

CARL JOHAN BERGLUND

Origen's References to Heracleon

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament
450*

Mohr Siebeck

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Carl Johan Berglund

Origen's References to Heracleon

A Quotation-Analytical Study
of the Earliest Known Commentary
on the Gospel of John

Mohr Siebeck

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Preface

This monograph is a revised version of my doctoral dissertation in New Testament Exegesis, which was defended at Uppsala University in June of 2019.

Since I began working on Origen's references to Heracleon in 2012, I have had the pleasure to interact with fellow scholars in a number of settings, some of which have led to the publication of earlier versions of certain of the arguments in the book. My take on Greco-Roman education and learned culture was well received at a conference in Göttingen, Germany, in 2015, and a number of the points made in chapter 2 are previously made in my paper in the conference volume.¹ The difficulties of evaluating ancient Greek quotations were discussed in Leuven, Belgium, in 2015, and the beginning of chapter 3 is a reworked version of my essay in the conference volume.² My methodology for discerning verbatim quotations from less faithful renderings, which is discussed in the rest of chapter 3, was presented at the Origeniana Duodecima conference in Jerusalem in 2017, and was later published in the conference proceedings.³ Likewise, my analysis of Heracleon's interpretation of the healing of a son of a royal official in John 4:46–54 was presented at a conference in Örebro, Sweden, in 2018, and has since been published in a conference volume.⁴

Many people have generously contributed to the completion of this work. My academic supervisors, James A. Kelhoffer, Anders Ekenberg, and Peter Martens, have gently and expertly guided me toward the more fruitful areas of my research. Ronald E. Heine has been a generous mentor with a seeming-

¹ Carl Johan Berglund, "Interpreting Readers: The Role of Greco-Roman Education in Early Interpretation of New Testament Writings," in *Scriptural Interpretation at the Interface between Education and Religion*, ed. Florian Wilk, TBN 22 (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 204–47.

² Carl Johan Berglund, "Evaluating Quotations in Ancient Greek Literature: The Case of Heracleon's *Hypomnēmata*," in *Shadowy Characters and Fragmentary Evidence: The Search for Early Christian Groups and Movements*, eds. Joseph Verheyden, Tobias Nicklas, and Elisabeth Hernitscheck, WUNT 388 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2017), 201–31.

³ Carl Johan Berglund, "Discerning Quotations from Heracleon in Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*," in *Origeniana Duodecima*, eds. Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony and Rita Corstjens, BETL 302 (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 489–503.

⁴ Carl Johan Berglund, "How 'Valentinian' Was Heracleon's Reading of the Healing of the Son of a Royal Official?," in *Healing and Exorcism in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity*, eds. Mikael Tellbe and Tommy Wasserman, WUNT II/511 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 219–39.

ly inexhaustible supply of experience of scholarship on Origen. Marianne Wifstrand Schiebe has been exceedingly helpful, not least in her tireless efforts in scrutinizing my translations from ancient Greek. Karl Olav Sandnes has been a recurrent source of joy and new perspectives on my work. Harold W. Attridge, Tobias Nicklas, Joseph Verheyden, and Ismo Dunderberg have been helpfully encouraging. David Konstan has been a cordial critic. Simeon Burke has been a friend and a critical reader. Martin Wessbrandt has been a stimulating conversation partner. Hans Engdahl has contributed with another perspective on Origen. And my fellow doctoral students Bim O'Reilly, Daniel Gustafsson, Adam Sabir, Michael Öberg, and Petter Spjut have been good companions on the long journey from project description to final draft.

The writing of a scholarly monograph would be impossible without loving support and encouragement from those closest to one's heart. Fortunately, I have been generously supplied, in innumerable forms, by Linda, the love of my life, and by our two wonderful sons Albin and Einar. May you both grow up to question the world with all your minds, love your neighbors with all your strengths, and trust the Lord with all your hearts!

Vällingby, June 2020

Carl Johan Berglund

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the second century CE, a fascinating transition in the reception of early Christian literature occurred. The earliest generations had been engaged in rewriting the written material they had inherited into new compositions, the way Luke is generally believed to have rewritten Mark, writers of early Christian letters to have copied Paul, and authors of apocryphal Acts to have built on earlier Christian narratives. By contrast, a new generation retained previous Christian writings as they were, and placed their own reflections in commentaries (*hypomnēmata*), a type of secondary literature in which the added material is clearly separated from the original text, and which thereby presents the original text as valuable, important, and authoritative. This transition contributed to establishing the fourfold Gospel and the Pauline letters as authoritative writings comparable to the Old Testament, and is therefore formative for the emerging New Testament.

The earliest known witnesses to this transition, the *hypomnēmata* on the Gospels written by the second-century Christian author Heracleon, are – unfortunately enough – only extant in the form of references made by two later authors: two in the works of Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150–215 CE) and four dozen by Origen of Alexandria (ca. 185–254 CE).¹ The Greek word ὑπομνήματα can be used to refer not only to learned commentaries, but also to official records, personal notes, and physical means of remembrance, which means that we do not know the actual genre of Heracleon’s writing. Since all we have is a collection of short excerpts, we know neither if it had any other title, nor the extent or format of the work.²

¹ The title of Heracleon’s writing is taken from the description in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.15/92 (SC 157, 196.42): ἐν οἷς καταλέλοιπεν ὑπομνήμασιν (“in the *hypomnēmata* he [Heracleon] has left behind”). References to Origen’s *Commentary on the Gospel of John* will be given with book number, chapter number, and paragraph number. Chapter and paragraph numbers will be separated with a slash rather than a dot, to signify that the paragraph numbering is continuous throughout each book and not subordinated to the chapter numbering. When a quotation is presented, a reference to an edition in the Sources Chrétiennes series will also be given. Unless otherwise indicated, translations from Greek will be my own.

² Heracleon’s activity is impossible to date with any more precision than to the second half of the second century. Alan England Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, TS I.4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), 31–34, argues for a date around 170; Eugène de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme: Étude critique des documents du gnosticisme chré-*

Ancient authors mentioning Heracleon generally describe him as a heretic teacher connected to Valentinus (ca. 100–175 CE), who was one of several mid-second-century candidates for leadership of the Christian community in Rome, but left the city after failing to gain sufficient support.³ Irenaeus of Lyons (ca. 130–202 CE) mentions Heracleon briefly as a proponent of Valentinus's doctrines, especially the belief in a heavenly Fullness (πλήρωμα) inhabited by no less than thirty divine eons (αἰῶνες) that were emanated from the Father.⁴ Tertullian of Carthage (ca. 160–225 CE) presents Heracleon as a follower of another teacher, Ptolemy (second century CE), who allegedly had departed from Valentinus by viewing the eons as deities in their own right rather than as aspects of the one God.⁵ The author of the *Elenchos*, often identified with Hippolytus of Rome (ca. 170–235 CE),⁶ presents Heracleon as a

tien aux II^e et III^e siècles, 2nd ed. (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1925), 77, suggests 155–180; Elaine H. Pagels, *The Johannine Gospel in Gnostic Exegesis: Heracleon's Commentary on John*, SBLMS 17 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1973), 16, proposes 160–180; Timothy James Pettipiece, "The Nature of 'True Worship': Anti-Jewish and Anti-Gentile Polemic in Heracleon (Fragments 20–24)," in *Colloque International "L'Évangile Selon Thomas et les Textes de Nag Hammadi"*, eds. Louis Painchaud and Paul-Hubert Poirier, Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi 8 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 377–94, here 378, argues for 150–175; Agnès Bastit, "Forme et méthode du Commentaire sur Jean d'Héracléon," *Adamantius* 15 (2009): 150–76, here 151, proposes 160–170; Einar Thomassen, "Heracleon," in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Tuomas Rasimus, NovTSup 132 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 173–210, here 174, claims, on the basis of his reception by Irenaeus, that he must have been a well-known figure by 180. Alastair H. B. Logan, "The Johannine Literature and the Gnostics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Johannine Studies*, eds. Judith M. Lieu and Martinus C. de Boer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 171–85, here 183, points to the late 170s or 180s.

³ Tertullian, *Val.* 4.1. Heracleon's double association to Rome (where Valentinus taught) and Alexandria (where Origen encountered his *hypomnēmata*) has caused some scholars, including Birger A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 161–62, to speculate that he was "an Alexandrian who spent some time in Rome as a Valentinian teacher and then returned to Alexandria."

⁴ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.4.1. Michael Kaler and Marie-Pierre Bussières, "Was Heracleon a Valentinian? A New Look at Old Sources," *HTR* 99.3 (2006): 275–89, here 277, are entirely correct that Irenaeus bases the link from Heracleon and Ptolemy to Valentinus on their views, and "does not directly state that Heracleon studied with or followed Valentinus." However, Irenaeus clearly assumes that the reader knows Heracleon and Ptolemy as affiliated with Valentinus.

⁵ Tertullian, *Val.* 4 (SC 280, 86.11–16): *Eam postmodum Ptolemaeus intrauit, nominibus et numeris aenonum distinctis in personales substantias, sed extra deum determinatas, quas Valentinus in ipsa summa diuinitatis ut sensus et affectus, motus incluserat. Deduxit et Heracleon inde tramites quosdam et Secundus et magus Marcus.*

⁶ For an overview of the debate concerning the authorship of the *Elenchos*, which is also known as *Philosophumena* or *Refutatio omnium haeresium*, see Enrico Norelli, "Construire l'opposition entre orthodoxie et hérésie à Rome, au III^e siècle," in *Des évêques, des écoles et des hérétiques: Actes du Colloque international sur la Réfutation de toutes les hérésies*, Ge-

“Valentinian” follower from the Italian peninsula who held that the human Jesus received the divine Word from his heavenly mother Sophia at his baptism.⁷ Clement presents Heracleon as “the most notable of Valentinus’s school” and sets forth two separate instances where Heracleon comments on material that seems to stem from the Synoptic Gospels.⁸ And most importantly, Origen presents Heracleon as a personal acquaintance of Valentinus, and interacts with his interpretations of the Fourth Gospel on four dozen occasions.⁹

This common way of presenting one’s adversaries as links in a genealogical chain through which certain “heresies” have been inherited, ultimately from the magician Simon of Acts 8:9–24, is regularly used by early Christian heresiologists in order to persuade their readers to reject these teachers before even considering their words and opinions.¹⁰ Despite this insight, previous

nève, 13–14 juin 2008, eds. Gabriella Aragione and Enrico Norelli (Prahins: Editions du Zèbre, 2011), 233–55; Manlio Simonetti, “Per un profilo dell’autore dell’*Elenchos*,” in *Des évêques, des écoles et des hérétiques: Actes du Colloque international sur la Réfutation de toutes les hérésies*, Genève, 13–14 juin 2008, eds. Gabriella Aragione and Enrico Norelli (Prahins: Editions du Zèbre, 2011), 257–73; Allen Brent, “The *Elenchos* and the Identification of Christian Communities in Second – Early Third Century Rome,” in *Des évêques, des écoles et des hérétiques: Actes du Colloque international sur la Réfutation de toutes les hérésies*, Genève, 13–14 juin 2008, eds. Gabriella Aragione and Enrico Norelli (Prahins: Editions du Zèbre, 2011), 275–314. For arguments for the traditional attribution, see Miroslav Marcovich, “Introduction,” in *Refutatio Omnium Haeresium*, PTS 25 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986), 1–51, here 8–17.

⁷ *Elenchos* (also known as Hippolytus, *Haer.*) 6.p.4, 6.29.1, 6.35.6.

⁸ Clement, *Strom.* 4.9/71–72; *Ecl.* 25.1.

⁹ Heracleon is also mentioned in Theodoretus (ca. 393–466), *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* 1.8, and in Photius (ca. 810–893 CE), *Ep.* 134. Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 173, remarks: “That Heracleon was a ‘Valentinian’ is thus a point on which all our sources agree.” He does admit, however, that some of these sources seem to know no more about Heracleon than his name. Pier Franco Beatrice, “Greek Philosophy and Gnostic Soteriology in Heracleon’s ‘Hypomnemata,’” *EC* 3.2 (2012): 188–214, here 189, remarks that “these authors supply very little information about Heracleon, his work and thought, and what they do tell us is not always consistent.” de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 76, goes so far as to state that the information given by most sources is so meager that one learns nothing from them.

¹⁰ Bentley Layton, “The Significance of Basilides in Ancient Christian Thought,” *Representations* 28 (1989): 135–51, here 136, characterizes the effects of this rhetoric as replacing original ideas with trivialized substitutes, concealing their potential relevance, and causing them to be forgotten. Einar Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed: The Church of the “Valentinians,”* Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 60 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 19–20, argues that Irenaeus’s presentation of the “Valentinians” is based on a combination of different sources including the first known heresy catalogue, the *Catalogue against all the Heresies* quoted in Justin Martyr, 1 *Apol.* 26.2–5. John Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity*, Christian Theology in Context (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 83–85, describes Irenaeus’s genealogy from Simon Magus to Tatian, suggests that the practice goes

scholarship on Heracleon has generally taken these presentations at face value and presumed that Heracleon's interpretations are determined by a set of controversial doctrines conforming to either "Valentinianism" or "Gnosticism." Where no such doctrines are visible in the extant material, they have nonetheless been presumed to be present, as a hidden agenda behind the exegesis in Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*. In opposition to this practice, Hermann Langerbeck and Ansgar Wucherpfennig have argued that Origen in his responses to Heracleon presumes later "Valentinian" ideas that are unattested in Heracleon's own writing.¹¹

In addition, previous scholars have generally – typically after a brief lamentation of the fact that Heracleon's comments are available only by the mediation of Clement and Origen – presumed that almost every statement they attribute to this allegedly "Valentinian" predecessor is a faithful rendering of Heracleon's views, words, and interpretive practices.¹² This has been

back to Polycarp, and notes that the genealogy has almost no point of contact with Valentinus and his disciples. Geoffrey S. Smith, *Guilt by Association: Heresy Catalogues in Early Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 4–5, 49–57, 131–34, traces a common format – ordering allegedly false teachers in chronological order, frequently presenting them as disciples of previous teachers, to give the impression of an unbroken chain of heretic transmission going back to Simon Magus – back to Justin's *Catalogue*. A complementary approach, in which "heretic" teachers were presented as having imported their ideas from Greek philosophy, is described by Winrich Alfried Löhr, "Christian Gnostics and Greek Philosophy in the Second Century," *EC* 3.3 (2012): 349–77, here 350.

¹¹ Hermann Langerbeck, "Die Anthropologie der alexandrinischen Gnosis: Interpretationen zu den Fragmenten des Basilides und Valentinus und ihrer Schulen bei Clemens von Alexandrien und Origenes," in *Aufsätze zur Gnosis*, ed. Hermann Dörries, *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen / Philologisch-historische Klasse* 3:69 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1967), 38–82, here 67–72; Ansgar Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus: Gnostische Johannesexegese im zweiten Jahrhundert*, WUNT 142 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 332–57. With a more limited scope, Beatrice, "Greek Philosophy and Gnostic Soteriology," 206, remarks that "Origen never quotes a fragment in which Heracleon expounds the distinction of the three natures [...], evidently for the simple reason that he did not find it! Origen's criticism is inspired by his general anti-Valentinian stance which at times leads him to force the thought of his adversary." Harold W. Attridge, "Heracleon and John: Reassessment of an Early Christian Hermeneutical Debate," in *Biblical Interpretation: History, Context, Reality*, SBL Symposium Series 26 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 57–72, here 61, endorses Wucherpfennig's view: "A more adequate assessment of the debate must begin with the reevaluation of Heracleon's work by Wucherpfennig, who insists that a proper assessment of Heracleon should be grounded in his fragments and not in a reconstruction of the presumed Valentinian background of Heracleon."

¹² Werner Foerster, *Von Valentin zu Herakleon: Untersuchungen über die Quellen und die Entwicklung der valentinianischen Gnosis*, BZNW 7 (Giessen: Alfred Töpelmann, 1928), 3, admits that Origen does not always quote Heracleon "wörtlich," but asserts that not only his direct quotations but also his indirect representations of Heracleon's opinions can be taken as correct representations of the views of this "Gnostic" author. Michel R Desjardins,

done despite the widely acknowledged fact that, in ancient literature, quotations are often adapted to better fit the style, grammar, and argumentative needs of the quoting author – a practice giving Clement and Origen a certain freedom to adapt their material on Heracleon to fit their overall picture. Before presuming that Heracleon subscribed to a certain set of doctrines, such allegations should be tested against what we can reconstruct of his actual words. Before statements and views attributed to him by ancient authors can be used to reconstruct his views and exegetical methodology, they should be critically analyzed with respect to the quotation practices of the quoting author, to evaluate how much they may be adapted.

Since we have no information on Heracleon other than what is transmitted by his adversaries, it is not certain that any reconstruction we can make of his views and interpretations is representative for his outlook on the Christian tradition. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to discern dependable data on second-century scriptural interpretation from dubious allegations, and thereby strengthen our understanding of the early development of Christian exegesis.

A. Aims and Questions

This study presumes neither that every statement Origen attributes to Heracleon is a verbatim quotation, nor that Heracleon's exegesis is determined by doctrines to which he never, in the extant material, refers explicitly. The project has three aims: First, variations in Origen's attribution formulas will be used to evaluate whether he is presenting a verbatim quotation or a more adapted rendering. Secondly, the more trustworthy of the references will be used to reconstruct Heracleon's interpretations within a context given by his own exegetical methodology and by the writings to which he himself refers. Finally, the views and concerns exhibited in Heracleon's exegesis will be compared to the views used by Origen to categorize his exegetical opponents.

"The Sources for Valentinian Gnosticism: A Question of Methodology," VC 40.4 (1986): 342–47, here 345, argues that the "Fathers" have reproduced the words of their opponents far more literally than the author of Acts ever did to Paul, and declares: "To cast doubt on the basic reliability of Origen's quotations from Heracleon, for example, is to be unduly skeptical." Kyle Keefer, *The Branches of the Gospel of John: The Reception of the Fourth Gospel in the Early Church*, LNTS 332 (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 33, declares that "the consensus is that Origen faithfully represented Heracleon's point of view, and quite likely his exact words." His brief lamentation is located on page 32. Pettipiece, "The Nature of 'True Worship,'" 377, complains that "we cannot be sure about the authenticity of Heracleon's voice as it is recorded by Origen," and goes on to discuss (386 n. 33) what Heracleon "states quite specifically" and "even more explicitly" without considering Origen's mediation.

Our first question in the analysis of every passage in which Origen interacts with Heracleon's exegesis is how each reference to Heracleon is presented: where it falls on a scale from a trustworthy, word-by-word transmission of a written source, to an allegation without any claimed basis. In chapter 3, linguistic theory will be used to argue for a possible variance in the claims implied by different ways of constructing an attribution formula, and this variance will be confirmed by comparison to Origen's actual quotation practices. This analysis will result in criteria that can be used to discern four different modes of attribution – four ways in which Origen attributes views and statements to Heracleon:

1. *Verbatim quotations* are references where the statements attributed to Heracleon are presented as transmitting his actual words, as they were found in his writing. In this mode of attribution, we expect only minimal adaptations, which may include spelling variants and the choice of a conjunction, such as δέ (“but” or “and”), γάρ (“for”), or διό (“for this reason”), to connect the quoted statement to the surrounding prose.
2. *Summaries* or *non-interpretive rephrasings* are references presented as transmitting the precise point that Heracleon has made in his writing, but not necessarily the exact words and phrases he has used to express it. Here, we expect adaptations aimed at brevity and clarity, and possibly a change of key terms to conform to the terms used by the quoting author in the surrounding argument.
3. *Explanatory paraphrases* are references presented as revealing not merely the point actually expressed in Heracleon's writing, but the underlying argument or dogmatic idea on which this point rests. In this mode, we expect more radical adaptations of the quoted text, using an understanding of his views based not only on the entirety of the quoted work, but also shaped by other information available to the quoting author, such as heresiological descriptions of his exegetical opponents.
4. *Mere assertions* are references where Heracleon's views are presented without any stated basis in his writing. In these cases, we expect the information given to originate entirely in other sources than Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*, such as heresiological writings and personal interaction with exegetical opponents.

These four modes of attribution will follow us throughout the analyses in the later chapters of this monograph, in which every reference to Heracleon will be categorized either as a quotation, a summary, a paraphrase,¹³ or an asser-

¹³ The term “paraphrase” will be relevant on more than one level in this study; in addition to Origen paraphrasing Heracleon, we will also note that Heracleon paraphrases the

tion.¹⁴ As illustrated by Figure 1, the four categories are not intended to describe four distinct phenomena, but divisions on a continuous scale of smaller to larger adaptations of the source. No sharp delineations can be made between the four modes of attribution, and certain boundary cases will remain ambiguous.

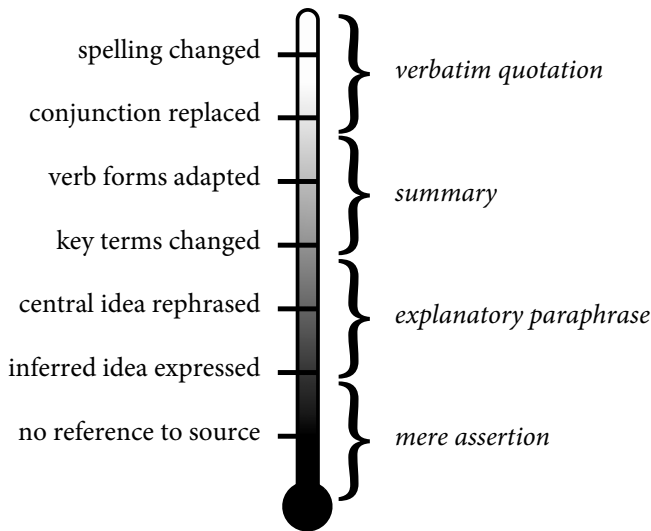


Figure 1. Extent of adaptation vs. mode of attribution.

This distinction between four modes of attribution is more specific than the commonly used one between *fragmenta* (attributed statements) and *testimonia* (assertions),¹⁵ in which our first three categories are all considered *frag-*

Gospel of John, and that modern scholars frequently paraphrase, in the course of their analyses, what Origen claims Heracleon to be saying.

¹⁴ For brevity, the terms verbatim quotation, summary, explanatory paraphrase, and mere assertion will often be shortened to quotation, summary, paraphrase, and assertion. No distinction in meaning between the full and the abbreviated terms is intended.

¹⁵ According to Hermann Diels, *Poetarum philosophorum fragmenta*. Vol. 3:1 of *Poetarum graecorum fragmenta* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1901), VI, this distinction was first introduced in Georg Kaibel, *Comicorum graecorum fragmenta*. Vol. 6:1 of *Poetarum graecorum fragmenta* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1899). Diels used this distinction quite systematically in his *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1903). Cf. Walter Burkert, "Diels' Vorsokratiker: Rückschau und Ausblick," in *Hermann Diels (1848–1922) et la science de l'antiquité: Huit exposés suivis de discussions*, eds. William M. Calder and Jaap Mansfeld, *Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique* 45 (Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 1999), 169–206, here 173; Jaap Mansfeld, "Sources," in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, eds. Keimpe Algra et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 1–30, here 26–27.

menta.¹⁶ It differs from other reference categorization systems in that it measures how well a reference matches its source rather than how clear it is that a certain source has been used.¹⁷

The extent to which material in these four categories can be used in subsequent analysis depends on the object of study. If we are studying Origen's conceptions of his exegetical opponents, all four categories are valuable, and if we are concerned with third-century scriptural interpreters that are not known from other sources, Origen's explanatory paraphrases and mere assertions can give us information that would otherwise be unattainable. But if we are studying how the historical Heracleon interpreted the Fourth Gospel, we should, in general, limit ourselves to the first two categories, and if the object of study is Heracleon's theological vocabulary, it is only the first category that claims to reflect Heracleon's *ipsissima verba*. In the absence of sharp delineations, individual references in excluded categories may always be used with caution.

Our second aim will also be addressed in the analysis of every passage in which Origen refers to Heracleon. Starting from the verbatim quotations and summaries identified in the previous step of the analysis, this study will attempt to reconstruct Heracleon's reasoning without presuming him to subscribe to the views described in heresiological material such as Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*. The reconstruction will be made within a theoretical perspective given not by heresiological identifications of him as a "Valentinian" teacher, but by his own work: the established methodology which he seems to be using in his exegesis, and the early Christian literature to which he himself refers. Previous scholars have presumed Heracleon to be either a "Gnostic" or a "Valentinian," and used his exegesis to gain an understanding of interpretive practices that are supposed to be specific to this particular group. This study makes no such assumption, and can therefore analyze Heracleon's interpretations while keeping it an open question whether his exegesis confines him to a sub-group within the Christian movement or is applicable within a more general second-century Christian interpretive discourse. Although this analysis mostly will be based on summaries and verbatim quotations, a few of the explanatory paraphrases will also yield valuable material. Several of the paraphrases will be found to fit very well in the picture given by the quotations and summaries.

¹⁶ Diels will typically call out particularly dubious references among his *fragmenta*, so he is not unaware of the distinctions we are systematizing here.

¹⁷ Annewies van den Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation in Clement of Alexandria: A View of Ancient Literary Working Methods," *VC* 50.3 (1996): 223–43, here 228–29, describes how previous scholars have distinguished between "quotations," "reminiscences," "references," and "paraphrases," while herself preferring to use a scale of "certain dependence," "probable dependence," "unprovable dependence," and "no dependence" upon a previous author.

The third question will mainly be addressed in the final discussion. Considering all of the material analyzed in the previous chapters, Heracleon's views and concerns will be discussed and compared to the views used by Origen to define two categories of exegetical opponents: the heterodox (οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι), who attribute the Old Testament to an ignorant and inferior creator god, and "those who bring in the natures" (οἱ τὰς φύσεις εἰσάγοντες), who claim that the eternal fate of human beings is determined by their inherent nature as being either spiritual (πνευματικός), animated (ψυχικός), or earthly (χοϊκός). These categories will be discussed more thoroughly under the heading "Theoretical Framework" below.

Two considerable omissions are made in this study, mainly in the interest of reduced complexity. First, all references to Heracleon not made by Origen are left out of consideration. As discussed above, Heracleon is mentioned once by Irenaeus, once by Tertullian, three times by the author of the *Elenchos*, twice by Clement, once by Theodoretus, and once by Photius. While the shorter references are unlikely to yield any additional data, analyzing Clement's two passages with a quotation-analytical methodology should eventually be done as a complement to this monograph. Secondly, this study neglects to make any substantial comparisons of Heracleon's interpretations to the literature usually considered "Valentinian," such as the Gospel of Truth (NHC I 3, XII 2), the Tripartite Tractate (NHC I 5), the Gospel of Philip (NHC II 3), Interpretation of Knowledge (NHC XI 1), A Valentinian Exposition (NHC XI 2), or Clement's *Excerpts from Theodotus*. This latter omission should not be construed as a denial of the potential value of such comparisons, but rather as a recognition that this rich and enigmatic literature deserves a more serious consideration than they could be given within this monograph. A proper comparison should not presume that any of the authors involved conform to the descriptions given in heresiological literature, and be bidirectional, so that the understanding of Heracleon that is the result of this study may be used to reevaluate the "Valentinian" literature as well as vice versa.¹⁸

¹⁸ Desjardins, "The Sources for Valentinian Gnosticism," 343, points out that none of these writings claim to represent the views of the "Valentinians," an observation which is reinforced by the difficulty scholars have in agreeing on which writings to include in the "Valentinian" corpus. He also finds a chicken and egg problem in that the identification of some Nag Hammadi writings as primary sources to "Valentinianism" is based on the claims made in heresiological secondary sources. Philip L. Tite, *Valentinian Ethics and Paraenetic Discourse: Determining the Social Function of Moral Exhortation in Valentinian Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 15–17, admits that the definition of a "Valentinian" corpus is based on a circular argument, but still presents an extensive list of sixteen primary sources divided into four classes of descending dependability. David W. Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field: Early Christian Reception of the Gospel of Matthew*, Studies of the Bible and its Reception 6 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 11–15, opts to study six particular "Valentinian" writings based on their acceptance by Desjardins, Thomassen, and Dunder-

The rest of this introduction will specify the material for this investigation, briefly describe the method used, discuss the categories which are used by heresiologists, scholars, and Origen to categorize Heracleon, and give an account of previous research on Heracleon. Chapter 2 will establish the theoretical perspective in which we will view Heracleon, given not by heresiological categorization but by Greco-Roman education and literary criticism. The third chapter will develop the method of quotation analysis that will be used to evaluate the dependability of Origen's references. This method will then be applied, throughout chapters 4–10, to all passages in which Origen refers to Heracleon. The last chapter will summarize and discuss the results of our three aims, as well as some implications for further research.

In all, this study will contribute to future scholarship by developing a methodology for the underappreciated difficulty of evaluating quotations in ancient literature, by providing a more secure foundation for future studies on Heracleon, and by giving new insights into second-century Christian diversity.

B. Material

The material for this investigation consists of the dominant part of all references to Heracleon in ancient literature – the four dozen relevant passages in Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. This monumental work originally comprised thirty-two books covering John 1:1–13:32, but only nine of these books are extant. The manuscript tradition, consisting of eight manuscripts,¹⁹ is dependent on a single thirteenth-century manuscript, the Codex Monacensis.²⁰ Critical editions by Alan E. Brooke, Erwin Preuschen, and Cécile

berg. Paul Linjamaa, *The Ethics of The Tripartite Tractate (NHC I, 5): A Study of Determinism and Early Christian Philosophy of Ethics*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 95 (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 7–12, gives a similar list, but does not attempt to put a limitation on the “Valentinian” corpus.

¹⁹ Described in Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 1–7; and in Erwin Preuschen, “Einleitung,” in *Der Johanneskommentar*. Vol. 4 of *Origenes Werke*, GCS 10 (Berlin, 1903), IX–CVIII, here IX–XL, are: (1) Codex Monacensis, Gr. 191 in the Bavarian State Library (13th century), (2) Codex Venetus, Gr. 43 in the Bibliotheca Marciana in Venice (1374), (3) Codex Barberinus I, Gr. V, 52 in the Barberini Library in Rome (15th or 16th century), (4) Codex Barberinus II, Gr. VI, 14 in the Barberini Library in Rome (15th or 16th century), (5) Codex Matritensis, Gr. O. 32 in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid (1555), (6) Codex Regius, Gr. 455 in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (17th century), (7) Codex Bodleianus, Misc. 58 (18th century), and (8) a transcription of Codex Bodleianus made by Herbert Thorndike, B. 9. 12 in Trinity College in Cambridge.

²⁰ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 1–8; Alan England Brooke, “Introduction,” in *The Commentary of Origen on S. John's Gospel* (Cambridge, 1896), ix–xxviii, here ix–xxi; Preuschen, “Einleitung,” IX–XL; Yvonne Janssens, “Héracléon: Commentaire sur l'Évan-

Blanc have been published, and modern translations are available.²¹ Images of the manuscript can be accessed from the website of the Bavarian State Library.²²

As most ancient commentaries, Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* begins with an introduction discussing general questions about the commented work, such as its aim and utility, its position within the larger body of Christian literature, and the reason for its title.²³ In a multi-volume commentary such as this, shorter introductions and closing remarks – in which Origen often mentions his patron, Ambrose – appear at the beginning and end of some of the constituent books. The rest of the commentary is structured around a series of running quotations, generally called lemmata, from the source text. During the exposition that follows, Origen may sometimes repeat a phrase or two from the lemma in order to specify to which words his comments refer.

The table below specifies the verses of the Gospel of John in view in each book of Origen's commentary, which books are extant, and whether they

gile selon Saint Jean," *Muséon* 72 (1959): 101–51, 277–99, here 104; Cécile Blanc, "Avant-propos," in *Commentaire sur Saint Jean. Texte grec, avant-propos, traduction et notes par Cécile Blanc*, SC 120 (Paris: Cerf, 1966), 7–42, here 41; Ronald E. Heine, "Introduction," in *Commentary on the Gospel According to John: Books 1–10*, trans. Ronald E. Heine, FC 80 (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 1989), 3–28, here 7–10.

²¹ Origen, *The Commentary of Origen on S. John's Gospel*, ed. Alan England Brooke (Cambridge, 1896); Origenes, *Der Johanneskommentar*. Vol. 4 of *Werke*, ed. Erwin Preuschen, GCS 10 (Berlin, 1903); Origène, *Commentaire sur Saint Jean. Texte grec, avant-propos, traduction et notes par Cécile Blanc*, ed. Cécile Blanc, trans. Cécile Blanc, SC 120, 157, 222, 290, 385, 120 bis (Paris: Cerf, 1966–1996); Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John: Books 1–10*, trans. Ronald E. Heine, FC 80 (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 1989); Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John: Books 13–32*, trans. Ronald E. Heine, FC 89 (Washington, D.C.: CUA Press, 1993); Origen, *Origenes' Johanneskommentar Buch I–V*, trans. Hans Georg Thümmel, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 63 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011); Origène, *Commento al Vangelo di Giovanni. Testo greco a fronte*, ed. Vito Limone, trans. Vito Limone (Milano: Bompiani, 2012).

²² Digitale Bibliothek, Münchener Digitalisierungszentrum. "BSB-Hss. Cod. graec. 191," <http://daten.digital-e-sammlungen.de/0004/bsb00046889/images/>.

²³ Ronald E. Heine, "The Introduction to Origen's *Commentary on John* Compared with the Introductions to the Ancient Philosophical Commentaries on Aristotle," in *Origeniana Sexta: Origène et la Bible*, eds. Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluc, BETL 118 (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 3–12, compares Origen's introduction to those of the commentaries on Aristotle by Origen's contemporary Alexander of Aphrodisias (early third century). For the six standard questions as expressed by Ammonius Hermiae (ca. 435–517 CE) in his commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*, see Carl Johan Berglund, "Understanding Origen: The Genre(s) of the Gospels in Light of Ancient Greek Philology and Modern Genre Theory," *Scrinium* 12 (2016): 181–214, here 188–92.

incorporate passages where Origen refers to Heracleon.²⁴ Of the extant references to Heracleon, half are located in book 13, while the other half are scattered in books 2, 6, 10, 19 and 20. Heracleon is not mentioned in books 1, 28 and 32, and since most of Origen's thirty-two books are no longer extant, we may presume that most of his references to Heracleon are also lost.

Books of Origen's <i>Commentary</i>	Condition	Commented verses in John	Passages referring to Heracleon	Extant material
1	extant	1:1a	none	
2	extant	1:1b–7	2 passages	Passages 1–2
3–5	quotations	(1:8–15)	unknown	
6	extant	1:16–29	8 passages	Passages 3–10
7–9	lost	(1:30–2:11)	unknown	
10	extant	2:12–25	6 passages	Passages 11–16
11–12	lost	(3:1–4:12)	unknown	
13	extant	4:13–54	24 passages	Passages 17–40
14–19 A	lost	(5:1–8:18)	unknown	
19 B	extant	8:19–25	2 passages	Passages 41–42
19 C	lost	(8:26–36)	unknown	
20	extant	8:37–53	6 passages	Passages 43–48
21–27	lost	(8:54–11:38)	unknown	
28	extant	11:39–57	none	
29–31	lost	(12:1–13:1)	unknown	
32	extant	13:2–33	none	

The passages in which Origen refers to Heracleon are not simply “fragments” in the sense that they preserve incomplete excerpts from Heracleon's *hypo-mnēmata*; unlike physical fragments of ancient manuscripts, they are determined by what their author, Origen, found relevant to include in a particular context, and contain not only presentations of Heracleon's views but also Origen's evaluations and responses. Sometimes, these are clearly separated from the preceding presentations, other times they are inseparably intermingled. Origen is not merely a preserver of material from Heracleon – he is an active dialogue partner in a one-sided conversation where he alone decides what Heracleon is allowed to say. Within a given passage, Origen's interac-

²⁴ Nothing is extant of book 3. Three quotations from books 4 and 5 appear in the *Philocalia* and in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.25.7–10, but none of them refer to Heracleon. The first page of book 10 is lost, but the first lemma refers to John 2:12. Both the beginning and end of book 19 are lost, and the verses covered in those (19 A and C) are inferred from the extant middle part (19 B). In book 28, forty-one lines covering John 11:39–40 are missing. We have no indication that Origen ever continued his commentary beyond John 13:33.

tion with Heracleon may comprise multiple references made in different modes of attribution.²⁵

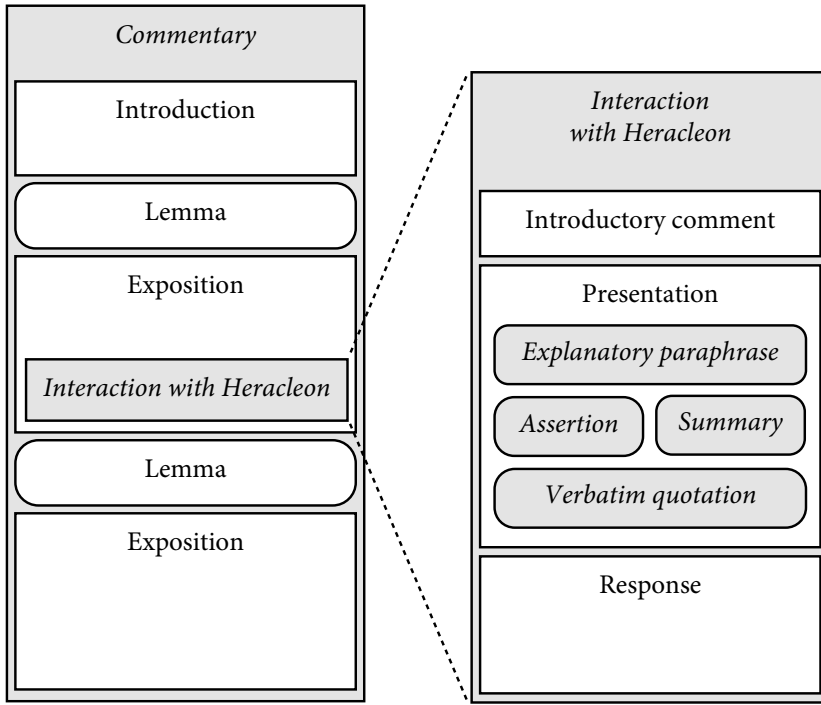


Figure 2. The structure of Origen's *Commentary*.

Figure 2 illustrates the structure of Origen's commentary, as well as the typical structure of his interactions with Heracleon. Origen usually interacts with

²⁵ Mansfeld, "Sources," 26–28, complains that the concept of a fragment is ill defined, and that modern practices of arranging fragments according to thematic categorization obstructs consideration of their provenance and eventual relations to one another. Peter A. Brunt, "On Historical Fragments and Epitomes," *CQ*, New Series 30.2 (1980): 477–94, here 494; and Dominique Lenfant, "Peut-on se fier aux 'fragments' d'historiens? L'exemple des citations d'Hérodote," *Ktêma: Civilisations de l'Orient, de la Grèce et de Rome antiques* 24 (1999): 103–22, here 103–5, note that scholars often overestimate the dependability of ancient quotations, which reflect the interest of the intermediate author at least as much as they transmit the quoted work. Guido Schepens, "Jacoby's *FGrHist*: Problems, Methods, Prospects," in *Collecting Fragments*, ed. Glenn W. Most, *Aporematà* 1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 144–72, here 166–67 n. 66, reflects on how quoting authors simultaneously protect their quotations from being lost and conceal their meaning by enclosing them in new contexts, adapting their wording, and hiding the points where verbatim quotations start and end.

Heracleon at the end of his own exposition. These passages often begin with an introductory comment relating Heracleon's view on the Johannine passage in question to the issues Origen had previously discussed. They almost always end with a response in which Origen refutes, criticizes, or declares his acceptance of Heracleon's interpretation.²⁶ Some such passages grow quite lengthy as Origen spends several paragraphs presenting Heracleon's views, while others, when Origen succinctly summarizes and responds to Heracleon, are short. Between the introductory comment and the response, Origen presents Heracleon's interpretation. These presentations are not only in the form of verbatim quotations, but also in freer renderings where he refers less to Heracleon's words than to the ideas he infers to be underlying his interpretations – ideas he often feels the need to refute.

An unavoidable difficulty when working with the writings of Origen, is that Origen himself in the fourth and fifth centuries was a highly-controversial figure, and there are allegations that his works were corrupted, either to suppress any statements that would appear to contradict Nicene orthodoxy, or to insert such statements. This difficulty is especially pronounced when working with Latin translations of Origen's works by Rufinus of Aquileia (ca. 340–410 CE), who was deeply involved in this conflict.²⁷ Fortunately, the *Commentary on the Gospel of John* is available in the original Greek, and it is not specifically mentioned in allegations of this sort. Therefore, no attempts will be made in this study to get beyond Codex Monacensis to an earlier, and presumably uncorrupted, version of Origen's text.

²⁶ For an analysis of this variance in Origen's responses, see Carl Johan Berglund, "Origen's Vacillating Stances Toward His 'Valentinian' Colleague Heracleon," *VC* 71.5 (2017): 541–69.

²⁷ In a letter to friends in Alexandria, quoted in Rufinus, *Adult. libr. Orig.* 7, Origen speaks of two instances where false versions of his writings were distributed in his own lifetime. Rufinus, *Adult. libr. Orig.* 16, concludes that if anything in Origen's works contradicts Catholicism, it may be inserted by heretics. Jerome (ca. 347–420 CE), *Ep.* 124, accuses Rufinus of misrendering Origen's *First Principles* in his Latin translation, and gives a long list of specific heresies that he insists are present in the original Greek. In Jerome, *Ruf.* 2.18–19, he describes the conflict in more detail, and accuses Rufinus of mistranslating the previously mentioned letter. Rufinus admits, in *Apol. Hier.* 2.45–46, that he has sometimes adapted his translations not to lead the reader into heresy, but claims that Jerome has done the same in his translations. Their debate on how not to translate Origen into Latin does not necessarily imply that different Greek versions circulated. See also the discussions in Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 159–93; Pádraig O'Cleirigh, "Origen's Consistency: An Issue in the Quarrel between Rufinus and Jerome," in *Origeniana Septima*, eds. Wolfgang A. Bienert and Uwe Kühneweg (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 225–31; Richard A. Layton, "Plagiarism and Lay Patronage of Ascetic Scholarship: Jerome, Ambrose and Rufinus," *J ECS* 10.4 (2002): 489–522.

C. Method

The main method used in this study is the method of quotation analysis that is developed in chapter 3, building on previous works by, among others, Peter A. Brunt, Christopher D. Stanley, Annewies van den Hoek, and Sabrina Inowlocki.²⁸ The method is based on a combination of linguistic theory and observations in the attribution formulas used by Origen to attribute various statements, views, and interpretive moves to Heracleon and other previous authors. Origen, especially, tends to construct a new formula to fit every particular occasion, using a variety of terms such as φησί (“he says”), ὡς ἄρα (“that”), and αὐταῖς λέξεσιν (“with these very words”). While some of these variations are certainly made simply for rhetorical variation, some are found to indicate a certain mode of attribution.

To exemplify the procedure, we may look at Origen’s short interaction with Heracleon’s interpretation of the Pharisees’ question to John the Baptist in John 1:25: “Why, then, do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?”²⁹

Heracleon, accepting (παραδεξάμενος / 1) the Pharisees’ statement about Christ, Elijah, and every prophet being obliged to baptize as spoken soundly, says with these very words (αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησίν / 2): “...who alone are obliged to baptize...” – and is refuted by what has recently been presented by us, especially since he has understood (νενόηκεν / 3) “prophet” in a more general sense, for he is not able to show that any of the prophets were baptizing. Not unconvincingly, though, he remarks (φησίν / 4) that the Pharisees are asking out of their ill will, and not as if they want to understand.³⁰

The passage begins with a claim that Heracleon is accepting (παραδεξάμενος) an unstated implication behind the Pharisees’ question, namely that John’s baptizing activity implies that he is either Christ, Elijah, or “the prophet.” Since Origen has been discussing this implication in the preceding paragraphs, the claim links back to the context and no other introduction is necessary. As proof for his claim, Origen presents a few words from Heracleon’s

²⁸ Brunt, “Historical Fragments”; Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature*, SNTSMS 69 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); van den Hoek, “Techniques of Quotation”; Sabrina Inowlocki, *Eusebius and the Jewish Authors: His Citation Technique in an Apologetic Context*, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

²⁹ Further analysis of this passage will be offered in chapter 5.

³⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.23/126 (SC 157, 226.37–228.44; Brooke’s fragment 6): Παραδεξάμενος δὲ ὁ Ἡρακλέων τὸν τῶν φαρισαίων λόγον ὡς ὑγιῶς εἰρημένον περὶ τοῦ ὀφείλεσθαι τὸ βαπτίζειν Χριστῷ καὶ Ἠλίᾳ καὶ παντὶ προφήτῃ, αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν, οἷς μόνοις ὀφείλεται τὸ βαπτίζειν, καὶ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων μὲν ἡμῖν ἔναγχος ἐλεγχόμενος, μάλιστα δὲ ὅτι κοινότερον τὸν προφήτην νενόηκεν· οὐ γὰρ ἔχει δεῖξαι τινα τῶν προφητῶν βαπτίσαντα. Οὐκ ἀπιθάνως δὲ φησιν πυνθάνεσθαι τοὺς φαρισαίους κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν πανουργίαν, οὐχὶ ὡς μαθεῖν θέλοντας.

writing. By including the phrase αὐταῖς λέξεσιν (“with these very words” or “with the same words”) in his attribution formula, Origen indicates explicitly that he is quoting Heracleon verbatim. The verbatim quotation is followed by Origen’s response, in which he declares that he has already refuted Heracleon by arguing, in his preceding exposition, that the act of baptizing is characteristic of neither Christ nor Elijah, both of whom preferred to instruct others to baptize. To this previous refutation, Origen adds that Heracleon would have to prove that baptizing was generally practiced among Old Testament prophets – a claim that Origen would be prepared to refute – since he has neglected the definite article ὁ in the Pharisees’ question, and read “a prophet” rather than “the prophet.”³¹ Origen’s last sentence refers to a separate claim, allegedly made by Heracleon, that the Pharisees ask their question not in a desire to understand the Baptist, but rather to call his activities into question. Since Origen has previously made the exact same point in his own interpretation,³² it is not entirely surprising that Origen agrees with Heracleon on this point.

Several modes of attribution can be discerned even in this short excerpt. The few words attributed with the second attribution formula – αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησὶν (“he says with these very words”) – are clearly presented as a verbatim quotation, reflecting the precise literal expression (λέξις) used by Heracleon. The fourth reference, concerning the motivation of the Pharisees, is attributed to Heracleon with a single φησὶν (“he says”), but without any specification that what follows is quoted verbatim. In addition, the statement appears in indirect speech (*oratio obliqua*), using an accusative-with-infinitive construction. As will be argued below, such an attribution is better understood as a summary, in which Origen is relaying the point that Heracleon has made in his writing, but not necessarily the actual words he used to express it. In the third attribution formula, the verb νοέω (“perceive with the mind,” “understand”) does not, strictly speaking, refer to something Heracleon has written, but to the thought process that Origen infers behind his comment. Similarly, Origen’s first attribution refers not to Heracleon’s comments directly, but to the understanding of the Pharisees’ question that Origen infers to be behind the comments. Such references, where Origen’s presentation appears to be separated from Heracleon’s words by a process of interpretation, are here categorized as explanatory paraphrases.

In the analysis below, this passage will be labeled “Passage 6,” and these four attributions will be designated “Paraphrase 6.1,” “Quotation 6.2,” “Para-

³¹ Origen is well aware of the possibility of minor textual variants between different manuscripts, but does not discuss such a possibility in this context. Cf. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40/204 (“Passage 9” in chapter 5), where he discusses the readings Βηθανία and Βηθαβα-ρᾱ in John 1:28.

³² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.22/120.

phrase 6.3,” and “Summary 6.4,” respectively.³³ Although Origen’s quotations and summaries may readily be used to discuss Heracleon’s interpretive practices, more care has to be exercised in the use of his paraphrases. In this particular passage, the quoted words “...who alone are obliged to baptize...” do provide some support for Origen’s inference that Heracleon thinks that the Pharisees are speaking soundly. Similarly, his claim that Heracleon has read “a prophet” rather than “the prophet” will receive some support from a previous reference, which will be designated “Quotation 4.1.” Heracleon’s ostensible interest in the motivations of individual characters may be related to established interpretive practices in Greco-Roman learned culture.

D. Theoretical Framework

In contrast to previous studies on Heracleon, this study will avoid using theoretical frameworks based on heresiological constructs, such as the frameworks of “Gnosticism” or “Valentinianism.” The context in which this study views Heracleon is constituted by Greco-Roman learned culture (παιδεία), and especially the interpretive practices that were established in learned discourses on classical Greek literature such as Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This interpretive tradition is known under such modern terms as “classical scholarship,” “*Dichtungstheorie*,” “Greek philology,” or “ancient literary criticism.”³⁴ It will be further presented and discussed in chapter 2, building on the previous work of Bernhard Neuschäfer, Frances M. Young, Ansgar Wucherpfennig, and Peter W. Martens.³⁵

I. “Gnostics” and “Gnosticism”

The ancient Greek word γνωστικός is an adjective related to knowledge, discernment, and theoretical – as opposed to practical – abilities, and is not

³³ This analysis can be found on pages 149–52.

³⁴ Cf. the various titles of Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1968); Manfred Fuhrmann, *Die Dichtungstheorie der Antike: Aristoteles, Horaz, ‘Longin’: Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992); Heinz-Günther Nesselrath, ed., *Einleitung in die griechische Philologie* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1997); George Alexander Kennedy, *Classical Criticism*. Vol. 1 of *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

³⁵ Bernhard Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, Schweizerische Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft 18 (Basel: Friedrich Reinhardt, 1987), 139–40, 287–92; Frances M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 85–89, 292–99; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 48–103, 372–81; Peter W. Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 25–66.

inherently a negative term.³⁶ Its negative use is likely to go back to the exhortation to avoid τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως (“what is falsely called knowledge”) in 1 Tim 6:20.³⁷ The use of γνωστικοί to denote a certain category of ancient thinkers seems to originate with Irenaeus, who in his treatise against what he considered “falsely called knowledge” uses the term in his presentation of Valentinus:³⁸

Let us now also consider their unstable opinions, how they never, when there are two or three of them, speak the same about the same things, but present diametrically opposed ideas regarding both entities and names. The first one, who has adapted the principles of the so-called “Gnostic” heresy (γνωστικὴ αἵρεσις) into his own doctrinal characteristics, Valentinus, has decided as follows: [...] ...he has declared, in a similar way to those falsely called “knowledgeable ones” (γνωστικοί), to which we will return.³⁹

It is clear from this presentation that γνωστικοί (“Gnostics” or “knowledgeable ones”) is a term that Irenaeus uses polemically and ironically,⁴⁰ that he primarily associates it to oppositional teachers other than Valentinus,⁴¹ and that

³⁶ Michael A. Williams, “On Ancient ‘Gnosticism’ as a Problematic Category,” in *The Gnostic World*, eds. Garry W. Trompf, Gunner B. Mikkelsen, and Jay Johnston (London: Routledge, 2018), 100–117, here 100–102. The positive use of the term by Clement of Alexandria is described by Antti Marjanen, “What Is Gnosticism? From the Pastorals to Rudolph,” in *Was There a Gnostic Religion?*, ed. Antti Marjanen, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 87 (Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2005), 1–53, here 13–15.

³⁷ Marjanen, “What Is Gnosticism?,” 5–9, summarizes and criticizes the idea that the author of the Pastorals here refers to an early form of “Christian Gnosticism.” Contrastingly, Gerd Lüdemann, “Did Gnosticism Ever Exist?,” in *Was There a Gnostic Religion?*, ed. Antti Marjanen, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 87 (Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2005), 121–32, claims that Paul’s polemics in 1–2 Cor necessitates that his opponents subscribe to a “Gnostic” myth.

³⁸ A fuller quotation of this passage is available in Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed*, 23–27, accompanied by an argument that the description of Valentinus’s teachings in this passage is, in all likelihood, adapted by Irenaeus from a previous source, and cannot be trusted as a report on the doctrine of Valentinus himself.

³⁹ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.11.1 (SC 264, 166.1194–167.1199, 170.1222–1224): Ἰδωμεν νῦν καὶ τὴν τούτων ἄσφατον γνώμην, δύο που καὶ τριῶν ὄντων πῶς περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν οὐ τὰ αὐτὰ λέγουσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς πράγμασιν καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασιν ἐναντία ἀποφαίνονται. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ πρῶτος, ἀπὸ τῆς λεγομένης Γνωστικῆς αἵρέσεως τὰς ἀρχὰς εἰς ἴδιον χαρακτῆρα διδασκαλείου μεθαρμόσας Οὐαλεντίνος, οὕτως ὥριστο· [...] ...ἐδογμάτισεν, ὁμοίως τοῖς ῥηθησομένοις ὑφ’ ἡμῶν ψευδωνύμοις Γνωστικοῖς. The Greek text of this passage is only extant through the transmission of Epiphanius of Salamis (ca. 315–403 CE), *Pan.* 31.9–32, but is corroborated by a Latin manuscript tradition.

⁴⁰ The irony and polemic are also apparent from Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.11.5 (SC 264, 179.12), where he claims that the “Valentinians” are γνωστικῶν γνωστικώτεροι (“more knowledgeable than the knowledgeable ones”). Cf. Smith, *Guilt by Association*, 133.

⁴¹ Herbert Schmid, “Valentinianer und ‘Gnostiker’: Zu einer Bemerkung des Irenaeus von Lyon in *Adversus haereses* 1.11.1,” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Markschies and Einar Thomassen, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 96 (Leiden:

its expansion to include Valentinus is part of his endeavor to present his adversaries in a genealogical chain in order to more easily refute them all.⁴² It is not surprising that other ancient heresiologists found the term useful.⁴³

Recognizing that an ancient heresiological category is not entirely appropriate for uncritical use in modern scholarship, Adolf von Harnack attempted to describe the “Gnostics” as a group of early theologians who aimed to present Christianity as a philosophical system acceptable to a Hellenized audience, and whose ideas later developed in several diverse directions. For Harnack, the most important “Gnostic” doctrines were the rejection of the Old Testament and the distinction between its creator God and the previously unknown Father revealed by Christ, the claim that the material world is inherently evil and the consequent dismissal of Christ’s second coming and the resurrection of the human body, and a denunciation of any moral responsibility that by necessity led to a dual practice of either strict asceticism or lax morality.⁴⁴

Harnack’s criteria were later developed by Hans Jonas into a set of basic features of “Gnosticism,”⁴⁵ including (1) the notion that the world is deluded

Brill, 2020), 88–108, proposes that Irenaeus might not have any specific group in mind, but uses the term to denote all Christians who put another god in the place of the Old Testament creator. Cf. Origen’s category οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι (“the heterodox”), discussed below.

⁴² This has been observed by, among others, Karen L. King, *What Is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2003), 31–33; Marjanen, “What Is Gnosticism?,” 12–13; Antti Marjanen, “Gnosticism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, eds. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 203–220, here 204–5; Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 79–80; Smith, *Guilt by Association*, 146–47, 153–55. In other passages, it is more difficult whether Irenaeus uses γνωστικοί to denote a specific group of adversaries or as a general term for heretics. Marjanen, “What Is Gnosticism?,” 10–13, argues that Irenaeus step by step expands his concept of the “Gnostics” from a specific category to a general term for most, if not all, of the heresies to which he refers.

⁴³ Michael Allen Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism”: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 37–41, enumerates the *Elenchos*, Epiphanius, and Tertullian as users of the term “Gnostics,” while noticing that both Clement and Origen seem to avoid using this term as a heresiological label. Marjanen, “What Is Gnosticism?,” 13–24, discusses the use of the term by Clement, Tertullian, by the author of the *Elenchos*, and by Epiphanius, noting especially that their allegations of libertine sexual practices among the “Gnostics” have influenced later conceptions.

⁴⁴ Adolph Harnack, *History of Dogma*, 3rd ed., Theological Translation Library 2 (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1901), 226–28, 237, 252–62.

⁴⁵ The noun “Gnosticism” is generally recognized as coined by Henry More, *An Exposition of the Seven Epistles to the Seven Churches Together with a Brief Discourse of Idolatry, with Application to the Church of Rome* (London: James Flesher, 1669), 99, who used it to designate the heresy described in Rev 2:18–29: “...thereby she seduced the servants of Christ to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to Idols, which is a chief point of that which was called *Gnosticisme*. And the truth of the supposed History here we do in no

by a lack of knowledge, (2) the conviction that this knowledge can only be expressed in mythological form, (3) the idea that lower spiritual beings have emanated from higher ones in a history of devolution, (4) a radical dualism between the absolutely transcendent supreme God and a material world created by ignorant lower beings that were emanated from this supreme God, (5) a concept of the human spirit as a portion of divine substance imprisoned in a soul and a material body created by a questionable creator-god, (6) a view of the enlightened few as spiritual beings superior to the rest of humanity, engaged in a rebellion against the creator, and free from the yoke of moral law, and (7) a complete lack of any concept of original sin, atonement on the cross, or resurrection of the human body.⁴⁶ Similar lists of criteria are later used by Kurt Rudolph, Christoph Marksches, Birger Pearson, and Barbara Aland.⁴⁷

By now, the criticism raised against the concepts of “Gnostics” and “Gnosticism” is well known. Michael A. Williams relates the factors commonly used when modern scholars define these concepts to a selection of the ancient literature it supposedly describes, and found surprisingly little overlap: There is no systematic program of “inverse exegesis” of the myths of others.⁴⁸ The notion of a creative agent inferior to the highest God does not necessitate a rejection of the material world as such.⁴⁹ The diverse reflections on human

wise deny.” (The italics are of the original.) Cf. King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, 7; Marjanen, “What Is Gnosticism?,” 1–2; Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 9.

⁴⁶ Jonas’s criteria are variously expressed in various sources; this is a combined summary of Hans Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion: The Message of the Alien God and the Beginnings of Christianity* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1963), 42–47, and Hans Jonas, “Delimitation of the Gnostic Phenomenon – Typological and Historical,” in *The Origins of Gnosticism: Colloquium of Messina 13–18 April 1966*, ed. Ugo Bianchi (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 90–108. Cf. Marjanen, “Gnosticism,” 205–7.

⁴⁷ Kurt Rudolph, *Die Gnosis: Wesen und Geschichte einer spätantiken Religion* (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1977), 64–67; Christoph Marksches, *Gnosis: An Introduction* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 16–17; Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 12–14; Barbara Aland, “Was ist Gnosis? Wie wurde sie überwunden? Versuch einer Kurzdefinition,” in *Was ist Gnosis? Studien zum frühen Christentum, zu Marcion und zur kaiserzeitlichen Philosophie*, WUNT 239 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 241–55, here 244–46. These definitions do not necessarily define the same category, as some lists are more inclusive than others. Rudolph, especially, is criticized by Marjanen, “What Is Gnosticism?,” 50–52, for wanting to include so much variety that his “Gnosticism” begins to become a meaningless concept.

⁴⁸ Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism,”* 76–79, 94–95.

⁴⁹ Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism,”* 113–15. The author expands on this particular theme in Michael Allen Williams, “A Life Full of Meaning and Purpose: Demiurgical Myths and Social Implications,” in *Beyond the Gnostic Gospels: Studies Building on the Work of Elaine Pagels*, eds. Eduard Iricinschi et al., Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 82 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 19–59, here 21–33.

origin do not indicate a “hatred” of the physical body.⁵⁰ The soteriological determinism that is exhibited in some of these texts is not a common trait.⁵¹ And the wide range of attested attitudes towards sexuality – including asceticism, monogamous marriage, and a sexual libertinism that is based on a decidedly positive view of the human body – can in no way be described as “either asceticism or libertinism.”⁵² In his conclusions, Williams finds the concept of “Gnosticism” to add nothing of value to the understanding of this body of literature.⁵³ Similarly, Karen King evaluates the various ways in which “Gnosticism” has been defined by modern scholars, and concludes that the ancient religious entity they purport to describe never existed. The category, she argues, has simply been used to define a normative Christianity, whereby versions of Christianity that have been deemed to be insufficiently Jewish, contaminated by foreign ideas, or simply deviating beyond the acceptable boundaries have been designated “Gnostic,” as a modern equivalent to “heretic” that has proven to be more acceptable to scholars.⁵⁴

As can be expected, the response to the criticism has been varied. Some scholars have attempted to defend some version of the traditional concept of “Gnosticism.”⁵⁵ Some have preferred to repurpose the term to denote a small-

⁵⁰ Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism,”* 136–38. Cf. Karen King’s observations that some “Gnostic” texts promote healing and exorcism as primary to Christian practice and mission in Karen L. King, “Rethinking the Diversity of Ancient Christianity: Responding to Suffering and Persecution,” in *Beyond the Gnostic Gospels: Studies Building on the Work of Elaine Pagels*, eds. Eduard Iricinschi et al., Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 82 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 60–78, here 61–62.

⁵¹ Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism,”* 211–12.

⁵² Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism,”* 160–62, 187–88. Karen King makes the same argument in King, “Rethinking the Diversity,” 62–63.

⁵³ Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism,”* 260–66. Cf. Williams, “On Ancient ‘Gnosticism’ as a Problematic Category”, where this conclusion is reiterated.

⁵⁴ King, *What Is Gnosticism?*, 1–4, 30–33, 54, 152–53, 226–28.

⁵⁵ Marvin W. Meyer, “Gnosticism, Gnostics and *The Gnostic Bible*,” in *The Gnostic Bible*, eds. Willis Barnstone and Marvin W. Meyer (Boston: Shambhala, 2003), 1–19, here 16–17; Birger A. Pearson, “Gnosticism as a Religion,” in *Was There a Gnostic Religion?*, ed. Antti Marjanen, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 87 (Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2005), 81–101; Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 8–14; Marjanen, “Gnosticism,” 210–11; Roelof van den Broek, *Gnostic Religion in Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1–12; Carl B. Smith, “Post-Bauer Scholarship on Gnosticism(s): The Current State of Our ‘Knowledge,’” in *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Early Christian Contexts: Reconsidering the Bauer Thesis*, ed. Paul A. Hartog (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2015), 60–88; April D. DeConick, *The Gnostic New Age: How a Countercultural Spirituality Revolutionized Religion from Antiquity to Today* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016), 11–12; Christopher M. Tuckett, “Principles of Gnostic Exegesis,” in *Gospels and Gospel Traditions in the Second Century: Experiments in Reception*, eds. Joseph Verheyden, Tobias Nicklas, and Jens Schröter, BZNW 235 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2018), 277–309, here 277–78; Logan, “The Johannine Literature and the Gnostics,” 171–73. Michael Kaler, *Flora Tells a Story: The*

er, more well-defined category, otherwise designated “Sethianism.”⁵⁶ Others have opted to view these texts and teachers in a larger and more general perspective, in view not only of texts deemed to have a similar dogmatic agenda, but also of a wider range of roughly contemporary Christian and non-Christian literature.⁵⁷ This latter approach, which enables similarities and differences other than dogmatic and ideological ones to become visible, is the approach that will be followed in this study. Whereas “Gnosticism” may be used in order to discuss contributions of other scholars, the present analysis will not be dependent on any particular definition of this concept, on the historical existence of any “Gnostic” faction, or on Heracleon’s purported relation to any such group.

II. “Valentinians” and “Valentinianism”

As they refer to the students and later followers of an individual teacher, the concepts of “Valentinians” and “Valentinianism” are considerably more well-defined than “Gnostics” and “Gnosticism.”⁵⁸ The presentations of certain

Apocalypse of Paul and Its Contexts (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008), 62–64, argues that the category of “Gnosticism” is useful only as a “literary and theological designation for several varieties of early Christian mystical literature,” and stresses that the idea of a large, organized religious movement is no longer sustainable. Similarly, Mark Edwards, “The Gnostic Myth,” in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, eds. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 137–50, argues that “Gnosticism” is still useful to describe a mode of theological discourse, but cannot be thought of as a system of doctrines or a sect.

⁵⁶ David Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 19–51; Dylan M. Burns, “Providence, Creation, and Gnosticism According to the Gnostics,” *JCS* 24.1 (2016): 55–79, here 55–58; Austin Busch, “Characterizing Gnostic Scriptural Interpretation,” *ZAC* 21.2 (2017): 243–71, here 243–45. These particular studies build on Bentley Layton, “Prolegomena to the Study of Ancient Gnosticism,” in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 334–50. In this context, one might also mention Tuomas Rasimus, *Paradise Reconsidered in Gnostic Mythmaking: Rethinking Sethianism in Light of the Ophite Evidence*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 68 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 41–62, who argues that Sethian and Ophite ideas have a large overlap, and should be considered in the context of one another.

⁵⁷ Michel R. Desjardins, “Rethinking the Study of Gnosticism,” *Religion & Theology* 12.3–4 (2005): 370–84, here 377–80; Nicola Denzey Lewis, *Cosmology and Fate in Gnosticism and Graeco-Roman Antiquity: Under Pitiless Skies* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 26–28; Ismo Dunderberg, *Gnostic Morality Revisited*, WUNT 347 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 5–10; Hugo Lundhaug and Lance Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 97 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 56–73.

⁵⁸ It is worth noting that Michael A. Williams, “Was There a Gnostic Religion? Strategies for a Clearer Analysis,” in *Was There a Gnostic Religion?*, ed. Antti Marjanen, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 87 (Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2005), 55–79, here 60–62, 68–69, argues that the categories of “Sethianism” and “Valentinianism” are

individuals in the heresiological literature as associated with Valentinus and his students can be used to reconstruct a network of social connections, within which certain ideas associated with these individuals may have circulated. There is, however, no need to presume that these “Valentinians” self-identified as anything more specific than “Christians” or viewed themselves as being in opposition to a more standard version of Christianity.⁵⁹ While some of them may have constituted the dominant circle within their Christian community, others may have existed – with or without conflict – in communities where other interests set the tone.⁶⁰ In the absence of a central regulating force, there may never have been any standard version of their ideas, except for what they shared with other Christians, and most of their writings may have been difficult to trace back to any specific authors.⁶¹ Even ancient sources exhibit considerable difficulties in distinguishing “Valentinians” from other second-century Christians.⁶²

discrete clusters of sources and traditions that ought to be kept when the concept of “Gnosticism” is abandoned. Ismo Dunderberg, “Recognizing the Valentinians – Now and Then,” in *The Other Side: Apocryphal Perspectives on Ancient Christian “Orthodoxies,”* eds. Tobias Nicklas et al., NTOA/SUNT 117 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017), 39–53, here 40–41, holds that “Valentinianism” will probably stand the test of critical inquiry better than “Gnosticism.”

⁵⁹ Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 35.6, concedes that the “heretics” call themselves *χριστιανοί* (“Christians”), but argues that it is more appropriate to name them after their human founders. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.15.2, admits that the “Valentinians” seek to be recognized by Irenaeus’s Christian community, as they hold similar beliefs. Cf. Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field*, 18–19; Judith Lieu, *Marcion and the Making of a Heretic: God and Scripture in the Second Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 20–22.

⁶⁰ Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism,”* 23, 31–43; Ismo Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism: Myth, Lifestyle, and Society in the School of Valentinus* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 2–10.

⁶¹ Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed*, 13–22. Alexander Kocar, “The Ethics of Higher and Lower Levels of Salvation in the *Excerpts from Theodotus* and the *Tripartite Tractate*,” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Marksches and Einar Thomassen, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 205–38, here 206 n. 4, emphasizes that the material he is studying is only one strand of “Valentinian” theology among many, and is not representative of Heracleon’s views. In addition, the distinction between eastern and western branches of “Valentinianism” presented in the *Elenchos*, 6.35.1–7, is probably a heresiological construct. See Jean-Daniel Dubois, “La sotériologie valentinienne du *Traité tripartite* (NH I,5),” in *Les textes de Nag Hammadi et le problème de leur classification: Actes du colloque tenu à Québec du 15 au 19 septembre 1993*, eds. Louis Painchaud and Anne Pasquier, Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi: Études 3 (Québec: Université Laval, 1995), 221–32; Joel Kalvesmaki, “Italian versus Eastern Valentinianism?,” *VC* 62.1 (2008): 79–89.

⁶² Dunderberg, “Recognizing the Valentinians,” 39–40. The distinction might have been more tangible in the third and fourth centuries, as argued by Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 119; PHEME PERKINS, “Valentinians and the Christian Canon,” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*,

Since the writings of Valentinus are even more fragmentarily preserved than those of Heracleon,⁶³ our main source to any common “Valentinian” mythology is Irenaeus’s heresiological treatise.⁶⁴ He describes a spiritual realm, the πλήρωμα (“Fullness”), populated by thirty divine beings, αἰῶνες (“aeons”), ordered in pairs of males and females. The youngest of the females, Wisdom, was seized by a desire to know the highest divinity. When this caused unrest in the divine world, Christ removed this desire from Wisdom and placed it outside the Fullness, where it formed the divine being Achamoth. When Achamoth repented, she was divided in two parts, consisting of material (ὕλικός) and animated (ψυχικός) substance.⁶⁵ Out of the latter, Achamoth formed the δημιουργός (“Maker”),⁶⁶ who created the material world. When the Maker created human beings, Achamoth gave some of them a πνευματικός (“spiritual”) seed, which is why there are three distinct human natures: material, animated, and spiritual, as Irenaeus explains:⁶⁷

eds. Christoph Marksches and Einar Thomassen, *Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies* 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 371–99, here 371–73.

⁶³ Clement refers to Valentinus’s writings six times in Clement, *Strom.* 2.8/36.2–4, 2.20/114.3–6, 3.7/59.3, 4.13/89.1–3, 4.13/89.6–90.1, and 6.5/52.3–53.1, and three references are available in the *Elenchos* 6.37.7, 6.42.2, and 10.13.4. See Christoph Marksches, *Valentinus Gnosticus? Untersuchungen zur valentinianischen Gnosis mit einem Kommentar zu den Fragmenten Valentins*, WUNT 65 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992).

⁶⁴ The Tripartite Tractate is probably a better source to many of the views described by Irenaeus, but does not present itself as representative or normative for a “Valentinian” movement. Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed*, attempts to circumvent this problem by constructing a pure, Eastern “Valentinianism” from the Tripartite Tractate and Clement’s *Excerpts from Theodotus*, from which the Western form – to which he associates Heracleon – was derived, but his concepts of Eastern and Western “Valentinianism” are still based on heresiological sources. Tite, *Valentinian Ethics and Paraenetic Discourse*, 12–13, finds that he forces his material into an overly coherent system.

⁶⁵ Since “psychic” has other connotations, ψυχικός is not straightforward to translate into English. Since the basic meaning is “to be endowed with a soul,” we take the detour through the Latin *anima* (“air,” “breath,” or “soul”) and *animare* (“to blow” or “to give life”) and use “animated” in the sense of having been given a soul. Cf. Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 116; Ismo Dunderberg, “Valentinian Theories on Classes of Humankind,” in *Gnostic Morality Revisited*, WUNT 347 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 137–48, here 137 n. 2; Jean-Daniel Dubois, “Once Again, the Valentinian Expression ‘Saved by Nature,’” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Marksches and Einar Thomassen, *Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies* 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 193–204, here 193.

⁶⁶ Although the term δημιουργός was used of any skilled workman or craftsman, it is frequently transcribed as “demiurge” in studies of “Gnosticism” or “Valentinianism.” Since Origen also uses the term in the positive sense of “Creator,” and since Heracleon’s understanding of the δημιουργός is an open question, this study uses the more neutral translation “Maker.”

⁶⁷ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.1–7. Cf. Michel R. Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, SBL Dissertation Series 108 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 12–16; Rudolph, *Die Gnosis*, 342–45.

They conceive of three kinds of humans, spiritual (πνευματικός), earthly (χοϊκός), and animated (ψυχικός), born just as Cain, Abel, and Seth. The three natures are in accordance with them, no longer considered as one, but as a category. The earthly one will end up in destruction. The animated one, if he makes the better choice, will come to rest in the intermediate realm, but if he makes the worse choice, will also end up in destruction. The spiritual ones, whom Achamoth has been sowing in righteous souls from then until now, are later – after being brought up and taught there, since they are sent out as infants – when they are deemed worthy of maturity, assigned as brides to the angels of the Savior, they teach, while their souls by necessity come to rest with the Maker in the intermediate realm for ever.⁶⁸

According to this scheme, the Savior was sent to remind the spiritual humans of their true nature and collect them to the Fullness, while animated humans will reach an intermediary realm (μεσότης), together with the Maker, and the material ones will perish.⁶⁹

The difficulty that this description is located in a heresiological source should neither be ignored nor downplayed.⁷⁰ Karen King argues that the two main insights instigated by the discovery of the Nag Hammadi literature is that early Christianity was more diverse and dynamic than previously known, and that the portraits given by ancient heresiologists are inaccurate and misleading, not least by overplaying differences and erasing similarities between themselves and the “heretics” they describe.⁷¹ David W. Jorgensen maintains that the contrast Irenaeus posits between the imaginative eisegesis of the

⁶⁸ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.7.5 (SC 264, 110.753–112.769): Ἀνθρώπων δὲ τρία γένη ὑφίστανται, πνευματικόν, χοϊκόν, ψυχικόν, καθὼς ἐγένοντο Κάϊν, Ἀβελ, Σήθ· καὶ ἐκ τούτων τὰς τρεῖς φύσεις, οὐκέτι καθ’ ἓν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ γένος. Καὶ τὸ μὲν χοϊκόν εἰς φθορὰν χωρεῖν· καὶ τὸ ψυχικόν, ἐὰν τὰ βελτίονα ἔλθῃται, ἐν τῷ τῆς Μεσότητος τόπῳ ἀναπαύσεσθαι, ἐὰν δὲ τὰ χεῖρω, χωρήσειν καὶ αὐτὸ πρὸς τὰ ὅμοια· τὰ δὲ πνευματικά, ἃ ἂν κατασπείρῃ ἡ Ἀχαμὼθ ἔκτοτε ἕως τοῦ νῦν δικαίαις ψυχαῖς, παιδευθέντα ἐνθάδε καὶ ἐκτραφέντα, διὰ τὸ νήπια ἐκπεπέμφθαι, ὕστερον τελειότητος ἀξιοθέντα, νύμφας ἀποδοθήσεσθαι τοῖς τοῦ Σωτῆρος Ἀγγέλοις δογματίζουσι, τῶν ψυχῶν αὐτῶν ἐν Μεσότητι κατ’ ἀνάγκην μετὰ τοῦ Δημιουργοῦ ἀναπαυσαμένων εἰς τὸ παντελές.

⁶⁹ Traditionally, this view has been regarded as implying complete moral indifference, but more recent studies have questioned this notion in favor of more complex relations between eschatology and morality. See Einar Thomassen, “Saved by Nature? The Question of Human Races and Soteriological Determinism in Valentinianism,” in *Zugänge zur Gnosis*, eds. Christoph Markschies and Johannes van Oort, *Patristic Studies* 12 (Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 129–50; Dunderberg, “Valentinian Theories”; Linjamaa, *The Ethics of The Tripartite Tractate*; Kocar, “The Ethics of Higher and Lower Levels of Salvation”; Ismo Dunderberg, “Paul and Valentinian Morality,” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Markschies and Einar Thomassen, *Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies* 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 434–56.

⁷⁰ Pace Desjardins, “The Sources for Valentinian Gnosticism,” 345, who claims that since we have no reason to distrust Irenaeus’s ability to understand the “Valentinian” position, his description should be considered trustworthy.

⁷¹ King, “Rethinking the Diversity,” 60–61.

“Valentinians” and his own exegetical “rule of truth” is nothing more than a rhetorical invention.⁷² Dunderberg argues that although Irenaeus had access to “Valentinian” writings, his rhetoric does not shy away from any of the dirty tricks used in ancient polemics, and his summaries may misrepresent the material to which he had access.⁷³ Jaap Mansfeld ingeniously describes Irenaeus’s presentation of the views of his adversaries as a *cento* of *centos*. A *cento* was an ancient genre in which entire lines were lifted verbatim from classical works and rearranged to tell entirely different stories. Irenaeus argues that this is what the heretics are doing to the New Testament, and Mansfeld claims that Irenaeus himself performs something similar when he arranges the words of his adversaries to present a coherent development.⁷⁴

Geoffrey S. Smith has performed an extensive analysis of a passage where Irenaeus describes how some followers of Ptolemy view God’s cognition (ἐννοια) and will (θέλημα) as factors in creation.⁷⁵ Smith compares Irenaeus’s description with parallels in the Gospel of Truth, the Tripartite Tractate, A Valentinian Exposition, and Clement’s *Excerpts from Theodotus*, and concludes that Irenaeus’s account is a caricature of a “Valentinian” position that “was just not scandalous enough to contribute in a meaningful way to a heresiological project.”⁷⁶ Smith does not believe that Irenaeus has produced this caricature himself, only that he repeats the words of an earlier heresiologist, but the problem illustrates the difficulties of trusting Irenaeus’s accounts.⁷⁷

It is also difficult to know which specific group Irenaeus is describing in any particular passage.⁷⁸ Einar Thomassen, who has analyzed how Irenaeus refers to his opponents in this context, argues that Valentinus’s name is used to denote two different groups of opponents: Sometimes, Irenaeus is referring to a large category, including Valentinus himself and all who derive their teachings from his. Other times, he is speaking of a more specific group of teachers, some of whom he has personally encountered in Gaul, and to whom Valentinus and his contemporaries are distant figures of the past. In his effort

⁷² Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field*, 31–35, 84.

⁷³ Dunderberg, “Recongnizing the Valentinians,” 42–45.

⁷⁴ Jaap Mansfeld, *Heresiography in Context: Hippolytus’ Elenchos As a Source for Greek Philosophy* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 56, 153–60.

⁷⁵ Geoffrey S. Smith, “Irenaeus, the Will of God, and Anti-Valentinian Polemics: A Closer Look at *Against the Heresies* 1.12.1,” in *Beyond the Gnostic Gospels: Studies Building on the Work of Elaine Pagels*, eds. Eduard Iricinschi et al., Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 82 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 93–123.

⁷⁶ Smith, “Irenaeus,” 117.

⁷⁷ Smith, “Irenaeus,” 118–23.

⁷⁸ Cf. Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 197–99, who argues against the common view that Irenaeus primarily describes the system of Ptolemy. Similar objections are offered by Gerd Lüdemann, “The History of Earliest Christianity in Rome,” *Journal of Higher Criticism* 2 (1995): 112–41.

to denounce his adversaries, Irenaeus falls into a contradiction where he simultaneously presumes that a system he has found in one of his sources is the “Valentinian” doctrine that is valid for all of them, and complains that different “Valentinians” are never able to agree with one another.⁷⁹ This inconsistency, Thomassen concludes, does not inspire trust in Irenaeus’s descriptions:

The heresiologists’ attributions of specific systems to individual authors and groups are motivated by their polemical (and inconsistent) construction of heresy as both “a” false doctrine and as something essentially multiform and inconsistent. For these reasons such attributions are, as a general rule, not trustworthy.⁸⁰

None of the “heretical” systems presented by Irenaeus can therefore be presumed to accurately describe Heracleon’s actual views.⁸¹

Any attempt to use Irenaeus’s descriptions to illuminate other “Valentinian” texts gives rise to a plethora of further questions: Do the words πλήρωμα and αἰὼν always refer to the spiritual realm and the thirty divine beings, rather than their more ordinary meanings? Should the word δημιουργός (“Maker”) always be read in view of Irenaeus’s description rather than compared to the concept of a δημιουργός in Plato’s *Timaeus*? Does the notion that some people are πνευματικοί (“spiritual”) always imply the existence of inferior categories, when Paul seems to be able to use the same adjective in an unrelated sense?⁸² Can Ptolemy be presumed to subscribe to the version of soteriological determinism described in the Tripartite Tractate, regardless of whether he expresses such a belief or not? How much dogmatic conformance can we expect from the students and “grand students” of a particular teacher, who may also have had additional teachers, and innovated beyond what they

⁷⁹ Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed*, 13–22; cf. Christoph Marksches, “Individuality in Some Gnostic Authors: With a Few Remarks on the Interpretation of Ptolemaeus, Epistula ad Floram,” *ZAC* 15.3 (2011): 411–30, here 413–14, who argues that the main system in Irenaeus’s description belongs to the generation after Ptolemy and Heracleon – that is, two generations after Valentinus himself. Irenaeus’s own strategy of responding to the “Valentinians” by presenting a “canon of truth” (κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας in Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.9.4) that summarizes his Christian tradition into a formula that must, in Irenaeus’s view, be used as an interpretive key to the Christian scriptures may, as suggested by Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 103–20, have led him to presume that there must be a similar formula that is able to encapsulate the “Valentinian” ideas.

⁸⁰ Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed*, 22.

⁸¹ If, as argued by Behr, *Irenaeus of Lyons*, 103–4, Irenaeus had access to no other “Valentinian” texts than those whose contents he reports in *Haer.* 1.1–9, it is no great mystery why he regarded the views of those teachers with whom he spoke in Gaul to be representative for all “Valentinians.” There is no need for modern scholarship, however, to make the same assumption.

⁸² In 1 Cor 2:6–3:3, Paul seems to be using πνευματικοί (“spiritual ones”) to refer to a category of mature Christian believers whose understanding may be assisted by the divine Spirit, and who are distinguished from new Christians, “infants in Christ.”

were taught? How much accuracy do we expect from the polemical, antagonistic, and biased description given by Irenaeus? There is no shortage of attempts to bridge the differences between Irenaeus's "Valentinians" and the apparent reasoning of "Valentinian" texts by proposing certain variations of the system Irenaeus describes,⁸³ but these efforts still all too often presume that the heresiological sources accurately describe one version of the system they are studying.⁸⁴

When Christoph Marksches reviews available material from Ptolemy, another second-century "Valentinian" teacher, he concludes that the only reliable source for a reconstruction of Ptolemy's teachings is the Epistle to Flora, which is known from Epiphanius.⁸⁵ Marksches finds the argument for an identification of the "Valentinian" Ptolemy and the Ptolemy mentioned by Justin Martyr (ca. 100–165 CE) to be unconvincing, partly because we know at least fourteen different Ptolemies from this era.⁸⁶ In addition, he finds that the identification of Ptolemy as author of an interpretation of the Johannine

⁸³ Walther von Loewenich, *Das Johannes-Verständnis im zweiten Jahrhundert*, BZNW 13 (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1932), 83–84, suggests that Heracleon's "exegetical conscience" compelled him to break free from the dogmatic views described by Irenaeus. Rudolph, *Die Gnosis*, 341–44, maintains that the "Valentinians" welcomed free thought and reshaping of their inherited tradition, but still argues that the main characteristics of Irenaeus's description are representative for all "Valentinians." Marksches, "Individuality in Some Gnostic Authors," 426–27, suggests that some "Valentinians" chose to emphasize the individuality of various heavenly entities, while others de-individualized them in order to put more emphasis on their monotheism. Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 134–38, and "Valentinian Theories," argues that some "Valentinians" dealt with two "natures" rather than three. He finds it unlikely that "Valentinians" were uninterested in the moral improvements of their adherents, and suggests that their distinction between spiritual and animated people is more similar to Philo's distinction between "the perfect wise man" and people still in need of making progress. Thomassen, "Saved by Nature?," proposes that Heracleon, specifically, had a less strict view, where the animated ones may eventually be transformed into spiritual ones. Such a teaching would also be easier to imagine being put into sociological practice, Thomassen argues. Linjamaa, *The Ethics of The Tripartite Tractate*, 119–46, uses the concept of free will (αὐτεξούσια) to distinguish between two different "Valentinian" categories: on the one hand those described by Irenaeus and in Clement's *Excerpta ex Theodoto*, who maintained that only the middle category possessed freedom of will, while the materials were predetermined to be lost, and the spirituals to be saved; and on the other hand those who were behind the Tripartite Tractate and are described in Origen, *First Principles*, who rejected free will and argued that human choices were determined by their disposition or character (προαίρεσις).

⁸⁴ For instance, when Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 141–44, argues that Heracleon views all Christians as spiritual and all Jews as animated – how is Irenaeus's description still relevant for understanding Heracleon's theology?

⁸⁵ Christoph Marksches, "New Research on Ptolemaeus Gnosticus," ZAC 4.2 (2000): 225–54, here 252. Cf. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 33.3.1–33.7.10.

⁸⁶ Marksches, "New Research on Ptolemaeus Gnosticus," 246–49. Cf. Justin Martyr, 2 *Apol.* 2.1–6 *apud* Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.17.

prologue quoted by Irenaeus does not go back to Irenaeus himself, but only to a Latin translation from the fourth century.⁸⁷ Marksches concludes that the complex system described by Irenaeus reflects the views of neither Valentinus nor Ptolemy, but must be the result of later developments among their followers.⁸⁸ He does not claim that the heresiologists are intentionally misleading in the information they give about Ptolemy and Valentinus – he thinks they are presenting “Valentinianism” to the best of their limited knowledge – but still warns against taking the heresiologists’ descriptions for granted when studying the early “Valentinians.” And this is to our advantage, Marksches argues, as the discrepancy will allow us to discern a historical development from the thinking of Valentinus and Ptolemy, to the later version described by Irenaeus.⁸⁹

In their latest reflections on the “Valentinians,” Marksches and Thomassen carefully describe a category largely derived from the descriptions of outsiders,⁹⁰ hail recent advances in the understanding of individual figures,⁹¹ rightly warn against taking Irenaeus’s account too much at face value,⁹² and

⁸⁷ The attribution *et Ptolemaeus quidem ita* is present in the Latin translation, but not in the Greek excerpts provided by Epiphanius, *Pan.* 31.27.11 (Cf. SC 264, 136–37). Marksches, “New Research on Ptolemaeus Gnosticus,” 249–53, argues convincingly that the attribution should be considered an addition by the Latin translator, and is endorsed by Lewis Ayres, “Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians: Toward a Rethinking of Patristic Exegetical Origins,” *J ECS* 23.2 (2015): 153–87, here 157 n. 11. Cf. Tuomas Rasimus, “Ptolemaeus and the Valentinian Exegesis of John’s Prologue,” in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Tuomas Rasimus, NovTSup 132 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 145–72, here 145, who accepts Ptolemy as author.

⁸⁸ Christoph Marksches, “Die Krise einer philosophischen Bibeltheologie in der Alten Kirche oder: Valentin und die valentinianische Gnosis zwischen philosophischer Bibelin-terpretation und mythologischer Häresie,” in *Gnosis und Manichäismus: Forschungen und Studien zu Texten von Valentin und Mani sowie zu den Bibliotheken von Nag Hammadi und Medinet Madi*, BZNW 72 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 1–37, here 26–29, proposes that the followers of Valentinus altered his teachings in three key ways: they externalized various aspects of Valentinus’s monotheistic concept of God into independent eons; they spiritualized the fall of Adam into a pre-material event; and they replaced the historical Christ-event with spiritual events in the Pleroma.

⁸⁹ Marksches, “New Research on Ptolemaeus Gnosticus,” 226, 250–52.

⁹⁰ Christoph Marksches and Einar Thomassen, “Introduction,” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Marksches and Einar Thomassen, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 1–14, here 1.

⁹¹ Marksches and Thomassen, “Introduction,” 4–5.

⁹² Christoph Marksches, “Grande Notice: Einige einleitende Bemerkungen zur Überlieferung des sogenannten Systems der Schüler des Ptolemaeus Gnosticus,” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Marksches and Einar Thomassen, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 29–87. Marksches rightfully points out several questions regarding Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.1–8, that are in need of further study: The textual transmission of *Against Heresies* is uncertain in both Greek and Latin versions, its genre

appropriately stress the importance of distinguishing between different views of different “Valentinian” adherents.⁹³ Still, they presume that the individuals so described by the heresiologists possessed a doctrinal coherence, a distinct socio-religious identity, and a continuity over time, without trying to discern which parts of this cohesion – as distinct from other Christians at the time – may be heresiological constructions.⁹⁴ At the present state of research, a more ground-up approach is needed, where the individual sources commonly categorized as “Valentinian” are studied one by one, and the question of distinctive cohesion left open, to be demonstrated or dismissed based on the differences and similarities so discovered, rather than taken for granted.

Unlike most previous studies of Heracleon, which despite the difficulties have used the system described by Irenaeus as an interpretive key to Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata*, this study attempts to understand Heracleon’s interpretations without the aid of heresiological descriptions. It is not a given that this approach will get us closer to the truth, but it will at the very least map out a previously uncharted range of possible understandings of Heracleon, thereby illuminating how little we actually know about him. The suitability of this approach should be evaluated based on its ability to make sense of Heracleon’s comments.

III. *The Heterodox and “Those Who Bring in the Natures”*

Just as the concepts of “Gnosticism” and “Valentinianism” must be discussed in order to understand the positions of other scholars, two similar categories are necessary to understand the context in which Origen presents Heracleon’s views. As demonstrated elsewhere, Origen defines, in his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, seven distinct but partly-overlapping categories of exegetical opponents – interpreters of early Christian literature whose views he sets out to refute – two of which are relevant for discussing Heracleon’s views.⁹⁵

and intended audience are not evident, it is unclear which and how many other authors provide Irenaeus with source material, and it is not known whether the theology described should be dated to the 150s or 180s. The question of whether Irenaeus’s description can be used as a key to understand “Valentinian” source material should be placed at the tail end of Markschie’s list.

⁹³ Einar Thomassen, “The Relative Chronology of the Valentinian Systems,” in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Markschie and Einar Thomassen, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 17–28. Thomassen documents significant differences between the mythological systems in different sources and discusses how these may have developed from one to another, but presupposes that all versions are genuine “Valentinian” theologies rather than heresiological misrepresentations.

⁹⁴ Markschie and Thomassen, “Introduction,” 1–2.

⁹⁵ Carl Johan Berglund, “Heracleon and the Seven Categories of Exegetical Opponents in Origen’s *Commentary on the Gospel of John*,” *ZAC* 23.2 (2019): 228–51. The other five categories are “those who stop at the letter” (literalist interpreters), “those who are con-

Origen defines οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι (“the heterodox” or “those with different views”) by their interpretive practice of attributing the Old Testament not to the Father of Christ, but to a different, inferior god, who is ignorant of who is truly the highest power. The clearest reference to this category appears when Origen remarks that they are proven wrong by the first verse in the Gospel of Mark, where John the Baptist is presented as the ἀρχή (“beginning”) of the gospel of Jesus Christ:

This makes me wonder how the heterodox (οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι) can attribute the two testaments to two gods, when they are no less proven wrong even by this statement. For how can John, the man of the Maker (δημιουργός), be the beginning of the gospel if he – as they believe – belongs to the other god, and knows nothing – as they think – of the new deity?⁹⁶

Origen’s reference to the heterodox in this passage presumes that the reader is aware of this category of interpreters who differentiate between the God of the Old Testament and the Father of Christ, and who believe that the Jewish prophets are ignorant of the God who sent Christ. In other passages, he also notes that the same category denounce the Creator (δημιουργός) and “devote themselves to the fabrication of myths.”⁹⁷ The names of Marcion of Sinope (ca. 85–160 CE), Basilides (fl. ca. 120–140 CE) and Valentinus recur as examples of heterodox individuals.⁹⁸ Even though Origen explicitly includes Heracleon’s alleged teacher, Valentinus, in the category, he seems not to be including Heracleon himself, since he consistently takes care to specify whether he is currently opposing οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι or Heracleon. Given Origen’s clearly stated definition, no presumption will be made about the theology of the heterodox beyond what follows naturally from the differentiation between the two gods.

fused on the Father and the Son” (Monarchians), “those who bring in the appearance” (Docetists), “those who defend reincarnation” (believers in the transmigration of souls), and “those of Marcion.”

⁹⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.13/82 (SC 120 bis, 98.17–24): “Ὅθεν θαυμάζειν μοι ἔπεισι, πῶς δυσὶ θεοῖς προσάπτουσιν ἀμφοτέρας τὰς διαθήκας οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι, οὐκ ἔλαττον καὶ ἐκ τούτου τοῦ ῥήτου ἐλεγχόμενοι. Πῶς γὰρ δύναται ἀρχὴ εἶναι τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, ὡς αὐτοὶ οἴονται, ἐτέρου τυγχάνων θεοῦ ὁ Ἰωάννης, ὁ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἀγνοῶν, ὡς νομίζουσι, τὴν καινὴν θεότητα;

⁹⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.28/171, 19.3/12. It is worth noting that Origen uses δημιουργός as a neutral term denoting either the Christian God, creator of heaven and earth, or an inferior creator such as the one described by Irenaeus. Thereby, he illustrates that use of seemingly “heterodox” terms does not necessitate “heterodox” views. Cf. the quotations from Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/102–4 below on pages 114–15, 118.

⁹⁸ This is observed by Alain Le Boulluec, *La notion d’hérésie dans la littérature grecque: II^e–III^e siècles* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1985), 508; Winrich Alfried Löhr, “Gnostic Determinism Reconsidered,” *VC* 46.4 (1992): 381–90, here 385; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 108–11. See Origen, *Hom. Jer.* 10.5, 15.2; *Comm. Matt.* 12.12.

Origen defines οἱ τὰς φύσεις εἰσάγοντες (“those who bring in the natures”) with reference to their characteristic teaching that there are some people who, by nature and original constitution, are spiritual (πνευματικοί), while others are animated (ψυχικοί), or merely earthly (χοϊκοί).⁹⁹ In one of his more revealing mentions of this category, Origen remarks that they support their defining teaching on the notion that God, by hardening the heart of Pharaoh, precluded him from releasing the Israelites (Exod 9:12):

Since some of the heterodox use this – roughly speaking, they also do away with free will by the introduction of natures (φύσεις εἰσάγειν) that perish, unable of being saved, and others that are saved, being incapable of perishing – and say that the Pharaoh has a perishing nature, and because of this was hardened by God, who has mercy on the spiritual ones (τοὺς πνευματικούς), but hardens the earthly ones (τοὺς χοϊκούς), let us see what it is they are saying.¹⁰⁰

This passage reveals that Origen constructs “those who bring in the natures” as a sub-category of the heterodox, and claims that these interpreters teach that the spiritual ones (οἱ πνευματικοί) are saved without any risk of perdition, while the earthly ones (οἱ χοϊκοί) perish with no possibility of salvation. Elsewhere, Origen specifies that the spiritual ones are thought to be uniquely capable of receiving the word of God, and presents “those who bring in the natures” as followers of both Valentinus and of Heracleon himself.¹⁰¹ Even then, he takes care to specify whether it is this category or Heracleon he is refuting, and seems never to use Heracleon’s comments as an example of how “those who bring in the natures” interpret the early Christian literature. No assumptions about the theology of “those who bring in the natures” can be made beyond their defining distinction between three deterministic human natures.¹⁰²

Origen’s two categories are every bit as heresiological as Irenaeus’s descriptions, but precisely defined by two quite specific dogmatic points. Since they are ingrained within our primary source material, they cannot be avoided. We should not, however, make any *a priori* assumptions about Heracleon’s

⁹⁹ These terms are used by Paul, but seemingly not in the senses implied here. In 1 Cor 15:44–49, he distinguishes between the natural (ψυχικός) human body before the resurrection, and the spiritual (πνευματικός) resurrection body, and presents a contrast between the first Adam, who was earthly (χοϊκός), and the second, who is heavenly (ἐπουράνιος).

¹⁰⁰ Origen, *Princ.* 3.1.8 (SC 268, 48.196–203): καὶ ἐπεὶ χρώνται τούτοις τῶν ἑτεροδόξων τινές, σχεδὸν καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸ αὐτεξούσιον ἀναιροῦντες διὰ τὸ φύσεις εἰσάγειν ἀπολλυμένας, ἀνεπιδέκτους τοῦ σώζεσθαι, καὶ ἑτέρας σωζομένας, ἀδυνάτως ἔχουσας πρὸς τὸ ἀπολέσθαι, τὸν τε Φαραὼ φασὶ φύσεως ὄντα ἀπολλυμένης διὰ τοῦτο σκληρύνεσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐλεοῦντος μὲν τοὺς πνευματικούς, σκληρύνοντος δὲ τοὺς χοϊκούς, φέρε ἴδωμεν ὃ τί ποτε καὶ λέγουσι.

¹⁰¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 3.1/8, 20.33/287; *Cels.* 5.61.

¹⁰² Deterministic ideas similar to what Origen describes are expressed in the Tripartite Tractate. For a study of these, see Linjamaa, *The Ethics of The Tripartite Tractate*.

relations to these two categories, but consider Origen's presentations and arguments regarding Heracleon's allegiances, and make our evaluations based on the summaries and verbatim quotations he presents. Heracleon's inclusion in one or both of these categories will not be used as an interpretive key to his comments, but kept as an open question to be discussed in the final chapter.

E. Previous Scholarship

In the following pages, previous scholarship on Heracleon will be described, starting with the groundwork of Alan E. Brooke, continuing with the convergence culminating in the consensus around the understanding of Elaine Pagels, before considering the reorientation attempts by Ansgar Wucherpfenig, Michael Kaler, and Marie-Pierre Bussières, and the resistance offered by Agnès Bastit and Einar Thomassen. The section will be concluded by descriptions of the reevaluations of Valentinus, Basilides, and Marcion offered by Christoph Marksches, Wilfried A. Löhr, and Judith Lieu, with which the present study shares its aim to use more trustworthy sources than heresiological allegations.

I. Groundwork

All modern scholarship on Heracleon owes a debt of gratitude to Alan E. Brooke who, in the late-nineteenth century, correctly identified all passages mentioning Heracleon in the writings of Origen, Clement, and Photius, numbered them from one to fifty-one, and collected them in a handy volume.¹⁰³ In his introduction, Brooke goes through all eight available manuscripts to Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, describes them, dates them, compares them, and places them in a genealogical tree. He demonstrates beyond any doubt that all other manuscripts are dependent on the abovementioned Codex Monacensis, since gaps caused by water damage to this manuscript recur in all the others.¹⁰⁴ Brooke also enumerates the various other passages where Heracleon is mentioned by other early Christian authors, and concludes that he belongs to the late-second century, most probably was active in the 170s, that he wrote commentaries to the Gospels of John and Luke, and that he also made references to the Gospel of Matthew.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ The first to collect extant material from Heracleon was probably John Ernest Grabe, *Spicilegium SS. patrum, ut et hæreticorum, seculi post Christum natum I. II. & III.* (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1698), 80–117. Grabe presents the references from both Clement and Origen in Greek with Latin translations.

¹⁰⁴ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 1–17.

¹⁰⁵ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 31–35.

When interpreting Heracleon's comments, Brooke is unreservedly dependent on heresiological material, and presumes that Heracleon subscribes to a "Valentinian" mythology much like the one described by Irenaeus.¹⁰⁶ Nevertheless, he makes a number of claims that in subsequent scholarship are often repeated as facts: Heracleon's interpretation is determined, he claims, by an attempt to read his own dogmatic system into the Gospel of John, whereby arbitrary characters within the gospel narrative become metaphors for his favorite mythological figures. The Samaritan woman in John 4:1–42, Brooke argues, is taken by Heracleon as a symbol for Wisdom (σοφία) – the fallen αἰὼν, whom Irenaeus describes as causing the creation of the material world, and whom Heracleon never mentions explicitly – which makes the redemption of the spiritual ones (οἱ πνευματικοί) the point of this story. The effortless, pre-determined conversion of the spiritual Samaritans is contrasted, Brooke maintains, with the earthly ones (οἱ χοϊκοί), human beings who, by birth and innermost constitution, share the nature of the devil, full of error and falsehood. Heracleon's favorite figure, Brooke asserts, is the Maker (ὁ δημιουργός) who is represented by a whole array of characters, including John the Baptist, the royal official of John 4:46, and the unnamed judge of John 8:50 – even though Heracleon explicitly argues that the unnamed judge is Moses. The point of all these stories in Heracleon's view, Brooke argues, is to express the precarious situation of the animated ones (οἱ ψυχικοί), who are predestined neither to perdition nor to salvation, and who therefore are in need of the Savior's grace.¹⁰⁷

Brooke's overall description of Heracleon's work is not gracious:

And his [Heracleon's] whole system of metaphorical interpretation is the most arbitrary attempt to read into the Fourth Gospel the details and teaching of the system in which he had been brought up. At the same time, we must remember that, though the application is more arbitrary, the general method is exactly the same as that of Origen himself. Both extract the meaning they desire from the words on which they are commenting by a violent

¹⁰⁶ Three quarters of a century before Brooke, August Neander, *Genetische Entwicklung der vornehmsten gnostischen Systeme* (Berlin: Dümmler, 1818), 143–57, devoted fifteen pages to Heracleon. Neander notes that he was the first to produce a commentary on the Fourth Gospel, remarks that Heracleon's comments sometimes reveal his scholarly education, his religious sense, and his clear mind, and asserts that his claims are often impossible to understand without reference to principles of the Valentinian system. Neander, *Genetische Entwicklung*, 144: "[Herakleon] war der Erste, oder Einer der ersten, der einen Commentar über das Evangelium des Johannes schrieb, von welchem uns durch den Origenes, der bei seiner Exegese besonders auf die Prüfung der Erklärungen Herakleons Rücksicht nahm, bedeutende Fragmente erhalten sind, wichtig sowohl um Herakleons Auslegungsweise als seine eigenthümlichen Lehren kennen zu lernen. In diesen finden wir durchaus die Grundsätze des Valentinianischen Systems, und sie werden dadurch in manchen Fällen noch mehr erläutert, so wie ohne dieselben Herakleons Behauptungen oft nicht verstanden werden können."

¹⁰⁷ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 35–49.

system of metaphorical distortion. But whereas Origen applies his method more consistently, and endeavors to find a meaning which is based on a system formed from the study of the Fourth Gospel as a whole and of other books whose teaching is not alien to that of this Gospel, Heracleon attempts, very often with excessive wildness, to discover in the Gospel a system which has only a superficial and verbal connexion with it.¹⁰⁸

Brooke's characterization of both Heracleon's and Origen's methodologies as primarily "arbitrary" reflects the limited understanding of second- and third-century interpretive strategies in his time.¹⁰⁹ It also allows for the possibility that Brooke has not considered the possible distortion of Heracleon's work inherent in Origen's transmission by means of unrepresentative selection and tendentious presentation. When Brooke admits that the expressions used by Heracleon with regard to the Passion are "surprisingly literal for a Gnostic,"¹¹⁰ that his remarks on the true nature of confession are "of great interest and surprising excellence,"¹¹¹ and that "he is often at his best in those places where Origen complains of his want of spiritual insight and servile adherence to the letter,"¹¹² one might find it surprising that he does not reflect on the accuracy of the ways in which Origen represents Heracleon. As will be argued below, some of the points with which Brooke takes issue may originate not in Heracleon's own words but in Origen's reception; Origen and Brooke may both have presumed that Heracleon had the views described in heresiological works such as Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*.

II. Convergence

Brooke's evaluations are often repeated in subsequent scholarship. Presuming that Heracleon subscribes to a "Gnostic" cosmology including the three human natures,¹¹³ Eugène de Faye argues that he views the Fall of Adam as equivalent to becoming entangled in physical reality,¹¹⁴ and describes him as primarily interested in the redemption of the spiritual ones.¹¹⁵ De Faye concludes that Heracleon has modified Valentinus's system to be strictly monotheistic, that he does not reject the Old Testament altogether, and that he has accepted the physical death of Jesus.¹¹⁶ Werner Foerster asserts that all of

¹⁰⁸ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 48.

¹⁰⁹ It is indeed possible that no sufficient understanding of Origen's methodology was reached before the contributions by Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis*, PTS 28 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986); and Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*.

¹¹⁰ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 46.

¹¹¹ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 47, referring to Clement, *Strom.* 4.9/70.

¹¹² Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 48.

¹¹³ de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 75–102.

¹¹⁴ de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 93.

¹¹⁵ de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 98.

¹¹⁶ de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 101.

Origen's references are correct representations of Heracleon's views, goes through them in some detail, and concludes that Heracleon basically conforms to the "Valentinian" system described by Irenaeus, if not in all terminological details.¹¹⁷ Walther von Loewenich commends Heracleon for using the virtues of a good exegete to actually interpret the Fourth Gospel, rather than simply seeking proof for his theological system, but characterizes his interpretation as driven by a "Gnostic" dogmatic bias and a perceived duty to allegorize.¹¹⁸

François Sagnard argues that Heracleon views the world as divided into three levels: the Fullness, the Intermediary realm, and the physical reality, into which the eternal Word has descended in order to recoup the fallen spiritual nature – represented by the Samaritan woman – from the material world. He concludes that Heracleon's interpretations illustrate the "Valentinian" theology described by Irenaeus.¹¹⁹ Jean Mouson argues that Heracleon's comments on John 1:15–34 are more literalistic than allegorical, but that Heracleon makes use of the smallest clues available to support his dualistic ontology, where any element in the text can be interpreted either in the physical or in the spiritual realm. Mouson concludes that Heracleon views the Baptist as an animated person, not a spiritual one.¹²⁰ Somewhat more radically, Hans-Joachim Schoeps curtly rejects Heracleon as no better than a Gentile.¹²¹

Yvonne Janssens reconstructs Heracleon's writing based on the assumption that all of Origen's references are equivalent to verbatim quotations, and discusses his theological system in some detail.¹²² Using a "Gnostic" frame of reference, she maintains that he views the created world as the kingdom of the devil, and matter as something evil.¹²³ The idea of the Fall is replaced by the existence of the Maker, she argues.¹²⁴ Janssens applauds the attentive scrutiny and philological precision of Heracleon's exegesis, but laments his allegorical imagination.¹²⁵ Manlio Simonetti acknowledges the difficulty of reconstructing Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* from Origen's references, but argues that

¹¹⁷ Foerster, *Von Valentin zu Herakleon*, 3–44, 67–81.

¹¹⁸ Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 82–95.

¹¹⁹ François Sagnard, *La gnose valentinienne et le témoignage de saint Irénée*, Études de philosophie médiévale 36 (Paris: Vrin, 1947), 480–520.

¹²⁰ Jean Mouson, "Jean-Baptiste dans les fragments d'Héracléon," *ETL* 30.2–3 (1954): 301–22.

¹²¹ Hans-Joachim Schoeps, "Zur Standortbestimmung der Gnosis," *TLZ* 81 (1956): 413–22, here 420: "Auch wenn sich synkretistische Tendenzen zeigen lassen, daß gewisse Gnostiker (z. B. Ptolemäus oder Herakleon) ihre Ideen in die Bibel hineininterpretiert haben, bleibt darum doch bestehen: *Gnosis ist nie etwas anderes als pagane Gnosis*." (Emphasis original.)

¹²² Janssens, "Héracléon."

¹²³ Janssens, "Héracléon," 278–79.

¹²⁴ Janssens, "Héracléon," 287.

¹²⁵ Janssens, "Héracléon," 296–99.

it is a comprehensive commentary rather than a collection of *scholia* written in the margins of a Gospel manuscript.¹²⁶ He finds Origen's presentation to be based on actual interaction with Heracleon's comments, and his responses to use the scholarly standard of Alexandrian philology.¹²⁷ He concludes that Origen and Heracleon apply the same formal exegetical procedure, and that their differing conclusions are due to their fundamental disagreement on a few doctrinal points.¹²⁸

In sharp contrast to the scholarship trend, Hermann Langerbeck questions Heracleon's theological "Valentinianism." Within a study of the anthropology of Alexandrian "Gnosis," Langerbeck analyzes Heracleon's comments on John 8:44 and does not find the ideology he expects.¹²⁹ He concludes that Heracleon does not subscribe to the theory of the three human natures at all, but that Origen reads this system, which belongs with later "Gnostics," into Heracleon's comments.¹³⁰ Unfortunately, Langerbeck's doubts did not lead to a general reevaluation of Brooke's assumptions.

III. Consensus

Few scholars have done more for the serious consideration of alternative early Christian voices than Elaine H. Pagels. Her 1979 book, *The Gnostic Gospels*, managed to raise awareness of this literature both among scholars and in the general public,¹³¹ and her 1973 monograph *The Johannine Gospel in Gnostic Exegesis* is probably the most influential contribution to the study of Heracleon to date.¹³² At the time of her writing, the concept of "Gnosticism" was not yet under criticism, and it was still an open question whether the Fourth

¹²⁶ Manlio Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," *VetChr* 3 (1966): 111–41, here 111–18; Manlio Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene (continuazione e fine)," *VetChr* 4 (1967): 23–64.

¹²⁷ Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 113–14, 121.

¹²⁸ Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 135.

¹²⁹ Langerbeck, "Anthropologie," 67–72.

¹³⁰ Langerbeck, "Anthropologie," 69–70: "Mir scheint, wir dürfen es durchaus, wenn wir voraussetzen, daß Origenes seine Kenntnis des gnostischen 'System' gar nicht primär aus Heracleon schöpft. In der schon generationenalten Polemik der Kirche gegen 'die Gnostiker' hatten sich begreiflicherweise bestimmte loci communes herausgebildet, die in jeder einzelnen Auseinandersetzung einfach vorausgesetzt werden. Dazu gehört die These, daß die Gnostiker lehren, die Seelen seine 'naturaliter salvandae vel periturae' die *χοικοί* seien also φύσει τοῦ διαβόλου υἱοί. Das wird für die vulgäre Gnosis zu Origenes' Zeit auch seine Richtigkeit haben."

¹³¹ Elaine H. Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Random House, 1979).

¹³² Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*. For a thorough overview of Pagels's scholarly career, see Philippa Townsend, "Explorations at the Edges of Orthodoxy: Elaine Pagels' Study of the Early Christian World," in *Beyond the Gnostic Gospels: Studies Building on the Work of Elaine Pagels*, eds. Eduard Iricinschi et al., Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 82 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 1–16.

Gospel was “Gnostic” or not.¹³³ In this context, Pagels’s main concern is to demonstrate that the “Gnosticism” of John was not located in the Gospel proper, but in its interpretation by the “Gnostics.” As suggested by her title, Pagels is not interested in Heracleon as an individual scriptural interpreter, but as an example of what she calls “Gnostic exegesis” and which she views as determined by an insistence to read every detail in the Fourth Gospel as a symbol of those “Gnostic” dogmatic principles that Irenaeus describes.¹³⁴ To explain why Heracleon never refers explicitly to any of this mythology, Pagels proposes that the “Gnostic” maintained two separate exegetical traditions: an esoteric one intended only for the initiated, and an exoteric tradition which presumed knowledge of a mythology to which it never explicitly referred.¹³⁵

Pagels presumes that Heracleon subscribes to a strict soteriological determinism, in which those born with a spiritual nature are predetermined to salvation, the earthly or material ones doomed from birth, and only the animated ones have a choice to make – but can still only respond to Christ on a lower level than the spiritual ones who share his nature.¹³⁶ When Pagels simultaneously argues that Heracleon occasionally uses *ψυχικός* and *πνευματικός* in a completely different sense, namely to denote two different schools of scriptural interpretation, in which one places historical significance on the events described in the gospels, while the other regards them as wholly metaphorical,¹³⁷ the reader might wonder whether such a complexity in Herac-

¹³³ The notion that the Gospel of John was mainly used in “Gnostic” circles in the second century, while other Christians avoided it, was established by Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), 206–8; and by Joseph Neubould Sanders, *The Fourth Gospel in the Early Church: Its Origin & Influence on Christian Theology up to Irenaeus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1943), 47–66. It has been thoroughly refuted by Charles E. Hill. See Charles E. Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 465–75; Charles E. Hill, “‘The Orthodox Gospel’: The Reception of John in the Great Church Prior to Irenaeus,” in *The Legacy of John: Second-Century Reception of the Fourth Gospel*, ed. Tuomas Rasimus, NovTSup 132 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 233–300; cf. Perkins, “Valentinians and the Christian Canon,” 378–80.

¹³⁴ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 11–19, with references to Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.8.5, 3.11–12, and 4.19.

¹³⁵ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 18–19. This proposal is also intended to explain the differences between the theology expressed in Ptolemy, *Letter to Flora*, and the anonymous interpreter quoted in Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.8.5 – which is only a difficulty if one accepts the questionable identification of Ptolemy as the author behind the latter, which is only present in a fourth-century Latin translation of Irenaeus’s work; cf. note 87 above.

¹³⁶ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 49, 83, 112–13. Pagels construes that Heracleon’s opinion regarding the fate of the animated ones is in conflict with the standard “Gnostic” view that they are predetermined to end up together with the Maker in a lower eternal realm than the spiritual ones.

¹³⁷ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 117–22.

leon's nomenclature may suggest that Origen misreads or misrepresents some of his interpretations.

Pagels does not, however, consider Origen's transmission of Heracleon's interpretation as a factor behind her reading of Heracleon. In fact, her recurrent practice of presenting what Origen says of his adversary as if it was taken directly from Heracleon reveals her unstated presupposition – shared with most scholars of her generation – that every statement Origen attributes to Heracleon is the equivalence of a verbatim quotation that can be used to analyze Heracleon's position without evaluating whether Origen, to some extent, may have adapted the attributed statement to his own argumentative needs.¹³⁸ The most important instance of this deficiency appears in the description of the main contrast she finds in Heracleon's interpretation:

Heracleon sets forth his soteriological doctrine most explicitly in his exegesis of the two major conversion stories preserved from his commentary – that of the Samaritan woman in Jn 4.7–42, and that of the centurion's son, which follows in Jn 4.46–54. These two accounts, immediately juxtaposed in the gospel, offer a striking contrast. Heracleon assumes that this effect is intended to show that, in each case, conversion occurs on a fundamentally different level – virtually as a qualitatively different process. He uses the term “pneumatic nature” to characterize the first, and “psychic nature” to characterize the second – terms which seem to justify the assumption of commentators (from Origen to Sagnard) that Heracleon interprets these in terms of his “hypothesis of natures,” that is, in terms of a “substantive determinism.”¹³⁹

In retrospect, it is disheartening to realize that, despite Pagels's recurrent assertions that Heracleon uses the term πνευματική (“spiritual”) to characterize the Samaritan woman, Origen nowhere attests this usage with a quotation.¹⁴⁰ In fact, a closer inspection of the relevant passages reveals that every instance in which the Samaritan woman is designated as a spiritual person appears within Origen's responses, or in attributions where Origen is clearly paraphrasing Heracleon's thought.¹⁴¹ Similarly, none of the six mentions of the soul (ψυχή) within Passage 40 substantiates her claim that Heracleon is

¹³⁸ See, e.g. Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 80, 86–91, 94. Cf. also 73, where she correctly identifies the information given as relayed by Origen.

¹³⁹ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 83.

¹⁴⁰ Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 338: “Dafür, dass Heracleon selber die Samariterin eine Pneumatikerin genannt hat, hat Origenes in den erhaltenen Fragmenten allerdings kein Zitat als Beleg anführen können.”

¹⁴¹ The term occurs in the mouth of Origen in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.20/134, 13.20/122, 13.25/150, 13.61/431, 28.21/179, 28.21/183, and in a paraphrase intended to accentuate the impiety of Heracleon's interpretation in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.25/149. The analysis of these passages in chapter 7 will confirm the conclusion in Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 339: “An all diesen Belegstellen erscheint die Identifizierung der Samariterin als Trägerin einer pneumatischen Physis stets in Origenes' Gegenargumentation oder in Überleitungs-passagen seines Referats, nichts aber in Herakleons eigentlichen Zitaten. Sie beruht daher offenbar auf dem Verständnis, mit dem Origenes Herakleons Hypomnemata studiert hat.”

referring to human beings of a specific animated (ψυχικός) nature.¹⁴² Pagels's overarching argument, that Heracleon demonstrates "through every detail of his exegesis" that the Samaritan woman "represents the *pneumatic elect*,"¹⁴³ while the son of the royal official "represents the *psychic* nature as a whole,"¹⁴⁴ seems therefore to be based not on Heracleon's words,¹⁴⁵ but on the presupposition – shared by Origen, Brooke, and Pagels – that Heracleon subscribes to the heterodox views described by Irenaeus.¹⁴⁶

The twin presumptions that everything Origen presents is equivalent to a verbatim quotation and that Heracleon's exegesis is determined by a "Valentinian" system continue to dominate scholarship after Pagels's contribution. Kurt Rudolph briefly asserts that Origen's forty-eight "quotations" from Heracleon, whose teachings largely correspond to those of Ptolemy, are among our most important witnesses for the "Gnostic" interpretation of scripture.¹⁴⁷ Jean-Michel Poffet, limiting himself to the material on John 4:13–42, performs a detailed comparison of the interpretations of Origen and of Heracleon.¹⁴⁸ Poffet finds Heracleon able to perform literal, as well as allegorical, interpretation, but still asserts that he lacks any interest in the historiographical level of the text, and that he views the Johannine narrative only as a collection of symbolic elements to be interpreted within a "Valentinian" mythological system.¹⁴⁹ Poffet strongly prefers the interpretation of Origen, who takes the whole biblical literature into account, in contrast to Heracleon, who – Poffet claims – confines himself within John 4.¹⁵⁰ Poffet regularly presents state-

¹⁴² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/417–18, 13.61/428–29, 13.61/433. See further the analysis in chapter 9.

¹⁴³ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 86. Her italics.

¹⁴⁴ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 85. Her italics.

¹⁴⁵ Dunderberg, "Valentinian Theories," 143–44: "The distinction between the spiritual and the animate ones is not clearly made in the respective fragments of Heracleon: he neither calls the Samaritan woman 'a spiritual person,' nor the healed son of the royal officer 'an animate person.'"

¹⁴⁶ Dunderberg, "Valentinian Theories," 143, finds that the reading of Einar Thomassen, which coincides with that of Pagels, "is too much based upon a general impression of what a Valentinian teacher should teach and pays too little attention to the views attested for Heracleon himself."

¹⁴⁷ Rudolph, *Die Gnosis*, 22, 346.

¹⁴⁸ Jean-Michel Poffet, *La méthode exégétique d'Héracléon et d'Origène, commentateurs de Jn 4: Jésus, la Samaritaine et les Samaritains*, Paradosis (Fribourg: Universitaires, 1985).

¹⁴⁹ Poffet's limited understanding of Heracleon's and Origen's methodologies is understandable since his monograph is published prior to the revealing studies by Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*.

¹⁵⁰ Poffet, *Méthode*, 275–81. The criticism in Thomassen, "Heracleon," 185 n. 52, is quite harsh: "Poffet is more concerned with polemicizing against Heracleon's exegesis than in understanding it on its own terms, and is therefore less helpful for our purposes." On Heracleon's use of Synoptic and Pauline material to interpret the Gospel of John, see the index in Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 108 and the analysis in Carl Johan Berglund,

ments attributed to Heracleon as if they were quoted directly from Heracleon's work,¹⁵¹ but once remarks that it is difficult to know whether Origen gives us access to Heracleon's words or merely to his thoughts.¹⁵²

Antonio Castellano makes a similarly comparative study limited to John 1:15–29.¹⁵³ He presumes Heracleon to be a “gnóstico valentiniano” who subscribes to the theory of the three human natures,¹⁵⁴ and concludes that Heracleon's exegesis constitutes a failed attempt to legitimize “Valentinian” theology in the wider Christian movement.¹⁵⁵ With reference to previous research by Torjesen and Neuschäfer,¹⁵⁶ he notes that Heracleon takes Synoptic parallels into account, and makes use of the same literary-critical methodology as Origen does,¹⁵⁷ which makes him more positive towards Heracleon's exegesis than is Poffet.¹⁵⁸ Castellano often presumes that the statements attributed to Heracleon are verbatim quotations,¹⁵⁹ but suggests varying trustworthiness by presenting some of them italicized,¹⁶⁰ rather than within quotation marks, and some in plain text.¹⁶¹ Beyond asserting that Origen sometimes quotes Heracleon verbatim,¹⁶² he does not discuss his evaluations of Origen's references.

Kyle Keefer presents, in his 2006 dissertation, a reading of Heracleon that is openly dependent on Pagels's, and that adds little to it. Keefer presumes that Origen faithfully represents Heracleon's point of view and asserts that his main exegetical goal is to demonstrate that the Fourth Gospel exemplifies “Valentinian” soteriology and cosmology. He repeats Pagels's claims concern-

“Literary Criticism in Early Christianity: How Heracleon and Valentinus Use One Passage to Interpret Another,” *J ECS* 27.1 (2019): 27–53, as well as pages 322–27 below.

¹⁵¹ Poffet, *Méthode*, 26, 29, 31–38, 49–50, 53–54, 66–67, 70–74, 77–80, 89–92, 95, 97, 101, 104, 106–7.

¹⁵² Poffet, *Méthode*, 47 n. 124.

¹⁵³ Antonio Castellano, *La exégesis de Orígenes y de Heracleón a los testimonios del Bautista*, Anales de la Facultad de Teología IL/1 (Santiago: Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, 1998).

¹⁵⁴ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 15–22, 181–83.

¹⁵⁵ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 183: “La obra de Heracleón puede ser considerada como un esfuerzo de legitimar y validar la doctrina gnóstica valentiniana en la Iglesia, en la medida en que intenta fundarla en la exégesis del Evangelio de Juan. No obstante es necesario reconocer que el resultado al cual llega permanece distante de las posiciones de la fe ortodoxa.”

¹⁵⁶ Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*.

¹⁵⁷ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 179–81.

¹⁵⁸ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 181: “Se puede afirmar que tanto Orígenes como Heracleón condividen en buena parte las líneas fundamentales de una común teoría hermenéutica basada en el concepto platónico de los dos niveles de la realidad (el sensible y el inteligible), y comparten también los principales procedimientos exegéticos derivados de la filología de la época.”

¹⁵⁹ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 55–57, 99–100.

¹⁶⁰ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 57, 97–98.

¹⁶¹ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 32–33, 87.

¹⁶² Castellano, *Exégesis*, 56–57.

ing the spiritual woman and the animated royal official, and accuses Heracleon of consistently ignoring the concrete meaning of the text to find arbitrary symbols for spiritual entities beyond the world of the text.¹⁶³

IV. Reorientation

The 2002 monograph by Ansgar Wucherpennig performs a thorough analysis of many of Heracleon's interpretations within the theoretical perspective of ancient literary criticism.¹⁶⁴ Starting from previous works on Origen's methodology, primarily by Bernhard Neuschäfer, Wucherpennig is able to identify several of the exegetical techniques used by Heracleon – including διορθωτικόν (“textual criticism”), γλωσσηματικόν (“word studies”), τεχνικόν (“grammatical-rhetorical analysis”), and ιστορικόν (“analysis of what is reported in the text”) – as part of the methodology of an ancient literary critic.¹⁶⁵ Heracleon's writing follows the scholarly discipline of ancient literary criticism, Wucherpennig concludes.¹⁶⁶ Wucherpennig notes that Origen sometimes makes a distinction between Heracleon himself and later followers of Heracleon,¹⁶⁷ suggests that Origen's reading of Heracleon's writing may, at times, be colored by later “Valentinian” dogmatic ideas,¹⁶⁸ and argues that Heracleon should be analyzed independently from any closed “Gnostic” system.¹⁶⁹ His arguments on these points have inspired this study's distinctions

¹⁶³ Keefer, *Branches*, 32–43. The treatment of Heracleon in Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 161–65, is also clearly dependent on Pagels.

¹⁶⁴ See note 35 above and chapter 2 below.

¹⁶⁵ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 42–45, 55–100, 372–81.

¹⁶⁶ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 380–81: “Herakleon sah sich wohl nicht primär als Historiker. Die wissenschaftliche Disziplin, der sein Johanneskommentar folgt, war vielmehr die Philologie, der das ιστορικόν jedoch als wichtiger Bestandteil angehörte. Der Bezeichnung als Philologe hätte Herakleon vermutlich zugestimmt.”

¹⁶⁷ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 23–24: “Origenes selber aber schreibt sie nicht Herakleon zu, sondern seinen Schülern, indem er bei der ersten Aussage im Singular von λέγων und erst bei der zweiten von ὡς οἶονται οἱ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ, also im Plural von seinen Schülern spricht. Die angeführten Belege, die sich noch um weitere Stellen aus anderen Bänden ergänzen lassen, zeigen: Origenes hat noch einen Unterschied zwischen Herakleon und den Lehren erkannt, die er als Auffassungen aus seinem Schülerkreis referiert.” On this particular point, Wucherpennig repeats a previous assertion by Simonetti, “Eracleone e Origene,” 57.

¹⁶⁸ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 332–57. See also the response in Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 182. Thomassen also claims to find the same idea expressed in Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 141–44, but the idea that “Heracleon does not use the concept of different human natures at all, but that this has been imposed on him by Origen's report of his views” seems to be absent from Dunderberg's reasoning in these pages.

¹⁶⁹ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 5–10, esp. 10: “Seine Fragmente sollen unabhängig von einem fertigen gnostischen System als zeitgenössische Auslegung der Johannes-evangeliums analysiert werden.”

between Heracleon, the heterodox, and “those who bring in the natures,”¹⁷⁰ as well as the choice to question the use of “Valentinian” theology, as described by Irenaeus, to understand Heracleon’s comments.¹⁷¹

Wucherpennig sometimes discusses his evaluations of Origen’s different ways of attributing various statements to Heracleon, but these accounts are incomplete and give an inconsistent impression. In some cases, he argues why a particular attribution should be considered a verbatim quotation,¹⁷² but in others, he simply presents a quotation as if taken directly from Heracleon.¹⁷³ Sometimes he notes that Origen may be summarizing rather than quoting Heracleon,¹⁷⁴ and occasionally he goes as far as suggesting that a particular attributed statement is not a quotation from Heracleon’s writing, but formulated by Origen in an attempt to harmonize Heracleon’s interpretation with later “Valentinian” ideas.¹⁷⁵ Although there seems to be some method to Wucherpennig’s evaluations, for instance his insistence that λέγει ὅτι (“he says that”) always introduces a verbatim quotation,¹⁷⁶ he never presents a list of his criteria, and it remains unclear whether he has applied them uniformly to the whole material.¹⁷⁷ His lack of explicit criteria calls attention to the need for a consistent evaluation of Origen’s references to Heracleon, an evaluation that has to precede an analysis of Heracleon’s comments that is – as Wucherpennig rightly calls for – independent of the heterodox dogmatic systems described in heresiological sources.

Endorsing Wucherpennig’s conviction that a proper assessment of Heracleon should be grounded in a reconstruction of his writing rather than of his presumed “Valentinian” background,¹⁷⁸ Harold W. Attridge offers a short study of Heracleon. Attridge maintains that Heracleon’s reflections on the Johannine prologue seem to be thoroughly philosophically grounded and mainly aimed at affirming the divinity of the Word.¹⁷⁹ He also claims that Heracleon’s concept of φύσις (“nature”) is not the static category Origen makes of it, but a realm of potentiality to be realized in the life of a Chris-

¹⁷⁰ See “The Heterodox’ and ‘Those Who Bring in the Natures’” above.

¹⁷¹ See “Aim and Questions” above.

¹⁷² See e.g. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 196 n. 68, 277 n. 137.

¹⁷³ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 84, 166–67, 261, 342.

¹⁷⁴ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 83.

¹⁷⁵ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 135: “Die hier von Origenes zitierte Notiz versucht, die ursprüngliche Auslegung Herakleons mit der Lehre der Valentinianer zu harmonisieren und geht möglicherweise sogar auf Origenes selber zurück.” He is here referring to Paraphrase 1.4 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/100 – see the analysis in chapter 4.

¹⁷⁶ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 277 n. 137.

¹⁷⁷ He does not, for instance, evaluate the material in Passages 19, 37, and 39.

¹⁷⁸ Attridge, “Heracleon and John,” 61.

¹⁷⁹ Attridge, “Heracleon and John,” 63–66.

tian.¹⁸⁰ Attridge concludes that Heracleon does no more violence to the text than does Origen, and that it is likely that Origen has imposed “an alien scheme” upon Heracleon’s interpretations.¹⁸¹

Following Wucherpennig in recognizing Heracleon’s use of ancient literary criticism, Annewies van den Hoek remarks that Heracleon “appears to have been a meticulous reader and text critic of the Scriptures; every inflection, every syllable, and every dot seem to have been analyzed.”¹⁸² She correctly identifies one case where Origen’s mode of attribution shifts radically, in that Origen first “deals with Heracleon’s interpretation in a rather indirect way” that “reflects his own interpretation of Heracleon’s thought,” and then “continues by quoting Heracleon verbatim.”¹⁸³ Her descriptions match the categories of “explanatory paraphrases” and “verbatim quotations” described above.

Most recently, Jean-Daniel Dubois applauds Wucherpennig’s use of ancient literary criticism and philosophical parallels, rather than heresiological material, to understand Heracleon.¹⁸⁴ Dubois maintains that “Heracleon’s discourse on φύσις aims at finding the real meaning of a text below its surface,”¹⁸⁵ rather than determined by “Valentinian” dogmatics, and is able to suggest several Platonic parallels in addition to those proposed by Wucherpennig.¹⁸⁶ PHEME PERKINS also endorses Wucherpennig’s view that Origen misreads Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata* by presuming him to be discussing a set form of “Valentinian” mythology.¹⁸⁷

In a separate attempt to reorient studies of Heracleon, Michael Kaler and Marie-Pierre Bussi  res question Heracleon’s association with the “Valentinian” school. They do so on the basis of the presentations of Heracleon by Irenaeus, Clement, and Origen, arguing that Irenaeus bases the identification of Heracleon as a “Valentinian” only on a similarity of views, that Clement bases no polemic on his identification of Heracleon as “the most notable of Valentinus’s school,” and that Origen disbelieves that Heracleon was an acquaintance (γν  ριμος) of Valentinus.¹⁸⁸ Unfortunately, Kaler and Bussi  res greatly overestimate what can be discerned from subtle details in heresiological

¹⁸⁰ Attridge, “Heracleon and John,” 68–71.

¹⁸¹ Attridge, “Heracleon and John,” 71.

¹⁸² Annewies van den Hoek, “Heracleon and the Hermeneutics of Prepositions: Interpreting ‘EN,’” *Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* 60.1–4 (2008): 37–49, here 38.

¹⁸³ van den Hoek, “Heracleon and the Hermeneutics of Prepositions,” 43. Cf. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.21/137.

¹⁸⁴ Dubois, “Once Again, the Valentinian Expression ‘Saved by Nature,’” 199, referring to Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 332–57.

¹⁸⁵ Dubois, “Once Again, the Valentinian Expression ‘Saved by Nature,’” 199.

¹⁸⁶ Dubois, “Once Again, the Valentinian Expression ‘Saved by Nature,’” 200–203.

¹⁸⁷ Perkins, “Valentinians and the Christian Canon,” 389.

¹⁸⁸ Kaler and Bussi  res, “Was Heracleon a Valentinian?,” 175–282.

presentations. Irenaeus presents Heracleon's association with Valentinus as something his reader is supposed to know, and his reference to similarities in views is a secondary accentuation of the association. Origen's presentation of Heracleon, to which we will return in chapter 4, does specify that his association with Valentinus is hearsay, but does not imply that Origen has a contrarian view himself.¹⁸⁹ This methodological deficiency of the study by Kaler and Bussi res is unfortunate, especially since they do make several worthwhile observations concerning the material on Heracleon. They note correctly that Clement does not present Heracleon as an adversary, even though he clearly links him to Valentinus.¹⁹⁰ They consider the curious dissimilarities between Heracleon's comments and "Valentinianism" as it is described by the heresiologists as a cause for concern.¹⁹¹ And they realize that Origen's responses are addressed to Heracleon personally, not as a "Valentinian" representative:

Although Origen repeatedly censures the allegedly arbitrary, inconsistent, or unsupported nature of Heracleon's exegesis, he does not adduce any sort of grand Valentinian system as the cause for this. All his rebuttals are addressed to Heracleon personally. Origen does occasionally say that a given exegesis springs from Heracleon's belief in souls having fixed natures but never says or implies that Heracleon owes his exegesis to the influences of a specifically Valentinian system of beliefs or to the importation of such a belief system into his exegetical work.¹⁹²

Although their methodology does not allow them to provide conclusive answers, Kaler and Bussi res thus manage to pose several intriguing questions that will recur in the present study.

V. Resistance

Agn s Bastit generally accepts Wucherpennig's conclusion regarding Heracleon's methodology, but is strongly opposed to any attempt to deny or play down Heracleon's adherence to the "Valentinian" theology described by Irenaeus.¹⁹³ She repeats Pagels's assertion that Heracleon calls the Samaritan woman a spiritual woman,¹⁹⁴ and that he views the son of the royal official as an animated human,¹⁹⁵ even though these characterizations only appear on the lips of Origen. Her interpretation of Heracleon's comments presumes that Heracleon believes in the inferior Maker, that he subscribes to the theory of

¹⁸⁹ Cf. the refutation in Thomassen, "Heracleon," 173–74.

¹⁹⁰ Kaler and Bussi res, "Was Heracleon a Valentinian?," 288–89.

¹⁹¹ Kaler and Bussi res, "Was Heracleon a Valentinian?," 275–76 n. 1.

¹⁹² Kaler and Bussi res, "Was Heracleon a Valentinian?," 284.

¹⁹³ Bastit, "Forme et m thode," 151 n. 8.

¹⁹⁴ Bastit, "Forme et m thode," 165.

¹⁹⁵ Bastit, "Forme et m thode," 169.

three human natures, and that he reads the details of the “Valentinian” myth into the Fourth Gospel.¹⁹⁶

Although she admits that Origen sometimes transmits Heracleon’s words only approximately,¹⁹⁷ Bastit insists that most references are “en propres termes,”¹⁹⁸ and give us a faithful idea of Heracleon’s interpretation and commentary.¹⁹⁹ She displays great trust in Origen’s presentation of Heracleon’s comments, and even complains that scholars do not trust the clues to Heracleon’s views given in Origen’s responses.²⁰⁰ Bastit notes that Heracleon’s exegesis takes note of grammatical details,²⁰¹ discusses the motivations of narrative characters,²⁰² and displays an appreciation not only for the Johannine but also the Matthean Gospel.²⁰³ In her conclusion, she lauds Heracleon’s ability to express his interpretations with elegance, nuance, and attention to both the Johannine text and the “Valentinian” doctrines.²⁰⁴

Einar Thomassen makes both of the presuppositions that are questioned in this study. He asserts, in no uncertain terms, that all forty-eight of Origen’s references to Heracleon are “quotations, of varying length,”²⁰⁵ and proceeds to treat them as implicitly trustworthy material, sometimes by presenting a quotation from Origen as if taken directly from Heracleon.²⁰⁶ He also asserts that all sources agree that Heracleon was a “Valentinian,”²⁰⁷ and proceeds to presuppose large measurements of “Valentinian” theology, as he finds it in here-siological and other sources, behind Heracleon’s interpretations:

¹⁹⁶ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 162–70.

¹⁹⁷ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 153, 160, 168.

¹⁹⁸ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 170–71.

¹⁹⁹ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 153.

²⁰⁰ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 153, 158 n. 48.

²⁰¹ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 155–57.

²⁰² Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 159–60.

²⁰³ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 160–61.

²⁰⁴ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 175: “Il est indéniable qu’Héracléon, selon une méthode qui paraît manifestement trop peu scientifique aux yeux d’Origène, s’est préalablement imprégné de son objet, dont il propose le commentaire suivi, verset par verset, pour le rendre avec toutes ses nuances et sa force maximale dans son commentaire, où transparait, à travers ce grossissement analytique, la fascination de l’écrivain pour la figure du Sauveur johannique et l’attention lumineuse qu’il porte à ses moindres gestes et paroles.”

²⁰⁵ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 174.

²⁰⁶ Such quotations appear for instance in Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 185, 187, 189, 191. Exceptions are 185 n. 50, where he follows Wucherpfennig’s suggested differentiation between Heracleon’s words and Origen’s, and 191 n. 74, where he concludes that “interference from Origen is therefore likely.” The lack of any consistent evaluation of Origen’s attributions is all the more surprising when one considers that when he, in 175 n. 12, presents the references in Clement and in Photius, he dismisses one as “a brief report,” and another as “a vague allusion.”

²⁰⁷ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 173.

Being a Valentinian, Heracleon must have presupposed a system akin to the Valentinian systems reported by Irenaeus, the *Refutatio*, the *Tripartite Tractate*, the *Valentinian Exposition* and the various sections of the *Excerpts from Theodotus*.²⁰⁸

Thomassen takes as self-evident the view that Heracleon is reading a specific set of “Valentinian” ideas into the Fourth Gospel.²⁰⁹ When he finds disharmonies between Heracleon’s comments and the “Valentinian” theology he presumes to find in them, he does not question that Irenaeus is describing a theology to which Heracleon subscribes, only that Heracleon disagrees with other “Valentinians” on some points. To explain Heracleon’s comments on John the Baptist as related to the concept of an animated (ψυχικός) nature, Thomassen not only asserts that Heracleon uses ψυχικός in two unrelated senses – one being the animated nature originating in the repentance of a fallen eon, the other being a certain limited receptivity to the Savior – he also has to presume that Heracleon views John the Baptist as simultaneously both animated and spiritual.²¹⁰

Thomassen accepts Wucherpennig’s results concerning Heracleon’s competence in ancient literary criticism.²¹¹ He discusses whether Heracleon’s interest extends beyond the words of Jesus that it contains, and concludes that it does, even if the words and deeds of Jesus receive special attention. He remarks that Heracleon also takes an interest in the historical meaning of the text, even though he mostly uses historical details merely as support for alle-

²⁰⁸ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 205. Cf. 178, 181, 184, 185, 187, 189, 200, 206, 207, where “Valentinian” theology is presupposed to be underlying Heracleon’s interpretations.

²⁰⁹ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 180–81: “These fragments illustrate several characteristic features of Heracleon’s exegesis. [...] These exegetical operations all serve, of course, to justify a specific set of theological ideas.” Cf. 191: “The devil, of course, represents the realm of matter. [...] Here again Heracleon is working with the Valentinian tripartition of material, psychic and spiritual.” Cf. 204: “There is no doubt, of course, that Heracleon is interpreting these characters [the Samaritan woman, the royal official and the Jews of John 8] applying a set of ideas that have not been derived directly from the gospel.” Cf. 207 n. 118: “It is true that Heracleon never mentions the figure of Sophia, but the analogies with other Valentinian sources make it more reasonable to assume that he presupposed some form of the Sophia myth than that he did not.”

²¹⁰ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 181–83. Cf. 189 n. 65, where he accepts that κατὰ φύσιν (“in its natural state”) is a common expression for a healthy state, but still insists that in Heracleon’s usage it also has a special “Valentinian” meaning. Or 191, where he understands correctly that Heracleon explains that one cannot be a child of the devil by nature, but still insists that Heracleon is working with a category of humans with a “material” nature.

²¹¹ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 193: “At the same time he [Heracleon] displays a fair amount of exegetical professionalism: he pays attention to the precise words and phrases occurring in the text he is commenting on, he comments on the appropriateness of the words used for the characters speaking them or their addressees, he supplies historical information relating to the text and he correlates the text of John with the parallel accounts in Matthew and Luke. In these respects he shows himself to be conversant with the craft of the philological commentary of his time.”

gorical interpretations.²¹² He finds “no indication that the Valentinians preferred the narrative of John over those of Matthew and Luke,”²¹³ and concludes that since he “obviously takes it for granted that John the disciple was familiar with” the “Valentinian” system, “Heracleon’s approach is not incompatible with the spirit of the gospel.”²¹⁴

Most recently, Christopher M. Tuckett elegantly combines all the traditional features of scholarship on Heracleon within three pages of an article on the principles of “Gnostic” exegesis.²¹⁵ He acknowledges that “we do not necessarily have all of Heracleon’s commentary,” that Origen’s selective presentation may misrepresent Heracleon’s interpretation, and that “our knowledge is partial and hence somewhat insecure.”²¹⁶ In his analysis, he nevertheless presumes that all of Origen’s references are trustworthy, and that Heracleon presupposes the “Valentinian” theology described by heresiologists. He commends the “at times quite careful attention being paid to the detailed wording of John’s Greek,”²¹⁷ notes that Heracleon places a high value on the written text of the Gospel, and concludes:

Almost everything in Heracleon’s exegesis of John is thus geared to illustrating aspects of Valentinian beliefs about the nature of the universe (though there is no explicit explanation here of any myth of the origins of the Pleroma: it is however almost certainly presupposed), about the different natures of human beings and their responses to the coming of the Saviour.²¹⁸

By their acceptance of Wucherpennig’s demonstration of Heracleon’s ability as an ancient literary critic, combined with their resistance to recent attempts to do away with heresiological categories, Bastit, Thomassen, and Tuckett represent the current state of scholarship on Heracleon: the dual presumption that almost all of Origen’s references to Heracleon are dependable, and that Heracleon’s exegesis is more or less determined by the “Valentinian” doctrines described by Irenaeus. By contrast, this monograph will attempt to base its depiction of the author of the earliest known commentary to the Gospel of John not on the allegations of ancient heresiologists, but on what we can discern from his own writing.

VI. *Reevaluations*

In the last three decades, Christoph Marksches, Wilfried A. Löhr, and Judith Lieu have offered thorough reevaluations of the second-century Christian

²¹² Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 195–200.

²¹³ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 201.

²¹⁴ Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 207.

²¹⁵ Tuckett, “Principles of Gnostic Exegesis,” 283–85.

²¹⁶ Tuckett, “Principles of Gnostic Exegesis,” 283.

²¹⁷ Tuckett, “Principles of Gnostic Exegesis,” 285.

²¹⁸ Tuckett, “Principles of Gnostic Exegesis,” 285.

teachers Valentinus, Basilides, and Marcion. All three of these studies share this monograph's aim to use more trustworthy data than heresiological depictions.²¹⁹

Markschies finds all ancient presentations of Valentinus to be based more on the views of later "Valentinian" teachers than on any particular knowledge of the historical Valentinus.²²⁰ Irenaeus, Clement, Tertullian, and Epiphanius inform us that Valentinus taught in Rome for some time in the interval from 136 to 166 CE,²²¹ but do not describe any teaching spectacular enough to explain his later reputation as an arch-heretic.²²² Markschies argues for a modern assessment of Valentinus based not on these vague accounts, but on the admittedly minuscule material from Valentinus himself.²²³ To that end, he performs a meticulous study of all nine passages where statements are attributed to Valentinus by either Clement or the author of the *Elenchos*.²²⁴ In each case, he analyzes the attribution formula to discern the attributed statement from the surrounding prose, and considers the aims and purposes expressed in the literary context, in order to understand what use the quoting author made of Valentinus. For each reference, Markschies concludes that Valentinus's remarks are perfectly understandable without any appeal to "Valentinian" mythology, and fit well within the Alexandrian tradition of biblical interpretation represented by Philo (ca 20 BCE–50 CE) and Clement.²²⁵ Valentinus should therefore, Markschies argues, be regarded as neither a reformer of "Gnosticism" nor a founder of "Valentinianism" but as one of several early Christian Platonists, who all have left too little material to conclude whether Valentinus's views on human origins, sin, and redemption are idiosyncratic or conventional.²²⁶ Markschies retains the view that Valentinus

²¹⁹ Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*; Winrich Alfried Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule: Eine Studie zur Theologie- und Kirchengeschichte des zweiten Jahrhunderts*, WUNT 83 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1996); Lieu, *Marcion*.

²²⁰ Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 363–87.

²²¹ Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 293–336. Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.4.3; Clement, *Strom.* 7.17/106.3–4; Tertullian, *Praescr.* 30.1; Val. 4; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 31.2, 7.

²²² Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 335–36.

²²³ Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 1–8.

²²⁴ Clement, *Strom.* 2.8/36.2–4, 2.20/114.3–6, 3.7/59.3, 4.13/89.1–3, 4.13/89.6–90.1, 6.5/52.3–53.1; *Elenchos* 6.37.7, 6.42.2, 10.13.4.

²²⁵ Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 11–290. Markschies also (337–63) considers whether some of the Nag Hammadi literature could reasonably be added to Valentinus's bibliography, but answers in the negative. The most common suggestion, the Gospel of Truth, is an anonymous writing attributed by Irenaeus not to Valentinus himself but to a "Valentinian" disciple, and other suggestions are no better.

²²⁶ Markschies, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 391: "Angesichts der geringen Überreste von anderen Theologen des 2. Jhs und der wenigen Fragmente Valentins kann man auch sehr schwer abgrenzen, in welchen Punkten er wirkliche *originelle* Lösungen erdachte bzw. lediglich konventionelle Theologumena wiederholte."

gave rise to an influential “Gnostic” school that in a later generation produced a highly controversial theology,²²⁷ but argues that Valentinus himself was neither a “Gnostic,” according to the criteria presented by Hans Jonas, nor a “Valentinian,” as defined by the teachings of Ptolemy and the *Excerpts from Theodotus*.²²⁸ Although his study lacks a clear methodology for evaluating various references to Valentinus, Marksches identifies the right goal: Valentinus should be assessed from his own writings, not from the allegations of his adversaries. In that regard, his study is a direct predecessor to the present one.

Working a few years after Marksches, Löhr analyzes nineteen statements attributed to Basilides as well as fifteen *testimonia* and six heresiological descriptions of his teachings.²²⁹ Löhr does not develop a strict methodology for discerning verbatim quotations from free renderings, but suggests the difference between direct and indirect speech to be an important factor,²³⁰ and finds some dependable references.²³¹ Taking the heresiological bias of the material into account,²³² he finds most presentations of Basilides to be based on little more than Irenaeus’s catchy vilification of the teacher.²³³ In his own assessment, Basilides was a speculative philosopher at the intersection between Christian, Hellenistic Jewish, and Middle Platonic traditions, who rejected the God of the Old Testament.²³⁴ Löhr argues that Basilides’s writings, to which Clement refers in a number of different contexts, must have constituted traditional teaching material in second-century Alexandria, and only later came to be considered heretical.²³⁵ Although the later conclusion seems to underestimate the controversial nature of rejecting the Old Testament divinity, Löhr has the right idea of how to reconstruct the views of an early Christian author: based on what can be reconstructed of his own words, not on heresiological summations.

²²⁷ Marksches, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 392–97.

²²⁸ Marksches, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 402–7.

²²⁹ Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 5–323.

²³⁰ Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 2–3: “Bei Clemens finden wir auf der einen Seite wörtliche Zitate, auf der anderen Seite z. T. in ‘oratio obliqua’ formulierte, referierende Zusammenfassungen basilidianischer Lehrmeinungen und Exegesen, die man auch als ‘doxai’ bezeichnen könnte. Zuweilen scheint ein unvermittelter Übergang von ‘oratio obliqua’ in ‘oratio recta’ vorzuliegen, wobei zu vermuten ist, daß die ‘oratio recta’ ein mehr oder weniger wörtliches Zitat aus der Vorlage präsentiert.”

²³¹ Cf. Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 62, 76, 80–81, 106–7, 162.

²³² Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 1–4.

²³³ Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 324–25. Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.24.3–7.

²³⁴ Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 325–31. Löhr also (12–13) characterizes Basilides as a Christian exegete and commentary writer, a characterization that has been subsequently rejected by James A. Kelhoffer, “Basilides’s Gospel and *Exegetica* (Treatises),” in *Conceptions of “Gospel” and Legitimacy in Early Christianity*, WUNT 324 (Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 77–95, here 90.

²³⁵ Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 331–37.

In a more recently published study, Lieu contrasts the Marcion of the heresiologists to the Marcion we can discern from his writings. After carefully considering the accounts of Justin,²³⁶ Irenaeus,²³⁷ Tertullian,²³⁸ Epiphanius,²³⁹ the anonymous *Dialogue of Adamantius*,²⁴⁰ Clement,²⁴¹ Origen,²⁴² and Ephrem the Syrian,²⁴³ she concludes that each author constructs precisely the Marcion that he needs for his own polemical purposes,²⁴⁴ which consequently cannot be trusted to portray the historical Marcion.²⁴⁵ Instead, Lieu attempts to reconstruct Marcion's Gospel and *Apostolikon* from the references given by, primarily, Tertullian and Epiphanius.

While both these authors aim to refute Marcion's theology using only Gospel passages that Marcion accepts, while simultaneously documenting his alleged mutilation of Luke's Gospel, Lieu finds them to proceed in different ways. Epiphanius works from a pre-composed collection of excerpts from Marcion's text, to which he adds analytical comments. As he proceeds through his material, the comments grow shorter, and at times he seems to have forgotten the principles behind his own selection.²⁴⁶ Tertullian has a more fluid and argumentative presentation, which makes it more difficult to discern the authentic Marcion:²⁴⁷

Tertullian is throughout in charge of the text he quotes and of his argument; to this end he employs a mix of summary, paraphrase, and quotation, with few indicators as to which he is using or when he is moving from one to another. A perhaps deliberate consequence is that the confident identification, let alone reconstruction, of the text of Marcion's 'Gospel' is difficult.²⁴⁸

Lieu adds that Tertullian sometimes appears to present Marcion's reasoning with a relentlessly systematic logic that ruthlessly exposes a fatal weakness

²³⁶ Lieu, *Marcion*, 25.

²³⁷ Lieu, *Marcion*, 46–49.

²³⁸ Lieu, *Marcion*, 84–87.

²³⁹ Lieu, *Marcion*, 113–15.

²⁴⁰ Lieu, *Marcion*, 121–24.

²⁴¹ Lieu, *Marcion*, 133–35.

²⁴² Lieu, *Marcion*, 142.

²⁴³ Lieu, *Marcion*, 175–76.

²⁴⁴ For instance, when Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.4.3, mentions Marcion's teacher Cerdo, it is solely to provide a link back to the heresiarch Simon of Acts 8, and when he enumerates Marcion's supposed teachings – the rejection of the Creator, the claim that Christ was sent by a higher divinity to abolish the Creator's work, the selective use of Paul and Luke, and the notion that the Jewish heroes in Hades rejected Jesus – in *Haer.* 1.27.1–4, the list turns out to be negations of all the key components of Irenaeus's own faith. Cf. Lieu, *Marcion*, 15–25, 46–49.

²⁴⁵ Lieu, *Marcion*, 8–11, 25, 46–49, 84–87.

²⁴⁶ Lieu, *Marcion*, 193–96, 236–38.

²⁴⁷ Lieu, *Marcion*, 188–93, 234–36.

²⁴⁸ Lieu, *Marcion*, 191.

that might not have been as apparent in the original text.²⁴⁹ Similar characterizations could, indeed, be made of Origen's presentations of Heracleon.

In the end, Lieu finds Marcion less of a mutilator than an interpreter of the early Christian tradition,²⁵⁰ an interpreter primarily working from Paul's letter to the Galatians,²⁵¹ whose followers were indistinctive enough to be persecuted and martyred alongside other Christians.²⁵² She concludes that Marcion is a thoroughly Christian thinker, marked by the preoccupations of his time, whose radical separation between the Father of Christ and the Creator arises out of exegetical challenges in introducing the Christian message to an audience steeped in popularized Platonic philosophy.²⁵³ Ironically enough, her Marcion is someone whose name would long have been forgotten, had it not been for the adversarial portrayals of him as a heretic.²⁵⁴

After Marksches's, Löhr's, and Lieu's reevaluations of Valentinus, Basilides, and Marcion, based on what can be reconstructed of their own works rather than on uncritical acceptance of the portraits given by the heresiologists, the time has come to reassess the author of the earliest known commentary on the Gospel of John along the same lines. The next chapter offers a superior context in which to view Heracleon than the dubious generalizations of "Gnosticism:" the ancient literary-critical tradition in which early commentaries on the classical Greek literature were produced.

²⁴⁹ Lieu, *Marcion*, 191–93. An additional difficulty when assessing how well Tertullian's Latin text reflects Marcion's original Greek is that Tertullian's own scriptural quotations exhibit large variations from any standard text.

²⁵⁰ Lieu, *Marcion*, 192, 296.

²⁵¹ Lieu, *Marcion*, 404–5, 417–18, 428–30.

²⁵² Lieu, *Marcion*, 395–97.

²⁵³ Lieu, *Marcion*, 433–39.

²⁵⁴ Lieu, *Marcion*, 433.

Chapter 2

Ancient Literary Criticism

Since the first chapter has established that the traditional categories of “Gnosticism” and “Valentinianism” are too tainted by heresiological bias to be used as keys to Heracleon’s comments, it is the task of this chapter to describe a preferable theoretical framework for the study of Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata*: the ancient literary-critical tradition used in commentaries on classical Greek literature.¹

Developed by ancient intellectuals associated with the famous libraries of Alexandria and Pergamon, people who variously called themselves γραμματικοί (“grammarians”), κριτικοί (“critics”) or φιλόλογοι (“philologists”), this tradition spread to most of the ancient world, and had a heavy influence on Greco-Roman education and learned culture.² The relevance of this tradition for the understanding of early Christian scriptural interpretation was originally demonstrated in Neuschäfer’s study of Origen’s exegetical methodology.³ Castellano and Wucherpennig have established that many of Heracleon’s exegetical techniques are applications of the same ancient literary-critical methodology,⁴ and the same observation will be made recurrently throughout the analysis in chapters 4–10 below.

A. Greco-Roman Education and Learned Culture

It is beyond doubt that the production and interpretation of literary works were associated with high status in Greco-Roman society. For instance, the extant correspondence of Pliny the Younger (ca. 61–113 CE) reveals that the social life of this wealthy lawyer and politician to a large extent revolved around books and public readings. Pliny would regularly host release parties where he and his friends would listen to the first public reading of a newly

¹ A number of the points made below are also made, often in more detail, in Berglund, “Interpreting Readers.”

² Recent introductions to this tradition include Francesca Schironi, “Greek Commentaries,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 19.3 (2012): 399–441; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 41–66; Berglund, “Interpreting Readers,” 225–36. The most detailed overview remains Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*.

³ Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*; cf. Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 25–40.

⁴ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 179–81; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 42–45, 372–81.

written piece of literature, and offer praise and criticism. In the absence of publishing houses and printing presses, such recitation events were important opportunities to getting one's writing noticed among the elite, while also a possibility of receiving criticism without losing face. Pliny is insistent on keeping the discussion within the bounds of polite social interaction, and to establish himself as the leader of a prominent literary community.⁵ This sense of status is, obviously, built on the immense difficulties of literary production in a society where basic education was a commercial service, specialized literature was only accessible through personal connections, and authors received no financial benefit beyond the potential support of a wealthy patron.

Neither the Hellenistic kingdoms nor the Roman Empire organized any state-sponsored education, but let schooling be provided by independent teachers, who gathered their students wherever they could – in their own homes, in the homes of their students, or in public places such as streets or gymnasia.⁶ Boys, and sometimes girls, from sufficiently well-off families were taught to read, copy, memorize, recite, interpret, and eventually imitate classical literature by authors such as Homer, Euripides, or Menander.⁷ While the sons of merchants and clerks left school as soon as their limited education was sufficient to support their family businesses, elite children continued on, in order to achieve the knowledge, discernment, and rhetorical skills expected within higher society.⁸ Diomedes Grammaticus (fourth century CE) claims that the philosophically educated are as far removed from ordinary people as the uneducated are from animals.⁹ Lucian of Samosata (125–180 CE) colorfully

⁵ William A. Johnson, *Readers and Reading Culture in the High Roman Empire. A Study of Elite Communities* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 42–62, 73; cf. Berglund, “Interpreting Readers,” 213–15.

⁶ For introductions to the study of education in the Greco-Roman world, see Tor Vegge, *Paulus und das antike Schulwesen: Schule und Bildung des Paulus*, BZNW 134 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2006), 13–107; Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Histoire de l'éducation dans l'antiquité*, 5th ed. (Paris: Seuil, 1960). Cf. also Berglund, “Interpreting Readers,” 206–11. Worth noticing is that the content and pedagogical methodology of Greco-Roman education was surprisingly stable, which permits us to discuss evidence from the first five centuries CE almost as if they referred to the same period.

⁷ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 36–44, 220–44, 247–52; Karl Olav Sandnes, *The Challenge of Homer: School, Pagan Poets and Early Christianity*, LNTS 400 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 24–25, 41–45, 56–57.

⁸ Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 247–52.

⁹ Diomedes Grammaticus, *De arte grammatica* pr. Cf. Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*, The Transformation of the Classical Heritage (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 17.

describes those who were able to attain higher education as elevated to a height from which the rest of mankind appeared as ants.¹⁰

Although there is evidence of booksellers (βιβλιοπώλεις) in ancient society, the primary distribution channels for literature were more personal: circles of friends, personal acquaintances, and literary communities. As every single copy of a literary work would have to be painstakingly penned by hand, preferably by a well-salaried commercial scribe or an expensive slave, duplicates were not made in anticipation of future sales, but on the initiative of a reader who borrowed a copy in order to create his own, or of a writer who wanted to present his work as a gift to a friend. Any wider distribution was entirely out of the control of the author, who could only hope that future copies were accurately made and correctly attributed to him.¹¹

A reader intent on finding a particular book, beyond the most common literature, was largely dependent on personal connections with other readers, whose similar interests might have led them to acquire a copy – or know someone who had. Among the thousands of literary papyri found at Oxyrhynchus in Egypt are some letters between friends with large libraries, who instruct each other on whom to ask for a copy of a specific work discussing features of ancient drama.¹² The immensely productive writer Galen of Pergamon (ca. 129–200 CE) complains that when working in Rome, he is unable to access any commentaries on the works of Hippocrates (ca. 460–370 BCE). Such highly specialized literature appears to be unavailable outside of his own personal library.¹³

As a consequence of these conditions for authorship, production, and distribution of literature in antiquity, there is no particular connection between the fact that a work was written, the number of copies that were eventually produced, and the question of whether one has survived into modern times. Even quite popular works could fall out of use and therefore cease to be copied, while an obscure writing that was only ever produced in a singular copy

¹⁰ Lucian of Samosata, *Hermotimus* 5. Cf. Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 1; Sandnes, *The Challenge of Homer*, 35–36.

¹¹ Raymond J. Starr, “The Circulation of Literary Texts in the Roman World,” *CQ* 37.1 (1987): 213–23; Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 83–93; Harry Y. Gamble, “The Book Trade in the Roman Empire,” in *The Early Text of the New Testament*, eds. Charles E. Hill and Michael J. Kruger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 23–36.

¹² On such literary communities, see Starr, “Circulation,” 218; Johnson, *Readers*, 180–87; Gamble, “Book Trade,” 30–31; Lincoln H. Blumell, *Lettered Christians: Christians, Letters, and Late Antique Oxyrhynchus*, *New Testament Tools, Studies, and Documents* 39 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 175–78.

¹³ Galen, *On My Own Books* 34. Cf. Johnson, *Readers*, 92–93.

may have survived by pure happenstance.¹⁴ Since there was no direct financial benefit in having a large readership, the intended audience of a particular work did not need to be larger than a single person.

Christian intellectuals were not excluded from such literary circles.¹⁵ Even if the vast majority of Christians were uneducated – as was the vast majority of people in general – the early Christian movement soon came to include even the highest strata of society.¹⁶ Christians produced more literature than any comparable community in the Greco-Roman world,¹⁷ and Gentile and Christian students seem to have studied together at both elementary and advanced levels of Greek learning.¹⁸ Justin Martyr describes the gatherings of Christian communities as reminiscent of literary communities,¹⁹ and the activities of Christian teachers such as him and Origen must have appeared indistinguishable, to an outside observer, from those of contemporary philo-

¹⁴ Roger S. Bagnall, *Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 35, warns against regarding the statistical distribution of genres in preserved ancient manuscripts as anything else than the result of pure chance: “It is inherently unlikely that the extreme lumpiness of the data reflects reality – that letter-writing or contracts went in and out of fashion; that sometimes people got tax receipts and sometimes they did not; that at times everything was fine and no one bothered to complain to the authorities; that there was little need of keeping accounts in the third quarter of the second century, unlike other periods; and so on. Most of these variations can in fact be ascribed to specific circumstances in the archeological preservation of papyri and ostraca: the Zenon archive, the Arsinoite and Herakleopolite cartonnage finds, discoveries of Theban ostraca, the pots full of contracts at Gebelein, and so on.”

¹⁵ Cf. Berglund, “Interpreting Readers,” 219–24.

¹⁶ Alexander Weiß, *Soziale Elite und Christentum: Studien zu ordo-Angehörigen unter den frühen Christen* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015), 188–208.

¹⁷ Udo Schnelle, “Das frühe Christentum und die Bildung,” *NTS* 61.02 (2015): 113–143, here 115: “Kann man eine Bewegung als unliterarisch und indirekt bildungsfern klassifizieren, die bereits in den ersten 50 Jahren ihres Bestehens so viele Schriften und neue Gattungen geschaffen hat wie keine andere Religion in ihrer Entstehungsphase?” Christian scribes must have been actively producing books at an early stage, and in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.23.1–2, we have an account of what appears to be a large and well-organized scriptorium in Origen’s Caesarea. Cf. Balbina Bäbler, “Für Christen und Heiden, Männer und Frauen: Origenes’ Bibliotheks- und Lehrinstitut in Caesarea,” in “*Das Paradies ist ein Hörsaal für die Seelen*,” *Religiöse Bildung in historischer Perspektive*, eds. Peter Gemeinhardt and Ilinca Tanaseanu-Döbler, *Studies in Education and Religion in Ancient and Pre-Modern History in the Mediterranean and Its Environs* 1 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 129–51, here 143–45.

¹⁸ Raffaella Cribiore, “Why Did Christians Compete with Pagans?,” in *Pedagogy in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, eds. Karina Martin Hogan, Matthew Goff, and Emma Wasserman, *EJL* 41 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 359–74.

¹⁹ John S. Kloppenborg, “Literate Media in Early Christ Groups: The Creation of a Christian Book Culture,” *J ECS* 22.1 (2014): 21–59, here 42–43; Wally V. Cirafesi and Gregory Peter Fewster, “Justin’s ἀπομνημονεύματα and Ancient Greco-Roman Memoirs,” *Early Christianity* 7.2 (2016): 186–212, here 188–89, 205–12.

sophical schools.²⁰ The many references to Greek literature, philosophy, and other areas of learning in the writings of Clement of Alexandria imply the existence of an educated Christian readership,²¹ and among the literary requests from Oxyrhynchus is at least one decidedly Christian letter asking for copies of Jewish Pseudepigrapha.²²

As a writer of secondary literature commenting on something so esoteric as a Christian Gospel, Heracleon must have enjoyed some measure of higher education, and either personal wealth or the support of others necessary for such an intellectual pursuit. It is not unlikely that he served as a teacher for a group of other intellectual Christians, and that his *hypomnēmata* was either

²⁰ Tobias Georges, “‘...herrlichste Früchte echter Philosophie...’ – Schulen bei Justin und Origenes, im frühen Christentum sowie bei den zeitgenössischen Philosophen,” *Milennium* 11.1 (2014): 23–38, convincingly argues that the only major difference between these Christian schools and their philosophical counterparts are their theological views. Loveday Alexander, “Paul and the Hellenistic Schools: The Evidence of Galen,” in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 60–83, here 60–61, 76–77, finds Galen to describe Christian groups and philosophical school in similar ways, including the features of faith and loyalty. Stanley K. Stowers, “Does Pauline Christianity Resemble a Hellenistic Philosophy?,” in *Paul Beyond the Judaism/ Hellenism Divide*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 81–102, here 95–102, finds seven similarities – mutual exclusivity, counter-cultural traits, the ideal of self-control, calls to conversion, search for wisdom, interpretation of texts, and social formation – that, despite obvious differences, makes Pauline churches more similar to philosophical schools than to traditional religion. Udo Schnelle, “Philosophische Interpretation des Johannesevangeliums: Voraussetzungen, Methoden und Perspektiven,” in *The Prologue of the Gospel of John: Its Literary, Theological, and Philosophical Contexts*, eds. Jan G. Van der Watt, R. Alan Culpepper, and Udo Schnelle, WUNT 359 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 159–87, here 161–63, argues that since philosophers and Christian teachers both discussed questions of the divine, and both viewed their activities as a way of life rather than a purely theoretical exercise, ancient philosophy and theology should not be thought of as separate categories. Arthur P. Urbano, “Literary and Visual Images of Teachers in Late Antiquity,” in *Teachers in Late Antique Christianity*, eds. Peter Gemeinhardt, Olga Lorgeoux, and Maria Louise Munkholt Christensen, *Studies in Education and Religion in Ancient and Pre-Modern History in the Mediterranean and Its Environs* 3 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2018), 1–31, here 2–6, argues that at least by the fourth century, the rivalry between Christian intellectuals and Platonist philosophers should not be framed as a primarily religious conflict, but as a competition between two philosophical schools, both intent on subsuming valuable insights from competing philosophies into a unary system of thought.

²¹ Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: “Grammatica” and Literary Theory 350–1100*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 19 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 164; Robert G. T. Edwards, “Clement of Alexandria’s Gnostic Exposition of the Decalogue,” *J ECS* 23.4 (2015): 501–28, here 508–20.

²² P. Oxy. 63.4365. Cf. AnneMarie Luijendijk, *Greetings in the Lord: Early Christians and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 70–74; Blumell, *Lettered Christians*, 169–71, 178.

the basis for or the result of his teaching activities.²³ In addition, the specifics of his comments necessitate familiarity with at least some of the literary-critical techniques originally developed for the analysis of Homeric literature.

B. Principles of Ancient Literary Criticism

The dominance, in all of Greco-Roman education, of classical literature such as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* necessitated a measure of explanation, as Homer's archaic Greek already in classical times were often considered difficult to understand. One of the oldest strata of ancient literary criticism is therefore γλωσσηματικόν ("word studies"), aimed at discerning the proper meaning of a particular word in a given context, considering its etymology, semantics, and the peculiarities of the Homeric idiom.²⁴ Such investigations could result in glossaries (λέξεις or γλώσσαι) that could be consulted by unenlightened readers,²⁵ but also in more elaborate discussions, such as when an anonymous literary critic discusses whether a description of Hector as κορυθαίολος refers to him being a quick-moving (αἰόλος) man in a helmet (κόρυς) or simply him having a decorated (αἰόλος) helmet, and supports both interpretation by reference to other passages where αἰόλος is used.²⁶ The procedure of searching through the Homeric epics for other occurrences of the same word that might illuminate the usage was eventually expanded into a general principle, whereby anything obscure in a Greek text should be clarified using other passages by the same author: Homer should be clarified from Homer, Euripides from Euripides.²⁷

²³ Perkins, "Valentinians and the Christian Canon," 380, suggests that Heracleon's writing was an instruction book for relative beginners that circulated without authorial attribution in a single copy, which eventually reached Origen through his patron Ambrose. Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 25, suggests that it may have been written in more than one hand, as Heracleon and some of his students entered different materials.

²⁴ René Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 202; Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," 401, 412–15.

²⁵ Eric G. Turner, *Greek Papyri: An Introduction* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1980), 114; Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," 403; Pieter B. Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema: A Comparison of Two Commentary Collections from the Hellenistic-Roman Period*, STDJ 121 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 113–14.

²⁶ Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 114–16, refers to P. Oxy. 8.1086.106–113, commenting on Homer, *Il.* 2.816.

²⁷ Various versions of this principle are attested in Aristarchus of Alexandria, *Schol.* D on *Il.* 5.385, lines 9–13; Cicero, *Inv.* 2.117; Galen, *On Diagnosis by the Pulse*, 8.958.6–8. Cf. Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship*, 210–11, 225–27; Jaap Mansfeld, *Prolegomena: Questions to Be Settled before the Study of an Author or a Text*, *Philosophia antiqua* 61 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 148–49, 177–78, 204; Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," 436–37; Ayres, "Irenae-

Another difficulty with Homer was his way of portraying the Greek gods as anthropomorphic deities with an almost complete lack of morality. In view of later philosophical and ethical thinking, Homer's epics could not be defended as the foundation of Greek literary heritage without reinterpretation. Two reading strategies emerged to deal with this problem: some argued that the gods depicted by Homer were δαίμονες ("lesser divinities"), imperfectly mediating between the divine and human realms by impersonating the gods. Others developed ways of interpreting Homer allegorically, by letting the gods be metaphors. Both of these strategies can be traced in later Christian literature.²⁸

Greek intellectuals were well prepared to make a sharp distinction between the claims made in the text and the way in which these claims were expressed. Gregory of Nazianzus (ca. 329–390 CE) eloquently describes the expression (λέξις) as the outer garment in which the thought (νοῦς) of the text is clothed,²⁹ and remarks that in some texts only one of these is good, while the other leaves something to be desired.³⁰ When the λέξις of a text was obscure, the established practice was to evaluate possible interpretations with regard to the writing's overall νοῦς, as well as its historical and literary context.³¹

Literary critics comparing their different Homeric manuscripts soon discovered the need to deal with variant readings, and developed methods of διορθωτικόν ("textual criticism"). The results of these efforts can be seen both in marginal notes documenting variants, and in a certain standardization of the classical texts in the Roman era.³² Other established techniques were τεχνικόν ("grammatical–rhetorical analysis"), μετρικόν ("critique of style and meter"), and ιστορικόν ("analysis of what is reported in the text"). The latter would certainly comprise scrutiny of any historiographical claims made in the text, but included anything the text reported – history or medicine, fact or

us vs. the Valentinians," 160; Berglund, "Literary Criticism in Early Christianity," 35–36. The latter article compares how Valentinus and Heracleon apply this principle.

²⁸ John M. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists: 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 31–32, 216–19; Luc Brisson, *How Philosophers Saved Myths: Allegorical Interpretation and Classical Mythology*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 9–10, 20–26, 32–40, 58–59; Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," 433–36.

²⁹ The thought could also be denoted ὕλη, πραγματικόν, ὑπόθεσις, οἰκονομία, *res*, *sensus*, or *materia*, while the expression could be called εἶδος, λεκτικόν or *verba*.

³⁰ Gregory of Nazianzus, *On Himself and the Bishops* 267–71.

³¹ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 21, 34–35, 81, 120; Kathy Eden, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and Its Humanist Reception*, Yale Studies in Hermeneutics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), 21, 27–41; Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work*, 23–25. Cf. Berglund, "Interpreting Readers," 228–30.

³² Turner, *Greek Papyri*, 107–10, observes that Greek manuscripts from the Roman period have a lower degree of variability than those from the Ptolemaic era, and attributes this difference to the efforts of ancient literary critics.

fiction.³³ A longer analysis was often concluded by a κρίσις ποιημάτων – a moral and esthetical evaluation of the work as a whole.³⁴

This ancient methodological tradition was, by modern standards, remarkably stable, even over the course of centuries. This is illustrated by the practice of the prolific commentator Simplicius of Cilicia (ca. 480–540 CE) to begin his analyses by considering the view of Alexander of Aphrodisias (fl. ca. 200 CE), whom he still considered an authority in the field.³⁵ At the other end of the range, Han Baltussen argues that early traces of ancient literary criticism are discernible already in Plato's *Protagoras*, where Socrates discusses the correct understanding of particular terms, discusses the purpose and hidden meaning of the poem, points to grammatical details to support his interpretation, uses one passage to clarify another, and expresses his conclusions in the form of prose paraphrases of the poet's point.³⁶ Since Socrates aims to reject this way of interpreting poetry, the methodology must be well established in oral literature before Plato's time, Baltussen argues.³⁷

The Christian uptake of ancient literary criticism has long been associated with Origen, and regarded as a natural development when third-century Christian communities became more stable, resourceful, and educated.³⁸ In recent years, however, scholars have recognized that the same exegetical techniques were utilized by several Christian teachers before Origen, including

³³ In several attestations of the term, ἱστορία does not denote a description of past events but an investigation or inquiry of any subject and, by extension, the written account produced by such an investigation. Even when a more specialized sense originated with Aristotle, who used πράγματα ἱστορικά to denote past events and their circumstances, and ἱστορία to mean an account of such, the more general sense continued to be in use. See Dimitrios Iordanoglou and Mats Persson, "Tidigare än, men ändå samtida: Om det förflutna i antik grekisk historieskrivning," *Lychnos* (2012): 93–134, here 95–99, 111–12. Cf. Basil Studer, "Der Begriff der Geschichte im Schrifttum des Origenes von Alexandrien," in *Origeniana Octava: Origen and the Alexandrian Tradition*, ed. Lorenzo Perrone, BETL 164 (Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 757–77, here 759: "In der Antike besitzen das griechische Wort ἱστορία und sein lateinisches Äquivalent eine doppelte Bedeutung. Sie besagen, wie schon angedeutet, Erforschung und Erzählung." For an overview of the topics ancient literary critics treated under ἱστορικόν, see Schironi, "Greek Commentaries," 418–20.

³⁴ Marrou, *Histoire*, 229–42; Turner, *Greek Papyri*, 118–19; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 139–40; Vegge, *Paulus und das antike Schulwesen*, 113–15; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 41–42.

³⁵ Han Baltussen, *Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius: The Methodology of a Commentator* (London: Duckworth, 2008), 114–35.

³⁶ Plato, *Prot.* 245c, 339b–347a.

³⁷ Han Baltussen, "Plato *Protagoras* 340–48: Commentary in the Making?," in *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, eds. Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, and Martin William Francis Stone (London: Institute of Classical Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2004), 21–35.

³⁸ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 49–76; Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians," 154–55.

Heracleon,³⁹ Irenaeus,⁴⁰ Justin Martyr,⁴¹ Ptolemy,⁴² and Theodotus the Cobbler (second century CE),⁴³ the last two of which share Heracleon's alleged association with Valentinus.⁴⁴ The innovation to apply ancient literary criticism to Christian writings thus occurred in Heracleon's generation, not Origen's.⁴⁵

C. Literary-Critical Commentaries

Ancient intellectuals were frequently simultaneously engaged in the literary-critical study of classical Greek literature, the teaching of literary-critical skills to others, and the writing of new Greek literature.⁴⁶ As such, they benefited greatly from studying and producing literary-critical commentaries – exegetical writings proceeding through an established writing line by line or passage by passage, offering literary-critical explanations and comments.⁴⁷ As teachers, they used commentaries as reminders of what aspects of the text they should discuss with their students. As students, they took notes from their teachers' lectures on classical writings, perhaps adding their own observations as they continued to study the text. As literary critics, they produced their own commentaries, intermingling established interpretations with opinions of their own, to participate in the intellectual discourse of their day.⁴⁸ De-

³⁹ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 179–81; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 42–45, 55–100, 372–81.

⁴⁰ Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians," 171–78.

⁴¹ Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians," 180–82.

⁴² Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians," 166–67.

⁴³ Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians," 167–68.

⁴⁴ Ayres, "Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians," 178–85, argues that Irenaeus's use of literary criticism is prompted by his conflict with "Valentinian" exegesis, but does not attempt to explain why the "Valentinians" took it up in the first place. Cf. Berglund, "Interpreting Readers," 204–5.

⁴⁵ Cf. the discussion in Berglund, "Interpreting Readers," 237–42.

⁴⁶ Raffaella Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, ASP 36 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 100, argues that comparisons of the hands of literary-critical commentaries and school exercises suggest that the same individuals often produced both. Monica Berti, "Greek and Roman Libraries in the Hellenistic Age," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran and the Concept of a Library*, eds. Sidnie White Crawford and Cecilia Wassén, STDJ 116 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 33–54, here 45, maintains that understanding the lack of boundaries between poets, historians, and philologists is imperative for understanding ancient literary culture.

⁴⁷ Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 30, defines a commentary as "a writing that stands in an interpretative relationship with a base text and quotes that base text explicitly in lemmata." As we will see below, "quotes" may be overly restrictive, as ancient literary critics often summarized or paraphrased the base text in their lemmata.

⁴⁸ Ilsetraut Hadot, "Der fortlaufende philosophische Kommentar in der Antike," in *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter: Beiträge zu seiner Erforschung*, eds. Wilhelm Geer-

pending on their interests and areas of competence, their commentaries could include various data in addition to what was ordinarily included.

The Greek and Latin terms for this literature, ὑπομνήματα and *commentarii*, reflect the diverse possibilities of the genre. Originally referring to memories,⁴⁹ notebooks,⁵⁰ or other physical memory-aids,⁵¹ the terms may be used in reference to excerpts or other notes taken down while reading or listening to the recitation of a book,⁵² to a personal diary,⁵³ to official records,⁵⁴ to an unfinished draft of any type of writing,⁵⁵ to a collection of notes taken from the lectures of a teacher,⁵⁶ as well as to a full-fledged literary-critical commentary.⁵⁷ Writings called ὑπομνήματα or *commentarii* could belong to any of these categories, and the genre of such a writing must therefore be determined from the text itself, not its designation.

A basic feature of a commentary is a clear distinction between the base text that constitutes the basis for the interpretation and the comments added by the commentator.⁵⁸ In the absence of established numerical reference systems, ancient commentary writers organize their comments around a set of running

lings and Christian Schulze, *Clavis commentariorum antiquitatis et medii aevi* 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 183–99, here 184; Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 51–54.

⁴⁹ Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 2.44.

⁵⁰ Demosthenes, *Tim.* 49.30, speaks of a banker's financial records.

⁵¹ Isocrates, *Or.* 4.156, uses the term in reference to a memorial monument.

⁵² Such note-taking is well-attested in ancient literature. Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.6.14, has Socrates confessing to the habit; Aristotle, *Top.* 1.14, instructs his readers to practice it; Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 8.336d, has a fictional character boasting about it; Cicero, *Inv.* admits to do it; and, most famously, Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 3.5.10, claims to have inherited 160 such notebooks from his uncle. Cf. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 73–79; van den Hoek, “Techniques of Quotation,” 225–27; Tiziano Dorandi, *Le stylet et la tablette. Dans le secret des auteurs antiques*, L'Âne d'or 12 (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2000), 27–31.

⁵³ The most famous example is, obviously, Julius Caesar, *Bell. gall.*

⁵⁴ Diodorus Siculus (ca. 90–30 BCE), *The Library of History* 1.4.4, claims to be based on the official records of the Roman empire.

⁵⁵ Lucian of Samosata, *How to Write History* 48, describes a typical writing process as a first stage of collecting the material, a second stage of weaving it into a draft (ὑπόμνημα), and a third stage of giving the writing beauty, polish, shape, and rhythm. Galen, *On My Own Books* 1, distinguishes between his finished works and the rough ὑπομνήματα he sometimes would share with friends and students. Cicero, *Att.* 1.19, claims to have written a *commentarium* in Greek, describing his time as a consul of Rome, and sent it to another writer in the hope that he will use it to write a biography of Cicero. Cf. Matthew D. C. Larsen, *Gospels Before the Book* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 11–19, 29–34.

⁵⁶ When Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.0.2, claims to have read the *hypomnēmata* of those who call themselves disciples of Valentinus, he might be referring to such collections.

⁵⁷ Aurélie Gribomont, “La question du titre dans la littérature Byzantine: Quelques pistes de réflexion autour du terme ὑπόμνημα,” *Byzantion* 82 (2012): 89–112, offers a nice overview of this development. Cf. Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 1–3.

⁵⁸ Turner, *Greek Papyri*, 114–15; Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 30–32.

quotations, lemmata, from the base text. If each chunk of text is short enough, the whole of the base text may be repeated within the commentary,⁵⁹ but when the passages are longer, commentary writers shorten their lemmata by quoting only the first line or phrase of a longer passage, quoting the first and last few words of their selected pericope, or summarizing or paraphrasing the text in their own words.⁶⁰ Although an ideal commentary would comment on every line of the base text, in practice many choose to comment only on a selected part of the text, and omit lines and passages of less interest to the commentator.⁶¹

Before his first lemma, the commentator would provide an introduction to the text, addressing a set of standard questions regarding its aim (σκοπός), its utility (χρήσιμον), its place (τάξις) in an order of study, the reason for its title (ἐπιγραφή), its authenticity, and its division into main arguments (κεφάλαια).⁶² These six questions are most clearly enumerated in an Aristotelian commentary by Ammonius Hermiae (ca. 435–517 CE),⁶³ but were established as a standard set long before that. Ronald E. Heine finds all six questions –

⁵⁹ For instance, P. Oxy. 19.2221 and P. Köln 5.206 repeats every single line of Nicander (second century BCE), *Ther.* 377–95. Cf. Schironi, “Greek Commentaries,” 410.

⁶⁰ Wilhelm Geerlings, “Die lateinisch-patristischen Kommentare,” in *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter: Beiträge zu seiner Erforschung*, eds. Wilhelm Geerlings and Christian Schulze, *Clavis commentariorum antiquitatis et medii aevi* 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 1–14, here 8–9, remarks that Augustine of Hippo (354–430 CE) regularly used paraphrases as a first step of his biblical interpretations. Silvia Fazzo, “Aristotelianism as a Commentary Tradition,” in *Philosophy, Science and Exegesis in Greek, Arabic and Latin Commentaries*, eds. Peter Adamson, Han Baltussen, and Martin William Francis Stone (London: Institute of Classical Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2004), 1–19, here 9, remarks that the lemmata in Alexander of Aphrodisias’s commentaries were often paraphrased, to a greater or lesser extent: “This paraphrastic element can consist simply of making explicit the logical and syntactical links, for example by replacing pronouns with nouns, clarifying what the main verb is, changing the word order, or replacing ambiguous expressions with more obvious and incontrovertible ones, usually borrowed from within Aristotle’s terminology.” Baltussen, *Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius*, 208 et passim, observes that Simplicius variously uses both reliable quotations and free paraphrases, as it fits the context. See also Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 202; Hadot, “Der fortlaufende philosophische Kommentar,” 184–85; Barbara Aland, “Die Paraphrase als Form gnostischer Verkündigung,” in *Was ist Gnosis? Studien zum frühen Christentum, zu Marcion und zur kaiserzeitlichen Philosophie*, WUNT 239 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 259–73, here 260–61, 273; Schironi, “Greek Commentaries,” 409–11.

⁶¹ Hartog, *Peshet and Hypomnema*, 109–12, suggests that commentaries that quote the entirety of the base text (such as P. Oxy. 8.1086) were primarily intended for educational contexts, those that shorten their lemmata (as does P. Oxy. 2.221v) for the exchange of ideas among literary critics.

⁶² Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 10–11; Heine, “Introductions,” 4–5.

⁶³ Ammonius, *Commentary on Aristotle’s Categories*, in CAG, vol. IV.4. 7.15–8.10. Cf. quotation and discussion in Berglund, “Understanding Origen,” 189–92.

albeit without Ammonius's technical vocabulary – in various works by Alexander of Aphrodisias, all from the vicinity of 200 CE.⁶⁴ He concludes that all six must have been known among literary critics at least at the beginning of the third century CE, and could have been part of Alexandrian literary-critical education at that time.⁶⁵ Unfortunately, we have no trace of an introduction to Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* on the Fourth Gospel.

By establishing the base text and its interpretation as separate entities, commentaries certify the authority of the base text, while simultaneously constructing it as an object that can be analyzed and discussed. This process opens the base text for multiple different interpretations – including the possibility of criticism and rejection.⁶⁶ The commentator must simultaneously praise the text as a valuable fixed object, and analyze it critically as in need of clarification and further discussion among experts, of which the commentator himself is the first among potential equals.⁶⁷ In addition to the actual comments, the commentator obviously had opportunities to impose his own perspective on the base text in both the selection of which parts to include and in the process of quoting or paraphrasing it.⁶⁸

When the works of earlier literary critics were used and re-used by later ones, the line between the repetition of traditional interpretations and new contributions were often blurred.⁶⁹ As any new commentary would appropriate anything its author found to be valuable in earlier commentaries, new and

⁶⁴ Heine, "Introductions," 3–7. Ilsetraut Hadot, *Simplicius: Commentaire sur les Catégories*, *Philosophia antiqua* 50 (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 29–36, identifies all six of Ammonius's questions in the works of Porphyry of Tyre (ca. 234–305 CE), among others, and Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 57–67, finds several of the questions in the fourth-century commentaries on Virgil by Aelius Donatus and Servius.

⁶⁵ Heine, "Introductions," 7. Cf. the longer discussion of the history of *schemata isagogica* before Origen in Mansfeld, *Prolegomena*, 10–57.

⁶⁶ Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 102–5.

⁶⁷ Ineke Sluiter, "The Dialectics of Genre: Some Aspects of Secondary Literature and Genre in Antiquity," in *Matrices of Genre: Authors, Canons, and Society*, eds. Mary Depew and Dirk Obbink, Center for Hellenic Studies Colloquia 4 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000), 183–203, here 187–92.

⁶⁸ Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 213–14, points out that the paraphrase in P. Ryl. 1.24 1:7–16 permits only one of two possible interpretations of the base text in Homer, *Il.* 4.306–7. Hector encourages a charioteer coming too close to another chariot to extend his spear, but does not specify whether to strike at an enemy or to punish a fellow soldier who has disturbed the formation – two rather different interpretations, of which the paraphrase only permits the latter.

⁶⁹ Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 59–63, argues that ancient commentaries cannot be considered the work of individuals, but should be thought of as expressions of an open-ended, continuous, and living tradition of scholarship.

inherited material would co-exist, often without discernible differentiation.⁷⁰ Even when the tradition offered multiple suggested solutions to a given exegetical problem (ἀπορίαι), commentators often present them all, without stating any preference of their own.⁷¹ Originality was not in high regard in antiquity, and even innovative commentators might emphasize the influence of their teachers in order to present their work in the context of an authoritative tradition.⁷² The line is further blurred whenever a commentary originates not from the written work of a literary critic, but from notes taken down by one of his students⁷³ – and therefore may be attributed, with equal accuracy, either to the teacher or the transcriber.⁷⁴

D. Early Christian Commentaries

It is not known who wrote the first Christian literary-critical commentary.⁷⁵ Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 263–340 CE) and Jerome (ca. 347–420 CE) briefly mention a number of early Christians as writers of what could conceivably constitute early Christian commentaries, but no extant material permits us to corroborate these claims.⁷⁶ One early candidate is Papias of Hierapolis (early

⁷⁰ Sluiter, “The Dialectics of Genre,” 190–92; Fazzo, “Aristotelianism as a Commentary Tradition,” 5. Fazzo adds that the earlier works so mined would eventually cease to be consulted and therefore cease to be copied.

⁷¹ Fazzo, “Aristotelianism as a Commentary Tradition,” 10–11; cf. Hartog, *Pesher and Hypomnema*, 130–31.

⁷² Baltussen, *Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius*, 23. Baltussen (29–32) remarks that Simplicius was unusual for his time in that he produced extensive commentaries in his own voice rather than lecture notes collected by his students, although (205–6) his works would be well suited to teach from.

⁷³ Porphyry, *Plot.* 3, for instance, reports that Plotinus’s lectures on Plato were taken down by his student Amelius of Tuscany, who eventually was able to present about one hundred such scrolls to his adoptive son Hostilianus Hesychius of Apamea. Cf. Sluiter, “The Dialectics of Genre,” 191.

⁷⁴ Marcel Richard, “ΑΠΟ ΦΩΝΗΣ,” *Byzantion* 20 (1950): 191–222, here 193, notes that even a commentary explicitly identified as taken down ἀπὸ φωνῆς (“from the voice”) of a predecessor may not contain the teacher’s *ipsissima verba*, but a more or less free rendition of his teachings. From the ninth century onwards, Richard (219–22) argues, the phrase even loses its oral connotation and can refer to any previous author. The oral origin of the work is more certain whenever it contains what appears to be genuine reactions from and interaction with the auditors, even though such material also may be literary fiction.

⁷⁵ Pace Geerlings, “Die lateinisch-patristischen Kommentare,” 1, who declares Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata* to be “den ersten christlichen Kommentar zu einer biblischen Schrift.” That is a possibility, but not a certainty.

⁷⁶ After evaluating these mentions, Katharina Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift In Daniele: Kommunikative Strategien eines frühchristlichen Kommentars*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 85 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 391, concludes that while Hippolytus

second century CE), who is said to have written five volumes of λογίων κυριακῶν ἐξηγήσεως (“explanations of the words of the Lord”).⁷⁷ The term ἐξηγήσεως clearly implies some kind of exegetical material, but not necessarily literary-critical, and it is not obvious whether Papias aims to explain individual sayings of Jesus,⁷⁸ write a gospel commentary,⁷⁹ construct a combination of gospel and commentary,⁸⁰ or even to present his own gospel narrative.⁸¹ Basilides, who was active in the first half of the second century,⁸² is said to have compiled twenty-four books regarding the gospel (εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον),⁸³ a writing which many scholars take to be a gospel commentary,⁸⁴ even

cannot have been the first to write Christian secondary literature, too little remains of his predecessors’ works to be usable for comparing genres.

⁷⁷ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 3.39.1.

⁷⁸ A. F. Walls, “Papias and Oral Tradition,” *VC* 21.3 (1967): 137–40; A. C. Perumalil, “Papias,” *ExpTim* 85.12 (1974): 361–66, here 363; Armin Daniel Baum, “Papias als Kommentator evangelischer Aussprüche Jesu: Erwägungen zur Art seines Werkes,” *NovT* 38.3 (1996): 257–76; Armin Daniel Baum, “Papias, der Vorzug der *Viva Vox* und die Evangelien-schriften,” *NTS* 44.1 (1998): 144–51.

⁷⁹ Charles E. Hill, “Papias of Hierapolis,” *ExpTim* 117.8 (2006): 309–15, here 310, holds that the five volumes contained interpretations and oral traditions relating to written Gospels. Monte A. Shanks, *Papias and the New Testament* (Eugene: Pickwick, 2013), 175, finds it reasonable to conclude that Papias’s writing was “to some degree a type of commentary.”

⁸⁰ Ulrich H. J. Körtner, *Papias von Hierapolis: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des frühen Christentums* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), 167, argues that Papias’s writing had a unique genre, with affinities both with gospel stories and Gospel commentaries. Dennis R. MacDonald, *Two Shipwrecked Gospels: The Logoi of Jesus and Papias’s Exposition of Logia about the Lord* (Atlanta: SBL, 2012), ix–x, characterizes Papias’s writing as an extended Gospel, combining Mark, Matthew and Q with a running commentary.

⁸¹ Richard Bauckham, “Did Papias Write History or Exegesis?,” *JTS* 65.2 (2014): 463–88, here 487–88, maintains that Papias wrote a narrative about Jesus rather than a commentary. Larsen, *Gospels Before the Book*, 87–93, argues that Papias ordered Mark’s raw material (ὑπομνήματα) into his own collection of Jesus stories, much like Matthew and Luke.

⁸² Clement, *Strom.* 7.17/106 dates Basilides’s activities to the reigns of Hadrian (117–138 CE) and Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE). Cf. Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 19–23; Kelhoffer, “Basilides’s Gospel and Exegetica (*Treatises*),” 77.

⁸³ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.7.7. Eusebius’s introduction in 4.7.6 gives the impression that his data originates in a written refutation (ἐλεγχος) of Basilides by a second-century here-siologist named Agrippa Castor. Cf. Andrew James Carriker, *The Library of Eusebius of Caesarea*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 67 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 180.

⁸⁴ Layton, “The Significance of Basilides in Ancient Christian Thought,” 143, views Basilides’s work as a commentary of both the Old and New Testaments, taking εὐαγγέλιον to refer to the Christian message as a whole rather than to a specific written work. Clemens Scholten, “Die alexandrinische Katechetenschule,” *JAC* 38 (1995): 16–37, here 37, assumes it to be a continuous commentary on the Gospel of Luke. Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 12–13, 325–26, takes it to be a commentary on Basilides’s own collection of gospel materials.

though there is no preserved text to analyze.⁸⁵ Jerome quotes from a *commentarius* by Hegesippus (ca. 110–180 CE), but the quotation does not exhibit any literary criticism.⁸⁶ Jerome remarks that Revelation was interpreted (*interpretatur*) by both Justin Martyr and Irenaeus – but this might merely imply that they used Revelation as a basis for their argumentation.⁸⁷ Melito of Sardis (d. ca. 180 CE) is also to have composed one book (*librum unum*) on Revelation, but its genre is not known.⁸⁸ Eusebius notes that Rhodon (fl. ca. 180–192 CE) wrote a ὑπόμνημα on the six days of creation, but he does not specify whether the term refers to a commentary or an unfinished reflection.⁸⁹ Jerome and Eusebius also mention ὑπομνήματα on the Gospel of Matthew and other scriptures by Symmachus (late second century), but it is not known whether these writings made use of literary criticism.⁹⁰ Eusebius’s claim that Clement’s teacher Pantaneus (fl. ca. 180–200 CE) has commented (ὑπομνηματιζόμενος) on the Christian δόγμα suggests notes on specific teachings rather than com-

Markschies, *Gnosis*, 79, argues that Basilides published “his own version of the Gospel of Luke with a relatively free commentary in 24 volumes.”

⁸⁵ Layton, “The Significance of Basilides in Ancient Christian Thought,” 147, argues that Basilides was a “literary critic,” “engaged in the typically Alexandrian literary occupation of expository exegesis,” but Ayres, “Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians,” 168, finds it striking that Basilides did not use literary criticism. Kelhoffer, “Basilides’s Gospel and *Exegetica* (*Treatises*),” 79, 90–94, points out that there is precious little evidence for the characterization of Basilides as an exegete of Christian Scripture, and finds it more probable that he wrote explanations (ἐξηγητικά) of, or treatises (*tractatum*) on, his own theological system than comments on a written gospel narrative.

⁸⁶ Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 2; cf. 22. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.23.3, 4.8.1, calls Hegesippus’s writings ὑπομνήματα, but none of his presentations in 2.23, 3.20, 4.8, and 4.22 give the impression that Hegesippus wrote literary-critical commentaries. David J. DeVore, “Opening the Canon of Martyr Narratives: Pre-Decian Martyrdom Discourse and the *Hypomnēmata* of Hegesippus,” *J ECS* 27.4 (2019): 579–609, here 588, reports that Hegesippus’s work has been characterized, by various scholars, as an apology, a proto-church history, a hagiography, or just notes, and points out that Eusebius’s historiographical bias makes it impossible to determine its genre with any certainty.

⁸⁷ Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 9. Given that Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.18.8, does not mention a commentary by Justin, only that he mentions Revelation in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, Jerome’s note could merely refer to Justin, *Dial.* 81. Similarly, Eusebius’s enumeration of Irenaeus’s works in *Hist. eccl.* 5.26 contains no commentaries, only the note that he made use of Hebrews and the Wisdom of Solomon.

⁸⁸ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 4.26.2; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 24. Melito’s extant comments on Gen 22, published in Stuart George Hall, *Melito of Sardis: On Pascha and Fragments*, Oxford Early Christian Texts (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), 74–77, cf. xxxii–xxxiii, are not literary-critical, and the associated “Fragment 12,” which does reflect on linguistic details, is dated considerably later by Hall, *Melito*, xxxiii–xxxiv.

⁸⁹ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.13.8. Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 37, calls this writing a *tractatus*.

⁹⁰ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.17; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 54.

ments on a text, although Jerome claims that several of Pantaneus's *commentarii* on Holy Scripture are extant in his day.⁹¹

A more substantiated possibility is provided by Irenaeus, who quotes an interpretation of the Johannine prologue by an anonymous author.⁹² On the one hand, this author clearly demonstrates literary-critical expertise, arguing that the evangelist intentionally uses homonyms to refer to two entities with one word, and using another scriptural passage – Eph 5:14 – to interpret John 1:4.⁹³ On the other hand, it is not clear that the analysis continued beyond the first five verses, and the format of the excerpt is more reminiscent of an exegetical analysis included within an argumentative work than of a commentary. A typical commentary starts with a lemma, continues with an analysis, and ends with presenting the author's conclusion, but this excerpt begins with a claim regarding what the evangelist is saying, then quotes the Fourth Gospel as support, and finally offers an analysis explaining how the claim is supported by the quotation.⁹⁴ It is therefore unlikely that this excerpt has been taken from a commentary.

More material is available in a four-volume commentary on Daniel from ca. 200 CE, commonly attributed to Hippolytus of Rome (ca. 170–235 CE). According to an extensive analysis by Katarina Bracht, this work offers comments on a series of consecutive excerpts from Daniel, which are generally quoted verbatim,⁹⁵ but its methodology is not literary-critical. Its author does not address the six standard introductory questions,⁹⁶ discusses no issues of textual criticism, offers few word studies or grammatical-rhetorical analyses, and his focus on what is reported in the text is not informed by any insight into ancient literary criticism.⁹⁷ Instead, his exegesis seems heavily influenced by Jewish exegetical traditions: Like the *peshar* commentaries in the Qumran literature, this text explains the Daniel narrative to a specific community of

⁹¹ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 5.10.4; Jerome, *Vir. ill.* 36.

⁹² Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.8.5. The reference is introduced with αὐταῖς λέξεσι λέγοντες οὕτως (“saying, in these very words”), and seems to be presented as a verbatim quotation, as also stated by Rasimus, “Ptolemaeus,” 159. An attribution to Ptolemy is present in the Latin translation, but not in the Greek excerpts provided by Epiphanius. See above, page 29 n. 87.

⁹³ Ayres, “Irenaeus vs. the Valentinians,” 155–64.

⁹⁴ Rasimus, “Ptolemaeus,” 159–62. notes that only those parts of the Johannine prologue that can be used for the author's argument receive comment.

⁹⁵ Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 83–84, 439–56, 395, documents a few exceptions, including paraphrases of the prayer and hymn offered in the fiery furnace (Dan 3:24–90) and some omissions and changes in Dan 11, where the author is using 1 Macc 1–11 as a corrective to the narrative. Cf. the overview in Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 401–5.

⁹⁶ Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 383, argues that the one-sentence introduction in Hippolytus, *Comm. Dan.* 1.1.1, does address the aim (σκοπός) of Daniel, while leaving the other five questions unaddressed, but the aim discussed there is clearly the aim of the commentary writer, not of the author of Daniel.

⁹⁷ Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 391–92.

believers, because he believes that the text contains a concealed message that can only be deciphered in his own time.⁹⁸ Bracht find these similarities to Jewish exegesis remarkable, given the author's negative attitude towards contemporary Judaism, and speculates that it might have reached him through Christian mediation rather than direct contact.⁹⁹ Klaus Berger also emphasizes similarities with Jewish traditions,¹⁰⁰ while Jean Daniélou characterizes Hippolytus's exegesis as more pastoral than methodological, and more liturgical than scholarly.¹⁰¹ Cristian Bădiliță regards the writing not as a commentary, but as a collection of homilies.¹⁰²

The wealth of references to what may be early Christian commentaries on scripture illuminates how important this form of writing eventually became in early Christian intellectual reflection and identity formation, and certifies the validity of studying its early development. The scarcity of extant literary-critical commentary texts to analyze makes Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* – to the extent that it can be reconstructed from Origen's references – a key witness to the early Christian uptake of ancient literary criticism.

⁹⁸ Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 376–80. Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 398, concludes: “Der Vergleich ergab, dass die Schrift als christlicher Bibelkommentar mit pescher- und homilieartigen Zügen zu charakterisieren ist, denn sie weist Nähe zum fortlaufenden Midrasch pescher, zu paganen kaiserzeitlichen fortlaufenden Philosophenkommentaren (soweit die dürftige Quellenlage hier Aussagen zulässt) und zur Homilie auf. Wesentliche Differenzen zeigt sie hingegen zu paganen und christlichen ‘gelehrten’ Kommentaren in philologisch-exegetischer Schultradition auf.”

⁹⁹ Bracht, *Hippolyts Schrift*, 392–93. Bracht's conclusion (*Hippolyts Schrift*, 398, cf. 393) that Hippolytus's commentary belongs neither to the Jewish nor literary-critical exegetical traditions, but must be placed in a genre of its own, exhibits a view of genres as predominantly concerned with categorization rather than interpretation. If Hippolytus, as Bracht seems to argue, uses mostly Jewish exegetical methodology to produce something close to Christian homilies, his commentary should be recognized as simultaneously participating in the two genres of pesher commentaries and collected Christian homilies. Cf. Berglund, “Understanding Origen,” 192–96.

¹⁰⁰ Klaus Berger, *Die Auferstehung des Propheten und die Erhöhung des Menschensohnes: Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Deutung des Geschehens Jesu in frühchristlichen Texten* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976), 52: “Hippolyt kommentiert in einer dem Midrasch pescher verwandten Weise Schriftstellen mit apokalyptischen Traditionen, die er aus jüdischer und christlicher Überlieferung außerhalb der Schrift empfangen hat.”

¹⁰¹ Jean Daniélou, *Message évangélique et culture hellénistique aux II^e et III^e siècles* (Desclée, 1961), 237.

¹⁰² Cristian Bădiliță, *Métamorphoses de l'antichrist chez les pères de l'église*, *Théologie historique* 116 (Paris: Beauchesne, 2005), 231–32. Notably, collections of early Christian homilies preached on consecutive passages of biblical books are not seldom included in modern discussion of early Christian commentaries. Geerlings, “Die lateinisch-patristischen Kommentare,” 3, estimates that at least one third of extant Latin Christian commentary literature originated as homilies.

E. Origen's Use of Literary Criticism

That Origen was an educated man, well versed in Greco-Roman learned culture, is documented not only in his own writings, but also in those of others.¹⁰³ Eusebius describes him as so highly educated in Greek language and literature that he once earned his living as a teacher of the subject,¹⁰⁴ and the heresiologist Epiphanius accuses him of poisoning his fellow Christians with Greek ideas.¹⁰⁵ His own disciple Gregory Thaumaturgus (ca. 213–270 CE) enthusiastically acclaims his combined knowledge of Greek and biblical literature,¹⁰⁶ while the Neoplatonic philosopher Porphyry of Tyre (ca. 234–305 CE) laments that he mixed his fine Greek education with foreign – that is, Jewish – fables.¹⁰⁷ In addition, the ancient literary-critical methodology described above is clearly discernible not only in Origen's commentaries – of which his *Commentary on the Gospel of John* is the prime example – but also in many of his other writings.¹⁰⁸ For instance, his treatise *Prayer* comprises a line-by-line analysis of the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9–13), as a basis for Origen's more practical advice regarding his readers' prayer life.¹⁰⁹

Early in the writing, Origen offers a word study on εὐχή (“prayer” or “vow”) and discusses how to discern in which sense it is used in different contexts.¹¹⁰ Later, he uses 1 Tim 2:1 to differentiate between four kinds of prayers: simple requests (δεήσεις), prayer in the sense of worship (προσευχαί), spiritual petitions (ἐντεύξεις), and thanksgiving (εὐχαριστία).¹¹¹ His most extensive word study, unsurprisingly enough, is offered on ἐπιούσιος, the strange adjective that qualifies the bread in Matt 6:11. Origen argues that the word is a neologism based on the concept of οὐσία (“essence”). The bread for which Jesus teaches his disciples to ask is therefore a kind of spiritual nourishment that lets human beings take part in eternal life:

¹⁰³ Analyses of Origen's education and intellectual activities include Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 287–92; Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, 164–69, 499 n. 10; Ronald E. Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 19–25, 60–64, 188–92; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 14–19, 33–40, 73–81; Bäbler, “Für Christen und Heiden,” 129–33, 139–45.

¹⁰⁴ Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.2.7–14.

¹⁰⁵ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 64.72.

¹⁰⁶ Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Orat. paneg.* 13.

¹⁰⁷ Porphyry, *Christ. apud Eusebius, Hist. eccl.* 6.19.5–8.

¹⁰⁸ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 85–89; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 42–63.

¹⁰⁹ Carl Johan Berglund, “Origenes exegetiska metodik i *Om bönen*,” in *Ad fontes: Festschrift till Olof Andrén på 100-årsdagen*, eds. Carl Johan Berglund and Daniel Gustafsson (Skellefteå: Artos, 2015), 45–56.

¹¹⁰ Origen, *Or.* 3.1–4.2.

¹¹¹ Origen, *Or.* 14.2–5.

"Essential" (ἐπιούσιος) is therefore the bread that inherently corresponds to the intellectual nature and its essence, gives health, vigor and strength to our souls, and grants a share of immortality itself (since the word of God is immortal) to those who eat it.¹¹²

Furthermore, Origen claims that this nourishment is what is suggested when the Old Testament speak of the "tree of life" or "wisdom of God." He is perfectly aware that other interpreters have suggested that ἐπιούσιος stems from the verb ἐπιέναι ("approach," "come upon") and refers to the bread of the world that is to come, but prefers his own explanation.¹¹³

In his grammatical–rhetorical analyses, Origen notes that certain forms of verbs may be read either as imperatives or as indicatives, identifies rhetorical figures such as metaphors, paraphrases, and hyperboles, and discusses who the speaker may be in cases where this is unclear.¹¹⁴ In his analysis of the Lord's Prayer, Origen feels the need to explain the use of the imperative mood rather than the more elegant optative. This he explains as influence from the Septuagint, which regularly utilizes imperative forms where optatives would fit:

Also, concerning the "hallowed be your name" and the following being written in the imperative (προστακτικός) form, it must be said that the translators also consistently used imperatives instead of optatives (εὐκτικός), as in the Psalms: "Let (γενηθήτω) the lying lips be silenced who speak lawlessness against the righteous" instead of "May" (γενηθείη)...¹¹⁵

Origen also speaks out against a claim, allegedly made by the Syrian apologist Tatian (ca. 120–180 CE), that God's creative commands in Genesis were to be read as prayers, not commands.¹¹⁶

¹¹² Origen, *Or.* 27.9 (GCS 2, 369.18–23): ἐπιούσιος τοῖνον ἄρτος ὁ τῇ φύσει τῇ λογικῇ καταλληλότερος καὶ τῇ οὐσίᾳ αὐτῇ συγγενής, ὑγίαν ἅμα καὶ εὐεξίαν καὶ ἰσχὺν περιποιῶν τῇ ψυχῇ καὶ τῆς ἰδίας ἀθανασίας (ἀθάνατος γὰρ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ) μεταδιδούς τῷ ἐσθίοντι αὐτοῦ.

¹¹³ Origen, *Or.* 27.10, 13. Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 58, notices that Origen, in his homilies on the Song of Songs, explains key words "either in the form of an extended paraphrase or through a study of the term from other biblical contexts." Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 141–53, argues with surprising emphasis that Origen was knowledgeable about both classical and biblical Greek usage – as if these spheres were completely separate. He also claims that Origen is especially keen on discerning the boundaries between the semantic domains of similar words in biblical usage.

¹¹⁴ Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 202–5, 223, 276–77; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 56–59, 61–62.

¹¹⁵ Origen, *Or.* 24.5 (GCS 2, 355.22–356.2): ἔτι περὶ τοῦ "ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου" καὶ τῶν ἐξῆς προστακτικῶν χαρακτηρὶ εἰρημένων λεκτέον ὅτι συνεχῶς προστακτικοῖς ἀντὶ εὐκτικῶν ἐχρήσαντο καὶ οἱ ἐρμηνεύσαντες, ὡς ἐν τοῖς ψαλμοῖς: "ἅλαλα γενηθήτω τὰ χεῖλη τὰ δόλια, τὰ λαλοῦντα κατὰ τοῦ δικαίου ἀνομίαν," ἀντὶ τοῦ γενηθείη....

¹¹⁶ Origen, *Or.* 24.5. Cf. Origen, *Cels.* 6.51; Tatian *apud* Clement, *Ecl.* 38.1; Fragments 7–8 in Tatianos, *Oratio ad graecos*, ed. Edvardus Schwartz, TUGAL 4:1 (Leipzig, 1888).

The analysis of what was reported in the text could expand into longer excursuses which showed off the literary critic's expertise in a wide area of subjects such as geography and topography, geometry, zoology, and medicine – all in order to clarify an aspect of the text. In Origen's case, this is the stage where his generally positive attitude towards Greek learning is at its most visible: he considers everything that can be used for biblical exegesis to be valuable.¹¹⁷ In reference to Matt 6:12, Origen discusses all kinds of debts (ὀφειλήματα) and obligations in human societies: to other Christians, to compatriots, to foreigners, to God, and to ourselves. His conclusion is that the forgiveness for debts referenced in the Lord's Prayer is a necessity, since we never can fulfill all our obligations completely.¹¹⁸

The critique of style and meter is primarily applicable to poetry. Origen laments that Septuagint translations of Hebrew poetry tend to ignore the meter, and exhorts future translators to, at the very least, preserve the original divisions between lines.¹¹⁹ Origen's criticism of style also includes pointing out where the ἀκολουθία ("inner logic") of the text is deficient. For instance, Origen notes that John 4:44 breaks the logical transition between vv. 43 and 45.¹²⁰ The inner logic is also at the forefront when Origen points out that one should not read ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ("in heaven") in Matt 6:9 as a physical location – the Creator cannot physically be contained within one of his own creations – but necessitates a metaphorical or allegorical interpretation. The same is true, Origen argues, when God in Gen 3:8 is said to walk in a garden.¹²¹

Frances Young provides an extensive exposition of the context and reception of Origen's exegetical methodology.¹²² She does not only locate it within the sphere of Greco-Roman education and learned culture,¹²³ but also explains its deep roots in Hellenistic literary, Jewish scriptural, and Roman legal exegesis,¹²⁴ and relates it to early Christian efforts to present the Bible as a superior alternative to classical Greek literature.¹²⁵ She illuminates how Origen's use of ancient literary criticism influenced Eusebius, Didymus the Blind

¹¹⁷ Marrou, *Histoire*, 232–34; Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 155–62, 186–88, 201–2, 240–43; Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 79, 85–89; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 49–54, 59–60. Cf. Origen *Ep. Greg.* 1 (SC 148, 186–89).

¹¹⁸ Origen, *Or.* 28.8.

¹¹⁹ Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 240–41, with reference to Codex Ambrosianus F. 126 sup.

¹²⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.54/367.

¹²¹ Origen, *Or.* 23.1.

¹²² Young, *Biblical Exegesis*.

¹²³ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 76–89.

¹²⁴ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 89–94.

¹²⁵ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 49–75, 285–95.

(ca. 313–398 CE), and eventually the whole tradition of Christian exegesis,¹²⁶ and excellently explains how the fourth-century Origenist controversy originated in a conflict on how best to express the ὑπόθεσις (“overall argument”) of the Christian canon as a whole.¹²⁷ What remains underexplored is how Origen's methodology relates to previous efforts, in the second half of the second century, to apply ancient literary criticism to early Christian writings.¹²⁸ It appears, after all, that he was deeply familiar with at least one such effort from his reading of Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* on the Gospel of John.

F. Origen's Reception of Heracleon

Most previous scholarship presumes that Origen views Heracleon solely as a “Gnostic” or “Valentinian” opponent, and refers to him solely for the purpose of refuting his supposedly heterodox interpretations of the Fourth Gospel.¹²⁹ Some scholars go so far as to call Origen's work a “countercommentary” to Heracleon's, suggesting that these refutations is the primary aim of the commentary.¹³⁰ Others present a more nuanced picture, taking note of the fact that Origen apparently finds Heracleon's exegesis worthy of serious consideration, and even that he occasionally agrees with Heracleon on minor points.¹³¹

¹²⁶ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 295–99. Cf. also Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture*, who traces the development through which ancient literary criticism became the foundation of Christian medieval literary culture.

¹²⁷ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 161–85.

¹²⁸ Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 82, erroneously claims that “No commentaries or works of a scholarly kind from the second century are extant among Christian literature.”

¹²⁹ Yvonne Janssens, “L'épisode de la samaritaine chez Héracléon,” in *Sacra pagina*, eds. J. Coppens, A. Descamps, and É. Massaux, BETL 12–13 (Paris: Librairie Lecoffre, 1959), 77–85, here 77, reports that Origen consistently refutes Heracleon. By focusing solely on negative stances, Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie*, 513–18, is able to vividly depict an Origen who takes every chance to present Heracleon's interpretations in negative light – ignoring all variance in the material.

¹³⁰ Francis Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 524–26, 528, argues that the aim of Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* is to overwrite Heracleon's work in order to erase it.

¹³¹ Cécile Blanc, “Le Commentaire d'Héracléon sur Jean 4 et 8,” *Aug 15* (1975): 81–124, here 82, acknowledges that Origen sometimes approves Heracleon's exegesis. Poffet, *Méthode*, 164–65, remarks that Origen disagrees with Heracleon on what Poffet calls “l'ontologie du gnostique” while other remarks by Heracleon are accepted. Jeffrey A. Trumbower, “Origen's Exegesis of John 8:19–53: The Struggle with Heracleon over the Idea of Fixed Natures,” *VC* 43.2 (1989): 138–54, here 141–42, notes that although Origen, in a few places, resorts to name-calling, “he usually feels the need to take Heracleon's exegesis seriously, and he provides substantive arguments to counter that exegesis.” Castellano, *Exégesis*, 149, argues that while Origen completely refutes Heracleon's theological premises, he shows great interest in seriously considering Heracleon's exegesis, and even expresses admiration

Two recent, more detailed studies of Origen's responses to Heracleon have revealed a whole range of stances – ranging from general renunciation and emphatic criticism, via considered disagreement and hypothetical approval, all the way to agreement and praise.¹³²

Heracleon's interpretation of Jesus's sandal, which John is not worthy to untie (John 1:27), as a symbol of the world is called ἀδρότερος ("strong") and μεγαλοφυέστερος ("ingenious").¹³³ Likewise, his observation that Jesus does not expect the Samaritan woman to trust him prior to John 4:12 is deemed πιθανώτατος ("most plausible") and μὴ ἀπίθανος ("not unconvincing").¹³⁴ On some points, Origen simply states that Heracleon is οὐ ψευδόμενος ("not mistaken"),¹³⁵ or that he argues οὐκ ἀπίθάνως ("not unconvincingly"),¹³⁶ or οὐ κακῶς ("not badly").¹³⁷ In a handful of responses, Origen recognizes that Heracleon makes a perfectly valid philological point, which nonetheless must be refuted since it may be used to support heterodox dogmatic views. Origen would be prepared to approve of Heracleon's interpretation if he was sure that Heracleon has not made his point in order to discredit the Old Testament or argue for the theory of the three human natures.¹³⁸ In a large number of responses, Origen expresses his disagreement with Heracleon in a considered and measured way that displays an interest for the philological details of Heracleon's exegesis. He points out that some of Heracleon's arguments need clarifications to be understood,¹³⁹ or need additional arguments in order to be persuasive,¹⁴⁰ or that they are imprecise,¹⁴¹ too simple,¹⁴² forced,¹⁴³ peculiar,¹⁴⁴

of certain of his interpretations. That Origen sometimes agrees with Heracleon is also noted by Attridge, "Heracleon and John," 62–63; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 114, 118.

¹³² Berglund, "Vacillating Stances"; Dunderberg, "Reconizing the Valentinians," 49–52. Dunderberg's scale ranges from "completely disagree," via "disagree," "neither agree nor disagree," and "agree," to "completely agree."

¹³³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/199.

¹³⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.16/95.

¹³⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/59.

¹³⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.23/126, 6.39/197, 6.39/198, 13.10/62. Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie*, 218–20, points out that Irenaeus warns against the πιθανολογία ("ability to persuade") of the heterodox, but Castellano, *Exégésis*, 139 n. 204, affirms that, for Origen, the term is positive.

¹³⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/115. Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 114, n. 26, lists several of these passages as interpretations that Origen accepted.

¹³⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/58; 13.10/61; 13.10/63–64; 13.20/120–21; 20.20/169–70. Cf. Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 114–15.

¹³⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.32/202, 13.49/324. In the former of these cases, Origen admits that Heracleon has managed to clarify the text to some degree (εἴπερ τι ἐδύνατο σαφῆ ποιῆσαι τὸν λόγον). Concerning the latter, Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 47, points out that Origen's remark does not amount to a refutation.

¹⁴⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/66, 13.19/116, 13.31/192, and possibly also 10.37/248.

¹⁴¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/115 (SC 157, 215): οὐ πάνυ δὲ ἐξητασμένως.

logically flawed,¹⁴⁵ or simply incorrect,¹⁴⁶ without resorting to emotional or belittling language.¹⁴⁷ In several responses, his criticism is considerably more emphatic,¹⁴⁸ and in a few cases it turns personal, general, and derogatory.¹⁴⁹

Which stance Origen takes in a particular case is determined not only by dogmatic differences, but also by Heracleon's exegetical procedure and presentation of evidence. Surely, there is no shortage of responses where Origen takes issue with what he believes to be Heracleon's dogmatic position, and this factor seems to be especially decisive in cases of hypothetical approval, where Origen's decision to disagree with Heracleon is reached on dogmatic grounds. However, in the cases where his responses are the most negative and derogatory, Origen is not pointing to heterodox dogmatic points with which he disagrees, but to Heracleon's allegedly deficient exegetical methodology. In one such example, Origen is visibly upset:

Compare how we have scrutinized these things to the limit of our strength, leaving none of the definitions stated to stand unsupported, with what Heracleon, even though he has no authority to say whatever he wants, simply declares!¹⁵⁰

Origen's attention to his predecessor's exegetical procedure, and lack thereof, implies that he views Heracleon not only as a heterodox teacher, but also as a fellow literary critic, from whom he expects a rigorous application of literary-critical methodology.¹⁵¹

Himself an expert in ancient literary criticism, Origen is well positioned to recognize – and criticize – Heracleon's use of the same methodology. His

¹⁴² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/198 (SC 157, 276): πολὺ δὲ ἀπλούστερον; 13.53/363 (SC 222, 234): ἀπλούστερον. Cf. Blanc, "Héracléon," 108–9; Poffet, *Méthode*, 273–74.

¹⁴³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.11/68 (SC 222, 66): Προδήλως δὲ ἐνταῦθα βιάζεται; 13.17/102 (SC 222, 84): ἰδίως καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἀκολουθίαν τῶν ῥητῶν; 13.38/248 (SC 222, 164): ταπεινῶς ἐξεληφθαι καὶ βεβιασμένως; 13.46/300 (SC 222, 196): βίαιος. Cf. 2.14/100, 2.21/137 (see below).

¹⁴⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.33/213 (SC 157, 510): ἰδιотρόπως. Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 140, notes that this response is not a clear rejection of Heracleon's interpretation.

¹⁴⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.31/188; 20.8/54; 20.23/198–200; 20.24/211–12; 20.28/253–54.

¹⁴⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.3.13 (SC 157, 138): οὐχ ὑγιῶς.

¹⁴⁷ Not all of these responses are fair. Poffet, *Méthode*, 240, cf. 249–50, points out how Origen in *Comm. Jo.* 13.41/272–73 first asks how Heracleon can presume that human souls can be "seen" – only to turn right around and criticize him for reading the next sentence too literally. Cf. Blanc, "Héracléon," 101.

¹⁴⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/100–101; 2.21/137–39; 6.20/113; 6.15/92; 6.39/199–200; 6.60/306–7; 13.17/102.

¹⁴⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.19/118; 10.33/215; 13.15/93; 19.14/89.

¹⁵⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/113 (SC 157, 212.44–214.48): Ὅσῃν δὲ βάσανον ἡμεῖς περὶ τούτων κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν πεποιεῖμεθα, οὐδένα ἀπαραμύθητον ἑώντες τῶν λεγομένων ὄρων, συγκρίναι τοῖς ὑπὸ Ἡρακλέωνος, ἅτε οὐκ ἐξουσίαν ἔχοντος τοῦ λέγειν ὃ βούλεται, ἀποφανθεῖσιν. Cf. the complete analysis of this passage (Passage 5 B) below.

¹⁵¹ Berglund, "Vacillating Stances," 567–69.

reception of Heracleon's comments therefore adds to Wucherpennig's identifications of ancient literary-critical methodology in Heracleon's exegesis,¹⁵² and further emphasizes the validity of using this tradition as the theoretical framework for a study of Heracleon.

In the next chapter, we will turn to the development of the method of this study, starting with describing the difficulties involved in analyzing ancient writings that are only known from references in later literature, and continuing with mapping out the quotation practices of the ancient authors Clement, Eusebius, and Origen.

¹⁵² Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 42–45, 55–100, 372–81.

Chapter 3

Quotation Analysis

This chapter discusses the difficulties of working with ancient Greco-Roman writings that are extant only in the form of quotations and references made by other authors, as a consequence of the ancient practice of adapting quotations to the style and argumentative needs of their new contexts. It develops a method for quotation analysis that in chapters 4–10 will be applied to all of Origen's references to Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*.

The chapter begins with a survey of ancient quotation practices, starting with quotations from well-known literature where most adaptations would be recognizable to readers, and successively moving closer to the time, place, genre, and social circle of Origen of Alexandria. The most important factors for estimating the extent of adaptations made to a particular quotation will be identified as the wording of the formula by which the quotation is introduced and attributed to the quoted author, the quotation habits of the individual quoting author, his view of the quoted author as a rival, an authority or a provider of source material, and the aims and methods of the quoted author in the context into which the quotation is inserted. The quotation practices of two ancient authors – Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Caesarea – will be studied in more detail in order to provide comparative material for Origen's attribution formulas. An analysis of Origen's quotation practices will assess whether his quotation practices included verbatim quotations, and how such quotations were attributed.¹

Finally, a set of criteria will be presented by which four different modes of attribution in Origen's interactions with Heracleon may be discerned: (1) verbatim quotations, which present the attributed statements as lifted verbatim or almost verbatim from Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*; (2) summaries, in which Origen claims to present what Heracleon has written without necessarily transmitting his actual words; (3) explanatory paraphrases, in which Origen presents the ideas he infers to be underlying Heracleon's reasoning; and (4) mere assertions of Heracleon's views with no claimed basis in his writing. While only the first of these four categories indicates a claim to reflect the actual words used by Heracleon, the second category also purports to be trustworthy material for studying his methods, views, and interpretations.

¹ An earlier version of this argument is published in Berglund, "Evaluating Quotations."

Within the last two categories, Origen may be interacting not primarily with Heracleon, but with later readers of Heracleon's work – contemporaries of Origen who advocate views that may or may not be present in Heracleon's writing, but with which Origen clearly disagrees.²

A. Ancient Quotation Practices

Within a larger category of intertextual practices including paraphrase, summary, allusion, and reminiscence, we may define a quotation as any instance where a recognizable sequence of words is taken from the quoted text and incorporated, with or without modification, into the quoting text.³ This can be done for several different reasons. The quoted words might provide a reminiscence of their original context, the borrowed authority of their original author, a well-put formulation of the quoting author's point, or some other value to the quoting text.⁴ Whereas there is a modern presupposition that a quotation should be reproduced verbatim from the original, properly delimited with quotation marks, attributed to the correct author, and accompanied by a reference specifying where it can be checked, ancient intellectuals had different standards. Sometimes they found it beneficial to mark the quoted material as foreign, and sometimes not. Sometimes they found great value in naming the original author; sometimes they found it better to leave that out.⁵

Ancient authors do not enjoy the convenience and precision of the modern quotation marks,⁶ but have to rely on words.⁷ To introduce a quotation, they

² These criteria have been previously presented in Berglund, "Discerning Quotations."

³ Cf. the discussion in Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 3–6. She shares my concern of delimiting the concept of a quotation from the looser allusion and reference, but wants also to exclude unmarked but recognizable repetition of known verbiage.

⁴ Christopher Pelling, "Fun with Fragments: Athenaeus and the Historians," in *Athenaeus and His World: Reading Greek Culture in the Roman Empire*, eds. David Braund and John Wilkins (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), 171–90, here 171–75, explores the use of quotations to provide smooth transitions from one subject to the next.

⁵ Aulus Gellius, *Noct. att.* 2.6.16, equates naming the author of a quotation with lauding him. Pelling, "Fun with Fragments: Athenaeus and the Historians," 185–88, discusses the idea of referencing the authority most appropriate for the subject matter, rather than the specific source you happen to be using. Baltussen, *Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius*, 44, demonstrates that one of Simplicius's motivations for quoting his predecessors at length was the rarity of extant copies of their works. Such preservatory aims are not the norm in ancient quotation practice.

⁶ The various forms of modern quotation marks seem to originate with the *diple*, a chevron-like mark used in the margins of ancient manuscripts to highlight particularly interesting passages including, but not limited to, the lemmata – the running quotations from a source text upon which a commentary is generally based. The thirteenth-century manuscript in which Origen's *Commentary* is preserved exhibits an interesting intermedi-

typically combine a *verbum dicendi* (“verb of speaking”) such as φησὶν or λέγει (“he says”) with a name or designation for the author to whom they intend to attribute the statement. A simple ὥδι or οὕτως (“so,” “thus”) may be used synonymously. Optionally, a verb such as γράφω (“write”) could be used to indicate that the words are taken from a written source, and phrases such as ἕως (“up to”) or μετ’ ὀλίγα (“and shortly after”) can be used to mark an omission within the quotation. Consistency is not always a feature of these formulas, and the end-points of quotations are often not indicated at all.⁸

When working with material preserved only in the form of quotations, the possibilities for errors are large. Attributions may misrepresent the source. Direct quotations may be inaccurate. Paraphrases may distort or even falsify the original. When book numbers and other numerals are cited, they have a high risk of corruption in scribal transmission. Ancient authors do not always clearly specify what they intend to attribute to their sources, and it may be extremely complex to discern quoted text from the surrounding prose.⁹

ate form, where curved double-line marks similar to modern double quotation marks are placed in the margins of the manuscript, next to lemmata from the Fourth Gospel – but not where Heracleon is referenced. For similar examples and discussion, see Patrick McGurk, “Citation Marks in Early Latin Manuscripts,” *Scriptorium* 15 (1961): 3–13, 437–42; Kathleen McNamee, *Sigla and Select Marginalia in Greek Literary Papyri*, Papyrologica Bruxellensia 26 (Brussels: Fondation égyptologique Reine Élisabeth, 1992), 11, 32–34; Ruth H. Finnegan, *Why Do We Quote? The Culture and History of Quotation* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2011), 86–95. While other scholars have found the use of diplēs difficult to explain, Ulrich Schmid, “Die Diplē: Einführung,” in *Von der Septuaginta zum Neuen Testament: Textgeschichtliche Erörterungen*, eds. Martin Karrer, Siegfried Kreuzer, and Marcus Sigismund, ANTF 43 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 77–81, argues that in several manuscripts including P. Berol. 9782, P. Oxy 3.405, and several biblical codices, it is clear that they primarily serve the use of marking quotations. Marcus Sigismund, “Die Diplē als Zitatmarkierung in den ‘großen’ Unzialcodices – Versuch eines Fazits,” in *Von der Septuaginta zum Neuen Testament: Textgeschichtliche Erörterungen*, eds. Martin Karrer, Siegfried Kreuzer, and Marcus Sigismund, ANTF 43 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 149–52, remarks that although diplēs are used to mark many cases where attribution formulas appear in Codices Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus and Ephraimi rescriptus, we do not know whether these marks were added in the production of the codices or later by their readers. While the marks in Sinaiticus are consistently made, Alexandrinus and Ephraemi display a much larger variance. Sigismund suggests that the practice started in some fourth-century *scriptoria*, and were spread by later users who marked up the codices they were reading.

⁷ The formulas described below can be viewed as a special case of the more general concept of a linguistic transition marker, defined by Jonas Holmstrand, *Markers and Meaning in Paul: An Analysis of 1 Thessalonians, Philippians and Galatians*, ConBNT 28 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1997), 20–22, as a linguistic phenomenon that signals the end or beginning of a unit in the text, and either prepares the reader for a change in topic or confirms that such a change has taken place.

⁸ Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 6, 36–37; Brunt, “Historical Fragments,” 478–79.

⁹ Tim J. Cornell, *The Fragments of the Roman Historians*. Vol. 1, *Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 15–16, 44–45; Franco Montanari, “The Fragments of Hel-

I. Quotations Adapted to New Contexts

Comparisons of texts preserved both in ancient quotations and in a direct tradition reveal that ancient authors frequently adapt the text they quote. Superfluous or irrelevant words and phrases are omitted. Dated word choices are modernized. Clarifying words and phrases are added. Verbs are adapted to fit grammatically into the surrounding text. Quotations are cut mid-sentence, to include only what the quoting author finds most useful, even if this distorts the meaning of the quotation. Sometimes words from two different source texts are combined into what looks like one quotation. When a short paraphrase is added to the beginning of a quotation to give the reader a sense of context, or when a quotation precedes a summary of a longer passage, the boundaries between these different modes of attribution are not easily visible to the modern reader.¹⁰

Not all differences between a quotation and its source text are intentional changes made by the quoting author. He might have used a different version of the source text than what we have available, or quoted from an anthology in which the text appeared in an adapted form, or the change might have been introduced in the subsequent copying of his manuscript.¹¹ Traditionally, differences in short quotations have been blamed on faulty memory, and those in longer quotations on carelessness.¹² But ancient authors were steeped in a culture of rhetoric, and the need to argue their case often took precedence to their interest in accurately reproducing the words of the quoted text. Tim J. Cornell finds that ancient literary critics, such as Charisius (fourth century CE), Diomedes (late fourth century CE), and Priscian (fl. ca. 500 CE), always quote verbatim and frequently give specific references, probably due to the linguistic purposes of their works. By contrast, ancient historians, such as Livy (ca. 60 BCE–15 CE), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (ca. 60 BCE–7 CE), and Tacitus (ca. 56–120 CE), and biographers, such as Suetonius (ca. 69–122 CE)

lenistic Scholarship,” in *Collecting Fragments*, ed. Glenn W. Most, *Aporemata 1* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 273–88, here 281.

¹⁰ Brunt, “Historical Fragments,” 479–84; John Whittaker, “The Value of Indirect Tradition in the Establishment of Greek Philosophical Texts or the Art of Misquotation,” in *Editing Greek and Latin Texts: Papers given at the Twenty-Third Annual Conference on Editorial Problems, University of Toronto, 6–7 November 1987* (New York: AMS Press, 1989), 63–95, here 71, 84–85; Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 4–5; Dominique Lenfant, “The Study of Intermediate Authors and Its Role in the Interpretation of Historical Fragments,” *Ancient Society* 43 (2013): 289–305, here 295–301.

¹¹ Pelling, “Fun with Fragments: Athenaeus and the Historians,” 188–90, argues that although some of the differences discernible in ancient quotations are similar to typical manuscript variants, most are not.

¹² For an example, see William C. Helmbold and Edward N. O’Neil, *Plutarch’s Quotations*, *Philological Monographs of the American Philological Association* 19 (Baltimore, 1959), ix.

and Plutarch (ca. 46–120 CE), only rarely quote verbatim or give specific references, since their interest lies mainly in matters of historical fact. Most authors fall somewhere between these extremes, Cornell finds.¹³

Porphry is one ancient author who considered himself entitled to adapt quoted text to his own purposes. In his *Philosophy from Oracles* – which itself is mainly preserved in the form of quotations in Eusebius’s *Praeparatio Evangelica* – he bases his argument on a collection of divine oracles that he may or may not have gathered himself. After appealing to the gods as witnesses that he has not added or removed anything from the νοῦς (“sense”) of the oracles, he explicitly states that he considers himself free to alter their λέξις (“wording”), in order to correct a phrase, improve clarity, complete the meter, or leave out anything that does not contribute to his own purpose.¹⁴

I have neither added, nor taken away anything from the meanings of the oracles, except where I have corrected or clarified a mistaken wording, completed the failing meter or crossed out something that did not contribute to the purpose, so that I have preserved the pure sense of what was said.¹⁵

In the reception of this passage, Theodoret of Cyrhus (ca. 393–466 CE) is rather upset that Porphyry accuses the divine Apollo of incorrect usage, lack of clarity, and halting meter, but has no word of criticism for Porphyry’s adaptations of his quotations. Neither has Eusebius.¹⁶ This lack of criticism suggests that quotation practices similar to Porphyry’s were common among ancient Greek authors.

II. Quotations from Well-Known Literature

When ancient authors quote from well-known works such as the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the Jewish scriptures,¹⁷ many of their adaptations would have

¹³ Cornell, *Fragments*, 7, 15, 38–40.

¹⁴ This and similar examples are further discussed in Whittaker, “Indirect Tradition,” 75; Sabrina Inowlocki, “‘Neither Adding nor Omitting Anything’: Josephus’ Promise Not to Modify the Scriptures in Greek and Latin Context,” *Journal of Jewish Studies* 56.1 (2005): 48–65, here 49, 64–65; Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 40–42; Aaron P. Johnson, *Religion and Identity in Porphyry of Tyre: The Limits of Hellenism in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 24–27, 172–78.

¹⁵ Porphyry, *Philos. orac.* 303F (Smith) *apud* Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 4.7.1 (SC 262, 120.3–9): οὐδὲν οὔτε προστέθεικα οὔτε ἀφείλον τῶν χρησθέντων νοημάτων, εἰ μή που λέξιν ἡμαρτημένην διώρθωσα ἢ πρὸς τὸ σαφέστερον μεταβέβληκα, ἢ τὸ μέτρον ἐλλείπον ἀνεπλήρωσα, ἢ τι τῶν μὴ πρὸς τὴν πρόθεσιν συντεινόντων διέγραψα, ὥς τὸν γε νοῦν ἀκραιφνῆ τῶν ρηθέντων διετήρησα.

¹⁶ Whittaker, “Indirect Tradition,” 70, 94–95.

¹⁷ Even if Homer and the Jewish scriptures did not have identical standings in their respective communities, Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 270–71, and Maren R. Niehoff, “Why Compare Homer’s Readers to Biblical Readers?,” in *Homer and the Bible in the Eyes of Ancient Interpreters*, *Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture* 16 (Leiden: Brill,

been quite evident to some of their readers, and can be used to gauge the perceived acceptability of such practices.

Christopher D. Stanley has compared Homeric quotations in four Greek authors to the vulgate Homeric tradition.¹⁸ He finds omissions and grammatical changes aimed at creating a more smoothly flowing text to be frequent adaptations. Word additions and substitutions are less common, and changes in word order almost unknown. The changes seem to reflect literary artistry rather than memory lapses,¹⁹ an impression strengthened by the observation that the authors also take care to provide variation in their attribution formulas. Since Plutarch is found to adapt more than half of his quotations in one writing, but only one in sixteen in another, Stanley argues that the adaptations vary not only with author, but also from writing to writing.²⁰

The same practices of adapting quotations recur in Jewish literature.²¹ Stanley finds problematic portions to be omitted or replaced, grammar adapted, explanatory remarks added, and word order altered to highlight a particular word or phrase. The amount of adaptation seems unrelated to the genre of the quoting text. Philo's adaptations are often quite obvious, Stanley argues, in that interpretive glosses are inserted, overly literal expressions replaced with his own spiritual interpretations, and recently made quotations repeated in slightly different words.²² Similar repetitions in Origen's references to Heraclitus may provide insight into how his attribution formulas vary with his amount of adaptations.

Stanley has also found that the apostle Paul frequently adapts his quotations from the Jewish scriptures. Paul recurrently omits problematic or irrelevant material, replaces troublesome word choices, reverses word order to accentuate what he wants to use, and adjusts the grammar to fit his own sentence structure. Stanley finds such adaptations to occur in the majority of

2012), 3–14, here 5, have noted similar interpretive strategies on both sides of the conventional dichotomy between Greek and Jewish. Both sets of texts exercised a formative influence on their respective societies. Both were widely regarded as unique revelations of divine truth, often in need of allegorical interpretation. Both had central roles in education, and were widely cited in argumentation. And both were established in a relatively standard text-form.

¹⁸ He references Strabo, *Geogr.*, Pseudo-Longinus, *Subl.*, Heraclitus, *All.*, and Plutarch, *Mor.*

¹⁹ This point is also made by Jeff Mitscherling, who studies a passage (*Leg.* 777A1–2) where Plato changes ἀρετῆς to νόου when quoting a line from Homer (*Od.* 17.322–23) and concludes that since νόου is ill-fitting in Homer's context, but well-fitting in Plato's, the change is likely intentional – and recognizable by Plato's audience. See Jeff Mitscherling, "Plato's Misquotation of the Poets," *CQ* 55.01 (2005): 295–98.

²⁰ Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 271–74, 289–91.

²¹ Stanley analyzes Philo, *Ebr.*, Philo, *Leg.*, 1QS, 1QM, CD, 4QFlor (4Q174), 4QTest (4Q175), 4QcommGen A (4Q252, formerly 4QPBless), and 11QMelch (11Q13).

²² Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 304–5, 323–36.

Paul's quotations, some of which are reduced to their essential elements in order to make a succinct point, and to avoid directing the reader's attention to aspects of the quoted text that might stand in the way of Paul's argument. Stanley finds no correlation between the amount of adaptation made and Paul's attribution formula: a verbatim quotation can be offered without any introduction at all (cf. 1 Cor 10:26), and a formulaic phrase can be used to introduce a text that is not found in the Hebrew Bible (cf. 1 Cor 2:9). Neither can he detect any correlation between adherence to the quotation's original wording and faithfulness to its original context: highly adapted texts can still be applied very literally (cf. Rom 9:9), while verbatim quotations can be integrated into Paul's argument in a way that is foreign to their original contexts (cf. Rom 10:18).²³

Stanley concludes that Greek authors, Jewish authors, and Paul exhibit the same practices of adapting their quotations, and that this phenomenon occurs to the extent preferable to the individual author at the time of writing. Some authors almost always reproduce their sources verbatim; others adapt them much more frequently. A single author could readily place verbatim and adapted quotations side by side, or quote from the same work using different modes at different times. To Stanley, the choice of approach seems to be based solely on how well the original wording matches the point that the quoting author wants to make. Since no efforts are made to conceal adaptations to quotations from well-known literature, Stanley argues that such adaptations were common and well accepted throughout the Greco-Roman world.²⁴ We will therefore have to expect adaptations to be made to quotations in a wide array of ancient literature, to an extent mainly dependent on the preferences of the individual author.

III. *Reconstructing Lost Works from Quotations*

The need to consider not only the quoting author's quotation habits, but also his view of the quoted author, is apparent from reconstructions of lost historiography. Only a small fraction of all historiographical works written in antiquity have come down to us via manuscript transmission. Many other texts are only partially preserved in the form of quotations and references in later works, quotations that often appear separated from their original contexts and placed in a new critical or polemical setting. This is especially true for those quotations that are attributed to a named author, since ancient historians generally preferred an anonymous reference when they agreed with the quoted author, and only cited their precursor's name in order to disagree

²³ Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 69–71, 78–79, 252–64.

²⁴ Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 258–64, 289–91, 337, 342–43.

or display their own superiority.²⁵ In addition, alterations of the sense of a quotation are more common in polemical circumstances.²⁶

In an effort to reconstruct the writings of Ctesias of Cnidus (fifth–fourth century BCE) from quotations in about fifty ancient authors, Dominique Lenfant has scrutinized how ancient authors adapt quotations from Herodotus (484–425 BCE). She finds the extent of adaptation to depend heavily on the preferences of the quoting author, as well as his view of the predecessor as an authority, a rival, or merely a provider of source material. The selection of material is highly non-representative and privileges the picturesque, bizarre or erroneous. It consistently decouples the reported information from its original context, and almost always erases any reservations that Herodotus might have toward what he reports.²⁷ Verbatim quotations are virtually absent from her material, which mostly consists of paraphrases and summaries.²⁸ Such summaries may reflect the content of their source but not the style or vocabulary of the quoted author. Any particular word may be chosen by the quoting rather than the quoted author, and an explanatory insertion may be written by either of the parties involved.²⁹ It will therefore be necessary to discern between Origen’s summaries and verbatim quotations before drawing any conclusions regarding Heracleon’s vocabulary.

Lenfant argues that to evaluate the dependability of ancient quotations, one must study both the habits of the individual quoting author, and the aims and methods used in the context in which the quotation appears. She urges her readers to avoid blind confidence in scholarly reconstructions of quoted material, blanket skepticism toward such efforts, and the temptation to vacillate between confidence and skepticism in accordance to one’s present needs. Both she and Guido Schepens stress the importance, for any presentation of quoted literature, to consider the intermediary role of the quoting author – not only as an introductory reservation, but by evaluating possible adaptations to every individual quotation.³⁰

One of the rare instances where Athenaeus of Naucratis (second–third centuries CE) criticizes Herodotus may illustrate the amount of adaptation present in his references:³¹

²⁵ Schepens, “Fragments,” 144–46, 166–67.

²⁶ Brunt, “Historical Fragments,” 483; Mansfeld, “Sources,” 16–19.

²⁷ This point is also observed by Brunt, “Historical Fragments,” 480–81.

²⁸ Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 47, errantly claims that Lenfant suggests that verbatim quotations did not exist at all in ancient literature.

²⁹ Lenfant, “Peut-on se fier,” 106, 119–21; Lenfant, “Intermediate Authors,” 293–301.

³⁰ Lenfant, “Peut-on se fier,” 106, 119–21; Lenfant, “Intermediate Authors,” 291–303; Schepens, “Fragments,” 168.

³¹ What follows goes beyond Lenfant’s analysis of the same material in Lenfant, “Peut-on se fier,” 115.

This is also why they in this community throw anklebones, dance, and play ball. Herodotus incorrectly says (οὐ καλῶς εἶρηκεν) that these games were invented because of a famine during the reign of Atys, for the heroic [epics] are older than those times.³²

This reference starts with the name of the original author, followed by the short negative value judgment οὐ καλῶς (“incorrectly”). A *verbum dicendi*, εἶρηκεν, marks the beginning of a seven-word summary of Herodotus’s statement, referring back to the games of the previous sentence. A motivation for the negative value judgment follows: Herodotus is wrong, since such games are described already in the *Odyssey*, which certainly predates the reign of Atys. Athenaeus is clearly referencing Herodotus, who does have a fifteen-line story of how the Lydians claim to have invented the games of dice (κύβοι), anklebones (ἀστράγαλοι), and ball (σφαῖρα) in order to take their minds off their hunger during a famine in the reign of Atys. The beginning of this story reads:

The Lydians themselves also maintain that the games that are now established among both them and the Greeks were invented by them. At the same time as they were invented among them, they also claim to have settled in Tyrrhenia. According to how it is told among them, there was a severe famine in all of Lydia when Atys, son of Manes, ruled....³³

We can safely conclude that this story is what Athenaeus is summarizing, and his words turn out to be a rather accurate summary of the Lydians’ story. What is missing, apart from some differences in which games are mentioned, is Herodotus’s clear reservation that he is only reporting a claim made by the Lydians, not endorsing it. If Heracleon, in a similar way, reported certain interpretations of the Fourth Gospel without endorsing them, Origen may not have preserved this distinction.³⁴

Lenfant identifies four different modes of attribution in Athenaeus’s references to Herodotus: In lexical references to specific words used by Herodotus, the word in question is grammatically adapted to Athenaeus’s phrase, and the attribution made with verbs such as μνημονεύω (“mention”) or καλέω (“call”). In quotations, which typically are introduced by φησὶν (“he says”) and presented in direct speech, the differences are comparable to manuscript

³² Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 1.33/19a (LCL 204, 104): Ἡρόδοτος δὲ οὐ καλῶς εἶρηκεν ἐπὶ Ἄττος διὰ λιμὸν εὐρεθῆναι τὰς παιδιάς: πρεσβεύει γὰρ τοῖς χρόνοις τὰ ἡρωικά. The referent of the neutral plural adjective ἡρωικά has to be inferred; the neutral τὰ ἔπη can be supplied from the context of the *Odyssey*, which is mentioned previously in the passage.

³³ Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.94.4–9 (LCL 117, 122): Φασὶ δὲ αὐτοὶ Λυδοὶ καὶ τὰς παιγνίας τὰς νῦν σφίσι τε καὶ Ἕλλησι κατεστειώσας ἐωυτῶν ἐξεύρημα γενέσθαι. Ἄμα δὲ ταύτας τε ἐξευρεθῆναι παρὰ σφίσι λέγουσι καὶ Τυρσηνίην ἀποικίσαι, ὧδε περὶ αὐτῶν λέγοντες. Ἐπὶ Ἄττος τοῦ Μάνεω βασιλέος σιτοδείην ἰσχυρὴν ἀνὰ τὴν Λυδίην πᾶσαν γενέσθαι.

³⁴ Pelling, “Fun with Fragments: Athenaeus and the Historians,” 185–86, describes a similar case where Athenaeus drops Herodotus’s declaration that certain information about the Spartiates simply repeats what they say themselves.

variants. Summaries, in which Athenaeus shortens Herodotus's descriptions considerably, are typically introduced by the verb ἱστορέω (here: "report"). And in paraphrases, Athenaeus rephrases Herodotus's data in his own words, which may be indicated by the inserted phrase ὡς φησὶν Ἡρόδοτος ("as Herodotus says"). In one case, she notes that an attribution formula is followed by a few words of paraphrase before a verbatim quotation begins; in another, she finds that a φησὶν inserted in the middle of a sentence marks the transition from paraphrase to verbatim quotation. All in all, Lenfant finds the criteria she is able to discern to be rather trustworthy – they appear to be misleading only in two or three cases out of forty-three – and surmises that the same guidelines may be applicable to Athenaeus's interactions with lesser known historians. She also remarks that the selection of material from Herodotus reflects Athenaeus's themes, and is in no way representative for Herodotus's work in general.³⁵ It should be possible to identify similar criteria for different modes of attribution in Origen, and the same reservation about the selection of material applies to his references to Heracleon.

Han Baltussen identifies two particular verbs used by Simplicius, in addition to *verba dicendi*, to introduce verbatim quotations. The first is παρατίθημι ("present"), a verb that is also used by other commentators to mean "quote". The other is ἀκούω ("hear," "listen"), which in combination with a reference to what a predecessor has said or written becomes, in Simplicius's quotation practice, an emphasized introduction to a fairly accurate quotation.³⁶

The reliability of attributions of particular views may also depend on the status of the attributed author. A saying attributed to the founder of a certain philosophical school may just as likely have been made by any of his followers; if the view expressed was considered representative for the school, the quoting author may have found it more appropriate to credit the teacher rather than the student. This phenomenon also implies that a statement attributed to a lesser-known figure is not necessarily representative for the thinking of this individual, as his name is more likely to have been preserved in connection to a peripheral view that was atypical for his school. The mention of a name does not necessarily imply that a writing by this individual is the quoting author's source, since he may have used an intermediary source.

³⁵ Dominique Lenfant, "Les 'fragments' d'Hérodote dans les *Deipnosophistes*," in *Athénée et les fragments d'historiens*, ed. Dominique Lenfant, Études d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne (Paris: de Boccard, 2007), 43–72, here 45–53, 68–70. In a similar study of Athenaeus's references to Xenophon, Christine Maisonneuve, "Les 'fragments' de Xénophon dans les *Deipnosophistes*," in *Athénée et les fragments d'historiens*, ed. Dominique Lenfant, Études d'archéologie et d'histoire ancienne (Paris: de Boccard, 2007), 73–106, finds that Athenaeus quotes faithfully when his subject is words or things, but less so when he discusses humans or banquets.

³⁶ Baltussen, *Philosophy and Exegesis in Simplicius*, 45–46.

On the other hand, an individual writing to which the quoting author had access may be the source not only to explicitly attributed views and statements, but also to unattributed material in the same context. Ancient authors do not always clearly distinguish their own material from what they take from others.³⁷

In Origen's case, it is highly probable that he had direct access to Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* at some point. His mentor Ambrose, who provided him with ample supplies for his intellectual endeavors, is said to be a former follower of Valentinus, and would in all probability have both the means and the occasion to provide him with a copy.³⁸

IV. Quotations in Clement of Alexandria

Since the above survey has identified the preferences of the individual quoting author as a key factor in evaluating the amount of adaptation made to any given quotation, we will now proceed to consider the quotation practices of individual authors of some proximity to Origen.

Clement of Alexandria was a prolific writer whose quotation habits may well have influenced Origen's,³⁹ as he preceded Origen as a Christian teacher in Alexandria – and may even have taught Origen himself for a short period around 200 CE.⁴⁰ According to the findings of Annewies van den Hoek, Clement's most frequently used attribution formula consists of either a *verbum dicendi* or a κατὰ, in both cases followed by the name of the quoted author. Verbatim quotations are indicated explicitly in Clement's attribution formulas by use of a term such as κατὰ λέξιν ("literally"), ὡδὲ πως ("in the following way"), ἀντικρυς ("outright"), διαρρήδην ("expressly"), or αὐταῖς λέξεσιν ("with the same words"). Van den Hoek finds κατὰ λέξιν to be particularly clear, since it appears only rarely but always is accompanied with a name of the quoted author and a title of the writing used.⁴¹

³⁷ Richard Goulet, "Les références chez Diogène Laërce: Sources ou autorités?," in *Titres et articulations du texte dans les œuvres antiques*, ed. Jean Claude Fredouille, Collection des études augustiniennes. Série Antiquité 152 (Paris: Inst d'Etudes Augustiniennes, 1997), 149–66; Mansfeld, "Sources," 26–27; Cornell, *Fragments*, 44–45.

³⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.2/6–12; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.23.1–2. Cf. Heine, *Origen*, 89–90.

³⁹ Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 220, holds that Eusebius of Caesarea positions his work within an Alexandrian Christian intellectual tradition exemplified by Clement and Origen, and that his choice of sources and methodology reflects his inheritance from these predecessors. David T. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1993), 335–42, describes the link from Clement via Origen to Eusebius as the funnel through which the intellectual inheritance from Hellenistic Judaism impacted later Christian authors. It appears plausible that quotation practices would be inherited along the same lines.

⁴⁰ Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 131–32. Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 6.1.1.

⁴¹ van den Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation," 233–34.

Van den Hoek also finds that Clement's quotation practices varies according to his view of the quoted author. Quotations from authors in his own intellectual tradition are frequently freer in form and presented without naming the quoted author. The Alexandrian teacher Pantaneus is considered a main influence on Clement, but is only mentioned once in his writings. Philo is quoted hundreds of times, but named on only a handful of occasions. Such authorities as Plato and Paul are named in about a fifth of the occasions they are used, Homer a third, and Euripides about half – most times with no mention of the dialog, letter, epos, or play from which the words are taken.⁴² In interactions with his opponents – authors such as Marcion, Basilides, and Valentinus – Clement is considerably more prone to present his quotations verbatim, to name the quoted author, and to specify the source of the quotation. Van den Hoek's conclusion that Clement omits the names of authors who transmit an apostolic or Alexandrian tradition, and only names authors to emphasize either their authority or their individuality, is consistent with the tendency of ancient historians to cite their predecessors by name only if they disagreed with them.⁴³

Clement's three quotations from Valentinus all seem to comply with van den Hoek's findings. In the first, the subject is martyrdom. Clement has just finished refuting Basilides's views on martyrdom when he turns to Valentinus:

Valentinus, in some homily, writes literally (κατὰ λέξιν γράφει): "Fundamentally, you are immortal and children of eternal life, but you wanted death distributed to you in order to consume and do away with it, so that death would die in you and through you. For when you let go of the world, without being destroyed, you will seize control of all creation and destruction." For (γάρ) he assumes (ὑποτίθεται) a race saved by nature – he as well, similarly to Basilides – and that this different race has come here to us from above for the annihilation of death, and that the origin of death was an action by the creator of the world.⁴⁴

⁴² Some of Van den Hoek's numerical estimations, which are based on an index compiled by Otto Stählin in his GCS editions of Clement's works, might be debatable. Some of the material appears in sequences where a correctly identified author in the first instance may be enough to attribute a whole series of quotations. In addition, some uncounted titles may be attributable to specific individuals. No specific numbers are given for Marcion, Basilides or Valentinus.

⁴³ van den Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation," 229–237. The credibility of suggestion is strengthened by a comparison to Clement, *Strom.* 1.1/11, where Clement specifies the geographical location of a number of previous teachers without mentioning the name of a single one.

⁴⁴ Clement, *Strom.* 4.13/89.1–4 (GCS 15, 287.10–19): Οὐαλεντίνος δὲ ἐν τινι ὁμιλίᾳ κατὰ λέξιν γράφει: "ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἀθάνατοί ἐστε καὶ τέκνα ζωῆς ἐστε αἰωνίας καὶ τὸν θάνατον ἠθέλετε μερίσασθαι εἰς ἑαυτοὺς, ἵνα δαπανήσητε αὐτὸν καὶ ἀναλώσητε, καὶ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ θάνατος ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ δι' ὑμῶν. ὅταν γὰρ τὸν μὲν κόσμον λύητε, ὑμεῖς δὲ μὴ καταλύησθε, κυριεύετε τῆς κτίσεως καὶ τῆς φθορᾶς ἀπάσης." φύσει γὰρ σφωζόμενον γένος ὑποτίθεται καὶ αὐτὸς

Clement attributes the quotation explicitly to Valentinus, locates it within a homily, and introduces it with the phrase κατὰ λέξιν γράφει, indicating a verbatim quotation from a written source. The transition marker γάρ indicates a possible shift from quotation to interpretation, and since the quotation is in the second person plural, the shift to third person with the verb ὑποτίθεται (“he assumes”) confirms that the quotation indeed ended at the close of the previous sentence. The γάρ in itself is not enough to discern the end of the quotation, since this word also can be used by the quoted author.

A few lines further down, a second quotation is introduced by the formula γράφων αὐταῖς λέξεσιν (“writing in these very words”), which also purports to give a verbatim quotation from a written source. As he names Valentinus in the preceding reference, he has no need to repeat the name here:

Concerning this god, he hints at these things when he writes, in these very words (γράφων αὐταῖς λέξεσιν): “As much as the image is less than the living face, so much inferior is the world to the living eon. What is then (οὖν) the reason for the image? The greatness of the face that was provided to the artist as a model, in order that it should be honored with his name. For the appearance was not found to be authentic, but the name has completed what was lacking in the casting. The invisible [agent] from God also (δὲ καὶ) cooperates in the faith of the one being molded.” For the Maker, called God and Father, he labels (προσεῖπεν) an image and a prophet of the true God. And Wisdom, whose work the image is, to the glory of the invisible, he labels an artist.⁴⁵

This quotation is written in the third person, and while there is a γάρ followed by a προσεῖπεν (“he labels”) that most probably marks the shift from quotation to interpretation, there are previous conjunctions (οὖν, γάρ, δὲ καί) that could possibly mark the end of the verbatim quotation and the beginning of interpretation, paraphrase, or summary.

In the third case, the topic addressed is whether God gave philosophy to the Greeks in order to prepare them to receive the gospel. After presenting his own opinion, Clement supports his view by quoting Valentinus:

By this time also the leader of the elders of the community, Valentinus, in the homily about friends writes literally (κατὰ λέξιν γράφει): “Many of the things written in the public books are also found written in the congregation of God – for those shared things are words from the heart, a law written in the heart. This is the people of the Beloved, who are loved and

ἐμπερῶς τῷ Βασιλείδῃ, ἄνωθεν δὲ ἡμῖν δεῦρο τοῦτο δὴ τὸ διάφορον γένος ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ θανάτου καθαίρεισιν ἡκείν, θανάτου δὲ γένεσιν ἔργον εἶναι τοῦ κτίσαντος τὸν κόσμον.

⁴⁵ Clement *Strom.* 4.13/89.6–90.2 (GCS 15, 287.21–30): περὶ τούτου τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκεῖνα αἰνίττεται γράφων αὐταῖς λέξεσιν. “ὅποσον ἐλάττων ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ ζῶντος προσώπου, τοσοῦτον ἦσσαν ὁ κόσμος τοῦ ζῶντος αἰῶνος. τίς οὖν αἰτία τῆς εἰκόνης; μεγαλωσύνη τοῦ προσώπου παρεσχημένου τῷ ζωγράφῳ τὸν τύπον, ἵνα τιμηθῇ δι’ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ. οὐ γὰρ αὐθεντικῶς εὐρέθη μορφή, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὄνομα ἐπλήρωσεν τὸ ὑστερήσαν ἐν πλάσει. συνεργεῖ δὲ καὶ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀόρατον εἰς πίστιν τοῦ πεπλασμένου.” τὸν μὲν γὰρ δημιουργὸν ὡς θεὸν καὶ πατέρα κληθέντα εἰκόνα τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ θεοῦ καὶ προφήτην προσεῖπεν, ζωγράφον δὲ τὴν Σοφίαν, ἥς τὸ πλάσμα ἡ εἰκὼν, εἰς δόξαν τοῦ ἀοράτου....

who love him.” Whether the books he calls (λέγει) “public” are the Jewish writings or those of the philosophers, he regards the truth as common property.⁴⁶

Here, Clement specifies his source to be Valentinus’s homily about friends (ἡ περὶ φίλων ὁμιλία). The quotation is introduced by the phrase κατὰ λέξιν γράφει (“he writes literally”), purporting that the words are taken verbatim from a written source. That the quotation ends at αὐτόν (“him”) is clear from the fact that the main verb of the next sentence, λέγει (“he calls”), is not applicable to the previous grammatical subject, ὁ λαός (“the people”), but describes what Valentinus is doing in the quoted passage.

Even though there is no direct tradition of Valentinus’s works against which Clement’s quotations may be checked, van den Hoek’s results and our observations give reason to believe that he presents Valentinus’s words verbatim. If Origen’s quotation practices are similar to Clement’s, we may expect some of the statements he attributes to Heracleon to be verbatim quotations. Van den Hoek’s study has also revealed that certain terms within Clement’s attribution formulas may indicate whether a quotation is presented verbatim or not – an observation that may be extensible, *mutatis mutandis*, to Origen.

V. Quotations in Eusebius of Caesarea

Eusebius of Caesarea was a disciple of Origen’s disciple Pamphilus (d. 309 CE). He inherited Origen’s library, including the original manuscripts of his works.⁴⁷ If Origen’s quotation practices influenced other ancient writers, Eusebius should be a prime example.

According to Sabrina Inowlocki, Eusebius employs a wide array of verbs in his attribution formulas, including γράφω (“write”), μαρτυρέω (“testify”), ιστορέω (“examine” or “record”), λέγω (“say”), φημί (“say”), φάσκω (“think” or “say”), διέξειμι (“go through”), ἐρμηνεύω (“explain” or “describe”), διηγέομαι (“describe”), and μνημονεύω (“mention”). She finds that he often marks the end of a quotation with τοσαῦτα followed by the name of the quoted author, and almost always marks gaps in a quotation with a phrase such as καὶ ἐπιλέγει, καὶ μετὰ βραχέα or πάλιν. Just like Clement, Eusebius regularly indicates that a quotation is verbatim by use of a term such as κατὰ λέξιν

⁴⁶ Clement, *Strom.* 6.6/52.3–53.1 (GCS 15, 458.11–18): ἡδη δὲ καὶ τῶν τὴν κοινότητα πρεσβυνόντων ὁ κορυφαῖος Οὐαλεντίνος ἐν τῇ περὶ φίλων ὁμιλίᾳ κατὰ λέξιν γράφει· “πολλὰ τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐν ταῖς δημοσίαις βίβλοις εὐρίσκεται γεγραμμένα ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ· τὰ γὰρ κοινὰ ταῦτα ἔστι τὰ ἀπὸ καρδίας ῥήματα, νόμος ὁ γραπτὸς ἐν καρδίᾳ· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ λαὸς ὁ τοῦ ἡγαπημένου, ὁ φιλούμενος καὶ φίλων αὐτόν.” δημοσίας γὰρ βίβλους εἶτε τὰς Ἰουδαϊκὰς λέγει γραφὰς εἶτε τὰς τῶν φιλοσόφων, κοινοποιεῖ τὴν ἀλήθειαν. The function of the accusative τὴν κοινότητα is not self-evident, but it may be taken as an *accusativus limitationis*, limiting the range of the leadership expressed by the verb πρεσβεύω to a specific community.

⁴⁷ Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 220. See Eusebius *Hist. eccl.* 6.32.3; 6.33.4; 7.32.25.

(“literally”), πρὸς ῥῆμα (“to the word”), or ὡδὲ πως (“in the following way”). Apart from the absence of such terms, Inowlocki identifies the use of indirect speech as another indication that Eusebius is paraphrasing or summarizing rather than quoting verbatim – and she finds these indications to be trustworthy.⁴⁸ In his *Demonstratio evangelica*, Eusebius systematically makes more adaptations of his quotations than in other works, but also indicates this freedom by use of indirect speech. Inowlocki is not able to find an instance where Eusebius seems to present a verbatim quotation without actually doing so.⁴⁹

Inowlocki remarks, however, that Eusebius’s faithfulness to the wording of his sources is not matched by a similar attitude to their sense. On the contrary, he constantly makes both his paraphrases and his verbatim quotations serve his agenda, by cutting them off from their original contexts to give them new meanings, by omitting expressions that do not conform to his own theology, and by changing words to suggest agreements between Josephus and the Gospels. He switches between summaries, paraphrases, and verbatim quotations not only to avoid unnecessary repetition, Inowlocki finds, but also to strengthen his own argument. Inowlocki stresses that Eusebius’s way of changing the quoted text is not a sign of intellectual dishonesty; in the context of ancient literary practices, such adaptations are part of the natural process through which a text is offered a new life after it is written.⁵⁰

Eusebius’s consistency in indicating verbatim quotations with terms such as κατὰ λέξιν and paraphrases with the use of indirect speech raises the question of whether similar traits may be discerned in Origen’s attribution formulas. If different levels of faithfulness to the original wording are indicated by signs such as indirect speech, or the presence or absence of specific terms, we may be able to discern between different modes of attribution in Origen’s interactions with Heracleon. Eusebius’s habit of placing his quotations in new contexts, which give the quoted words a different meaning than what the quoted author intended, emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between Heracleon’s words on the one hand, and the sense Origen infers from them on the other. Origen may be misrepresenting Heracleon’s views even when he is quoting him verbatim.

So far, we have not only identified the quoting author’s view of the quoted author – as a rival, an authority, or a provider of source material – as a critical factor for determining how much adaptation we should expect. We have also confirmed that this factor appears to be decisive for Clement’s habits of quot-

⁴⁸ Indirect speech is also used as an indication that Clement is paraphrasing in Luke J. Stevens, “The Evangelists in Clement’s *Hypotyposes*,” *J ECS* 26.3 (2018): 353–79, here 366–67.

⁴⁹ Sabrina Inowlocki, “Eusebius of Caesarea’s *Interpretatio Christiana* of Philo’s *De vita contemplativa*,” *HTR* 97.3 (2004): 305–28, here 314, 318, 327; Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 68–70, 190–91, 220–22.

⁵⁰ Inowlocki, *Eusebius*, 190, 289–93.

ing his adversaries verbatim. We can therefore not expect Origen, whose stance toward Heracleon has been revealed to vacillate from general renunciation to agreement and even praise, to maintain a single mode of attribution vis-à-vis his predecessor. If he, whenever he discusses philological details in Heracleon's exegetical procedure, takes care to document these details with verbatim quotations, we cannot presume the same rigor in cases where he argues that Heracleon's interpretations are made in order to support heterodox views, or where he describes in quite general terms how unsatisfactory Heracleon's exegetical procedure is. Instead, every interaction has to be evaluated on its own terms, based on the wording used by Origen to attribute particular views and statements to Heracleon.

B. Origen's Quotation Practices

Even a limited survey of Origen's references to previous Christian literature exhibits several different modes of attributions: quotations that are clearly presented as verbatim, quotations without such markings, summaries, paraphrases, and mere assertions where someone's view is specified without reference to a written source. Although there is no reason to assume that Origen quotes opponents such as Heracleon in the same way as he quotes authorities such as Paul, less than perfect parallels may still inform us of how Origen varies his attribution formulas in accordance with how much he adapts his quotations. Since other authors have been found to vary their quotation practices from writing to writing,⁵¹ we will primarily consider Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, where his references to Heracleon are located.

I. Verbatim Quotations

The most easily verified case of verbatim quotation occurs when Origen repeats a phrase from the Gospel of John that already has been quoted in the previous lemma. In these and other cases where the reader is expected to recognize the quoted words immediately, and have no need of explicit attribution to a named author, Origen's formula consists simply of the neutral definite article τό.⁵² When these quotations appear in original manuscripts

⁵¹ Primarily Plutarch. See page 82 above.

⁵² Cf. Friedrich Blass, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961), 267. Linguistically, the added article indicates that the following word(s) are mentioned rather than used, that the author is referring to the words themselves rather than to entities in the world. See Emar Maier, "Switches between Direct and Indirect Speech in Ancient Greek," *Journal of Greek Linguistics* 12.1 (2012): 118–39, here 131. See also Florian Coulmas, "Reported Speech: Some General Issues," in *Direct and Indirect Speech*, ed. Flori-

without quotation marks inserted by modern editors, they are only discernible by the fact that the definite article precedes a word or a phrase that the reader will recognize. When the author repeats something already quoted, this recognition is obtained by the repetition, but when an author quotes a presumably well-known phrase, he can simply assume that the reader will recognize it. That Origen is also prepared to use this technique when he is referring to other biblical passages implies that he expects his reader to recognize a wide range of passages from the Old and New Testaments:

For the moment, (τό) “Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (Luke 1:35) will be enough for the discernment of power from spirit. Regarding the spirits in the prophets – that they were given to them by God and therefore may, in a way, be called their possessions – (τό) “The spirits of the prophets are subjects to the prophets” (1 Cor 14:32) and (τό) “The spirit of Elijah is resting on Elisha” (2 Kgs 2:15) will be enough.⁵³

Here, Origen is using phrases from Luke 1:35, 1 Cor 14:32, and 2 Kgs 2:15 to argue that John the Baptist has the power, but not the spirit, of Elijah. The quotations are verbatim, with the exception that the unnecessary prefix ἔπ- has been stripped from the verb ἐπαναπέπαυται (“he is resting on”) – hardly a significant adaptation. In a similar case, Origen uses τό to introduce a quotation from Rom 10:6–8, in which he has left out a movable ν, spelled out the implied subject ἡ γραφή (“Scripture”), and added the intensifying adverb σφόδρα (“very much”).⁵⁴ Additional examples appear throughout the *Commentary*.⁵⁵ Thus, the neutral definite article τό is one of Origen's ways of introducing a verbatim quotation.

As noted above, verbatim quotations in the writings of Clement and Eusebius are often explicitly marked as such by use of a term such as κατὰ λέξιν (“literally”), πρὸς ῥῆμα (“to the word”), or ὡδὲ πως (“in the following way”). Origen does not use this technique particularly frequently, but when he does, his most commonly used term is αὐταῖς λέξεσιν (“with the same words”).⁵⁶ This term is used in the same sense by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for instance, in the long but clear introductory formula “I will present it with the

an Coulmas, *Trends in Linguistics. Studies and Monographs* 31 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986), 1–28, here 11–12.

⁵³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.11/67 (SC 157, 178.12–18): Ἀρκεσθήσεται δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος πρὸς μὲν τὸ διαφέρειν δύναμιν πνεύματος τὸ “Πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐπελεύσεται ἐπὶ σὲ καὶ δύναμις ὑψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι”. πρὸς δὲ <τὸ> τὰ ἐν τοῖς προφήταις πνεύματα, ἅτε δεδωρημένα αὐτοῖς ὑπὸ θεοῦ οἰονεῖ ἐκείνων ὀνομάζεσθαι κτήματα τὸ “Πνεύματα προφητῶν προφήταις ὑποτάσσεται”. καὶ τὸ “Ἀναπέπαυται τὸ πνεῦμα Ἠλίου ἐπὶ Ἐλισαίᾳ.”

⁵⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.15/111.

⁵⁵ Cf. eg. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.52/350 (Matt 8:20), 20.4/18 (Ps 125:6).

⁵⁶ The TLG database has about twenty passages where Origen uses αὐταῖς λέξεσιν, about eight where he uses κατὰ λέξιν, and two where he uses ὡδὲ πως. I have not found any instances where Origen uses ἀντίκρυς, διαρρήδην, or πρὸς ῥῆμα in an attribution formula.

same words (αὐταῖς λέξεσιν) as I wrote there.”⁵⁷ Plutarch uses the same term to assert that he has quoted a controversial statement by the Epicurean philosopher Colotes (ca. 320–268 BCE) without altering it: “For this is uttered – neither justly nor truthfully – with these very words (αὐταῖς λέξεσιν) by Colotes.”⁵⁸ Origen repeatedly uses the term in his interactions with Celsus (second century CE) in *Against Celsus*.⁵⁹ In his *Exhortation to martyrdom*, Origen uses it to assert that a certain wording is used in the Gospels:

Those who kill us terminate a bodily life, for such is the [phrase] “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body” (Matt 10:28 // Luke 12:4) that is said, with these very words (αὐταῖς λέξεσιν), by Matthew and Luke.⁶⁰

Unsurprisingly enough, the wording given here conforms to the wording of Matt 10:28 and Luke 12:4.⁶¹ The presence of the term αὐταῖς λέξεσιν may therefore be used as a second criterion for finding verbatim quotations.

Another way in which Origen commonly introduces quotations is to use a single *verbum dicendi* (“verb of speaking”) – most commonly φησί(ν) (“he says”) – either preceding the attributed statement or inserted a few words into it. A prime example is the Pauline quotation that appears just after the lemma of John 1:3a – πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (“all things were made through him”) – in which Origen quotes the first five verses of Romans:

Never has “through whom” the first place, but always the second, as in the epistle to the Romans: “From Paul, a slave,” he says (φησί), “of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God – which he preannounced through his prophets in the holy Scriptures – about his son, who came from the offspring of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and the apostolic mission of obedience to faith among all the peoples on behalf of his name.” For (γάρ) God....⁶²

⁵⁷ Dionysius, *Pomp.* 2: θήσω δὲ αὐταῖς λέξεσιν, ὡς ἐκεῖ γέγραφα. See also *Thuc.* 11: αὐταῖς λέξεσιν οὕτως γράφων (“with the same words written in the following way”).

⁵⁸ Plutarch, *Adv. Col.* 1124d: τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ Κωλώτης αὐταῖς λέξεσιν ἐκπεφώνηκεν, οὐ δικαίως οὐδ’ ἀληθῶς. The same phrase is used in *Adv. Col.* 1125c, and in *Stoic. rep.*, 1036a.9: ταυτὶ γὰρ αὐταῖς λέξεσιν εἶρηκεν (“For this way, with these very words, he has spoken.”)

⁵⁹ Origen, *Cels.* 1.12.1, 2.20.49, 2.49.21.

⁶⁰ Origen, *Mart.* 34.70–72 (GCS 2, 31.13–15): οἱ ἀναιροῦντες οὖν ἡμᾶς σώματος ζωὴν ἀποκτεννοῦσι· τοιοῦτον γὰρ ἐστὶ τό· μὴ φοβηθῆτε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποκτεννόντων τὸ σῶμα, αὐταῖς λέξεσιν ὑπὸ Ματθαίου καὶ Λουκᾶ εἰρημένον.

⁶¹ In Matt 10:28, Origen hereby gives text-critical support to the Codex Bezae reading φοβηθῆτε, while Sinaiticus and Vaticanus has φοβεῖσθε.

⁶² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.10/70 (SC 120 bis, 252.1–254.11): Οὐδέποτε τὴν πρώτην χώραν ἔχει τὸ “δι’ οὗ,” δευτέραν δὲ αἰ· οἶον ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους· “Παῦλος δοῦλος, φησί, Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, ἀφωρισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ, ὃ προεπηγγέιλαιτο διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ ἐν γραφαῖς ἀγίας περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ, τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαβὶδ κατὰ σάρκα, τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιοσύνης ἐξ ἀνα-

This is a verbatim quotation of Rom 1:1–5, to which no meaningful adaptations have been made.⁶³ On the contrary, we may note that Origen, who uses this Pauline passage to make an argument concerning the phrase δι' αὐτοῦ (“through him”) in John 1:3, does not amend Paul’s expression δι’ οὗ (“through whom”) to δι’ αὐτοῦ in order to streamline his argument, but lets the mismatch stand.

In similar cases, Origen inserts γάρ φησι (“for he says”) after the second word of a verbatim quotation of 2 Thess 2:11–12, uses γράφων (“writing”) to introduce a quotation from 1 Cor 12:4–6, in which he leaves out a movable ν and replaces a δέ with a καί, and constructs the attribution formula ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ἑβραίους ὁ αὐτὸς Παῦλός φησιν (“In Hebrews, the same Paul says”) to introduce a completely verbatim quotation from Heb 1:2.⁶⁴ He uses εἶρηται (“it is said”) to introduce a verbatim quotation from Ps 45:11, attributes a quotation from 1 Thess 5:21–22 – verbatim apart from a dropped δέ – with the formula τὴν Παύλου διδασκαλίαν φάσκοντος (“the teaching of Paul, who says”), and he precedes a verbatim quotation from Jer 3:25 LXX with the formula κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον πού (“according to what is said somewhere”).⁶⁵ We may conclude that Origen, when he attributes a statement with a single *verbum dicendi*, regularly presents verbatim or almost-verbatim quotations, even in the absence of a term such as κατὰ λέξιν (“literally”) or αὐταῖς λέξεσιν (“with the same words”).

II. Summaries

The accuracy of attributed statements introduced with single *verba dicendi* does not, however, extend to statements presented in indirect speech. Consider, for instance, these short references to the Gospel of Matthew and First Corinthians:

στασεως νεκρῶν, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν, δι’ οὗ ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολὴν εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ. Ὁ γὰρ θεὸς....

⁶³ David’s name is spelled Δαβὶδ rather than the more usual Δαβίδ, but this is the choice of the editor rather than of Origen; Blanc uses this spelling consistently, and the manuscript has the *nomen sacrum* δαδ. Origen’s word order “Christ Jesus,” represented in the manuscript by the *nomina sacra* XC IC, follows Codex Vaticanus and P10 rather than Codex Sinaiticus and P26, which both have the opposite word order. The movable ν of πᾶσιν is left out, but this is commonly done to avoid two consecutive consonants or to gain a more regular right margin, and any copyist in the chain between Origen and the Codex Monacensis could have made this change. None of these minor differences constitutes an adaptation made to the quotation.

⁶⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.30/182, 2.10/78, 2.10/72.

⁶⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.3/16, 19.7/44, 20.32/385.

For instance, when the Savior says (λέγοντος / 1) “Call no one on the earth a teacher,” the apostle says (φησί / 2) that in the assembly, teachers are also appointed.⁶⁶

Neither of these two references is a verbatim quotation. The first case is a summary of Jesus’s saying, in Matt 23:8–10, that his disciples should not call each other “rabbi,” “father,” or “teacher,” since they have one teacher, and one Father, who is in heaven. The second is a similar summary of 1 Cor 12:28, where Paul enumerates several different positions, including teachers, to which Christians may be appointed. Neither of the summaries can be said to misrepresent their originals in any significant way, but neither are the exact terms and formulations of the original authors transmitted. These references are therefore better identified as summaries than as quotations.

The first case in the example above is impossible to identify without access to an independent manuscript tradition, since the grammatical form is identical to a form most commonly used by Origen to present verbatim quotations: a statement presented in direct speech, attributed by a *verbum dicendi*.⁶⁷ We may identify this example as a summary presented in the form of a verbatim quotation. In the second case, however, we may take notice that the statement is presented in indirect speech, in this case by use of an infinitive construction.

In general, a statement in direct speech (*oratio recta*), as example (a) below, can be considered synonymous to several different statements in indirect speech (*oratio obliqua*), for instance examples (b)–(e):

- (a) Joan said: “The baby is crying.”
- (b) Joan said that the baby was crying.
- (c) Joan indicated that the child was making a noise.
- (d) Joan told her husband that their daughter Lisa was unhappy.
- (e) Joan cut the argument short, feigning that their daughter had woken from her nap.

While all of these statements may accurately represent the same event, only (a) could reliably be used to reconstruct the original utterance. While (b) does reflect the same wording as (a), it cannot be distinguished by form from (c), which conveys the same information as (b) but in different words. Statements

⁶⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.3/19 (SC 120 bis, 64.42–45): οἷον λέγοντος τοῦ σωτῆρος: “Μὴ καλέσητε διδάσκαλον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς” ὁ ἀπόστολος φησι τετάχθαι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ διδασκάλους.

⁶⁷ Although the choice of λέγω rather than φησί, and the use of a participle rather than a finite verb, may be thought of as hints that the excerpt is adapted in some way, a comparison with other cases reveals that Origen frequently uses this form to present verbatim or almost-verbatim quotations. Compare, for instance, Origen, *Cels.* 2.9 to Matt 28:20; *Cels.* 6.12 to 1 Cor 3:19, *Comm. Jo.* 5.4/1 to Eccl 12:12 LXX, *Comm. Jo.* 6.10/62 to Matt 1:14, and *Comm. Jo.* 19.17/108 to John 8:12. The freer renderings with the same form – such as the rephrasing of Matt 5:28 in Origen, *Cels.* 3.44, the rephrasing of Ezek 11:19–20 LXX in *Princ.* 3.1.15, and the composite quotation from John 12:45; 14:9 in *Comm. Jo.* 13.25/153 – may not be possible to identify without access to the original text.

in indirect speech may also, as (d), include information not contained in the original utterance, but inferred from the context or from general knowledge of the situation, or even, as (e), express the reporting speaker's understanding of what the utterance means in an assumed context.⁶⁸ Or, expressed in linguistic terms:

In indirect speech, the reporter is free to introduce information about the reported speech event from his point of view and on the basis of his knowledge about the world, as he does not purport to give the actual words that were uttered by the original speaker(s) or that his report is restricted to what was actually said.⁶⁹

Statements such as examples (b)–(e), which report the content of an original speech event filtered through different levels of interpretation or reformulation, may be called “rephrasings,” “paraphrases,” or “summaries.” In the following, attributions similar to (b) or (c) will be called “summaries,” and attributed statements comparable to (d) or (e) will be designated “explanatory paraphrases.” The differentiation between verbatim quotations and summaries will be made based on the distinction between direct and indirect speech.

In Ancient Greek, direct speech is formed simply by preceding the quoted words with an introductory formula. In minimal form, the utterance γράψω (“I will write”) can be transformed into the direct-speech quotation φησὶ γράψω (“He said: ‘I will write’”). Indirect speech can be formed either with accusative and infinitive, in which the main verb of the utterance is put in infinitive form, as in φησὶ γράψειν (“He said that he would write”), and its subject (if any) in accusative, or by the use of a complementizer such as ὅτι or ὥς (“that”),⁷⁰ as in φησὶ ὅτι γράψει (“He said that he would write”). In contrast to English, where this construct changes the tense of the verb (from “will write” to “would write”), in Greek the tense is preserved, while the person is changed (in this case from the first person to the third) and optionally the mood (from indicative to optative).⁷¹

⁶⁸ Coulmas, “Reported Speech,” 2–6; Charles N. Li, “Direct Speech and Indirect Speech: A Functional Study,” in *Direct and Indirect Speech*, ed. Florian Coulmas, Trends in linguistics. Studies and monographs 31 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986), 29–45, here 29–30, 41; Maier, “Switches,” 118–19; Keith Allan, “Reports, Indirect Reports, and Illocutionary Point,” in *Indirect Reports and Pragmatics: Interdisciplinary Studies*, eds. Alessandro Capone, Ferenc Kiefer, and Franco Lo Piparo, Perspectives in Pragmatics, Philosophy & Psychology 5 (Cham: Springer, 2016), 573–91.

⁶⁹ Coulmas, “Reported Speech,” 3.

⁷⁰ A complementizer is a function word or morpheme that combines with a clause or verbal phrase to form a subordinate clause. Cf. Sandra A. Thompson and Anthony Mulac, “The Discourse Conditions for the Use of the Complementizer *that* in Conversational English,” *Journal of Pragmatics* 15 (1991): 237–51, here 237; Maier, “Switches,” 120.

⁷¹ Li, “Direct Speech,” 29; Corien Bary, “Tense in Ancient Greek Reports,” *Journal of Greek Linguistics* 12.1 (2012): 29–50, here 29; Maier, “Switches,” 119–22.

Two factors make distinguishing between direct and indirect speech more complex. Firstly, ὅτι is sometimes used to introduce a statement that can only be read as direct speech, such as φησὶ ὅτι γράψω (“He said: ‘I will write’”). Secondly, ancient Greek authors sometimes switch rather abruptly from indirect to direct speech, sometimes within the same sentence, without making this transition explicit.⁷² While it might appear strange that the word ὅτι may be used to introduce either a direct quotation or an indirect report, this is indeed how this phenomenon is generally described.⁷³ However, Emar Maier has recently proposed that ὅτι should be understood uniformly as introducing indirect speech, and that a sentence such as φησὶ ὅτι γράψω should be understood as a case when the author first introduces a speech report in indirect speech, only to immediately switch to direct speech before presenting the quoted material.⁷⁴ In cases where the reader otherwise would have to consider whether a particular ὅτι is a ὅτι *recitativum* or not, Maier suggests that we instead should consider if the writer makes a switch from indirect to direct speech. In the context of this investigation, where variation between different modes of attribution is expected, Maier’s model removes a level of complexity in the analysis while still representing the same complexity in the data. It is therefore worth considering whether Origen uses ὅτι to introduce indirect speech reports.

A few examples may illustrate Origen’s use of ὅτι in attribution formulas. In an analysis of what it means to hunger and thirst, he uses the formula γέγραπται ὅτι (“it is written that”) to refer to a passage in Exodus:

Shortly thereafter, when he came into Rephidim, it is written that (γέγραπται ὅτι) the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled there against Moses.⁷⁵

⁷² Maier, “Switches,” 122–29. Nigel Turner, “Syntax,” in *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, ed. James Hope Moulton (Edinburgh: Clark, 1963), 1–417, here 325–26, mentions both these phenomena.

⁷³ A few scholars have discussed this problem. Paul Winter, “Ὅτι Recitativum in Luke I 25, 61, II 23,” *HTR* 48.3 (1955): 213–16, suggests that some instances may be explained by an underlying Hebrew *ki recitativum*. Thomas Daiber, “Wisset! Zu einem angeblichen Anakoluth in Mk 2,10 bzw. zum ὅτι recitativum,” *ZNW* 104.2 (2013): 277–85, here 282–84, connects the practice to later usage in Byzantine Greek and Church Slavonic.

⁷⁴ Maier, “Switches,” 129–30, 133–36. Maier does not specify to which dialects of ancient Greek his arguments refer, but since he quotes examples from Acts and from Plutarch, he seems to have considered *Koinē* as well as Attic Greek. An alternative to Maier’s view is to speak of a third category. Coulmas, “Reported Speech,” 6–10, reviews seven such proposals, all of which have less precision than Maier’s model.

⁷⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.2/11 (SC 222, 40.25–28): Καὶ μετ’ ὀλίγα, ἡνίκα ἦλθεν εἰς Ῥαφιδείν, γέγραπται ὅτι “Ἐδίψησεν ὁ λαὸς ἐκεῖ ὕδατι, καὶ ἐγόγγυζεν ὁ λαὸς ἐκεῖ ἐπὶ Μωσῆν.” Cf. Exod 17:3 LXX: ἐδίψησεν δὲ ἐκεῖ ὁ λαὸς ὕδατι, καὶ ἐγόγγυζεν ἐκεῖ ὁ λαὸς πρὸς Μωσὴν....

Compared to the Septuagint version, Origen's rendition makes no changes to the sense, but the word order has been altered in multiple places, and the preposition *πρός* has been changed into *ἐπί*. In another context, Origen makes two comparable references to Eph 5:8 – one using infinitive, one using *ὅτι* – in the same paragraph:

If it was not said in Paul that (*ἐλέγετο ὅτι*) we once were in darkness but now are shining in the Lord, [...]. But now Paul claims to be (*φησι γεγονέναι*) “once darkness, but now light in the Lord (Eph 5:8)” so it is possible for darkness to turn into light.⁷⁶

The repetition makes it visible that Origen in both these versions changes the wording of Eph 5:8: In the first, the original verb form *ἦτε* (“you were”) is altered to *ἦμεθα* (“we were”); in the other, the verb is replaced with *γεγονέναι* (“to have become”). The first version also changes the noun *φῶς* (“light”) to the participle *φωτεινοί* (“shining”). These changes are significant enough to speak of two summaries rather than two verbatim quotations. There is no significant difference in the amount of adaptation made to the two versions of Eph 5:8, so there seems to be no need to distinguish between statements attributed using *ὅτι* and statements attributed using infinitive. We may also note that the unaltered parts of Eph 5:8 are identical in both versions, which suggests that similar repetitions in statements attributed to Heracleon may be of help in discerning how Origen's summarizes Heracleon.

Another complementizer, which Origen sometimes uses in a similar way as *ὅτι* (“that”), is *ὥς ἅρα* (“that”). Summaries introduced this way include an account of what is unique in the Lukan baptismal narrative,⁷⁷ as well as a re-telling of a prediction, in the Third Book of Kingdoms,⁷⁸ that king Ahab, if he attacks Ramoth-gilead, will die there:

It is written in the third of the Kingdoms that (*γέγραπται ... ὥς ἅρα* / 1) Micaiah, when he was called by Ahab to prophesy about whether he should go down to Ramoth-gilead for war or hold back, he said: (*εἶπεν ... τό* / 2) “I saw Israel's God sitting on his throne....”⁷⁹

In this passage, Origen uses two different introduction formulas. The first, a rather complex phrase including the term *ὥς ἅρα*, introduces a short summary of 3 Kgdms 22:1–19a, specifying the protagonists and the historical situa-

⁷⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.20/135–136 (SC 120 bis, 300.22–28): *Εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἐπὶ Παύλου ἐλέγετο, ὅτι “ἦμεθα ποτε ἐν σκότῳ, νῦν δὲ φωτεινοὶ ἐν κυρίῳ,” ἐπὶ δὲ ὧν οἴονται φύσεων ἀπολυμένων, ὅτι σκότος ἦσαν ἢ σκότος εἰσὶ, καὶ χωρὰν εἶχεν ἡ περὶ φύσεων ὑπόθεσις. Νυνὶ δὲ ὁ Παῦλος φησὶ γεγονέναι “ποτὲ σκότος, νῦν δὲ φῶς ἐν κυρίῳ,” ὥς δυνατοῦ ὄντος τοῦ σκότος εἰς φῶς μεταβαλεῖν. Cf. Eph 5:8: ἦτε γάρ ποτε σκότος, νῦν δὲ φῶς ἐν κυρίῳ.*

⁷⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.50/262; cf. Luke 3:21–22.

⁷⁸ The Septuagint calls 1–2 Sam 1–2 Kingdoms, and 1–2 Kgs are called 3–4 Kingdoms.

⁷⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.29/258 (SC 290, 282.10–284.14): *γέγραπται ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ τῶν Βασιλειῶν ὥς ἅρα εἶπεν Μιχαίας κληθεὶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀχαάβ εἰς τὸ προφητεῦσαι περὶ τοῦ πότερον αὐτῷ καθήκει πορευθῆναι εἰς Ῥαμμὶθ Γαλαὰδ εἰς πόλεμον ἢ ἐπισχεῖν, τὸ “Εἶδον θεὸν Ἰσραὴλ καθήμενον ἐπὶ θρόνου αὐτοῦ....”*

tion of the narrative. The second, which picks up the earlier εἶπεν (“he said”) and delimits the attributed statement with a simple τό (“the”), introduces an almost verbatim quotation of 3 Kgdms 22:19b–22. Origen uses a summary, introduced by the combination of a *verbum dicendi* and the complementizer ὥς ἅρα (“that”), to give context to his verbatim quotation. As these two summaries are considerably shorter, compared to their originals, than the ones discussed above, it is plausible that ὥς ἅρα for Origen indicates a larger amount of adaptation than ὅτι does.

From these examples, we may conclude that attributed statements presented in indirect speech – either by use of infinitive constructions or preceded by ὅτι or ὥς ἅρα – may exhibit a larger amount of adaptation than what is common in statements presented in direct speech. This study will therefore adopt the working hypotheses that ὅτι implies indirect speech, and that statements presented in indirect speech are summaries rather than verbatim quotations.

III. Explanatory Paraphrases

Not all statements introduced by ὥς ἅρα (“that”) can be considered summaries, however. Most times this phrase is used, Origen is not summarizing his source but rather presenting a real or hypothetical point of view in his own words. To the extent that such statements appear to be made based on a source text that Origen also quotes or summarizes, they are similar to examples (d) and (e) above and will be designated “explanatory paraphrases.”⁸⁰ If they appear without reference to a source, they are regarded as mere assertions.

One example of this mode of attribution is when Origen, based on two short verbatim quotations from Rom 7:8, 9, proceeds to synopsise an important point in Paul’s teaching on sin:

Accordingly, the apostle says (φησί / 1): “Without law, sin is dead,” and adds (καὶ ἐπιφέρει / 2): “when the commandment came, sin was revived” – generally teaching (καθολικὸν διδάσκων / 3) that sin has no influence in itself, before the law and the commandments.⁸¹

The two quotations are verbatim apart from a left out γάρ and a dropped movable ν of ἀνέζησεν (“was revived”), and the phrase καὶ ἐπιφέρει (“and adds”) marks a gap in the quotation, a few of Paul’s words left out by Origen,

⁸⁰ Kurt Zepernick, “Die Exzerpte des Athenaeus in den Dipnosophisten und ihre Glaubwürdigkeit,” *Philologus* 77 (1921): 311–63, here 318–19, and Lenfant, “Les ‘fragments’ d’Hérodote dans les *Deipnosophistes*,” 51, both observe that Athenaeus sometimes paraphrases Herodotus rather than quotes him, and identify the phrase ὥς φησιν Ἡρόδοτος (“as Herodotus says”) to be an indicator for this mode of attribution.

⁸¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.15/106 (SC 120 bis, 280.8–12): Φησί τοίνυν ὁ ἀπόστολος: “Χωρὶς νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά,” καὶ ἐπιφέρει: “Ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ μὲν ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησε” καθολικὸν διδάσκων περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὡς μηδεμίαν ἐνέργειαν αὐτῆς ἐχούσης πρὶν νόμου καὶ ἐντολῆς.

before the verbatim quotation continues.⁸² In contrast, the third attribution formula καθολικὸν διδάσκων (“generally teaching”) indicates that what follows is not a quotation, but Origen’s attempt to articulate, in his own words, what he perceives to be Paul’s teaching in this area – based, one may presume, not only on the words quoted here but on a more general understanding of Pauline theology. Since such an articulation is separated from Paul’s words by a process of interpretation on Origen’s part, we may call it an explanatory paraphrase. In addition to the predicative adjective καθολικός (here: “generally”), the verb διδάσκω (“teach”), which is not a *verbum dicendi*, may indicate such a process of generalization and interpretation.

A similar example appears when Origen, within a discussion of the true identity of John the Baptist, refers to an otherwise unknown early Christian writing entitled *The Prayer of Joseph*.⁸³

If someone accepts also the hidden writing entitled *Prayer of Joseph*, which circulates among the Hebrews, he will find this opinion clearly and explicitly expressed there, that (εἰρημένον ... ὡς ἄρα / 1) those who originally possessed something extraordinary compared to [other] humans, who were much better than the other souls, have descended from being angels into human physical form. Jacob says in fact (φησὶ γοῦν ὁ Ἰακώβ / 2): “The one who speaks to you, I, Jacob and Israel, I am an angel of God and a sovereign spirit. Abraham and Isaac were created before all works, but I, Jacob, am called ‘Jacob’ by humans, but my name is Israel, and I am called ‘Israel’ by God. I am a man who sees God, because I was born before every living being who has been given life by God.” And he adds (καὶ ἐπιφέρει / 3): “When I came from Mesopotamia in Syria, God’s angel Uriel came out and said that I had descended upon the earth to live among the humans, and that I was called by the name Jacob. He was jealous and attacked me. He wrestled with me, saying that his name would go above and beyond every angel’s name including mine. I told him his name and its rank among the sons of God: ‘Are you not Uriel, the eighth after me? Am I not Israel, archangel of the power of the Lord and commander in chief among the sons of God? Am I not Israel, the first attendant before the face of God, and do I not address my God by his immortal name?’⁸⁴

⁸² Cf. Rom 7:8–9: ...χωρὶς γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά. ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτέ, ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησεν....

⁸³ Pieter W. van der Horst and Judith H. Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 249–58, present three fragments from the Ἰωσήφ προσευχή taken from Origen’s writings, of which this interaction is Fragment A. J. Z. Smith, “Prayer of Joseph,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1983), 699–714, dates the writing to the first century CE and adds that none of the other mentions of it in Eusebius and in various lists of apocryphal works add to our knowledge of the text.

⁸⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.31/188–90 (SC 120 bis, 338.16–340.40): Εἰ δὲ τις προσίεται καὶ τῶν παρ’ Ἑβραίοις φερομένων ἀποκρύφων τὴν ἐπιγραφομένην “Ἰωσήφ προσευχὴν,” ἀντικρυς τοῦτο τὸ δόγμα καὶ σαφῶς εἰρημένον ἐκείθεν λήψεται, ὡς ἄρα οἱ ἀρχῆθεν ἐξαίρετόν τι ἐσχηκότες παρὰ ἀνθρώπους, πολλῶ κρείττους τυγχάνοντες τῶν λοιπῶν ψυχῶν, ἀπὸ τοῦ εἶναι ἄγγελοι ἐπὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην καταβεβήκασι φύσιν. Φησὶ γοῦν ὁ Ἰακώβ. “Ὁ γὰρ λαλῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ Ἰακώβ καὶ Ἰσραὴλ ἄγγελος θεοῦ εἰμι ἐγὼ καὶ πνεῦμα ἀρχικόν, καὶ Ἀβραάμ

Even though we have no other witness to this passage of *The Prayer of Joseph*, we can presume, based on the examples discussed above, that Origen's second attribution formula φησὶ γοῦν ὁ Ἰακώβ ("Jacob says in fact") introduces a verbatim quotation, presented as proof of the previously made claim. The third formula καὶ ἐπιφέρει ("and he adds") most likely indicates a gap, some words or sentences left out by Origen, before the verbatim quotation continues with the story of Jacob's encounter with Uriel.⁸⁵ The claim, introduced by ὡς ἄρα ("that"), that this writing explicitly expresses the opinion that some humans are angels descended into physical form is, then, an explanatory paraphrase – based at least in part on the two verbatim quotations given. Although we may agree with Origen that the quoted text attests that some humans – or at least one, Jacob – are angels who have turned into human form, the other points in Origen's paraphrase are not attested to by the two quotations and may be merely inferred by Origen.⁸⁶

Just like Clement,⁸⁷ Origen has a tendency to refer to writers in his own tradition in the form of anonymous paraphrases. Ironically enough, one of the prime examples is a reference to Clement:

But sun and moon and stars, as some of those who were before us have described (διηγῆσαντο), were assigned to those who were not worthy that the God of gods be called their god.⁸⁸

καὶ Ἰσαὰκ προεκτίσθησαν πρὸ παντὸς ἔργου· ἐγὼ δὲ Ἰακώβ, ὁ κληθεὶς ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων Ἰακώβ, τὸ δὲ ὄνομά μου Ἰσραὴλ, ὁ κληθεὶς ὑπὸ θεοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, ἀνὴρ ὁρῶν θεόν, ὅτι ἐγὼ πρωτογονος παντὸς ζώου ζουμένου ὑπὸ θεοῦ." Καὶ ἐπιφέρει· "Ἐγὼ δὲ ὅτε ἡρχόμην ἀπὸ Μεσοποταμίας τῆς Συρίας, ἐξῆλθεν Οὐριήλ ὁ ἄγγελος τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ εἶπεν ὅτι κατέβην ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ κατεσκήνωσα ἐν ἀνθρώποις, καὶ ὅτι ἐκλήθην ὀνόματι Ἰακώβ· ἐζήλωσε καὶ ἐμαχέσατό μοι. Καὶ ἐπάλαε πρὸς με, λέγων προτερήσειν ἐπάνω τοῦ ὀνόματός μου τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῦ πρὸ παντὸς ἀγγέλου. Καὶ εἶπα αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ καὶ πόσος ἐστὶν ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ· Οὐχὶ σὺ Οὐριήλ ὄγδοος ἐμοῦ, κἀγὼ Ἰσραὴλ ἀρχάγγελος δυνάμεως κυρίου καὶ ἀρχιχιλιάρχος εἰμι ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ; οὐχὶ ἐγὼ Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ἐν προσώπῳ θεοῦ λειτουργὸς πρῶτος, καὶ ἐπεκαλεσάμην ἐν ὀνόματι ἀσβέστῳ τὸν θεόν μου;"

⁸⁵ The ὅτι-clauses in Uriel's story may be read as introducing direct speech, but Origen's interpretation that the text claims that certain humans are angels descended into human physical form demands that Uriel is speaking about Jacob. The fact that Origen, at least in this case, reads ὅτι as introducing indirect speech strengthens the hypothesis that he uses it in the same way himself. Cf. the translation in FC 80, 145–46; Horst and Newman, *Early Jewish Prayers in Greek*, 253; Smith, "Prayer of Joseph," 713.

⁸⁶ Origen is not unique in his way of combining verbatim quotations with explanatory paraphrases. Christopher A. Baron, "The Delimitation of Fragments in Jacoby's *FGrHist*: Some Examples from Duris of Samos," *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* 51.1 (2011): 86–110, here 102–3, remarks that Athenaeus regularly begins with an editorial comment introducing the topic, continues with a series of verbatim quotations introduced by γοῦν, and ends with another comment.

⁸⁷ See page 88 above.

The notion that the heavenly bodies have been given to the Gentiles for worship is originally from Deut 4:19, cited by Origen later in the context, but the τινές ("some") referred to seems to be Clement:

But he [God] provided the sun, the moon and the stars for worship, which the Law says that God created for the nations in order to prevent them from totally perishing, by becoming entirely without gods.⁸⁹

Clement's point is quite faithfully preserved in Origen's rendering, but his wording – apart from the obvious ἥλιος, σελήνη and ἀστέρες – is nowhere in sight. That the attribution is made with the verb διηγέομαι ("describe"), rather than a *verbum dicendi* such as φημί, may be an indication of his mode of attribution. Origen also refers to Plato under the guise of ἐλλήνων τινές ("some Greeks"),⁹⁰ to Philo anonymously as τινές ("some people"),⁹¹ and to the Shepherd of Hermas without mentioning either name or title.⁹²

That Origen's explanatory paraphrases are not always true to the views expressed by the quoted author is illustrated by a reference to Rom 4:17, where Paul remarks that God, when he calls Abraham a father to many nations in Gen 17:5, is referring to things that do not yet exist – Abraham's future descendants – as if they already do. Origen provides both a faithful reformulation and a free reinterpretation of this verse:

The apostle does appear to use "the things that do not exist" (Rom 4:17) not for what does not exist in any number or any way, but for the morally bad, thinking (νομίζων / 1) that "things that do not exist" are the things that are evil. For "the things that do not exist," he says (γάρ φησὶν / 2), "God called as if they did" (Rom 4:17).⁹³

Origen's second attribution formula, γάρ φησὶν ("for ... he says"), leads us to expect a verbatim quotation, but Origen has adapted his quotation from Rom 4:17 in two ways: by altering the order of the phrases, and by replacing the verb form καλοῦντος ("calling") with ἐκάλεσεν ("called"). These two adaptations change Paul's wording, but not the sense of his statement. Origen's first attribution formula, on the other hand, uses the verb form νομίζων ("think-

⁸⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.3/25 (SC 120 bis, 228.43–45): "Ἡλιος δὲ καὶ σελήνη καὶ ἀστέρες, ὥς τινες τῶν πρὸ ἡμῶν διηγέσαντο, ἀπενεμήθησαν τοῖς μὴ ἀξίοις ἐπιγράφεσθαι τὸν θεὸν τῶν θεῶν θεὸν αὐτῶν εἶναι.

⁸⁹ Clement, *Strom.* 6.14/110.3 (GCS 15, 487.12–14): ἔδωκεν δὲ τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὴν σελήνην καὶ τὰ ἄστρα εἰς θρησκείαν, ἃ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, φησὶν ὁ νόμος, ἵνα μὴ τέλειον ἄθεοι γενόμενοι τελέως καὶ διαφθαρώσιν.

⁹⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.13/93.

⁹¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.42/217. Cf. Runia, *Philo in Early Christian Literature*, 162, 350.

⁹² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.36/327. Origen also has a credited reference to the Shepherd in *Comm. Jo.* 1.39/288.

⁹³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.13/94 (SC 120, 268.5–8): Φαίνεται δὲ ὁ ἀπόστολος τὰ "οὐκ ὄντα" οὐχὶ ἐπὶ τῶν μηδαμῇ μηδαμῶς ὄντων ὀνομάζων ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῶν μοχθηρῶν, "μὴ ὄντα" νομίζων τὰ πονηρά. "Τὰ μὴ ὄντα, γάρ φησιν, ὁ θεὸς ὡς ὄντα ἐκάλεσεν."

ing”) to introduce an explanatory paraphrase that seriously misrepresents Paul’s point. Paul is referring to Abraham’s future descendants, who do not yet exist but at some point in the future will exist; Origen claims that he refers to evil, which does not really exist, he purports, since it was not included in the original creation. When Origen presents an explanatory paraphrase that is not substantiated by a verbatim quotation or a summary, we cannot assume that he is representing Heracleon’s views correctly.

IV. Mere Assertions

In a number of cases where Origen mentions specific views or doctrines, he does not refer to any source material from which the opinion in question has been taken. For instance, Origen uses ὥς ἄρα (“that”) to refer to a Marcionite doctrine that Jesus was not born of Mary:

I think that Marcion is also misinterpreting sound ideas when he denies his [Jesus’s] birth of Mary as far as it concerns his divine nature to declare that (ὥς ἄρα) he was not born of Mary, and therefore has ventured to cut out these passages from the gospel.⁹⁴

Although it is generally accepted that Marcion’s gospel did not include a birth narrative, scholars hesitate to assign any specific deliberation to this exclusion, and would not claim that Marcion excised the passage to teach Jesus was not born of Mary.⁹⁵ Origen seems, therefore, to be arguing merely from the absence of material in Marcion’s gospel, which makes his claim about Marcion’s view of Christ’s birth a mere assertion.

Origen also uses ὥς ἄρα to speak of a theory that Jesus is a reborn Jewish prophet,⁹⁶ to introduce an *anthypophora* (an answer to a question he has posed himself),⁹⁷ to introduce *prokatalēpseis* (hypothetical objections),⁹⁸ and

⁹⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.6/24 (SC 157, 398.8–12): Ἐγὼ δ’ οἶμαι καὶ τὸν Μαρκίωνα παρεκδεξάμενον ὑγιεῖς λόγους, ἀθετοῦντα αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐκ Μαρίας γένεσιν κατὰ τὴν θείαν αὐτοῦ φύσιν, ἀποφῆνασθαι ὥς ἄρα οὐκ ἐγεννήθη ἐκ Μαρίας, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τετολημκέναι περιγράψαι τοὺς τοῦς τόπους ἀπὸ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου.

⁹⁵ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.27.2, accuses Marcion of excluding anything to do with Christ’s birth (*generatione Christi*) and Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.7.11 (SC 456, 100.91–102.97), insists, with reference to Marcion, that Luke 1:31, 34 belong to “our gospel”. Cf. Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.7.4, 4.19.10 (SC 456, 98, 246). See David Salter Williams, “Reconsidering Marcion’s Gospel,” *JBL* 108.3 (1989): 477–96, here 478–82; Joseph B. Tyson, *Marcion and Luke-Acts: A Defining Struggle* (University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 43–44, 96, 100, 119; Lieu, *Marcion*, 213–14; Dieter T. Roth, *The Text of Marcion’s Gospel* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 412.

⁹⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.10/64. A similar theory is expressed in Luke 9:19.

⁹⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.12/94. For the term ἀνθυποφορά, see R. Dean Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms Connected to Methods of Argumentation, Figures and Tropes from Anaximenes to Quintilian*, CBET 24 (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 19–20.

⁹⁸ The *prokatalēpsis* in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.22/178, is that humans do not generally adhere to the wishes of their fathers, and in *Comm. Jo.* 20.23/195 that if sharing the desires of the devil is sufficient to be called a child of the devil, good intentions should be sufficient to

to express an unreasonable interpretation of John 13:8 that he wants to refute.⁹⁹ Similarly, the verb νομίζω (“think,” “deem,” “consider”) is used, together with a statement in indirect speech, to introduce a *prokatalēpsis*,¹⁰⁰ to refer to the heterodox view that John the Baptist was ignorant of Christ’s God,¹⁰¹ and to discuss the notion that humans and angels are the same created beings in different physical circumstances.¹⁰² The verb οἶμαι (“think,” “suppose,” “believe”) is also used to introduce *prokatalēpseis*,¹⁰³ and to refer to the views of narrative characters.¹⁰⁴ The hypothetical nature of several of these examples underline that Origen may use this term regardless of whether the idea he wants to discuss is explicitly stated in his source. Such cases, when they refer to Heracleon without any supporting quotations or summaries, will be categorized as mere assertions.

C. Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed a variety of quotation practices in ancient literature and established that the practice of adapting the quoted text to the context into which it was inserted was established enough among ancient authors to necessitate careful evaluation of ancient quotations. Based on previous studies of ancient quotations, the most important factors for estimating the extent of adaptations in any given case have been found to be (1) the quoting practices of the individual quoting author, (2) his view of the quoted author as an authority, a rival, or merely a provider of source material, and (3) the aims and methods used in the literary context into which the quotation is incorporated.

Closer analysis of quotations in Clement of Alexandria and in Eusebius of Caesarea has revealed a rich variation in their attribution formulas, some of which may indicate whether a particular reference is a verbatim quotation or a less faithful rendering, as both Clement and Eusebius had a tendency to quote their adversaries verbatim while being considerably more vague when referring to authors within their own tradition. Since the end of nearly all quotations appear unmarked, this study has identified the possibility of searching for a transition marker accompanied by a grammatical shift in

be called a child of God. For the term προκατάληψις, see Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, 104.

⁹⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 32.8/97.

¹⁰⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.2/11.

¹⁰¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.13/82.

¹⁰² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.34/145, 148.

¹⁰³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.22/130, 19.3/18.

¹⁰⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.9/56, 13.12/75, 28.26/248.

order to find the point where the reasoning of the quoted author ends, and the reasoning of the quoting author resumes.

Turning to Origen of Alexandria, we found that the vacillating stances exhibited in his various responses to Heracleon's interpretations indicate a similar variance in mode of attribution in his presentations of Heracleon's views. Whenever he discusses details in Heracleon's exegetical procedure, we may expect him to pay due attention to Heracleon's words and to present them accurately, but when he declares himself unable to accept Heracleon's interpretation due to its affinity to a controversial dogmatic view, he might be conflating Heracleon's words with the views advocated not by Heracleon, but by "Valentinians" contemporary to Origen. Distinguishing between these two cases will allow for greater precision in determining Origen's position, as well as avoiding a major pitfall in reconstructing Heracleon's views.

Lastly, this study has identified four distinctive modes of attribution in Origen's references to previous Christian literature, and developed a set of criteria for discerning them: Statements attributed with a *verbum dicendi* and presented in direct speech (*oratio recta*) are categorized as verbatim quotations, which present the attributed statements as lifted verbatim or almost verbatim from the source. Statements attributed with a *verbum dicendi* but presented in indirect speech (*oratio obliqua*) – whether by use of an accusative-with-infinitive construction or by use of a complementizer such as ὅτι ("that") – are taken as summaries, in which Origen claims to present what the quoted author has written without necessarily transmitting his actual words. Attributions made with the complementizer ὡς ἄρα ("that"), or with a more interpretive verb, indicating that Origen's presentation is separated from the words of the quoted author by a process of interpretation, are viewed as explanatory paraphrases, in which Origen refers to the ideas he infers to be underlying the argument of the quoted author. Such attributed views or positions that appear without any stated basis in a writing by the attributed author are considered mere assertions.

When these criteria are applied to Origen's presentations of Heracleon's views and interpretations – which will be done in the following seven chapters – only those references that are categorized as verbatim quotations should be used to reconstruct Heracleon's actual words. Attributed statements categorized as summaries may be considered trustworthy material for studying Heracleon's methods, views, and interpretations, but the vocabulary they exhibit may be Origen's as much as Heracleon's. In material categorized as explanatory paraphrases, we may expect Origen's inferences of Heracleon's views to be based as much on his interactions with other, contemporary exegetical opponents as on Heracleon's words, and the mere assertions may refer to the views of these contemporary adversaries rather than to what Heracleon has expressed in his *hypomnēmata*.

Chapter 4

Creators and Creations

In the next seven chapters, the method developed in chapter 3 will be applied to all of Origen's references to Heracleon, in order to answer the questions posed in chapter 1. Each of the following chapters will analyze a continuous portion of Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, referring to an unbroken context within the Fourth Gospel. The large gaps in Origen's text, which may have originally included additional references to Heracleon, will be located at the chapter boundaries.

A. Passage 1: The Agency of Creation (John 1:3a)

When he first introduces Heracleon, Origen is interpreting John 1:3a, which reads: "All things came into being through him (δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο), and without him not one thing came into being." He remarks that the description that the world is created δι' αὐτοῦ ("through him") and not ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ("by him"),¹ must mean that the Word did not have agency of the creation. Someone greater, such as the Father, must be the one who created all things through the Word. Admitting that it is not altogether clear whether the Holy Spirit is among the "all things" that came into being through the Word, Origen purports that the Spirit, who he assumes to be dependent on the Word both for his existence and his rationality, is first in rank of all things which have come into being by the Father's agency through Christ.²

That these reflections were at least partly prompted by someone else's reasoning becomes apparent when Origen suddenly introduces Heracleon and discusses his interpretations:

But forcedly, I believe, and without evidence, Heracleon, who is said to be (λεγόμενον εἶναι / 1.1) an acquaintance of Valentinus, in his interpretation of "all things came into being through him" (John 1:3a) has understood (ἐξεληφέναι / 1.2) "all things" as the world and that which is in it, excluding from "all things," as far as his suggestion goes, what goes beyond the world and that which is in it. For he says (φησὶ γάρ / 1.3) that neither did the

¹ Origen vacillates between quoting the second and third word of John 1:3 as δι' αὐτοῦ ("through him") or as δι' οὗ ("through which"), apparently considering the two expressions equivalent for the purposes of his present argument. Since the expression δι' οὗ is not used in this Johannine context, Origen's vacillation suggests that Heracleon's writing used δι' οὗ at some point.

² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.10/70–12/90.

eternal realm come into being through the Word nor did that which is in the eternal realm, both of which he thinks (οἶεται / 1.4) came into being before the Word.³

In this paragraph, Origen briefly introduces Heracleon as an acquaintance (γνώριμος) of Valentinus, and attributes one understanding, one statement, and one belief to him. For easy reference, these four references will be numbered from 1.1 to 1.4. Reference 1.1 being the introduction of Heracleon, and References 1.2–1.4 being the three attributions. In Reference 1.2, Origen claims that Heracleon has read “all things” (πάντα) as limited to the world and not including everything that exists. In 1.3, he attributes a statement that neither the αἰών (“eternal realm”) nor that which is in the αἰών came into being through the Word. And in Reference 1.4, he concludes the sentence stating that Heracleon believes both of these categories to have come into being before the Word did.

Erwin Preuschen and Walther Völker present the statement attributed in Reference 1.3 as a quotation by use of wide letter spacing, while the other material appears in plain, unadorned text.⁴ Cécile Blanc, Werner Foerster, and Ronald E. Heine all present the same statement within quotation marks in their respective translations, while leaving the other references in plain text.⁵ Timothy J. Pettipiece presents 1.1 in plain text, italicizes 1.2 and 1.4, and presents 1.3 within quotation marks.⁶ Elaine Pagels quotes from 1.2 as if directly from Heracleon. Ansgar Wuchterpfennig uses italics in his presentation of Reference 1.2, suggesting that it does originate with Heracleon. He presents Reference 1.3 as a quotation emphasized with italics, and remarks explicitly that the end of the quotation is marked by the phrase ἅτινα οἶεται (“both of

³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/100 (SC 120 bis, 274.1–276.8; Brooke’s fragment 1): Βλαίως δὲ οἶμαι καὶ χωρὶς μαρτυρίου τὸν Οὐαλεντίνου λεγόμενον εἶναι (1.1) γνώριμον Ἡρακλέωνα διηγούμενον τὸ “πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο” ἐξεληφέναι (1.2) “πάντα” τὸν κόσμον καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, ἐκκλείοντα τῶν πάντων, τὸ ὅσον ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποθέσει αὐτοῦ, τὰ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ διαφέροντα. Φησὶ γάρ· (1.3) “οὐ τὸν αἰῶνα ἢ τὰ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι γεγονέναι διὰ τοῦ λόγου,” ἅτινα οἶεται (1.4) πρὸ τοῦ λόγου γεγονέναι.

⁴ Wide letter spacing (*Sperrung*) is consistently used by Preuschen and Völker to mark Origen’s quotations from Heracleon. The use is confirmed by Foerster, who replaces the *Sperrung* with quotation marks in his German translation, and by Blanc, who sometimes replaces the wide letter spacing in Preuschen’s Greek text with quotation marks in her own Greek edition.

⁵ Since Blanc’s Greek text is virtually unchanged from Preuschen’s, the analysis of Blanc’s material has been limited to her French translation. Any quotation analysis she has performed for her Greek text should be apparent from her translation as well.

⁶ Pettipiece consistently presents his italic text in bold italics, and combines quotation marks with bold italics when presenting attributed statements as quotations from Heracleon. Since no distinction in meaning between italics and bold italics, or between a quotation and a bold italic quotation, can be discerned in Pettipiece’s presentation, only the distinction between plain text, (bold) italics, and (bold italic) quotations will be noted.

which he thinks”), which introduces Origen’s reconstruction of Heracleon’s thoughts.⁷

	1.1 λεγόμενον	1.2 ἐκλαμβάνω	1.3 φησί γάρ	1.4 οἶεται
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Preuschen	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Völker	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Foerster	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Pettipiece	Plain text	Italics	Quotation	Italics
Pagels	–	Quotation	–	–
Wucherpennig	Plain text	Italics	Quotation	Plain text
Berglund	Assertion	Paraphrase	Summary	Paraphrase

Let us first consider which mode of attribution is used in these four cases, beginning with Origen’s presentation of Heracleon in Reference 1.1. It is worth noting that the identification of Heracleon as an associate of Valentinus is not presented as taken from Heracleon’s own writing, or derived in any other way from Heracleon’s self-presentation. On the contrary, the formula λεγόμενον εἶναι (“who is said to be”) presents this information as coming from a third party. Origen is not speaking out of personal knowledge of the situation, but may be taking his information from other readers of Heracleon’s writing,⁸ or from a previous, heresiological source.⁹ Since the association is presented with no stated basis in Heracleon’s writing, Reference 1.1 is presented as a mere assertion, and will be designated Assertion 1.1.

In his second reference, Origen claims that Heracleon has understood πάντα (“all things”) in a particular way. This attribution is not made with a *verbum dicendi*, but with the verb ἐκλαμβάνω (“understand”, “take in a certain way”). Thus, the claim does not refer to what Heracleon has written, but

⁷ SC 120 bis, 274–77; GCS 10, 70; FC 80, 120; Walther Völker, *Quellen zur Geschichte der christlichen Gnosis*, SAQ Neue Folge 5 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1932), 63–64; Werner Foerster, *Zeugnisse der Kirchenväter*. Vol. 1 of *Die Gnosis* (Zürich: Artemis, 1969), 214; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 30; Timothy James Pettipiece, “Heracleon: Fragments of Early Valentinian Exegesis. Text, Translation, and Commentary” (M. A. Thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, 2002), 35; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 110, 112–13. The reconstructions of Heracleon’s writing in Janssens, “Héracléon,” will not be reported, since she seems to presume that every reference is a verbatim quotation. I have been unable to consult Manlio Simonetti, *Testi gnostici in lingua greca e latina* (Milano: Fondazione Lorenzo Vala, 1993).

⁸ Such as his patron Ambrose, who is mentioned in Origen, *Cels.* p.1, 3.1, 4.1 and Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.2/9, 2.1/1, 6.2/6.

⁹ Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.4.1; Tertullian, *Val.* 4.1; *Elenchos* 6.p.4, 6.29.1, 6.35.6, all of which mention Heracleon’s association with Valentinus.

to what Origen perceives to be the thought process behind his words. This seems to be recognized by most previous scholars, who have rendered this claim in plain text rather than as a quotation. Thus, Reference 1.2 is an explanatory paraphrase – Paraphrase 1.2.

The third reference uses the *verbum dicendi* φησί (“he says”), but the attributed statement is presented in indirect speech using an infinitive-with-accusative construction. Although previous studies unanimously regard this reference as a quotation, chapter 3 argued that such presentation implies that Origen is making more than minimal adaptations of his source, and the only possible conclusion here is that Reference 1.3 is a summary, Summary 1.3.

The fourth reference uses the verb οἶται (“he thinks”) which clearly refers to Heracleon’s thought process rather than what he has written, which seems to be recognized in previous studies where the attributed statement is rendered in plain text. Reference 1.4 is an explanatory paraphrase.

Although there is no question that Origen presents Heracleon as an associate of Valentinus,¹⁰ and although we have no particular reason to believe that this information is false, we may want to consider how much weight we can reasonably put on this particular point. Based on his association with Valentinus, previous scholarship has often taken for granted that Heracleon’s interpretations are determined by a “Valentinian” dogmatic system such as the one described by Irenaeus.¹¹ But if the association Origen presents between Valentinus and Heracleon is based on nothing but hearsay, his presumption that Heracleon shares the views of the heterodox and “those who bring in the natures” may be similarly unfounded, as suggested by Langerbeck and Wucherpennig.¹² The term Origen uses, γνῶριμος (“acquaintance”), is commonly used in heresiological literature to introduce various teachers as disciples of previously rejected figures – that is, to infer guilt by association – but may also include other types of acquaintances.¹³ Origen does not specify that He-

¹⁰ Pace Kaler and Bussi  res, “Was Heracleon a Valentinian?,” 279–82, who argue that λεγόμενον εἶναι indicates not only that Origen reports information he has received from others, but also that he “did not consider Heracleon a Valentinian.” Although Kaler and Bussi  res manage to pose interesting questions, their argumentation makes too much of these two words and their radical conclusions cannot be sustained by available evidence. See also the refutation in Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 173–74.

¹¹ See the discussion in chapter 1, where this common presupposition is questioned.

¹² Langerbeck, “Anthropologie,” 67–72; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 332–57.

¹³ When, in Homer, *Od.* 16.9, Odysseus remarks that since the dogs are quiet, the approaching steps must be of a γνῶριμος of Eumaeus, he clearly refers to an acquaintance, not a disciple. When Demosthenes, *Cor.* 284, argues that Aeschines is not a friend, not even a γνῶριμος of Philip, no discipleship is in view. When Philostrates, *Vit. soph.* 1.24.2 (LCL 134, 104), uses γνῶριμοι to refer to people listening together with the sophist Marcus, nothing in the context excludes the presence of other acquaintances of Marcus besides his disciples. In addition to the twelve, looser acquaintances may be in view when Justin Martyr, *1 Apol.* 50.12, uses γνῶριμοι to refer to those who abandoned Jesus after his crucifixion.

Heracleon shared any particular views of Valentinus and does not repeat Heracleon's association with Valentinus as a way of refuting his views on the Fourth Gospel.¹⁴ To presume that Heracleon shares a whole dogmatic system based on his alleged association with Valentinus is unwarranted.

In Summary 1.3, Origen specifies that Heracleon explicitly excludes two things from the "everything" that came into being through the Word: the αἰών ("eternal realm") and what is ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι ("in the eternal realm"). It may be assumed, although it is not certain, that the key word αἰών is chosen by Heracleon rather than by the summarizer Origen. Within the New Testament, αἰών is mostly used to refer to a time period, either the present one or the coming one, and the phrase ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι is used several times to refer to the present (τούτῳ or νῦν) or coming (ἐρχομένῳ or μέλλοντι) age (Matt 12:32, Mark 10:30, Rom 12:2, Eph 1:21, 1 Tim 6:17, etc.). In the Fourth Gospel, the common phrase εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα ("forever") points forward to the coming divine kingdom (John 4:14, 6:58, 14:6, etc.). This particular case does not point forward to an age to come, but backward to creation, and seems, therefore, to refer to an age or realm that precedes the creation.¹⁵ That which is in this realm, or that which exists eternally since before the creation, would then at least include the Father and the Word. It seems reasonable that Heracleon might read the "everything" (πάντα) that came into being through the Word as excluding, minimally, the Father and the Word himself. Heracleon's description, in which there is one αἰών within which something else is located, does not match Irenaeus's heresiological specification of thirty "Valentinian" divinities called αἰῶνες.¹⁶

In Paraphrase 1.2, Origen claims that Heracleon excludes, from his understanding of πάντα, what goes beyond the κόσμος ("world") and what is in the

We know from the Gospels that Justin Martyr, 1 *Apol.* 32.6, speaks of disciples when he writes of γνῶριμοι sent to borrow a donkey for Jesus's entry into Jerusalem, but nothing in Justin's text suggests that their status as disciples rather than acquaintances is of importance. When Origen, *Cels.* 2.69.65, mentions that Jesus gave bread to two of his γνῶριμοι (cf. Luke 24:30), it is not knowable whether they are referenced *qua* disciples or *qua* acquaintances. In this case, Chadwick translates "friends" in Origen, *Contra Celsum*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 120.

¹⁴ Kaler and Bussièrès, "Was Heracleon a Valentinian?" 283, go so far as to claim that one "would find this lack of reference to Heracleon's Valentinianism extremely odd, if Origen did in fact consider Heracleon a Valentinian."

¹⁵ Pace Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 118–19, who presumes Heracleon to be referring to the "Valentinian" Pleroma.

¹⁶ Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 132–39, 267, argues that Heracleon here makes a significant distinction between the eternal realm of God and his Word on the one hand, and the created realm on the other – thereby excluding the eternal realm of God from πάντα – but does not, in contrast to a similar passage in the Tripartite Tractate, hint that the αἰών is a secondary creator. Both he and Janssens, "L'épisode de la samaritaine chez Héracléon," 78, point out that Heracleon always uses αἰών in the singular, never plural.

κόσμος. This claim seems to be based on the same information as Summary 1.3 and may not add any additional data. In Paraphrase 1.4, Origen infers that Heracleon, since he does not think that the eternal realm and what is in it came into being through the Word, must believe that they existed before the Word. This paraphrase does not add any information to what is known from Summary 1.3. With a minimalist interpretation of the expression, where what is in the αἰών is the Father, the inference is completely logical.¹⁷ With a slightly-less-minimalist interpretation, where both the Father and the Word are implied, the statement is nonsensical; the Word cannot have come into being before the Word. Origen's inference that Heracleon believes the αἰών and its contents to precede the Word may be based on a heresiological description where some of the "Valentinian" αἰῶνες are described as preceding the Word, while others have come into being through the Word and its female counterpart Life. Wucherpennig rightly identifies this remark as an attempt to harmonize Heracleon's comments with the teachings of later "Valentinian" adherents.¹⁸

In the next paragraph, Origen twice attributes to Heracleon a phrase with strong similarities to the phrase τὸν κόσμον καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ ("the world and that which is in it") in Paraphrase 1.2:

Taking an even more ruthless stance towards "and without him not one thing came into being" (John 1:3a), and having no respect for "Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and you will be a liar" (Prov 30:6), to "not one thing" he adds (προστίθῃσι / 1.5) "of that which is in the world and in the creation." And since it is evident that what he says is exceedingly forced and interpreted contrary to what is clear – if what he believes to be divine is excluded from "everything" while that which, as he thinks, will completely perish can properly be called "everything" – we need not spend more time refuting what proves to be obviously absurd, such as when he, to the scripture that says "without him not one thing came into being" (John 1:3a) without justification from the scripture adds (προστιθέντα / 1.6) "of that which is in the world and in the creation," and does not demonstrate this with plausible arguments, demanding to be believed like the prophets or the apostles who, with power and without accountability, passed on their writings of salvation to their contemporaries and to those who came after them.¹⁹

¹⁷ Keefer, *Branches*, 36, notes the logic of Heracleon's distinction: "Certainly θεός is not included in πάντα, and if not θεός, then it is possible that other elements of the heavenly sphere are excluded as well."

¹⁸ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 135: "Die hier von Origenes zitierte Notiz versucht, die ursprüngliche Auslegung Herakleons mit der Lehre der Valentinianer zu harmonisieren und geht möglicherweise sogar auf Origenes selber zurück."

¹⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/100–101 (SC 120 bis, 276.8–25; Brooke's fragment 1): Ἀναιδέστερον δὲ ἰστάμενος πρὸς τὸ "Καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν," μὴ εὐλαβούμενος τὸ "Μὴ προσθήῃς τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ, ἵνα μὴ ἐλέγξῃ σε καὶ ψευδὴς γένη," προστίθῃσι (1.5) τῷ "οὐδὲ ἓν." "Τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ τῇ κτίσει." Καὶ ἐπεὶ προφανὲς ἐστὶ τὰ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ λεγόμενα σφόδρα βεβιασμένα καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἐνάργειαν ἀπαγγελλόμενα, εἰ τὰ νομιζόμενα αὐτῷ θεῷ ἐκκλείεται τῶν "πάντων," τὰ δέ, ὡς ἐκεῖνος οἶται, παντελῶς φθειρόμενα κυρίως "πάντα"

Twice, Heracleon is said to have added a phrase to the οὐδὲ ἓν (“not one thing”) of John 1:3a. Previous scholars present these two references as quotations: Preuschen and Völker use wide letter spacing, Foerster, Blanc, Heine, Pettipiece, and Wucherpennig all use quotation marks, although Foerster omits Reference 1.6. Pagels seems not to refer to this paragraph.²⁰

	1.5 προστίθῃσι	1.6 προστιθέντα
Blanc	Quotation	Quotation
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	–
Pettipiece	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation	Quotation

These two references are particularly tricky, since the verb form προστίθῃσι (“he adds”) can be understood in several different ways. One possibility is that Origen is accusing Heracleon of physically adding the phrase τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ τῇ κτίσει (“of that which is in the world and in the creation”) after οὐδὲ ἓν (“not one thing”) to his text of the Gospel of John, presumably by quoting the passage with this phrase added to it. Another possibility is that Origen accuses Heracleon of interpreting the Johannine οὐδὲ ἓν as if the phrase was present – that is, mentally adding the phrase when interpreting John 1:3a. A third possibility is that Heracleon explicitly argues that the phrase οὐδὲ ἓν should be interpreted as if the phrase was included – that is, that the author of the Fourth Gospel silently excludes any extra-cosmic entities from his assertion that “not one thing” came into being without the Word.²¹ A fourth possibility is that Heracleon is simply quoting from a version of the Gospel of John which already included this phrase, which led to Origen accusing him of intentionally adding it.

καλεῖται, οὐκ ἐπιδιατριπτέον τῇ ἀνατροπῇ τῶν αὐτόθεν τὴν ἀτοπίαν ἐμφαινόντων· οἷον δὴ καὶ τὸ τῆς γραφῆς λεγούσης· “Χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν”. προστιθέντα (1.6) αὐτὸν ἄνευ παραμυθίας τῆς ἀπὸ τῆς γραφῆς τό· “τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ τῇ κτίσει”. μηδὲ μετὰ πιθανότητος ἀποφαίνεσθαι, πιστεύεσθαι ἀξιοῦντα ὁμοίως προφῆταις ἢ ἀποστόλοις τοῖς μετ’ ἐξουσίας καὶ ἀνυπευθύνως καταλείπουσι τοῖς καθ’ αὐτοὺς καὶ μεθ’ αὐτοὺς σωτήρια γράμματα.

²⁰ SC 120 bis, 277; GCS 10, 70; FC 80, 120; Völker, *Quellen*, 63–64; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 214; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 35; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 110–11. Blanc’s translation leaves it somewhat unclear whether the phrase is presented as a quotation, or merely quoted to delimit it from the surrounding text.

²¹ So Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 117–18, who argues that the phrase is quoted from Heracleon’s word study on the expression οὐδὲ ἓν.

Based solely on the information given in Passage 1, the second possibility is quite attractive. The phrase allegedly added here nicely complements the claim made in Summary 1.3 that neither the eternal realm, nor what is in the eternal realm, came into being through the Word. References 1.5 and 1.6 could therefore be explanatory paraphrases based on the same information that is behind the previous summary. In a few later references, however, it is clear that Heracleon recurrently introduces his comments not with a verbatim quotation, but with a paraphrase of a verse or passage of the Fourth Gospel, as is common in ancient commentaries.²² Given this practice in Heracleon's writing, it is more likely that Heracleon has added the phrase, not to the text of the Fourth Gospel, but to his paraphrase of it, provided at the outset of his comment on this Johannine passage as a base for further reflection. Therefore, this study concurs with the scholarly consensus and concludes that these two references are verbatim quotations.

In his response, Origen criticizes Heracleon in several different ways. He expresses his discontent with Heracleon's interpretation by quoting (verbatim) an exhortation from Prov 30:6, which instructs its reader not to add anything to the words of God. In doing so, Origen identifies the Fourth Gospel as the words of God, and presumes Heracleon to do the same. He calls it σφόδρα βεβιασμένος ("exceedingly forced") and ἀτοπία ("absurd") to exclude τὰ νομιζόμενα αὐτῷ θεῖα ("what he thinks to be divine") from πάντα ("everything") – while he himself, we may presume, also excludes the Father from what he believes to have come into being through the Word. And he complains that Heracleon presents his interpretation without plausible arguments, as if he believes himself to have the same authority as an Old Testament prophet or an apostle of Christ.²³ As noted above, this lack of evidence is a recurring theme in his responses to Heracleon.²⁴

The next paragraph attributes two more statements to Heracleon:

In addition, he also understands (ἐξακούω) "everything came into being through him" (John 1:3a) in his own way, affirming (φάσκων / 1.7) that the one who supplied the Maker (δημιουργός) with the cause for the origin (γένεσις) of the world, that is the Word, is not the one "from whom" or "by whom," but the one "through whom" (δι' οὗ), taking what has been written beyond the customary usage of this phrase. For if the truth of the matter was

²² See page 63 above and the analyses of references 4.1, 8.1–2, and 20.5 below.

²³ Pace Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 83, who claims that Heracleon here appeals to writings of the "Valentinian" school, which for him had apostolic authority.

²⁴ Cf. Berglund, "Vacillating Stances," 559–63, 567–69. Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 121, argues that this lack of evidence is the cause of Origen's characterization of Heracleon's interpretation as βιαίως ("forced"). More probable is that these are two separate criticisms: In Origen's view, Heracleon's interpretation neither follows naturally from the Johannine text, nor is it supported by other scriptural passages. As noted by Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 128; cf. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 238, ἐνάργεια is a technical term in Greco-Roman literary criticism, referring to the plainly expressed sense of the text.

as he thinks, it would have had to be written that everything was created through the Maker by the Word, and not the other way around, through the Word by the Maker. We, who use “through whom” in consistency with customary usage, have not left our interpretation unattested, but he, who cannot support the sense he purports from the divine scriptures, appears to be both mistrusting what is true and shamelessly opposing it, for he says that (φησί γὰρ ὅτι / 1.8) in order that “through him” be understood in this way, the Word did not make (ἐποίει) [the world] himself, caused by the activity of someone else (ὅπ’ ἄλλου ἐνεργοῦντος), but someone else (ἕτερος) did, because of his activity.²⁵

The seventh reference uses the participle φάσκων (“affirming”) and concerns who caused the creation of the world. The eighth is made with φησί (“he says”) and pertains to who performed the act of creation. Blanc quotes the eighth, but leaves the seventh in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, Heine,²⁶ and Pettipiece all present both as quotations. Pagels constructs a single quotation from the two references, and presents it a quotation directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig is inconsistent. He remarks that Origen quotes Heracleon twice in this paragraph, and calls Reference 1.7 a verbatim quotation, but puts quotation marks around 1.8 only, while 1.7 is simply italicized.²⁷

	1.7 φάσκων	1.8 φησί γὰρ ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text	Quotation
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Pettipiece	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation (?)	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase	Summary

²⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/102–3 (SC 120 bis, 276.26–278.41; Brooke’s fragment 1): “Ἐτι δὲ ιδίως καὶ τοῦ ‘Πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο’ ἐξήκουσε φάσκων· (1.7) Τὸν τὴν αἰτίαν παρασχόντα τῆς γενέσεως τοῦ κόσμου τῷ δημιουργῷ, τὸν λόγον ὄντα, εἶναι οὐ τὸν ἀφ’ οὗ, ἢ ὑφ’ οὗ, ἀλλὰ τὸν δι’ οὗ, παρὰ τὴν ἐν τῇ συνηθείᾳ φράσιν ἐκδεχόμενος τὸ γεγραμμένον. Εἰ γὰρ ὡς νοεῖ ἡ ἀλήθεια τῶν πραγμάτων ἦν, ἔδει διὰ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ γεγράφθαι πάντα γεγονέναι ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου, οὐχὶ δὲ ἀνάπαλιν διὰ τοῦ λόγου ὑπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ. Καὶ ἡμεῖς μὲν τῷ ‘δι’ οὗ’ χρησάμενοι ἀκολούθως τῇ συνηθείᾳ, οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον τὴν ἐκδοχὴν ἀφήκαμεν· ἐκεῖνος δὲ πρὸς τῷ μὴ παραμεμυθῆσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν θείων γραμμάτων τὸν καθ’ ἑαυτὸν νοῦν, φαίνεται καὶ ὑποπτεύσας τὸ ἀληθὲς καὶ ἀναιδῶς αὐτῷ ἀντιβλέψας· φησί γάρ· ‘Ὅτι (1.8) οὐχ ὡς ὑπ’ ἄλλου ἐνεργοῦντος αὐτὸς ἐποίει ὁ λόγος, ἵν’ οὕτω νοηθῇ τὸ δι’ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ’ αὐτοῦ ἐνεργοῦντος ἕτερος ἐποίει.’”

²⁶ Heine’s second quotation mark of the first quotation is missing, making it unclear where he deems the quotation to end.

²⁷ SC 120 bis, 277–79; CGS 10, 70; FC 80, 121; Völker, *Quellen*, 64; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 214–15; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 30; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 36; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 111–12, cf. 116, 144.

Let us begin with Reference 1.8, which is the clearer of these two references. It is made with a *verbum dicendi*, φησί (“he says”), and the attributed statement is a complete sentence with a finite verb, ἐποίησεν (“he made” or “he did”). The ὅτι that appears after φησί γάρ may be taken as part of the attributed statement (as is done by Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, and Pettipiece), but it is more reasonable to see it as part of the attribution formula, as Wuchterpfennig does. Chapter 3 argued that a *verbum dicendi* followed by ὅτι implies that Origen is making non-trivial adaptations of his source, and there is no particular reason why this case would be an exception. The key terms of this statement, ποίεω (here: “make”) and ἐνεργέω (“be in action,” “operate”), do not appear previously in this paragraph, which suggests that they are Heracleon’s choice of words. Apart from that, there is ample opportunity for Origen to have adapted the statement. Reference 1.8 is thus a summary.²⁸

The statement in 1.7 is presented in indirect speech, using an accusative-with-infinitive construction. The verb φάσκω can be used either in the sense of “say,” “affirm,” or in the sense of “think,” “deem,” and the attributed statement can therefore be taken either as a summary or an explanatory paraphrase. The content of this statement appears to be the basis for the preceding comment, which characterizes Heracleon’s understanding of the Johannine phrase as somewhat peculiar. It seems to be based on the content of Summary 1.8. Origen may have inferred – based on the information that Heracleon claimed that the Word did not perform the creative work himself, but caused someone else to perform this activity – that the one providing the cause for the origin of the world is the one “through which” the world has been created, according to the Fourth Gospel. Based on this connection in content, it is reasonable to take φάσκω in a more interpretive sense, and conclude that Reference 1.7 is an explanatory paraphrase.

Summary 1.8 distinguishes between a more abstract activity effectuating or causing the creation (ἐνεργέω) and the more concrete activity of carrying out the work (ποιέω). Heracleon is said to claim that the role of the Word is not ποιεῖν but ἐνεργεῖν, and to state that ἕτερος (“someone else”) is carrying out the work, caused by the activity of the Word.²⁹ This ἕτερος is not described in any further detail, and cannot easily be identified with the “Valentinian” demiurge as described by Irenaeus.³⁰ A creative worker (ποιοῦν) whose activity is prompted by an originator (ἐνεργῶν) higher up in the causal chain indicates a level of cooperation that is far from the heresiologists’ descriptions of

²⁸ Heine, FC 80, 120 n 132, argues that the phrase ἵν’ οὕτω νοηθῇ τὸ δι’ αὐτοῦ (“in order that ‘through him’ should be understood in this way”), which appears within Reference 1.8, is likely to be added as an interpretive comment by Origen. The other scholars take it as we do here, as part of what is attributed to Heracleon.

²⁹ With Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 151–53.

³⁰ Pace Simonetti, “Eracleone e Origene,” 119.

the heterodox Maker as stupid and ignorant. Heracleon's ἕτερος ("someone else") is not an alternative divinity in opposition to the Father of Christ, but a subordinate agent in charge of carrying out the plans for the creation.³¹ It could be connected to the idea, expressed in several ancient sources, that ἀγγέλοι ("angels") were involved in creation.³²

The summary does not specify the Father's role in the creative endeavor. One possibility, suggested by Eugène de Faye, is that Heracleon posited more than two links in this causal chain – that the deity that is in the eternal realm caused the activity of the Word, which in its turn caused the activity of a lower creative agent.³³ Such a model would be compatible both with the Johannine prologue and with the statement quoted from Heracleon.³⁴ Origen's complaint that Heracleon takes the expression δι' αὐτοῦ ("through him") beyond its customary usage would, in that case, be unsubstantiated by the evidence Origen provides.

Alternatively, as suggested by Harold W. Attridge, Heracleon's distinction between originator (ἐνεργῶν) and worker (ποιοῦν) can be intended to match the distinction between a divine creator and a created being. The idea that God is αὐτοκίνητος ("self-moved") – that is, independent of any other cause – would not be unique to Heracleon. Attridge argues that Heracleon is simply aiming to interpret δι' αὐτοῦ in a way that is both philosophically consistent and in line with the affirmation in John 1:1 that the Word is θεός ("God").³⁵ In that case, the role of the Father is irrelevant for Heracleon's argument that a divine being cannot be caused to act by someone else.

As noticed by Wuchterpfennig, the remark by Heracleon that Origen seems to be summarizing amounts to a γλωσσηματικόν ("word study") on πάντα. This word study seems to involve the word κόσμος ("world"), which recurs throughout Origen's presentation and may, therefore, be chosen by Heracleon, even though it does not appear in any quotation or summary in this passage. If so, Heracleon may be basing his word study of John 1:3a on a similar statement in John 1:10, which reads ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο ("The world came into being through him"), and presuming ὁ κόσμος ("the world") to be a less-abstract rendering of πάντα. Heracleon's way of using one passage

³¹ Pace Keefer, *Branches*, 37, who describes this interpretation as being conformant to "Valentinian" views. Cf. Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 83, who remarks that Heracleon seems not to have shared the "Valentinian" understanding of creation, and suggests that he was more of an exegete than a dogmatist. Cf. also Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 156–60, who refers to Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.5.3, and *Elenchos* 6.33.1.

³² See Marksches, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 14–24; Attridge, "Heracleon and John," 65.

³³ de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 82.

³⁴ The point that a belief in a lower creative being does not necessitate a negative view of the material world is thoroughly made by Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism,"* 113–15; Williams, "A Life Full of Meaning and Purpose," 21–33.

³⁵ Attridge, "Heracleon and John," 63–66.

of the Fourth Gospel to interpret another is compatible with Aristarchus's principle, and suggests knowledge of Greco-Roman literary criticism.³⁶

In the last paragraph of the passage, Origen concludes his response without any additional references to Heracleon:

This is not the time to refute that the Maker (δημιουργός), being a servant of the Word, has made the world, and demonstrate that the Word, being a servant of the Maker, constructed the world. For, according to the prophet David, God "spoke and they came into being," he "commanded and they were created" (Ps 148:5). The uncreated God commanded the first-born of the whole creation, and not only was the world and what is in it created, but also everything else, "whether thrones or dominions, rulers or powers, for everything was created through him and for him, and he himself is before all things" (Col 1:15–17).³⁷

Both here and above,³⁸ Origen is using the term δημιουργός ("Maker") as a neutral term denoting either the Christian God, Father of Christ and creator of heaven and earth, or an inferior creator tasked with the practicalities of the creative process. Both here and above, he presents a false dichotomy where the world is either created by the Word through the Maker or vice versa. Origen presumes the distinction between Father and Word to be the only relevant context for interpreting both the Johannine δι' αὐτοῦ and Heracleon's distinction between ποιεῖν and ἐνεργεῖν, while Heracleon may have other, subordinate, agents in mind.³⁹ Origen's first quotation in this paragraph, from the Septuagint version of Ps 148:5, does support Origen's view that the process of creation originated with God's spoken command, but does not necessarily preclude the involvement of other agents. His second quotation, from Col 1:15–17, speaks to the existence of angelic beings such as

³⁶ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 117–23. See also chapter 2.

³⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/104 (SC 120 bis, 278.41–51; Brooke's fragment 1): Οὐ τοῦ παρόντος δὲ καιροῦ ἐλέγξει τὸ μὴ τὸν δημιουργὸν ὑπῆρέτην τοῦ λόγου γεγενημένον τὸν κόσμον πεποιηκέναι καὶ ἀποδεικνύναι ὅτι ὑπῆρέτης τοῦ δημιουργοῦ γενόμενος ὁ λόγος τὸν κόσμον κατεσκεύασε. Κατὰ γὰρ τὸν προφήτην Δαβὶδ "Ὁ θεὸς εἶπε καὶ ἐγενήθησαν, ἐνετείλατο καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν." "Ἐνετείλατο" γὰρ ὁ ἀγέννητος θεὸς τῷ πρωτοτόκῳ πάσης κτίσεως "καὶ ἐκτίσθησαν," οὐ μόνον ὁ κόσμος καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ πάντα, "εἴτε θρόνοι εἴτε κυριότητες εἴτε ἀρχαὶ εἴτε ἐξουσίαι· πάντα γὰρ δι' αὐτοῦ καὶ εἰς αὐτὸν ἔκτισται, καὶ αὐτὸς ἐστὶ πρὸ πάντων."

³⁸ Cf. the quotation on page 114–15.

³⁹ Cf. how Clement, *Strom.* 4.13/90, quotes a reflection by Valentinus on creation, in which no distinction between creator and higher god is made, and immediately criticizes the "Valentinian" idea of lower creative agents. Dunderberg, "Reconizing the Valentini-ans," 47, remarks: "[S]ince the distinction between the true God and the creator-god is not present in [this passage], Clement must 'produce it' by bringing in what he obviously considered to be standard Valentinian theology." Cf. also Marksches, *Valentinus Gnosticus?*, 183–85, who finds it surprising that Clement reads the idea of two gods into Valentinus's words even though he previously has quoted him referring to angels as involved in creation.

thrones and powers created through the Word, but does not specify whether they were involved in creating the material world or not.

B. Passage 2: Spiritual Humans and Spiritual Life (John 1:3b–4)

When he next interacts with Heracleon, Origen has proceeded to the last two words of John 1:3, which can be taken either with the preceding or the following sentence.⁴⁰ Origen opts for the latter and reads: “What came to being in him was life, and the life was the light of the humans.”⁴¹ Asserting the paradoxical nature of this statement, he argues that the life that is the light of the humans cannot be the natural life, but must signify the spiritual life of the Christians, a life that came into being in Christ when humanity was created, for it could not exist before human beings did. Origen also asserts that this life is attainable for those who lack it, since the author of Eph 5:8 confesses to once having been darkness. Origen maintains that those who distinguish between spiritual (πνευματικός) and earthly (χοϊκός) natures should have difficulties with this passage, since it locates spiritual people, rather than earthly ones, in darkness.⁴²

After concluding this refutation, Origen turns to Heracleon:

Forcedly, once again, when he comes upon this passage, Heracleon is taking (ἐξείληφεν / 2.1) “What came into being in him was life” [and reads] “in the spiritual humans” instead of “in him” – as if he believes (νομίσας / 2.2) “the Word” and “the spiritual ones” to be equivalent, even if he does not say so explicitly. And, as if really reflecting on this, he says: (φησὶν / 2.3) “For he granted them their first formation himself, at their creation, as he brought what had been sown by someone else into form, into light and its own individuality, and displayed them.” He has not observed, however, what else is said in Paul about the spiritual ones – that he leaves it unsaid that they are humans: “The animated human does not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit, for they are madness to him, but the one who is spiritual discerns everything” (1 Cor 2:14–15). It is not without reason, we say, that he has not added “human” to “spiritual.” For the spiritual is better than a human; the human is characterized by a body, a soul, or both of these together, but not also by the spirit, which is more divine than them, and the spiritual is so named based on his superior participation in the divine Spirit. The elements of this theory are also presented without any demonstrated

⁴⁰ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, AB 29 (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 6; C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, 2nd ed. (London: SPCK, 1978), 156–57; George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 2nd ed., WBC 36 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 2.

⁴¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.18/128. Cf. 2.16/114. See also Bart D. Ehrman, Gordon D. Fee, and Michael W. Holmes, *The Text of the Fourth Gospel in the Writings of Origen* (Society of Biblical Literature, 1992), 45–47; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 160.

⁴² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.16/112–20/136.

evidence. As it stands, he is not able to reach a shadow of credibility in his argument about these things. So much about that.⁴³

Three references to Heracleon are made in this passage, the first with the interpretive verb ἐξείληφεν (“he is taking”), the second with the introspective νομίσας (“believing”), and the third with the *verbum dicendi* φησὶν (“he says”). While leaving the second as plain text, the first and third are both presented as quotations by Blanc, Preuschen, Völker, Heine, Foerster, Pettipiece, and Wucherpfennig; Pettipiece and Wucherpfennig even italicize both. Pagels quotes from 2.3 as if directly from Heracleon.⁴⁴ As the first reference is a phrase that Heracleon is claimed to have read instead of another phrase, the quotation marks in Blanc, Heine, and Foerster might be intended merely to delimit the phrase from the surrounding prose, but the combination of quotation marks and italics in Pettipiece and Wucherpfennig is harder to read as anything else than indicating that Origen is presenting a quotation from Heracleon, especially since Wucherpfennig explicitly calls both references quotations.⁴⁵ Wucherpfennig’s remark that the second reference reveals that Origen has misunderstood Heracleon indicates that he takes it as originating with Origen, and not with Heracleon.⁴⁶ Van den Hoek has also analyzed this particular paragraph, and argues that Origen, in 2.1 and 2.2, deals with Heracleon’s interpretation in a rather indirect and roundabout way, which “reflects his own understanding of Heracleon’s thought,” and “almost sounds like a willful misunderstanding.” She also maintains that in Reference 2.3, “Origen continues by quoting Heracleon verbatim.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.21/137–39 (SC 120 bis, 302.1–24; Brooke’s fragment 2): Πάνν δὲ βιαίως κατὰ τὸν τόπον γενόμενος ὁ Ἡρακλέων τὸ “Ὁ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν” ἐξείληφεν (2.1) ἀντὶ τοῦ “ἐν αὐτῷ” “εἰς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τοὺς πνευματικούς,” οἷονεὶ ταῦτόν νομίσας (2.2) εἶναι τὸν λόγον καὶ τοὺς πνευματικούς, εἰ καὶ μὴ σαφῶς ταῦτ’ εἴρηκε· καὶ ὡς περὶ αἰτιολογῶν φησιν· (2.3) “Αὐτὸς γὰρ τὴν πρώτην μόρφωσιν τὴν κατὰ τὴν γένεσιν αὐτοῖς παρέσχε, τὰ ὑπ’ ἄλλου σπαρέντα εἰς μορφὴν καὶ εἰς φωτισμόν καὶ περιγραφὴν ἰδίαν ἀγαγὼν καὶ ἀναδείξας.” Οὐ παρετήρησε δὲ καὶ τὸ περὶ τῶν πνευματικῶν παρὰ τῷ Παύλῳ λεγόμενον, ὅτι ἀνθρώπους αὐτοὺς εἶναι ἀπεσιώπησε· “Ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος οὐ δέχεται τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ, μωρία γὰρ αὐτῷ ἐστίν· ὁ δὲ πνευματικὸς ἀνακρίνει πάντα.” Ἡμεῖς γὰρ οὐ μάρτην αὐτόν φαμεν ἐπὶ τοῦ πνευματικοῦ μὴ προστεθεικέναι τὸ “ἄνθρωπος”· κρεῖττον γὰρ ἢ “ἄνθρωπος” ὁ πνευματικὸς, τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἥτοι ἐν ψυχῇ ἢ ἐν σώματι ἢ ἐν συναμφοτέροις χαρακτηριζομένου, οὐχὶ δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ τούτων θειοτέρῳ πνεύματι, οὐ κατὰ μετοχὴν ἐπικρατοῦσαν χρηματίζει ὁ πνευματικὸς. Ἄμα δὲ καὶ τὰ τῆς τοιαύτης ὑποθέσεως χωρὶς κἀν φαινομένης ἀποδείξεως ἀποφαίνεται, οὐδὲ μέχρι τῆς τυχούσης πιθανότητος φθάσαι εἰς τὸν περὶ τούτων δυνήθεις λόγον. Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν περὶ ἐκείνου.

⁴⁴ SC 120 bis, 303; GCS 10, 77; FC 80, 131; Völker, *Quellen*, 64–65; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 215; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 34, 106; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 39; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 161.

⁴⁵ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 161.

⁴⁶ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 162.

⁴⁷ van den Hoek, “Heracleon and the Hermeneutics of Prepositions,” 43.

	2.1 ἐξείληφεν	2.2 νομίσας	2.3 φησὶν
Blanc	Quotation (?)	Plain text	Quotation
Preuschen	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Heine	Quotation (?)	Plain text	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation (?)	Plain text	Quotation
Pettipiece	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase	Paraphrase	Quotation

According to our criteria, the first reference – in which the interpretive choice to read “in the spiritual humans” instead of “in him” is ascribed to Heracleon – is an explanatory paraphrase. The verb Origen is using refers to Heracleon’s interpretive process, not to what he has written or expressed.⁴⁸ In the second reference, Origen takes one interpretive step further, to claim that Heracleon’s interpretation suggests that he believes “the Word” and “the spirituals” to be identical, or equivalent expressions for the same spiritual reality. As Origen frankly admits, this speculation lacks clear support in Heracleon’s writing. This explanatory paraphrase illustrates, therefore, how Origen is paraphrasing Heracleon in order to make explicit the heterodox ideas he infers to be underlying Heracleon’s interpretations. The third attributed statement is introduced by φησὶν (“he says”) and is presented in direct speech without traces of being adapted to Origen’s sentence structure. It is therefore presented as a verbatim quotation.⁴⁹

The assertion that Heracleon views the Word as identical or equivalent to spiritual humans is clearly a misrepresentation of Heracleon that even Origen hesitates to make, and should be left out of any analysis of Heracleon’s views.⁵⁰ The explanatory paraphrase informs us that Heracleon is interpreting

⁴⁸ Since explanatory paraphrases do not reflect Heracleon’s language, this paraphrase does not imply that ἀντὶ τοῦ is typical for the exegetical language of Heracleon as claimed by Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 273.

⁴⁹ Pace Jens Holzhausen, “Die Seelenlehre des Gnostikers Herakleon,” in *ψυχή – Seele – anima: Festschrift für Karin Alt zum 7. Mai 1998*, ed. Jens Holzhausen, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 109 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1998), 279–300, here 285, n. 26, who claims that the third attribution cannot contain Heracleon’s own wording, since it fails to clearly make distinctions that Origen might ignore, but would be important for the “Gnostic” Heracleon. Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 161, n. 277.

⁵⁰ Pace Holger Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System: Zur Rezeption der valentinianischen Gnosis bei Origenes*, Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte 56 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 119, who argues that Heracleon here describes the relationship between the Word and the spirituals as a particularly intimate unity, and Simonetti, “Eracleone e Origene,” 122, who claims that Heracleon here expresses that the spirituals have the origin and reason of their lives in the Word.

John 1:3b–4 as pertaining to humans that are spiritual (πνευματικοί) in some sense. Thereby, it specifies that the pronoun αὐτοῖς (“them”) in the quoted comment refers to such spirituals. The concept of spiritual people recurs in the Pauline literature and may readily be understood without references to the views denounced by Irenaeus. In Gal 6:1, Paul argues that spiritual people should be able to gently guide Christians who sin back to the right path. In 1 Cor 2:11–3:3, he distinguishes between more advanced “spiritual” Christians, who are able to discern everything, and the less-mature “animated” (ψυχικός) and “carnal” (σαρκικός) ones, who are unable to receive spiritual gifts (πνευματικά) from God – gifts that seem to be an important part of what Paul wishes his audience to receive (Rom 1:11, 15:27; 1 Cor 14:1). Heracleon’s spiritual humans could, therefore, refer to such mature and receptive Christians, rather than to a separate category of humans with a particular inherent nature.⁵¹

Two possible contributors to Heracleon’s association of ὁ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ with mature Christians may be identified. First, the Pauline literature has established ἐν αὐτῷ as a reference to the position of Christians who, in Christ, receive blessings, knowledge, and fulfillment.⁵² In this case, the spirituals are those who participate in Christ, as the branches participate in the vine (John 15:5; Rom 11:17). Alternately, Heracleon may have read ὁ γέγονεν ἐν αὐτῷ as referring to a process in which something is formed (ὁ γέγονεν) into the image of an archetype (ἐν αὐτῷ).⁵³ In that case, the spirituals are those Christians who gradually are transformed into true images of God, in the sense expressed in 2 Cor 3:18. In both cases the category may be open rather than limited to a predetermined category.⁵⁴

In Quotation 2.3, the subject of the first clause must be the divine Word. The quoted comment thus describes how the Word, at the time of creation, grants the spiritual humans their first formation (μόρφωσις). To describe this event, Heracleon uses a horticultural image.⁵⁵ While someone else may have been involved in sowing the seeds, it is the divine Word who has made them germinate, sprout, and blossom. If humanity as a species is in view, the one

⁵¹ Pace Simonetti, “Eracleone e Origene,” 122–24, who interprets Heracleon in accordance with other “Valentinian” sources and concludes that he limits the life-giving activity of the Word to the category of the spirituals, and Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System*, 119, n. 96, who uses Clement’s *Excerpts from Theodotus* to argue that the spiritual seed, in Heracleon’s view, is only given to a small privileged minority.

⁵² Cf. 1 Cor 1:5; Eph 1:3–14; Col 2:6–10.

⁵³ Barbara Aland, “Erwählungstheologie und Menschenklassenlehre: Die Theologie des Herakleon als Schlüssel zum Verständnis der christlichen Gnosis?,” in *Gnosis and Gnosticism*, ed. Martin Krause, NHS 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 148–81, here 153.

⁵⁴ Aland, “Erwählungstheologie,” 153–55, repeatedly asserts this point.

⁵⁵ Pace Aland, “Erwählungstheologie,” 154, who claims it to be obvious that he uses “den valentinianischen Mythos.”

sowing the seeds might be the Father;⁵⁶ if the focus is on individual humans, the seeds would be sown by their human fathers. Since the first alternative would be incongruous with Heracleon's previously discussed view on the agency of creation, the second interpretation is the more probable one.⁵⁷ Heracleon's specification that this creative process is their first formation indicates that a second formative process is in view. Presumably, the life mentioned in John 1:4 is given to the spirituals in this second process, but Heracleon does not specify how.⁵⁸ The simplest possible assumption is that this second formative process is the one through which a newborn Christian matures into a spiritual one, in the sense in which this adjective is used by Paul. Possibly, this process could have been expressed in analogous terms where the sowing is Christian preaching or missionary activity, and the activity of the Word is directed to the spiritual growth of the individual Christian rather than the natural growth of a human fetus. Such imagery would comply with the imagery in First Corinthians, where Paul claims to have sown the spiritual things (τὰ πνευματικά ἐσείραμεν) in Corinth, and expects the Corinthians to mature spiritually (1 Cor 9:11, 2:14–3:3, 14:1).

Heracleon seems, thus, to be interpreting the Johannine assertion that what came to being in the Word was a life that was the light of the humans as a reference to the spiritual life of individual Christians. This line of interpretation may be developed in dialogue with Pauline literature. Heracleon's view seems to be well in line with the outlook of the author of the Fourth Gospel, who in John 20:31 declares that the intention of his writing process is to inspire in his readers a faith in Jesus leading to life in his name.⁵⁹

In his response, Origen makes two points: First, he claims that Heracleon has overlooked an important distinction, in 1 Cor 2:14–15, between the ani-

⁵⁶ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 168–71, explores this alternative.

⁵⁷ This interpretation of Heracleon's comment, in which the sowing mentioned belongs to natural processes, is incompatible with the interpretation by Holzhausen, "Die Seelenlehre des Gnostikers Herakleon," 284–86, who reads the sowing as referring to a "spiritual seed" that was present, albeit dormant, in the creation of the spiritual category of humans. It is likewise incompatible with the assertions, in Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 288, 337–38, 341–42, 347, that Heracleon here is expressing that the Father gives spirit to the humans through the Christ.

⁵⁸ Aland, "Erwählungstheologie," 153, asserts that Heracleon neither specifies how this life is won, nor claims it to be limited to a specific group of people: "Es wird lediglich das Beziehungsverhältnis deutlich gemacht: Pneumatiker haben Bezug zu jenem wahren Quell des Seins. Sie sind Pneumatiker, insofern sie aus der allein wirklichen ζωή leben."

⁵⁹ This conformity is also noted by Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 124, who remarks that, apart from the arbitrary limitation to a spiritual category, the path from enlightenment to life is in perfect harmony with the Johannine text: "Dal nostro punto di vista è opportuno rilevare che, anche se arbitrariamente limitata ad una sola categoria di privilegiati, la connessione qui istituita da Eracleone fra l'illuminazione e la vita è in perfetta armonia con testo giovanneo."

mated human (ψυχικός ἄνθρωπος) and the one who is spiritual (πνευματικός), where Paul in the latter case has omitted ἄνθρωπος in order to suggest that the one who is spiritual is more than a human. Origen does not use this alleged distinction to argue that the spirituals in Paul's thought are angels or divinities, but to claim that the spiritual humans are so named based on their participation in the Holy Spirit – a claim that is not incompatible with the interpretation of Heracleon's view presented above. Secondly, Origen complains that Heracleon's theory is presented without references to any scriptural passages supporting Heracleon's view. Thus, he claims Heracleon's thesis to be based not on the scriptural word, but only on Heracleon's own authority. This is a recurring criticism in Origen's interactions with Heracleon,⁶⁰ which may be due more to a difference in exegetical genre than any substantial differences in opinion: if Heracleon is producing a simpler, shorter commentary than Origen's substantial argumentative work, or is simply making notes in preparation for his lectures, he may not feel the need to substantiate his every claim.

Origen's way of proceeding from refuting "those who believe that there are spiritual natures" to interacting with Heracleon suggests that he intends to use Heracleon as an example of the presumption that salvation is determined by an inherent human nature. However, as demonstrated by Ansgar Wucherpfennig, Origen's example turns out to be a bad one, since Heracleon has other intentions in this passage than discussing the eternal fate of different categories of humans.⁶¹

In this analysis of the first two passages in which Origen interacts with Heracleon's comments on the Fourth Gospel, we have identified three verbatim quotations, two summaries, four explanatory paraphrases, and two assertions. The paraphrases seem to be based on nearby quotations and summaries, and may not add any information that is not also present in these summaries and quotations. So far, Heracleon's comments – to the extent that they can be reconstructed from Origen's presentation – have been perfectly understandable without references to heterodox dogmatic positions such as

⁶⁰ Berglund, "Vacillating Stances," 560–61.

⁶¹ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 163: "Als Beispiel will er dann die Auslegung Herakleons referieren, die sich allerdings als missglückter Beleg entpuppt, weil Origenes seiner Exegese offenbar nicht das gleiche prädestinationische Verständnis entnehmen kann, das er kennt. [...] Herakleons ursprüngliche Exegese aber hatte eine andere Intention als das Schicksal verschiedener Menschenklassen zu belegen." Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 163–68, goes on to argue that Heracleon's interpretation is co-dependent on the Gospel of John and Plato's dialogue *Timaios*. Although fascinating, such analysis of Heracleon's potential extra-biblical influences is outside of the scope of the present investigation. Pace Simonetti, "Eracleone e Origene," 124–25, who claims that Heracleon's interpretation specifically refers to "la distinzione di natura fra gli uomini" – a distinction of humanity into three species that was unacceptable to orthodox Christians such as Origen.

those described by Irenaeus. Although there is no question that Heracleon posits the existence of a creative agent other than the Father, this ἕτερος (“someone else”) is a subordinated agent in full co-operation with the Word, and not an ignorant competitor. Heracleon’s references to the αἰών seem not to refer to one of thirty divine beings, but simply to an eternal realm that existed before the creation of the physical world. When he speaks of ἄνθρωποι πνευματικοί (“spiritual humans”), this concept seems based on the Pauline concept of mature Christians rather than on the “Valentinian” theory of three human natures, which is a theory that Origen may be reading into Heracleon’s comments. Heracleon seems, therefore, to belong neither to the heterodox nor to “those who bring in the natures.”

In the next chapter, we will see if these preliminary conclusions survive when confronted with Heracleon’s comments on John the Baptist.

Chapter 5

The Testimony of John the Baptist

In a series of interactions, Origen reports and evaluates a number of comments made by Heracleon in reference to the testimonies of John the Baptist about Jesus in John 1:15–34. Taking John as a representative of the Jewish prophetic tradition and, in extension, of the whole of the Old Testament, Origen seems repeatedly to presuppose that Heracleon is rejecting the Jewish scriptures – a position that he does not substantiate with a quotation.

A. Passage 3: The Explanation of the Only-Begotten (John 1:16–18)

The sixth book of Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* begins with the report that Origen has been forced to relocate from his native Alexandria and abandon his previous work on the sixth book, and is now starting anew, once his trusted scribes are present to take his dictation. His first lemma quotes John 1:19a.¹ Origen notes that this verse introduces John the Baptist's second testimony, and argues that the first testimony included not only John 1:15, which is explicitly attributed to John, but also 1:16–18, where it is more difficult to discern whether the statement is spoken by the narrator² or continues the saying of John the Baptist.³ On this point, he reports that Heracleon takes the opposite view:

¹ That Origen had already given his own exposition of John 1:15–18, either at the end of book 5 or in the part of book 6 that he abandoned in Alexandria, is clear not only from the fact that he starts quoting at 1:19, but also from his remark, in *Comm. Jo.* 6.3/15, that he has already discussed 1:16 and concluded that the Jewish prophets also received their gifts from the fullness of Christ, and eventually were led by the Spirit to the full truth. So also Blanc, SC 157, 141 n. 2.

² The term “narrator” is here used in its modern sense, and is not intended as a claim that ancient literary critics discerned between the author and the narrator of a written work. Origen's term μαθητής (“disciple”) is well chosen to discern the narrator from the Baptist, while identifying him with the Johannine beloved disciple who, Origen asserts in *Comm. Jo.* 32.20/261, is the author of the Fourth Gospel.

³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.3/13. As noted by Castellano, *Exégesis*, 34, Origen is here repeating an assessment stated already in *Comm. Jo.* 2.35/213. Modern commentators tend to disagree with Origen on this point, and take 1:16–18 to be the words of the evangelist rather than of

But Heracleon does not understand (ὕπολαμβάνω) “No one has ever seen God” etc. (John 1:18) correctly, when he claims (φάσκων / 3.1) that this is said not by the Baptist, but by the disciple. For if – also according to him (κατ’ αὐτὸν / 3.2) – it was the Baptist who said “From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace, for the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:16–17), how does it not follow that he, who has received yet another grace corresponding to the former grace, and who admits that the law has been given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ – how can he fail to understand, from all this that he has received from the Fullness, how “no one has ever seen God” and that the “only-begotten” who is “in the bosom of the Father” (John 1:18) has handed over the explanation to him and to all who have received from the Fullness? It is not only now that he who is “in the bosom of the Father” has revealed himself, as if there previously was no one who was suitable to receive what he has told the apostles. After all, he who was “before Abraham was born” (John 8:58) teaches us that “Abraham rejoiced because he would see his day” and that he was glad (John 8:56).⁴

Two references to Heracleon are made in this passage, first regarding the claim that John 1:18 is spoken by the narrator of the Fourth Gospel rather than by the character of John the Baptist, secondly regarding the claim that John 1:16–17 is, in contrast, spoken by John the Baptist. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present the first as a quotation, but not the second. Blanc and Heine present both as plain text. Pettipiece italicizes both. Castellano presents

the Baptist. Walter Bauer, *Das Johannesevangelium*, HNT 6 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1925), 26, remarks that the Baptist suddenly disappears in 1:16. Brown, *John*, 35, regards 1:15 as a parenthesis added by a redactor who based it on 1:30. Barrett, *John*, 168, claims that while 1:16 may continue the words of the Baptist, it is more probable that it is to be connected with 1:14. Donald Arthur Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 130; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 15; Andrew T. Lincoln, *The Gospel According to Saint John*, BNTC IV (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2005), 106–7; and LarsOlov Eriksson, *För att ni skall tro: Johannesevangeliet*, NTB 3 (Örebro: Libris, 2007), 25, all take 1:15 to be parenthetical, whereby 1:16 continues the thought of 1:14.

⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.3/13–15 (SC 157, 138.6–140.24; Brooke’s fragment 3): Οὐχ ὑγιῶς δὲ ὁ Ἡρακλέων ὑπολαμβάνει “Οὐδεὶς τὸν θεὸν ἑώρακεν πώποτε” καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς, φάσκων (3.1) εἰρῆσθαι οὐκ ἀπὸ τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ ἀλλ’ ἀπὸ τοῦ μαθητοῦ. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ κατ’ αὐτὸν (3.2) τὸ “Ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν, καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος· ὅτι ὁ νόμος διὰ Μωσέως ἐδόθη, ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένετο” ὑπὸ τοῦ βαπτιστοῦ εἴρηται, πῶς οὐκ ἀκόλουθον <τὸ> τὸν ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰληφότα καὶ χάριν δευτέραν ἀντὶ προτέρας χάριτος ὁμολογοῦντά τε διὰ Μωσέως μὲν δεδῶσθαι τὸν νόμον, τὴν δὲ χάριν καὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ γεγονέναι, ἐκ τῶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πληρώματος εἰς αὐτὸν ἐληλυθότων νενοηκέναι πῶς “θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακεν πώποτε,” καὶ τὸ τὸν μονογενῆ εἰς τὸν κόλπον ὄντα τοῦ πατρὸς τὴν ἐξήγησιν αὐτῷ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος εἰληφόσι παραδεδωκέναι; Οὐ γὰρ νῦν πρῶτον ἐξηγήσατο “<ὁ ὢν> εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ πατρὸς” ὥς οὐδενὸς ἐπιτηδείου πρότερον γεγεννημένου λαβεῖν, ἃ τοῖς ἀποστόλοις διηγῆσατο· εἶγε πρὶν Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι ὢν διδάσκει ἡμᾶς τὸν Ἀβραὰμ ἡγαλλιάσθαι, ἵνα ἴδῃ τὴν ἡμέραν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν χαρᾷ γεγονέναι.

both in plain text. Wucherpennig presents the first reference in plain text and does not mention the second.⁵

	3.1 φάσκω	3.2 κατ' αὐτὸν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Plain text
Völker	Quotation	–
Foerster	Quotation	–
Heine	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Castellano	Plain text	Plain text
Wucherpennig	Plain text	–
Berglund	Summary	Paraphrase

The claim that John 1:18 is spoken by the Johannine narrator, rather than by the character of John the Baptist, is presented in indirect speech, using an infinitive construction, and attributed to Heracleon using the verb φάσκω, which can be used either in the sense of “say,” “affirm” or in the sense of “think,” “deem.” Since the information given here is not supported by any other reference, it is most natural to take this case in the former sense and categorize this reference as a summary.⁶ The second claim, that John 1:16–17 is spoken by John the Baptist, is presented as hypothetical and attributed to Heracleon with the phrase κατ' αὐτὸν (“according to him”). Its connection to Heracleon’s writing is weaker than the preceding reference. If Heracleon never mentioned 1:16–17, but only claimed 1:18 to be spoken by the narrator, it is reasonable that Origen would fill in the gap in his argument by presuming him to ascribe 1:16–17 to the Baptist. It is, therefore, an explanatory paraphrase, inferred by Origen based on the claim concerning 1:18.⁷

The report indicates that Heracleon has considered the distinction between a statement spoken by the narrator and a statement placed in the mouth of a

⁵ SC 157, 139; GCS 10, 109; FC 80, 171; Völker, *Quellen*, 65; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 215; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 32–33; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 42; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 173.

⁶ The vocabulary of a summary may be chosen by either one of Origen and Heracleon. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 174–75, takes the term ὁ μαθητὴς to be chosen by Heracleon, and remarks that the usage is similar to the commonly used term ὁ ποιητὴς for the author/narrator of the Homeric literature. This term is, however, more likely to be chosen by Origen, who also uses it in *Comm. Jo.* 6.6/33–34.

⁷ Pace Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 173–75, and Bauer, *Johannesevangelium*, 26, who both claim that Heracleon argued that 1:16–17 are spoken by the Baptist. Wucherpennig speculates that Heracleon might have found formal grounds, in the asyndeton of 1:18, for the resumption of the voice of the narrator. Although that is possible, it is equally likely that Heracleon found the shift from singular to plural at the beginning of 1:16 to signal the end of the Baptist’s saying.

narrative character. As noted by Wucherpennig and Bastit, such considerations of speaking characters (πρόσωπα τὰ λέγοντα) are not unusual in Greco-Roman literary criticism.⁸ Origen's response mostly refers to the hypothetical claim about 1:16–17, and is aimed at those who make a distinction between the God of the Jews and the Father of Christ. Origen argues that if the Baptist admits that the law originates with Moses, but grace and truth with Christ, and claims to have received “grace upon grace” from the Fullness of Christ, he should be able to understand who Jesus is. This response presumes that Heracleon purports that John is an ignorant representative of the Maker and of his supposedly inferior Jewish faith. It is not impossible that such views have been quoted in a lost section of Origen's *Commentary*, but it is not present in extant material and appears, therefore, to be inferred by Origen. That his response is aimed at the heterodox, rather than at Heracleon, becomes more apparent when Origen, after an extended argument – asserting that Jewish prophets such as Moses, Joshua, Isaiah, and Ezekiel were perfectly aware of the true, allegorical, meaning of Jewish law and Israelite history, and of Christ's presence on the heavenly throne – clarifies that this extended excursion has been aimed at those who, in their wild fantasy of glorifying Christ's visit “have invented another, even greater god,” while others have merely tried to minimize how much the prophets understood.⁹ He then hypothesizes that these interpreters (referred to in the plural) may – in contrast to Heracleon, he presumes – claim the break between the utterance of John the Baptist and the voice of the disciple to be located at the beginning of 1:16,¹⁰ and proceeds to argue that this interpretation would be forced (βεβιασμένην) and inconsistent (ἀνακόλουθον). Origen concludes that since there is no indication of a change of speaker between 1:15 and 1:16, it is John the Baptist who is speaking all through 1:15–18.¹¹

B. Passage 4: A Prophet Who Is Not *the* Prophet (John 1:21b)

Origen finds a conundrum in John 1:21b, where John the Baptist outright denies being the prophet – despite being called a prophet (προφήτης) by both

⁸ Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 263–76; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 96–97, 173–74, 375; Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 156.

⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.6/31. The excursion is located in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.3/15–5/30.

¹⁰ As is often done by modern interpreters. Cf. note 3 above.

¹¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.6/33–42. Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 85, is so impressed by Origen's response that he withdraws his previous judgment that Heracleon is the better exegete, and concludes that Heracleon's comment on John 1:18 is made solely on dogmatic grounds.

Zechariah (Luke 1:76) and Jesus (Luke 7:26 and Matt 11:9). Always attentive to details in the text, Origen observes that there is a significant difference between “the prophet” and “a prophet.” Whereas John undoubtedly can be said to be the latter, Origen denies that he is the former, since the prophet whose future arrival was originally announced by Moses (Deut 18:15, 18) is none other than Christ himself.¹² Heracleon did not make the same observation:

The distinction between “the prophet” and “a prophet” has escaped the notice of the many, also that of Heracleon, who – with these very words – says that (αὐταῖς λέξεσὶ φησιν ὡς ἄρα / 4.1) “John acknowledged that he was neither the Christ, nor a prophet, nor Elijah.” To understand it in that way he [Heracleon] would have to scrutinize the relevant passages (οἱ τόποι) to see whether he [John the Baptist] is speaking the truth or not when he claims neither to be a prophet nor Elijah. But he [Heracleon] gives no attention to the relevant passages, and has passed by so many things without examination in the *hypomnēmata* he has left behind. What exceedingly little (σφόδρα ὀλίγα) he has to say in what follows (ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς) – about which we will speak shortly – is completely unsupported.¹³

One statement is attributed to Heracleon in this paragraph. Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, Heine, Castellano, and Wucherpennig all present it as a quotation, in contrast to Blanc, who uses plain text, and Pettipiece, who italicizes it. Wucherpennig notes explicitly that the quotation is verbatim. Heine includes ὡς ἄρα (“that”) in the quotation, even though it seems to be part of the attribution formula.¹⁴

	4.1 αὐταῖς λέξεσὶ φησιν ὡς ἄρα
Blanc	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Quotation
Castellano	Quotation
Pettipiece	Italics
Wucherpennig	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation

¹² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.15/88–91.

¹³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.15/92 (SC 157, 196.36–45; Brooke’s fragment 4): “Ἐλαθε δὲ τοὺς πολλοὺς ἡ διαφορά τοῦ “ὁ προφήτης” καὶ “προφήτης,” ὡς καὶ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα, ὅστις αὐταῖς λέξεσὶ φησιν, ὡς ἄρα (4.1) Ἰωάννης ὡμολόγησεν μὴ εἶναι ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ μὴδὲ προφήτης μὴδὲ Ἡλίας. Καὶ δεόν αὐτὸν οὕτως ἐκλαβόντα ἐξετάσαι τὰ κατὰ τοὺς τόπους, πότερον ἀληθεύει λέγων μὴ εἶναι προφήτης μὴδὲ Ἡλίας, ἢ οὐ. Ὁ δὲ μὴ ἐπιστήσας τοῖς τοποῖς, ἐν οἷς κατατέλειπεν ὑπομνήμασιν ἀνεξετάστως παρελήλυθεν τὰ τηλικαῦτα, σφόδρα ὀλίγα καὶ μὴ βεβασανισμένα ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς εἰπών, περὶ ὧν εὐθέως ἐροῦμεν.

¹⁴ SC 157, 197; GCS 10, 125; FC 80, 194; Völker, *Quellen*, 65; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 215; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 55; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 44; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 183, 196.

In his attribution formula in this paragraph, Origen uncharacteristically combines his *verbum dicendi* φησιν (“he says”) with both αὐταῖς λέξεσιν (“with the very words”) and ὡς ἅπα (“that”).¹⁵ While the former phrase undeniably indicates a verbatim quotation, the latter is ordinarily used when Origen intends to present an idea he finds to be underlying Heracleon’s writing rather than his actual words. This unusual combination puts some doubt into the consistency of the phrases used in Origen’s quotation formulas, but could indicate that what follows is not only a verbatim quotation – thus αὐταῖς λέξεσιν – but also illustrates precisely the point Origen has made concerning the lack of attention, among interpreters of the Fourth Gospel, given to the presence or absence of definite articles. Nevertheless, this reference fulfills our criteria for a verbatim quotation.

The quoted words amount to a rather simple observation based on the text of John 1:19–21: Ἰωάννης ὡμολόγησεν μὴ εἶναι ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ μηδὲ προφήτης μηδὲ Ἠλίας (“John acknowledged that he was neither the Christ, nor a prophet, nor Elijah”). The contrast – suggested by the contrastive conjunction ἀλλὰ – between his denial of being the Christ and his denials of being a prophet or Elijah is likely to be connected to the narrative context, in which the questioning Jews primarily are interested in whether John claims to be the Christ, and secondarily attempt to identify him as Elijah or as the prophet. As they do not propose additional alternatives, they may have exhausted a list of potential messianic figures with these three options.¹⁶ In Heracleon’s writing, this simple observation may be the starting point of a longer chain of reasoning that Origen does not summarize. This impression is strengthened when reading, with Blanc and Wucherpennig, ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς as referring to what follows in Heracleon’s argument and not, as Heine does, to the grammatical sequences of the biblical text.¹⁷

In Origen’s perspective, where the question “Are you the prophet?” refers to a specific prophetic figure related to the arrival of the Christ, his complaint

¹⁵ Codex Monacensis has ὡς ἂν εἰ here, raising some additional doubt as to the original wording. Preuschen, GCS 10, 125.15, and Blanc, SC 157, 196.38, both amend it to ὡς ἅπα. Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 183 n. 15.

¹⁶ As demonstrated by John Joseph Collins, *The Scepter and the Star: Messianism in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), second-temple Jews discussed multiple messianic figures in eschatological contexts. While most Qumran scholars speak of a priestly and a Davicic messiah, Collins also adds a prophetic one. The unspecified title ὁ Χριστός may in this context refer to a Davidic messiah, ὁ προφήτης to a prophetic messiah, and Elijah to a priestly one. See M. De Jonge, “Jewish Expectations about the ‘Messiah’ According to the Fourth Gospel,” *NTS* 19.3 (1973): 246–70; Markus Öhler, “The Expectation of Elijah and the Presence of the Kingdom of God,” *JBL* 118.3 (1999): 461–76.

¹⁷ Blanc, SC 157, 197; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 35. Cf. Heine, FC 80, 194.

that Heracleon has failed to notice the definite article is reasonable.¹⁸ His complaint that Heracleon is not paying attention to οἱ τόποι (“the relevant passages”) may be interpreted in a number of ways depending on our understanding of the rhetorical term τόπος.¹⁹ In this context, however, it most probably refers to biblical passages of relevance for Heracleon’s argument on Elijah and the prophets.²⁰ Therefore, Origen seems to be using Aristarchus’s principle – to clarify Homer from Homer – as a standard by which to measure Heracleon’s interpretive practices.²¹

However, Heracleon may be more attentive to οἱ τόποι than Origen realizes. As observed by Mouson,²² Heracleon mentions the alternatives “Elijah” and “a prophet” in the opposite order compared to John 1:21, 25, and may be influenced by the parallel in Matt 11:7–15. There, “a prophet” (11:9), without the article, is one of the alternative interpretations of John’s identity, and “Elijah” (11:14) is mentioned later. Heracleon may be relating the Baptist’s Johannine denial of his prophetic identity to the Matthean account, where Jesus claims that he is both a prophet, something more than a prophet, and Elijah. If so, Heracleon is a more competent literary critic than Origen gives him credit for.

C. Passage 5 A: The Word, the Voice, and the Sound (John 1:23)

In his analysis of John the Baptist’s claim to be “a voice (φωνή) of one crying out in the wilderness” (John 1:23), Origen remarks that just as Jesus can be described as the Word who is using words, John is a voice who uses his voice to point to the Word. He finds it fitting that Zechariah loses his voice when he is unable to accept that he is going to be the father of this voice (Luke 1:20), and finds John’s relationship to Jesus analogous to Aaron’s relationship to Moses: neither Aaron nor John has a message of their own, but serves as the voice of their respective masters (Exod 7:1, Luke 1:17). He concludes that John

¹⁸ Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 208–10.

¹⁹ Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.2.20–22, theorizes that there are a few common topics (κοινοὶ τόποι) that are applicable to any subject, but that most chains of reasoning will be constructed from more specific (εἰδη) topics, applicable only to the matter at hand. Later rhetorical theorists provided lists of τόποι applicable to different situations. See Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, 117–20.

²⁰ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 183–84 n. 17, suggests that Origen by τὰ κατὰ τοὺς τόπους is referring to “die Belegstellen [...] die er für sein Textverständnis anführen wird.”

²¹ See chapter 2 and, for further reflection on Heracleon’s use of this principle, Berglund, “Literary Criticism in Early Christianity.”

²² Mouson, “Jean-Baptiste dans les fragments d’Héracléon,” 307.

is merely the voice of Jesus, who is the one crying out and the one to whom Isaiah is referring, but also declares the reading where John is the speaker of Isaiah's prophecy to be acceptable.²³

Even though Origen has already dismissed Heracleon's remarks on the identity of John the Baptist as σφόδρα ὀλίγα ("exceedingly little") and μὴ βεβασανισμένα ("completely unsupported"),²⁴ he returns to Heracleon's analysis and presents it in more detail:

Heracleon, describing John and the prophets rather slanderously, says that (φησὶν ὅτι / 5.1) the Savior is the word (λόγος), the voice in the wilderness represented by John is a voice (φωνή), and the whole line (τάξις) of prophets is an echo (ἤχος).²⁵

One statement is attributed to Heracleon here. Blanc, Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, Heine, Castellano, Pettipiece, and Wucherpfennig all present it as a quotation. Blanc, who most often presents Preuschen's Greek text without alterations, even adds quotation marks to her edited Greek in this paragraph, and Castellano remarks that this is without doubt a literal quotation.²⁶

	5.1 φησὶν ὅτι
Blanc	Quotation
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Quotation
Castellano	Quotation
Pettipiece	Quotation
Wucherpfennig	Quotation
Berglund	Summary

The passage begins with a short, dismissive introductory comment, leading into a statement attributed to Heracleon with the *verbum dicendi* φησὶν ("he says") followed by ὅτι ("that"). Nothing in the statement itself precludes it from being quoted verbatim, but our criterion that ὅτι indicates that a speech report is presented in indirect speech leads us to conclude that this is a summary, where the thought is Heracleon's but the vocabulary may be Origen's.

²³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.17/94–20/108.

²⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.15/92. See quotation above.

²⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/108 (SC 157, 210.5–8; Brooke's fragment 5, part 1): Δυσφημότερον δὲ ὁ Ἡρακλέων περὶ Ἰωάννου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν διαλαμβάνων φησὶν ὅτι (5.1) "Ὁ λόγος μὲν ὁ σωτὴρ ἔστιν, φωνὴ δὲ ἡ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ἢ διὰ Ἰωάννου διανοοῦμένη, ἤχος δὲ πᾶσα προφητικὴ τάξις."

²⁶ SC 157, 210, 211; GCS 10, 129; FC 80, 199; Völker, *Quellen*, 65; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 215; Castellano, *Exégeseis*, 56; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 184; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 46.

The summary is clearly delimited, since Origen's next sentence introduces his response.

Whether any part of this summary is quoted verbatim, it may be assumed that the three key terms on which the statement hinges – λόγος, φωνή, and ἤχος – are chosen by Heracleon.²⁷ The first of these, λόγος (“word”), has a wide range of meaning, including “statement,” “argument,” and “reason.” The second, φωνή (“voice”), can be used to refer to the sound made by inanimate objects such as trumpets and water, to the cries of animals and songs of birds, to human speech, utterances, sayings, and reports. It is applied to John the Baptist in Mark 1:3, but we have no other indications that Heracleon knew and used this Gospel. The semantic domain of the third term, ἤχος (“echo”), includes inarticulate cries and wailings, indistinct noises such as the one from breathing, but also echoes and the sound of human speech. As all three terms have a broad range of meaning, the contexts in which they appear are determinative for the sense in which they are used. In this particular case, there seems to be a three-step development or a tripartite contrast in play, which means that how a reader understands one of the terms will impact his or her understanding of the other two.²⁸

A probable reading of Heracleon's comment should also match the three referents enumerated by Origen: the Savior (σωτήρ), the voice (φωνή) in the wilderness represented by John, and the whole line (τάξις) of prophets. The first of these unambiguously refers to Jesus, for whom σωτήρ (“Savior”) is Heracleon's preferred term.²⁹ It is worth noticing that Heracleon here presents an explicit connection between the eternal λόγος and the human Jesus, at least on a symbolical level.³⁰ Secondly, it is worth noticing that the connec-

²⁷ The argument by Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 223–24, that Heracleon here is using literary-critical technical terms such as διανοέω and τάξις is less certain, since the vocabulary of a summary may come either from Heracleon or from Origen.

²⁸ Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, 55, presumes that Heracleon's distinction is based on the theory of the three human natures, but argues that he is here using one spiritual and two animated natures rather than the standard model of spiritual, animated, and material natures. This mismatch should be enough evidence that Heracleon does not use the theology of “those who bring in the natures” here. Mouson, “Jean-Baptiste dans les fragments d'Héracléon,” 313, wants to explain the mismatch by arguing that Heracleon is speaking about soteriology rather than ontology. Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 55–57, argues that Heracleon's ἤχος is, indeed, a reference to the material nature.

²⁹ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 388–90, counts twenty-eight instances where Heracleon used this title, at least six where he used the name Ἰησοῦς, and three where he uses κύριος. While some of these may have to be regarded as Origen's word choice, the overall proportions are likely to stand.

³⁰ Although Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 159, is right to point this out, he may be overestimating the certainty that Heracleon's identification of the Word and the Savior is not merely on a symbolical level when he states: “Der Logos ist mit dem Erlöser iden-

tion in all likelihood is dependent on the Johannine prologue, in which the λόγος is introduced, said to be divine, said to have become flesh, and said to be the object of the preaching of John the Baptist. Heracleon is therefore using John 1:1–15 to clarify John 1:23.

The second of the three referents can, as Origen noted in his own exposition, refer either to Jesus (if John symbolizes the voice of the one who was to come) or to John (if John represents himself), and the choice between these two alternatives will depend on the interpretation of the three key terms. In the third, the noun τάξις may be used in the sense of a group of soldiers arranged in a battle array or a category of people with a similar function. Thus, πᾶσα προφητικὴ τάξις (“the whole line of prophets”) probably refers to the long line of prophets in the Judeo-Christian tradition.³¹

In his response, Origen focuses on the third of Heracleon’s terms, ἥχος (“echo”), which he interprets as referring to an indistinct, meaningless noise. Using two images from First Corinthians – the trumpet giving an unclear signal (φωνή) from 1 Cor 14:8 and the noisy (ἡχών) gong and cymbal of 1 Cor 13:1 – he takes Heracleon’s three terms as a hierarchy of decreasing significance, where λόγος is rational discourse, φωνή coherent speech, and ἥχος senseless noise. The referent of the latter, the prophetic arrangement, is taken as synonymous with the prophetic voice (ἡ προφητικὴ φωνή) of the Old Testament:

It must be said to him that just as nobody gets ready for battle if an unclear sound (φωνή) is given from the trumpet (cf. 1 Cor 14:8), just as the one without love who has knowledge of secrets or possesses the gift of prophecy has become a noisy (ἡχών) gong or a clanging cymbal (cf. 1 Cor 13:1) – if the voice (φωνή) of prophecy is nothing more than a noise (ἥχος), how can the Savior refer you to it? “Search the scriptures,” he says, “because you expect to have eternal life in them, and they are those who testify,” and “If you trusted Moses you would have trusted me, for it was about me he wrote,” and also “Isaiah prophesied well about you when he said: ‘This people honor me with their lips.’” I do not know if anyone will receive the unintelligible noise (ἥχος) so beautifully recommended by the Savior, or if it is possible to get ready, from the scriptures to which we are referred as from the sound (φωνή) of a trumpet, for the battle against the opposing forces, if the sound (φωνή) is that of an unintelligible noise (ἥχος). And if the prophets – in their understanding – lacked love and therefore were a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal, how can the Lord refer those who are to receive help to their noise (ἥχος)?³²

tisch. Dies zeigt sich in Fragment 5, in dem Heracleon erklärt: ‘ὁ λόγος μὲν ὁ Σωτὴρ ἐστίν.’” Cf. also Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.19/115.

³¹ Cf. Ps 109:4 LXX, where τὴν τάξιν Μελχισεδεκ may be used to denote a line of prophets following Melchizedek.

³² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/109–10 (SC 157, 210.8–212.26; Brooke’s fragment 5, part 2): Λεκτέον δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὅτι ὥσπερ ἐὰν ἀδελφὸν σάλπιγξ φωνὴν δῶ οὐδεὶς παρασκευάζεται εἰς πόλεμον, καὶ ὁ χωρὶς ἀγάπης ἔχων γνώσιν μυστηρίων ἢ προφητείαν γέγονεν χαλκὸς ἡχών ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον, οὕτως εἰ μηδὲν ἐστὶν ἕτερον ἢ ἥχος ἢ προφητικὴ φωνή, πῶς ἀναπέμπων ἡμᾶς ἐπ’ αὐτὴν ὁ σωτὴρ “Ἐρευνάτε, φησί, τὰς γραφάς, ὅτι ὑμεῖς δοκεῖτε ἐν αὐ-

With his understanding of ἤχος as referring to an inarticulate noise, and πᾶσα προφητικὴ τάξις as referring to the prophetic voice in the Jewish tradition, Origen construes Heracleon's comment as denouncing the whole of the Old Testament as mere noise. He responds by criticizing Heracleon for not considering other relevant biblical passages, where Christ references the Old Testament and recommends his hearers to study it, clearly viewing the Jewish scriptures as a meaningful discourse, in contrast to the unclear sound (φωνή) of the trumpet and the inarticulate noise (ἤχος) of the gong.³³ While such an understanding of Heracleon's statement is not impossible, it may be determined more by an expectation that a disciple of Valentinus should reject the Jewish prophetic tradition than by what Heracleon actually wrote.

Origen's interpretation is not surprising, given what other ancient authors make of the three-way contrast between λόγος, φωνή, and ἤχος. When Diogenes Laërtius (third century CE) discusses Stoic theories of language, he discerns ἤχος ("noise") from λέξις ("speech") within the more general category of φωνή ("sound"). Speech is articulate and can be used to transfer a meaningful statement (λόγος):

Sound (φωνή) differs from speech (λέξις), because sound includes the noise (ἤχος), but speech is only the articulate. Speech differs from statement (λόγος), because a statement always has meaning. Speech can also be meaningless – such as "blityri" – but never a statement.³⁴

This Stoic distinction strengthens Origen's reading of ἤχος as "noise" and makes his understanding of Heracleon's comment completely reasonable. Furthermore, a similar distinction is made by Philo:

There are also some things we know about the articulate voice (φωνή), which of all living things was assigned only to the human. For example, that it is emitted from the mind, that it is articulated in the mouth, that it is the striking tongue that impresses articulation and speech (λόγος) upon the tension of the voice (φωνή), and does not produce the bare origi-

ταῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχειν· καὶ ἐκεῖναί εἰσιν αἱ μαρτυροῦσαι· καὶ "Εἰ ἐπιστεύετε Μωσεῖ, ἐπιστεύετε ἂν ἐμοί· περὶ γὰρ ἐμοῦ ἐκεῖνος ἔγραψεν"· καὶ "Καλῶς ἐπροφήτευσεν περὶ ὑμῶν Ἡσαΐας λέγων· Ὁ λαὸς οὗτος τοῖς χεῖλεσίν με τιμᾷ"; Οὐκ οἶδα γὰρ εἰ τὸν ἄσημον ἤχον παραδέξεται τις εὐλόγως ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἐπαινέσθαι, ἢ ἐνεστὶν παρασκευάσασθαι ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν ὡς ἀπὸ φωνῆς σάλπιγγος, ἐφ' ἃς ἀναπεμπόμεθα, εἰς τὸν πρὸς τὰς ἀντικειμένας ἐνεργείας πόλεμον, ἀδήλου φωνῆς ἤχου τυγχανούσης. Τίνα δὲ τρόπον, εἰ μὴ ἀγάπην εἶχον οἱ προφῆται καὶ διὰ τοῦτο χαλκὸς ἦσαν ἡχῶν ἢ κύμβαλον ἀλαλάζον, ἐπὶ τὸν ἤχον αὐτῶν, ὡς ἐκεῖνοι εἰλήφασιν, ἀναπέμπει ὁ κύριος ὠφεληθησομένους;

³³ It is somewhat surprising that he will use the example of the trumpet, since the "unclear sound" to which Paul is referring is the speaking of tongues, which remains an undoubtedly positive concept in Paul's reasoning – even in this context, when he declares his preference for prophetic speech over glossolalia.

³⁴ Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives* 7:57: διαφέρει δὲ φωνὴ καὶ λέξις, ὅτι φωνὴ μὲν καὶ ὁ ἤχος ἐστὶ, λέξις δὲ τὸ ἐναρθρον μόνον. λέξις δὲ λόγου διαφέρει, ὅτι λόγος ἀεὶ σημαντικός ἐστι, λέξις δὲ καὶ ἀσήμαντος, ὡς ἡ βλίτυρι, λόγος δὲ οὐδαμῶς.

nal sound (φωνή) – an unworked and formless noise (ἦχος) – because it holds the position (τάξις) of a herald or an interpreter to the communicating mind (νοῦς).³⁵

Philo's statement uses several multivalent words, but from the context it is clear that he employs ἦχος ("noise") to denote a formless φωνή ("sound") that can be formed into meaningful λόγος ("speech") by the movements of the tongue. The distinction he makes also strengthens the interpretation of ἦχος as a sound devoid of meaning, although Philo admits that an ἦχος can be made to hold meaningful information.

Philo's claim may also shed some additional light on Heracleon's next statement, which also concerns a φωνή ("sound") that is transformed into a λόγος ("word"):

I do not know how he declares (ἀποφαίνεται / 5.2), without any reasoning, that the voice (φωνή), which is well suitable (οἰκειοτέραν) for the word (λόγος), becomes a word, as the woman also changes into a man. And as if he had the authority to declare, be trusted, and move on, he says (φησὶν / 5.3) that the noise (τῷ ἡχῳ) will be transformed into a voice (φωνή) – giving the position of a disciple to the voice (φωνή) that turns into a word, but that of a servant to that which turns from a noise (ἦχος) into a voice (φωνή). If he anywhere, in any way had presented an argumentation to prove these points, we would have made every effort to refute them. Now, a resolute rejection is sufficient as refutation.³⁶

Two references are made in this paragraph, the second and third of this passage. The second reference is made by the verb ἀποφαίνω (here: "declare"), and the third by φησὶν ("he says"). Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, and Castellano present both as quotations, but both Blanc and Heine use plain text. Castellano remarks explicitly that both references are verbatim quotations. Pettipiece and Wucherpennig italicize both statements.³⁷

³⁵ Philo, *Dreams* 1.29 (Philo, *Opera quae supersunt*, ed. Paul Wendland [Berlin: Reimer, 1898], 211.3–9): καὶ μὲν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἐνάρθρου φωνῆς, ἣν μόνος ἐκ πάντων ζῶων ἔλαχεν ἄνθρωπος, ἔστιν ἃ γνωρίζομεν· οἷον ὅτι ἀπὸ διανοίας ἀναπέμπεται, ὅτι ἐν τῷ στόματι ἀρθροῦται, ὅτι ἡ γλώσσα πλήττουσα τῇ τῆς φωνῆς τάσει τὸ ἐνάρθρον ἐνσφραγίζεται καὶ λόγον, ἀλλ' οὐ ψιλὴν | αὐτὸ μόνον φωνὴν ἀργὴν καὶ ἀδιτύπωτον ἦχον ἀπεργάζεται, ὅτι κήρυκος ἡ ἐρμηνεύς ἔχει τάξιν πρὸς τὸν ὑποβάλλοντα νοῦν.

³⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/111 (SC 157, 212.27–35; Brooke's fragment 5, part 3): Οὐκ οἶδα δ' ὅπως χωρὶς πάσης κατασκευῆς ἀποφαίνεται (5.2) τὴν φωνὴν οἰκειοτέραν οὖσαν τῷ λόγῳ λόγον γίνεσθαι, ὥς καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα εἰς ἄνδρα μετατίθεσθαι. Καὶ ὥς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων τοῦ δογματίζειν καὶ πιστεῦεσθαι καὶ προκόπτειν, τῷ ἡχῳ φησὶν (5.3) ἔσεσθαι τὴν εἰς φωνὴν μεταβολήν, μαθητοῦ μὲν χώραν διδούς τῇ μεταβαλλοῦσῃ εἰς λόγον φωνῇ, δούλου δὲ τῇ ἀπὸ ἡχου εἰς φωνήν. Καὶ εἰ μὲν ὅπως ποτὲ πιθανότητα ἔφερεν ἐπὶ τῷ αὐτὰ κατασκευάσαι, κἂν ἡγωνισάμεθα περὶ τῆς τούτων ἀνατροπῆς· ἀρκεῖ δὲ εἰς ἀνατροπὴν ἡ ἀπαραμύθητος ἀπόφασις.

³⁷ SC 157, 213; GCS 10, 129; FC 80, 199–200; Völker, *Quellen*, 65–66; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 215–16; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 56–57; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 47; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 184–85.

	5.2 ἀποφαίνεται	5.3 φησὶν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Castellano	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Italic	Italic
Berglund	Summary	Summary + paraphrase

The second reference is made using the verb ἀποφαίνω (here: “declare”), which is not a pure *verbum dicendi*, but suggests a measure of interpretation. As the attributed statement seems to consist of a kernel – the (“voice”) becomes a (“word”) – that seems necessary not only for the additions that the voice is οἰκειότεραν (“well suitable”) for the word and that also ἡ γυνή (“the woman”) changes into ἀνὴρ (“a man”), but also for the next attributed statement, we may presume this kernel to accurately reflect something Heracleon has written. The first addition, about the voice’s suitability for the word, appears well integrated with this kernel, and may also be accepted. The second addition, about the woman changing into a man, is more loosely connected to the kernel, and the phrase connecting it to the kernel, ὥς καὶ (“as also”) may indicate that the parallel is secondary and does not stem from Heracleon.³⁸ The reference is therefore taken as a summary, with the reservation that the addition about the woman changing into a man may be added by Origen.

The third reference appears after a second lament over Heracleon’s lack of extended argumentation. As it is made with a single *verbum dicendi*, φησὶν (“he says”), followed by an accusative-with-infinitive construction, the attributed statement is to be categorized as a summary. This statement also consists of a kernel, saying that the ἦχος (“sound”) turns into a φωνή (“voice”), to which dependent phrases have been added, stating that this process makes the voice a disciple and the sound a servant. While we may safely infer that the kernel was expressed in Heracleon’s writing – in parallel to the previous kernel – the statement about the disciple and the servant may be Origen’s explanatory paraphrase, based on the two identified kernels.

The paragraph is concluded by Origen’s third lament over Heracleon’s way of simply stating his view rather than arguing for it, and an announcement that this curt statement will be met by an equally blunt rejection. One might wonder if part of the reason for Origen’s refusal to refute Heracleon’s pronouncement in detail is that he lacks any deeper understanding of Herac-

³⁸ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 234–37, explores the possibility that Heracleon is alluding to a similar idea in Plato, *Tim.* 42a–d.

leon's thought. While Origen, in general, can be expected to be knowledgeable both about theories of language and about Philo, it is entirely possible, given Heracleon's brief presentation, that he has failed to understand Heracleon's image.

Using Philo's theory of language, Heracleon's two statements about the λόγος, φωνή, and ἦχος may be understood as referring to interpretation of prophecy. Taken by themselves, the statements by prophets – including John, contemporary Christian prophets, and possibly the entirety of the Old Testament – may appear nonsensical, as mere ἦχος (“noise”). But by a proper method of understanding, whether referring to the Pauline gift of interpretation of glossolalia or a good reading of the Jewish scriptures, it is revealed to be an ἦχος (“echo”) of the φωνή (“voice”) of the divine λόγος. While such reconstructions of Heracleon's mind may be difficult to verify, a safer conclusion is that Origen's reading of Heracleon's statements, as a denouncement of the Old Testament, is not the only possible interpretation.

In fact, the attitude toward the Hebrew prophetic tradition expressed by Heracleon in this passage may be comparable to the one expressed in the *Protrepticus* by Clement of Alexandria, his contemporary.³⁹ In his first chapter, Clement argues – with reference to John 1:19–23 – that both John and the voice crying out in the desert are “forerunning voices of the Lord” (πρόδρομοι τοῦ κυρίου φωναί) who speak darkly of the salvation clearly revealed by Christ.⁴⁰ He also speaks of Moses, Isaiah and “the whole choir of the prophets” (παντός τοῦ προφητικοῦ χοροῦ) as a more rational alternative to the fear inspired by the signs and wonders in Egypt, and by the cloud and the burning bush in the desert.⁴¹ When he returns to the same theme at the end of his treatise, he speaks of the musical sound (ἦχος μουσικῆς) that accompanies the choir (χορός) of the righteous – expressly including prophets – in their hymn to the King of all.⁴² If it is interpreted correctly, Heracleon's similar language may express a similarly positive attitude toward the Jewish prophets.

D. Passage 5 B: What Is Around John Is Not John Himself (John 1:21)

After rejecting Heracleon's speech-related metaphors, Origen returns to the aforementioned difficulty that John claims to be neither the prophet nor Elijah, even though the Johannine gospel calls him both. Origen is not alone in having noticed this conundrum, but he does not like Heracleon's solution:

³⁹ Clement, *Protr.* 1/7–10 (SC 2, 60–66).

⁴⁰ Clement, *Protr.* 1/9.3 (SC 2, 64).

⁴¹ Clement, *Protr.* 1/8.1–2 (SC 2, 62).

⁴² Clement, *Protr.* 12/119.2 (SC 2, 189)

Well, now we will go through what we put off in the above inquires – how it has been set in motion. The Savior calls him – according to Heracleon (κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα / 5.4) – both a prophet and Elijah, but himself he denies both. When the Savior calls him a prophet and Elijah, he explains what is around him (τὰ περὶ αὐτόν) rather than himself, he says (φησί / 5.5), but when he calls him greater than the prophets and everyone born of a woman, then he characterizes John himself. But, he says (φησί / 5.6), “it is John himself, not what is around him (τὰ περὶ αὐτόν), that answers when he is asked about himself.” Compare how we have scrutinized (βάσανον ποιέω) these things to the limit of our strength, leaving none of the definitions stated to stand unsupported (ἀπαραμύθητος), with what Heracleon, even though he has no authority (ἐξουσία) to say whatever he wants, simply declares! How John being “Elijah” and a “prophet” is about what is around him (τὸ περὶ αὐτόν), while his being “a voice of one crying out in the wilderness” is about himself, he does not in any way attempt to prove, but he does use the example that (χρήται παραδείγματι ὅτι / 5.7) what is around him is as different from himself as his clothes are. And asked about his clothing, if he was his clothes, he would not have answered “yes.” How can John’s clothes be the Elijah that was to come? I do not agree with him at all. At best, in accordance with how we were able to explain “in the spirit and power of Elijah,” it could be possible to say that the spirit of Elijah in some way serves as clothing for John’s soul.⁴³

Four references are made in this paragraph. Reference 5.4 is made with the phrase κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα (“according to Heracleon”). References 5.5 and 5.6 are both made with a single φησί (“he says”), which is inserted at the end of 5.5, but as the third word of 5.6. The last reference is made with the unusual formula χρήται παραδείγματι ὅτι (“he does use the example that”). Blanc and Heine present all four references in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, and Wucherpfennig present 5.4 in plain text, but the other three as quotations. Pettipiece italicizes all four. Castellano italicizes the first three, but does not quote the fourth.⁴⁴

⁴³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/112–14 (SC 157, 212.36–214.59; Brooke’s fragment 5, part 4): Ὅπερ δὲ ὑπερεθέμεθα ἐν τοῖς πρὸ τούτων ἐξετάσαι, πῶς κεκίνηται, νῦν φέρε διαλάβωμεν. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ σωτὴρ κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα (5.4) φησὶν αὐτόν καὶ προφήτην καὶ Ἠλίαν, αὐτὸς δὲ ἑκάτερον τούτων ἀρνεῖται. Καὶ προφήτην μὲν καὶ Ἠλίαν ὁ σωτὴρ ἐπὶ αὐτόν λέγει, οὐκ αὐτόν ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ αὐτόν, φησί, (5.5) διδάσκει· ὅταν δὲ μείζονα προφητῶν καὶ ἐν γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν, τότε αὐτόν τὸν Ἰωάννην χαρακτηρίζει· αὐτὸς δέ, φησί, (5.6) περὶ ἑαυτοῦ ἐρωτώμενος ἀποκρίνεται ὁ Ἰωάννης, οὐ τὰ περὶ αὐτόν. Ὅσῃ δὲ βάσανον ἡμεῖς περὶ τούτων κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν πεποιήμεθα, οὐδένα ἀπαραμύθητον ἑώντες τῶν λεγομένων ὄρων, συγκρίναι τοῖς ὑπὸ Ἡρακλέωνος, ἅτε οὐκ ἐξουσίαν ἔχοντος τοῦ λέγειν ὃ βούλεται, ἀποφανθεῖσιν. Πῶς γὰρ ὅτι περὶ τῶν περὶ αὐτόν ἐστὶν τὸ Ἠλίαν αὐτόν καὶ προφήτην εἶναι, καὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ τὸ φωνὴν αὐτόν εἶναι βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, οὐδὲ κατὰ τὸ τυχὸν πειράται ἀποδεικνύναι· ἀλλὰ χρήται παραδείγματι, ὅτι (5.7) τὰ περὶ αὐτόν οἰοῖ ἐνδύματα ἢ ἕτερα αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἐρωτηθεὶς περὶ τῶν ἐνδυμάτων εἰ αὐτὸς εἴη τὰ ἐνδύματα, ἀπεκρίθη ἂν τὸ “Ναί.” Πῶς γὰρ ἐνδύματα τὸ εἶναι τὸν Ἠλίαν τὸν μέλλοντα ἔρχεσθαι ἐστὶν Ἰωάννου, οὐ πάντι κατ’ αὐτόν θεωρῶ· τάχα καθ’ ἡμᾶς, ὡς δεδυνήμεθα διηγησαμένους τὸ “ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἠλίου” δυναμένου πως λέγεσθαι τοῦτο τὸ πνεῦμα Ἠλίου ἐνδύμα εἶναι τῆς Ἰωάννου ψυχῆς.

⁴⁴ SC 157, 213–15; GCS 10, 129–30; FC 80, 200; Völker, *Quellen*, 66; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 216; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 57; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 47–48; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 185–86.

	5.4 κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα	5.5 φησί	5.6 φησί	5.7 χρήται παρα- δείγματι ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Castellano	Italics	Italics	Italics	–
Wucherpennig	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase	Summary	Quotation	Summary

This paragraph demonstrates a whole series of the modes in which Origen attributes statements to Heracleon. After the introductory comment, stating that he returns to a previously mentioned subject, Origen attributes an observation on the Johannine narrative to Heracleon by inserting the phrase κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα (“according to Heracleon”) into it. This loose reference, appearing several words into the sentence, suggests that the sentence is written by Origen rather than Heracleon. Considering that Origen here must write either “a prophet” or “the prophet,” the attribution may be limited to the lack of definite article before προφήτην. Reference 5.4 is therefore an explanatory paraphrase.

Into the next sentence, a single φησί (“he says”) has been inserted. As this is a single *verbum dicendi* and the rest of the sentence uses finite verbs, it is not impossible to take this as a verbatim quotation. But since the attribution does not appear until the penultimate word of the main clause, and since there is no indication of a changed mode of attribution beforehand, Reference 5.5 is more likely to be a summary. Contrastingly, the next attribution is made by a single φησί appearing as the third word of the clause, and the statement is presented in direct speech. Reference 5.6 is therefore a verbatim quotation.

The last attribution formula used in this paragraph is too unusual to be comparable to other examples, and therefore difficult to gauge. The verb χράω may be used in the sense of “declare” or “proclaim,” but is here more likely to be used in the less-conclusive sense of “use.” As such, it does imply a connection to what Heracleon has written, but not that what follows is a verbatim quotation. As the verb does not imply any larger amount of interpretation on Origen’s part, Reference 5.7 will be categorized as a summary.

The two claims made in Paraphrase 5.4 and Summary 5.5 are not based on the Fourth Gospel. Jesus’s discussion of John’s identity in terms of a prophet and Elijah is not reported in the Gospel of John, and neither is his remark that no one of those born of women is greater than John. Both appear, how-

ever, in Matt 11:7–15,⁴⁵ which we already have noticed that Heracleon seems to be using.⁴⁶ The impression that Heracleon is using a Matthean tradition to interpret a Johannine text is strengthening.⁴⁷

Heracleon's distinction between John and what is around him is enigmatic. Blanc connects it to a notion, ascribed to the "Valentinians" by Irenaeus and Clement, of the souls of spiritual people protecting their inner spiritual selves as clothing protects the body.⁴⁸ While this notion may fit this case rather well, it would appear surprising that it would be unknown to Origen, who otherwise seems to know the theology of "those who bring in the natures" rather well. Castellano's suggestion that Heracleon distinguishes John's external identity, as a prophet and Elijah, from his true self, which is greater than all the prophets, is perhaps not clear enough to close the matter.⁴⁹ Wucherpfennig also tries in vain to explain this passage.⁵⁰

The best clue to Heracleon's reasoning may be his use of Matt 11:7–15, where not only John's potential identities as a prophet and Elijah are mentioned, but also his lack of fine clothing. The Gospel of Matthew describes John's clothing as being made of camel's hair and complemented by a leather belt around his waist.⁵¹ This clothing has been associated with the prophet Elijah, at least by Clement, who exclaims:

Who among them walks around in a sheepskin and a leather belt like Elijah? Who walks around naked and barefoot except for a sackcloth like Isaiah? Or with only a linen loincloth like Jeremiah? Who will imitate John's knowledgeable way of life? But the blessed prophets gave thanks to the Creator while living in this way.⁵²

The same association has been made by modern scholars,⁵³ who have concluded that the mention of the peculiar clothing of John the Baptist consti-

⁴⁵ The parallel in Luke 7:24–28 fails to mention Elijah.

⁴⁶ See page 133 above.

⁴⁷ The connection to the Matthean parallel is previously argued by Mouson, "Jean-Baptiste dans les fragments d'Héracléon," 307; Édouard Massaux, *Influence de l'évangile de saint Matthieu sur la littérature chrétienne avant saint Irénée*, ed. Frans Neirynck, BETL 75 (Leuven: University Press, 1986), 427.

⁴⁸ SC 157, 31–32.

⁴⁹ Castellano, *Exégesis*, 87.

⁵⁰ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 201–21.

⁵¹ Matt 3:4: αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Ἰωάννης εἶχεν τὸ ἔνδυμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ τριχῶν καμήλου καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην περὶ τὴν ὀσφὺν αὐτοῦ....

⁵² Clement, *Strom.* 3.6/53.5 (GCS 15, 220.28–221.5): τίς αὐτῶν μηλωτὴν καὶ ζώνην δερματίνην ἔχων περιέρχεται ὡς Ἡλίας; τίς δὲ σάκκον περιβέβληται γυμνὸς τὰ ἄλλα καὶ ἀνυπόδετος ὡς Ἡσαΐας; ἢ περιζῶμα μόνον λινοῦν, ὡς Ἰερεμίας; Ἰωάννου δὲ τὴν ἔνστασιν τὴν γνωστικὴν τοῦ βίου τίς μιμήσεται; ἀλλὰ καὶ οὕτω βιοῦντες ἡγαρίστουν τῷ κτίσαντι οἱ μακάριοι προφῆται.

⁵³ See the references in James A. Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist: "Locusts and Wild Honey" in Synoptic and Patristic Interpretation*, WUNT 176 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 4 n. 8.

tutes a claim that he is indeed the new Elijah, who has come to fulfill the prophecies of Isa 40:3 and Mal 3:1.⁵⁴ Heracleon may similarly have associated John's camel skin and leather belt – which undoubtedly is *περὶ αὐτόν* (“around him”) – as symbols of his prophetic identity. Using the double affirmation in Matt 11:9 that John is both a prophet and something more than a prophet, he may have reflected that, while John's role as a prophet was obvious to anyone who notices his clothing, his true identity as the precursor of Christ (cf. Passage 8) is less apparent. Heracleon may be stating that while it is technically true that John is a prophet and Elijah, these identifications do not exhaust his identity, and must therefore ultimately be rejected.

In his response, Origen emphatically laments Heracleon's lack of argumentation in this context. This is an often-recurring criticism that may say more about how Heracleon presents his interpretations than about the interpretive process behind them. If Heracleon “simply declares” his conclusions, it may be because the style in which he is writing is too brief to allow for extended argumentation.

E. Passage 5 C: The Investigating Priests and Levites (John 1:19)

After emphatically lamenting Heracleon's lack of extended argumentation, Origen is more positive toward his reflections on why the interrogators of John the Baptist were priests and Levites:

Wanting (*θέλων*) also to describe why those who were questioning him and were sent out from the Jews are priests and Levites, not badly he states: (*λέγει τὸ / 5.8*) “...because it was appropriate (*προσῆκον*) for them, who were in the service of God, to investigate and inquire about these things.” But (*τὸ / 5.9*) “...because he was also from the Levite tribe” is not particularly well considered. Just as we investigated when we had doubts before – if those who were sent out had known John and his origin, what reason do they have to ask whether he is Elijah? And likewise with the question “Are you the prophet?” Thinking (*οἰόμενος*) that nothing significant is indicated by the addition of the article, he says that (*λέγει ὅτι / 5.10*) they asked if he was a prophet since they wanted to know the basics.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist*, 121–23.

⁵⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/115 (SC 157, 214.1–13; Brooke's fragment 5, part 5): *Θέλων δ' εἶ παραστήσαι διὰ τί ἱερεῖς καὶ λευῖται οἱ ἐπερωτῶντες ἀπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων πεμφθέντες εἰσίν, οὐ κακῶς μὲν λέγει τὸ· (5.8) Ὅτι τούτοις προσῆκον ἦν περὶ τούτων πολυπραγμαίνειν καὶ πυνθάνεσθαι, τοῖς τῷ θεῷ προσκαρτεροῦσιν, οὐ πάννυ δὲ ἐξητασμένως τὸ (5.9) “ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκ τῆς λευϊτικῆς φυλῆς ἦν,” ὥσπερ προαποροῦντες ἡμεῖς ἐξητάσαμεν, ὅτι εἰ ἤδεισαν τὸν Ἰωάννην οἱ πεμφθέντες καὶ τὴν γένεσιν αὐτοῦ, πῶς χώραν εἶχον πυνθάνεσθαι περὶ τοῦ εἰ αὐτὸς Ἥλιας ἐστίν; Καὶ πάλιν ἐν τῷ περὶ τοῦ εἰ “ὁ προφήτης εἶ σύ;” Μηδὲν ἐξαίρετον οἰόμενος σημαίνεσθαι κατὰ τὴν προσθήκην τοῦ ἄρθρου, λέγει ὅτι· (5.10) Ἐπηρώτησαν εἰ προφήτης εἶναι τὸ κοινότερον βουλόμενοι μαθεῖν.*

Three statements are attributed to Heracleon in this paragraph. In References 5.8 and 5.9 this is done with a shared *verbum dicendi*, λέγει (“he states”), followed in each case by the definite article τό. Reference 5.10 uses another λέγει, followed by ὅτι. Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, Heine, Pettipiece, and Wucherpfennig present all three as quotations, although Wucherpfennig remarks that the third quotation, which is not clearly delimited, may be paraphrased by Origen. Blanc presents only 5.9 as a quotation. Castellano does not quote this paragraph.⁵⁶

	5.8 λέγει τό	5.9 τό	5.10 λέγει ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Pettipiece	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Castellano	–	–	–
Wucherpfennig	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation (+ paraphrase)	Quotation	Summary (+ paraphrase)

All three statements are attributed with a single *verbum dicendi*, and should therefore be categorized as either summaries or quotations. Since the first two statements consist of disconnected dependent clauses rather than complete sentences, indirect speech cannot be distinguished from direct speech. However, the use of the definite article strengthens the impression of verbatim quotations, and this is how these two statements are categorized. In the tenth reference, λέγει is followed by a ὅτι that, according to our criteria, indicates indirect speech. It is therefore categorized as a summary.

In addition to the attributed statements, two other points are attributed to Heracleon. In the first dependent clause, which also serves as a transition to the new subject, Origen infers the intent behind Heracleon’s first quoted statement: a wish to answer the question why the investigators sent out from Jerusalem were priests and Levites. And in the last sentence, Origen accuses Heracleon of ignoring the definite article before προφήτης not as a mistake, but because he does not think it matters. These two references, made with θέλων (“wanting”) and οἰόμενος (“thinking”), undoubtedly express Origen’s inferences from Heracleon’s words, and are therefore categorized as explanatory paraphrases. While the second one can be dismissed as insignificant and rather mean-spirited, the first one expresses a reasonable inference, presuma-

⁵⁶ SC 157, 215; GCS 10, 130; FC 80, 200–201; Völker, *Quellen*, 66; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 216; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 48–49; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 187, cf. 208 n. 137.

bly based on the main clause from which the two quoted dependent clauses are taken.

Heracleon seems to have remarked that it was appropriate that the investigators sent out from Jerusalem to question John the Baptist were priests and Levites, partly because their professions ensured their competence in investigating a self-proclaimed prophet, partly because it is reasonable that a member of the Levite tribe, such as John, should be interviewed by Levites. Ignorant of the messianic implications of “the prophet,” Heracleon seems to have remarked that the investigators started with the rather basic question of whether John considered himself a prophet or not. That is not an unreasonable interpretation, given that Jesus and his disciples are questioned in similar ways. That John is of the Levite tribe is not mentioned in the Fourth Gospel, but is apparent from the Gospel of Luke, which presents his father Zechariah as a priest and his mother Elizabeth as a descendant of Aaron. As all Israelite priests were descendants of Aaron, this makes John an Aaronite descendant by two lines. That John is a descendant of Aaron is also mentioned in the Gospel of the Ebionites.⁵⁷ We cannot know where Heracleon encountered this information, so this passage does not prove that he knew either of these Gospels, only that he was prepared to use other writings to illuminate the Gospel of John.

Wucherpennig convincingly argues that Heracleon’s προσῆκον (“appropriate”) is a technical term in Greco-Roman literary criticism, used to discuss whether a statement fits a certain narrative character,⁵⁸ and that Heracleon presents a contrast between the priests and Levites, who are merely doing their duty, and the Pharisees, who are asking out of ill will.⁵⁹ As Wucherpennig argues, the idea that Heracleon here is referring to a category of humans with a particular nature appears ungrounded.⁶⁰

In the next paragraph, Origen discusses Heracleon’s interpretation of a statement about John that does not appear in the Fourth Gospel, but appears to be taken from a Synoptic tradition:

Furthermore, not only Heracleon but – as far as I have investigated – also all the heterodox, being unable to discern a simple ambiguity, have understood (ὑπελήφασιν / 5.11) John as being greater than Elijah and all the prophets on account of “Among those born of a wom-

⁵⁷ Luke 1:5; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.13.6 (GCS 25, 350.10–12): ὃς ἐλέγετο εἶναι ἐκ γένους Ἀρὼν τοῦ ἱερέως, παῖς Ζαχαρίου καὶ Ἐλισάβετ, καὶ ἐξήρχοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν πάντες. Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 198. Wucherpennig’s argument (*Heracleon Philologus*, 199.) that Heracleon received his information about the Pharisees’ critical attitude toward John’s baptizing activities specifically from Luke 7:30 is less convincing, since such information appears in multiple locations.

⁵⁸ Cf. Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work*, 246–54, where such discussions of characterizations, but not this technical term, are described.

⁵⁹ Cf. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.23/126 (Heracleon, Summary 6.4, below).

⁶⁰ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 197.

an, no one is greater than John” (Luke 7:28) since they do not realize that “No one is greater than John among those born of a woman” can be true in two ways: not only by him being greater than all, but also by some being equal to him. For it is true that while many prophets are equal to him, relative to the grace that is given to him, no one is greater than him. He thinks (οἶται / 5.12) John is proven to be greater, since Isaiah is prophesying about him, as if no one among those who ever has prophesied had been deemed worthy of this honor by God before. Truly, he has ventured to say this as one who despises (ὡς κατάφρο- νῶν / 5.13) what is called the Old Testament, and has not observed that Elijah himself has also been the subject of prophecy. Elijah is prophesied about by Malachi, who says: “See, I send you Elijah of Tishbe, who will restore the father’s heart toward the son” (Mal 3:22–23). And, as we read in Third Kings, Josiah has also been named in a prophecy by the prophet who came out of Judah and, in the presence of Jeroboam, said: “Altar! This is what the Lord says: ‘See, a son is born of David, and Josiah is his name’” (3 Kgdms 13:2). Some people say that Samson, too, is the subject of a prophecy by Jacob, when he says: “Dan will judge his own people as if there was only one tribe in Israel” (Gen 49:16), since Samson, who was of Dan’s tribe, judged Israel. Let these points be made to refute the carelessness of the one declaring (ἀποφηναιμένου) that John alone is the subject of prophecy, which he stated (εἰρηκότος / 5.14) when he wanted to explain what “I am a voice crying out in the wilderness” (John 1:23) means.⁶¹

What is attributed to Heracleon in this paragraph are not statements, but four specific views: that John the Baptist is greater than all previous prophets, that this is proven by him being the subject of a prophecy, that the Old Testament is to be despised, and that John is the only prophet who is himself also the object of prophecy. Blanc, Heine, and Wucherpfennig use plain text for all four of these references. Preuschen presents 5.12 as a quotation, but the other three in plain text. Völker agrees that 5.12 is a quotation, while 5.11 is not, but

⁶¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/116–18 (SC 157, 216.14–218.43; Brooke’s fragment 5, part 6): “Ἐτι δὲ οὐ μόνος Ἡρακλέων, ἀλλὰ ὅσον ἐπ’ ἐμῇ ἱστορίᾳ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐτερόδοξοι, εὐτελεῖ ἀμφιβολίαν διαστείλασθαι μὴ δεδυνημένοι, μείζονα Ἡλίου καὶ πάντων τῶν προφητῶν τὸν Ἰωάννην ὑπελήφασιν (5.11) διὰ τὸ “Μείζων ἐν γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν Ἰωάννου οὐδεὶς ἐστίν,” οὐχ ὁρῶντες ὅτι ἀληθὲς τὸ “Οὐδεὶς μείζων Ἰωάννου ἐν γεννητοῖς γυναικῶν” διχῶς γίνεται, οὐ μόνον τῷ αὐτὸν εἶναι πάντων μείζονα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἴσους αὐτῷ εἶναι τινὰ· ἀληθὲς γὰρ ἴσων ὄντων αὐτῷ πολλῶν προφητῶν, κατὰ τὴν δεδομένην αὐτῷ χάριν τὸ μηδὲνα τοῦτου μείζονα εἶναι. Οἶεται (5.12) δὲ κατασκευάζεσθαι τὸ μείζονα <τῷ> προφητεῦεσθαι ὑπὸ Ἡσαΐου, ὡς μηδενὸς ταύτης τῆς τιμῆς ἡξιωμένου ὑπὸ θεοῦ τῶν πώποτε προφητευσάντων. Ἀληθῶς δ’ ὡς καταφρονῶν τῆς παλαιᾶς χρηματιζούσης διαθήκης καὶ μὴ τηρήσας καὶ αὐτὸν Ἡλίαν προφητευόμενον τοῦτ’ ἀπετόλμησεν εἰπεῖν· (5.13) καὶ γὰρ Ἡλίας προφητεύεται ὑπὸ Μαλαχίου λέγοντος· “Ἰδοὺ ἀποστέλλω ὑμῖν Ἡλίαν τὸν Θεοβίτην, ὃς ἀποκαταστήσει καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱόν.” Καὶ Ἰωσίας δέ, ὡς ἐν τῇ τρίτῃ τῶν Βασιλείων ἀνέγνωμεν, προφητεύεται ὀνομαστί ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐληλυθότος ἐξ Ἰούδα προφήτου λέγοντος, παρόντος καὶ τοῦ Ἱεροβοάμ, “Θυσιαστήριον, τάδε λέγει κύριος· Ἰδοὺ υἱὸς τίκεται τῷ Δαβίδ, Ἰωσίας ὄνομα αὐτῷ.” Φασὶν δὲ τινες καὶ τὸν Σαμψὼν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰακώβ προφητεῦεσθαι λέγοντος· “Δὰν κρινεῖ τὸν ἑαυτοῦ λαόν, ὥσει καὶ μία φυλὴ ἐν Ἰσραὴλ,” ἐπεὶ ἀπὸ τῆς φυλῆς τοῦ Δὰν γενόμενος ὁ Σαμψὼν ἔκρινε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ. Καὶ ταῦτα δὲ εἰς ἐλεγχον τῆς προπετείας τοῦ ἀποφηναιμένου μηδὲνα πλὴν Ἰωάννου προφητεῦεσθαι εἰρήσθω, ταῦτα εἰρηκότος (5.14) ἐν τῷ θέλειν αὐτὸν διηγέσθαι τί τὸ “Ἐγὼ φωνῇ βοῶντος ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ.”

does not include 5.13 and 5.14. Foerster includes only 5.12, which he presents in plain text. Pettipiece uses italics for the first two, and plain text for the latter two. Castellano only refers to Reference 5.12, which he attributes to Origen, equivalently with the plain text of the majority.⁶²

	5.11 ὑπελήφασιν	5.12 οἶεται	5.13 ὥς καταφρονῶν	5.14 εἰρηκότος
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text	Plain text
Völker	Plain text	Quotation	–	–
Foerster	–	Plain text	–	–
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Plain text	Plain text
Castellano	Plain text	–	–	–
Wucherpennig	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Berglund	Paraphrase	Paraphrase	Assertion	Summary

References 5.11 and 5.12 are made with the interpretive verbs ὑπολαμβάνω (“understand” or “assume”) and οἶεται (“he thinks”). Both refer to what may have been in Heracleon’s head rather than to what Origen has found on the page, so both are explanatory paraphrases.⁶³ The εἰπεῖν (“to say”) that is used to refer to the same view in the sentence following Reference 5.12 strengthens the impression that the paraphrase is based on Heracleon’s writing, but does not clarify exactly how.

Reference 5.13 is made by combining ὥς (“as”) with a participle. It has no stated basis in Heracleon’s writing, and it is improbable that Heracleon would have declared any view about the Old Testament in general in this context. Although it is possible that Origen is evaluating Heracleon’s Old Testament exegesis in general, his remark may also be based purely on prejudice, and should therefore be categorized as a mere assertion. Reference 5.14 uses ἀποφαίνω (“declare”), supported by a perfect participle form of the *verbum dicendi* λέγω (“say”). It repeats one key element from the explanatory paraphrase – the point that John is the only prophet who is also the subject of prophecy. Since this point is also the one refuted in the response inserted between the two references, we may infer that this point was present in Heracleon’s writing, and that this fourteenth reference is a summary.

⁶² SC 157, 217–19; GCS 10, 130–31; FC 80, 201; Völker, *Quellen*, 66; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 216; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 87; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 48–50; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 188.

⁶³ The verb οἶμαι is among those identified by Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work*, 164, as technical terms used in Greco-Roman literary criticism to denote what the reader is supposed to infer from the writing.

The references to Heracleon in this paragraph seem all to be based on the point made in Summary 5.14. In order to elucidate John the Baptist’s self-description in John 1:23, Heracleon has noted that John is not presenting himself as a prophet, but as the one about whom Isaiah has prophesied. According to Paraphrase 5.11, Heracleon has compared this self-description to the account of Matt 11:7–15, where the Matthean Jesus asserts that not only is John a prophet and Elijah, but no one born of a woman is greater than John – an assertion that is not repeated in the Fourth Gospel.⁶⁴ Seemingly, Heracleon has tried to harmonize the two accounts by stating that John is the only prophet who is also the subject of prophecy, which would indicate that he is greater than his predecessors. As Origen demonstrates, this is a point on which he is wrong.

The view referenced in Reference 5.11 is ascribed not only to Heracleon, but “also” to “all the heterodox” – an expression that locates Heracleon outside the category of the heterodox and illustrates that Origen does not always presume Heracleon to share all views of this group.⁶⁵ The added reference to Origen’s investigation (ιστορία) suggests that this distinction is consciously made and based on some knowledge of what individual heterodox teachers claimed. Origen’s distinction between John being greater than all other prophets and John being equal to the most prominent among the prophets is rather subtle, and suggests that Origen presumes Heracleon and the heterodox teachers referenced in this paragraph to be educated in Greco-Roman literary criticism, even if their presumed competency is not advanced enough to win Origen’s approval.

F. Passages 6–7: John’s Reason for Baptizing (John 1:24–27)

Although the next passage has already been quoted in the introductory chapter,⁶⁶ it will be repeated here in order to perform a complete analysis.

The context in the Fourth Gospel is the Pharisees’ question to John: τί οὖν βαπτίζεις εἰ σὺ οὐκ εἶ ὁ χριστὸς οὐδὲ Ἠλίας οὐδὲ ὁ προφήτης; (“Why, then, do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”) in John 1:25. Origen remarks that there is quite a difference in attitude toward John between, on the one hand, the priests and Levites, who seem to tacitly agree that it is appropriate that the voice in the wilderness baptizes and, on the other hand, the Pharisees, who question John’s activities, adding to the conflict between John and the Pharisees that is apparent from Matt 3:7–12. On

⁶⁴ Origen quotes Luke 7:28 rather than the parallel in Matt 11:11, but it is already established that Heracleon is using the Matthean tradition found in Matt 11:7–15.

⁶⁵ This point is further expanded in Berglund, “Heracleon and the Seven Categories.”

⁶⁶ See page 15 above.

that ground, Origen concludes that the Pharisees approach John's baptism as hypocrites, and that their question is bitter (πικρός) and misinformed, since Jesus, the true prophet, does not baptize but leaves that activity to his disciples.⁶⁷ Then, he turns to his predecessor:

Heracleon, accepting (παραδεξάμενος / 6.1) the Pharisees' statement about Christ, Elijah, and every prophet being obliged to baptize as spoken soundly, says with the very words (αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν / 6.2): "...who alone are obliged to baptize..." – and is refuted by what has recently been presented by us, especially since he has understood (νενόηκεν / 6.3) "prophet" in a more general sense, for he is not able to show that any of the prophets baptized. Not unconvincingly, though, he remarks (φησὶν / 6.4) that the Pharisees are asking out of their ill will, and not as if they want to understand.⁶⁸

Four references are made in this passage. The first is made with the participle παραδεξάμενος ("accepting"), the second with the phrase αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν ("he says with the very words"), the third with the more interpretive verb νοέω ("perceive," "apprehend," "understand"), and the fourth with a single φησὶν ("he says"). Blanc uses plain text for all four. Preuschen reads Origen's second attribution formula as referring to the preceding words, and presents the words περὶ τοῦ ὀφείλεσθαι τὸ βαπτίζειν Χριστῷ καὶ Ἠλίᾳ καὶ παντὶ προφήτῃ ("about Christ, Elijah, and every prophet being obliged to baptize") as a quotation. He does likewise with the fourth reference. Völker, in contrast, reads the second attribution formula as referring to the words that follow, οἷς μόνοις ὀφείλεται τὸ βαπτίζειν ("who alone are obliged to baptize"), and presents the second and fourth attributed statements as quotations. Opting for Völker's understanding of the second reference, Foerster presents the second and fourth attributed statements as quotations. Heine presents the second attributed statement – the words following αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν – as a quotation, but not the others. Pettipiece italicizes the second and fourth attributed statements. Castellano italicizes both the words preceding and those following αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν to indicate that they originate with Heracleon, and does likewise with the fourth attributed statement. Wucherpennig, reading the attribution formula as Völker does, presents the second attributed statement as a quotation, but merely italicizes the fourth.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.22/119–23/125.

⁶⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.23/126 (SC 157, 226.37–228.44; Brooke's fragment 6): Παραδεξάμενος (6.1) δὲ ὁ Ἡρακλέων τὸν τῶν φαρισαίων λόγον ὡς ὑγιῶς εἰρημένον περὶ τοῦ ὀφείλεσθαι τὸ βαπτίζειν Χριστῷ καὶ Ἠλίᾳ καὶ παντὶ προφήτῃ, αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν, (6.2) οἷς μόνοις ὀφείλεται τὸ βαπτίζειν, καὶ ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων μὲν ἡμῖν ἔναγχος ἐλεγχόμενος, μάλιστα δὲ ὅτι κοινότερον τὸν προφήτην νενόηκεν· (6.3) οὐ γὰρ ἔχει δεῖξαι τινα τῶν προφητῶν βαπτίσαντα. Οὐκ ἀπιθάνως δὲ φησιν (6.4) πυνθάνεσθαι τοὺς φαρισαίους κατὰ τὴν αὐτῶν πανουργίαν, οὐχὶ ὡς μαθεῖν θέλοντας.

⁶⁹ GCS 10, 134; SC 157, 227–29; FC 80, 204; Völker, *Quellen*, 67; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 216–17; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 97; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 54; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 189–90.

	6.1 παραδεξάμενος	6.2 αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν	6.3 νενόηκεν	6.4 φησὶν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation
Völker	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Foerster	Plain text	Quotation	–	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Plain text	Italics	Plain text	Italics
Castellano	Italics	Italics	–	Italics
Wucherpennig	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text	Italics
Berglund	Paraphrase	Quotation	Paraphrase	Summary

The first reference in this passage – the claim that Heracleon has accepted the statement attributed to the Pharisees as spoken soundly (ὕγιως εἰρημένον) – clearly refers to how Origen understands the thought process behind Heracleon’s words. Therefore, it is an explanatory paraphrase. The second reference uses the formula αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν, and undoubtedly introduces a verbatim quotation. However, it is less clear whether the quoted words appear before the formula, as suggested by Preuschen, after the formula, as understood by Völker, Heine, Foerster, Pettipiece, and Wucherpennig, or around the formula, as proposed by Castellano. Since the phrase introduced with *περί* grammatically is an attribute to the λόγος (“statement”) of the Pharisees, it is probable that Origen’s attribution formula is intended to imply the conclusion of the Pharisees’ statement and the transition to Heracleon’s words. The words following the formula, those emphasized by Völker, are therefore taken as a verbatim quotation from Heracleon. The third reference, stating that Heracleon has understood (νενόηκεν) the word “prophet” in a more general sense, is made with an interpretive verb,⁷⁰ and is clearly an explanatory paraphrase. The fourth statement, attributed with a single φησὶν, is presented in indirect speech using an accusative-with-infinitive construction, and is therefore categorized as a summary.

The quoted words οἷς μόνοις ὀφείλεται τὸ βαπτίζειν is a disconnected relative clause that Heracleon seems to have applied to the triad described by the Pharisees: the Christ, Elijah, and the prophet. Origen is correct in his assessment that the Pharisees’ question may be read as implying that only these three figures are supposed to be baptizing, and Heracleon’s quoted clause suggests that this is how he read the question. Origen’s assessment that Heracleon has accepted the implications of the Pharisees’ question seems, therefore, to be correct. Likewise, his claim that Heracleon has understood the

⁷⁰ The verb *voéō* is also among those identified by Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work*, 164, as technical terms used in Greco-Roman literary criticism to denote what the reader is supposed to infer from the writing.

Pharisees as referring to “a prophet” in a more general sense than “the prophet” as a messianic figure, appears to be supported by the quotation in Passage 4 (Quotation 4.1), and may also be correct. Neither of these explanatory paraphrases is, therefore, misleading – although they do not add new information to what has been given in quotations and summaries.

The summary attributed to Heracleon at the end of the interaction implies that he reflected on the motivations behind actions described in the Johannine narrative.⁷¹ This rather advanced line of inquiry suggests that Heracleon was competent in ancient literary criticism. It is not entirely surprising that Origen would agree with Heracleon on this point, as he has previously made precisely the same point in his own exposition, stating that the Pharisees “have the poison of snakes and asps under their tongues.”⁷²

After his lemma of John’s answer to the Pharisees – “I baptize with water. Among you stands the one you do not know, the one who comes after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.” – from John 1:26, Origen uncharacteristically proceeds directly to Heracleon’s interpretation and saves his own exposition for later:

Heracleon thinks that (οἶται ὅτι / 7.1) John answers those sent by the Pharisees not by responding to what they asked, but by saying what he wants. He does not realize that he is accusing the prophet of discourtesy, if he really answers something else than what someone has asked. It is necessary to watch out for this, since it is a failure that occurs in conversations.⁷³

One statement is attributed to Heracleon in this passage. Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, and Wucherpennig present it as a quotation, Blanc and Heine use plain text. Pettipiece and Castellano italicize the statement.⁷⁴

⁷¹ The claim of Aland, “Erwählungstheologie,” 158, that the Pharisees represent the lowest of the three human natures is not only dependent on the notion that Heracleon subscribed to the views of “those who bring in the natures” but also the idea that his every comment conveys this. Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 240, who also rejects the claim.

⁷² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.23/123.

⁷³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.30/153 (SC 157, 246): Ὁ μὲν Ἡρακλέων οἶται ὅτι (7.1) ἀποκρίνεται ὁ Ἰωάννης τοῖς ἐκ τῶν φαρισαίων πεμφθεῖσιν, οὐ πρὸς ὃ ἐκεῖνοι ἐπηρώτων, ἀλλ’ ὃ αὐτὸς ἐβούλετο, ἑαυτὸν λανθάνων ὅτι κατηγορεῖ τοῦ προφήτου ἀμαθίας, εἶγε ἄλλο ἐρωτώμενος περὶ ἄλλου ἀποκρίνεται· χρή γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο φυλάττεσθαι ὡς ἐν κοινολογίᾳ ἀμάρτημα τυγχάνον.

⁷⁴ SC 157, 247; GCS 10, 139–40; FC 80, 212; Völker, *Quellen*, 67; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 217; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 98; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 56; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 190.

	7.1 οἶται ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics
Castellano	Italics
Wucherpfennig	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase

The reference is made with a verb that refers to what Heracleon is thinking rather than what he has actually expressed. This reference must therefore be categorized as an explanatory paraphrase.

Since this particular explanatory paraphrase appears without accompanying summaries or verbatim quotations, Origen has not given us any dependable information of how Heracleon has interpreted this verse. Heracleon seems to have expressed some perceived discrepancy between the Pharisees' question and John's answer, but the idea that John is simply saying what he wants is Origen's understanding of Heracleon's view.

G. Passage 8: Christ's Physical Presence (John 1:26–27)

At the end of his own exposition on John 1:26–27, Origen returns to Heracleon's interpretation:

Heracleon, in reference to “is standing among you” says (φησὶν / 8.1): “He is already present, he is in the world and among humans, and he is already visible for all of you.” Thereby, he invalidates what has been presented about him permeating the whole world. It must be said to him: When is he not present? When is he not in the world? [...] There is no need for me to demonstrate in detail that he has always been among the humans – the passages that can show this are obviously innumerable – in order to prove that when Heracleon says (εἰρημένον τό / 8.2) “He is already present, he is in the world and among humans...” to interpret “He stands in the midst of you,” he is not speaking soundly. Not unconvincingly, however, it is said by him that (λέγεται ὅτι / 8.3) the “coming after me” proves that John is a precursor of Christ, for he is truly a servant who is running in advance of the Lord.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/194–97 (SC 157, 274.1–7, 276.18–27; Brooke's fragment 8, part 1): Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων τὸ “Μέσος ὑμῶν στήκει” φησὶν (8.1) ἀντὶ τοῦ “Ἦδη πάρεστιν καὶ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώποις, καὶ ἐμφανὴς ἔστιν ἥδη πᾶσιν ὑμῖν.” Διὰ τούτων δὲ περιαιρεῖ τὸ παρασταθὲν περὶ τοῦ διαπεφοιτηκέναι αὐτὸν δι' ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου. Λεκτέον γὰρ πρὸς αὐτόν. Πότε γὰρ οὐ πάρεστιν; Πότε δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ; [...] Καὶ τί με δεῖ καθ' ἕκαστον ἀποδεικνύναι, δυσεξαριθμήτων ὄντων <τῶν> παραστήσαι ἐναργῶς δυναμένων, ὅτι αἰ

This passage has three references to Heracleon, the second of which repeats most of the first. Blanc uses quotation marks for 8.1 and 8.2, but not for 8.3. Preuschen presents both the first two references, as well as the words πρόδρομον εἶναι τὸν Ἰωάννην τοῦ Χριστοῦ (“John being the precursor of Christ”) of the third reference as quotations. Völker and Foerster present both 8.1 and 8.3 as quotations, but leave out 8.2. Heine presents only 8.2 as a quotation. Pettipiece presents the first two as quotations and merely italicizes the third. Castellano presents 8.1 within quotation marks, quotes 8.2 as taken directly from Heracleon, and presents 8.3 as a quotation extending to the end of the paragraph. Wucherpennig presents all three references as quotations.⁷⁶

	8.1 φησὶν	8.2 εἰρημένον τό	8.3 λέγεται ὅτι
Blanc	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	–	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	–	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Pettipiece	Quotation	Quotation	Italics
Castellano	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation	Quotation	Summary

The first reference is made with a *verbum dicendi*, φησὶν (“he says”) and appears in direct speech. It is therefore categorized as a verbatim quotation. The second reference is made in passive form – εἰρημένον (“what has been said”) – and the attributed statement is delimited by the definite article τό. This statement is also presented as a verbatim quotation, and the verbatim repetition of most of the first attributed statement makes it even more probable that the words are taken verbatim from Heracleon’s writing. The third statement is attributed with another *verbum dicendi* in passive form, λέγεται (“it has been said”), but presented in indirect speech, using both ὅτι (“that”) and the optative verb form δηλοῖ (“proves”). It is therefore categorized as a summary. The summary ends with δηλοῖ, after which an approving comment by Origen is added.

ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἦν, πρὸς τὸ ἐλέγξει οὐχ ὑγιῶς εἰρημένον τὸ (8.2) “Ἦδη πάρεστιν καὶ ἔστιν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώποις” εἰς διήγησιν παρὰ τῷ Ἡρακλέωνι τοῦ “Μέσος ὑμῶν ἔστηκεν”; Οὐκ ἀπιθάνως δὲ παρ’ αὐτῷ λέγεται ὅτι (8.3) τὸ “Ὅπισω μου ἐρχόμενος” τὸ πρόδρομον εἶναι τὸν Ἰωάννην τοῦ Χριστοῦ δηλοῖ. Ἀληθῶς γὰρ ὡς περὶ οἰκῆτης ἐστὶν προτρεχών τοῦ κυρίου.

⁷⁶ SC 157, 275–77; GCS 10, 197–98; FC 80, 222–23; Völker, *Quellen*, 76; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 127; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 99–100; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 57–58; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 190–91.

Heracleon's first comment seems to be a reasonable interpretation of John 1:26–27, and Origen seems to read Heracleon overly literally. It is not clear from Heracleon's words that he would deny that the Savior, in the sense stressed by Origen, has been present in the world since its creation, and it is unlikely that Origen would deny that the incarnated Christ is present in the world in another sense than the eternal Word. In view of the messianic expectations inherent in the questions posed to John the Baptist, and considering that these two verses mark the point in the Fourth Gospel in which Christ's presence is first expressed in the narrative present, Heracleon seems merely to be expanding on this announcement, stating that the Messiah now has arrived and is physically present among humans.⁷⁷ Heracleon's second comment, summarized by Origen, seems also to be a reasonable conclusion from John's statement that Christ is the one coming after him. We may note that Heracleon here seems to be paraphrasing the Fourth Gospel, to provide a basis for further reflections.

Origen continues to attribute short statements to Heracleon, giving each a brief evaluation:

Much too simply, he is taking (ἐξείληφεν ὅτι / 8.4) "I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandal" to mean that the Baptist thereby declares himself to be unworthy of providing even the least honorable service to the Christ. However, after this interpretation he is suggesting, and not unconvincingly (ὕποβέβληκεν τό / 8.5): "I am not important enough that he on my account would descend from his majesty and take flesh as a sandal. I cannot give account of this, and neither describe nor explain its plan." But after taking (ἐκδεξάμενος / 8.6) "the sandal" as the world in a particularly strong and ingenious way, the same Heracleon....⁷⁸

Origen's fourth reference is made with ἐξείληφεν ("he is taking"), the fifth with ὕποβέβληκεν ("he is suggesting"), and the sixth with ἐκδεξάμενος ("taking"). Preuschen and Völker present all three as quotations. Foerster presents the fourth and fifth as quotations, but renders the sixth in plain text. Blanc presents only the fifth one as a quotation, and Heine does not use quotation marks for any of them. Pettipiece italicizes the fourth, presents the fifth as a quotation, and presents the sixth in plain text. Castellano presents the fourth

⁷⁷ On this point, I agree with Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 239.

⁷⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/198–99 (SC 157, 276.28–278.39; Brooke's fragment 8, part 2): Πολὺ δὲ ἀπλούστερον τὸ "Οὐκ εἰμὶ ἄξιος, ἵνα λύσω αὐτοῦ τὸν ἱμάντα τοῦ ὑποδήματος" ἐξείληφεν ὅτι (8.4) οὐδὲ τῆς ἀτιμοτάτης ὑπηρεσίας τῆς πρὸς τὸν Χριστὸν ἄξιος εἶναι διὰ τούτων ὁ βαπτιστὴς ὁμολογεῖ. Πλὴν μετὰ ταύτην τὴν ἐκδοχὴν οὐκ ἀπιθάνως ὕποβέβληκεν τό· (8.5) Οὐκ εἰμὶ ἐγὼ ἱκανός, ἵνα δι' ἐμὲ κατέλθῃ ἀπὸ μεγέθους καὶ σάρκα λάβῃ ὡς ὑπόδημα, περὶ ἧς ἐγὼ λόγον ἀποδοῦναι οὐ δύναμαι οὐδὲ διηγῆσθαι ἢ ἐπιλύσαι τὴν περὶ αὐτῆς οἰκονομίαν. Ἀδρότερον δὲ καὶ μεγαλοφυέστερον ὁ αὐτὸς Ἡρακλέων κόσμον τὸ ὑπόδημα ἐκδεξάμενος (8.6)....

and fifth as quotations, and does not emphasize the sixth in any way. Wucherpfennig presents the first two as quotations and the sixth in italics.⁷⁹

	8.4 ἐξείληφεν ὅτι	8.5 ὑποβέβληκεν τό	8.6 ἐκδεξάμενος
Blanc	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Quotation	Plain text
Castellano	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Wucherpfennig	Quotation	Quotation	Italics
Berglund	Summary	Quotation	Paraphrase

The fourth reference is made with the verb ἐκλαμβάνω, which in this context means to understand something in a certain sense. The verb suggests some interpretation on Origen's part, but the clear reference to John the Baptist's remark in John 1:27 anchors the remark to a specific part of the Fourth Gospel. The attributed statement is preceded by ὅτι, which according to our criteria means that it appears in indirect speech, and the grammar neither indicates nor precludes a shift to direct speech. As this reference appears unsupported by any verbatim quotation or summary, it is more likely to be a summary than an explanatory paraphrase.

The fifth reference is made with ὑποβάλλω ("bring in," "put forward," or "suggest"), and could refer either to what happens in the text or what Origen infers to have happened in Heracleon's thought process. The attributed statement, however, appears grammatically unconnected to the surrounding prose, just as a speech report in direct speech, and preceded – in lieu of quotation marks – with the definite article τό. It is expressed in the first person singular with a subject that must be identified with John the Baptist, and may therefore be characterized as a paraphrase of the Fourth Gospel – a form in which Heracleon did write. The fifth attributed statement will therefore be categorized as a verbatim quotation.

The sixth reference is made with ἐκδέχομαι ("take in a certain sense"), a synonym to the previous ἐκλαμβάνω. The verb suggests a measure of interpretation and, since it seems to repeat Origen's reading of the verbatim quotation, it will be categorized as an explanatory paraphrase. It states that Heracleon has interpreted the sandal (ὑπόδημα) in the Baptist's remark as a symbolic reference to the created world (κόσμος) – apparently contradicting

⁷⁹ SC 157, 277–79; GCS 10, 148; FC 80, 223; Völker, *Quellen*, 68; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 217–18; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 100; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 58; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 191.

the previous identification of ὑπόδημα as a symbolic reference for the σάρξ (“flesh”) taken by Jesus in the incarnation.

Heracleon's remark appears to be a continued paraphrase expressing Heracleon's interpretation of the saying of John the Baptist in John 1:27. According to Origen's summary, Heracleon has already stated that John's remark expresses his humility in reference to the Christ. This statement expands on the same theme, expressing that Heracleon estimates himself to be unworthy of Christ's salvific services, and unable to explain how the eternal Word can become a human being.⁸⁰

The interaction continues, and Origen arrives to a point on which his disagreement with Heracleon is more severe:

...went on to sacrilegiously declare (ἀποφίνασθαι / 8.7) that all this must also be understood about the person John represents – for he believes (οἶεται / 8.8) that the Maker of the world, who is inferior to the Christ, admits this in these words. This is the greatest of all impieties, for the Father who sent him is the God of the living, as Jesus witnesses himself, of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and therefore the Lord of heaven and earth, because he made them. He alone is good, and greater than the one who was sent. But even if Heracleon, as we said before, in a particularly strong way also conceives (γενόηται / 8.9) the whole world as being the sandal of Jesus, I don't find it necessary to agree at all. For how, with such an interpretation, will “Heaven is my throne, and the earth my footstool” be saved as a testimony about the Father, spoken by Jesus?⁸¹

Three additional references are made here, the seventh with ἀποφίνασθαι (“declare”), the eighth with οἶεται (“he believes”), and the ninth with γενόηται (“he conceives”). Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present 8.8 as a quotation, but not the others. Blanc and Heine present all three in plain text. Pettipiece italicizes 8.7 and 8.8, but not 8.9. Castellano italicizes 8.7 and presents 8.8 as a quotation. Wucherpennig italicizes 8.8, but does not mention 8.9.⁸²

⁸⁰ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 55, asserts that Heracleon here declares his inability to understand or explain the οἰκονομία of the new revelation, but the lack of understanding refers to the constitution of Christ's physical body, not to the plan of his teachings.

⁸¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/199–201 (SC 157, 278.39–280.53; Brooke's fragment 8, part 3): ...μετέστη ἐπὶ τὸ ἀσεβέστερον ἀποφίνασθαι (8.7) ταῦτα πάντα δεῖν ἀκούεσθαι καὶ περὶ τοῦ προσώπου τοῦ διὰ τοῦ Ἰωάννου νοουμένου. Οἶεται (8.8) γὰρ τὸν δημιουργὸν τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάττωνα ὄντα τοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦτο ὁμολογεῖν διὰ τούτων τῶν λέξεων, ὅπερ ἐστὶν πάντων ἀσεβέστατον. Ὁ γὰρ πέμψας αὐτὸν πατὴρ, ὁ τῶν ζώντων θεός, ὡς αὐτὸς Ἰησοῦς μαρτυρεῖ, τοῦ Ἀβραὰμ καὶ τοῦ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ τοῦ Ἰακώβ, ὁ διὰ τοῦτο κύριος τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅτι πεποίηκεν αὐτά, οὗτος καὶ μόνος ἀγαθὸς καὶ μείζων τοῦ πεμφθέντος. Εἰ δὲ καί, ὡς προειρήκαμεν, ἀδρότερον γενόηται (8.9) καὶ πᾶς ὁ κόσμος ὑπόδημα εἶναι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τῷ Ἡρακλέωνι, ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶμαι δεῖν συγκατατίθεσθαι. Πῶς γὰρ μετὰ τῆς τοιαύτης ἐκδοχῆς σωθήσεται τὸ “Οὐρανός μοι θρόνος, ἡ δὲ γῆ ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν μου,” μαρτυρούμενον ὡς περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς εἰρημένον ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ;

⁸² SC 157, 279; GCS 10, 148; FC 80, 223–24; Völker, *Quellen*, 68; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 218; Castellano, *Exegesis*, 100–101; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 58–59; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 191–92.

	8.7 ἀποφίνασθαι	8.8 οἶεται	8.9 νενόηται
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Völker	Plain text	Quotation	–
Foerster	Plain text	Quotation	–
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Plain text
Castellano	Italics	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	Plain text	Italics	–
Berglund	Summary	Assertion	Paraphrase

The verb ἀποφαίνω (“display,” “demonstrate,” or “declare”), which is used in Reference 8.7, is not a *verbum dicendi*. By referring to Heracleon’s text on a slightly higher level, speaking of what he does in the text rather than what he writes, it fits best when introducing a summary. The attributed statement appears in indirect speech, using an accusative-with-infinitive construction, and does not appear to be supported by any other attributed statement. It is therefore categorized as a summary.

The verb οἶμαι (“think” or “believe”), which is used in Reference 8.8, clearly refers to what is in Heracleon’s mind rather than in his writing. The attributed statement that the Maker of the world, through his prophet John the Baptist, in John 1:27 is admitting his inferiority to the Christ, appears in indirect speech using an accusative-with-infinitive construction. The preposition γάρ (“for”) expresses a connection to the previous summary. However, rather than to use the summary to interpret this new claim, Origen uses the new claim to motivate why the previous summary is sacrilegious. The eighth attributed statement is therefore a mere assertion with no claimed basis in Heracleon’s writing.⁸³

The verb νοέω (“consider,” “apprehend,” or “conceive”), which is used in Reference 8.9, also refers to Heracleon’s thoughts rather than his words. This reference may be considered synonymous to the previous claim that Heracleon is ἐκδεξάμενος (“taking”) the sandal as a metaphor for the world.⁸⁴ As the above claim, this reference is categorized as an explanatory paraphrase.

If we move Origen’s assertion that Heracleon views John as a metaphor for the Maker to one side, we are left with the summarized comment that the unworthiness, expressed in Summary 8.4, to provide the Savior with even the lowliest service, should also be applied to the person represented by John. It

⁸³ Pace de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 84–85; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 117, who both assert that Heracleon identifies the Baptist with the Maker.

⁸⁴ The same idea is referenced a paragraph further down, in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/202 (SC 157, 280.56), but Heracleon is not named, and the reference does not add anything to the information given in Paraphrase 8.9,

is, however, unknown whom, if not the Maker, Heracleon believes to be represented by John in this sense. Based on Heracleon's established use of Matthew 11:7–15, he could be referring specifically to the prophet Elijah, but also to the more general idea of a Christian prophet or preacher.

H. Passage 9: The Location of the Questioning (John 1:28)

After the conclusion of Origen's previous interaction with Heracleon, the commentary continues with the lemma of John 1:28, "This took place in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing." Still having Heracleon's writing readily available, Origen starts to argue that even though "Bethany" is the initial reading,⁸⁵ the place intended must be "Bethabara."

We are not unaware that "This took place in Bethany" is found in nearly all the copies, and this seems also to have been the case even earlier – and in Heracleon, we have indeed read (ἀνέγνωμεν / 9.1) "in Bethany (Βηθανία)" – but we have been convinced that it is necessary to read not "in Bethany" but "in Bethabara," after having been to the places to investigate the footsteps of Jesus and his disciples, and of the prophets.⁸⁶

Since there is only one word attributed to Heracleon here, our analysis will be brief. Preuschen and Völker both present it as a quotation, this time combining their usual wide letter spacing with quotation marks, but Foerster uses plain text. Blanc, Heine, Pettipiece, and Wucherpfennig all use quotation marks, but Castellano merely italicizes the word.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ The seemingly initial reading Βηθανία occurs in P66 P75 \aleph^a A B C* H^c L M N W^{sup} Δ Θ 118 124, while Origen's Βηθαβαρά and similar readings occur in \aleph^c C^c K T Π U Λ 083 f^{a,13} 33. We may note, with Bauer, *Johannesevangelium*, 32–33, that Origen is arguing for the correct geographical information, not against Βηθανία as the initial reading, as presumed by Barrett, *John*, 175; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 20–21; John F. McHugh, *John 1–4: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, ICC (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 144.

⁸⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40/204 (SC 157, 284.1–286.4; Brooke's fragment 9): Ὅτι μὲν σχεδὸν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις κεῖται. "Ταῦτα ἐν Βηθανία ἐγένετο" οὐκ ἀγνοοῦμεν, καὶ ἔοικεν τοῦτο καὶ ἔτι πρότερον γεγονέναι· καὶ παρὰ Ἡρακλέωνι γοῦν "Βηθανίαν" ἀνέγνωμεν (9.1). Ἐπείσθημεν δὲ μὴ δεῖν "Βηθανία" ἀναγινώσκειν, ἀλλὰ "Βηθαβαρά," γενόμενοι ἐν τοῖς τοποῖς ἐπὶ ἱστορίαν τῶν ἰχνῶν Ἰησοῦ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν προφητῶν.

⁸⁷ SC 157, 287; GCS 10, 149; FC 80, 224; Völker, *Quellen*, 68; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 218; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 101; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 63; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 192.

	9.1 ἀνέγνωμεν
Blanc	Quotation
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Heine	Quotation
Foerster	Plain text
Castellano	Italics
Pettipiece	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation

Since Origen, with the word choice ἀνέγνωμεν (“we have read”) refers to what he has read in Heracleon’s writing, this is a verbatim quotation, albeit consisting of only one word.⁸⁸ It is safe to conclude that Heracleon’s copy of the Fourth Gospel had Βηθανία (“in Bethany”) here, as had the majority of manuscripts available to Origen.⁸⁹

I. Passage 10: The Less-than-Perfect Lamb of God (John 1:29)

Origen’s last extant interaction with Heracleon regarding the testimony of John the Baptist regards his saying, in John 1:29: ἴδε ὁ ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ αἴρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου. (“Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”). Origen embarks on an extended examination of this verse. He notes that there are five different kinds of sacrificial animals prescribed in the Jewish scriptures – bulls, sheep, goats, turtledoves, and pigeons – and posits that while the sacrificial lambs apparently are symbols for Christ, the other sacrifices may be images for the blood of the holy martyrs. He makes a distinction between the humanity of Christ, which – he claims – is the lamb led away to be sacrificed, and his divinity, which is the high priest who leads the

⁸⁸ The case is similar to Athenaeus’s lexical references to words used by Herodotus discussed in Lenfant, “Les ‘fragments’ d’Hérodote dans les *Deipnosophistes*,” 46–47. There is no ground on which to argue that Heracleon “claims” that the place name is Bethany, as is done by Tuckett, “Principles of Gnostic Exegesis,” 285 n. 21, as Origen merely claims that he uses the word.

⁸⁹ That at least one of the manuscripts available to Origen had the reading Βηθαβαρᾶ is a reasonable assumption, since Origen speaks of “nearly all” of the copies. *Pace* Raymond G. Clapp, “A Study of the Place-Names Gergesa and Bethabara,” *JBL* 26.1 (1907): 62–83, here 75–76, who wants to make this note by Origen the origin of the alternative reading.

lamb. And he remarks that the word κόσμος (“world”) in this verse cannot refer exclusively to the Christians, but must include all of humanity.⁹⁰

At the end of this exposition – and at the end of the extant portion of the sixth book of his *Commentary* – Origen interacts with the interpretation of Heracleon:

Once again Heracleon, having reached this passage, without any evidence or presentation of witnesses declares (ἀποφαίνεται ὅτι / 10.1) that John says “the lamb of God” (John 1:29a) as a prophet, but “the one who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29b) as something more than a prophet. He believes (οἶεται / 10.2) that the former is said about his body, but the latter about the one who is in the body, since the lamb is a less than perfect [member] of the species of sheep, and so is also the body in comparison to the one inhabiting it. “But if he wanted to testify to the perfection of the body,” he says (φησί / 10.3), “he would have spoken of a ram about to be sacrificed.” After the extended examination above, I do not think it is necessary to take up the subject again and exert myself on what Heracleon so carelessly has stated. Only one thing must be noted: Just as the world could barely contain him who had emptied himself, so it needed a lamb, not a ram, for its sin to be taken away.⁹¹

Three statements are attributed to Heracleon in this passage, the first with ἀποφαίνεται (“he declares”), the second with οἶεται (“he believes”), and the third with φησί (“he says”). Blanc and Heine use plain text for all three, but Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three as quotations. Pettipiece italicizes all three statements. Castellano has a closing quotation mark after the third reference, which suggests that he deems the third attributed statement to be a quotation, even though the opening quotation mark is missing. Wucherpennig presents the first and third as quotations, but merely italicizes the second.⁹²

⁹⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.51/264–59/305.

⁹¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.60/306–7 (SC 157, 364.56–366.16; Brooke’s fragment 10): Πάλιν ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ὁ Ἡρακλέων γεγόμενος χωρὶς πάσης κατασκευῆς καὶ παραθέσεως μαρτυριῶν ἀποφαίνεται ὅτι (10.1) τὸ μὲν “Ἀμνὸς τοῦ θεοῦ” ὡς προφήτης φησὶν ὁ Ἰωάννης, τὸ δὲ “Ὁ αἵρων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν τοῦ κόσμου” ὡς περισσότερον προφήτου. Καὶ οἶεται (10.2) τὸ μὲν πρότερον περὶ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ λέγεσθαι, τὸ δὲ δεύτερον περὶ τοῦ ἐν τῷ σώματι, τῷ τὸν ἁμνὸν ἀτελὴ εἶναι ἐν τῷ τῶν προβάτων γένει, οὕτω δὲ καὶ τὸ σῶμα παραθέσει τοῦ ἐνοικούντος αὐτῷ. Τὸ δὲ τέλειον εἰ ἐβούλετο, φησί, (10.3) τῷ σώματι μαρτυρῆσαι, κριὸν εἶπεν ἂν τὸ μέλλον θύεσθαι. Οὐχ ἡγοῦμαι δὲ εἶναι ἀναγκαῖον μετὰ τηλικαύτας γεγεννημένας ἐξετάσεις τευτάζειν περὶ τὸν τόπον, ἀγωνιζομένους πρὸς τὰ εὐτελῶς ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἡρακλέωνος εἰρημένα. Μόνον δὲ τοῦτο ἐπισημειώτεον, ὅτι ὥσπερ μόγις ἐχώρησεν ὁ κόσμος τὸν κενώσαντα αὐτόν, οὕτως ἁμνοῦ καὶ οὐ κριοῦ ἐδεήθη, ἵνα ἀρθῇ αὐτοῦ ἡ ἁμαρτία.

⁹² SC 157, 365–67; GCS 10, 168–69; FC 80, 252; Völker, *Quellen*, 68; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 218; Castellano, *Exégesis*, 153; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 192.

	10.1 ἀποφαίνεται ὅτι	10.2 οἶεται	10.3 φησί
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Castellano	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation (?)
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Italics	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Paraphrase	Quotation

The first reference is made with the verb ἀποφαίνω (“declare”). This is not strictly a *verbum dicendi*, but has previously been used in references categorized as summaries.⁹³ The attributed statement is preceded by ὅτι (“that”), and there is nothing in the grammar that necessitates direct speech. Using the working hypotheses presented in chapter 3,⁹⁴ this study presumes that indirect speech is used, and concludes that Reference 10.1 is a summary. The second reference is made with the clearly interpretive οἶομαι (“think,” “believe”). It refers to the thought process behind Heracleon’s interpretation and is likely to be Origen’s inference based on Heracleon’s earlier distinction, in Summary 5.5 and Quotation 5.6, between John himself and what is around John, which Origen here extends to Jesus. The statement is therefore taken to be an explanatory paraphrase. The third reference is made with a single *verbum dicendi* and presented in direct speech. It is thereby presented as a verbatim quotation.

Heracleon argues, we can conclude from the verbatim quotation, that the evangelist’s choice to refer to an ἀμνός (“lamb”) – rather than to a ram or a ewe – must be significant. Judging from the summary, he also made a distinction between the identification of Jesus as the lamb of God on the one hand, and the notion that he will take away the sin of the world on the other, the latter of which reveals, in Heracleon’s view, an insight that goes beyond what can be expected of a (Jewish) prophet. The remark seems to build not only on the Fourth Gospel, but on the remark by Jesus, narrated in Matt 11:9 and Luke 7:26, that John is something more than a prophet.⁹⁵ Michel R. Desjardins argues that Heracleon makes this distinction in order to distinguish between Christ’s body and his inner self – that Paraphrase 10.2 is the reason for the statement summarized in Summary 10.1.⁹⁶ Desjardins appears to correctly de-

⁹³ See the analyses of references 5.2, 5.14, and 8.7 above.

⁹⁴ See page 100.

⁹⁵ Massaux, *Influence*, 428, argues that Heracleon here is using Matt 11:9 to interpret John 1:29.

⁹⁶ Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, 53.

scribe what Origen is claiming, but the reason outlined in the paraphrase is likely to be inferred by Origen rather than expressly stated by Heracleon.

This chapter has revealed several cases where the Matthean tradition on the identity of John the Baptist, which we know from Matt 11:7–15, can be used as an interpretive key to Heracleon's reasoning. Heracleon's intriguing omission of the definite article of ὁ προφήτης ("the prophet") in Quotation 4.1 may be explained by influence from Matt 11:9, where the word is used without a definite article. The remark on John's clothing in Matt 11:8 may be our best available clue to Heracleon's curious distinction between John himself and what is "around John" in Quotation 5.6. Taken in concert with the description in Matt 3:4a, what is "around John" could be the camel skin and leather belt that physically surround him, which may be interpreted as symbols of his identity as a prophet. Unless Origen is misleading us in Summary 5.5 and Paraphrase 5.11, Heracleon also uses Jesus's claim in Matt 11:11 that no one born of a woman is greater than John to argue that John is greater than all previous prophets. Summary 10.1 seems also to be based on Matt 11:9.

Although it cannot be said that all of Heracleon's interpretations in this chapter have been perfectly understandable, we have been able to come quite far in reconstructing his chain of reasoning without using Irenaeus's descriptions. Heracleon's interpretations seem, indeed, to be based not on heterodox theology, but on interaction with a Matthean parallel. The theology of the heterodox and "those who bring in the natures" seems to be something Origen expects to find in Heracleon's interpretations, rather than something Heracleon has expressed, and Heracleon seems to belong to neither of these two categories.

Chapter 6

Passover in Jerusalem

Origen's references to Heracleon in Book 10 of his *Commentary on the Gospel of John* revolve around John 2:12–20, where Jesus visits the temple at the time of Passover, makes a whip out of cords, and drives out the merchants from the temple court. The first page of this volume has been lost and replaced with a long quotation covering all of the text covered in book 10, but in what remains of the introduction, Origen states explicitly that his point of departure is John 2:12, in which Jesus and his disciples are said to have spent a few days in Capernaum with his mother and his brothers. That this verse is quoted within the main text rather than as a lemma is a rare exception from his ordinary form. Most probably, this lemma was placed before his introduction to Book 10, which would explain why he felt the need to re-quote the verse before proceeding into his exposition.

A. Passages 11–12: Visiting Capernaum (John 2:12–13a)

Origen notes that the wedding at Cana and the short stay in Capernaum are narrated in disagreement with the Synoptics, where Jesus, after being baptized by John, travels out in the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. The difference prompts him to reflect on the relationship between spiritual and historical truth in the Gospels. Accepting that the evangelists occasionally include some information that is not, strictly speaking, historically accurate, Origen argues that they nevertheless aimed to present an accurate depiction (εἰκῶν ιστορική) of historical events (πράγματα), even though they sometimes waived this aim in order to accurately present the central Christian message.¹ While there are apparent historical disagreements between the Gospels, he is convinced that the right interpretation will reveal them to be in agreement on the deeper, spiritual level.²

At the end of Origen's exposition of John 2:12, there is an extended interaction with Heracleon, beginning with the following presentation:

¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.1/3–5/20. For further analysis of this reflection, see Berglund, "Understanding Origen," 207–14.

² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.6/23–27.

Heracleon, however, when he interprets “After this, he went down to Capernaum” says (φησί / 11.1) that it once again reveals a beginning of a new direction (οικονομία), since “went down” (John 2:12) is not said without reason. And he says (φησί / 11.2) that “Capernaum” signifies these outermost [parts] of the world, these material (ὕλικός) [parts] into which he had descended. And since the place was unsuitable, he says (φησίν / 11.3), “he is not said to have done or said anything there.” Had, then, our Lord not been recorded in the other Gospels as having done or said anything in Capernaum, perhaps we would have considered if his exegesis was acceptable. But now....³

Origen goes on to summarize an extensive number of gospel passages in which actions and utterances of Jesus are connected to the town of Capernaum, including Jesus’s preaching of the kingdom (Matt 4:12–17), the man with the unclean spirit (Mark 1:21–27), and Peter’s febrile mother-in-law (Luke 4:38). He concludes:

We have presented all this about what has been said and done by the Savior in Capernaum to refute the exegesis of Heracleon, who says (λέγοντος / 11.4): “Therefore, he is not said to have done or said anything there.” Let him either grant that there are two meanings of “Capernaum,” present and argue which ones they are, or – if he is not able to do this – let him refrain from saying that the Savior has visited any place fruitlessly!⁴

Origen presents this evidence not only to refute Heracleon’s interpretation, but also to substantiate his own argument that Capernaum, which etymologically means ἀγρός παρακλησίσεως (“field of exhortation”), primarily is a place for exhortations to righteous action, in some contrast to the joyful celebration at Cana.⁵

Four statements are attributed to Heracleon in this passage, all four with a single *verbum dicendi* each, namely φησί (“he says”) and λέγοντος (“who says”). Blanc presents all four in plain text. Preuschen quotes all four, but Völker and Foerster leave out the fourth one. Heine presents the fourth one within quotation marks, the others without. Pettipiece presents the first three

³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.11/48–49 (SC 157, 414.1–416.11; Brooke’s fragment 11): Ὁ μέντοι γε Ἡρακλέων τὸ “Μετὰ τοῦτο κατέβη εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ αὐτὸς” διηγούμενος ἄλλης πάλιν οἰκονομίας ἀρχὴν φησι (11.1) δηλοῦσθαι, οὐκ ἀργῶς τοῦ “Κατέ<βη>” εἰρημένον· καὶ φησι (11.2) τὴν Καφαρναοὺμ σημαίνειν ταῦτα τὰ ἔσχατα τοῦ κόσμου, ταῦτα τὰ ὑλικά εἰς ἃ κατήλθεν· καὶ διὰ τὸ ἀνοίκειον, φησίν, (11.3) εἶναι τὸν τόπον οὐδὲ πεποικῶς τι λέγεται ἐν αὐτῇ ἢ λελαληκῶς. Εἰ μὲν οὖν μηδὲ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς εὐαγγελίοις πεποικῶς τι ἢ λελαληκῶς ἐν τῇ Καφαρναοὺμ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν ἀνεγέγραπτο, τάχα ἂν ἐδιστάξαμεν περὶ τοῦ παραδέξασθαι αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐρμηνείαν. Νυνὶ δὲ...

⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.11/58–59 (SC 157, 418.55–420.62; Brooke’s fragment 11): Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα περὶ τῶν ἐν Καφαρναοὺμ τῷ σωτῆρι εἰρημένων καὶ πεπραγμένων παρεστήσαμεν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐλέγχειν τὴν Ἡρακλέωνος ἐρμηνείαν λέγοντος· (11.4) Διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲ πεποικῶς τι λέγεται ἐν αὐτῇ ἢ λελαληκῶς. Ἡ γὰρ δύο ἐπινοίας διδόντω καὶ αὐτὸς τῆς Καφαρναοὺμ καὶ παριστάτω καὶ πεισάτω ποίας· ἢ τοῦτο ποιῆσαι μὴ δυνάμενος ἀπιστάσθω τοῦ λέγειν τὸν σωτῆρα μάρτην τινὶ τόπῳ ἐπιδεδημηκέναι.

⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.8/37–38, 10.9/42, 10.12/62–66. Cf. Blanc, SC 157, 406 n. 1; Heine, FC 80, 264 n. 63.

in italics, but leaves out the fourth. Wucherpennig's presentation is inconsistent. At one point, he italicizes the three first references; at other points, he identifies the first as a summary and treats the second and third as verbatim quotations. Pagels quotes from the first two as if directly from Heracleon.⁶ Bastit, whose trust in Origen's presentation is especially pronounced, construes even the claim that Jesus's visit was fruitless, which appears in Origen's response, as a verbatim quotation from Heracleon.⁷

	11.1 φησί	11.2 φησί	11.3 φησὶν	11.4 λέγοντος
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	–
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	–
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	–
Wucherpennig	Summary	Quotation	Quotation	–
Pagels	Quotation	Quotation	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Quotation	Quotation

The first two attributed statements are presented in indirect speech using accusative and infinitive, but the third and fourth appear in direct speech. In accordance with the criteria presented in chapter 3, the first and second references are identified as summaries, while the third and fourth are categorized as verbatim quotations. Since the φησὶν appears several words into the third attributed statement, it is unclear where this quotation begins. Where only two or three words precede the attribution formula of a verbatim quotation, we regularly assume Origen to be quoting verbatim from the beginning of the sentence, but as the number of prefixed words increase, the probability that the verbatim quotation is preceded by a summary or paraphrase grows. Since virtually the same quotation reappears in the fourth attributed statement, in which the *verbum dicendi* is placed strictly before the quotation, this case is unusually clear: The sentence quoted in the fourth reference is a whole sentence, which purportedly appeared in Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*; the words before φησὶν in the third statement are a short explanatory paraphrase connecting Heracleon's διὰ τοῦτο ("therefore") to a specific reason, inferred by Origen, namely that τὸ ἀνοικεῖον εἶναι τὸν τόπον ("the place was foreign"). This causal connection seems, therefore, to be inferred by Origen rather than expressed by Heracleon.

⁶ SC 157, 415–19; GCS 10, 180–81; FC 80, 266–68; Völker, *Quellen*, 68–69; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 218–19; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 68; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 52, 67, 85; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 51, 60–64, 94.

⁷ Bastit, "Forme et méthode," 153 n. 19.

According to Summary 11.1, Heracleon takes note of the word choice κατέβη (“went down”) and states that it is not chosen without a reason. Instead of simply noting that Capernaum is located at a lower physical elevation than Jerusalem, he seems to have sought a metaphorical interpretation. Based on Summary 11.2, he seems to read this travel itinerary as a symbolic expression of the journey of the eternal Word from the spiritual realm, in immediate proximity of the Father, into the lower, material realm, which – in this context – may indeed be viewed as a remote periphery of the world.

The Greek word οἰκονομία (here: “direction”) in Summary 11.1 can have a number of connotations in contexts of private economy, state politics, or literature. Even if its primary use regarded the care of a household (οἶκος), already Plato is using it to refer to kings and rulers.⁸ In other contexts, Origen uses it to denote the overall plan of a piece of writing, the divine order in the created world, or the divine plan of salvation that is behind God’s actions in history. In some cases, Origen makes a clear distinction between God’s unchangeable οὐσία (“nature”) and his οἰκονομία (“dispensation”) in which he turns toward humans.⁹ Origen is not alone in using the word in connection to Jesus’s life and death; this usage is established already in the second century.¹⁰ It is not inconceivable that Heracleon would use the term in a similar way – if this is Heracleon’s word choice rather than Origen’s – to denote a new phase in God’s plan for humanity, or possibly the arrival of a different ruler than Caesar. In the context of interpreting John 2:12 as referring to Christ’s arrival into the material world, such an understanding of Origen’s summary is likely. Heracleon seems, therefore, to have referred to Christ’s arrival as a sign of the beginning of a new order of things in the global household, the beginning of a new era for humankind.¹¹

Origen presumes that Heracleon, in Quotation 11.4, is arguing that Capernaum is a foreign place in which the Gospels describe no words or deeds by Jesus. This is likely to be a misunderstanding of Heracleon’s argument. In his response, Origen is able to point to a number of passages in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke in which Jesus’s activities are located at Capernaum. Con-

⁸ Gerhard Richter, *Oikonomia: Der Gebrauch des Wortes Oikonomia im Neuen Testament, bei den Kirchenvätern und in der theologischen Literatur bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*. Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte 90 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005), 7–9.

⁹ Hendrik Simon Benjamins, “*Oikonomia* bei Origenes: Schrift und Heilsplan,” in *Origeniana sexta*, eds. Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec, BETL 118 (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 327–31; Richter, *Oikonomia*, 192–201, 214.

¹⁰ Benjamins, “*Oikonomia* bei Origenes,” 329 n. 10, points especially to Justin, *Dial.* 30.3, 31.3, 45.4, 67.7, 87.5, 103.3, and 120.1.

¹¹ This notion is similar to the model of Hans Conzelmann, *Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas*, 7th ed., Beiträge zur historischen Theologie 17 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1993), 9, in which the birth of Jesus begins the middle of three consecutive global eras in Lukan theology, the time of the work of Jesus.

sidering that Heracleon regularly refers to material from Matthew and, possibly, Luke,¹² it appears improbable that Heracleon would have been ignorant of the passages Origen enumerates. In addition, the son of a royal official that Jesus heals in John 4:43–54, a passage we know that Heracleon knew,¹³ was located in Capernaum. More likely, Heracleon's comment refers solely to what is said in John 2:12. The διὰ τοῦτο ("therefore") in the quoted sentence may refer to the notion that the evangelist has refrained from recounting any words or deeds of Jesus in this verse in order not to draw the readers' attention from the symbolic significance behind the travel itinerary.

The half-verse notice that ἔγγυς ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων ("the Passover of the Jews was near") in John 2:13a is the subject of its own exposition in Origen's *Commentary*. Origen points out that the evangelist presents it as a festival of the Jews, while Exodus (12:1, 26–27, 43, 48) rather consistently speaks of "the Passover of the Lord" – in a similar fashion to how it (cf. Exod 8:16–19, 32:7) speaks of the Israelite people as "the Lord's" when they are righteous, and "Moses's" when they sin. He proposes that there is a distinction between the human Passover, with its customary commercial trade in sacrificial animals, and the divine Passover that is to be celebrated in spirit and in truth – that the Jewish festivals are shadows of things to come. As an argument for his view, he presents John's application of the prohibition against breaking the bones of the paschal lamb (Exod 12:10 LXX, 12:46) to Jesus (John 19:36). Furthermore, based on the tradition that the paschal lamb was cooked over fire and then eaten, he urges his readers to eat the Word – that is the scriptures – cooked by the process of spiritual interpretation, beginning with the most central elements and proceeding with more peripheral passages. Such nourishment, he argues, should last them until the unleavened bread of the Passover gives way to the manna, the food of angels. For, Origen insists, what is corporeal (σωματικός) in the text must be interpreted as a symbol for something spiritual (πνευματικός), not of something else that is corporeal, and what is historical (ἱστορικός) in the text must be interpreted as a symbol of something intelligible (νοητός), not of something historical.¹⁴

¹² Some of Heracleon's examples of metaphorical children in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/215 seem to be taken from Matthew. In Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.32/200–202, Heracleon draws a parallel to the parable of the five foolish bridesmaids, which we know from Matt 25:1–13. In Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/115, Heracleon mentions that John the Baptist is from the Levite tribe, a fact that is not mentioned in the Fourth Gospel, but may be taken from Luke 1:5. Cf. also Clement of Alexandria, *Ecl.* 25.1; *Strom.* 4.9. For a more thorough analysis of Heracleon's use of other early Christian writings in his interpretations of the Gospel of John, see Berglund, "Literary Criticism in Early Christianity." Cf. also the brief remark that Heracleon was aware of the Synoptic parallels in Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 64–65.

¹³ See chapter 9.

¹⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.13/67–19/116.

At the end of this exposition, Origen offers a brief and negative interaction with Heracleon's work:

Heracleon, however: "This," he says (φησίν / 12.1), "is the great festival. It symbolized the passion of the Savior, when the lamb was not only slaughtered, but also offered recreation by being eaten: when it was sacrificed, it signified the Savior's passion in this world; when it was eaten, it signified the recreation at the wedding banquet." We have presented his wording (αὐτοῦ τὴν λέξιν) so that we, seeing how feebly, randomly, and without arguments the man goes about in such important matters, may despise him all the more.¹⁵

The one statement attributed to Heracleon in this passage is presented as a quotation by Blanc, Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, Heine, Pettipiece, and Wucherpennig. Pagels only quotes individual words from this passage, so it is not clear whether she considers the attributed statement to be a quotation.¹⁶

	12.1 φησίν
Blanc	Quotation
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Quotation
Pettipiece	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation
Pagels	–
Berglund	Quotation

This short interaction consists of a brief introduction, a verbatim quotation, and an unusually vehement response. The reference is made by a single φησίν, placed after the first word of the quoted sentence, which is presented in direct speech – a clear example of what we categorize as a verbatim quotation. The quotation is clearly delimited, since the next sentence refers to Heracleon in the third person.

Rather similarly to Origen, Heracleon seems to have made a symbolic interpretation of the Jewish Passover, going beyond the mere mentioning of the

¹⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.19/117–18 (SC 157, 452.40–48; Brooke's fragment 12): Ὁ μέντοι γε Ἡρακλέων· Ἀὐτῇ, φησίν, (12.1) ἡ μεγάλη ἐορτὴ· τοῦ γὰρ πάθους τοῦ σωτῆρος τύπος ἦν, ὅτε οὐ μόνον ἀνηρέϊτο τὸ πρόβατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνάπαυσιν παρεῖχεν ἐσθιόμενον, καὶ θυόμενον <μὲν> τὸ πάθος τοῦ σωτῆρος τὸ ἐν κόσμῳ ἐσήμαινεν, ἐσθιόμενον δὲ τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν τὴν ἐν γάμῳ." Παρεθέμεθα δὲ αὐτοῦ τὴν λέξιν, ἵνα τὸ ὡς ἐν τηλικούτοις ἀναστρέφειν τὸν ἄνδρα παρερριμμένως καὶ ὕδαρῳ μετὰ μηδενὸς κατασκευαστικοῦ θεωρήσαντες μᾶλλον αὐτοῦ καταφρονήσωμεν.

¹⁶ SC 157, 453; GCS 10, 190–91; FC 80, 280–81; Völker, *Quellen*, 69; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 219; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 70; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 51; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 75–76, 95–96.

festival in John 2:13a to descriptions, presumably in the Old Testament, of the paschal lamb and the Passover meal. The slaughtering of the lamb he takes as a symbol of Christ's passion, and its consumption as a symbol of the heavenly banquet in the kingdom of God (Cf. Matt 22:1–14, 25:1–13; Luke 12:36; Rev 19:6–9). The ease by which this interpretation is done is reminiscent of Augustine's reflection that, when the Jews kill the sheep and eat the Passover, "nothing else is indicated but the very Christ in which they refuse to believe."¹⁷ The interpretation seems not to presume a heterodox perspective.¹⁸

Given that Origen himself makes similarly symbolic interpretations of this short remark, his unusually negative stance toward Heracleon's comment is surprising. His insistence that what is corporeal should be interpreted as symbols of something spiritual, and what is historical as something intelligible, might indicate that he finds Heracleon's symbolic interpretation too concrete, referring, as it does, to the historical event of Christ's passion and the eschatological event of the heavenly banquet. Probably more important, however, is Heracleon's brief way of presenting his interpretation, without a lengthy argument presenting scriptural evidence for his claim. Origen, with his extended preceding exposition, is visibly upset that Heracleon can get away with merely stating his conclusion.

B. Passages 13–14: Merchants in the Temple Court (John 2:13b–17)

When we next encounter Heracleon, Origen has made a detour through all three of the Synoptic Gospels to refute an, in his view, overly literal interpretation of Jesus's entrance into Jerusalem. Returning to John's second chapter, he turns to Heracleon's interpretation of Jesus's ascent to Jerusalem (John 2:13b) and encounter with the merchants in the temple court (John 2:14–17). This extensive interaction will be analyzed paragraph by paragraph:

That is our [view], but let us also look at that of Heracleon, who says (φησί / 13.1) that the climb up to Jerusalem (Ἱεροσόλυμα) signifies the Lord's ascent from material things (ἀπὸ τῶν ὕλικῶν) to the place of the soul (εἰς τὸν ψυχικὸν τόπον), which is an image of [the heavenly] Jerusalem (Ἱερουσαλήμ). He thinks that (οἶεται / 13.2) "He found in the temple (ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ)" (John 2:14), and not "in the [temple court (πρόναῳ)]," has been stated in order that not only the called ones (τὴν κλήσιν) – the ones without spirit – should be thought

¹⁷ Augustine, *Serm.* 202.3. ET: Edmund Hill: Augustine, *Sermons 184–229Z: On the Liturgical Seasons*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Edmund Hill, The Works of Saint Augustine III/6 (New Rochelle: New City Press, 1993), 93.

¹⁸ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 73–77, suggests that Heracleon's reflection is connected to the second-century conflict on when Christians should celebrate Easter, and points out a parallel in the writings of Melito of Sardis.

to receive help from the Lord. For he believes (ἡγεῖται / 13.3) that the holiest of the holy ones is the temple, into which only the high priest enters – I think he is saying (οἶομαι αὐτὸν λέγειν) that the spiritual ones go there – and that those of the temple court (τὰ δὲ τοῦ προνάου), where also the Levites [go], are a symbol of the animated ones, who are found in a salvation outside of the Fullness.¹⁹

This paragraph has a difficult text-critical problem in the third sentence. The manuscript (Codex Monacensis, fol. 191v) has either τ'ανω or τ'αγω, but the simple reading τῷ ἄνω (“in the above”) is hardly understandable in the context. Preuschen emends the text to τῷ ναῷ (“in the shrine”). This is an attractive emendation, since it reflects a simple transposition of two letters, but it is impossible in this context, where the misunderstanding that only the outsiders are included necessitates a term that refers to an outer area. Blanc’s suggestion προνάω (“in the temple court”), which is the one quoted above, is the only logical alternative.²⁰ This emendation is also supported by Origen’s response, in which the phrase τὰ τοῦ προνάου (“those of the temple court”) implies that he has read προνάω in Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata*.

Three references to Heracleon are made in this paragraph, one with φησί (“he says”), one with οἶεται (“he thinks”), and one with ἡγεῖται (“he believes”). All three are presented in plain text by Blanc and Heine, as quotations by Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster, and in italics by Pettipiece. Wucherpfennig presents the first reference as a quotation, but the second and third ones in italics. Pagels does not quote this paragraph, but provides several explanatory paraphrases of it.²¹

¹⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.33/210–11 (SC 157, 508.37–510.11; The first third of Brooke’s fragment 13): Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τὰ ἡμέτερα. Ἰδωμεν δὲ καὶ τὰ Ἡρακλέωνος, ὅς φησι (13.1) τὴν <εἰς> Ἱεροσόλυμα ἄνοδον σημαίνειν τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑλικῶν εἰς τὸν ψυχικὸν τόπον, τυγχάνοντα εἰκόνα τῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἀνάβασιν τοῦ κυρίου. Τὸ δὲ “Εὗρεν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ” καὶ οὐχὶ “προνάω,” οἶεται (13.2) εἰρῆσθαι ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ τὴν κλησιν μόνην νοηθῆναι τὴν χωρὶς πνεύματος βοηθεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου· ἡγεῖται γὰρ τὰ μὲν ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων εἶναι τὸ ἱερόν, εἰς ἃ μόνος ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς εἰσῆει, ἔνθα οἶομαι αὐτὸν λέγειν τοὺς πνευματικοὺς χωρεῖν· τὰ δὲ τοῦ προνάου, ὅπου καὶ οἱ λεῦνται, σύμβολον εἶναι τῶν ἔξω τοῦ πληρώματος ψυχικῶν εὕρισκομενων ἐν σωτηρίᾳ.

²⁰ Pace Janssens, “Héracléon,” 131 n. 26, who holds that Heracleon wrote τῷ ναῷ, but intended ναός to mean temple court (“parvis”) – an otherwise unattested usage. Janssens also claims that Heracleon used ἱερόν to denote only the holy of holies, while Heracleon’s reference clearly is to the temple area as a whole. See also Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 68.

²¹ SC 157, 509–11; GCS 10, 206–7; FC 80, 302; Völker, *Quellen*, 69; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 219; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 72; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 52, 56, 67–72; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 51–52.

	13.1 φησί	13.2 οἶεται	13.3 ἡγεῖται
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Wucherpfennig	Quotation	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Paraphrase	Paraphrase

All three attributed statements are presented in indirect speech by use of accusative with infinitive. The first verb (φησί) refers to the words written by Heracleon, the second (οἶεται) and third (ἡγεῖται), rather, to the thought process behind them. According to the criteria presented in chapter 3, this difference is what constitutes the distinction between summary and explanatory paraphrase. The first reference is therefore a summary, the second and third are paraphrases.

In the summary, Origen claims that Heracleon views Jesus's ascent to Jerusalem – with the spelling Ἱεροσόλυμα – as a symbol of his ascent from material things (ἀπὸ τῶν ὑλικῶν) to the place of the soul (εἰς τὸν ψυχικὸν τόπον), which, in its turn, is a symbol of Jerusalem – this time with the spelling Ἱερουσαλήμ. This double symbolism depends on a subtle distinction between the earthly Ἱεροσόλυμα and the heavenly Ἱερουσαλήμ, that the audience is supposed to understand.²² Origen regularly varies between these two spellings – mostly determined by his source material,²³ but on occasion, with a connec-

²² Christoph Marksches, “Himmliches und irdisches Jerusalem im antiken Christentum,” in *La cité de Dieu: Die Stadt Gottes: 3. Symposium Strasbourg, Tübingen, Uppsala 19.–23. September 1998 in Tübingen*, eds. Siegfried Mittmann, Anna Maria Schwemer, and Martin Hengel, WUNT 129 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 303–50, traces how references to the heavenly and earthly Jerusalems develop in Christian literature from the first and second centuries. He remarks (303–10) that for New Testament writers such as Paul and Luke, the earthly Jerusalem is still of great interest, but in the later Christian literature, the heavenly Jerusalem takes precedence, and the earthly city mostly comes under consideration in connection to millennialist expectations of Christ's second coming. Marksches describes (323–25) how Origen, *Princ.* 2.11.2, opposes such ideas as too literal. With this shift in accentuation, Marksches argues (329–31), early Christians could maintain that Christian eschatology is to unfold according to patterns found in the Jewish literature, while distancing themselves from the Jews, avoiding the embarrassment associated to the destruction of Jerusalem, and shift their earthly orientation toward more important Greco-Roman cities.

²³ The dominance of Ἱεροσόλυμα in Origen, *Comm. Jo.*, which is about four times more common than Ἱερουσαλήμ, is easily explained by the discussion of Johannine material where this spelling is used. The use of Ἱερουσαλήμ in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.26/160–63,

tion to the distinction between an earthly and a heavenly city. In his preceding exposition of this Johannine pericope, he explains that the city to which no one on earth ascends or enters is called Ἱερουσαλήμ,²⁴ and suggests that the Jerusalem mentioned in John 2:13b may be ἡ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ (“the Jerusalem above”).²⁵ It is therefore clear from Origen’s context that he claims Heracleon to be differentiating between an earthly and a heavenly Jerusalem.²⁶

Heracleon’s interpretation of the ascent to Jerusalem indicates that he has noticed that Jesus’s miracle at Cana, where he turned water into wine, demonstrates his authority over physical reality and prompts a material response: drinking the wine. Here, Jesus ascends to Jerusalem, where his actions in the temple court demonstrate no extraordinary physical ability, but are rather intended to demonstrate his authority over religious practices and move the audience toward a response located in the soul: putting their trust in him.²⁷ Thereby, Heracleon seems to be saying, Jesus moves from a physical presence in the world to an intellectual presence in the soul. His comment that ὁ ψυχικὸς τόπος (“the place of the soul”) symbolizes the heavenly Jerusalem suggests that he views these activities in the soul as significant for a future eschatological reality represented by the New Jerusalem (cf. Rev 3:12, 21:2).

In the two paraphrases that follow, Origen claims that Heracleon interprets different parts of the Jerusalem temple as obscure references to the spiritual ones and the animated ones – both of which are included in the expression ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ (“in the temple”). Heracleon uses the expression τὰ ἁγία τῶν ἁγίων (“the holiest of the holy ones”) for the spiritual ones, Origen maintains, while τὰ τοῦ προναοῦ (“those of the temple court”) are the animated ones who are without spirit and are found in a salvation outside of the Fullness. This model fits very well with the idea, described by Irenaeus, that the animated ones come to rest in an intermediate realm, while the spiritual ones proceed to the divine realm.²⁸ Apparently, Origen has used the theology of “those who bring in the natures” in his attempt to discern the idea behind Heracleon’s words.

The paraphrases do not appear to be based on the summary that they follow, and may therefore contain some trace of the comment on which they are based. The clause ἔνθα οἶομαι αὐτὸν λέγειν τοὺς πνευματικούς χωρεῖν (“I think he is saying that the spiritual ones go there”) is undoubtedly added by Origen as an interpretive comment. The same is probably true for the expla-

32/203–6, is determined by the discussion of Zech 9:9 LXX, which uses this spelling. The use of Ἱερουσαλήμ in *Comm. Jo.* 1.5/30 and 2.34/211 likewise follows the usage in Luke 24:18 and Acts 1:8, respectively.

²⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.23/132.

²⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.29/182.

²⁶ Cf. Janssens, “Héracléon,” 130 n. 25; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 64–67.

²⁷ Cf. John 2:23, in which many are said to come to believe in Jesus, with 2:11, where only the disciples respond in such a way.

²⁸ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.7.5; see the quotation on page 25.

nation that the Levites are a symbol of the animate ones, where the phrase ἔξω τοῦ πληρώματος (“outside of the fullness”) fits especially well with Irenaeus’s description. The claim that the called ones (τὴν κλήσιν) are without spirit may also be a heresiological factoid. On the other hand, the mention of the called ones, the contrast between the Levites and the high priest and their respective domains – the holy of holies and the temple court – may originate with Heracleon.²⁹

It is thus possible that Origen’s two paraphrases are based on a comment, made by Heracleon, that the more inclusive term ἱερόν (“temple” or “holy place”) is chosen before the more specific πρόναος (“temple court”) to avoid any implication that Jesus’s help is only available to the called ones (ἡ κλήσις). This comment would then be based on the premise that ἱερόν includes both the holy of holies, into which only the high priest enters, and the πρόναος, where the Levites are. The Jerusalem temple had a number of sequentially inter-enclosing courtyards. While everyone was welcome to the outermost courtyard, only Jews, Jewish males, or priests and Levites were allowed to proceed one, two, or three steps closer to the Holy of holies, which only the high priest was allowed to enter, and only once a year. While the temple had at least five such levels, Heracleon seems only to refer to two: the innermost sanctuary within the temple building and the courtyard immediately outside the building, where the priests and Levites performed the sacrifices. His knowledge of the temple layout might, therefore, be based entirely on Heb 9:1–10, where an inner and an outer chamber is associated with the high priest and the Levites, respectively.³⁰ The term ἡ κλήσις (“the calling” or “the called ones”) is established in early Christian usage to denote a category of individuals called to faith in Christ.³¹ Its use suggests that the boundary between Heracleon’s two groups may be based on the response of individuals to Christ’s calling: those who have received the calling without, so far, accepting it, and those who have come to faith in Christ. Heracleon may thus be implying that Jesus’s salvific assistance is available both before and after an initial acceptance of his calling.

In the next paragraph, Origen’s references to Heracleon are slightly less interpretive:

He takes (ἐξεδέξατο / 13.4) those found in the temple “selling cattle, sheep and doves, and the sitting money changers” (John 2:14) to correspond to (λέγεσθαι ἀντὶ) those who give nothing out of kindness, but think of the arrival of strangers to the temple in terms of business and profit, as it is for the sake of their own profit and greed they provide sacrifices

²⁹ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 70–71, arrives at similar conclusions on this point.

³⁰ That Heracleon seems to be dependent on Heb 9 here is previously noted by Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 68; Massaux, *Influence*, 435.

³¹ Poffet, *Méthode*, 73; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 69.

for the worship of God. Furthermore, he interprets (ἀπαγγέλλει) the whip made out of cords by Jesus (not received from someone else!) in a peculiar way when he claims (λέγων / 13.5) the whip to be an image of the power and activity of the Holy Spirit, blowing away the inferior ones (οἱ χείρονες). He also says (φησί / 13.6) that the whip, the cord, the cloth, and such things are images of the power and activity of the Holy Spirit. Then he adds (προσείληφεν), by himself, something that has not been written, that (ὥς ἄρα / 13.7) the whip was tied to a stick (ξύλον). Since he understands this stick to be a symbol of the cross, he says (φησί / 13.8) that by use of this stick, the trading gamblers and all evil have been demolished and eliminated.³²

In this paragraph, five interpretive moves and statements are attributed to Heracleon using the verbs ἐκδέχομαι (“take in a certain way”), ἀπαγγέλλω (“interpret”), λέγω (“say”), φησί (“say”), προσλαμβάνω (“add”), and, once again, φησί (“say”). Preuschen, Völker and Foerster present all five as quotations. Blanc and Heine present all in plain text. Pettipiece and Wucherpennig italicize all but 13.7, which is presented in plain text. Pagels quotes from 13.4 as if directly from Heracleon.³³

	13.4 ἐξεδέξατο	13.5 λέγων	13.6 φησί	13.7 προσείληφεν	13.8 φησί
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Plain text	Italics
Wucherpennig	Italics	Italics	Italics	Plain text	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	–	–	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Summary	Paraphrase	Summary

³² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.33/212–14 (SC 157, 508.37–512.28; The middle third of Brooke’s fragment 13): Πρὸς τούτοις τοὺς εὐρισκομένους ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ πωλοῦντας βόας καὶ πρόβατα καὶ περιστεράς καὶ τοὺς καθημένους κερματιστὰς ἐξεδέξατο (13.4) λέγεσθαι ἀντὶ τῶν μὴδὲν χάριτι διδόντων, ἀλλ’ ἐμπορίαν καὶ κέρδος τὴν τῶν ξένων εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν εἰσοδὸν νομιζόντων, τοῦ ἰδίου κέρδους καὶ φιλαργυρίας ἔνεκεν τὰς εἰς τὴν λατρείαν τοῦ θεοῦ θυσίας χορηγούντων. Καὶ τὸ φραγέλλιον δὲ πεποιῆσθαι ἐκ σχοινίων ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, οὐχὶ παρ’ ἄλλου λαβόντος ἰδιοτρόπως ἀπαγγέλλει, λέγων (13.5) τὸ φραγέλλιον εἰκόνα τυγχάνειν τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐνεργείας τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐκφυσῶντος τοὺς χείρονας, καὶ φησι (13.6) τὸ φραγέλλιον καὶ τὸ λίνον καὶ τὴν σινδόνα, καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα, εἰκόνα τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ τῆς ἐνεργείας εἶναι τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος. Ἐπειτα ἑαυτῷ προσείληφεν (13.7) τὸ μὴ γεγραμμένον, ὥς ἄρα εἰς ξύλον ἐδέδετο τὸ φραγέλλιον. ὅπερ ξύλον τύπον ἐκλαβὼν εἶναι τοῦ σταυροῦ φησι (13.8) τοῦτῳ τῷ ξύλῳ ἀνηλώσθαι καὶ ἡφανίσθαι τοὺς κυβευτὰς ἐμπόρους καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν κακίαν.

³³ SC 157, 511; GCS 10, 207; FC 80, 302; Völker, *Quellen*, 69–70; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 219–20; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 72–73; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 79; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 52–53.

Although none of the statements are presented in direct speech, all five references seem to refer to specific properties of the Johannine text, and be based on what Heracleon may have expressed. Slightly more interpretation may be present in Reference 13.7, where the attribution formula προσείληφεν [...] ὡς ἄρα (“he adds [...] that”) suggests that Origen refers to an idea inferred from Heracleon’s writing. This reference is therefore categorized as an explanatory paraphrase, while the others are summaries of Heracleon’s interpretations, where details and individual word choices may be adapted by Origen, but whose basic ideas should correspond to what Heracleon has written.

In Summary 13.4, Heracleon characterizes the merchants in the temple courts as people who view the temple visitors as business opportunities, whom they provide with sacrificial animals for profit, and not out of the kindness of their hearts.³⁴ Such a remark may be the result of either a γλωσσηματικόν (“word study”) on the participle πωλοῦντες (“sellers”) or a reflection on the conditions for trade in the courts of the Jerusalem temple – which would be a ἱστορικόν (“analysis of what is reported in the text”).³⁵ It may therefore reveal how Heracleon built his metaphorical interpretations of the Fourth Gospel on ancient literary criticism. Heracleon reads the merchants as a symbol of the evil in the world, and the whip with which Jesus drives them out of the temple corresponds to the power and activity of the Holy Spirit.³⁶ Assuming that Jesus tied the cords of the whip to a piece of wood, he argues that this stick is a symbol of the cross, whereby the cleansing of the temple becomes a symbol of God’s victory, on the cross, over evil.

The theory of three human natures, which Origen seems to have read into Heracleon’s comments in the previous paragraph, is entirely absent from this one.³⁷ Origen seems, in his response, to be criticizing Heracleon’s symbolic interpretation for being insufficiently anchored in the Johannine text. He points out that Jesus has made the whip himself, which does not match the Holy Spirit, which he has received from the Father (cf. John 1:32–34). He also remarks that the text does not specify that the cords are fastened to a stick, so Heracleon’s piece of wood is absent from the text. These points of criticism

³⁴ The explicit identification of the merchants as Jews, as done by Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 159, appears to be misleading, since this fact is not pointed out by Heracleon. Associations between Jews and greed are too common in anti-Semitism to be taken lightly.

³⁵ The suggestion of Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 58–60, that Heracleon is performing γενεαλογικόν (“analysis of people involved”) is perhaps less precise, since the merchants are only explained in their role as businesspeople, not as individuals.

³⁶ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 90–93, 376, unconvincingly argues that Heracleon refers to the attire of the high priest as additional symbols of the power and activity of the Holy Spirit. The additional materials mentioned are, rather, the base materials used to make the σχοινία (“cords”) that Jesus, in his turn, uses to make the whip.

³⁷ Pace Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 66–82, who presumes that Heracleon’s interpretation of the whole Johannine passage is determined by this theory.

are reasonable and serve to support Origen’s summarized points that Heracleon interpreted the whip as a symbol for both the Holy Spirit and for the cross.

In the third paragraph we finally have a verbatim quotation:

And I do not know how, speaking nonsense (φλυαρῶν), he says (φησίν / 13.9) that a whip is made out of these two things, when he examines (ζητῶν) the object Jesus made. For “he did not make it,” he says (φησί / 13.10), “out of dead leather, for he wanted to make the assembly no longer a den of robbers and merchants, but into a house of his Father’s.” From these words (ῥητά), a bare minimum must also be said against him about the deity (περὶ τῆς θεότητος). For if Jesus claims the temple in Jerusalem to be the house of his Father, but this temple is made to the glory of the creator of the heaven and the earth, then we are certainly taught to believe the son of God to be a son of the maker (τὸν ποιητὴν) of heaven and earth, and not of someone else!³⁸

Two statements are attributed to Heracleon here. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both as quotations, Blanc and Heine set them in plain text. Pettipiece and Wucherpennig set the first one in plain text, but the second one within quotation marks. Pagels does not quote this paragraph.³⁹

	13.9 φησίν	13.10 φησί
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Plain text	Quotation
Pagels	–	–
Wucherpennig	Plain text	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Quotation

³⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.33/215–16 (SC 157, 512.28–514.40; The last third of Brooke’s fragment 13): Καὶ οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως φλυαρῶν φησιν (13.9) ἐκ δύο τούτων πραγμάτων φραγέλλιον κατασκευάζεσθαι, ζητῶν τὸ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ γενόμενον· Οὐ γὰρ ἐκ δέρματος, φησί, (13.10) νεκροῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτό, ἵνα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν κατασκευάσῃ οὐκέτι ληστῶν καὶ ἐμπόρων σπήλαιον, ἀλλὰ οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ. Λεκτέον δὲ τὸ ἀναγκαιότατον περὶ τῆς θεότητος καὶ ἐκ τῶν ῥητῶν τούτων πρὸς αὐτόν. Εἰ γὰρ τὸ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἱερὸν οἶκον τοῦ ἰδίου πατρὸς φησιν εἶναι ὁ Ἰησοῦς, τοῦτο δὲ τὸ ἱερὸν εἰς δόξαν τοῦ κτίσαντος τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν γέγονεν, πῶς οὐκ ἄντικρυς διδασκόμεθα μὴ ἑτέρου τινὸς νομίζειν υἱὸν εἶναι παρὰ τὸν ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ;

³⁹ SC 157, 511–13; GCS 10, 207; FC 80, 302; Völker, *Quellen*, 70; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 220; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 73; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 53. Wucherpennig does have an opening quotation mark for 13.8, but since both the closing quotation mark and the italics are missing, this is probably a mistake.

The first reference is made by a single φησὶν (“he says”). It is preceded by a curt rejection claiming that Heracleon is speaking nonsense (φλυαρῶν), and presents an attributed statement in indirect speech, using accusative with infinitive. Although it is identified as a summary, it does not add any new information, since Origen has already stated that Heracleon thinks that Jesus made the whip not only out of cords, but also used a piece of wood. The second reference is also made with a single φησί, but the attributed statement appears in direct speech and is, therefore, presented as a verbatim quotation. As the following sentence introduces Origen’s response, the end of the quotation is clearly delimited. The starting point is less clear, since the attribution formula appears four words into the sentence, after οὐ γὰρ ἐκ δέρματος (“but not out of leather”). However, since νεκροῦ (“dead”), which follows φησί, is an attribute of δέρματος (“leather”), and since οὐ (“not”) and ἐκ (“out of”) are essential to the meaning of the sentence, these three words are likely to be quoted verbatim. The conjunction γὰρ (“for”) may be added to graft the quotation into the surrounding prose.

In the quoted comment, Heracleon stresses that Jesus did not make the whip out of leather, connects this fact to his aim to make the temple a proper house for worship, and relates the text to its parallel in Matt 21:13, where Jesus complains not that the temple has become an οἶκον ἐμπορίου (“marketplace”), but that it is being turned into a σπήλαιον ληστῶν (“den of robbers”).⁴⁰ Combining the two expressions, Heracleon proclaims that Jesus’s aim is to turn the den of robbers and merchants that the temple has become into a house of his Father’s. Heracleon’s wording does not necessitate the notion that it has ever previously been a house of Jesus’s Father’s, and is therefore – intentionally or not – open to the idea that the God of the Jews and the Father of Christ may be different gods.

Origen responds by pointing out that Jesus’s appeal to cease the transformation of his Father’s house into a marketplace – as is stated in John 2:16 – presupposes that the temple already is a house of his Father’s, not only that it should become one. Since the historical temple was dedicated to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, this observation should invalidate any distinction between the Jewish God and the Christian Father, Origen claims.⁴¹

Before moving on to the conversation between Jesus and the Jews in John 2:18–22, Origen also takes note of another deficiency in the interpretation of Heracleon, who claims that the quotation from the Psalter is uttered by the merchants, and not by Jesus:

⁴⁰ This complaint is originally located in Jer 7:11 LXX, where it refers not to merchants providing sacrifices, but to people sacrificing in the temple without first ceasing to sin. Heracleon’s use of Matt 21:13 is previously pointed out by Massaux, *Influence*, 428–29.

⁴¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.34/217–20.

However, the sixty-eighth psalm, reading “Zeal for your house has consumed me” and shortly thereafter “They put gall into my food and gave me vinegar for my thirst” – both of which are recorded in the Gospels – are, one must realize, said by the character (πρόσωπον) of Christ, with no manifest change in speaking character. But exceedingly carelessly, Heracleon thinks (οἶεται / 14.1) that “Zeal for your house will consume me” is said by a character (πρόσωπον) among those agents (δύναμεις) that have been driven out and destroyed by the Savior. He is not able to retain the sequence of the prophecy in the psalm if he considers this to be said by a character among those agents that have been driven out and destroyed. Consequently, it follows – according to him (κατ’ αὐτὸν) – that “They put gall into my food”, which is recorded in the same psalm, is also said by them. Seemingly, “it will consume me” troubled him, as it cannot possibly have been uttered (ἀπαγγέλλω) by Christ, since he did not recognize the customary use of terms describing human feelings about God and Christ.⁴²

There is no statement attributed to Heracleon here, just the assumption that the Psalter quotation is spoken by one of the merchants, rather than by Jesus. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster nevertheless present it quoted. Blanc and Heine present the paragraph in plain text. Pettipiece and Wucherpfnennig italicize the words from ἐκ προσώπου (“by a character”) to λέγεσθαι (“said”). Pagels does not refer to this passage.⁴³

	14.1 οἶεται
Blanc	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics
Wucherpfnennig	Italics
Pagels	–
Berglund	Paraphrase

⁴² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.34/222–24 (SC 157, 514.28–516.45; Brooke’s fragment 14): Πλὴν τὸν ἐξηκοστὸν ὄγδοον ψαλμόν, ἔχοντα τὸ “Ὁ ζῆλος τοῦ οἴκου σου κατέφαγέ με” καὶ μετ’ ὀλίγα· “Ἔδωκαν εἰς τὸ βρῶμά μου χολήν, καὶ εἰς τὴν δίψαν μου ἐπότισάν με ὄξος,” ἀμφότερα ἐν τοῖς εὐαγγελίοις ἀναγεγραμμένα, ἰστέον ἐκ προσώπου λέγεσθαι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, οὐδεμίαν ἐμφαίνοντα τοῦ λέγοντος προσώπου μεταβολήν. Σφόδρα δὲ ἀπαρτηρήτως ὁ Ἡρακλέων οἶεται (14.1) τὸ “Ὁ ζῆλος τοῦ οἴκου σου καταφάγεται με” ἐκ προσώπου τῶν ἐκβληθέντων καὶ ἀναλωθέντων ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτῆρος δυνάμεων λέγεσθαι, μὴ δυνάμενος τὸν εἰρμόν τῆς ἐν τῷ ψαλμῷ προφητείας τηρῆσαι νοοῦμενον ἐκ προσώπου τῶν ἐκβληθέντων καὶ ἀναλωθέντων δυνάμεων λέγεσθαι. Ἀκόλουθον δὲ ἐστὶν κατ’ αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ “Ἔδωκαν εἰς τὸ βρῶμά μου χολήν” ἀπ’ ἐκείνων λέγεσθαι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἀναγεγραμμένον ψαλμῷ· ἀλλ’, ὡς εἰκός, ἐτάραξεν αὐτὸν τὸ “Καταφάγεται με” ὡς μὴ δυνάμενον ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ ἀπαγγέλλεσθαι, οὐχ ὁρῶντα τὸ ἔθος τῶν ἀνθρωποπαθῶν περὶ θεοῦ καὶ Χριστοῦ λόγων.

⁴³ SC 157, 515; GCS 10, 208; FC 80, 304; Völker, *Quellen*, 70; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 220; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 77; Wucherpfnennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 53–54.

As this reference is made by use of the verb οἶμαι (“think”), it is probable that the specification “a character among those agents that have been driven out and destroyed by the Savior” is formulated by Origen, not by Heracleon. The specification makes use of a heavily specialized language used by ancient literary critics when analyzing speaking characters (πρόσωπα τὰ λέγοντα) in ancient narrative, and attests to Origen’s linguistic proficiency.⁴⁴ It is possible that Heracleon had access to a similar vocabulary. Even without regard for the language in which it is expressed, the identification is rather advanced, as the phrase is not spoken by a character in the Johannine narrative, but merely remembered by the disciples. It is unknowable whether Heracleon made the identification explicitly, or simply presumed the one who claimed to be devoured to be one of the merchants, or evil powers, driven out by Jesus, since Origen does not quote his comment. In the former case, this would be an example of Heracleon practicing ancient literary criticism.⁴⁵

Origen responds to Heracleon’s identification of the speaker by stating that, since there is no sign of a change of speakers within the psalm, both the line about the zeal and the line about gall and vinegar a dozen lines further down must be spoken by the same character.⁴⁶ If Heracleon understood his own interpretation correctly, he therefore would find himself arguing that the whole psalm is spoken by the evil forces driven out by Jesus. Origen speculates that Heracleon’s interpretive move was necessitated by his unwillingness to ascribe human feelings to Christ. This is not necessarily the case, since Heracleon could simply have neglected to consider the rest of the psalm.

C. Passages 15–16: Three Days and Forty-Six Years (John 2:18–20)

While the Jewish leaders in the Synoptics react to Jesus’s treatment of the merchants in the temple by questioning his authority, the Johannine Jewish leaders ask him to perform a miracle to validate the authority he has taken over the temple. Jesus responds with a promise to rebuild τὸν ναὸν τοῦτον (“this temple”) – referring to his own body – in three days after it has been torn down. The Jews naturally interpret his words as referring to the temple buildings, recently renovated and expanded under Herod the Great (37–4 BCE) and his successors, and put Jesus’s “three days” into the context of the

⁴⁴ Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe*, 263–76; Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 96–97. For the use of πρόσωπον as a technical term denoting (speaking) characters in ancient narrative, see also Nünlist, *The Ancient Critic at Work*, 49, 102–6, 116–34. Possibly, δυνάμεις is here used as a technical term denoting a co-acting group of characters.

⁴⁵ This possibility is argued by Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 96–97, 174–75, 375.

⁴⁶ Cf. Ps 68:22 LXX (69:21), referenced in Matt 27:34, 48; Luke 23:36; John 19:28–29.

forty-six-year duration of the current building project. Origen remarks that both the Jerusalem temple and Jesus's body may be seen as symbols of the Christian community, which is to die with Christ and be raised with Christ – presumably with a reference to baptism. Origen also notes that the temple is not said to be rebuilt τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ (“on the third day”), but ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις (“in three days”) – arguing that the resurrection is a three-day process, which would explain why Christ was not willing to let Mary touch him on Easter morning, but later had no such inhibitions in relation to Thomas.⁴⁷

On this last point, he compares his view to that of Heracleon:

Heracleon, however, says (φησὶν / 15.1) “in three” (John 2:19) in the sense of on the third, without examining – although he has given attention to the “in three” – how the resurrection is achieved in three days. Furthermore, he says (φησὶ / 15.2) that the third is the spiritual day, in which they think (οἶονται / 15.3) the resurrection of the assembly is signified. A logical consequence of this would be to say that the first [day] is the earthly day (τὴν χοϊκὴν ἡμέραν), and the second the animated one (τὴν ψυχικὴν), since the resurrection of the assembly did not occur on these days.⁴⁸

Here, two statements are attributed to Heracleon, each with a single φησὶ (“he says”). An additional belief is attributed to more than one person with the plural οἶονται (“they believe”). Preuschen and Völker present all three as quotations. Foerster quotes only the key phrases “in three” and “on the third” in the first reference, but presents the second and third as quotations. Blanc and Heine also quote only the key phrases, but present the other two in plain text. Pettipiece presents the first as a quotation, and the second and third in italics. Wucherpfennig presents the first two references in italics, and the third in plain text. Pagels does not quote from this paragraph, but paraphrases the information given about the first, second, and third days as if it was dependable data on Heracleon.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.35/225–37/247.

⁴⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.37/248–50 (SC 157, 530.54–61; Brooke's fragment 15): Ὁ μέντοι γε Ἡρακλέων τὸ “ἐν τρισὶν” φησὶν (15.1) ἀντὶ τοῦ “ἐν τρίτῃ,” μὴ ἐρευνήσας, καίτοι γε ἐπιστήσας τῷ “ἐν τρισὶν,” πῶς ἐν τρισὶν ἡ ἀνάστασις ἐνεργεῖται ἡμέραις. Ἐτι δὲ καὶ τὴν τρίτην φησὶ (15.2) τὴν πνευματικὴν ἡμέραν, ἐν ἣ οἶονται (15.3) δηλοῦσθαι τὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀνάστασιν. Τοῦτ' οὖν δὲ ἀκόλουθόν ἐστιν πρώτῃν λέγειν εἶναι τὴν χοϊκὴν ἡμέραν καὶ τὴν δευτέραν τὴν ψυχικὴν, οὐ γεγεννημένης τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐν αὐταῖς.

⁴⁹ SC 157, 531; GCS 10, 212; FC 80, 310; Völker, *Quellen*, 70; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 221; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 78; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologist*, 54; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 94, 96.

	15.1 φησὶν	15.2 φησί	15.3 οἰόνται
Blanc	Quotation (?)	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation (?)	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Quotation (?)	Plain text	Plain text
Pettipiece	Quotation	Italics	Italics
Wucherpennig	Italics	Italics	Plain text
Pagels	–	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Assertion

Both references to Heracleon are made with a single *verbum dicendi*. Since both attributed statements lack finite verbs, direct speech cannot be clearly discerned from indirect speech, but in both cases the sentence structure appears to be Origen's and what is quoted from Heracleon is, at most, individual key phrases. Such references are rightly identified as summaries. The repetition of the phrase ἐν τρίτῃ ("on the third") suggests that this phrase appeared in Heracleon's writing, but since it is ἐν τρισὶν ("in three") – a direct quotation from John 2:19 – that is the direct object of the first φησὶν ("he says"), it cannot be ruled out that ἐν τρίτῃ is Origen paraphrasing Heracleon to express more clearly what he takes Heracleon to say.

The third-person plural οἰόνται ("they think") cannot, however, refer to Heracleon. The word choice indicates interpretation rather than quotation, and Origen seems to be referring to a teaching of a category of Christians that – by way of the key words χοϊκή ("earthly") and ψυχική ("animated") in the next sentence – may be identified as "those who bring in the natures."⁵⁰ Origen associates Heracleon's remarks, which seem to include the key phrases ἐν τρισὶν ("in three"), ἐν τρίτῃ ("on the third"), and τὴν πνευματικὴν ἡμέραν ("the spiritual day"), to a teaching by this category that the resurrection of the Christian assembly is signified by a reference to this day. This remark seems not to be based on Heracleon's comments, especially since Origen already has been discussing the resurrection of the Christian community in his own exposition. The remark is therefore categorized as a mere assertion. Origen's added remark that, if the third day is spiritual, the first and second day must be earthly and animated, respectively, one again indicates that he is using the theory of three human natures as an interpretive framework for Heracleon's comments.

Since Origen's summaries give little more than three key phrases, it is difficult to estimate how Heracleon interpreted these verses. He may have noted

⁵⁰ Cf. pages 30–33. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 80, also notes that the plural form indicates a change in reference, and presumes that Origen is speaking about Heracleon's students.

that τρεῖς is a cardinal number, not an ordinal, even though the resurrection is not supposed to have occurred three full days after the crucifixion, but on the third day, based on an enumeration where the crucifixion took place on the first day. He may have concluded that, since the Johannine narrative clarifies that the resurrection took place on the third day, the cardinal number is here used in the same sense as the ordinal τρίτος.⁵¹ He may also have called the third day “the spiritual day,” but what he meant with this phrase remains unclear.

Proceeding to the forty-six years, Origen appears entirely unaware of the expansion project under Herod the Great. Instead, he unsuccessfully searches the Old Testament for a forty-six-year construction time of Solomon’s temple, or an equally long reconstruction period under Ezra or the Maccabees. His own failure to understand the text does not, however, prevent him from criticize Heracleon’s interpretation:

Heracleon, however, not paying attention to the literal sense, says (φησί / 16.1) that Solomon constructed the temple in forty-six years, which is an image of the Savior. He relates (ἀναφέρει / 16.2) the number “six” to matter (ὕλη), that is to the formation of the human body (πλάσμα), but “the number forty,” which is the fourth [element], he says (φησὶν / 16.3), “is the unmixable (ἀπρόσπλοκος)” [air], to the inbreathing (ἐμφύσημα) and to the seed in the inbreathing. But consider whether it is possible to understand “forty” through the four elements of the world introduced in what is set apart for the temple, and “six” through the fact that on the sixth day, humans came to be.⁵²

Three references to Heracleon are made in this passage. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three as quotations, although Foerster takes ἀναφέρει (“he relates”) as part of the quotation rather than as an attribution formula. Blanc and Heine present the first two as plain text, but the third within quotation marks. Pettipiece italicizes the first two and quotes the third. Pagels does not quote this paragraph. Wucherpennig takes the first reference as a quotation, specifies that the second is a summary, and quotes the third as if taken directly from Heracleon.⁵³

⁵¹ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 78, argues that Heracleon is paraphrasing John 2:19 using ἐν τρίτῃ (“on the third”) in the place of ἐν τρισὶν (“in three”) – which is a possibility.

⁵² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.38/261–62 (SC 157, 538.53–540.63; Brooke’s fragment 16): Ὁ μέντοι γε Ἡρακλέων μὴδὲ ἐπιστήσας τῇ ἱστορίᾳ φησί (16.1) τὸν Σαλομῶντα τεσσεράκοντα καὶ ἕξ ἔτεσιν κατεσκευακέναι τὸν ναὸν εἰκόνα τυγχάνοντα τοῦ σωτῆρος, καὶ τὸν ἕξ ἀριθμὸν εἰς τὴν ὕλην, τουτέστιν τὸ πλάσμα, ἀναφέρει, (16.2) τὸν δὲ τῶν τεσσεράκοντα, “ὁ τετράς ἐστιν,” φησὶν, (16.3) “ἡ ἀπρόσπλοκος,” εἰς τὸ ἐμφύσημα καὶ τὸ ἐν τῷ ἐμφυσήματι σπέρμα. Ὅρα δὲ εἰ δυνατόν τὸν μὲν τεσσεράκοντα διὰ τὰ τέσσαρα τοῦ κόσμου στοιχεῖα ἐν τοῖς ἀφωρισμένοις εἰς τὸν ναὸν ἐγκατατασσόμενα λαμβάνειν, τὸν δὲ ἕξ διὰ τὴν ἕκτην ἡμέραν γεγενέναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον.

⁵³ SC 157, 539–41; GCS 10, 214–15; FC 80, 313; Völker, *Quellen*, 71; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 221; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 80; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 55, 81–84.

	16.1 φησί	16.2 ἀναφέρει	16.3 φησὶν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Quotation
Pagels	–	–	–
Wuchterpfennig	Quotation	Summary	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Quotation

The first reference is made with a single *verbum dicendi*, but the attributed statement is presented in indirect speech using accusative and infinitive. It is therefore identified as a summary. The next sentence continues in indirect speech, and what is attributed to Heracleon using the verb ἀναφέρει (“he relates”) is also categorized as a summary. The third reference consists of a φησὶν (“he says”) inserted into the attributed statement, and probably indicates a shift in attribution mode to verbatim quotation. This quotation is not clearly delimited, and the only phrase that is clearly presented as quoted verbatim is ἡ ἀπόσπλοκος (“the unmixable”),⁵⁴ which immediately follows the *verbum dicendi*.⁵⁵ The last sentence is Origen’s response.

The word choice πλάσμα for the human body, which suggests an object molded out of clay, together with the unexplained ἐμφύσημα (“inbreathing”) indicates that Heracleon is using an image from Genesis, where God forms (πλάσσω in LXX) the first human being out of the earth (γῆ) and breathes in (ἐμφυσάω) a breath of life into its face (Gen 2:7). Apparently, Heracleon relates the number six to Christ’s material body,⁵⁶ and the number forty to the life with which it is infused. This could have been a reflection on Christ’s material and spiritual nature, had it not been for the intermediary reference to the unmixable (ἀπόσπλοκος) fourth, which in this context must be a reference to the fourth natural element, air.⁵⁷ Seemingly, Heracleon here re-

⁵⁴ The adjective ἀπόσπλοκος is otherwise unattested, except in an old scholion to Aristophanes, *Scholia in ranas* 1340: ἀπόσπλοκα ταῦτα καὶ ἀσυνάρτητα σὺν τοῖς ἐξῆς πᾶσι. See Jean-Frédéric Dübner, *Scholia Graeca in Aristophanem* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1883), 310.

⁵⁵ Heine, FC 80, 313, includes not only ἡ ἀπόσπλοκος (“which does not admit union”) but also ὁ τετράς ἐστίν (“which is the Tetrad”) in his quotation marks. Blanc, SC 157, 539–41, does likewise, but since she even includes Origen’s quotation formula φησὶν, her analysis on this point cannot be considered final.

⁵⁶ Cf. Foerster, *Von Valentin zu Herakleon*, 13.

⁵⁷ The order in which the four traditional elements were enumerated varied, but this identification of air as the fourth element matches the order (πῦρ, ὕδωρ, γῆν, ἀέρα) used in the context of discussing heterodox views in both Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.17.1, and the *Elenchos* 6.53.1.

fers to Christ as having a material body in which three of the elements – fire, water and earth – were mixed, while the fourth element – air – was not mixed with the others, but contained within the body. The σπέρμα (“seed”) in the inbreathing could possibly refer to the human capability to procreate, which is implied in the divine speeches of Gen 1:28, 3:15 and 3:16, but curiously absent from the creation account in Gen 2. It is also possible that while the inbreathing refers to Christ’s human soul, the seed refers to the Word.⁵⁸

In his response, Origen readily accepts that one may find symbolic referents in the numbers forty and six, but prefers to see “forty” as a symbol for the natural materials – made out of the four elements – of which the temple was made, and “six” as referring to the humans intended to be worshipping there. He does not revisit the question of historical reference to conclude how the text may be understood on a historical level.

This chapter has suggested that Heracleon’s remark that Jesus is not said to have done or said anything in Capernaum refers to the narrative discourse of the Fourth Gospel, rather than to a disability to perform miracles in a particular location. It has found Heracleon’s symbolic interpretation of the Jewish Passover festival to be remarkably similar to Origen’s own, and his contrast between “material things” and “the place of the soul” to be perfectly understandable without the three human natures – as a contrast between Jesus’s physical miracle in Cana and his more intellectual challenge on the temple court. The theology of “those who bring in the natures” seems not to be expressed in Heracleon’s writing but, rather, introduced by Origen as an interpretive framework by which to understand Heracleon’s reasoning.

⁵⁸ Janssens, “Héracléon,” 133 n. 36, suggests that the breath is Christ’s human soul and that the seed is the Word. She also remarks that this interpretation should clear Heracleon of all suspicion of docetic Christology. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 83–88, concludes that Heracleon thinks of humans as the combination of body and soul, and relates this view to contemporary alternatives.

Chapter 7

Meeting at the Well

Heracleon's reading of Jesus's encounter with a Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob, in John 4:1–26, has been regarded as a key element in his heterodox and deterministic reading of the Gospel of John. But almost all of the connotations to heterodox positions are located within explanatory paraphrases, in which Origen may well be reading the theology of “those who bring in the natures” into Heracleon's comments.

A. Passage 17: A Temporary Life (John 4:13–15)

In the thirteenth book of his *Commentary*, Origen picks up the pace and offers only brief expositions on individual lines in Jesus's conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well (πηγή) in John 4:13–18. He suggests, based on Jesus's apparent hesitancy to give the woman living water until she asks for it, that some spiritual gifts are only available upon request. He notes the difference between “this water,” which does not alleviate thirst forever, and the water that Jesus gives, and argues that Jacob's well symbolizes the knowledge available through the Scriptures, which is an incomplete version of the full knowledge, which only Christ can give. The fact that the woman is unmarried, but involved with a man that is not her husband, he takes to mean that she has subordinated herself to a false law, based on misunderstandings of the sound teachings – from which Jesus seeks to liberate her. Furthermore, Origen interprets her five former husbands as a metaphor for literal scriptural interpretation, pertaining to the world of the five senses, from which he aims to lead his readers into a search for the deeper, spiritual meaning of the text.¹

His first response to Heracleon refers to several verses of John 4:

Let us also look at Heracleon's [comments] on these passages. He says (φησὶν / 17.1) that this life and its glory were lacking, temporary, and deficient, for – he says (φησὶν / 17.2) – “it was of this world.” He thinks (οἶεται / 17.3) that it is proven that it is of this world since the sheep of Jacob were drinking from it. If what he took to be lacking, temporary, and deficient is the knowledge “in part” (1 Cor 13:9) – that is, the knowledge from the Scriptures – in comparison to “the unspeakable words that no human is permitted to repeat” (2 Cor 12:4), or all the present knowledge “through a mirror and a riddle” (1 Cor 13:12), which will

¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.1/1–9/56.

be abolished when the perfect knowledge comes, we would bring no charges. But if he does this to discredit the ancient [scriptures], he is blameworthy.²

This paragraph attributes three statements to Heracleon, the first two with the *verbum dicendi* φησίν (“he says”) and the third with the more interpretive verb οἶται (“he thinks”). Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three as quotations. Blanc uses plain text. Heine italicizes all three, concealing the second φησίν in his translation. Pettipiece presents all references in italics, including the repetition of the keywords “lacking, temporary, and deficient” within Origen’s response. Pagels removes Origen’s attributions and combines the three attributed statements into one sentence, which she presents as quoted directly from Heracleon. Poffet does not refer to this paragraph, but Wucherpennig quotes from the first reference as if directly from Heracleon.³

	17.1 φησίν	17.2 φησίν	17.3 οἶται
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Poffet	–	–	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Quotation	Paraphrase

The first reference is made with a *verbum dicendi*, but the attributed statement is presented in indirect speech, using an accusative-with-infinitive construction. In accordance with the criteria presented in chapter 3, it is therefore taken as a summary of Heracleon’s presentation. In the second reference, which is presented in direct speech, the attribution formula is preceded by two words, of which the particle γάρ (“for”), which connects this clause to the

² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/57–58 (SC 222, 62.1–13; Brooke’s fragment 17, part 1): Ἰδωμεν δὲ καὶ τὰ Ἡρακλέωνος εἰς τοὺς τόπους, ὅστις φησίν (17.1) ἄτονον καὶ πρόσκαιρον καὶ ἐπιλείπουσαν ἐκείνην γεγονέναι τὴν ζωὴν καὶ τὴν κατ’ αὐτὴν δόξαν· κοσμικὴ γάρ, φησίν (17.2), ἦν· καὶ οἶται (17.3) τοῦ κοσμικὴν αὐτὴν εἶναι ἀπόδειξιν φέρειν ἐκ τοῦ τὰ θρέμματα τοῦ Ἰακώβ ἐξ αὐτῆς πεπωκέναι. Καὶ εἰ μὲν ἄτονον καὶ πρόσκαιρον καὶ ἐπιλείπουσαν ἐλάβανεν τὴν ἐκ μέρους γνώσιν, ἥτοι τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν συγκρίσει τῶν ἀρρήτων ῥημάτων, “ἃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἀνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι,” <ἦ> πᾶσαν τὴν νῦν “δι’ ἐσόπτρου καὶ αἰνίγματος” γινόμενην γνώσιν καταργουμένην, ὅταν ἔλθῃ τὸ τέλειον, οὐκ ἂν αὐτὸ ἐνεκαλέσαμεν· εἰ δὲ ὑπὲρ τοῦ διαβάλλειν τὰ παλαιὰ τοῦτο ποιεῖ, ἐγκλητέος ἂν εἴῃ.

³ GCS 10, 234; SC 222, 63; FC 89, 81; Völker, *Quellen*, 71; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 222; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 86; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 82; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 261, 281.

preceding one, may be inserted by Origen. The attributed statement is therefore considered a verbatim quotation consisting of the two words κοσμική ἦν (“it was of this world”). The third reference is made with the more interpretive verb οἶεται (“he thinks”), and the attributed statement refers to the thought process behind Heracleon’s comment rather than his words. It is therefore presented as an explanatory paraphrase.

The grammatical subject of the verbatim quotation is not clear. From the context given by the summary, it appears to be ἐκείνην τὴν ζωὴν (“this life”) that is κοσμική (“of this world”), but from the context of the paraphrase, Jacob’s well seems to be the implied subject, since Jacob’s sheep drank from it.⁴ Therefore, It is probable that the text is corrupted, and that ἐκείνην τὴν πηγὴν (“this well”) is the original reading, rather than ἐκείνην τὴν ζωὴν (“this life”). Judging from Origen’s summary, Heracleon associated the physical source of water with the natural life that is sustained by food and water, but is lacking, temporary, and deficient in comparison to the eternal life of which Jesus speaks in John 4:14.⁵ The logical argument presented in Origen’s paraphrase – that the well must be of this world if Jacob’s sheep were drinking from it – is entirely congruent with this line of reasoning, but may be inferred by Origen rather than expressed by Heracleon.

In his response, Origen presumes that Heracleon understands Jacob’s well as a symbol for the Jewish scriptures.⁶ This is a reading Origen himself has practiced previously,⁷ but he has not demonstrated that Heracleon has done the same. Origen admits that Heracleon’s comments may be read as expressing a view similar to Origen’s – that the knowledge attainable by studying the scriptures is one day to be replaced by perfect knowledge – but finds it more probable that Heracleon intends to discredit τὰ παλαιά (“the ancient things”), by which he presumably means the Old Testament. Origen’s criticism in this response may therefore be based on a misunderstanding.

Origen’s open-ended response, in which two evaluations are made of two different readings of Heracleon’s words, continues in the next paragraph:

When he says (φησὶν / 17.4) that the water given by the Savior is from the Spirit and its power, however, he is not mistaken. He comments on “he would never be thirsty” with

⁴ The translation above follows that of Blanc, SC 222, 63, in taking the feminine accusative pronoun ἐκείνην as construed with ζωὴν.

⁵ Janssens, “L’épisode de la samaritaine chez Héracléon,” 78. Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 126, remarks that in some cases Heracleon’s κοσμικός seems to be used in the negative sense of “inclined toward the world,” while in other cases it seems to be a neutral term.

⁶ This understanding is presumed by Neander, *Genetische Entwicklung*, 152, who takes it as proof that Heracleon viewed Judaism as the Maker’s work. Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 85, also takes for granted that Heracleon “betrachtet den Jakobsbrunnen als Symbol des Alten Bundes.”

⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.1/6, 13.5/26–6/39.

these very words (ἀποδédωκεν αὐταῖς λέξεσιν οὕτως / 17.5): “For his life is eternal and never decays – as does indeed the first, the one from the well – but lasts. For the grace and the gift of our Savior are imperishable, and are neither consumed nor decayed in the one who takes part in it.” Since he admits that the first life is perishing, if he had spoken of literal life, and of seeking and finding the spiritual life that begins at the removal of the veil, he would have spoken soundly. But if he is denouncing the ancient [scriptures] as corrupted all through, it is clear that he does this because he does not see that these good things are the shadow of the ones that are to come.⁸

Two statements attributed to Heracleon are presented here, the fourth and fifth of this passage. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both as quotations. Blanc uses quotation marks for the fifth, but not for the fourth. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both, but Pettipiece also puts quotation marks around the fifth. Pagels quotes both statements as taken directly from Heracleon. Poffet argues that the phrase specifying that the first life does decay may be inserted by Origen, but treats the rest of the fifth attributed statement as a verbatim quotation. Wucherpennig quotes from the fifth attributed statement as if directly from Heracleon.⁹

	17.4 φησὶν	17.5 ἀποδédωκεν αὐταῖς λέξεσιν οὕτως
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Quotation
Pagels	Quotation	Quotation
Poffet	–	Quotation
Wucherpennig	–	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Quotation

⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/59–61 (SC 222, 62.14–64.26; Brooke’s fragment 17, part 2): “Ὁ δὲ δίδωσιν ὕδωρ ὁ σωτὴρ φησιν (17.4) εἶναι ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, οὐ ψευδόμενος. Καὶ εἰς τὸ “Οὐ μὴ διψήσῃ δὲ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα” ἀποδédωκεν αὐταῖς λέξεσιν οὕτως (17.5)· “αἰώνιος γὰρ ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ μηδέποτε φθειρομένη, ὡς καὶ ἡ πρώτη ἡ ἐκ τοῦ φρέατος, ἀλλὰ μένουσα· ἀναφαίρετος γὰρ ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ μὴ ἀναλίσκομένη μηδὲ φθειρομένη ἐν τῷ μετέχοντι αὐτῆς.” Φθειρομένην δὲ τὴν πρώτην διδοὺς εἶναι ζῶν, εἰ μὲν τὴν κατὰ τὸ γράμμα ἔλεγεν, ζητῶν τὴν περιαιρέσει τοῦ καλύμματος γινομένην κατὰ τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ εὐρίσκων, ὑγιῶς ἂν ἔλεγεν· εἰ δὲ πάντα φθορὰν κατηγορεῖ τῶν παλαιῶν, δῆλον ὅτι τοῦτο ποιεῖ ὡς μὴ ὁρῶν τὰ ἀγαθὰ τῶν μελλόντων ἔχειν ἐκεῖνα τὴν σκιάν.

⁹ GCS 10, 234; SC 222, 63–65; FC 89, 81–82; Völker, *Quellen*, 71; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 222; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 86–87; Poffet, *Méthode*, 22; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 136, 261.

The fourth reference is made with the single *verbum dicendi* φησὶν (“he says”). The attributed statement is presented in indirect speech, and is therefore regarded as a summary. The fifth attributed statement is preceded by the complex phrase ἀποδέδωκεν αὐταῖς λέξεσιν οὕτως (“he comments ... with these very words”). While the verb ἀποδίδωμι can be used in a number of senses, of which not all would refer to Heracleon’s words, the phrase αὐταῖς λέξεσιν is habitually used by Origen to attest that a quotation is presented verbatim. This reference is therefore categorized as a verbatim quotation, and ἀποδίδωμι read in the sense of adding a comment to a particular point in the text under consideration.

Heracleon, whose quoted words support our reading presented above, appears to have made a contrast between the natural life sustained by the water from the well, and the eternal life that Jesus offers in John 4:14. The state of perpetual non-thirst promised by Jesus is here equated with an eternally lasting life that neither decays nor is consumed, since life gracefully given by Christ is imperishable. Considering that the Johannine Jesus speaks of the water leading to eternal life, Heracleon’s interpretation appears to be a reasonable expansion of Jesus’s words. In addition, his summarized remark that Christ gives the gift of eternal life by assistance from the Spirit and its power indicates that Heracleon has a concept of Trinitarian collaboration, in which some actions of the earthly Jesus are dependent on the Spirit.

Origen admits, in his response, that Heracleon’s comment can be read as a reasonable interpretation regarding the natural life of a person not enlightened by the Spirit and by the spiritual understanding of the Christian scriptures, but repeats that any suggestion that the Old Testament is corrupt is blameworthy and wrong, since – he claims – the Jewish scriptures contain a shadow of the truths of Christianity. His consideration of two alternative readings of Heracleon’s interpretation implies that he is uncertain of whether Heracleon accepts the Old Testament or not.

John’s description of water as ἀλλομένοσ (“springing up”) apparently also caught Heracleon’s attention:

Not unconvincingly, he has explained (διηγῆσατο / 17.6) the “springing up” as those who partake in what is richly provided for them from above, and in their turn pour out what has been supplied to them for the eternal life of others. But he also commends (ἐπαινεῖ / 17.7) the Samaritan woman who, showing this unhesitating faith that corresponds to her inherent nature, did not doubt what he [Jesus] said to her. If he then had approved her choice, without hinting at her nature as being superior, we would have agreed entirely. But if he interprets the reason for her agreement as dependent on her natural constitution, and argues that this is not present in everybody, his claim must be refuted.¹⁰

¹⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/62–64 (SC 222, 64.27–37; Brooke’s fragment 17, part 3): Οὐκ ἀπιθάνως δὲ τὸ “ἀλλομένοσ” διηγῆσατο (17.6) καὶ τοὺς μεταλαμβάνοντας τοῦ ἀνωθεν ἐπιχορηγομένου πλουσίως καὶ αὐτοὺς ἐκβλύσαι εἰς τὴν ἐτέρων αἰώνιον ζωὴν τὰ ἐπικεχωρη-

Heracleon is here said to have provided one explanation and one commendation, the sixth and seventh references of this passage. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both as quotations. Blanc does not use quotation marks here. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both. Pagels, Poffet, and Wucherpennig quote from the sixth attributed statement as if directly from Heracleon.¹¹ Dunderberg remarks that this commendation is the best available argument for Pagels's view that Heracleon has a special kind of spiritual conversion in mind when interpreting the response of the Samaritan woman, since the unhesitant reaction that he seems to describe also coincides with an affirmation in the Tripartite Tractate that the spirituals "received knowledge straightaway from the revelation."¹²

	17.6 διηγῆσατο	17.7 ἐπαινεί
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	–
Poffet	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	–
Berglund	Summary	Paraphrase

Although it is not a *verbum dicendi*, the verb διηγέομαι ("explain") does refer to what Heracleon has expressed rather than to the thought process or views behind his words. This attributed statement seems not to repeat any information given in any other quotation or summary, and the fact that Origen accepts Heracleon's interpretation on this point also suggests that he will attempt to represent this particular view faithfully.¹³ Reference 17.6 is therefore regarded as a summary.

γημένα αὐτοῖς. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπαινεί (17.7) τὴν Σαμαρεῖτιν ὡσὰν ἐνδειξαμένην τὴν ἀδιάκριτον καὶ κατάλληλον τῇ φύσει ἑαυτῆς πίστιν, μὴ διακριθεῖσαν ἐφ' οἷς ἔλεγεν αὐτῇ. Εἰ μὲν οὖν τὴν προαίρεσιν ἀπεδέχετο, μηδὲν περὶ φύσεως αἰνιττόμενος ὡς διαφορούσης, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἂν συγκατεθέμεθα· εἰ δὲ τῇ φυσικῇ κατασκευῇ ἀναφέρει τὴν τῆς συγκαταθέσεως αἰτίαν, ὡς οὐ πᾶσιν ταύτης παρούσης, ἀνατρεπτέον αὐτοῦ τὸν λόγον.

¹¹ GCS 10, 234–35; SC 222, 65; FC 89, 82; Völker, *Quellen*, 71; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 222; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 94; Poffet, *Méthode*, 26; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 83; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 274.

¹² Dunderberg, "Valentinian Theories," 143. Cf. Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 83. See also Tri. Trac. 118.35.

¹³ Cf. Berglund, "Vacillating Stances," 551–53, where Origen's stance in this passage is categorized as "agreement."

The verb ἐπαινέω (“commend”) can also be said to describe what happens in the text rather than in the mind of its author, but is recurrently used in other contexts where Origen paraphrases or characterizes what a previous writer is saying. A typical example is when Origen interprets Isaiah’s words about the beautiful feet as a commendation of those who follow Christ:

When Isaiah says (φάσκων) “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” (Rom 10:15, cf. Isa 52:7), he has perceived the beautiful and well-timed proclamation of the apostles who follow the one who says “I am the way” (John 14:6), and commends (ἐπαινεί) the feet of those who proceed on the intelligible way of Christ Jesus and enter through the door to God.¹⁴

In this case it is obvious by comparison to the originals in Isaiah and Romans, that φάσκων (“saying”) introduces a verbatim quotation from Rom 10:15, and that the more interpretive ἐπαινεί (“he commends”) introduces an explanatory paraphrase, in which Origen expresses his own interpretation of the saying. The same pattern recurs in a number of passages in other works by Origen, where a λέγων (“saying”), which introduces a verbatim quotation of a statement, is preceded by ἐπαινεί (“he commends”), which introduces a characterization or interpretation of the same statement.¹⁵ The same pattern recurs – as we will see below – in reference to Heracleon in Passage 19, where an ἐπαινεί is followed by a φησίν (“he says”). There is no clarifying verbatim quotation here in 17.7, but the recurring pattern lets us conclude that in all probability, ἐπαινεί is used to introduce an explanatory paraphrase.¹⁶

Within this paraphrase, there is a slight repetition when Origen first speaks of the woman’s ἀδιάκριτον πίστιν (“unhesitating faith”) and then states that she did not doubt what Jesus said to her, which suggests that while the former is likely to be Origen’s explanatory paraphrase, the latter – the simple statement that the woman did not doubt Jesus’s words – may be summarized from Heracleon. In any case, the word φύσις (“nature”) seems to be chosen by Origen, based on his presumption that Heracleon’s commendation is grounded in his acceptance of the theory of three human natures. Origen’s hesitance in rejecting this comment suggests that it lacked any clear reference to this theory.

Apparently, Heracleon has interpreted Jesus’s statement, in John 4:14, that the living water, when consumed, will become a fountain of water springing up to eternal life, as concerning the spiritual life of the believer and those

¹⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.8/51 (SC 120 bis, 84.37–86.43): Ἡσαΐας δὲ φάσκων· “Ὡς ὡραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων ἀγαθὰ,” τὸ ὡραῖον καὶ ἐν καιρῷ γινόμενον τῶν ἀποστόλων ὁδεύοντων τὸν εἰπόντα· “Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ὁδός” κήρυγμα νοήσας ἐπαινεί “πόδας” τοὺς διὰ τῆς νοητῆς ὁδοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ βαδίζοντας διὰ τε τῆς θύρας εἰσιόντας πρὸς τὸν θεόν.

¹⁵ Origen, *Hom. Luc.* 1.9; *Princ.* 3.1.21; *Comm. Jo.* 6.47/245, 13.9/52.

¹⁶ This impression is strengthened by his word choice αἰνιττόμενος (“hinting”) later in the paragraph, which also suggests that he is reading something into Heracleon’s comment. Cf. Attridge, “Heracleon and John,” 68 n. 32.

around them: As a fountain does not keep its water within itself, but spreads it out, so those who drink Jesus's water will not hide their spiritual life within themselves, but benefit others in their vicinity, leading more and more people to the eternal life provided by Christ. Evidently, Heracleon has also applauded the woman for her immediate trust in what Jesus is telling her. Origen has no objections to Heracleon's remark regarding the fountain, but rejects his commendation, just in case it might be connected to the theory of three human natures.¹⁷

Origen does not hesitate to reject Heracleon's next two points:

I wonder how Heracleon, unsupported by what is written, can say (φησί), concerning "give me this water" (John 4:15), that (ὥς ἄρα / 17.8) she, having been pierced by the word for a moment, thereafter despised even the place of that so-called living water. Or how, concerning "give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water" (John 4:15), he can say that (φησὶν ὅτι / 17.9) the woman says this indicating that this water is laborious, hard to come by, and not nutritious. Where can he find evidence to show that Jacob's water is not nutritious?¹⁸

Two statements are attributed to Heracleon here, the eighth and ninth of this passage. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both as quotations. Blanc presents the ninth attributed statement as a quotation, but not the eighth. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both, and Pettipiece also adds quotation marks to the ninth. Pagels does not use this paragraph. Poffet quotes from the ninth attributed statement, and Wucherpfennig from the eighth, as if directly from Heracleon.¹⁹

¹⁷ Cf. Berglund, "Vacillating Stances," 553–56, where this response is analyzed as an example of "hypothetical approval," one of Origen's recurring stances toward Heracleon.

¹⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/65–66 (SC 222, 64.38–66.46; Brooke's fragment 17, part 4): Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ πῶς ὁ Ἡρακλέων τὸ μὴ γεγραμμένον ἐκλαβὼν φησι πρὸς τὸ "Δός μοι τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ" ὥς ἄρα (17.8) βραχέα διανυχθεῖσα ὑπὸ τοῦ λόγου ἐμίσησεν λοιπὸν καὶ τὸν τόπον ἐκείνου τοῦ λεγομένου ζώντος ὕδατος. Ἐτι δὲ καὶ πρὸς τὸ "Δός μοι τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ, ἵνα μὴ διψῶ μηδὲ διέρχωμαι ἐνθάδε ἀντλεῖν," φησὶν ὅτι (17.9) Ταῦτα λέγει ἡ γυνὴ ἐμφαίνουσα τὸ ἐπίμοχθον καὶ δυσπόριστον καὶ ἄτροφον ἐκείνου τοῦ ὕδατος. Πόθεν γὰρ δεικνύναι ἔχει ἄτροφον εἶναι τὸ τοῦ Ἰακώβ ὕδωρ;

¹⁹ GCS 10, 235; SC 222, 65–67; FC 89, 82; Völker, *Quellen*, 71–72; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 222; Poffet, *Méthode*, 29; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 83–84; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 389 n. 43.

	17.8 φησί(ν) ὡς ἄρα	17.9 φησί(ν) ὅτι
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Quotation
Pagels	–	–
Poffet	–	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation	–
Berglund	Summary	Summary

Both references are made with the *verbum dicendi* φησί(ν), followed by the complementizers ὡς ἄρα (“that”) and ὅτι (“that”).²⁰ The many key terms used by Origen suggest that he has found most of them used by Heracleon and, therefore, that the presentation is anchored in Heracleon’s text. Although ὡς ἄρα suggests a larger extent of adaptation than ὅτι does, the statements in other regards appear parallel, and the different complementizers may, in this case, be chosen for variation. Both statements are therefore categorized as summaries of Heracleon’s interpretation.

Heracleon apparently argues that the Samaritan, after a moment of insight in light of Jesus’s words, came to despise her previous source of “living water.” Presumably, he is referring not to the physical well, but to her Samaritan worship traditions, which he infers that she is abandoning after meeting Christ.²¹ The word choice μισέω (“hate” or “despise”) seems harsh, but may simply be intended to express the woman’s resolute determination to leave the religious traditions of her ancestors behind to join the movement around Jesus. The remark that the Samaritan water is “laborious, hard to come by, and not nutritious” may also be rather unspecific criticism of a foreign religious tradition, whether Heracleon has Judaism or Samaritanism in mind.

²⁰ The term “complementizer” is introduced on page 97.

²¹ Pace Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 86, who declares that Heracleon’s explanation of John 4:15 is only understandable when one considers that Heracleon regards the Samaritan as a representative for a spiritual nature, and presumes that Heracleon’s comment is made in order to argue for an abandonment of the Old Testament as Christian Scripture.

B. Passage 18: The True Husband (John 4:16–18)

The traditional distinction between Brooke's fragments 17 and 18 is not significant, since they form one uninterrupted interaction with Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*, and the distinction seems to be based solely on the distinction between the tenth and eleventh chapter of the thirteenth book of Origen's *Commentary*. For convenience, however, Brooke's numbering will be retained, and references numbered from 18.1 from this point forward.²² Origen continues:

In addition, as regards "he said to her..." (John 4:16) Heracleon says (φησί / 18.1): "It is clear that he [Jesus] is saying something like: 'if you want to receive this water, go call your husband.'" He thinks (οἶεται / 18.2) that what the Savior calls the Samaritan's husband is her "fullness," in the sense that if she comes to the Savior together with him, she will be able to receive the power, the unity, and the union with her fullness from him. For "he did not speak to her," he says (φησί / 18.3), "about calling for a man of this world, since he was not unaware that she did not have a lawful husband." Clearly he forces the text here when he says (λέγων / 18.4) that the Savior was saying to her "go call your husband and come back here" meaning her partner from the Fullness – for if this really was the case, it would have been necessary for him to also mention the man and say how she was to call him, so that she could come to the Savior with him.²³

Four references to Heracleon are made in this paragraph. Preuschen, Völker and Foerster present all four as quotations. Blanc has no markings. Heine and Pettipiece set all four in italics. Pagels quotes, with various renderings, from the second attributed statement as if it was taken directly from Heracleon. Poffet presents the three first attributed statements as Heracleon's words. Wucherpennig seems not to quote from this paragraph.²⁴

²² Cf. Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 73.

²³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.11/67–68 (SC 222, 66.1–14; Brooke's fragment 18, part 1): "Ετι δὲ ὁ Ἡρακλέων πρὸς τὸ 'Λέγει αὐτῇ' φησί (18.1)· δηλον ὅτι τοιοῦτό τι λέγων, 'εἰ θέλεις λαβεῖν τοῦτο τὸ ὕδωρ, ὑπάγε φώνησον τὸν ἄνδρα σου'. καὶ οἶεται (18.2) τῆς Σαμαρείτιδος τὸν λεγόμενον ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτήρος ἄνδρα τὸ πλήρωμα εἶναι αὐτῆς, ἵνα σὺν ἐκείνῳ γενομένη πρὸς τὸν σωτῆρα κομίσασθαι παρ' αὐτοῦ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ τὴν ἔνωσιν καὶ τὴν ἀνάκρασιν τὴν πρὸς τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς δυνηθῇ· οὐ γὰρ περὶ ἄνδρός, φησί (18.3), κοσμικοῦ ἔλεγεν αὐτῇ, ἵνα καλέσῃ, ἐπεὶ περ οὐκ ἠγνόει ὅτι οὐκ εἶχεν νόμιμον ἄνδρα. Προδήλως δὲ ἐνταῦθα βιάζεται, λέγων (18.4) αὐτῇ τὸν σωτῆρα εἰρηκέναι· 'Φώνησόν σου τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ ἔλθε ἐνθάδε,' δηλοῦντα τὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ πληρώματος σύζυγον· εἴπερ γὰρ τοῦθ' οὕτως εἶχεν, ἐχρῆν τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ τίνα τρόπον φωνητέον ἔσται αὐτὸν <εἰπεῖν>, ἵνα σὺν αὐτῷ γένηται πρὸς τὸν σωτῆρα.

²⁴ GCS 10, 235; SC 222, 67; FC 89, 82–83; Völker, *Quellen*, 72; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 223; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 64, 80, 88, 91; Poffet, *Méthode*, 31; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 86.

	18.1 φησί	18.2 οἶεται	18.3 φησί	18.4 λέγων
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	Quotation	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	–	–	–	–
Berglund	Quotation	Paraphrase	Quotation	Paraphrase

The first attributed statement is a complete sentence preceded by the *verbum dicendi* φησί (“he says”). According to our criteria, it is presented as a verbatim quotation. The second reference is made with the verb οἶεται (“he thinks”) which refers more to Heracleon’s thought process than to what he has written, and the attributed statement – which appears in indirect speech using accusative with infinitive – is therefore categorized as an explanatory paraphrase. The third attributed statement is a complete sentence into which φησί has been inserted as the fifth word. The whole sentence is taken as a verbatim quotation, with the exception of the attribution formula φησί and the conjunction γάρ, which may both have been added by Origen. The fourth attributed statement appears in indirect speech using accusative with infinitive, and is attributed with the *verbum dicendi* λέγων (“saying”). In isolation, it would be categorized as a summary. In the context of the rest of the passage, however, it is arguable that both these descriptions of Heracleon’s alternative husband are explanatory paraphrases of a third description, which is quoted verbatim in the following paragraph:

But if she was unaware of her own husband in the intended sense, as Heracleon says (φησί / 18.5), but ashamed to admit that she had a lover rather than a husband, in the straightforward sense – how could the instruction “go call your husband and come back here” be anything but meaningless? Then, in reference to “This you said truthfully” – “because you do not have a man,” he says (φησίν / 18.6): “...since the Samaritan did not have a husband in the world, for her husband was in the eternity.” We are, for our part, reading “Five men have you had,” but in Heracleon we have found (εὑρομεν / 18.7) “Six men have you had.” He explains (ἐρμηνεύει / 18.8) that the totality of material vice is revealed in the six husbands, with which she had gotten herself entangled and become intimate beyond reason, with whom she had sex, and by whom she was insulted, despised and abandoned. It must be said to him that if the spiritual woman really had sex with them, the spiritual woman sinned. And if the spiritual woman sinned, she was not a good tree – for “a good tree cannot bear bad fruit” according to the Gospel. It is clear that their imagination carries them away. If it is impossible for the good tree to bear bad fruit, and if the Samaritan was a good

tree because she happened to be spiritual, it would be consistent with this to say that either was her sexual practice not a sin, or she did not have sex with them.²⁵

Four additional statements are attributed to Heracleon here, two with φησί(v), one with εὑρομεν (“we find”) and one with ἐρμηνεύει (“he explains”). Preuschen has no special markings for the seventh, but presents the others as quotations. Völker and Foerster present all four as quotations. Blanc presents the sixth and seventh with quotation marks, but not the fifth and eighth. Heine and Pettipiece put all four in italics. Pagels seems not to quote from this passage, but Poffet quotes from the fifth and eighth attributed statements, and Wucherpennig from the sixth and from the eighth, as if directly from Heracleon.²⁶

	18.5 φησί	18.6 φησίν	18.7 εὑρομεν	18.8 ἐρμηνεύει
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Quotation	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	–	–	Quotation
Wucherpennig	–	Quotation	–	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase	Quotation	Quotation	Summary

²⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.11/69–74 (SC 222, 68.14–36; Brooke’s fragment 18, part 2): Ἄλλ’ ἐπεὶ, ὡς Ἡρακλέων φησί (18.5), κατὰ τὸ νοούμενον ἡγνόνει τὸν ἴδιον ἄνδρα, κατὰ δὲ τὸ ἀπλοῦν ἡσχύνετο εἰπεῖν ὅτι μοιχόν, οὐχὶ δὲ ἄνδρα εἶχεν, πῶς οὐχὶ μάτην ἔσται προστάσων ὁ λέγων. “Ὑπαγε, φώνησον τὸν ἄνδρα σου, καὶ ἐλθὲ ἐνθάδε”; Εἶτα πρὸς τοῦτο “Ἀληθὲς εἶρηκας ὅτι ἄνδρα οὐκ ἔχεις” φησίν (18.6). ἐπεὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ οὐκ εἶχεν ἄνδρα ἢ Σαμαρεῖτις· ἦν γὰρ αὐτῆς ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι. Ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν ἀνέγνωμεν. “Πέντε ἄνδρας ἔσχες”. παρὰ δὲ τῷ Ἡρακλέωνι εὑρομεν (18.7). “Ἐξ ἄνδρας ἔσχες.” Καὶ ἐρμηνεύει (18.8) γε τὴν ὑλικὴν πᾶσαν κακίαν δηλοῦσθαι διὰ τῶν ἐξ ἀνδρῶν, ἢ συνεπέπλεκτο καὶ ἐπλησίαζεν παρὰ λόγον πορνεύουσα καὶ ἐνυβριζομένη καὶ ἀθετουμένη καὶ ἐγκαταλειπομένη ὑπ’ αὐτῶν. Λεκτέον δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὅτι εἴπερ ἐπόρνευεν ἢ πνευματικῇ, ἡμάρτανεν ἢ πνευματικῇ· εἰ δὲ ἡμάρτανεν ἢ πνευματικῇ, δένδρον ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἦν ἢ πνευματικῇ· κατὰ γὰρ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. “Οὐ δύναται δένδρον ἀγαθὸν καρποὺς πονηροῦς ἐνεγκεῖν.” Καὶ ὁ δὴλον ὅτι οἴχεται αὐτοῖς τὰ τῆς μυθοποιᾶς. Εἰ δὲ ἀδύνατόν ἐστι τὸ ἀγαθὸν δένδρον φέρειν πονηροὺς καρποὺς, καὶ ἀγαθὸν δένδρον ἢ Σαμαρεῖτις ἢ πνευματικῇ τυγχάνουσα, ἀκόλουθον αὐτῷ λέγειν ἐστίν, ὅτι ἦτοι οὐκ ἦν ἁμαρτία ἢ πορνεία αὐτῆς, ἢ οὐκ αὐτὴ ἐπόρνευσεν.

²⁶ GCS 10, 235–36; SC 222, 67–69; FC 89, 83; Völker, *Quellen*, 72; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 223; Poffet, *Méthode*, 33, 35; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 86–87; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 134, 84, 389, 398.

The fifth reference consists of the dependent clause ὡς Ἡρακλέων φησί (“as Heracleon says”), inserted into a longer dependent clause, beginning with ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ (“but since” or “but seeing that”), in which Heracleon describes the grounds for his second objection: Heracleon’s idea that Jesus is referring to a non-corporeal husband of which the woman is unaware does not help him interpret Jesus’s instruction as a measured and insightful request. Despite the superficial similarity between this attribution formula and a single inserted φησί, this description is more likely to reflect Origen’s understanding of Heracleon’s interpretation than a verbatim quotation, and should be categorized as an explanatory paraphrase.²⁷ In contrast, the sixth attributed statement is a disconnected dependent clause preceded by a single φησὶν, and should be categorized as a verbatim quotation.

The seventh reference is unusual in that Origen refers not to what Heracleon says or thinks, but to what he finds (εὑρομεν) in Heracleon (παρὰ τῷ Ἡρακλέωνι). Since the preposition παρὰ followed by an author’s name in dative is a well-established way of referring to the text of a previous author,²⁸ there is no question that this is also a verbatim quotation. The eighth attributed statement appears in indirect speech, using accusative with infinitive, attributed by the verb ἐρμηνεύει (“he explains”). Although this is not a *verbum dicendi*, it does refer to what Heracleon does in his writing, not in his mind, and the statement is therefore categorized as a summary.

In the first quoted statement, Heracleon points out the context of Jesus’s instruction: Jesus does not ask the woman to go get her husband out of the blue, but as an answer to the woman’s request for living water – which suggests that he wants her to comply before he will grant her request.²⁹ Heracleon expresses this connection in the form of a cautiously presented paraphrase.³⁰ The second quoted statement uses the idea that Jesus has a supernatural insight into the people he encounters – suggested in John 1:47–51 and explicitly declared in John 2:23–25 – to argue that Jesus cannot possibly have been referring to an earthly husband, since he was well aware of the woman’s relation-

²⁷ The similar phrase ὡς φησὶν Ἡρόδοτος (“as Herodotus says”) has been identified by both Zepernick, “Die Exzerpte des Athenaeus in den *Dipnosophisten* und ihre Glaubwürdigkeit,” 318–19, and Lenfant, “Les ‘fragments’ d’Hérodote dans les *Deipnosophistes*,” 51, to be an indicator that Athenaeus is paraphrasing Herodotus rather than quoting him. Cf. also Baron, “The Delimitation of Fragments in Jacoby’s *FGrHist*,” 106 n. 49.

²⁸ See e.g. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Comp.* 9, 18; Polybius, *Historiae* 9.2.4.

²⁹ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 158, correctly notes that Heracleon suggests a connection of cause and effect here.

³⁰ The use of paraphrases to express one’s interpretive conclusions is a well established practice in ancient literary criticism, and has previously been recognized as part of Heracleon’s exegetical procedure by Poffet, *Méthode*, 62; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 40, 78, 94, 161–63, 196, 202, 243, 277–78.

ship situation. This argument is thus well connected to the thought-world of the Fourth Gospel.

There is an intriguing tension between three alternate descriptions of the alternative husband Heracleon thinks Jesus is speaking about. In Paraphrase 18.2 he is called her πλήρωμα (“fullness”), seemingly in the sense that she may achieve her true potential if paired with him. In Paraphrase 18.4, he is rather her σύζυγος (“partner”), which is located in the πλήρωμα, and in Quotation 18.6, he is described as a husband (ἀνὴρ) located in the eternity (αἰών). It is unlikely that all three of these ideas were present in Heracleon’s writing, and the triplication is likely to be due to Origen restating Heracleon’s idea in his own words. There is no question that priority should be given to the third version, which is not only presented as a verbatim quotation, but also corresponds more closely to the language of John 4:16. The terms σύζυγος and πλήρωμα seem therefore to be chosen by Origen in an effort to rephrase Heracleon’s concept in third-century terms. Origen’s multiple versions of the description suggest that Heracleon’s original statement was rather vague. Perhaps there is an idea of a personal guardian angel here,³¹ or a vaguely Platonic notion of an ideal version of oneself, a destiny that one should attempt to emulate.³²

Origen’s first objection is simple: Jesus cannot have been referring to anything other than an earthly husband, since he otherwise would have to specify the means by which this non-corporeal ἀνὴρ is to be summoned. Unfortunately, this line of argument does not add any specificity to the idea expressed by Heracleon. His second objection is more subtle: if Jesus is referring to a husband which is unknown to the woman, who is ashamed of her current relationship status, his request is not well thought out, but rather meaningless (μάτην). Such a request is clearly incompatible with Origen’s impression of the Johannine Jesus.

Quotation 18.7 regards the unrelated question of how many sexual partners the woman has had. Heracleon gives the number as six, but Origen objects that, in his manuscript, he reads “five.” There is no known manuscript with the sixth numeral in John 4:18 rather than the fifth, so it is doubtful that Heracleon had access to such a manuscript, and he is more likely to have arrived at his number by adding the woman’s current sexual partner to her five pre-

³¹ The notion that certain angels watch over individual human beings and/or intercede for them in the heavenly court may be present in Ps 91:11, Matt 18:10, Acts 12:15, Heb 1:14, Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 18, John Chrysostom, *Hom. Col.* 3, Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1.113.

³² That the partner is male is not necessarily significant, since the alleged metaphor starts with the male ἀνὴρ (“husband”) of Jesus’s instruction, but suggests that she may gain the comparatively large freedom associated with a male identity.

vious ones.³³ Judging from Origen’s ensuing summary, that number was significant to Heracleon as a symbol for τὴν ὕλικήν πᾶσαν κακίαν (“the totality of material vice”). One may note that κακία (“evil”, “vice”) is the noun of Heracleon’s expression, and speculate that a material vice, in Heracleon’s usage, is a vice that arises from excessive use of a material good – such as greed, gluttony, and lust. It is also notable that while Origen burdens the woman with guilt for her sexual behavior, Heracleon seems rather to describe her as a victim of male abuse – a woman who was despised, not loved, by her sexual partners, who eventually abandoned her. Heracleon’s intent is probably not to describe the woman as without sin, but rather to use her relationships as metaphors for questionable human behavior that may be attractive and enticing initially, but eventually leads to ruin.

Origen’s response to Heracleon’s material vice is clearly based on the dubious idea that Heracleon presents the Samaritan woman as a sinless spiritual person. He asserts that the sexual behavior described by Heracleon indicates that the woman is a sinner, and insists – with reference to Matt 7:18 – that it is impossible for a good tree to bear bad fruit. As the claim he is refuting is not substantiated in his quotations from Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata*, it may be a claim made by another group, such as “those who bring in the natures.”

C. Passage 19: The Right Place for Worship (John 4:19–20)

In John 4:19–20, the Samaritan woman concludes that Jesus is a prophet, and refers to the conflict between her ancestors, who worshiped on “this mountain,” and the Jews, who claim that Jerusalem is the right place for worship. Origen explains that her question is quite natural, since Jews and Samaritans worshiped in different locations: Jews in the Jerusalem temple, Samaritans on mount Gerizim. Noting that the word “Gerizim” means διατομή (“separation”) or διαίρεσις (“division”), he argues that the Samaritans in the narrative must be interpreted as a symbol of the heterodox, who – like the Samaritans – hold a false opinion (ψευδοδοξία) on divine matters. The Jews of the story, by contrast, Origen takes to represent his own Christian community who hold the right opinions.³⁴

Then, he turns to Heracleon:³⁵

³³ Poffet, *Méthode*, 34. Poffet and Janssens, “Héracléon,” 135 n. 43, both assert that Heracleon has not willfully altered his text, which is argued by Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 86–87.

³⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.12/75–14/90.

³⁵ See SC 222, 79 n. 4 on possible corruptions in this passage.

In regard to these words, Heracleon says (λέγει / 19.1) that the Samaritan is gracefully agreeing to what is said to her by him [Jesus]. “For only a prophet,” he says (φησίν / 19.2), “can know everything.” He is mistaken on both points: the angels can also know such things, and the prophet does not know everything. “For we know in part, and we prophesy in part” (1 Cor 13:9), whether we are prophesying or knowing. Next, he commends (ἐπαινεῖ / 19.3) the Samaritan for acting in a way that suits her nature, and for neither lying nor acknowledging her own obscenity outright. “After being persuaded,” he says (φησίν / 19.4), “that he was a prophet, she asked him, and revealed at the same time the cause for her sexual behavior, since she was ignorant of God and neglected both his worship and everything that was essential to her in life, and always found herself in unfortunate circumstances in life.” “For [otherwise] she would not,” he says (φησίν / 19.5), “have come to the well that was outside of the town.” I wonder how he thought the cause of the sexual behavior is manifested, and why ignorance became a cause for her offences also in regard to the worship of God. These things seem to be rash associations without any plausible argument. To this he also adds (προστίθουσιν) that (ὅτι / 19.6) she wishes to know how, by pleasing whom, and by worshiping God, she might be liberated from her sexual practice, when she says “our ancestors worshiped on this mountain” (Joh 4:20) etc. This claim is exceedingly easy to refute, for how could her wanting to know whom to please liberate her from her sexual sins?³⁶

Six references to Heracleon are made in this passage. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster render all six as quotations. Blanc presents all six as plain text. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all six. Pagels quotes from the second and sixth as if taken directly from Heracleon, which indicates that she considers Origen’s references to be verbatim quotations. Poffet quotes from all six as if directly from Heracleon.³⁷ Wucherpennig does not quote this passage.

³⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.15/91–94 (SC 222, 78.1–80.26; Brooke’s fragment 19): Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων εἰς τὰ αὐτὰ ῥήματα λέγει (19.1) εὐσχημόνως ὡμολογηκέναι τὴν Σαμαρεῖτιν τὰ ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ πρὸς αὐτὴν εἰρημένα· προφήτου γὰρ μόνου, φησίν (19.2), ἐστὶν εἰδέναι τὰ πάντα· ψευδόμενος ἐκατέρως· καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἄγγελοι τὰ τοιαῦτα δύνανται εἰδέναι, καὶ ὁ προφήτης οὐ πάντα οἶδεν· “Ἐκ μέρους γὰρ γινώσκωμεν καὶ ἐκ μέρους προφητεύομεν,” κἄν προφητεύωμεν ἢ γινώσκωμεν. Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ἐπαινεῖ (19.3) ὡς πρεπόντως τῇ αὐτῆς φύσει ποιήσασαν τὴν Σαμαρεῖτιν, καὶ μὴτε ψευσαμένην μὴτε ἄντικρυς ὁμολογήσασαν τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἀσχημοσύνην· πεπεισμένην τέ φησιν (19.4) αὐτὴν ὅτι προφήτης εἶη, ἐρωτᾶν αὐτὸν ἅμα τὴν αἰτίαν ἐμφαίνουσιν δι’ ἣν ἐξεπόρνευσεν, ἅτε δι’ ἄγνοιαν θεοῦ καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὸν θεὸν λατρείας ἀμελήσασαν καὶ πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὸν βίον αὐτῇ ἀναγκαίων, καὶ ἄλλως αἰεὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ τυγχάνουσιν· οὐ γὰρ ἄν, φησίν (19.5), αὐτῇ ἤρχετο ἐπὶ τὸ φρέαρ ἕξω τῆς πόλεως τυγχάνον. Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ πῶς ἐνόμισεν ἐμφαίνεσθαι τὴν αἰτίαν τοῦ ἐκπεπορνευκέναι, ἢ ἄγνοιαν αἰτίαν γεγενῆσθαι ἐπὶ τῶν πλημμελημάτων καὶ τῆς κατὰ θεὸν λατρείας· ἀλλ’ ἔοικεν ταῦτα ὡς ἔτυχεν ἐσχεδιακέναι χωρὶς πάσης πιθανότητος. Προστίθουσιν τε τούτοις· ὅτι (19.6) βουλομένη μαθεῖν πῶς καὶ τίνι εὐαρεστήσασα καὶ θεῷ προσκυνήσασα ἀπαλλαγείη τοῦ πορνεύειν λέγει τὸ “Οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ προσεκύνησαν” καὶ τὸ ἐξῆς. Σφόδρα δὲ ἐστὶν ἐνέλεγκτα τὰ εἰρημένα· πόθεν γὰρ ὅτι βούλεται μαθεῖν τίνι εὐαρεστήσασα ἀπαλλαγείη τοῦ πορνεύειν;

³⁷ GCS 10, 239; SC 222, 79–81; FC 89, 86–87; Völker, *Quellen*, 73; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 223–24; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 88; Poffet, *Méthode*, 37–38; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 89–90.

	19.1 λέγει	19.2 φησὶν	19.3 ἐπαινεῖ	19.4 φησὶν	19.5 φησὶν	19.6 προστίθουσιν τε τοῦτοις ὅτι
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	Quotation	–	–	–	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherp.	–	–	–	–	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Quotation	Paraphrase	Quotation	Quotation	Summary

The first statement, attributed to Heracleon with the *verbum dicendi* λέγει (“he says”), is presented in indirect speech using accusative with infinitive, and is thus considered a summary. The second statement is a complete sentence, into which the attribution formula φησὶν (“he says”) has been inserted as the fourth word. Since this is a way in which Origen often presents verbatim quotations, this statement is considered a verbatim quotation. The third statement is attributed with the verb ἐπαινέω (“commend”) and presented by use of participles. This statement half repeats Summary 17.7, which suggests that the repeated observation that the Samaritan’s behavior is in correspondence with her nature (φύσις) might be inferred by Origen rather than expressed by Heracleon. The fourth and fifth statements are also complete sentences into which φησὶν has been inserted a few words in. The repeated attribution formula may imply that Origen at some point has transitioned from verbatim quotation to summary without indicating this transition, but may also be intended merely to clarify that it is still Heracleon who is speaking, before the transition to Origen’s response beginning with οὐκ οἶδα (“I do not know”). The sixth statement is preceded by ὅτι (“that”) and is therefore considered to be presented in indirect speech. It is attributed by the verb προστίθωμι (“add”), which is not a *verbum dicendi*, but nevertheless refers to what Heracleon has put into his text. The statement, which cannot be inferred from nearby quotations, is therefore considered a summary.

The first point in Origen’s presentation seems to fairly reflect Heracleon’s view. That the Samaritan concludes that Jesus is a prophet based on his supernatural insight into her life situation is clear already from the Johannine narrative, and based on the notion that only a prophet could have access to such knowledge, as expressed in Quotation 19.2, the praise in Summary 19.1

appears to be a reasonable remark.³⁸ Origen's two-tiered criticism is technically correct, but seems to demand more precision in Heracleon's prose than is reasonable. It is not clear that Heracleon has considered the possibility that the Samaritan might take Jesus to be an angel, and his τὰ πάντα ("everything") is probably not intended to be taken at its full ontological power, but merely to indicate the lack of ordinary human boundaries to the potential knowledge shown in prophetic speech.

In Quotation 19.4, Heracleon holds that the Samaritan's question is based on her identification of Jesus as a prophet, which reveals, he argues, that her previous behavior was due to her ignorance of God (ἄγνοιαν θεοῦ). Pagels reads this phrase as revealing that he believes in a knowledge (γνώσις) that in itself is salvific.³⁹ But the knowledge referred to in this quotation is clearly a mere prerequisite for the right worship, which in turn may lead to a more ethical behavior and a better life situation overall. Heracleon's notion of knowledge is, then, similar to Paul's idea, expressed in Rom 10:14, that faith is necessary for salvation, basic knowledge is necessary for faith, and preaching is necessary to give people knowledge. Heracleon's remark can easily be read in a similar frame of reference, where basic Christian education is a prerequisite for orthopraxy.

D. Passage 20: On False Worship (John 4:21)

After the lemma quoting Jesus's line in John 4:21 – stating that the time has come to worship the Father “neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem” – Origen uncharacteristically presents Heracleon's interpretation before his own exposition:

Although Heracleon seems (ἔδοξεν) to have made a most plausible observation (τετηρηκέναι / 20.1) on this passage – that “Trust me, woman” is not said in answer to her previous statements, but is requested of her only now – he obscures this not unconvincing observation by stating (εἰπὼν / 20.2) that the devil or his order is called a mountain – since “the devil,” he says (φησὶν / 20.3), “was one part of the entirety of matter, and the order was the whole mountain of evil, a deserted den of wild animals that all those who lived before the law was given, as well as the Gentiles, were worshiping” – and that the creation or the creator, whom the Jews were worshiping, is called Jerusalem. But secondarily, he has also believed (ἐνόμισεν / 20.4) that the creation, whom the non-Jews were worshiping, is called a mountain, and that the creator, whom the Jews served, is called Jerusalem. Thus, he says (φησὶν / 20.5), “you as spiritual people will worship neither the creation nor the Maker (οὔτε τῇ κτίσει οὔτε τῷ δημιουργῶ), but the Father of Truth.” And “he [Jesus] does include

³⁸ Bastit's remark, in Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 157, that Heracleon pays attention to the rhetoric of the Johannine text appears to make too much of the adverb εὐσχημόνως (“gracefully”), which may be chosen by Origen rather than Heracleon.

³⁹ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 56–57, 88, 108.

her,” he says (φησὶν / 20.6), “as already a believer, and counts her among those who worship in accordance with the truth.”⁴⁰

Origen continues to declare that “we” symbolically understand Mount Gerizim as the “so-called piety of the heterodox,” and the Jerusalem temple as the simple rule of faith (κανών) of the majority, beyond which the holy and perfect ones will follow the angels into a better worship of the Father. It is significant that he is called “Father,” Origen claims, since it implies that the worshiper has become his child.⁴¹

The passage comprises six references to Heracleon. The first is made with a combination of ἔδοξεν and τετηρηκέναι (“he seems to have made an observation”), the second with the aorist participle εἰπών (“stating”), the third, fifth, and sixth with a single φησὶν (“he says”), and the fourth with ἐνόμισεν (“he believed”). Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all but the first one as quotations. Blanc presents all six without any special markings. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all six attributed statements. Pagels quotes from the second and third references as if directly from Heracleon. Poffet presents five of the six statements as Heracleon’s words, silently leaving out the fourth, which he presumably takes to be Origen’s addition. Wucherpennig quotes from the second, the third and the fifth as if taken directly from Heracleon.⁴²

⁴⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.16/95–97 (SC 222, 80.1–82.16; Brooke’s fragment 20): Ὅτε ἔδοξεν πιθανώτατα τετηρηκέναι ὁ Ἡρακλέων ἐν τούτοις (20.1) τὸ ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν προτέρων μὴ εἰρησθαι αὐτῇ. “Πίστευέ μοι, γύναι,” νῦν δὲ τοῦτο αὐτῇ προστετάχθαι, τότε ἐπεθόλωσεν τὸ μὴ ἀπίθανον παρατήρημα, εἰπών (20.2) ὅρος μὲν τὸν διάβολον λέγεσθαι ἢ τὸν κόσμον αὐτοῦ, ἐπεὶ περ μέρος ἐν ὃ διάβολος ὅλης τῆς ὕλης, φησὶν (20.3), ἦν, ὃ δὲ κόσμος τὸ σύμπαν τῆς κακίας ὅρος, ἔρημον οἰκητήριον θηρίων, ᾧ προσεκύνουν πάντες οἱ πρὸ νόμου καὶ οἱ ἔθνη· κοί· Ἱεροσόλυμα δὲ τὴν κτίσιν ἢ τὸν κτίστην, ᾧ προσεκύνουν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι. Ἀλλὰ καὶ δευτέρως ὅρος μὲν ἐνόμισεν (20.4) εἶναι τὴν κτίσιν ἢ <οἱ> ἔθνη· κοί· Ἱεροσόλυμα δὲ τὸν κτίστην <ᾧ> οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐλάτρευον. Ὑμεῖς οὖν, φησὶν (20.5), οἷον εἰ οἱ πνευματικοὶ οὔτε τῇ κτίσει οὔτε τῷ δημιουργῷ προσκυνήσετε, ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρὶ τῆς ἀληθείας· καὶ συμπαραλαμβάνει γε, φησὶν (20.6), αὐτὴν ὡς ἤδη πιστὴν καὶ συναριθμουμένην τοῖς κατὰ ἀλήθειαν προσκυνηταῖς.

⁴¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.16/98–100.

⁴² GCS 10, 239–40; SC 222, 81–83; FC 89, 87–88; Völker, *Quellen*, 73–74; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 225; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 89; Poffet, *Méthode*, 41–42; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 92; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 126, 130, 158 n. 263, 169, 229, 387. In 258 n. 49, Wucherpennig’s argument presumes ἐπεὶ περ to be quoted directly from Heracleon. In addition, Klaus Koschorke, *Die Polemik der Gnostiker gegen das kirchliche Christentum*, NHS 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 148 n. 67, quotes 20.4 as if directly from Heracleon.

	20.1 ἔδοξεν πιθανώτατα τετηρηκέναι	20.2 εἰπών	20.3 φησὶν	20.4 ἐνόμισεν	20.5 φησὶν	20.6 φησὶν
Preuschen	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	–	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	–	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	Quotation	Quotation	–	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	–	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpff.	–	Quotation	Quotation	–	Quotation	–
Berglund	Paraphrase	Summary	Quotation	Paraphrase	Quotation	Quotation

In the first reference, Origen cautiously speaks of an observation (παράτηρημα) that Heracleon seems (ἔδοξεν) to have made in the Johannine text. As this does not refer directly to Heracleon's words, but to Origen's understanding of them, the reference is an explanatory paraphrase. In the second, εἰπών ("stating") is followed by an infinitive phrase, which makes the attributed statement presented in indirect speech by use of a *verbum dicendi*. It is therefore categorized as a summary. In the third, the inserted φησὶν ("he says") appears to be entirely grammatically unrelated to the surrounding prose. Its function may, therefore, be to indicate that Origen has switched from summary to verbatim quotation somewhere between the ἐπεὶπερ ("since") that introduces the clause and the ἦν ("he was") that closes it.⁴³ The exact point of this switch is impossible to know, and it is difficult to insist on any of the words preceding the reference to be quoted verbatim. In the fourth reference, Origen uses the aorist ἐνόμισεν ("he believed"), followed by an infinitive phrase, to present what he takes to be a second interpretation by Heracleon. The verb refers to Heracleon's thoughts rather than his written words, and the attributed statement is, therefore, an explanatory paraphrase.⁴⁴ The fifth and sixth attributed statements are both complete sentences into which the single *verbum dicendi* φησὶν ("he says") has been inserted as the third and fifth word, respectively. According to our criteria, they are both verbatim quotations.

⁴³ The example is quite similar to a case in Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 6.261c (LCL 224, 200) where Athenaeus quotes Herodotus, and where Lenfant, "Les 'fragments' d'Hérodote dans les *Deipnosophistes*," 52, has identified an inserted φησὶν as marking the transition from paraphrase to verbatim quotation.

⁴⁴ Due to this repetition, the adverb δευτέρως ("secondly," "once again") might not be indicating a secondary interpretation given by Heracleon – as taken by Blanc, SC 222, 83, and Heine, FC 89, 87 – but to Origen's repetition of what has already been stated.

The main part of Heracleon's interpretation appears to be his identification of the two mountains. Having a limited interest in Samaritans, he recontextualizes Jesus's distinction between Jews and Samaritans – Mount Zion and Mount Gerizim – into a division between the Jews, who worship in the Jerusalem temple, and the Gentiles, who worship the pagan gods who reside on Mount Olympus. The latter mountain is described as a deserted place, a den of wild animals, a heap of evil, and as the order of the devil.⁴⁵ By describing Gentile worship as an order instigated by the devil, Heracleon takes a thoroughly negative stance towards traditional Greek piety. In his explanatory paraphrase, Origen expresses Heracleon's distinction in the terms of Rom 1:25, where Paul contrasts worshiping the creator to worshiping the creation, exemplified by images of birds, animals, and reptiles.⁴⁶

In Quotation 20.5, Heracleon paraphrases John 4:21–23 into the context of Jews and Gentiles. Jesus's second-person plural προσκυνήσετε (“you will worship”) is applied to Heracleon's audience, who are called πνευματικοί (“spiritual people”). But there is no mention of φύσεις (“natures”) here, and πνευματικοί does not refer to one of three human natures but to insightful Christian believers, in contrast to beginners, in the same sense as Paul uses the term in 1 Cor 3:1.⁴⁷ This passage is among the material to which Pagels refers to substantiate her repeated claim that Heracleon uses the term “pneumatic nature” to characterize the Samaritan woman and that he demonstrates “through every detail of his exegesis that she represents the pneumatic elect.”⁴⁸ We may note, however, that Heracleon primarily argues that Jesus regards the woman as a πιστή (“believer” or “faithful”), and that the small adverb ἤδη (“already”) in Quotation 20.6 adds a temporal aspect to his remark. The inclusion of the woman in the category of πνευματικοί is secondary, based on the juxtaposition of Quotations 20.5 and 20.6, and comes with

⁴⁵ The connection of the devil to a part of the entirety of matter is more difficult to interpret, partly because parts of it may have originated with Origen, and partly because the devil being μέρος ἐν (“one part,” “one share,” or “one portion”) of the entirety of matter can be read as the devil being a material being, the devil having been involved in creating a part of the material world, or as the devil having (temporary) dominion over a portion of the material reality.

⁴⁶ This connection is noted by several previous scholars including Blanc, SC 222, 82; Heine, FC 89, 88; Massaux, *Influence*, 435–36.

⁴⁷ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 387–88. Cf. Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 176–78, who argues that both Heracleon and the Tripartite Tractate build on Aristides, *Apology* 2 to distinguish between the three categories of Gentiles, Jews, and Christians. Irenaeus's description of the theory of the three natures may thus be irrelevant for the understanding not only of Heracleon but of other “Valentinian” texts. Concerning the theory of the three natures in the Tripartite Tractate, see also the cognitive reading in Linjamaa, *The Ethics of The Tripartite Tractate*.

⁴⁸ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 83, 86. Pagels's explicit claim that Heracleon in this passage identifies the Samaritan woman as a “pneumatic” appears in *Gnostic Exegesis*, 90.

the implication that Heracleon uses *πιστή* and *πνευματική* as synonyms. Heracleon's point is not that the woman is born with the status of a *πιστή* or *πνευματική*, but that she has reached this status quicker than expected. He seems not to be concerned with inherent human natures, but with the process of conversion from the Samaritan tradition to the movement around Jesus as a result of the Savior's own missionary activity.

On the other hand, Heracleon does make a clear distinction between a higher divinity, *ὁ πατήρ τῆς ἀληθείας* ("The Father of Truth"), and a lower being, *ὁ δημιουργός* ("the Maker"); presumably, this Maker is identical to the *ἕτερος* ("someone else") by whom, according to Summary 1.8, the material world has been created. And while the Gentile cult – in conjunction with Rom 1:23, 25 – is described as being directed towards *ἡ κτίσις* ("the creation"), the Jewish cult is deemed to be a worship of the Maker. Like the heterodox, Heracleon distinguishes between a lower divinity involved in creating the material world, whom he deems unworthy of worship, and the Father of Christ, whose worship he encourages. However, as we saw in Summary 1.8, Heracleon does not view the Maker as ignorant of or in opposition to the Father, but as a servant carrying out a task given to him by the Word.⁴⁹ Heracleon's view is therefore quite different from the one used by Origen to describe the heterodox.

In addition, Heracleon has observed not only that Jesus's *προσκυνήσετε* ("you will worship") includes the woman among those worshipping the Father in spirit and truth, but also – if one is to believe Origen's paraphrase – that Jesus, up to this point, has not asked the Samaritan to trust or believe him, but that her recognition of him as a prophet has changed the nature of the conversation. Heracleon is attentive to the details of the text he is analyzing.

E. Passage 21: Knowing Whom You Worship (John 4:22)

Concerning Jesus's statement, in John 4:22, that "you worship what you do not know, but we worship what we do know, since the salvation is from the Jews," Origen remarks that *ὕμεῖς* ("you") on the literal level refers to the Samaritans, but on the anagogical level must refer to "those who are heterodox concerning the scriptures," just as Jesus's *ἡμεῖς* ("we") must include Jesus himself, as well as those who follow him and seek salvation in a Christian reading of the Jewish scriptures.⁵⁰ He also takes interest in Heracleon's reading of *ὕμεῖς*:

⁴⁹ See the analysis on page 116 above. Cf. also the analysis of Reference 22.7 below, where Heracleon is referring to who he thinks to be the true creator.

⁵⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.17/101.

Consider if Heracleon has not understood “you” in a peculiar way, beyond the context of the words, and explained (δηγήσατο / 21.1) it as the Jews and the Gentiles. For that is what it is to have “you Jews” be said to the Samaritan woman, or “you Gentiles” to Samaria! The heterodox really do not know what they worship, because it is a fiction rather than a fact, and a myth rather than a mystery. But the one who worships the Maker (τὸν δημιουργόν) – especially in the sense of the inward Jew and the spiritual Jewish traditions – he knows whom he worships. It would be too much to now present the quotations Heracleon makes from the so-called “Preaching of Peter,” and take a stand on them by examining whether this document is genuine, spurious, or a mixture. Therefore, we opt to pass it over, and note only that he conveys (φέρειν / 21.2), as a teaching by Peter, that one must not worship as the Greeks do, who accept material objects and pay service to pieces of wood and stone, and not revere the divine as the Jews do, since they do not know God – even though they believe themselves to be the only ones who do – but serve angels, Mên, and Selênê.⁵¹

In the last quoted sentence, Origen repeats a claim that Jewish religious practice fails to revere the highest God, and in actuality serves lower beings such as angels and two ancient lunar divinities, Mên and Selênê. Mên is one of the most important male gods of west Anatolia, and usually identified with the moon.⁵² Selênê is the name of the Greek goddess most commonly identified with the moon, who in both Hesiod and in the Homeric hymns is described as a sister of Helios (the sun god) and of Eos (the dawn goddess).⁵³ Since the geographer Strabo (ca. 62 BCE–24 CE) describes a temple in Sebaste dedicated to both Mên and Selênê,⁵⁴ it is not unreasonable for the author of the Preaching of Peter (Πέτρου κήρυγμα) to unify their cults when characterizing Jewish worship as a veneration of the moon. Origen questions this view of Jewish worship and affirms that the Jewish sacrifices are offered to the creator of everything, even though he also notes that Stephen, in Acts 7:42, claims

⁵¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.17/102–4 (SC 222, 84.9–86.29; Brooke’s fragment 21): Ὅρα δὲ εἰ μὴ ἰδίως καὶ παρὰ τὴν ἀκολουθίαν τῶν ῥητῶν ὁ Ἡρακλέων ἐκδεξάμενος τὸ ὕμεις ἀντὶ τοῦ “Οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι <καὶ οἱ> ἔθνη” δηγήσατο (21.1). Οἶον δὲ ἐστὶν πρὸς τὴν Σαμαρεΐτιν λέγεσθαι· Ὑμεῖς οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, ἢ πρὸς Σαμαρεΐτιν· Ὑμεῖς οἱ ἔθνη; ἀλλ’ οὐκ οἶδασιν γε οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι ὃ προσκυνοῦσιν, ὅτι πλάσμα ἐστὶν καὶ οὐκ ἀλήθεια, καὶ μῦθος καὶ <οὐ> μυστηρία· ὁ δὲ προσκυνῶν τὸν δημιουργόν, μάλιστα κατὰ τὸν ἐν κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαῖον καὶ τοὺς λόγους τοὺς πνευματικούς· Ἰουδαϊκούς, οὗτος ὁ οἶδεν προσκυνεῖ. Πολὺ δὲ ἐστὶν νῦν παρατίθεσθαι τοῦ Ἡρακλέωνος τὰ ῥητά, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐπιγεγραμμένου “Πέτρου κηρύγματος” παραλαμβανόμενα, καὶ ἴστασθαι πρὸς αὐτὰ ἐξετάζοντας καὶ περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου, πότερον ποτε γνήσιόν ἐστιν ἢ νόθον ἢ μικτόν· διόπερ ἐκόντες ὑπερτιθέμεθα, ταῦτα μόνον ἐπισημειούμενοι φέρειν (21.2) αὐτόν, ὡς Πέτρου διδάξαντος, μὴ δεῖν καθ’ Ἑλλήνας προσκυνεῖν, τὰ τῆς ὕλης πράγματα ἀποδεχομένους καὶ λατρεύοντας ξύλοις καὶ λίθοις, μήτε κατὰ Ἰουδαίους σέβειν τὸ θεῖον, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτοὶ μόνον οἰόμενοι ἐπίστασθαι θεὸν ἀγνοοῦσιν αὐτόν, λατρεύοντες ἀγγέλοις καὶ μηνὶ καὶ σελήνῃ.

⁵² Richard L. Gordon, “Men (Μήν, Also Μείς),” *OCD*, 929; Ulrich W. Hiesinger, “Three Images of the God Mên,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 71 (1967): 303–10, here 303.

⁵³ Hesiod, *Theog.* 371–74 (LCL 57, 32); *Homeric Hymn to Helios* (31) 4–7 (LCL 496, 214). Cf. Robert C. T. Parker, “Selene,” *OCD*, 1340.

⁵⁴ Strabo, *Geogr.* 12.3.31 (LCL 211, 430).

that God let the Israelites, when they did not accept his covenant, worship the host of heaven. Origen also argues that Jesus's straightforward declaration that "the salvation is from the Jews" should be enough to disprove the heterodox rejection of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.⁵⁵

Two statements are attributed to Heracleon in this passage: first the explanation of ὑμεῖς ("you") as equivalent to οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι <καὶ οἱ> ἔθνικοί ("the Jews and the Gentiles"), and secondly the reference to the Preaching of Peter. Preuschen and Völker present both as quotations, each of them including the whole phrase τὸ ὑμεῖς ἀντὶ τοῦ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι <καὶ οἱ> ἔθνικοί in the second attributed statement. Foerster presents both as quotations, but includes only οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι <καὶ οἱ> ἔθνικοί in his first quotation. Blanc quotes the first attributed statement, but includes only οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι <καὶ οἱ> ἔθνικοί in her quotation. She renders the second reference as plain text. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both attributed statements, but Pettipiece also puts quotation marks around his translation of οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι <καὶ οἱ> ἔθνικοί. Pagels does not mention this passage. Poffet remarks that it is difficult to know whether the second attributed statement refers to Heracleon's words or to his thoughts. Wucherpfennig presumes ἀντὶ τοῦ ("in the sense of," "as") to be quoted verbatim from Heracleon, and mentions that Origen reports a quotation Heracleon has made from the Preaching of Peter.⁵⁶

	21.1 διηγήσατο	21.2 φέρειν
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Quotation	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Quotation	Italics
Pagels	–	–
Poffet	–	Quotation or summary
Wucherpfennig	Quotation	Report
Berglund	Paraphrase	Summary

In the first reference, the addition of the two words καὶ οἱ seems necessary to explain Origen's response, which presumes that Heracleon is reading ὑμεῖς ("you") as referring to both Jews and Gentiles.⁵⁷ The reference is made with

⁵⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.17/105–6.

⁵⁶ GCS 10, 241; SC 222, 85–87; FC 89, 89; Völker, *Quellen*, 74; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 225; Poffet, *Méthode*, 47 n. 124; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 94; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 272, 203 n. 105; "Einmal referiert er ein Zitat Herakleon aus dem Kerygma Petri."

⁵⁷ The words do not appear in Codex Monacensis, and Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 78, does not emend the text at this point, as Preuschen and Blanc do.

the verb διηγέομαι (“explain”), which is not a *verbum dicendi*. It still refers to what Heracleon has expressed rather than to his thoughts, but may suggest a measure of interpretation between Heracleon’s words and Origen’s presentation. In this context, it seems to be a paraphrase. In Quotation 20.5, Heracleon is paraphrasing Jesus’s saying that it is neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem that ὑμεῖς (“you”) should worship the Father, reading the two mountains as representing the cults of the Gentiles and of the Jews, rather than those of the Samaritans and of the Jews. Here, Origen seems to be paraphrasing Heracleon’s paraphrase, stating that Heracleon peculiarly takes Jesus’s ὑμεῖς (“you”), by which he refers to the Samaritans, as referring to the Jews and the Gentiles. Reference 21.1 is, therefore, categorized as an explanatory paraphrase.

The second reference is made with the verb φέρω (“convey”), and refers to what Heracleon presents from the Preaching of Peter. The attributed statement appears in indirect speech and fulfills our criteria for a summary. It may be compared with Clement’s more extensive presentation of the same material from the Preaching of Peter:

That the most esteemed of the Greeks do not perceive God based on knowledge, but based on indirect reasoning, Peter says (λέγει / 1) in the Preaching: “Be therefore aware that there is one God, who has made the beginning of everything, and who has the power over the end,” and “the invisible who sees everything, the incomprehensible who comprehends everything, the needless whom everything needs and through whom everything exists, the inapprehensible, the eternal, the imperishable, the unmade who has made everything with his mighty word [...]. Then he adds (εἶτα ἐπιφέρει / 2): “Do not revere this God in the way the Greeks do. [...] Peter himself explains, adding (αὐτὸς διασαφῆσει Πέτρος ἐπιφέρει / 3): “Since they live in ignorance and do not understand God as we do, based on the complete knowledge, they take what they have been given power to use and gives it shape – wood and stone, copper and iron, gold and silver – and forget its material and ordinary use. These things, which are meant to be of help for their livelihood, they erect and honor, and what God has given them to eat – the flyers of the air, the swimmers of the sea, the creepers of the earth, the wild animals and four-legged beasts of the field, as well as weasels, mice, cats, dogs, and monkeys, their own food given to feed them they sacrifice as sacrifices and offer dead corpses to dead objects as to gods. Thereby, they are unthankful to God and deny that he exists.” [...] He will also add, in this particular way (ἐποίσει πάλιν ὡδέ πως / 4): “and do not revere as the Jews do, for they believe that only they know God, even though they do not understand him, and serve angels and archangels, Mēn and Selēnē. If Selēnē does not appear, they do not celebrate the so-called first Sabbath, nor do they celebrate the new moon, the unleavened bread, the festival, or the great day.”⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 6.5/39.1–41.4 (GCS 15, 451.5–452.12): ὅτι δὲ οὐ κατ’ ἐπίγνωσιν ἴσασιν τὸν θεόν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ περίφρασιν Ἑλλήνων οἱ δοκιμώτατοι, Πέτρος ἐν τῷ Κηρύγματι λέγει (1). “γινώσκετε οὖν ὅτι εἷς θεός ἐστιν, ὃς ἀρχὴν πάντων ἐποίησεν, καὶ τέλους ἐξουσίαν ἔχων”. καί· “ὁ ἀόρατος, ὃς τὰ πάντα ὁρᾷ, ἀχώρητος, ὃς τὰ πάντα χωρεῖ, ἀνεπίδεής, οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐπιδέεται καὶ δι’ ὃν ἐστιν, ἀκατάληπτος, ἀέναιος, ἀφθαρτος, ἀποίητος, ὃς τὰ πάντα ἐποίησεν λόγῳ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ,” [...]. εἶτα ἐπιφέρει (2). “τοῦτον τὸν θεὸν σέ-

Unlike Origen, Clement does not voice any concerns about the status of the Preaching of Peter, but quotes it and interacts with it as with any piece of early Christian literature. His attribution formulas are brief. The first one uses the *verbum dicendi* λέγω (“say”), and the ensuing ones use ἐπιφέρω (“add”), which suggests that the sense of λέγειν is still relevant. The last attribution formula adds the phrase ὥδὲ πως (“in this particular way”), which indicates that the quotation is presented verbatim. Following Annewies van den Hoek’s results that Clement habitually quotes his adversaries verbatim, sometimes explicitly stating so with phrases such as ὥδὲ πως,⁵⁹ we may take all of the statements here attributed to Peter as verbatim quotations from the Preaching of Peter.

Several phrases are identically preserved in Clement’s presentation as in Origen’s, which strengthens the impression that they preserve the original reading of the Preaching. In several instances, Clement’s text is more detailed, which indicates that either Heracleon or Origen is summarizing the text. When Origen speaks of ῥητά (“words,” “literal contents”) that have been παραλαμβάνόμενα (“received,” “quoted”) by Heracleon, he suggests that Heracleon is quoting the Preaching of Peter verbatim, which indicates that it is Origen himself that is summarizing.⁶⁰ If this is the case, Clement’s parallel may be used both to evaluate how Origen’s summaries differ from the original text, and to clarify the theological positions Heracleon finds in the Preaching of Peter.

Origen’s summary faithfully preserves the most relevant information given in Clement’s quotations, but introduces his own word choices, and leaves out details and repetitions that may be relevant for understanding what Heracleon is saying. What appears to be the main message of the passage – the call to a Christian religious practice that is different from a Greek or a Jewish one – is equally preserved in both versions, but where Clement transmits σέβομαι

βεσθε μὴ κατὰ τοὺς Ἕλληνας” [...] αὐτὸς διασαφῆσει Πέτρος ἐπιφέρων (3): “ὅτι ἀγνοία φερόμενοι καὶ μὴ ἐπιστάμενοι τὸν θεὸν ὡς ἡμεῖς κατὰ τὴν γνῶσιν τὴν τελείαν, ὃν ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν εἰς χρήσιν, μορφώσαντες, ξύλα καὶ λίθους, χαλκὸν καὶ σίδηρον, χρυσὸν καὶ ἄργυρον, τῆς ὕλης αὐτῶν καὶ χρήσεως <ἐπιλαθόμενοι>, τὰ δοῦλα τῆς ὑπάρξεως ἀναστήσαντες, σέβονται, καὶ ἃ δέδωκεν αὐτοῖς εἰς βρώσιν ὁ θεός, <τὰ> πετεινὰ τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ τῆς θαλάσσης τὰ νηκτὰ καὶ τῆς γῆς τὰ ἔρπετα [καὶ τὰ] θηρία σὺν κτήνεσι τετραπόδοις τοῦ ἀγροῦ, γαλαῖς τε καὶ μῶς αἰλούρους τε καὶ κύνας καὶ πιθήκους· καὶ τὰ ἴδια βρώματα βρωτοῖς θύματα θύουσιν καὶ νεκρὰ νεκροῖς προσφέροντες ὡς θεοῖς ἀχαριστοῦσι τῷ θεῷ, διὰ τούτων ἀρνούμενοι αὐτὸν εἶναι.” [...] ἐποίσει πάλιν ὥδὲ πως (4): “μὴδὲ κατὰ Ἰουδαίους σέβεσθε· καὶ γὰρ ἐκείνοι μόνοι οἰόμενοι τὸν θεὸν γινώσκειν οὐκ ἐπίστανται, λατρεύοντες ἀγγέλους καὶ ἀρχαγγέλους, μηνὶ καὶ σελήνῃ· καὶ ἐὰν μὴ σελήνῃ φανῇ, σάββατον οὐκ ἄγουσι τὸ λεγόμενον πρῶτον, οὐδὲ νεομηνίαν ἄγουσιν οὔτε ἄζυμα οὔτε ἑορτὴν οὔτε μεγάλην ἡμέραν.”

⁵⁹ van den Hoek, “Techniques of Quotation,” 228–37. Cf. Berglund, “Evaluating Quotations,” 218–21.

⁶⁰ This is claimed to be the case in Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 203 n. 105, which is quoted in footnote 56 above.

(“revere”) as the main verb describing both Greek and Jewish religious practice, Origen swaps it out for προσκυνέω (“worship”) in reference to the Greeks, and for its active form σέβω (which also means “revere”) in relation to the Jews. Origen’s brief summation that the Greek accept material objects and pay service to pieces of wood and stone (τὰ τῆς ὕλης πράγματα ἀποδεχόμενους καὶ λατρεύοντας ξύλοις καὶ λίθοις) represents several lines in Clement’s quotation describing how the Greek take the various materials at their disposal, give them shape, and serve them various kinds of meat. Origen’s version of the clause concerning Jews is more similar to Clement’s explicitly verbatim quotation, even though he omits the ἀρχάγγελοι (“archangels”). The ensuing sentence, specifying how Jewish religious practice is, in effect, a service paid to the moon gods, and the apophatic theological declaration that, in Clement’s presentation, precedes the call may have been unavailable to Origen, and their omission says nothing about his way of summarizing Heracleon. On the other hand, these two sentences put the call summarized by Origen into the theological context in which Heracleon presumably found it.

The ensuing sentence clarifies that the alleged veneration of Mēn and Selēnē consists of the Jewish practice of celebrating the first day of every month, and to base the timing of this celebration on actual observation of the lunar crescent rather than on calculations in advance.⁶¹ The author of the Preaching of Peter takes the fact that the dates of all Jewish festivals are based on observations of the moon to mean that the Jews, in actuality, venerate the Gentile moon deities.

The theology expressed in the introductory apophatic declaration is strictly monotheistic, and appears to conform to Jewish and Christian doctrines of God. By stating that God has made the beginning of everything (ἀρχὴν πάντων ἐποίησεν), the author of the Preaching of Peter identifies God as the ultimate cause of the creation without stating that he performed all the creative work himself. On the contrary, he has made everything with his mighty word (τὰ πάντα ἐποίησεν λόγῳ δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ) – using the divine Word as a creative instrument. This view is compatible with the Johannine prologue, in which the world is said to be created through the Word.

Origen’s only comment on Heracleon’s attitude toward the Preaching of Peter is his remark that the point he is summarizing is conveyed by Heracleon ὡς Πέτρου διδάξαντος (“as a teaching by Peter”). It is not worth speculating as to whether Origen implies that Heracleon viewed this writing as authoritative on a level similar to the Gospel of John, or if his alleged approval was more limited in scope. We may, however, conclude that Heracleon agreed with the theology expressed in this particular passage of the Preaching of Peter. We may also note that Origen’s description of Heracleon’s use of the writing also matches what Clement is doing with the text. Clement’s formula

⁶¹ G. Delling, “Μήν, Νεομήνια,” *TDNT* 4:638–42. Cf. Num 28:11–15.

– the second quoted above – αὐτὸς διασαφήσει Πέτρος ἐπιφέρων (“Peter himself explains, adding”) does precisely what Origen claims Heracleon is doing: cites the Preaching of Peter as a teaching by the apostle Peter. If Origen accurately describes Heracleon’s use, it is therefore quite similar to Clement’s, and its use cannot be connected to a second-century conflict between “orthodoxy” and “heresy.”⁶² Furthermore, if Heracleon’s view of the creation process conformed to that of the apophatic declaration in the Preaching of Peter, this would give support to the model proposed above, in the analysis of Summary 1.8: Heracleon may have viewed the Word as an intermediate cause of creation, triggering Heracleon’s ἕτερος (“someone else”) to act, while himself being prompted by the Father to act. In such a creative cooperation, the Maker would not be in opposition to the Father, but a subordinate agent carrying out his plans.

F. Passage 22: Worshiping in Spirit and Truth (John 4:23)

When Jesus declares that “true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth” (John 4:23), Origen connects this to the question of interpreting the Old Testament, and claims that a true worshiper must follow the spiritual meanings of the law to worship in truth, as he believes that the Jewish ritual practices described in the Old Testament are types for the true – that is, Christian – ritual practices that were to follow. He also refers to Heracleon’s views in two paragraphs, of which the first reads:

Heracleon, nevertheless, thinks (οἶεται / 22.1) that “we worship” (John 4:22) refers to the one in the eternal realm and those who have come with him. “For they,” he says (φησὶν / 22.2), “worship in truth and know whom they worship.” Furthermore, “because the salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22) [is said] since “he was born,” he says (φησὶν / 22.3), “in Judea – but [it is] not among them, for it was not all of them who approved of him – and because it is from this people that the salvation and the Word have come out into the world.” But in a deeper sense, he explains (διηγείται / 22.4) that the salvation has originated from the Jews because they are held by him to be (αὐτῷ εἶναι νομίζονται) images of those in the Fullness. But he and his followers would have to show how every detail in the cult is an image of what is in the Fullness, if they do not only say this aloud but truly believe it.⁶³

⁶² Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologist*, 377, briefly notes that both Heracleon and Clement quote the Preaching of Peter as an authentic writing of Peter.

⁶³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.19/114–16 (SC 222, 92.1–14; Brooke’s fragment 22, part 1): Τὸ μέντοι γε “Ἡμεῖς προσκυνούμεν” ὁ Ἡρακλέων οἶεται (22.1) εἶναι ὁ ἐν αἰῶνι καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ ἐλθόντες· οὗτοι γάρ, φησὶν (22.2), ἤδεσαν τίνι προσκυνοῦσιν κατὰ ἀλήθειαν προσκυνοῦντες. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ “Ὅτι ἡ σωτηρία ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐστίν” <εἰρησθαι> ἐπεὶ ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ, φησὶν (22.3), ἐγενήθη, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐν αὐτοῖς – οὐ γὰρ εἰς πάντας αὐτοὺς εὐδόκησεν – καὶ ὅτι ἐξ ἐκείνου τοῦ ἔθνους ἐξῆλθεν ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ὁ λόγος εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην. Κατὰ δὲ τὸ

Four references to Heracleon are made here, the first with οἶται (“he thinks”), the second and third with φησὶν (“he says”), and the fourth with a more complex structure, in which Heracleon’s understanding of a particular Johannine phrase is explained by a certain belief that he is said to have. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all four as quotations. Blanc uses only plain text. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all four attributed statements. When Pagels quotes from the fourth attributed statement, she correctly identifies the information given as relayed by Origen, but Poffet quotes from the third and fourth as if directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig is inconsistent. When he quotes this paragraph, he presents all four attributed statements without quotation marks, but he also repeatedly presents “because it is from this people that the salvation and the Word has come out into the world” as a quotation taken directly from Heracleon.⁶⁴

	22.1 οἶται	22.2 φησὶν	22.3 φησὶν	22.4 διηγείται
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–	Relayed by Origen
Poffet	–	–	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text and quotation	Plain text
Berglund	Paraphrase	Quotation	Quotation + Summary	Paraphrase

The first reference is made with the verb οἶμαι (“think,” “believe”), which refers to Heracleon’s thought process rather than to his words, and is therefore presented as an explanatory paraphrase. The second attributed statement is a complete sentence into which φησὶν (“he says”) has been inserted as the third word. This is one of the ways in which Origen presents verbatim quotations.

νοούμενον ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων τὴν σωτηρίαν διηγείται (22.4) γεγονέναι ἐπειπερ εἰκόνες οὗτοι τῶν ἐν τῷ πληρώματι αὐτῷ εἶναι νομίζονται. Ἐχρῆν δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ ἕκαστον τῶν ἐν τῇ λατρείᾳ δεικνύναι πῶς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τῶν ἐν τῷ πληρώματι, εἴγε μὴ μόνον φωνῇ τοῦτο λέγουσιν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ φρονοῦσιν αὐτό.

⁶⁴ GCS 10, 243; SC 222, 93; FC 89, 91–92; Völker, *Quellen*, 74; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 225–26; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 73; Poffet, *Méthode*, 49–50; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 97; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 276, cf. 159, 275, 389. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 91 n. 231, claims that εἰκὼν is Heracleon’s term. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 258 n. 49, makes the same claim about ἐπεὶ.

This quotation is presented as support for the claim in the preceding paraphrase. Since the referent of the pronoun οὗτοι (“they”) is not specified within the quotation, we have to make use of the explanatory paraphrase to make sense of the quotation. The phrase ἡμεῖς προσκυνοῦμεν (“we worship”), that Heracleon allegedly is interpreting here, appears in the mouth of Jesus in John 4:22, and the first-person-plural pronoun is most often interpreted as referring to the Jews, as distinct from the Samaritans.⁶⁵ Origen claims that Heracleon reads the pronoun as referring to another community of which Jesus also is a member – the heavenly court, or rather the subset of the angelic community that has followed Christ in his exile to earth. The phrase ὁ ἐν αἰῶνι (“the one in the eternal realm”) sounds like a reference to God, but if it is part of the worshiping subject, it cannot be the Father. Christ himself, on the other hand, fulfills the triple criteria of an eternal being worshiping the Father and included in Jesus’s ἡμεῖς. The phrase οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ ἐλθόντες (“those who have come with him”) can then be read as referring either to the disciples or – more likely – to angels accompanying Jesus.⁶⁶ As members of the heavenly court, they would surely know whom they were worshiping.⁶⁷

The third reference is also presented as a verbatim quotation, but it is less clear where it begins and ends. The attribution formula, φησὶν (“he says”), does not appear until after the quotation from John 4:22 in the beginning of the sentence, and there is no claim that the quotation from John is included in the quotation from Heracleon. There is no doubt that the clause into which φησὶν has been inserted – ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐγενήθη – is part of the quotation. It is, however, less clear whether other parts of the sentence – the phrase beginning with ἀλλ’ οὐκ (“and not”), the clause beginning with οὐ γὰρ (“for it was not”), and the clause beginning with καὶ ὅτι (“and because”) – are part of the quotation or added by Origen. The content of these phrases and clauses fit both contexts equally well. The above translation is based on the assumption that the former two are part of the quotation while the third, which appears to resume Origen’s sentence structure preceding the attribution formula, is an added summary. It is unclear whether the subject of ἐγενήθη is the salvation (ἡ σωτηρία) of the quotation from John 4:22 or the one in the eternal realm (ὁ ἐν αἰῶνι) of the previous quotation from Heracleon, and the verb can be translated either as “it occurred” or as “he was born.” Both alternatives fit the context, as the gospel traditions locate both Jesus’s birth and his salvific death and resurrection in the Judean province. Likewise, οὐκ ἐν αὐτοῖς (“not among them”) can be read either as highlighting that these events occurred

⁶⁵ Cf. e.g. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 62.

⁶⁶ Cf. Matt 4:11, John 1:15, 20:12.

⁶⁷ See also the analysis of Quotation 24.2 below, where “those who worship in truth and not in delusion” are said to be “spirit.” Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 90, is – unsurprisingly enough – convinced that Heracleon is speaking of spiritual humans.

among the Jews and not among the Samaritans, or add the point that although Christ was a Jew, not all Jews became Christians. The remark that God was not well pleased with all of them can also be read in several ways, as highlighting the distinction between Jesus and his fellow Jews, or between the Jews and the Samaritans.⁶⁸

The fourth reference is made with the verb διηγείται (“he explains”), and refers to a deeper sense (νοούμενον) of what Heracleon has expressed, a deeper sense determined by his view of the Jews, Origen argues, as images (εἰκόνες) of higher beings in the Fullness. The reference to αὐτὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ (“he and his followers”) in the ensuing sentence suggests that Origen has come to this conclusion, not exclusively from his study of Heracleon’s writing, but has also considered the views of “those who bring in the natures.” It is clear that this reference is an explanatory paraphrase. Less clear is whether it is the Jews themselves, as in Origen’s paraphrase, or the details of their cult, as in his demand to Heracleon and his followers, who are images of higher beings in the Fullness.

Origen’s interaction with Heracleon continues:

To explain that God is to be worshiped “in spirit and truth” he says that (λέγει ὅτι / 22.5) the prior worshipers worshiped, in flesh and delusion, what was not the Father. Therefore – according to him (κατ’ αὐτὸν / 22.6) – all those who have worshiped the Maker are mistaken. And Heracleon does add (ἐπιφέρει / 22.7) that they served the creation rather than the true creator – which is Christ, if indeed “all things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being” (John 1:3).⁶⁹

Three additional references are made here, with λέγει ὅτι (“he says that”), κατ’ αὐτὸν (“according to him”), and ἐπιφέρει (“he adds”), respectively. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present the fifth and seventh as quotations, but leave the sixth as a comment by Origen. Blanc presents all three as ordinary text. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all three, but Heine notes that the identification of Christ with the true creator “must be Origen’s comment.” Pagels quotes the seventh, and Poffet both the fifth and the seventh, as if taken directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig explicitly claims the fifth to be a verbatim quotation, pointing to the attribution formula λέγει ὅτι as evidence for his claim, but does not mention the others.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Cf. Matt 3:17; 12:18; 17:5; Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22; 12:32.

⁶⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.19/117–18 (SC 222, 92.15–22; Brooke’s fragment 22, part 2): Πρὸς τοῦτοις τὸ “Ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ προσκυνεῖσθαι τὸν θεόν” <δι>ηγούμενος λέγει, ὅτι (22.5) οἱ πρότεροι προσκυνηταὶ ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ πλάνῃ προσεκύνουν τῷ μὴ πατρὶ, ὥστε κατ’ αὐτὸν (22.6) πεπλανῆσθαι πάντας τοὺς προσκεκνηκότας τῷ δημιουργῷ. Καὶ ἐπιφέρει (22.7) γε ὁ Ἡρακλέων ὅτι ἐλάτρευον τῇ κτίσει, καὶ οὐ τῷ κατ’ ἀλήθειαν κτίστῃ, ὃς ἐστὶν Χριστός, εἰ γε “Πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδέν.”

⁷⁰ GCS 10, 243; SC 222, 93; FC 89, 91–92; Völker, *Quellen*, 74–75; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 225–26; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 89; Poffet, *Méthode*, 53–54; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 97–98; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 277.

	22.5 λέγει ὅτι	22.6 κατ' αὐτὸν	22.7 ἐπιφέρει
Preuschen	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	–	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	–	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation	–	Quotation
Wucherpfennig	Quotation	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Paraphrase	Summary

The fifth reference is one of the cases where it is possible to view ὅτι as a *ὅτι recitativum* and read a verbatim quotation. According to our criteria, however, ὅτι implies indirect speech and a summary. The compact composition of the attributed statement – which declares both that the prior worshipers worshiped in flesh and delusion rather than spirit and truth, and that the one they were worshipping was not the Father – suggests that it is summarized. Although the phrase κατ' αὐτὸν is clearly added by Origen, it is unclear whether the conclusion, into which it has been added, is expressed by Heracleon or inferred by Origen. Since the shift from imperfect (προσεκύνουν) to perfect (πεπλανῆσθαι, προσκεκνηκότας) suggests a change in perspective, inference by Origen is the more likely alternative, and such an inferred conclusion is an explanatory paraphrase. The verb ἐπιφέρω (“place upon,” “subjoin,” “add”) is not a *verbum dicendi*, but does refer to what Origen found in Heracleon’s text. The seventh attributed statement, which appears in indirect speech indicated by ὅτι, is therefore categorized as a summary. It is unclear whether the remark identifying the true creator with Christ is part of the summary or a secondary remark made by Origen.

Heracleon’s reversal of “in spirit and truth” to “in flesh and delusion” is a creative rendering of what appears to be his main point – that the adherents of the prior (that is, Jewish) religious practice failed in their intention to serve the creator, and turned out to serve not the true creator, but another, created being, presumably identical to the ἕτερος (“someone else”) who, according to Summary 1.8, assisted in carrying out the creative work.⁷¹ As noted by Pagels, the distinction between serving the creation or the creator is an allusion to Rom 1:25, which clarifies that Heracleon’s assistant creator is, itself, a created

⁷¹ Poffet, *Méthode*, 53, notes that Heracleon’s method is quite clear at this point, and asserts that the contrast between the creation and the true creator is foreign to the Johannine text.

being.⁷² On the other hand, Pagels's identification of those worshipping the Maker as "the psychics,"⁷³ and her repeated assertion that their "error" consists in their practice of literal scriptural interpretation in which actual historical events are given significance,⁷⁴ have no support in Heracleon's words.

Although we cannot be sure that Heracleon identifies Christ as the creator here – this note may be added by Origen – he clearly maintains that the true creator (ὁ κατ' ἀλήθειαν κτίστης) is worthy of worship, and that the error of the Maker's worshipers is not their aim to worship the creator of the material world, but their failure to correctly identify him.

G. Passage 23: The Lost Members of the Household (John 4:23b)

After quoting the latter part of John 4:23 – "for the Father seeks such people to worship him" – Origen briefly notes that, if the Father seeks worshipers, he seeks them through his Son. The rest of his treatment of this half-verse consists of his interaction with Heracleon:

Heracleon says (φησὶν / 23.1) that what belongs to the Father's house, which is sought after so that the Father may be worshiped by the members of his household, is lost in the deep forest of deception. Had he then been looking to the story of the lost sheep or of the son who fell away from his father, we would even have approved of this description. But since those who are of his opinion are inventing fiction, I cannot see that they present anything with clarity about the lost spiritual nature. They teach us nothing articulate about the times and eternities before it was lost, for they cannot even make their own teachings clear. Therefore, we happily dismiss them with these criticisms.⁷⁵

There is one attributed statement in this paragraph. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present it as a quotation. Blanc presents it as ordinary text. Heine and Pettipiece italicize it. Pagels, Poffet, and Wucherpfennig all quote from it

⁷² Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 89. The use of Rom 1:25 is also pointed out by Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 79; Massaux, *Influence*, 436.

⁷³ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 89–90.

⁷⁴ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 14, 67, 71, 76.

⁷⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.20/120–22 (SC 222, 94.1–15; Brooke's fragment 23): Ἀπολωλέναι δὲ φησιν (23.1) ὁ Ἡρακλέων ἐν τῇ βαθείᾳ ὕλῃ τῆς πλάνης τὸ οἰκίον τῷ πατρὶ, ὅπερ ζητεῖται, ἵνα ὁ πατὴρ ὑπὸ τῶν οἰκείων προσκυνῇται. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἑώρα τὸν περὶ τῆς ἀπωλείας τῶν προβάτων λόγον καὶ τοῦ ἀποπεσόντος τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς υἱοῦ, καὶ ἀπεδεξάμεθα αὐτοῦ τὴν διήγησιν. Ἐπεὶ δὲ μυθοποιούντες οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς γνώμης αὐτοῦ οὐκ οἶδ' ὅ τί ποτε τρανῶς παριστᾶσιν περὶ τῆς ἀπολωλείας πνευματικῆς φύσεως οὐδὲν σαφὲς διδάσκοντες ἡμᾶς περὶ τῶν πρὸ τῆς ἀπωλείας αὐτῆς χρόνων ἢ αἰώνων – οὐδὲ γὰρ τραποῦν δύνανται ἑαυτῶν τὸν λόγον –, διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὺς ἐκόντες παραπεμψόμεθα, τοσοῦτον ἐπαπορήσαντες.

as if directly from Heracleon.⁷⁶ David W. Jorgensen calls it a quotation, but notes that the reference to the story of the lost sheep is a comment added by Origen.⁷⁷

	23.1 φησίν
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text
Heine	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics
Pagels	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation
Wucherpfennig	Quotation
Berglund	Summary

The statement is attributed with a *verbum dicendi* and appears in indirect speech using an accusative-with-infinitive construction. It is therefore categorized as a summary.

There is no reason to read ἐν τῇ βαθείᾳ ὕλῃ τῆς πλάνης (“in the deep forest of deception”) as an expression of the notion that the material world itself is erroneous, as has habitually been done in previous scholarship.⁷⁸ The phrase ὕλη βαθεία is regularly used to denote deep forests in both physical and metaphorical senses,⁷⁹ and there is no need to read it in any other way here. According to Origen’s summary, Heracleon has described the erroneous worship of a created being who assisted in the creation as the true creator – as described in Summaries 22.5 and 22.7 – metaphorically as a deep forest in which one may get lost. As in the parables from Luke 15, to which Origen associates his description, the deceived worshipers are not abandoned but

⁷⁶ GCS 10, 244; SC 222, 95; FC 89, 92; Völker, *Quellen*, 75; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 224; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 91; Poffet, *Méthode*, 56; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 100; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 289 n. 189.

⁷⁷ Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field*, 88 n. 9.

⁷⁸ Foerster, *Gnosis*, 224; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 91; Poffet, *Méthode*, 56–58; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 100–101; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 336.

⁷⁹ Strabo, *Geogr.* 6.1 (LCL 182, 44), describes how his protagonist once was traveling through a deep forest and strayed quite far from the road (ὁδοιπορῶν ποτε δι’ ὕλης βαθείας παραβῆναι τὴν ὁδὸν ἐπὶ πλεόν). Plutarch, *Mar.* 36.4 (LCL 101, 562), tells of a shipwrecked Marius who turns aside from the road and plunges into a deep forest to spend the night there (τότε μὲν ἐκτραπόμενος τῆς ὁδοῦ καὶ καταβαλὼν ἑαυτὸν εἰς ὕλην βαθεῖαν ἐπιπόνως διενυκτέρευσε). And Gregory Thaumaturgus, *Orat. paneg.* 14.49 (SC 148, 164) compares an involved philosophical argument, in which one may find oneself lost, to a deep forest.

sought after by the Father, who wants to offer a course-correction of their worship practices. This combination of being lost and being sought after suggests that the comment is dependent on a tradition similar to those preserved in Luke 15.⁸⁰ In addition, the identification of these worshipers as members of the household (οἰκεῖοι) of the Father suggests that Heracleon is primarily referring to the Jews, who are considered God’s selected people.

Origen’s response is a typical example of the stance of hypothetical approval.⁸¹ Origen is wholly prepared to accept and approve Heracleon’s interpretation if he can view it in the context of the parables of the lost sheep and of the prodigal son, but if he has to view it in the context of the fictions invented by those who share Heracleon’s view, he has to simply reject it. The response makes a clear distinction between Heracleon himself and οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς γνώμης αὐτοῦ (“those who are of his opinion”) – apparently a later group, presumably identical to “those who bring in the natures,” since they seem to speak of a πνευματικὴ φύσις (“spiritual nature”) that is being lost, rather than of members of the Father’s household.⁸²

H. Passage 24: In What Way Is God “Spirit”? (John 4:24)

Origen argues that the statement “God is spirit” in John 4:24 should be read metaphorically, just like similar statements that God is “light” (1 John 1:5) or “fire” (Deut 4:24), and not as a claim that there is a fifth element – in addition to earth, air, fire, and water – of which God’s body consists. Asking in what way God may be said to be πνεῦμα, he associates the expression to the breath of life breathed into the nostrils of Adam at creation (Gen 2:7) and suggests that spirit is what brings humans to the true life. Remarking that he would prefer to worship God beyond the metaphorical expressions, he asserts that nobody could teach us better in what way God is spirit than the Son, who, together with the angels, honors God based on the realities of heaven rather than their shadows on earth.⁸³ Turning to Heracleon, he expects him to pursue similar questions:

Nevertheless, concerning “God is spirit” Heracleon says (φησὶν / 24.1): “for his divine nature is irreproachable, pure, and invisible.” I wonder whether he has taught this in order to specify in what way God is spirit. Believing that he is explaining “those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” he says (φησὶν / 24.2): “in a way that is worthy of the one

⁸⁰ Such dependence is not necessarily a dependence on the Gospel of Luke, as such traditions could also have circulated orally in Heracleon’s time.

⁸¹ Berglund, “Vacillating Stances,” 553–56.

⁸² Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 134, 337, takes note of this distinction, even though his identification of this group as Heracleon’s students may be indefensibly specific.

⁸³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.21/123–24/146.

being worshiped – spiritually, and not in the way of the flesh, for those who are of the same nature as the Father are also spirit, those who worship in truth and not in delusion, just as the apostle also teaches when he calls such a piety ‘a rational service.’ (λογικὴν λατρείαν; Rom 12:1)” Let us consider if it is not extremely impious to say (λέγειν / 24.3) that those who worship God in spirit are consubstantial with the unborn and totally blessed nature, those who the same Heracleon shortly before has said (εἶπεν / 24.4) were fallen, when he said (λέγων / 24.5) that the Samaritan woman, who had a spiritual nature, had sex with several different men.⁸⁴

This paragraph contains five references to Heracleon, made with the verb forms φησίν, λέγειν, εἶπεν, and λέγων. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present the first two as quotations, but leave out the other three. Blanc presents all five in plain text. Heine presents the first two as italic quotations, does not emphasize the middle one at all, but italicizes the last two. Pettipiece presents the first attributed statement in italics, the second as a quotation, the third in plain text, and the last two in italics. Pagels, Poffet, and Wuchterpfennig quote from the first two attributed statements as if directly from Heracleon.⁸⁵

	24.1 φησίν	24.2 φησίν	24.3 λέγειν	24.4 εἶπεν	24.5 λέγων
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	–	–	–
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	–	–	–
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Quotation	Plain text	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	Quotation	–	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation	–	–	–
Wuchterpfennig	Quotation	Quotation	–	–	–
Berglund	Quotation	Quotation	Paraphrase	Paraphrase	Paraphrase

⁸⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.25/147–49 (SC 222, 110.1–112.15; Brooke’s fragment 24): Εἰς μὲν-τοι γε τὸ “Πνεῦμα ὁ θεός” ὁ Ἡρακλέων φησίν (24.1)· ἄχραντος γὰρ καὶ καθαρὰ καὶ ἀόρατος ἡ θεία φύσις αὐτοῦ. Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ εἰ ἐδίδαξεν ἡμᾶς ταῦτα ἐπειπὼν πῶς ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμά ἐστιν· τὸ δὲ “τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ δεῖ προσκυνεῖν” σαφηνίζει νομιζῶν φησίν (24.2)· ἀξίως τοῦ προσκυνουμένου πνευματικῶς, οὐ σαρκικῶς· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως ὄντες τῷ πατρὶ πνεῦμά εἰσιν, οἵτινες κατὰ ἀλήθειαν καὶ οὐ κατὰ πλάνην προσκυνοῦσιν, καθὰ καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος διδάσκει λέγων λογικὴν λατρείαν τὴν τοιαύτην θεο-σέβειαν. Ἐπιστήσωμεν δὲ εἰ μὴ σφόδρα ἐστὶν ἀσεβὲς ὁμοουσίους τῇ ἀγεννήτῳ φύσει καὶ παμμακαρίᾳ λέγειν (24.3) εἶναι τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας ἐν πνεύματι τῷ θεῷ, οὓς πρὸ βραχέος εἶπεν (24.4) αὐτὸς ὁ Ἡρακλέων ἐκπεπτωκότας, τὴν Σαμαρεῖτιν λέγων (24.5) πνευματικῆς φύσεως οὖσαν ἐκπεπορνευκέναι.

⁸⁵ GCS 10, 248; SC 222, 111–13; FC 89, 99; Völker, *Quellen*, 75; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 225; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 80, 90; Poffet, *Méthode*, 59; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 102; Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 356, 169, 376, 203 n. 104. Since Pagels’s quotation from the second statement reads “‘of the same divine nature,’” she seems to have erroneously added the adjective “divine” to her quotation.

The first two attributed statements, both preceded by a single *φησὶν* and a full stop, fulfill our criteria for verbatim quotations. Both are clearly delimited by the attribution formula at one end, and by Origen's response, expressed in the first person, at the other. The second quotation could also have ended at *καὶ γάρ* ("for ... also") or *καθὰ καὶ* ("just as ... also") if what follows these phrases could be read as Origen's comments rather than Heracleon's. The latter three, all presented in indirect speech using infinitive or participle phrases, and attributed to Heracleon with *verba dicendi*, repeat information already given about Heracleon with words chosen by Origen, and are therefore explanatory paraphrases. The third statement, claiming that the worshipers are consubstantial with God, paraphrases the claim just given in Quotation 24.2. The fourth statement, declaring that the worshipers have fallen, repeats Origen's response in Passage 18, that the Samaritan woman's sexual practice is sinful, whether she has a spiritual nature or not. This response is based on Heracleon's claim, in Summary 18.8, that she had been abandoned by her five previous sexual partners – a claim that Origen repeats in the fifth attributed statement of this paragraph.

While Heracleon does not make Origen's distinction between physical and metaphorical meanings of *πνεῦμα*, and does not aim to present a complete definition of in what way "God is spirit," his remark that "his divine nature is irreproachable, pure, and invisible" seems to be a similar reflection on what it means that God is spirit. Presumably, the three adjectives he presents are also applicable to the spiritual beings "who worship in truth and not in delusion." These worshipers should be the same group which is said, in Quotation 22.2, to "worship in truth." The statement here that they are spirit and "of the same nature as the Father" strengthens our previous conclusion that Heracleon is speaking about Jesus and a group of angels.⁸⁶ Apparently, Heracleon's concept of *φύσις* ("nature") here is not specific enough to distinguish between God, Jesus, and the angels – they all share the same invisible, pure, and irreproachable nature. As members of the heavenly court, it is not surprising that they are able to worship in a way that is based on truth, and worthy of the one being worshiped. The phrase *λογικὴν λατρείαν* ("a rational service" or "a spiritual worship") is taken from Rom 12:1.⁸⁷ Heracleon seems to associate the phrase not with the preceding sentence, in which Paul is exhorting his readers to present their bodies (*σώματα*) as sacrifices, but with the verse that follows, speaking of a renewal of the mind (*νοῦς*) beyond what is conformant to the present age (*αἰών*). Heracleon may thus be paraphrasing Rom 12:2.

⁸⁶ Pace de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 92–93, who claims that Heracleon is referring to the souls of the spiritual ones, and Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 337, who argues that he is speaking about "Menschen."

⁸⁷ The use of Rom 12:1 is previously noted by Massaux, *Influence*, 436–37.

Origen's response, which presumes that Heracleon's spiritual worshipers are human beings symbolized by the Samaritan woman, may, therefore, be based on a misinterpretation of Heracleon's argument. If the worshiping subjects Heracleon refers to include the Christ, it is not impious, from a later Christian perspective, to speak of him as having the same nature as the Father, and the Samaritan woman's sex life is irrelevant for this argument. The last part of his response repeats his point in Passage 18, that a "spiritual woman" who has sex with six different men must be a sinner. In both cases, the point that the woman had a spiritual nature is likely to be read into Heracleon's comments by Origen, based on an association with "those who bring in the natures."

I. Passage 25: The One Who Knows Everything (John 4:25)

When the Samaritan woman asserts that the Christ, whenever he comes, will tell us everything (ἀναγγελεῖ ἡμῖν ἅπαντα, John 4:25), Origen offers a reflection on how Samaritan messianic expectations, based solely on the Pentateuch, may look. He locates messianic prophecies in Jacob's and Moses's blessings of Judah (Gen 49:8–12; Deut 33:7), as well as in Balaam's blessings of Israel (Num 24:3–9, 15–19), but is unable to find any specific promise that he will proclaim everything. He also repeats his own allegorical identification of the Samaritans with the heterodox, and rephrases John 4:25–26 in view of this identification.⁸⁸ At the end of his exposition, he makes a short reference to Heracleon:

Let us also look at what Heracleon says. He states that (λέγει γὰρ ὅτι / 25.1) the assembly was expecting the Christ, and was convinced that he alone knows everything.⁸⁹

In this brief report, one statement is attributed to Heracleon. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present it as a quotation. Blanc presents it in plain text. Heine and Pettipiece italicize it. Pagels quotes the word "expects" as if directly from Heracleon. Poffet presents the whole statement as a quotation taken directly from Heracleon, noting that Heracleon has paraphrased the Fourth Gospel. Wucherpennig claims that it must be a verbatim quotation, since it is attributed with the phrase λέγει ὅτι.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.26/154–27/163.

⁸⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.27/164 (SC 222, 122.17–19; Brooke's fragment 25): Ὅρα δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα τί φησι· λέγει γὰρ ὅτι (25.1) προσεδέχετο ἡ ἐκκλησία τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ ἐπέπειστο περὶ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι τὰ πάντα μόνος ἐκεῖνος ἐπίσταται.

⁹⁰ GCS 10, 251; SC 222, 123; FC 89, 103; Völker, *Quellen*, 75; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 226; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 71; Poffet, *Méthode*, 62; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 104; Wucherpennig, *He-*

	25.1 λέγει γὰρ ὅτι
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text
Heine	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics
Pagels	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation
Berglund	Summary

This statement is attributed to Heracleon with the *verbum dicendi* λέγει (“he says”) followed by ὅτι. The ensuing words could possibly be taken verbatim from Heracleon’s writing, but there is no particular indication that Origen is quoting verbatim here. According to our criteria, this means that the statement is presented in indirect speech, and constitutes a summary.

Heracleon’s comment reads as a summary of the Samaritans’ encounter with Jesus in John 4:4–42. The Samaritan community (ἐκκλησία) had expectations for a coming Messiah. Starting with the lone woman’s realization that Jesus had an extraordinary insight into her situation (John 4:19, 39), followed by their own observation of him, they become increasingly convinced that Jesus is the Messiah (John 4:41–42). The summary is congruent with the previous Quotations 19.2 and 19.4 – stating that the woman became persuaded that Jesus was a prophet, since only a prophet can know everything – but goes beyond these in letting the Samaritans identify Jesus not merely as a prophet, but as the Christ.

The word choice ἐκκλησία for the Samaritan community is peculiar. Heracleon may be considering a particular Christian community with a Samaritan ethnical background, or implying a metaphorical interpretation where the experiences of these narrative characters are generalized to all Jews and Samaritans who received Jesus as the Christ.

J. Passage 26: Christ Reveals Himself (John 4:26–27)

Jesus’s proclamation in John 4:26, “It is I, the one who is speaking to you,” causes Origen to remark that Jesus also declared himself to be gentle and humble in heart (Matt 11:29). The disciples’ amazement that he is speaking to a woman makes Origen exhort his readers to emulate the generosity demon-

racleon *Philologus*, 277 n. 137. The claim by Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 78, that Heracleon “consistently calls her [Sophia] the ‘pneumatic ecclesia’” is not supported by this passage.

strated by Jesus when speaking to this marginalized woman and allowing her to be his apostle to Sychar.⁹¹ At the conclusion of this reflection, he turns to Heracleon:

Heracleon also says (φησί), about “It is I, the one who is speaking to you,” that (ὅτι / 26.1) [it was] because the Samaritan was convinced, about the Christ, that he, when he came, would tell her everything, that he says “You should know that the one whom you are expecting is me, the one who is speaking to you,” and when he declared himself [to be] the expected one who had arrived, he says (φησὶν / 26.2): “The disciples on whose account he had come to Samaria came to him.” But how could he have come to Samaria on account of the disciples, who already were together with him?⁹²

Two statements are attributed to Heracleon in this passage. Preuschen and Völker present both as quotations. Foerster combines them to a single quotation. Blanc uses plain text. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both. Pagels does not quote this passage. Poffet presents both attributed statements – including the references to the Fourth Gospel – as quotations taken directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig remarks that Heracleon is probably not presenting a “richtiges Zitat” of the Johannine text in the second attributed statement. That he is prepared to draw such a conclusion implies that he believes Origen is quoting Heracleon verbatim.⁹³

	26.1 φησί ... ὅτι	26.2 φησὶν
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	–	Quotation
Berglund	Summary + Quotation	Quotation

⁹¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.28/165–71. Cf. Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 105.

⁹² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.28/172 (SC 222, 128.41–48; Brooke’s fragment 26): Καὶ ὁ Ἡρακλέων δὲ φησι πρὸς τὸ “Ἐγὼ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι,” ὅτι (26.1) ἐπεὶ ἐπέπειστο ἡ Σαμαρεῖτις περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὡς ἄρα ἐλθὼν πάντα ἀπαγγελεῖ αὐτῇ, φησί “Γίνωσκε ὅτι ἐκεῖνος, ὃν προσδοκᾶς, ἐγὼ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι.” Καὶ ὅτε ὡμολόγησεν ἑαυτὸν τὸν προσδοκώμενον ἐληλυθέναι, “ἦλθον, φησὶν (26.2), οἱ μαθηταὶ πρὸς αὐτόν,” δι’ οὓς ἐληλύθει εἰς τὴν Σαμάρειαν. Πῶς δὲ διὰ τοὺς μαθητὰς ἐληλύθει εἰς τὴν Σαμάρειαν, οἵτινες καὶ πρότερον αὐτῷ συνῆσαν;

⁹³ GCS 10, 252–53; SC 222, 129; FC 89, 105; Völker, *Quellen*, 76; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 227; Poffet, *Méthode*, 66–67; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 105; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 31 n. 23.

The first reference is made with a combination of *φησί* (“he says”) and *ὅτι* (“that”), which, according to our criteria, implies a summary presented in indirect speech. The second reference consists of a single *φησίν*, and the statement is presented in direct speech, which implies a verbatim quotation. The presence of the second *φησίν* suggests a change in mode of attribution, from summary to verbatim quotation, but it is not clear where this transition occurs. Minimally, the verb *ἦλθον* (“they came”), which appears immediately before the second attribution formula, should be considered part of the quotation, since it is essential to the ensuing quoted sentence. In addition, the paraphrase of Jesus’s saying that appears within the first attributed statement, also appears to be formulated by Heracleon and subsequently quoted by Origen. Heracleon is in the habit of paraphrasing his source text, and it is unlikely that Origen would write a paraphrase of the Fourth Gospel and present it as Heracleon’s work.

This paraphrase of John 4:26 is a reasonable interpretation of the speech event in the Johannine narrative. It clarifies that the clause *ἐγώ εἰμι* (“I am” or “It is I”) should be read as Jesus declaring himself to be the Christ that the Samaritan woman in the previous verse has acknowledged that she is expecting. The second attributed statement, in which Heracleon remarks that the disciples on whose account Jesus had come to Samaria are approaching, appears strange in this context, as there is no indication that Jesus is visiting Samaria on account of the disciples who accompany him, and at this point return from buying groceries in town. John 4:4 states that it was necessary for Jesus to take the road through Samaria, but does not specify why. One possibility is that Heracleon has read this remark in the context of the preceding verses, where Jesus is said to leave Judaea when the Pharisees realize that he is gaining a larger following than John the Baptist, and assumed that Jesus is visiting Samaria to shield his disciples from the threat of persecution in Judaea. Another possibility is that Heracleon is reading a second meaning into the statement that the disciples arrived – with reference not to the disciples Jesus brought with him into Samaria, but to the new disciples gained that day by way of the woman’s testimony in Sychar. These new disciples will not be present until John 4:40, but Heracleon may be pointing out the causal connection between Jesus’s declaration and the successful mission among the Samaritans, which, in that case, he construes as the real reason behind Jesus’s travel itinerary. The latter alternative would reveal a particular interest in evangelization on Heracleon’s part.

K. Passage 27: The Abandoned Water Jar (John 4:28–30)

In John 4:28–30, the woman leaves her water jar and goes to tell the people of Sychar that she may have found the Christ, and they follow her back to him.

After quoting this passage,⁹⁴ Origen remarks that the abandonment of the water jar reveals how eager the woman is to share the good news with her peers. On a deeper level, he speculates that the water jar may symbolize the former opinions she now is abandoning, or her ongoing relationship with a man who is not her husband, whom she now leaves. He also notes that John never specifies that Jesus enters Sychar – in John 4:28–30, Jesus seems to stay by the well while the Samaritans come to him, and the wording in John 4:40 is such that Jesus may have stayed, not in the town but by the well, for two days.⁹⁵ At the end of his exposition, he interacts with Heracleon's interpretation:

Heracleon supposes (ὕπολαμβάνει / 27.1) that the water jar is the “disposition capable of receiving life,” and the “concept of the power that is from the Savior.” “Leaving it,” he says (φησί / 27.2), “with him – that is, keeping this vessel, in which she had come to get the living water, in the presence of the Savior – she returned to the world to announce to the called ones the good news of the arrival of the Christ, for it is through the spirit, and by the spirit, that the soul is brought to the Savior.” But consider if it is possible that the jar, which is completely abandoned, can really be an object of praise, for it says “the woman left her water jar” – it is not specified that she left it with the savior. In addition, it is totally incredible that she would leave the “disposition capable of receiving life,” the “concept of the power that is from the Savior,” and “the vessel in which she had come to get the living water” behind her to go away, without them, into the world “to announce to the called ones the good news of the arrival of the Christ”? And how is the spiritual woman, after so many arguments, still not completely convinced about the Christ, but says: “He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” He has also explained (δηγήσατο / 27.3) “they came out from the town” as in the sense of from their former way of life, which was worldly. “And they came by faith,” he says (φησί / 27.4), “to the Savior.” It must be said to him: in what way does he stay with them for two days? For he has not observed what we have stated before, that it is [not] recorded that it was in the town he stayed these two days.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Curiously, John 4:30 is missing from Origen's lemma, even though he comments on it before proceeding to the next section on John 4:31.

⁹⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.29/173–30/186.

⁹⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.31/187–92 (SC 222, 134.1–136.26; Brooke's fragment 27): Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων τὴν ὕδριαν τὴν δεκτικὴν ζωῆς ὑπολαμβάνει (27.1) εἶναι διάθεσιν καὶ ἔννοιαν τῆς δυνάμεως τῆς παρὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος, ἣν τινα καταλιπούσα, φησί (27.2), παρ' αὐτῷ, τουτέστιν ἔχουσα παρὰ τῷ σωτῆρι τὸ τοιοῦτο σκεῦος, ἐν ᾧ ἐληλύθει λαβεῖν τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ, ὑπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον εὐαγγελιζομένη τῇ κλήσει τὴν Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν· διὰ γὰρ τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος προσάγεται ἡ ψυχὴ τῷ σωτῆρι. Κατανόησον δὲ εἰ δύναται ἐπαινουμένη τυγχάνειν ἡ ὕδρια αὕτη πάντῃ ἀφιεμένη· “Ἀφῆκεν, γάρ φησι, τὴν ὕδριαν αὐτῆς ἡ γυνή.” Οὐ γὰρ πρόκειται, ὅτι ἀφῆκεν αὐτὴν παρὰ τῷ σωτῆρι. Πῶς δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἀπίθανον κατάλιπούσαν αὐτὴν τὴν δεκτικὴν τῆς ζωῆς διάθεσιν καὶ τὴν ἔννοιαν τῆς δυνάμεως τῆς παρὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος καὶ τὸ σκεῦος, ἐν ᾧ ἐληλύθει λαβεῖν τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ, ἀπεληλυθέναι εἰς τὸν κόσμον χωρὶς τούτων εὐαγγελισθαι τῇ κλήσει τὴν Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν; Πῶς δὲ καὶ ἡ πνευματικὴ μετὰ τοσούτους λόγους οὐ πείσεται σαφῶς περὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ φησι· “Μήτι οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός;” Καὶ τὸ “Ἐξῆλθον δὲ ἐκ τῆς πόλεως” δηγήσατο (27.3) ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐκ τῆς προτέρας αὐτῶν ἀναστροφῆς οὔσης κοσμικῆς· καὶ ἤρχοντο διὰ τῆς πίστεως,

Origen attributes four statements to Heracleon in this passage, organized in two pairs with ensuing responses. In Origen's first response, several phrases from the first pair of attributed statements are repeated. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all four statements as quotations; Völker does likewise with the repetitions within Origen's first response. Blanc presents the first pair without quotation marks, but makes one combined quotation of the second pair, curiously including the second φησί within the quotation. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all four attributed statements, including Origen's repetitions, and Heine also puts quotation marks around the last one. Pagels quotes from the first pair as if directly from Heracleon. Poffet presents both pairs as quotations taken directly from Heracleon. Wucherpfennig cites the second attributed statement as a quotation taken directly from Heracleon.⁹⁷

	27.1 ὑπολαμβάνει	27.2 φησί	27.3 διηγήσατο	27.4 φησί
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Quotation
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	Quotation	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpfennig	–	Quotation	–	–
Berglund	Summary (with included quotations)	Quotation	Summary	Quotation

The first reference is made with the verb ὑπολαμβάνω (“assume,” “suppose”), which speaks more to the thought process behind Heracleon's writing than to what he actually put into writing, but the statement includes two long phrases that, since they are repeated verbatim within Origen's response, may well be verbatim quotations. The remainder of the statement simply connects these two phrases with the water jar of the Johannine narrative, which does not leave much room for interpretation on Origen's part. The first reference is therefore taken to be a summary, including what seems to be two verbatim quotations. The second attribution formula is a single φησί (“he says”) inserted into a statement that continues the previous summary in a way that is

φησί (27.4), πρὸς τὸν σωτήρα. Λεκτέον δὲ πρὸς αὐτόν, πῶς μένει παρ' αὐτοῖς τὰς δύο ἡμέρας; οὐ γὰρ τετρήρηκεν, ὃ προπαρεθέμεθα ἡμεῖς περὶ τοῦ <οὐκ> ἐν τῇ πόλει αὐτὸν ἀναγεγράφθαι μεμενηκέναι τὰς δύο ἡμέρας.

⁹⁷ GCS 10, 255; SC 222, 135–37; FC 89, 108; Völker, *Quellen*, 76; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 227; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 94; Poffet, *Méthode*, 70–74; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 107–8; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 290.

difficult to translate accurately. This makes it unclear at which point the transition from summary to quotation occurs, but the verb καταλιπούσα (“leaving”), located immediately before the attribution formula, should be part of the verbatim quotation.

In the second pair, the third reference is made with the construction διηγῆσαι ἀντὶ τοῦ (“he has explained ... in the sense of”). Although this is not a *verbum dicendi*, it does refer to what Heracleon has put into writing, and the statement is categorized as a summary. The fourth attributed statement is a complete sentence, into which the attribution formula φησί (“he says”) has been inserted as the fifth or sixth word. This statement can safely be taken as a verbatim quotation.

Heracleon seems to be stating two things about the Samaritan woman. First, he claims that by leaving her vessel with Jesus, she accepts his power and demonstrates her willingness to receive new life from him. Thereby, he seems to be using the water jar as a symbol for the new life she will receive, rather than for the old life she is leaving, which would be more intuitive since the jar is the object of the verb ἀφίημι (“leave”) in John 4:28.⁹⁸ Secondly, Heracleon claims that when the woman preaches to her Samaritan peers (that is, to the world), they leave their town, which is a symbol of their former life, and come in faith to Jesus.⁹⁹ Although it is possible to see parallels between the spirit and the Samaritan woman, and between the soul and the other Samaritans, and argue that Heracleon views one as a symbol of the other, it is quite a stretch to argue, from this sentence, that he subscribes to a concept of three distinct human natures. More likely, he argues that to be successful in a preaching endeavor, one has first to partake of the Holy Spirit and receive his assistance, just like the Samaritan woman has to open her water jar to Christ before witnessing to her hometown.

In all, we may conclude that Heracleon never states that he views the Samaritan woman as a representative of humans with a spiritual nature as opposed to an animated or a material one, and that his interest in Christian mission is not limited to a pre-elected category of spiritual people.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ The claim by Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 90, that the receptive capacity for eternal life that Heracleon refers to is limited to the pneumatics, is based entirely on her presumption that Heracleon subscribes to what she calls substantive determinism. No such limitation is expressed by Heracleon in this passage.

⁹⁹ Koschorke, *Polemik der Gnostiker*, 168, remarks correctly that Heracleon notes the woman’s intent to pass on the “living water” she has received to others. However, he presumes that missionary activity is reserved for the spiritual ones, and directed towards the animated ones – a connection that Heracleon does not make.

¹⁰⁰ Pace de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 92; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 86–92, who both argue that Heracleon in his interpretation of John 4:1–26 is concerned solely with the redemption of the spiritual ones.

Chapter 8

The Disciples at Sychar

At the end of Jesus's conversation with the woman at Jacob's well in John 4:7–26, the disciples return from an errand as the woman departs to tell her fellow Samaritans about her encounter with the Savior. Before the Samaritans arrive to invite Jesus to stay a few days in their town, Jesus and his disciples have a conversation about food, harvest, and labor. In his comments on this passage, Origen refers to Heracleon a dozen times.

A. Passages 28–31: The Spiritual Food of Jesus (John 4:31–34)

The first couple of verses in Jesus's conversation with his disciples concern the everyday necessity of eating. The disciples return from buying groceries in Sychar (cf. John 4:8) and ask Jesus to eat. Jesus declines, claiming to have food the disciples know nothing about. When the disciples wonder who might have brought him food, he tells them: "My food is to do the will of the Father, and to fulfill his work" (John 4:34). Origen finds it fitting that a dialogue about water is followed by a conversation about food, and interprets the food of the disciples as λόγους τινὰς ἀρμόζοντας ("certain suitable teachings") that the disciples have found among the heterodox. He also remarks that it is suitable for humans to show hospitality toward Jesus, in the hope of eventually enjoying Jesus's own hospitality in the kingdom of heaven.¹

He then turns to Heracleon's interpretation:

Heracleon says that (φησὶν ὅτι / 28.1) they wanted to share with him some of what had been bought and brought from Samaria. But this he says because (φησὶν ἵνα / 28.2) some [...] the five foolish bridesmaids [...] from the bridegroom. Why should I believe that [...] having the same [...] being said [...] the excluded foolish bridesmaids – it is worthwhile to see – including an accusation against those among the disciples who fell asleep as the foolish bridesmaids did. In addition, the dissimilarity between light and nourishment (τροφῇ), and between oil and food (βρῶμα) [...] to reject the interpretation (αἰτιάσασθαι τὴν ἐκδοχὴν). Or, if he indeed was able to clarify the passage somewhat, he should have supported his own interpretation with more evidence.²

¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.32/193–99.

² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.32/200–202 (SC 222, 142.40–51; Brooke's fragment 28): Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλεὼν φησὶν, ὅτι (28.1) ἐβούλοντο κοινωνεῖν αὐτῷ ἐξ ὧν ἀγοράσαντες ἀπὸ τῆς Σαμαρείας κεκομίσκεισαν. Ταῦτα δὲ φησὶν ἵνα (28.2) τινὰ * * * * αἱ πέντε μωραὶ παρθένοι * * * *

This passage is unusually difficult due to a number of lacunae on this page of Codex Monacensis.³ Nevertheless, we may discern two references made to Heracleon: one with φησὶν ὅτι (“he says that”), one with φησιν ἵνα (“he says because”). They are followed by a response introduced by πῶς δὲ οἶμαι (“Why should I believe that?”). Blanc uses plain text for both attributed statements. Preuschen presents both as quotations. Völker and Foerster present the first as a quotation, but leave out the second. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both. Pagels quotes from the first as if directly from Heracleon. Poffet reads the second attribution formula as a single φησὶν, and combines the two references to one reconstructed quotation from Heracleon, in which Origen’s “he says” is put within parentheses. Wucherpennig does not refer to this paragraph.⁴

	28.1 φησὶν ὅτι	28.2 φησιν ἵνα
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	–
Foerster	Quotation	–
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Paraphrase

The formula φησὶν ὅτι (“he says that”), which is used in the first reference, typically introduces indirect discourse. Since the main verb in the ensuing clause, ἐβούλοντο (“they wanted to”), is in the plural and refers to the disciples, and the pronoun αὐτῷ (“with him”) refers to Jesus, both fit equally well in indirect as in direct speech. There is, therefore, no reason to argue that Origen switches to direct speech, and this statement is to be taken as a summary. The second reference refers to the reasoning behind Heracleon’s argu-

* * ἀπὸ τοῦ νυμφίου. Πῶς δὲ οἶμαι * * * τὰ αὐτὰ ἔχειν * * * λέγονται * * * ταῖς ἀποκλεισθεί-
σαις μωραῖς παρθένοις ἄξιον ἰδεῖν κατηγορίαν περιέχοντα τῶν μαθητῶν τοῖς αὐτοῖς κοιμω-
μένων ταῖς μωραῖς παρθένοις. Ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὸ ἀνόμοιον τοῦ φωτὸς πρὸς τροφήν, καὶ τοῦ
ἐλαίου πρὸς τὰ βρώματα * * * * * σαντας αἰτιάσασθαι τὴν ἐκδοχὴν· ἢ εἴπερ τι ἐδύνατο σαφῆ
ποιῆσαι τὸν λόγον, ἔχρην αὐτὸν διὰ πλειόνων παραμυθίσασθαι κατασκευάζον τα τὴν ἰδίαν
ἐκδοχὴν.

³ From available images, there appears never to have been anything written in these gaps. They may therefore reflect damaged areas of undeterminable extent in the *Vorlage*, and their respective lengths, indicated with asterisks in Blanc’s edition, are not necessarily significant.

⁴ SC 222, 143; GCS 10, 257; FC 89, 110; Völker, *Quellen*, 76; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 228; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 92; Poffet, *Méthode*, 77; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 110.

ment – notice the parallel between φησὶν ὅτι (“he says that”) and φησιν ἵνα (“he says because”) – and is presented as an explanatory paraphrase. The content of this paraphrase is too fragmentary to be discerned, except a clear reference to the parable of the ten bridesmaids in Matt 25:1–13, five of whom wanted to partake of the spare oil brought by the other five, when all of their lamps had burned out. Origen argues against the parallel between the disciples and the bridesmaids, which implies that Heracleon has suggested it.

In his response, Origen remarks that any accusation against the foolish bridesmaids, who fell asleep while waiting for the bridegroom, would also apply to the disciples who, according to Matt 26:40, 43, fell asleep in Gethsemane while they were waiting for Jesus to finish his prayer. Origen also argues that Heracleon’s interpretation is worthy of criticism because the parallel between the oil and light of the parable, and the nourishment (τροφή) and food (βρώμα) of this passage, is weak.⁵ In the final sentence, he admits that Heracleon might have had something to contribute, had he only presented more evidence.

We may conclude that Heracleon has found a parallel between the disciples, who went to buy food in Samaria, and the bridesmaids, who had to buy more oil when their lamps had burned out. His rather natural observation that the disciples wanted Jesus to partake of the food they had bought and brought appears to be a natural starting point for such a parallel. Since Origen’s response focuses on the parallel between nourishment and light, Heracleon seems not to have referred to the wise bridesmaids’ failure to share their oil, but to their ultimate goal of providing light to the bridal procession. How he construes this parallel is harder to gauge. Is he trying to exhort his readers to prepare to provide nourishment to Christ at his second coming? Is his point that the disciples happen to be absent when Christ reveals himself to the Samaritan woman, just like the foolish bridesmaids are absent when the bridegroom returns? Such a parallel would be strengthened by the point that in both cases, those who are absent are busy getting additional supplies.⁶

The shortest of Origen’s interactions with Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata* must be the one regarding John 4:32, where Jesus claims to have access to food unknown to the disciples:

Heracleon has said (εἶπεν) nothing about this passage.⁷

⁵ Neither term is mentioned in John 4:31 – τροφή appears in 4:8 and βρώμα in 4:34.

⁶ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 92, illustrates her insistence that Heracleon’s interpretations invariably express the theology of “those who bring in the natures” by arguing that, in Heracleon’s view, the disciples are unable to “commune” with Christ because they are animated people rather than spiritual. Poffet, *Méthode*, 77–78, makes a similar argument.

⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.34/225 (SC 222, 152.49–50; Brooke’s fragment 29): Οὐδὲν δὲ εἰς τὴν λέξιν εἶπεν ὁ Ἡρακλέων.

All previous scholars render this brief remark as plain text.⁸ Its negative form makes it less comparable to the rest of the material, but it may be regarded as a summary.

Heracleon's neglect to comment specifically on the single sentence in John 4:32 is not significant enough to demand an explanation.⁹ The modern chapter and verse delimitations were unknown to both Heracleon and Origen, and whether or not Heracleon intended to comment on the whole of the text, it is not noteworthy that a single sentence remains uncommented. Heracleon might have quoted John 4:31–32 in a single lemma, and simply neglected to say anything specific about the second sentence.¹⁰ Origen's remark implies, however, that the situation was uncommon enough to be noticed, and suggests that Heracleon did not ordinarily leave large swaths of text without comment.

The next verse, in which the disciples wonder who may have given Jesus food in their absence, is not left without comment by Heracleon:

Even if Heracleon understands (ὕπολαμβάνει / 30.1) this to be said in a bodily way by the disciples, as still thinking lowly and emulating the Samaritan when she said "You have no bucket, and the well is deep," it is worthwhile that we consider whether it is not because the disciples are perceiving something divine, that they say to one another: "No one has brought him anything to eat, have they?" For perhaps they supposed that some angelic power had brought him something to eat. It seems that this is why they were taught that the food he had to eat was greater, namely to "do the will of the one who sent" him "and to complete his work."¹¹

The understanding attributed to Heracleon in this paragraph is presented in plain text by Blanc, but as a quotation by Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster. Heine and Pettipiece italicize it. Poffet and Wucherpennig present it as a

⁸ GCS 10, 260; SC 222, 153; FC 89, 114; Völker, *Quellen*, 77; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 228; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 112. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 27, merely remarks that Origen notes that no comment from Heracleon is available.

⁹ Pace Poffet, *Méthode*, 78, who speculates whether Heracleon's comment on this verse was already lost, or if Heracleon was silent to avoid commenting on the disciples' ignorance regarding Jesus's real source of nourishment.

¹⁰ That Origen is referring specifically to John 4:32 can be inferred from the fact that this sentence is what he is quoting in his preceding lemma at *Comm. Jo.* 13.33/203.

¹¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.35/226–27 (SC 222, 152.1–10, Brooke's fragment 30): Εἰ καὶ σαρκικῶς ὑπολαμβάνει (30.1) ταῦτα λέγεσθαι ὁ Ἡρακλέων ὑπὸ τῶν μαθητῶν, ὡς ἔτι ταπεινότερον διανοουμένων καὶ τὴν Σαμαρεῖτιν μιμουμένων λέγουσαν· "Οὕτε ἀντλημα ἔχεις, καὶ τὸ φρέαρ ἐστὶν βαθύ," ἄξιον ἡμᾶς ἰδεῖν, μήποτε βλέποντές τι θεϊότερον οἱ μαθηταὶ φασιν πρὸς ἀλλήλους· "Μὴ τις ἤνεγκεν αὐτῷ φαγεῖν;" Τάχα γὰρ ὑπενόουν ἀγγελικὴν τινα δύναμιν ἐνηγοχέαι αὐτῷ φαγεῖν· καὶ εἰκὸς ὅτι διὰ τοῦτο ἐδιδάσκοντο ὅτι μείζον ἐστὶν ὃ εἶχεν βρῶμα φαγεῖν, ὅπερ ἦν ποιῆσαι "τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντος" αὐτὸν "καὶ τελειῶσαι τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ".

direct quotation from Heracleon, with no indication of Origen’s transmission. Pagels quotes only the key word σαρκικῶς (“in a bodily way”).¹²

	30.1 ὑπολαμβάνει
Blanc	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics
Pagels	–
Poffet	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase

The verb ὑπολαμβάνω (“understand”), with which this reference is made, refers more to Heracleon’s thought process than to the words of his writing. The word choice betrays a measure of interpretation on Origen’s part, and the statement is, therefore, an explanatory paraphrase.

Origen’s paraphrase obscures much of Heracleon’s interpretation, but the repetition of the point regarding the disciples’ failure to understand that Jesus was speaking metaphorically suggests that this point originates with Heracleon.¹³ Origen is not particularly critical of Heracleon’s comment, but lets himself be inspired to ponder the possibility of a spiritual interpretation of the disciples’ question. He remarks that, even if they were speaking about ordinary food, they could have imagined it coming from a heavenly source. In the end, he seems to silently agree with Heracleon’s understanding, as it logically explains the focus of Jesus’s reply.

Heracleon also comments on Jesus’s explanation, in John 4:34, that his secret food consists of doing the will of the Father and completing his work:

Heracleon says (φησὶ / 31.1), on account of “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me” (John 4:34), that the Savior explained to the disciples that this was (ἦν) what he discussed with the woman, saying that his own food was the will of the Father, for this was (ἦν) his nourishment, his rest, and his strength. He said (ἔλεγεν) that the will of the Father was for humans to know the Father and be saved. This was the Savior’s work, for which he was sent to Samaria – that is, to the world. Thus, he has taken (ἐξείληφεν / 31.2) as the very food of Jesus even the conversation with the Samaritan – an understanding which I think everyone can see is clearly made both poorly and violently. How the will of the Father can

¹² GCS 10, 260; SC 222, 153; FC 89, 115; Völker, *Quellen*, 77; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 228; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 92; Poffet, *Méthode*, 78; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 340.

¹³ Poffet, *Méthode*, 78–79, finds it remarkable that Heracleon is prepared to criticize the Samaritan woman for thinking according to the flesh; maybe this should have led him to question his presumption that Heracleon is presenting her as an ideal spiritual person.

be “nourishment” for the Savior he has not presented clearly. And how can the will of the Father be his “rest”? For the Lord is saying elsewhere, showing that the Father’s will is by no means his rest: “Father, let if possible this cup be taken away from me. Nevertheless, not what I want, but what you want.” And from where does it come that the will of God is the Savior’s strength?¹⁴

There are two references to Heracleon in this paragraph, the first made with φησί (“he says”) and the second with ἐξείληφεν (“he has taken”). Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, Poffet, and Beatrice see three by taking Heracleon, rather than Jesus, to be the grammatical subject of ἔλεγεν (“he said”). Blanc presents this paragraph in plain text. Preuschen presents both references as quotations, and includes the prepositional phrase beginning with διὰ τοῦ (“on account of”) in the first quotation. Völker and Foerster exclude the second (their third) reference, but present the first as a quotation. Heine and Pettipiece take Jesus to be the subject of ἔλεγεν, italicize the first reference, and leave the second in plain text. Pagels and Wucherpfennig both quote from the first attributed statement as if directly from Heracleon. Poffet leaves out ἔλεγεν, and explicitly claims to be quoting Heracleon when he presents his translation of the first attributed statement. Beatrice presents the statement attributed to Jesus with ἔλεγεν (“he said”) as a quotation taken directly from Heracleon.¹⁵

¹⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.38/247–49 (SC 222, 162.1–164.19; Brooke’s fragment 31): Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων διὰ τοῦ “Ἐμὸν βρώμα ἐστὶν ἵνα ποιήσω τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός μέ” φησι (31.1) διηγείσθαι τὸν σωτῆρα τοῖς μαθηταῖς, ὅτι τοῦτο ἦν, ὃ συνεζήτει μετὰ τῆς γυναικός, βρώμα ἴδιον λέγων τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρός· τοῦτο γὰρ αὐτοῦ τροφή καὶ ἀνάπαυσις καὶ δύναμις ἦν. Θέλημα δὲ πατρός ἔλεγεν εἶναι τὸ γνῶναι ἀνθρώπους τὸν πατέρα καὶ σωθῆναι, ὅπερ ἦν ἔργον τοῦ σωτῆρος τοῦ ἕνεκα τούτου ἀπεσταλμένου εἰς Σαμάρειαν, τουτέστιν εἰς τὸν κόσμον. Βρώμα οὖν αὐτὸ ἐξείληφεν (31.2) τοῦ Ἰησοῦ καὶ τὴν μετὰ τῆς Σαμареϊτιδος συζήτησιν, ὅπερ νομίζω σαφῶς παντὶ τῷ ὁρᾶσθαι καὶ ταπεινῶς ἐξείληφθαι καὶ βεβιασμένως. Πῶς δὲ τροφή τοῦ σωτῆρος τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρός σαφῶς οὐ παρέστησεν· πῶς δὲ καὶ ἀνάπαυσις τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρός; Λέγει γὰρ ὁ κύριος ἀλλαχοῦ, ὡς οὐ πάντως τοῦ πατρικοῦ θελήματος ἀναπαύσεως αὐτοῦ ὄντος· “Πάτερ, εἰ δυνατόν, παρελθάτω τὸ ποτήριον ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ· πλην οὐ τί ἐγὼ θέλω, ἀλλὰ τί σύ.” Πόθεν δὲ καὶ ὅτι δύναμις τοῦ σωτῆρος τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ;

¹⁵ SC 222, 163–65; GCS 10, 263; FC 89, 119; Völker, *Quellen*, 77; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 228; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 90, 93; Poffet, *Méthode*, 80; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 114; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 341; Beatrice, “Greek Philosophy and Gnostic Soteriology,” 204.

	31.1 φησί	31.2 ἐξείληφεν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	–
Foerster	Quotation	–
Heine	Italics	Plain text
Pettipiece	Italics	Plain text
Pagels	Quotation	–
Poffet	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	–
Berglund	Summary	Paraphrase

Origen specifies that Heracleon’s comments refer to Jesus’s statement about his food in John 4:34, and claims that Heracleon holds the Father’s will to be not only the topic of Jesus’s conversation with the Samaritan woman, but also his nourishment, his rest, and his strength. Since this reference is made with the *verbum dicendi* φησί, and the attributed statement is presented in indirect speech, using accusative with infinitive, it is a summary. The prepositional phrase beginning with διὰ τοῦ at the start of the sentence is Origen’s specification of what the summarized comment refers to, and not attributed to Heracleon – albeit this is a distinction of no importance for a summary. Since the whole summary is put in the imperfect tense, which is mainly visible in the repetitions of ἦν (“was”), the subject of the third person imperfect ἔλεγε (“he said”) must be Jesus, not Heracleon. The assertion that the Father’s will is for humans to come to know him and be saved is, therefore, put in the mouth of Jesus, and presented as Heracleon’s understanding of Jesus’s statement in John 4:34. Both sentences are part of Origen’s summary.

In the third sentence, the perfect ἐξείληφεν (“he has taken”) contrasts against the previous imperfect forms. Its subject must be Heracleon. The verb refers not to what Heracleon has stated, but to how he has understood the Johannine phrasing, so the attributed statement must be an explanatory paraphrase. Origen infers, reasonably enough, that Heracleon understands the conversation with the Samaritan woman as part of the fulfillment of Jesus’s purpose in life and, therefore, as something that counts as “food” in the metaphorical sense in which Jesus is using the word. In his response, Origen displays awareness of rhetorical techniques: the invectives ταπεινῶς (“poorly”) and βεβιασμένως (“violently”) are examples of *apodioxis*,¹⁶ and the appeal to insufficient proof is a species of *elenchos*.¹⁷

¹⁶ Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 18.

¹⁷ Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, 40–41.

Heracleon's interpretation is more sensible than Origen admits. Given the metaphorical sense in which Jesus is speaking about "food" in a situation where he appears to be not only far from starving, but also refreshed and energized after his conversation with the Samaritan, it is reasonable to identify this conversation as a manifestation of his mission on earth,¹⁸ and to speak of his activity as "rest" and "strength." The assertion that the will of the Father is that humans come to know him and be saved seems to combine a number of sayings by the Johannine Jesus – in John 6:29, 12:47, 17:3, and 18:37 – that all speak of Jesus's mission in these terms, and is, therefore, well in line with the tendency of the Fourth Gospel.¹⁹ Beatrice is correct to point out that Summary 31.1 "expressly and definitively contradicts any attempt to ascribe to Heracleon a doctrine of soteriological determinism."²⁰ Wucherpfennig rightfully points out that this passage expressly states that Jesus has come to rescue humans – and not only a specific human nature, but humans in general.²¹ In Heracleon's reading, John 3:34–35 becomes a subtle Johannine counterpart to the Great Commission in Matt 28:18–20.

B. Passages 32–36: The Imminent Harvest (John 4:35–38)

The next group of interactions revolves around the metaphor Jesus presents in John 4:35–38, of the imminent harvest in which the one who reaps will share the joy and receive his reward in eternal life, even though someone else has performed the previous work on the field.

Origen is harshly critical of those, including Heracleon, who purport that any part of the metaphor, for instance the saying "Four more months, then

¹⁸ Cf. Bastit, "Forme et méthode," 158–59: "Au delà, Héracléon se montre soucieux de garder l'unité du tissu évangélique, en commentant par exemple la péricope qui suit, l'entretien avec les disciples sur la 'nourriture', dont Jésus affirme qu'elle consiste pur lui à faire la volonté de son Père (Jn 4,34), comme une allusion à la discussion qui précède, puisque le dialogue pédagogique avec la Samaritaine peut être compris comme une manifestation concrète de cette mise en œuvre de la volonté divine."

¹⁹ The combination of food, rest, and strength is also reminiscent of Ps 23, which combines food ("green pastures"), rest ("he makes me lie down"), strength ("he restores my soul"), and fulfillment of one's purpose ("he leads me down the right paths"). Even though we have no other indications that Heracleon used the book of Psalms, it is not inconceivable that he knew Ps 23. Christological readings of the psalms are known since Luke 24:44 and Acts 2:25–35, and the practice of reading Jesus as the speaker of a psalm from Mark 15:34 and John 2:17.

²⁰ Beatrice, "Greek Philosophy and Gnostic Soteriology," 204.

²¹ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 126, 341. Pace Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 104, 108, 121, who claims this passage to be evidence that only the pneumatic humans are elected for salvation.

the harvest comes,”²² can be interpreted literally. In Origen’s time, a common interpretation of the four-month period was, apparently, a simple calendric one: harvest commences in *Nisan*, the first month of the twelve-month Jewish year; thus, this remark was made four months earlier, in the ninth month, *Kislev*.²³ Origen attempts to disprove such an interpretation by calculating narrated time between the Passover festival mentioned in John 2:13 and this event, and finds it unreasonable to believe that the Galileans, who greet Jesus amicably in John 4:45 because they had seen what Jesus did at Passover, had retained this memory for several months.²⁴ For him, it is an important insight that “the Savior many times has made noetic statements stripped of perceptible and bodily meaning”²⁵ – that is, utterances that refer to a spiritual world rather than that which is discernible by bodily senses.²⁶ Origen concludes that the *χῶραι λευκαί* (“white fields”) in Jesus’s statement indicate two separate concepts: On the one hand, they refer to “all the fields of Scripture” that now are being fulfilled in the presence of God’s word. On the other hand, they also signify “all the things that are perceived by the senses (αἰσθητός), including heaven and what is in it.” All of the former speak about the Christ; all of the latter, including giant sea monsters, are created for a good purpose.²⁷

Within this chain of argument, Origen refers to Heracleon as follows:

In addition, how strange wouldn’t it be to manifestly allegorize both “Lift up your eyes” and “see the fields, that they are already white for harvest” in every detail, but not take what [...] comes before this, “Do you not say: ‘Four more months, then the harvest comes,’” allegorically? Heracleon nevertheless, similarly to most people, does stay within the text, not thinking that it should be interpreted anagogically (ἀναγέσθαι), for he says that (φησὶ γοῦν

²² John 4:35. Cf. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.39/250, which, as P75, omits ἔτι.

²³ This calendric interpretation is not unheard of in modern scholarship; Aileen Guilding and John Bowman have used it as a basis for providing a context for the passage in Jewish lectionaries and a Samaritan festal calendar. However, the modern consensus is that four months is the traditional minimum interval between sowing and harvest. Farmers always have to wait before the crop can be harvested, but Jesus had barely finished sowing the word in Sychar before the Samaritans approached, dressed in white, to be harvested. Cf. Barrett, *John*, 241; Beasley-Murray, *John*, 63; Brown, *John*, 182; Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, 229–30; Lincoln, *John*, 180; J. Martin C. Scott, “John,” in *Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 1208–12, here 1172.

²⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.39–40. That Origen is prepared to perform such a calculation based on narrated time reflects his high expectation of historical accuracy of the Fourth Gospel. Cf. the analysis of Origen’s expectations of historical information in the Gospels in Berglund, “Understanding Origen,” 207–14.

²⁵ *Comm. Jo.* 13.39/250 (SC 222, 166.1–2): νοητὰ πολλάκις γυνὰ αἰσθητῶν καὶ σωματικῶν λελαληκέναι τὸν σωτήρα.

²⁶ See the analysis of the term *noetic* in Blossom Stefaniw, *Mind, Text, and Commentary: Noetic Exegesis in Origen of Alexandria, Didymus the Blind, and Evagrius Ponticus*, Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity 6 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010).

²⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.42/279–84 (SC 222, 180.23–184.57).

ὅτι / 32.1) he speaks (λέγει) of the harvest of crops as still being four months away, even though the harvest of which he spoke (ἔλεγεν) was already at hand. But I wonder why he has understood this harvest to be a harvest of the souls of the believers, as he says that (λέγων ὅτι / 32.2) they are already in full bloom, ready for harvest, and suitable to be gathered into a barn (συναχθῆναι εἰς ἀποθήκην) – that is, into rest by means of faith – as many as are ready. But not all, for “some were already ready,” he says (φησὶν / 32.3), “but some were about to be, some are about to be, and some are already sowers themselves (αἱ δὲ ἐπισπείρονται ἤδη).” So this is what he said (εἶπεν), but I wonder if he can explain how the disciples, by lifting up their eyes, can see the souls already being suitable for – as he believes (ὥς οἶεται) – being gathered into the barn. Furthermore, how can “One is the sower and another the reaper” and “I have sent you to harvest what you have not worked for” be true of the souls? And how can “Others have labored and you have entered into their labor” be applied to the soul? We, for our part, have understood a harvest of fruit gathered for eternal life, in accordance with the fruition of the word, which is hidden in us as a seed among our thoughts, and which has come to completion through further cultivation. But how it is sown by one and harvested by another, we will speak about in the following.²⁸

In this passage, Origen presents two points from Heracleon’s writing – one literal and one allegorical interpretation of the word *θερισμός* (“harvest”) – in order to criticize the former as being inconsistent with the latter, and the latter as being simply inconceivable. As support for his claims, he attributes three statements to Heracleon. Blanc presents the first as a quotation and the other two in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three as quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all three. Pagels seems not to use this passage. Poffet presents the first and third references as quotations directly from Heracleon. Wucherpfennig explicitly labels Origen’s whole presentation of Heracleon’s views as a quotation, including the statement “I

²⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.40/270–41/273 (SC 222, 176.58–178.25; Brooke’s fragment 32): πρὸς τοῦτοις πῶς οὐκ ἄτοπον τὸ μὲν “Ἐπάρατε τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑμῶν” κατὰ πάντα ἀλληγορή<σαι> σαφῶς, καὶ τὸ “Θεάσασθε τὰς χώρας ὅτι λευκαὶ εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμὸν ἤδη,” τὸ δὲ πρὸ τοῦ * * * * ἐρχόμενον τοῦτο “Οὐχ ὑμεῖς λέγετε ὅτι” Ἐτι τετράμηνός ἐστιν, καὶ ὁ θερισμὸς ἔρχεται” μὴ ἀλληγορικῶς ἐκλαβεῖν; Καὶ ὁ Ἡρακλέων μέντοι γε ὁμοίως τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐπὶ τῆς λέξεως ἔμεινεν μὴ οἰόμενος αὐτὴν ἀνάγεσθαι. Φησὶ γοῦν ὅτι (32.1) Τὸν τῶν γεννημάτων λέγει θερισμὸν, ὥς τούτου μὲν ἔτι διωρίαν ἔχοντος τετράμηνον, τοῦ δὲ θερισμοῦ, οὗ αὐτὸς ἔλεγεν, ἡδη ἐνεστῶτος. Καὶ τὸν θερισμὸν δὲ οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξεληφεν τῶν πιστευόντων, λέγων ὅτι (32.2) “Ἢδη ἀκμαῖοι καὶ ἔτοιμοι εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμὸν καὶ ἐπιτηδεῖοι πρὸς τὸ συναχθῆναι εἰς ἀποθήκην, τοῦτ’ ἔστιν διὰ πίστεως εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν, ὅσαι γε ἔτοιμοι· οὐ γὰρ πᾶσαι· αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἡδη ἔτοιμοι ἦσαν, φησὶν, (32.3) αἱ δὲ ἔμελλον, αἱ δὲ μέλλουσιν, αἱ δὲ ἐπισπείρονται ἡδη. Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν. Πῶς δὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ ἐπαίροντες τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς δύνανται βλέπειν τὰς ψυχὰς ἡδη ἐπιτηδεῖους οὕσας πρὸς τό, ὥς οἶεται, εἰς ἀποθήκην εἰσαχθῆναι, οὐκ οἶδα εἰ δύναται παραστήσαι. Καὶ ἔτι γε πῶς ἐπὶ τῶν ψυχῶν ἀληθὲς τὸ “Ἄλλος ὁ σπείρων, καὶ ἄλλος <ὁ> θερίζων” καὶ “Ἀπέστειλα ὑμᾶς θερίζειν ὃ οὐχ ὑμεῖς κεκοπιάκατε.” Τίνα δὲ τρόπον τὸ “Ἄλλοι κεκοπιάκασιν καὶ ὑμεῖς εἰς τὸν κόπον αὐτῶν εἰσεληλύθατε” δυνατόν ἐστιν παραδέξασθαι ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς; Ἡμεῖς οὖν θερισμὸν συναγομένου καρποῦ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἐκλαμβάνομεν κατὰ τὴν τελείωσιν τοῦ σπερματικῶς ἐγκειμένου κατὰ τὰς ἐννοίας ἡμῖν λόγου ἀπὸ γεωργίας πλείονος τετελειωμένου. Πῶς δὲ ὑπὸ ἄλλου σπείρεται καὶ ὑπὸ ἄλλου θερίζεται ἐν τοῖς ἐξῆς διαληψόμεθα.

wonder why he has understood this harvest to be a harvest of the souls of the believers,” which in that case would not be Origen’s criticism of Heracleon, but Heracleon’s criticism of Jesus. This implies that Wucherpfennig’s analysis of Origen’s references cannot be considered final.²⁹

	32.1 φησὶ γοῦν ὅτι	32.2 λέγων ὅτι	32.3 φησὶν
Blanc	Quotation	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	–	Quotation
Wucherpfennig	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Quotation

Origen’s presentation begins with a criticism, stating that Heracleon’s interpretation is an example of a strange (ἄτοπος), but supposedly widespread, practice of interpreting the first part of Jesus’s saying as concerning the physical world, in which there always is a period of waiting between sowing and harvest. To his previous argument that this scene could in no way have taken place four months before the harvest season, he now adds that any literal interpretation of these four months would be incompatible with an allegorical interpretation of the second part of Jesus’s statement about the harvest. This criticism appears entirely misguided. As a metaphorical statement, Jesus’s utterance has both a tenor (the entity to which it refers) and a vehicle (the image used to convey its meaning).³⁰ To identify the vehicle and discuss its ordinary features, some of which it presumably shares with the tenor, in no way precludes a second step in which the tenor is identified and the meaning of the metaphor evaluated. If Heracleon identified the natural harvest as the vehicle of Jesus’s metaphor, it does not follow that he cannot proceed to discuss the tenor in allegorical terms. As Wucherpfennig remarks, Heracleon’s procedure can be described as a simple application of ἱστορικόν (“analysis of what is reported in the text”) before proceeding to the allegorical sense.³¹

²⁹ SC 222, 177; GCS 10, 267; FC 89, 124; Völker, *Quellen*, 77; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 229; Poffet, *Méthode*, 86; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 116; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 253 n. 19.

³⁰ These terms for the two sides of a metaphor have been widely used since they were coined by Ivor A. Richards in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York, 1936), 95–100, even though his precision in defining them was somewhat lacking. See the criticism in David Douglass, “Issues in the Use of I. A. Richards’ Tenor–Vehicle Model of Metaphor,” *Western Journal of Communication* 64.4 (2000): 405–24.

³¹ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 166.

The first statement Origen attributes to Heracleon refers to the vehicle of Jesus's metaphor, and is introduced by the formula φησὶ γοῦν ὅτι ("he says that..."). The combination of the *verbum dicendi* φησὶ with the complementizer³² ὅτι indicates that the statement which follows is presented in indirect speech, and the grammatical shift between the present indicative φησὶ, whose grammatical subject is Heracleon, and λέγει, whose subject is Jesus, does not indicate a switch to direct speech. Therefore, the speech report is given in indirect speech and the statement is a summary. The second reference begins with a half-sentence introduction claiming that Heracleon has declared the harvest of the believers' souls to be the tenor of the metaphor. This claim is supported by the attributed statement, which speaks of people as being ἀκμαῖοι ("in full bloom") and ἔτοιμοι ("ready") to come to ἀνάπαυσις ("rest") through faith. Since the statement is introduced by λέγων ὅτι ("saying that"), our criteria lead to the conclusions that it is presented in indirect speech, and that it is a summary. The third statement attributed to Heracleon is introduced by a single φησὶν ("he says"), appears in direct speech, and is clearly delimited by the transition marker ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν ("So this is what he said") before Origen's response. Therefore, it is a verbatim quotation.

From the summaries and the verbatim quotation, it appears that Heracleon interpreted Jesus's metaphor as pertaining to the state of the souls of individual believers,³³ and even developed it to refer to different stages in the acceptance of the Christian message: some people were fully committed to Jesus already during his earthly ministry, while others were attracted, but remained uncommitted. In his own time, Heracleon recognized that some people were approaching faith in Jesus, while other hearers of the gospel remained unconvinced.³⁴ It is unclear whether the harvest specifically refers to Jesus's eschatological return, the natural death of the believer, or an entrance into a restful state characterized by faith in Jesus. In modern exegesis, George R. Beasley-Murray suggests that the white fields could refer to the approaching Samaritans, dressed in white, as a harvest already present.³⁵ Andrew T. Lincoln also

³² The term "complementizer" is introduced on page 97.

³³ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 167, 341, similarly posits that the harvest denotes the salvation of the believers, as well as their physical existence in the world. Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 288 n. 187, also notes that Manlio Simonetti, in a publication unavailable to me, has suggested that Heracleon here uses ψυχή to refer specifically to the spiritual ones. I agree with Wucherpfennig that Heracleon's comments should not be forced into the mold given by the theory of three human natures, and find it difficult to believe that Heracleon would use ψυχή rather than πνεῦμα to refer to a category he thinks of as πνευματικοί.

³⁴ Poffet, *Méthode*, 87–88, recognizes that Heracleon here is using temporal categories rather than "natures," but still claims that his perspective is perfectly coherent with his "Gnostic" horizon.

³⁵ Beasley-Murray, *John*, 63.

identifies the Samaritans as being ready for harvest,³⁶ and LarsOlov Eriksson connects the metaphor to God's work in the world and to Christian mission.³⁷ Furthermore, Wucherpennig points out that the imagery of humans as plants in a field is used also by Plato, Paul, and the authors of the Gospel of Truth and the Tripartite Tractate.³⁸ Thus, Heracleon's interpretation is not unreasonable.

How Heracleon interpreted the sowing activity (σπείρω) that is performed in the same passage is not spelled out, but may be cautiously inferred from the context. The most logical counterpart to a harvest consisting of people coming to faith in Jesus would be the preaching of the gospel message, in line with Paul's remark in Romans 10:14 that preaching is a prerequisite for faith.³⁹ If Jesus's contrast to the minimal gestation period of four months for ordinary grains is to have its full force, the sowing activity has to be an activity performed among the Samaritans very recently, such as Jesus's preaching to the Samaritan woman. His ensuing remark that the disciples have not performed the sowing and cultivation implies that these activities are possibly for humans to perform. Wucherpennig's claim that the sowing activity specifically refers to the creation of individual humans is less than convincing in view of this remark.⁴⁰

The realization that Heracleon interprets the sowing activity as missionary preaching may also illuminate the enigmatic expression αἱ δὲ ἐπισπείρονται ἤδη, which constitutes Heracleon's fourth category in Quotation 32.3. Those who were "already ready" (ἤδη ἕτοιμοι) are the Samaritans in the story, who were immediately ready to put their trust in Christ. Those who were "about to be" (ἔμελλον) are those who felt the need to examine his claims themselves (cf. John 4:42). Those who "are now about to be" (μέλλουσιν) are not characters in the story, but people who were hearing and considering Christian preaching in Heracleon's present time. In this context, ἐπισπείρονται can be understood either in the passive sense of denoting those who "now" (ἤδη), in Heracleon's time, are the recipients of the message preached by followers of Christ – or in the medium voice as those "already" (ἤδη) engaged in the sowing activity themselves. The above translation reflects the latter alternative.

In his response, Origen wonders how Heracleon came to understand the harvest of which Jesus is speaking as a harvest of the souls of individual believers. A possible clue to the origin of this interpretation is the expression συναχθῆναι εἰς ἀποθήκην ("gathered into a barn"). This term may be introdu-

³⁶ Lincoln, *John*, 180.

³⁷ Eriksson, *För att ni skall tro*, 86, 89.

³⁸ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 164, 287, referring to Plato, *Tim.* 41a–43a; 1 Cor 15:36–38, 42–44; Gos. Truth 41.3–13; Tri. Trac. 62.6–15.

³⁹ Perhaps the activities of the Jewish prophets and other expressions of divine providence can be included in the metaphor.

⁴⁰ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 166–67.

ced into Heracleon's interpretation simply by association to the harvest situation, but it can also be brought in from Matt 13:24–30. This Matthean pericope is another harvest illustration told by Jesus, in which the grain (σῖτος) is said to be gathered into a barn.⁴¹ Since this grain is explicitly identified, in Matt 13:38, as the children of the kingdom (οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας), it is plausible that Heracleon has turned to the Matthean harvest imagery in Matt 13:24–43 in order to interpret John 4:35–38.

Summary 32.2 may exhibit a dependence on another early Christian writing. In Heb 3:7–4:11, the letter writer urges his readers not to be disobedient to the voice of God, but to accept the calling of the Gospel in order to enter into God's rest: "Let us therefore make every effort to enter into this rest, so that no one may fall by following the same pattern of disobedience."⁴² The phrase τοῦτ' ἔστιν διὰ πίστεως εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν ("that is, into rest by means of faith") nicely summarizes the process envisioned in this exhortation. Since Origen attributes it to Heracleon, it is plausible that Heracleon's interpretation is informed by his reading of Heb 3:7–4:11.⁴³

In addition, Origen complains that Heracleon's interpretation is incompatible with three particular statements within Jesus's discourse in John 4:37–38. Origen's selection of these statements reveals that he thinks Heracleon is referring to the harvest of the believers' souls in a quite specific sense, in which each believer harvests their own soul. This is not likely to be correct. Rather, Heracleon is viewing the disciples (the original twelve as well as his own contemporaries) as the harvesters of new disciples. In Origen's understanding, it is each person's labor of cultivating their own soul that results in a harvest, and it is quite difficult to see how the sower and the reaper can be different people. In Heracleon's view, it is quite natural that the labor of one missionary worker may result in a harvest reaped by another. Origen expressly accepts an interpretation of the metaphor in which the field refers to the individual soul, where the gospel seed is planted among human thoughts and, after a period of cultivation, results in a harvest of fruits for eternal life.

⁴¹ Matt 13:30: ...τὸν δὲ σῖτον συναγάγετε εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην μου ("...but gather the grain into my barn"). The potential use of Matt 13:30 is previously pointed out by Massaux, *Influence*, 429.

⁴² Heb 4:11: Σπουδάζωμεν οὖν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν κατάπαυσιν, ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ τῆς ὑποδείγματι πέσῃ τῆς ἀπειθείας.

⁴³ Lewis Ayres, "Continuity and Change in Second-Century Christianity: A Narrative against the Trend," in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, eds. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 106–21, here 107–10, identifies a narrative pattern common to John 1:3; Heb 1:2, 2:10), and who invites believers to be his brothers (John 1:12, Heb 2:10–13) and continues to work among them. He also argues that this pattern is embedded in Matthew.

Heracleon's exegesis of Jesus's metaphor of the fields that are already white for harvest can be described as an identification of the vehicle and the tenor of the metaphor.⁴⁴ Heracleon states that Jesus is using the vehicle of the natural harvest to speak about humans coming to faith in Jesus, and applies this metaphor to his own present context. Apparently, he saw a need for the spreading of early Christian beliefs among his contemporaries. Origen's criticism is based on the misunderstanding that Heracleon, like Origen, is referring to each Christian's cultivation of their own soul rather than the preaching of the gospel among others.

The next passage in which Origen refers to Heracleon appears in a longer chain of reasoning in which Origen enumerates six different symbolic and literal meanings of the word *θερισμός* ("harvest").⁴⁵ Before proceeding to the seventh and superior alternative, Origen also presents Heracleon's view on the subject:

Heracleon will certainly say (ἐρεῖ γε) – and perhaps someone in the church (ἐκκλησιαστικός) agrees with him in this particular interpretation – that (ὅτι / 33.1) this is said (ταῦτα εἴρηται) with a meaning similar to "the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few" (Matt 9:37), referring to those who are ready for harvest and already suitable to be gathered into the barn – into rest, by means of faith – and suitable for salvation and for reception of the word. According to Heracleon (κατὰ μὲν τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα / 33.2), [this is] because of their constitution (κατασκευή) and their nature (φύσις) – according to the one in the church because of some preparation of the ruling principle of the mind, who is ready for fulfillment, to be harvested as well. We must therefore ask those who have understood it in this way if they are willing to accept that there has never, before our Savior's coming, been a harvest similar to the one anticipated after the times of the preaching of the gospel. For if many have come to faith because the harvest was plentiful, would not the apostles be the workers, who are "few" in relation to the large number who have received the word? Either, because of the "See the fields, that they are already white for harvest," nobody came to faith before our Savior's bodily arrival, or at least no worker has been a believer – which would be an absurd statement; Abraham, Moses and the prophets being neither among the workers going out to the field nor among those who are being harvested – or if there has indeed been both earlier workers and a harvest, the Savior appears to proclaim nothing that is worth pointing out to those who lift up their eyes to see the fields, "that they are already white for harvest." From this, it should be clear that "harvest" refers to none of the above alternatives.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ See the introduction of these terms on page 241.

⁴⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.39/250–50/326, or perhaps more specifically 13.43/285–45/297.

⁴⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.44/294–95 (SC 222, 190.1–192.29; Brooke's fragment 33): Καὶ ἐρεῖ γε ὁ Ἡρακλέων, τάχα δὲ τοῦτω κατὰ τὴν ἐκδοχὴν ταύτην συμπεριφερόμενός τις καὶ ἐκκλησιαστικός, ὅτι (33.1) τῷ κατὰ τὸ "Ὁ θερισμός πολὺς, οἱ δὲ ἔργαται ὀλίγοι" σημαυνομένῳ ὁμοίως ταῦτα εἴρηται, τῷ ἐτοίμους πρὸς θερισμὸν καὶ ἐπιτηδείους πρὸς τὸ ἤδη συναχθῆναι εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην διὰ τῆς πίστεως εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν εἶναι, καὶ ἐπιτηδείους πρὸς σωτηρίαν καὶ παραδοχὴν τοῦ λόγου· κατὰ μὲν τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα (33.2) διὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν φύσιν, κατὰ δὲ τὸν ἐκκλησιαστικὸν διὰ τινὰ εὐτρεπισμὸν τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ ἐτοίμου πρὸς τελείωσιν, ἵνα καὶ θερισθῇ. Λεκτέον οὖν πρὸς τοὺς οὕτως ἐκδεξαμένους, εἰ βούλονται παρα-

One statement and one view are attributed to Heracleon here. Blanc and Preuschen present this passage in plain text. Völker and Foerster present the first reference as a quotation, but leave out the second. Heine italicizes both, including the quotation from Matt 9:37 about the harvest being great and the laborers few.⁴⁷ Pettipiece also italicizes both, but excludes the quotation from the Gospel of Matthew. He suggests that the first reference here is a paraphrase of what is attributed to Heracleon in the previous interaction, and amounts to an interpretation of Matt 9:37 rather than of the Gospel of John. Pagels does not quote this passage, but presents it as evidence for her claim that Heracleon argued that the “psychics” could be saved. This implies that she takes it to be dependable information about Heracleon’s views, and illustrates her insistence in interpreting everything Heracleon says in terms of the three human natures. Poffet presents both these references as quotations taken directly from Heracleon, and Wucherpennig does likewise with the first one.⁴⁸

	33.1 ἐρεῖ γε ... ὅτι	33.2 κατὰ...
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Plain text	Plain text
Völker	Quotation	–
Foerster	Quotation	–
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Paraphrase	Italics
Pagels	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation	–
Berglund	Paraphrase	Assertion

δέξασθαι, μήποτε γεγενῆσθαι πρὸς τῆς τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἐπιδημίας θερισμὸν παραπλήσιον τῷ οὕτως ἂν ἐλπισθέντι ἀπὸ τῶν χρόνων τοῦ εὐαγγελικοῦ κηρύγματος· εἰ γὰρ τῷ εἶναι τὸν θερισμὸν πολὺν πολλοὶ πεπιστεύκασιν, καίτοι γε ὀλίγων ὄντων τῶν ἐργατῶν ἀποστόλων ὡς πρὸς τὸ πλῆθος τῶν παραδεξαμένων τὸν λόγον, ἥτοι διὰ τὸ “Θεάσασθε τὰς χώρας, ὅτι λευκαὶ εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμὸν ἤδη,” οὐδεὶς πρὸς τῆς σωματικῆς τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν ἐπιδημίας πεπίστευκεν, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ γέγονέν τις πιστευόντων ἐργάτης – ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἀτοπώτατον φάσκειν. Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Μωσῆς καὶ τοὺς προφήτας μήτε τῶν ἐργατῶν ἐκσχηκέναι χώραν, μήτε τῶν θεριζομένων –, ἢ εἴπερ καὶ πρότερον γεγόνασιν ἐργάται καὶ θερισμός, οὐδὲν δόξει παράδοξον ὁ σωτὴρ ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι τοῖς ἐπαίρουσιν τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς, ἵνα θεάσωνται τὰς χώρας “ὅτι λευκαὶ εἰσιν πρὸς θερισμὸν ἤδη.” Ἐκ τούτων δὴ δύναται πῶς εἶναι σαφές, ὅτι οὐδὲν τῶν προειρημένων ἐστὶν ἐνθάδε νοούμενον κατὰ τὸν θερισμόν.

⁴⁷ The use of Matt 9:37 is pointed out by Massaux, *Influence*, 430.

⁴⁸ SC 222, 191; GCS 10, 270; FC 89, 129; Völker, *Quellen*, 78; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 229; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 72; Poffet, *Méthode*, 89–90; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 118–19; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 287.

Reference 33.1 is made in an unusual way. The *verbum dicendi* ἐπεῖ (“he will say”) appears in the future tense, as if the statement is not yet made by Heracleon, just presented as something Heracleon might say. Both the statement and Origen’s ensuing response appear to be based on the information given in the references of the previous interaction. As observed by Pettipiece,⁴⁹ this reference should, therefore, be categorized as an explanatory paraphrase, formulated by Origen as an interpretation in line with what he takes to be Heracleon’s way of reasoning.

The view attributed to Heracleon in Reference 33.2 is not presented as having any particular basis in Heracleon’s words. Although it may well be based on Origen’s evaluation of Heracleon’s writing as a whole, it is presented as a mere assertion. It is worth noting that Origen, in this particular case, presumes that Heracleon believes in three different human natures. In contrast to a hypothetical church member (τις ἐκκλησιαστικός) with a similar view, who would explain this readiness as the result of a conscious decision,⁵⁰ Heracleon would explain it as a consequence of an inherent constitution (κατασκευή) or nature (φύσις) of the person in question. The dichotomy between Heracleon and a church member probably reflects the situation contemporary to Origen, when a clearer distinction had developed between the adherents of Origen’s version of Christianity and that of “those who bring in the natures,” rather than the situation in the second century. The same may be true of the concepts of κατασκευή and φύσις, which may reflect arguments in Origen’s time rather than what he found in Heracleon’s *hypomnēmata*.

In his response, Origen foregoes the reasons for why a person might be ready to come to faith – presumably, he agrees with the hypothetical church member on this matter – to focus on the referent of the word θερισμός (“harvest”). Appealing to logic, he argues that it is unreasonable to hold that the harvest refers to people coming to faith, since that would either exclude every believing Jew from the time before Jesus, including Abraham, Moses, and the prophets, from the community of believers – or imply that Jesus is simply stating the obvious, since there have always been people responding to the call of faith. In his continued argument, Origen holds that the harvest, rather, refers to the presence of the Word to clarify what has been stated by Moses

⁴⁹ Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 118–19.

⁵⁰ Toshio Mikoda, “Ἡγεμονικόν in the Soul,” in *Origeniana Sexta*, eds. Gilles Dorival and Alain Le Boulluec, BETL 118 (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 459–63, remarks that Origen regularly used ἡγεμονικόν (“ruling principle”), a concept derived from Stoic philosophy, to denote the central part of the human soul, in which the free will and the capacity to choose between higher and lower impulses are located. This usage fits the current context perfectly. Mikoda also argues that this makes the ἡγεμονικόν the primary locus in which the Word may interact with a human. Similar points are made, without reference to Mikoda, by Joseph Stephen O’Leary, *Christianisme et philosophie chez Origène* (Paris: Cerf, 2011), 178–79.

and the prophets, so that the Christian may interpret the Old Testament Christologically:⁵¹ “But the fields are “already white for harvest” since the Word of God is present to clarify all the fields of the Scriptures that were fulfilled by his arrival.”⁵²

After investigating the identity of the crop, Origen proceeds to consider the identity of the one who reaps. With reference to the promise that the eschatologically returning Christ will reward everybody for their deeds,⁵³ he interprets the reaper as a symbol of the believer. Heracleon, however, takes the reaper to be Christ:

Heracleon thinks (νομίζει / 34.1) that “The reaper receives pay” is said since “the Savior”, he says (φησὶν / 34.2), “speaks of himself as a reaper.” And he assumes (ὕπολαμβάνει / 34.3) our Lord’s pay to be the salvation and restoration of those who are reaped, which occurs when he rests upon them. “He gathers fruit for eternal life” is said, he says (φησὶν / 34.4), because what is gathered is either fruit for an eternal life, or itself eternal life. But obviously I think his interpretation is forced when he affirms that the savior receives a payment, and when he confounds the payment and the gathering of fruit into one, even though the writing quite evidently speaks of two events, as we have interpreted it above.⁵⁴

Four references to Heracleon are made in this paragraph, the first with νομίζει (“he thinks”), the second with φησὶν (“he says”), the third with ὑπολαμβάνει (“he assumes”), and the fourth with a second inserted φησὶν. Blanc presents all four in plain text. Preuschen and Völker present all four as quotations, but Foerster only the latter three. Heine italicizes all four. Pettipiece leaves the first in plain text, but italicizes the other three. Pagels does not quote this paragraph. Poffet presents all four, and Wucherpfennig the third attributed statement, as direct quotations from Heracleon.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.45/297.

⁵² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.42/279 (SC 222, 180.23–26): “Λευκαὶ” δὲ αἱ χῶραι “πρὸς θερισμὸν ἤδη” εἰσὶν, ὅτε πάρεστιν ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος σαφηνίζων καὶ φωτίζων πάσας τὰς χώρας τῆς γραφῆς πληρουμένας ἐν τῇ ἐπιδημίᾳ αὐτοῦ.

⁵³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.45/298, vaguely referring to Rev 22:12.

⁵⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.46/299–300 (SC 222, 194.21–196.13; Brooke’s fragment 34): Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων τὸ “Ὁ θερίζων μισθὸν λαμβάνει” εἰρῆσθαι νομίζει (34.1) ἐπεὶ θεριστὴν ἑαυτὸν λέγει, φησὶν, (34.2) ὁ σωτὴρ. Καὶ τὸν μισθὸν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν ὑπολαμβάνει (34.3) εἶναι τὴν τῶν θεριζομένων σωτηρίαν καὶ ἀποκατάστασιν τῷ ἀναπαύεσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς. Τὸ δὲ “Καὶ συνάγει καρπὸν εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον” φησιν (34.4) εἰρῆσθαι, ἢ ὅτι τὸ συναγόμενον καρπὸς ζωῆς αἰωνίου ἐστίν, ἢ <ὅτι> καὶ αὐτὸ ζωὴ αἰώνιος. Ἀλλὰ αὐτόθεν νομίζω βίαιον εἶναι τὴν διήγησιν αὐτοῦ, φάσκοντος τὸν σωτὴρα μισθὸν λαμβάνειν καὶ συγχέοντος τὸν μισθὸν καὶ τὴν συναγωγὴν τοῦ καρποῦ εἰς ἓν, ἀντικρυς τῆς γραφῆς δύο πράγματα παριστάσης, ὡς προδιηγησάμεθα.

⁵⁵ SC 222, 195–96; GCS 10, 272; FC 89, 131; Völker, *Quellen*, 78; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 229–30; Poffet, *Méthode*, 91–92; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 120; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 342. Origen’s ὑπολαμβάνει does appear in the Greek text of Wucherpfennig’s footnote, but is curiously missing from his German translation, creating the impression that it is beyond doubt that the words are quoted verbatim from Heracleon’s writing.

	34.1 νομίζει	34.2 φησὶν	34.3 ὑπολαμβάνει	34.4 φησὶν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Plain text	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Plain text	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpfennig	–	–	Quotation	–
Berglund	Paraphrase	Quotation	Paraphrase	Summary

The verb νομίζει (“he thinks”), with which the first reference is made, refers to Heracleon’s thought process rather than to his actual words. The causal connection between Jesus speaking of himself as a reaper and the statement that the reaper receives pay – which appears in indirect speech using accusative with infinitive – is, therefore, categorized as an explanatory paraphrase. In contrast, the following verb, φησὶν (“he says”), carries a statement in direct speech that is to be taken as a verbatim quotation. The *verbum dicendi* comes unusually late in this sentence, but the quoted words θεριστὴν ἑαυτὸν λέγει ὁ σωτὴρ (“The Savior speaks of himself as a reaper”) are delimited by the conjunction ἐπεὶ and by the next sentence, in which the verb ὑπολαμβάνει (“he assumes”) speaks of Heracleon in the third person. This verb also refers to Heracleon’s thought process and introduces a paraphrase. The interpretation of the Lord’s pay may be based on the quoted statement combined with the information given in Passage 32, although the connection between the reaping and the resting seems to be new information. The statement attributed with the last φησὶν is presented in indirect speech using an infinitive construction. It is therefore categorized as a summary.

Heracleon’s quoted and summarized comments betray an interest in the details of the text and suggest that he is performing a grammatical analysis (τεχνικόν) of the Johannine passage.⁵⁶ He ponders whether Jesus includes himself among the metaphorical sowers or the symbolic reapers, and concludes that he speaks of himself as a reaper. To understand what the payment Jesus would receive might indicate, he sees the parallel to Jesus’s metaphorical food in John 4:32, and suggests – if Origen’s paraphrase transmits his thought accurately – that as the “food” consists of doing the will of the Father and accomplishing his work, the “pay” may synonymously refer to the salvation and restoration of the people. He also identifies two different interpretations of the saying “he gathers fruit for eternal life:” either the indirect one, that the

⁵⁶ Cf. Chapter 2.

gathered fruit is connected to eternal life, or the direct identification, where what is gathered is eternal life itself.

Poffet argues that although Heracleon's language in this passage is deeply ingrained with Johannine vocabulary, his thinking is radically different, as the fruit in John 12:24 and 15:1–10 is intimately connected with the person of Jesus, who must die in order to produce the harvest, and without whom the disciples are unable to produce grapes.⁵⁷ He has a point in that the three metaphors make rather different use of their agricultural images. In John 15:1–10, it is the disciples who are to bear fruit, by being connected to Christ. In 12:24, it is Christ's sacrificial death that leads to the harvest. And in 4:35–38, the harvest seems to be a metaphor for a successful evangelization: the Samaritans come to believe in Jesus. However, the disagreement between these uses is present already in the Fourth Gospel, and is not produced by Heracleon.

Origen's response is brief. He simply deems the interpretation of the Savior as the recipient of the payment as βίαιος ("forced"), and repeats his own point that the payment and the gathering of fruit are two events, not one.

The identities of Jesus's metaphorical sower and reaper are also relevant in the following passage:

Heracleon explains "so that the sower and the reaper can rejoice together" (John 4:36) in the following way. "For the sower," he says (φησὶν / 35.1), "rejoices because he sows, and, since some of his seeds are already being gathered, because he has this hope also for the rest. The reaper does the same, because he also reaps. But the sower began as the first, and the reaper as the second, for it was not possible for both to begin at the same time – it was necessary to sow first, and then reap later. When the sower has ceased to sow, the reaper's work has not yet begun. In the present, while they both perform their own work, they rejoice together, regarding the fruition of the seeds as their mutual joy." Also, concerning "In this case the saying is true, that there is one who sows and another who reaps" (John 4:37), he says (φησὶν / 35.2): "for the Son of Man who is above the place sows, but the savior, who also is a Son of Man, reaps and sends as reapers the messengers, signified by the disciples, each for his own soul." But he has not at all expounded clearly whom the two sons of man are, of which one sows and one reaps.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Poffet, *Méthode*, 92–95.

⁵⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.49/322–24 (SC 222, 210.16–212.35; Brooke's fragment 35): Ὁ δ' Ἡρακλέων τὸ "Ἰνα ὁ σπείρων ὁμοῦ χαίρει καὶ ὁ θερίζων" οὕτω διηγήσατο· χαίρει μὲν γάρ, φησὶν, (35.1) ὁ σπείρων ὅτι σπείρει, καὶ ὅτι ἤδη τινὰ τῶν σπερμάτων αὐτοῦ συνάγεται ἐλπίδα ἔχων τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ περὶ τῶν λοιπῶν· ὁ δὲ θερίζων ὁμοίως ὅτι καὶ θερίζει· ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν πρῶτος ἤρξατο σπείρων, ὁ <δὲ> δευτέρως θερίζων. Οὐ γὰρ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐδύναντο ἀμφοτέροι ἀρξασθαι· ἔδει γὰρ πρῶτον σπαρῆναι, εἴθ' ὕστερον θερισθῆναι. Παισασμένου μέντοι γε τοῦ σπείροντος σπείρειν, ἔτι θεριεῖ ὁ θερίζων· ἐπὶ μέντοι τοῦ παρόντος ἀμφοτέροι τὸ ἴδιον ἔργον ἐνεργοῦντες ὁμοῦ χαίρουσιν κοινὴν χαρὰν τὴν τῶν σπερμάτων τελειότητα ἡγούμενοι. Ἐτι δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸ "Ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ὁ λόγος ἀληθινὸς ὅτι ἄλλος ἐστὶν ὁ σπείρων καὶ ἄλλος ὁ θερίζων" φησὶν· (35.2) ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὑπὲρ τὸν τόπον υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου σπείρει· ὁ δὲ σωτήρ, ὢν καὶ αὐτὸς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, θερίζει καὶ θεριστὰς πέμπει τοὺς διὰ τῶν μαθητῶν νοου-

In this passage, two extensive statements are attributed to Heracleon with the *verbum dicendi* φησὶν (“he says”), and followed by a short response. Blanc uses plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both statements as quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both. Pagels, Poffet, and Wucherpennig quote from both as if directly from Heracleon.⁵⁹

	35.1 φησὶν	35.2 φησὶν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation	Quotation

Both statements attributed to Heracleon appear in direct speech, attributed with a single φησὶν (“he says”), and accompanied by a quotation from the Fourth Gospel specifying to which phrase it refers. Such references are categorized as verbatim quotations.

In the first of these two quotations, Heracleon is concerned with the vehicle of Jesus’s metaphorical harvest. He explains the reasons for why a sower and a reaper should rejoice, and why their joy should be mutual. He also points out the necessity to sow first, and reap later.⁶⁰ Presumably, the points he chooses to stress are of importance for his interpretation of the tenor of the metaphor, to which he has turned in the second quotation. However, since Origen may have chosen his quotations for unrelated reasons, the points we do have regarding the tenor may not match those regarding the vehicle. Heracleon argues that there are two sons of man, one who sows and one who reaps. The reaper in question is identified with Jesus, in agreement with Quotation 34.2. The sower is described as ὁ μὲν γὰρ ὑπὲρ τὸν τόπον υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου (“the Son of Man who is above the place”). Heracleon also clarifies that the hearers of the metaphor – the disciples in the Johannine frame narra-

μένους ἀγγέλους, ἕκαστον ἐπὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν. Οὐ πάνυ δὲ σαφῶς ἐξέθετο τοὺς δύο υἱοὺς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τίνες εἰσὶν, ὧν ὁ εἷς σπείρει καὶ ὁ εἷς θερίζει.

⁵⁹ SC 222, 211–13; GCS 10, 276–77; FC 89, 137; Völker, *Quellen*, 78–79; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 230; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 18, 79, 106; Poffet, *Méthode*, 95, 97; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 122; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 166–67.

⁶⁰ Poffet, *Méthode*, 95–96, points out Heracleon’s preoccupation with temporal categories in this passage.

tive – represent ἄγγελοι (“angels” or “messengers”) who are sent out as harvesters, each for his own soul.⁶¹ As pointed out by Édouard Massaux,⁶² these identifications are clearly dependent on Matt 13:36–43, where the sower of Matt 13:24–30 is identified as the Son of Man, and the reapers are identified as ἄγγελοι (“angels” or “messengers”). Once again, Heracleon is using a Matthean tradition to interpret the Fourth Gospel.

Once we see the Matthean parallel, the one peculiarity that remains in Heracleon’s interpretation is his sharp distinction between the Son of Man who is above the place, and the Son of Man who is the Savior – that is, between the pre-incarnated and the incarnated λόγος. Heracleon expresses no limitation regarding which humans may be the objects of the sowing and reaping. Pagels’s presupposition that only the “pneumatic elect” are being sowed and reaped reflects her theoretical framework more clearly than it does the text.⁶³ Wucherpfennig’s claim that the angels assist the Savior in liberating humans from their earthly existence seems also to presuppose “Gnostic” views not attested in Heracleon.⁶⁴ The ἄγγελοι referred to by Heracleon could be either angels from heaven or humans aiming to spread the good news.

Origen, who does not discern the Matthean connection, criticizes Heracleon for not elaborating on his theory of the two sons of man to the point where it can be evaluated. The response refers only to the second quotation, creating the impression that Origen largely agrees with the interpretation expressed in the first quotation.

A final passage on the harvest metaphor concerns sowers and reapers:

Heracleon says that (φησὶν ὅτι / 36.1) it was not through (διὰ) them or from (ἀπό) them that these seeds were sown – he refers (φησὶ) to the apostles – “but those who have worked hard are the messengers of the plan (οἱ τῆς οἰκονομίας ἄγγελοι), the agents through whom they were sown and grown.” Concerning “You have entered into their labor” he has presented this (ταῦτα ἐξέθετο / 36.2): “The labor of those who sow is not the same as that of those who reap. For the former ones sow by digging in the earth in frost, water, and labor, and through the whole winter they take care of hoeing and picking the weeds. But the latter ones come to a ripe crop in the summer, and enjoy themselves while they reap.” The reader

⁶¹ This statement confirms that Heracleon views the crops in Jesus’s metaphor as symbolizing the souls of individual believers, as suggested by Quotation 32.3. Unless the ἄγγελοι are human missionaries, the remark may also reflect the notion that each human being has a personal guardian angel interceding for them at the divine throne. Cf. Matt 18:10; Acts 12:15; Heb 1:14; Jerome, *Comm. Matt.* 18.2; Basil, *Hom. Ps.* 43; John Chrysostom, *Hom. Col.* 3; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* 1.113.4.

⁶² Massaux, *Influence*, 430–31.

⁶³ Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 79, 106.

⁶⁴ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 167, 288–89.

who compares what has been said by us to that by Heracleon will be able to see which of the explanations that can be proven.⁶⁵

This paragraph has two references to Heracleon. Blanc renders them in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both statements as quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize both. Pagels and Wucherpennig quote from both as if directly from Heracleon. Poffet combines both into a single quotation, removes Origen's attributions, and presents it as Heracleon's words.⁶⁶

	36.1 φησὶν ὅτι	36.2 ταῦτα ἐξέθετο
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Summary + quotation	Quotation

The first reference is made with the phrase φησὶν ὅτι (“he says that”). According to our criteria, ὅτι marks indirect speech, but somewhere within this statement – presumably after the inserted remark that Heracleon is referring to the apostles – Origen seems to switch to direct speech, since the εἰσὶν (“they are”) is not qualified in any way. The reference is, therefore, categorized as a verbatim quotation, even though the beginning of the sentence appears to be merely summarized. The second reference is made with the unfamiliar phrase ταῦτα ἐξέθετο (“he has presented this”). Since this appears to refer to what is in Heracleon's writing, and since what follows is presented in direct speech, this reference is also categorized as a verbatim quotation.

⁶⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.50/336–37 (SC 222, 218.73–85; Brooke's fragment 36): Ὁ δ' Ἡρακλέων φησὶν ὅτι (36.1) οὐ δι' αὐτῶν οὐδὲ ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἐσπάρη ταῦτα τὰ σπέρματα – φησὶ δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων –, οἱ δὲ κεκοπιакότες εἰσὶν οἱ τῆς οἰκονομίας ἄγγελοι, δι' ὧν ὡς μεσιτῶν ἐσπάρη καὶ ἀνετράφη. Εἰς δὲ τό. “Ὑμεῖς εἰς τὸν κόπον αὐτῶν εἰσεληλύθατε” ταῦτα ἐξέθετο. (36.2) οὐ γὰρ ὁ αὐτὸς κόπος σπειρόντων καὶ θεριζόντων. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐν κρίει καὶ ὕδατι καὶ κόπῳ τὴν γῆν σκάπτοντες σπείρουσιν καὶ δι' ὅλου χειμῶνος τημελοῦσιν σκάλλοντες καὶ τὰς ὕλας ἐκλέγοντες. οἱ δὲ εἰς ἔτοιμον καρπὸν εἰσελθόντες θέρους εὐφραινόμενοι θερίζουσιν. Ἐξέσται δὲ συγκρίνοντι τὰ τε ὑφ' ἡμῶν εἰρημένα τῷ ἐντυγχάνοντι καὶ τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἡρακλέωνος ὁρᾶν ὅποια τῶν διηγήσεων ἐπιτετεῦχθαι δύναται.

⁶⁶ SC 222, 219; GCS 10, 278–79; FC 89, 140; Völker, *Quellen*, 79; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 230–31; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 79, 106; Poffet, *Méthode*, 101; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 125; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 288–89. Origen's attribution is present in Wucherpennig's Greek footnote, but merely marked as a gap in his German translation.

The phrase εἰς δὲ τό delimits the first quotation by introducing a re-quotation of the last words of John 4:38, to which the second quotation allegedly refers. The second quotation is delimited by the last sentence, which refers to it as something said by Heracleon. This last sentence is a short non-response, in which Origen merely invites his readers to compare Heracleon's interpretation to his own and take away what they can.

Heracleon's comment seems to be based on Jesus's distinction that one sows and another reaps (John 4:37), to which Origen referred in the previous passage in which he interacted with Heracleon. Since John 4:38 specifies that the disciples to which Jesus is speaking are counted among the reapers rather than the sowers, it is quite reasonable to assume, with Origen, that Heracleon's αὐτοί ("they") refers to the apostles. If so, Heracleon argues that the apostles are not the ones who have performed the heavy toil of the sowing, but that this work has already been performed by οἱ τῆς οἰκονομίας ἄγγελοι ("the messengers of the plan"). Wucherpennig argues, in accordance with his interpretation that Heracleon's sowing refers to the creation of human beings, that these are angels involved in the formation of human beings – thereby taking the place of the subservient gods of Plato's *Timaios*.⁶⁷ Considering that Heracleon rather seems to be speaking of Christian preaching and the harvest of new adherents to the Christian movement, however, it is more likely that he is referring to those who supposedly were sent by God with similar charges before – namely the Jewish prophets.

C. Passages 37–39: The Samaritan Revival (John 4:39–42)

In John 4:39–42, the author of the Fourth Gospel describes how, after many Samaritans had come to believe in Jesus based on the woman's testimony, Jesus was invited to stay two more days in Sychar, during which time many more came to believe him to be the Savior of the world. Origen has already discussed the woman's witnessing and the reaction of the townspeople in his exposition on John 4:28–30, and only adds that it would be natural for anyone who has been frustrated with false teachings to take their first encounter with sound teachings as a chance to leave the "city of opinions."⁶⁸ His interaction

⁶⁷ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 167. Robert M. Grant's use of this passage to argue that the angels of the creator-god perform their creative work ignorantly and unwittingly, and will not reap the harvest "for work has no relation to reward," seems to presuppose "Gnostic" views not apparent from Heracleon's words, as there is no hint in these quotations that the sowers do not know what they are doing. See Robert M. Grant, *Early Christianity and Society* (London: Collins, 1978), 68–69. Cf. Williams, "A Life Full of Meaning and Purpose," 55 n. 111. Williams finds Grant's interpretation strained, and endorses Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 79, 106.

⁶⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.51/338–40, cf. the previous treatment in 13.29/173–30/186.

with Heracleon also ends, not with a response, but with a reference back to his previous exposition:

Heracleon has taken (ἐξείληφεν / 37.1) “from the town” in the sense of from the world, and “because of the word of the woman” to mean because of the spiritual assembly (διὰ τῆς πνευματικῆς ἐκκλησίας). And he does distinguish (ἐπισημαίνω / 37.2) the “many,” as there are many animated ones, but the single one he calls (λέγει / 37.3) the immortal nature (φύσις) of the chosen (ἡ ἐκλογή), which is both single and unified. We have taken a stand about this, as far as it is possible, in the above.⁶⁹

Before the non-response referring to Origen’s previous arguments, three interpretive decisions are attributed to Heracleon. Blanc presents the first two within quotation marks, but the third in plain text – and her quotation marks may be intended merely to delimit the phrases attributed to Heracleon from the surrounding prose. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three as quotations. Heine also places these phrases within quotation marks, but italicizes additional parts of the paragraph. Pettipiece quotes the first two attributed phrases, and italicizes the third attributed statement. Pagels quotes from the third reference as directly from Heracleon. Poffet presents three short quotations from Heracleon. Wucherpennig does not comment on the reliability of this passage.⁷⁰

	37.1 ἐκλαμβάνω	37.2 ἐπισημαίνω	37.3 λέγει
Blanc	Quotation (?)	Quotation (?)	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Quotation (?)	Quotation (?)	Italics
Pettipiece	Quotation (?)	Quotation (?)	Italics
Pagels	–	–	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	–	–	–
Berglund	Paraphrase	Paraphrase	Summary

Origen’s first reference is made with a perfect indicative of ἐκλαμβάνω (*here*: “take in a certain sense”), the second with a present medium of ἐπισημαίνω

⁶⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.51/341 (SC 222, 222.21–27; Brooke’s fragment 37): Ὁ δ’ Ἡρακλέων τὸ μὲν “Ἐκ τῆς πόλεως” ἀντὶ τοῦ “ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου” ἐξείληφεν· (37.1) τὸ δὲ “Διὰ τὸν λόγον τῆς γυναικός” τουτέστιν διὰ τῆς πνευματικῆς ἐκκλησίας· καὶ ἐπισημαίνεται (37.2) γε τὸ “Πολλοὶ” ὡς πολλῶν ὄντων ψυχικῶν· τὴν δὲ μίαν λέγει (37.3) τὴν ἄφθαρτον τῆς ἐκλογῆς φύσιν καὶ μονοειδῆ καὶ ἐνικήν. Ἔστημεν δὲ ἐν τοῖς ἀνωτέρω, ὡς οἶόν τε ἦν, πρὸς ταῦτα.

⁷⁰ SC 222, 223; GCS 10, 279–80; FC 89, 141; Völker, *Quellen*, 79; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 231; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 94; Poffet, *Méthode*, 103; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 127. Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 342, 356.

(here: “distinguish”). Both verbs refer to the reasoning behind Heracleon’s words rather than what he actually expresses, and these two references are, therefore, categorized as explanatory paraphrases. The emphatic particle γε (“really”) strengthens this conclusion, since it suggests an additional distance, to be bridged by the emphasis, between Origen’s report and Heracleon’s original writing. The third reference is made with λέγει (“he calls”) and constitutes a summary.

As pointed out by Poffet, the association between town and world is similar to Quotation 27.2, in which Heracleon speaks of the woman as returning to the world when she goes back to the town.⁷¹ The association to ἡ πνευματικὴ ἐκκλησία (“the spiritual assembly”) is likewise reminiscent of Summary 25.1, where ἡ ἐκκλησία is used for the community of humans who were expecting the Christ. Heracleon may have made a parallel between the woman’s evangelization in the town of Sychar on the one hand, and the missionary work of the later Christian community in the world on the other.

Origen’s second paraphrase presumes the theory of the three human natures,⁷² but there are more reasons why Heracleon may have taken special notice of the word πολλοί (“many”). Given the context of evangelization, maybe he was speaking of how many Samaritans there were who came to believe in Jesus. Summary 37.3 is enigmatic, as it is uncertain who the chosen (ἡ ἐκλογή) is or are, and who the single one (ἡ μία) is. The statement may refer to the nature of Christ or the unity of the believers.

Origen has more to say about the report, in John 4:40–41, that Jesus stayed with the Samaritans for two days, during which many more came to faith. He notices that the text does not explicitly state that Jesus entered the Samaritan town, only that he remained with (παρά) them. This distinction allows him to maintain his previous identification of the Samaritan town with the “city of opinions” which the Samaritans had left.⁷³ Heracleon has made a similar observation:

Concerning these passages, Heracleon says (φησὶν / 38.1): “‘With (παρά) them,’ and not ‘in (ἐν) them,’ he remained (ἔμεινεν) for ‘two days’ – either the present age and the next one, which is at the wedding, or the period before his passion and that after his passion, when he departed from them after being ‘with them,’ causing many more to turn to faith through his own words.” It must be said, though, about what seems to be his observation (παρατήρησις) that (ὅτι / 38.2) it is written (γέγραπται) “with them” and not “in them,” that “with him” is similar to “Behold, I am always among you” – for he did not say “I am in you.” And when he claims (λέγων / 38.3) the two days to be either this age and the next one, or the one before the passion and after the passion, neither does he have in mind the ages coming after the next one – about which the apostle says (φησὶν ὁ ἀπόστολος): “that

⁷¹ Poffet, *Méthode*, 103.

⁷² The idea that there are many animated ones and only a few spirituals is expressed also in Clement, *Exc.* 56.2, where Origen may have encountered it.

⁷³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.52/342–48.

he might show in the coming ages” – nor does he perceive that Jesus is together with those who come to him not only before the passion and after the passion, after which he departs from them; he is always among (μετά) the disciples and has never yet abandoned them, so that they even say (λέγειν αὐτοῦς): “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.”⁷⁴

Three references to Heracleon are made in this paragraph. The latter two repeat phrases from the first. Brooke calls, in passing, the second repetition a “quotation of Heracleon’s words.” Blanc uses plain text throughout, with the exception of the quotation marks necessary to delimit phrases such as “with them” from the surrounding prose. Preuschen presents the first and third as quotations, but leaves the second in plain text. Völker and Foerster present the first as a quotation, and leave out the repetitions. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all three references, although Pettipiece also adds some delimiting quotation marks. Pagels, Poffet, and Wucherpennig quote from the first attributed statement as if directly from Heracleon.⁷⁵

	38.1 φησίν	38.2 τὴν δοκοῦσαν αὐτοῦ παρατήρησιν ὅτι	38.3 λέγων
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Plain text	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	–	–
Foerster	Quotation	–	–
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	–	–
Poffet	Quotation	–	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	–	–
Berglund	Quotation	Summary	Summary

⁷⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.52/349–51 (SC 222, 226.42–228.61, Brooke’s fragment 38): Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων εἰς τοὺς τόπους ταῦτα φησιν· (38.1) “παρ’ αὐτοῖς” ἔμεινεν καὶ οὐκ “ἐν αὐτοῖς” καὶ δύο ἡμέρας, ἦτοι τὸν ἐνεστῶτα αἰῶνα καὶ τὸν μέλλοντα τὸν ἐν γάμῳ, ἢ τὸν πρὸ τοῦ πάθους αὐτοῦ χρόνον καὶ τὸν μετὰ τὸ πάθος, ὃν παρ’ αὐτοῖς ποιήσας πολλὰ πλείονας διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου λόγου ἐπιστρέψας εἰς πίστιν ἐχωρίσθη ἀπ’ αὐτῶν. Λεκτέον δὲ πρὸς τὴν δοκοῦσαν αὐτοῦ παρατήρησιν, ὅτι (38.2) “παρ’ αὐτοῖς” καὶ οὐκ “ἐν αὐτοῖς” γέγραπται, ὅτι ὁμοιον τῷ “παρ’ αὐτοῖς” ἐστὶν τὸ “Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας” οὐ γὰρ εἶπεν· “Ἐν ὑμῖν εἰμι.” Ἐτι δὲ λέγων (38.3) τὰς δύο ἡμέρας ἦτοι τοῦτον τὸν αἰῶνα εἶναι καὶ τὸν μέλλοντα, ἢ τὸν πρὸ τοῦ πάθους καὶ μετὰ τὸ πάθος, οὔτε τοὺς ἐπερχομένους αἰῶνας μετὰ τὸν μέλλοντα νενόηκεν, περὶ ὧν φησιν ὁ ἀπόστολος· “Ἰνα ἐνδείξηται ἐν τοῖς αἰῶσιν τοῖς ἐπερχομένοις,” οὔτε ὁρᾷ, ὅτι οὐ μόνον πρὸ τοῦ πάθους καὶ μετὰ τὸ πάθος σύνεστιν τοῖς ἐρχομένοις πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο χωρίζεται· αἰεὶ γὰρ μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν ἐστὶν μηδεπώποτε καταλείπων αὐτοὺς, ὥστε καὶ λέγειν αὐτοὺς· “Ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ, ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός.”

⁷⁵ GCS 10, 281; SC 222, 227; FC 89, 143; Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 90; Völker, *Quellen*, 79–80; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 231–32; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 94; Poffet, *Méthode*, 104; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 129; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 77, 133.

The first reference is made with a single *verbum dicendi*, and the attributed statement is presented in direct speech. It is, therefore, categorized as a verbatim quotation. The quotation is clearly delimited, since the phrase λεκτέον δέ (“It must be said, though”) provides the transition to what must be Origen’s response, in which the first sentence refers back to Heracleon’s παρατήρησις (“observation”). The two repetitions allow us to observe how Origen’s adaptations of the quoted words correspond to his introductory formulas. Reference 38.2 repeats several words verbatim, but the main verb ἔμεινεν (“he stayed”) is swapped for γέγραπται (“it is written”). This strengthens our assumption that a ὅτι (“that”) in Origen’s usage indicates that what follows appears in indirect speech. A similar observation can be made regarding Reference 38.3, which is presented in indirect speech with an accusative-with-infinitive construction – λέγων [...] εἶναι (“he claims [...] to be”) – and to which a number of changes are made, including the exclusion of Heracleon’s distinction between the terms αἰών (“age”) and χρόνος (“period”). Both are good examples of summaries.

The summaries may be contrasted to the three biblical passages Origen quotes in his response. The first of these, Matt 28:20, is introduced only by the definite article τό, a practice which implies that Origen presumed this phrase to be well known by his readers. The second, Eph 2:7, is explicitly attributed to ὁ ἀπόστολος (“the apostle”) and presented in direct speech. The third, Gal 2:20, is an example of a sudden switch between modes of attribution. Origen introduces a statement, vaguely attributed to “the disciples” and presented in indirect speech, using an accusative with infinitive – and then presents a verbatim quotation from a letter of Paul. Presumably, his intention is to express that third-century disciples may share the experience which Paul describes, but his language can easily be construed as something else.

Apparently, Heracleon intends to make an allegorical interpretation of the report that Jesus remained two days with the Samaritans.⁷⁶ Noting that Jesus is said to have remained “with them” rather than “in them,” Heracleon considers himself free to interpret the report as referring to any form of presence, and presents two possible interpretations of the two periods of time behind the narrative’s “two days.” His first suggestion is that the two days are to refer to the present age, including Jesus’s earthly life in Galilee and Judea, and the coming age, the kingdom of heaven which the Matthean Jesus compared to a wedding in Matt 22:1–14; 25:1–13. Given an allegorical inclination, such an interpretation does make a distinction between two modes of Christ’s presence among humans – on earth and in the kingdom of heaven. Heracleon’s second suggestion is that the two days refer to the periods before and after the

⁷⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.57/391, 13.62/436–41, makes a similar interpretation on Jesus’s two separate visits to Cana in Galilee (John 2:1–2, 4:46) as possibly indicating Jesus’s two comings to the world – once to heal the dying, once to feast.

passion, respectively. This is another way of presenting two significantly different periods in Jesus's timeline, a way that places the time between the resurrection and the Parousia within the second period. Presumably, the first suggestion depends on the preposition being παρά ("with") rather than ἐν ("in") since it excludes a mystical mode of presence "within" present-day disciples. In contrast, the second suggestion includes such a mode of presence, after Christ's departure in the Ascension. Heracleon seems to note that the presence of the incarnated Jesus among humans has led to more people coming to faith than was possible before the incarnation.⁷⁷

Origen dismisses Heracleon's distinction between παρ' αὐτοῖς ("with them") and ἐν αὐτοῖς ("in them") as insignificant, since the language of the Great Commission has μεθ' ὑμῶν ("among you"). If Origen does appreciate a connection between the preposition used and the mode of Christly presence depicted, he is right that it is not clear that παρά cannot be used of a post-Ascension presence within the disciples, given that both μετά (as in Matt 28:20) and ἐν (as in Gal 2:20) can be used in this sense. Origen seems, however, to entirely miss Heracleon's point of comparing different modes of presence, when he objects that Jesus is not absent from the disciples after the Ascension. If the second of the two days are to refer to the period from the passion to the Parousia, Jesus's departure in the Ascension is interpreted as introducing not an absence, but a different mode of presence.

Based on the Samaritans' remark "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe" in John 4:42, Origen offers a reflection on the benefits of being a personal witness of Christ, able to walk by sight rather than by faith, and debarks upon an explanation of why Paul, in 2 Cor 5:7, claims to do the opposite.⁷⁸ In contrast, Heracleon's comment is more grammatical in nature:

Heracleon, taking "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe" in a more straightforward way, says (φησὶ / 39.1) that it lacks a "solely." Additionally, about "for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that he is the Savior of the world," he says (φησὶν / 39.2): "For people first come to trust the Savior after being guided by people, but when they

⁷⁷ The suggestion by Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System*, 118, that Heracleon is making a point that Christ can only be present among the animated ones is more based in assumptions of what Heracleon, as a "Valentinian," ought to believe than on this quotation. In addition, it might be noted that Origen is not responding to an interpretation where παρά and ἐν apply to different categories of people, but to an interpretation where they apply to different time periods. The theory by Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 137, that Heracleon's second period connects to a Jewish concept of an eschatological consolidation of creation is more sound, even though Wucherpfennig's view that the two periods correspond to one another as archetype and image seems to be more based on Valentinus's remarks on the image of God (Clement, *Strom.* 4.13/89.6–90.1; Völker's Fr. 5; Layton's VFrD) than on anything written by Heracleon.

⁷⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.53/352–62.

encounter his words, they no longer believe solely based on human testimony, but also based on truth itself.”⁷⁹

In this short passage, two statements are attributed to Heracleon. Blanc presents this passage in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both references as quotations, although Foerster excludes the Johannine quotations, which the other two scholars include. Heine italicizes both attributed statements, but Pettipiece only the second one. Pagels quotes from the second attributed statement, and Poffet from both, as if directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig does not quote this passage.⁸⁰

	39.1 φησί	39.2 φησίν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	Quotation
Poffet	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpennig	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Quotation

Both references are made with a single φησί(ν). The first attributed statement is presented in indirect speech, using the infinitive λείπειν (“to lack”), and is categorized as a summary. The second attributed statement appears in direct speech, and is categorized as a verbatim quotation. It is clearly delimited, as it is juxtaposed to the next lemma. Both statements come with specifications of which phrases in the text they refer to. No response appears after the quotation, and Origen’s introductory phrase states only that the summarized point takes a more straightforward approach to the text than Origen has done. Possibly, Origen agreed with these two points in Heracleon’s interpretation.

⁷⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.53/363 (SC 222, 234.72–79; Brooke’s fragment 39): Ἡρακλέων δὲ ἀπλούτερον ἐκλαβὼν τὸ “Οὐκέτι διὰ τὴν σὴν λαλίαν πιστευόμεν” φησι (39.1) λείπειν τὸ “μόνην.” Ἐτι μὲν γὰρ πρὸς τὸ “Αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀκηκόαμεν, καὶ οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ σωτὴρ τοῦ κόσμου” φησίν· (39.2) οἱ γὰρ ἄνθρωποι τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων ὁδηγοῦμενοι πιστεύουσιν τῷ σωτῇρι, ἐπὶ δὲ ἐντύχῳ τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ, οὗτοι οὐκέτι διὰ μόνην ἀνθρωπίνην μαρτυρίαν, ἀλλὰ δι’ αὐτὴν τὴν ἀλήθειαν πιστεύουσιν.

⁸⁰ SC 222, 235; GCS 10, 283; FC 89 146; Völker, *Quellen*, 80; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 232; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 72, 97; Poffet, *Méthode*, 106–7; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 131.

The quoted statement develops Heracleon's view on the relation between human testimony and the words of Jesus.⁸¹ It seems to refer to the situation in his own time, and equate the Samaritan's direct encounter with Jesus to both "his words" and "truth itself." Presumably, it is the Gospels in the New Testament that are hereby elevated above mere human testimony, or at least the sayings attributed to Jesus, which are embedded within those. Heracleon's sentiment concerning the lack of a "solely" in John 4:42 is shared by the editors of the NIV, who insert a "just" precisely where Heracleon wants it. Its addition clarifies that there is no contraposition between human testimony and a direct account, as they can co-exist as grounds for a Christian faith.

Despite Pagels's repeated assertions that Heracleon makes a contrast between the animated disciples and the spiritual Samaritans, we nowhere find him to make such a distinction explicit. The association to three human natures seems, rather, to be made by Origen, who twice presumes that Heracleon advocates the theology of "those who bring in the natures." Heracleon's interpretations seem not to be driven by heterodox dogmatic points, but by recurrent comparisons to Matthean parallels, which explain several intriguing features of his comments.

⁸¹ The view of Koschorke, *Polemik der Gnostiker*, 68, that Heracleon is here expressing the difference between the animated ones, who need guidance, and the spiritual ones, who can provide guidance, presupposes that Heracleon subscribes to the theory of the three human natures, as expressed in the Tripartite Tractate. There is certainly a distinction between guide and follower here, but Heracleon does not express this distinction in terms of spiritual and animated people.

Chapter 9

The Healing of a Son

The story in John 4:46–54 about the healing of a son of a royal official is presented in an unusual way in Origen’s *Commentary*, in that the whole story is referenced in a single lemma, followed by an exposition of the whole text. As is common with longer lemmata in ancient commentaries, only the first and final clauses of the text are actually quoted, while the bulk of the story is replaced by the word ἕως (“up to”).¹

In contrast to many modern interpreters, Origen does not associate this story with the Synoptic narrative, in Matthew 8:5–13 and Luke 7:1–10, of a centurion whose servant is ill, but regards it as an independent event.² In his exposition, he refers only briefly to the literal sense of the text – mostly to state that the event may well have transpired as it is narrated – before moving on to what he considers to be the primary question: of whom is the royal official a symbol?³ He offers two suggestions. One possibility is that the royal official is a symbol of Abraham, whose Jewish descendants are perishing as a result of their continuous adherence to the Torah rather than to the Christ. If this symbolic identity was intended by the evangelist, it may explain whom Jesus is addressing in the second person plural in verse 48, when he complains that unless you see (ἵδητε) signs and wonders, you do not believe (πιστεύετε). Origen’s other suggestion is that the royal official is an image of the immaterial rulers (ἄρχοντες) of the present age (cf. 1 Cor 2:6, 8; Eph 2:2) and his son is a symbol of those suffering under their rule. Origen does not explicitly choose between these two interpretations, but seems to prefer the former – a feature of the commentary which may suggest that this symbolic

¹ Heine, FC 89, 153, n. 457 notes this phenomenon.

² Cf. the remarks in Beasley-Murray, *John*, 71; Ernst Haenchen, *John 1: A Commentary on the Gospel of John Chapters 1–6*, trans. Robert Walter Funk, Hermeneia (Fortress Press, 1984), 236, and the reflection in Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St John. Vol 1, Introduction and Commentary on Chapters 1–4* (London: Burns & Oates, 1968), 471–75.

³ To whom the title βασιλικός may refer on the historical level is not within Origen’s interest. He merely remarks, in *Comm. Jo.* 13.58/394–95, that ὁ ἀκεραιότερος (“the simple-minded”) will presume the man to be either one of Herod’s men or a member of Caesar’s household. Beasley-Murray, *John*, 69, n. a, remarks that the term may refer to any relative or official of the Herods, so the suggestion in Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 256–57, that the title refers to a member of the court of Herod Antipas is a distinct possibility.

identification was a known disputed point in contemporary exegesis, and that the positions of Origen and his opponents were well known to the intended audience.⁴

At the end of this exposition, we find Origen's longest continuous interaction with Heracleon's writing.⁵ The first half of the passage presents Heracleon's interpretations, intermingled with short responses,⁶ while the latter half is entirely response. Due to its length, the passage will be analyzed topic by topic and paragraph by paragraph.

A. Passage 40 A: The Royal Official (John 4:46)

Unsurprisingly enough, the first topic of the passage is the symbolic identity of the royal official:

Heracleon seems (ἔοικεν) to say (λέγειν / 40.1) that the Maker (δημιουργός) is a royal official (βασιλικός) since (ἐπεὶ) he too reigned over those under him. But since (διὰ) his kingdom was small and temporary, he says (φησί / 40.2) "he was called a royal official, namely (οἰονεῖ) a little king, appointed to a small kingdom by a higher king." But his son in Capernaum he describes (διηγείται / 40.3) as being in the lower part of the middle area by the sea – that is (τουτέστιν), the region that borders on the material. He also states that (λέγει ὅτι / 40.4) his human property (ὁ ἴδιος αὐτοῦ ἄνθρωπος) was being ill – that is (τουτέστιν), he was not in his natural state but in ignorance and failure.⁷

Four statements are attributed to Heracleon in this paragraph. Blanc presents all four in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all four attributed statements, including their dependent clauses and phrases, as verbatim quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all four statements. Pagels quotes from 40.3 and 40.4 as from verbatim quotations, and does not hesitate to depend on the information given in 40.1. Wucherpennig regards the main clause of 40.1 as conjecture added by Origen, 40.3 and the ἐπεὶ-clause of 40.1

⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.58/394–59/415.

⁵ The Greek text of Passage 40 comprises 102 lines in SC 222, 262–70.

⁶ Le Boulluc, *La notion d'hérésie*, 516–18, notes that Origen's way of presenting Heracleon's interpretation with interlaced comments and criticisms serves to reduce Heracleon's commentary to an easily refuted caricature.

⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/416 (SC 222, 262.1–10; the first paragraph of Brooke's fragment 40): "Ἐοικεν δὲ βασιλικὸν ὁ Ἡρακλέων λέγειν (40.1) τὸν δημιουργόν, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐβασίλευεν τῶν ὑπ' αὐτόν· διὰ δὲ τὸ μικρὰν αὐτοῦ καὶ πρόσκαιρον εἶναι τὴν βασιλείαν, φησί (40.2), βασιλικὸς ὠνομάσθη, οἰονεῖ μικρὸς τις βασιλεὺς ὑπὸ καθολικοῦ βασιλέως τεταγμένος ἐπὶ μικρᾶς βασιλείας· τὸν δὲ ἐν Καφαρναοὺμ υἱὸν αὐτοῦ διηγείται (40.3) τὸν ἐν τῷ ὑποβεβηκότῳ μέρει τῆς μεσότητος τῷ πρὸς θάλασσαν, τουτέστιν τῷ συνημμένῳ τῇ ὕλῃ, καὶ λέγει ὅτι (40.4) ὁ ἴδιος αὐτοῦ ἄνθρωπος ἀσθενῶν, τουτέστιν οὐ κατὰ φύσιν ἔχων, ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ καὶ ἀμαρτήμασιν ἦν."

as summaries, but 40.2 and 40.4 as verbatim quotations.⁸ Wucherpfennig is quite critical towards those, including Pagels, who presume Origen's "vorsichtige Vermutung" to be a verbatim quotation from Heracleon.⁹ Bastit takes note of Origen's hesitant language in Reference 40.1, but her trust in Origen's presentation is so complete that she merely concludes that Heracleon's interpretation of this passage must have been allusive rather than explicit.¹⁰

	40.1 ἔοικεν ... λέγειν	40.2 φησί	40.3 διηγείται	40.4 λέγει ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	Quotation	Quotation
Wucherpfennig	Conjecture + summary	Quotation	Summary	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase + summary	Summary + quotation	Summary + paraphrase	Summary + paraphrase

In the first sentence, Origen presents his interpretive key to Heracleon's interpretation: the royal official is the allegorical representative of the Maker (δημιουργός), the inferior god who is said to have created the material world. This reference is made in indirect speech and preceded by a form of the verb *εἶκοι* ("seem"), which indicates that the information given is Origen's inference rather than stated explicitly by Heracleon. The main clause of 40.1 is thus presented as an explanatory paraphrase. The dependent clause of 40.1, *ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐβασίλευεν τῶν ὑπ' αὐτόν* ("since he also reigns over those under him"), does not really support the identification made in the main clause; rulership over subordinates is not a unique trait of the Maker, but a common characteristic of all rulers. The words do, however, associate the βασιλικός with the Synoptic centurion (ἐκατόνταρχος in Matthew; ἐκατοντάρχης in

⁸ SC 222, 263; GCS 10, 291; FC 89, 157; Völker, *Quellen*, 80; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 232; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 133; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 52, 84–85; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 250, 257–58, 263, 277.

⁹ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 257, n. 47. Cf. how Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 84, remarks that to a point, Heracleon's description "contains nothing markedly different from many other Christian homilies," but that his identification of the royal official with the Maker "marks his viewpoint as unmistakably Valentinian." Cf. also Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, 58–59, who takes it for granted that Heracleon takes the royal official as a symbol of the Maker, who is concerned for the health of his animated human offspring.

¹⁰ Bastit, "Forme et méthode," 167.

Luke), who claims to understand that Jesus would be able to heal at a distance, since he had soldiers under him to whom he could give orders (Matt 8:8–9; Luke 7:7–8).¹¹ This discrepancy suggests that the dependent clause is not part of the explanatory paraphrase, but a summary, and that Heracleon identifies the royal official with the centurion – or at least sees the analogy between these two characters.

In the second sentence, a statement given in direct speech is attributed to Heracleon with a single φησί (“he says”), and the main clause of 40.2 – βασιλικὸς ὠνομάσθη (“he was called a royal official”) – is clearly presented as a verbatim quotation. The other parts of the sentence are less certain. The phrase διὰ δὲ τὸ μικρὰν αὐτοῦ καὶ πρόσκαιρον εἶναι τὴν βασιλείαν (“but since his kingdom was small and temporary”) has an infinitive construction that is reminiscent of references which have been categorized as summaries. The exegetical phrase οἰονεῖ μικρὸς τις βασιλεὺς ὑπὸ καθολικοῦ βασιλέως τεταγμένος ἐπὶ μικρᾶς βασιλείας (“namely a little king, appointed to a small kingdom by a higher king”) also implies that the rule of the βασιλικός is small and temporary, but it is not clear that either one of these phrases is based on the other. Both phrases could be quoted, summarized, or paraphrased from Heracleon’s writing, and there is not much on which to base a conclusion either way. Since the inserted φησὶν (“he says”) constitutes a clearer boundary than the οἰονεῖ (“namely”), the exegetical phrase is here taken as part of the quotation, while the infinitive phrase is regarded as a summary.

The two remaining attributed statements in this paragraph are both presented in indirect speech and attributed using verbs that refer to what Heracleon is stating rather than what he is thinking. Thus, they are presented as summaries. In both cases, exegetical remarks beginning with τουτέστιν (“that is”) has been added. Although it is possible that they repeat Heracleon’s interpretations of the Fourth Gospel, the added interpretive layer increases the probability that they represent Origen’s interpretations of Heracleon. The interpretation of “by the sea” as borderline material also fits all too well into Origen’s suggested interpretive frame to be read without suspicion. Thus, these two remarks are explanatory paraphrases.¹²

If we take explanatory paraphrases to be less dependable than summaries, which in turn are less trustworthy than verbatim quotations, we may conclude that Heracleon reads the Johannine story of the royal official together with the Synoptic story of the centurion. The quotation βασιλικὸς ὠνομάσθη

¹¹ That Heracleon is referring to Matthew 8:5–13 and Luke 7:1–10 is also noted by Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 84, and by Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 260, who concludes that Heracleon has utilized the Synoptic tradition in his “Worterklärung” (γλωσσηματικόν) of the term βασιλικός.

¹² Pace Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 250, 263, 277, who takes both διηγείται and λέγει to be introducing verbatim quotations that, including the exegetical remarks, are “wörtlich zitiert” by Origen or “direkt aus seiner Vorlage abgeschrieben.”

(“he was called a royal official”) implies that Heracleon is reflecting on the use of this particular term and its significance. The summaries pointing to a small and temporary leadership position by appointment from a higher ruler suggest that this reflection takes place in the context of the Synoptic centurion, who points out, in Matt 8:9 and Luke 7:8, that he has both superiors and subordinates, and that obedience is expected in both these kinds of relationships. Like many modern interpreters, but in contrast to Origen, Heracleon may be regarding the two stories as two descriptions of the same event.¹³

In addition, this association between the royal official and the centurion may explain Origen’s conclusion that Heracleon is reading the character as a symbol for the Maker – since Irenaeus states that the symbolic identification of the centurion with the Maker is standard exegetical practice among the “Valentinians:”

They [the Valentinians] say that when the Savior came, he [the Maker] learned everything from him, that he gladly supported him with all his power, and that he is the centurion in the Gospel, who said to the savior: “I have also soldiers and servants under my power, and whatever I command them, they do” (cf. Matt 8:9).¹⁴

If Origen was aware of the “Valentinian” habit of identifying the centurion with the Maker, Heracleon’s association to the centurion may have caused Origen to conclude that Heracleon must be reading the Johannine pericope in the same way that other “Valentinians” read its Synoptic parallel.

The remark, in Summary 40.3, that the son is located “in the lower part of the middle area by the sea” may be read as a geographical note regarding the location of Capernaum: on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and in the Hula Valley, the lower region between Upper Galilee and the Golan Heights. The interpretive note connecting this geography to the idea that humans have either a material, an animated, or a spiritual nature (φύσις) may be a point that Origen reads into Heracleon’s comments.¹⁵ In Summary 40.4, the desig-

¹³ Another possibility is that Heracleon is reading βασιλικός as referring to Herod Antipas, a royal figure whose rule was entirely by delegation from his Roman superiors, and who from 4 BCE to 39 CE ruled as tetrarch of Galilee and Perea – a region which encompassed Cana and Capernaum.

¹⁴ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.7.4 (SC 264, 109.743–48): Ἐλθόντος δὲ τοῦ Σωτῆρος, μαθεῖν αὐτὸν παρ’ αὐτοῦ πάντα λέγουσιν, καὶ ἄσμενον αὐτῷ προσχωρήσαντα μετὰ πάσης τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸν εἶναι τὸν ἐν τῷ Εὐαγγελίῳ ἐκατόνταρχον, λέγοντα τῷ Σωτῆρι· “Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ὑπὸ τὴν ἐμαυτοῦ ἐξουσίαν ἔχω στρατιώτας καὶ δούλους, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν προστάξω, ποιοῦσι.” The Maker (δημιουργός) is mentioned at the outset of the paragraph (SC 264, 108.737) and is clearly the referent of the third-person singular verbs here.

¹⁵ Pace Keefer, *Branches*, 40, who claims this expression denotes the “midst of the psychic realm. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 61–62, 263–72, remarks that Heracleon’s topographical note seems to be based on actual knowledge of the geographical area, but concludes – since he reads the ensuing interpretive comment as authored by Heracleon – that he is supporting his speculative interpretation on geographical knowledge.

nation ὁ ἴδιος αὐτοῦ ἀνθρώπος (“his human property”) fits the Lukan δοῦλος (“servant”) and the Matthean παῖς (“boy”) better than the Johannine υἱός (“son”), which does not fit a slave boy. The expression οὐ κατὰ φύσιν ἔχων (“he was not in his natural state”) is standard medical language for an unhealthy state, and is, therefore, synonymous with the preceding ἀσθενῶν (“ill”).¹⁶ The terms ἀγνοία (“ignorance”) and ἀμάρτημα (“failure”) in Origen’s summary may have originated with Heracleon, since they recur in his interpretation of John 8:21.¹⁷

B. Passage 40 B: The Human Condition (John 4:47–50)

In the second, third, and fourth paragraphs, Origen discusses the state in which the son of the royal official is found, and its symbolic significance for Heracleon’s view on the human condition. The first sentence of the second paragraph is difficult to characterize, since it is interrupted by a lacuna:

Then, “out of Judea into Galilee” in the sense of (ἀντὶ τοῦ / 40.5) out of the Judea above [...] I do not know how he, proceeding to “he was about to die,” thinks (οἶεται / 40.6) that the views of those suggesting that the soul is immortal are refuted and assumes that this is equivalent to “both the soul and the body are destroyed in hell” (Matt 10:28). Heracleon does not hold (ἡγείται / 40.7) the soul to be really immortal, but merely suitable for salvation, for he claims it to be (λέγων εἶναι / 40.8) the perishable that is clothed in imperishability and the mortal that is clothed in immortality when its “death has been swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor 15:54).¹⁸

Assuming that the interrupted sentence is part of Origen’s presentation of Heracleon’s exegesis, four statements are attributed to Heracleon here. Blanc presents 40.6–8 in plain text, and her quotation marks at 40.5 seem not to constitute a claim that Origen is quoting Heracleon verbatim, but only that

¹⁶ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 278–79, clarifies this point with reference to Galen, *Art of Medicine* 321.3, 355.6–7, 358.7–8 and Plutarch, *Tu. san.* 2.134c, 18.132a. Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 189, n. 65, also accepts that this expression is a common medical one. Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 85, who does not recognize the medical idiom, reads it as expressing the state of a rational soul trapped in a material existence – a reading clearly dependent on her presumptions regarding Heracleon’s “Gnostic” theology.

¹⁷ Cf. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.14/89 and the analysis of Passages 41–42 below.

¹⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/417–18 (SC 222, 262.11–264.20; the second paragraph of Brooke’s fragment 40): Εἶτα τὸ “Ἐκ τῆς Ἰουδαίας εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν” ἀντὶ τοῦ (40.5) “ἐκ τῆς ἀνωθεν Ἰουδαίας” * * *. Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ ὅπως εἰς τὸ “Ἡμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν” κινήσεις οἶεται (40.6) ἀνατρέπεσθαι τὰ δόγματα τῶν ὑποτιθεμένων ἀθάνατον εἶναι τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ συμβάλλεσθαι ὑπολαμβάνων καὶ τὸ ψυχὴν καὶ σῶμα ἀπόλλυσθαι ἐν γενένη. Καὶ οὐκ ἀθανάτον γε εἶναι ἡγείται (40.7) τὴν ψυχὴν ὁ Ἡρακλέων, ἀλλ’ ἐπιτηδείως ἔχουσιν πρὸς σωτηρίαν, αὐτὴν λέγων εἶναι (40.8) τὸ ἐνδυνόμενον ἀφθαρσίαν φθαρτὸν καὶ ἀθανασίαν θνητὸν, ὅταν “καταποθῇ ὁ θάνατος αὐτῆς εἰς νίκος.”

the quoted words rephrase Jesus's saying. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all four as quotations. Heine presents 40.5 as a quotation, 40.6 and 40.8 in italics, but 40.7 in plain text. Pettipiece presents the words after ἀντὶ τοῦ as a verbatim quotation, the next two attributed statements in plain text, and the fourth one in italics. Pagels quotes from 40.6 and 40.7 as if directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig presents 40.5 and 40.8 as verbatim quotations, but argues that 40.6 must be a summary. He renders 40.7 in italics.¹⁹

	40.5 ἀντὶ τοῦ	40.6 οἶεται	40.7 ἡγεῖται	40.8 λέγων εἶναι
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Quotation	Italics	Plain text	Italics
Pettipiece	Quotation	Plain text	Plain text	Italics
Pagels	–	Quotation	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Summary	Italics	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Paraphrase	Summary

Since the truncated first sentence appears in the context of discussing Heracleon's interpretations, it seems to describe Heracleon's view, even though no such claim is extant. In the absence of an explicit attribution, however, the sentence cannot be taken as a verbatim quotation. Most likely, it is a summary. In the second sentence, Origen attributes a statement to Heracleon with the verb οἶεται ("he thinks"), which – properly speaking – refers to Heracleon's state of mind rather than his explicit words, but the statement that follows presents new information rather than an interpretation, and the οἶεται seems to question the accuracy of Heracleon's claim rather than denote an interpretation of his words. Therefore, this study concurs with Wucherpennig in finding Reference 40.6 to be a summary.²⁰ The verb ἡγεῖται ("he believes") of 40.7 also refers to Heracleon's mind rather than his words. As the renderings of Blanc, Heine, and Pettipiece suggest, this statement is not quoted from Heracleon, but an explanatory paraphrase, presumably of the reference that follows. Reference 40.8 presents a statement in indirect speech using an infinitive construction, and attributes it to Heracleon using a *verbum dicendi*. It is thus a summary.

¹⁹ SC 222, 263–65; GCS 10, 291–92; FC 89, 157–58; Völker, *Quellen*, 80–81; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 232; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 133–34; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 84, 101; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 250–51, 282.

²⁰ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 282, notes that the statement is presented in indirect speech, and concludes that it is likely to be a "stark zusammenfassende Wiedergabe."

Since the first sentence is incomplete, it is difficult to characterize with any certainty. If the phrase τῆς ἄνωθεν Ἰουδαίας (“the Judea above”) is anything else than a trivial geographical remark – based on Jerusalem’s high elevation compared to the surrounding countryside – it suggests that he interpreted the geographical note in John 4:47 as referring to Christ’s appearance in the flesh, his journey from the spiritual realm to the material.

Apparently, Heracleon has taken the narrator’s report that the son was about to die as proof that the human soul is mortal, and presented two scriptural passages as further support for this view. First, he has compared the report to Matt 10:28, where Jesus exhorts his followers not to fear human oppressors, but to fear the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell. Secondly, he has referred to 1 Cor 15:53–54, and argued that the φθαρτός (“perishable”) to which Paul refers is the human soul.²¹ Origen infers – apparently reasonably – that Heracleon does not believe that the soul is immortal, only that it can be saved.²² Heracleon’s argument on this point is, thus, based on a comparison with Synoptic and Pauline material. His excursus into the mortality of the soul further suggests that he reads the passage as not only a healing narrative, but also as a symbolic narrative about the perilous state of either humans in general or Jews in particular.

The third paragraph of the passage proceeds to the interaction between Jesus and the official in verses 48–49:

In addition, he says (φησὶν / 40.9) that “unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe” (John 4:48) is appropriately said to such a person whose nature it is to be persuaded by events (δι’ ἔργων) and by the senses (δι’ αἰσθήσεως), rather than to trust in a word. But “come down before my child dies” (John 4:49) he believes to have been said (εἰρησθαι νομίζει / 40.10) because death is the end of the law, which destroys through the sins. So, “before he was,” he says (φησὶ / 40.11), “completely put to death in accordance with his sins, the father begged the only Savior to rescue his son” – that is, such a nature.²³

²¹ The reference to Matt 10:28 is previously noted by Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 92; Massaux, *Influence*, 431, and the use of 1 Cor 15 by Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 92; Massaux, *Influence*, 437.

²² Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 84, remarks that Heracleon’s refusal of the immortality of the human soul is shared with many Christian authors. In contrast, Le Boulluec, *La notion d’hérésie*, 517–18, asserts that Heracleon argued neither for nor against the immortality of the soul, and that Origen’s strict dichotomy misrepresents Heracleon’s reasoning. Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 283: “Wahrscheinlich ist, dass Herakleon in seinen ursprünglichen Hypomnemata die Positionen, gegen die er sich hier wendet, wenn auch nicht mit Namen genannt, so doch wenigstens inhaltlich näher bestimmt hat.” Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 190, contends that Heracleon maintains that the survival of a *psychic* soul calls for a “process of total transformation” in which the perishable puts on the imperishable, an idea he describes as “characteristic of Valentinian soteriology.” Cf. Thomassen, “Saved by Nature?,” 145.

²³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/419–20 (SC 222, 264.21–29; the third paragraph of Brooke’s fragment 40): Πρὸς τοῦτοις καὶ τὸ “Ἐὰν μὴ σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα ἴδῃτε, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσητε” λέ-

This paragraph comprises three references to Heracleon. Blanc presents all three in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three attributed statements as verbatim quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all three. Pagels quotes from 40.9 as if directly from Heracleon, and takes the rest of the paragraph as dependable information about his views. Wucherpennig regards 40.9 and 40.11 as verbatim quotations, but argues that 40.10 must be a summary of a longer passage in Heracleon's writing.²⁴

	40.9 φησιν	40.10 εἰρῆσθαι νομίζει	40.11 φησί
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	–	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Summary	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Quotation

In the first sentence, Origen presents a comment by Heracleon on Jesus's remark in John 4:48 in indirect discourse with a single *verbum dicendi*. It is thus presented as a summary.²⁵ In the second, the attribution is made with the clearly interpretive verb νομίζει ("he believes"), but the information that follows reads more as a summary than as an explanatory paraphrase. As concluded by Wucherpennig, Origen is still mainly summarizing here.²⁶ The third sentence attributes a statement in direct discourse with a single *verbum dicendi*, and appears to introduce a verbatim quotation. Of the three words

γεσθαί φησιν (40.9) οικείως πρὸς τὸ τοιοῦτον πρόσωπον δι' ἔργων φύσιν ἔχον καὶ δι' αἰσθήσεως πείθεσθαι καὶ οὐχὶ λόγῳ πιστεύειν. Τὸ δὲ "Κατάβηθι πρὶν ἀποθανεῖν τὸ παιδίον μου" διὰ τὸ τέλος εἶναι τοῦ νόμου τὸν θάνατον εἰρῆσθαι νομίζει (40.10), ἀναρροῦντος διὰ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν· πρὶν τελέως οὖν, φησί (40.11), θανατωθῆναι κατὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας δεῖται ὁ πατήρ τοῦ μόνου σωτήρος, ἵνα βοηθήσῃ τῷ υἱῷ, τουτέστιν τῇ τοῖαδε φύσει.

²⁴ SC 222, 265; GCS 10, 292; FC 89, 158; Völker, *Quellen*, 81; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 233; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 134; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 83, 85, 88; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 251, 291, 294–95, 301.

²⁵ Pace Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 301, who despite noting the *oratio obliqua* reads the whole sentence as an almost verbatim quotation and suggests that the infinitive λέγεσθαι may have appeared in finite form in Heracleon's writing.

²⁶ Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 291: "Sein einleitendes 'νομίζει' zeigt, dass es sich hier um die thesenartige Wiedergabe eines ausführlicheren Abschnitts aus Herakleons ursprünglicher Schrift handelt." Considering that Wucherpennig readily believes Origen to be quoting verbatim even when he is using indirect speech, it is fitting that he takes one step away from that assessment when encountering this verb, and concludes that Origen here is summarizing Heracleon.

that precede the attribution formula – πρὶν τελέως οὖν (“So, before he was completely...”) – the first two are included in the quotation, while the adverb οὖν is likely to be chosen by Origen. At the end of the quotation, the explanation τουτέστιν τῇ τοιαύτῃ φύσει (“that is, such a nature”) is likely to be an interpretive comment added by Origen.²⁷

The first summary may be based on a reflection about whom Jesus might be addressing with his remark on the demand for signs and wonders. While there manifestly are characters in the Fourth Gospel who express a faith in Jesus that is not based on signs and wonders, there may also be people – in the story world as well as in the real world – who are inclined not to trust words alone, but rely more on observation of events. Heracleon may be referring to the basic dichotomy between rational and empirical knowledge, and considering Jesus’s remark to be fitting, if it is spoken to someone who is inclined to believe empirical proofs before logical. Although Origen uses the word φύσις (“nature”) in his summary, this reflection appears to be unrelated to the theory of three fixed human natures to which Origen associates it. Heracleon may have used a similar word, or used φύσις without reference to this theory.²⁸

Despite the interpretive verb, the second summary is well connected to the verbatim quotation, in which Heracleon links the death of the official’s son to sin. Since Heracleon recently has referred to Pauline material, this link is likely to be based on Paul’s claim, in Rom 6:20–23, that sin eventually leads to death. The summary adds a connection to Paul’s claim, in Rom 7:13, that sin works death through the Jewish law. Heracleon may well have referred to both passages.²⁹ While Origen finds Heracleon to be interpreting the dying son as a symbol of the dire situation of those with an inferior nature, Heracleon seems rather to view the son’s situation as a metonymy of the situation of the Jewish people, who are in need of a salvation that cannot come through the law, but only through the Savior.³⁰

²⁷ The assessment that this is a verbatim quotation commencing at the beginning of the sentence is in agreement with the claims of Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 251, 291, 294–95. On the other hand, we disagree on where the quotation ends, since Wucherpfennig assuredly includes the interpretive comment in what he calls “ein wörtliches Zitat Herakleons” (Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 294). Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 83, 85, is silently presuming not only that the interpretive comment is quoted verbatim from Heracleon, but also that it refers to one of the three human natures, when she claims (85) that “according to Heracleon, the son represents the *psychic* nature as a whole.”

²⁸ Pace Thomassen, “Saved by Nature?,” 136–37, who asserts that Heracleon’s remark “is another way of describing the difference between the spiritual and the psychic: whereas the spirituals attain faith intuitively and immediately, the psychics need to be convinced by means of visual demonstration.”

²⁹ This is previously suggested by Massaux, *Influence*, 437–38.

³⁰ The interpretation of Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System*, 118, of Heracleon’s reflection as a description of the dire situation of the *psychics*, presumes Origen’s description being correct. More intriguing is Wucherpfennig’s conclusion that the state of human ignorance and

In the fourth paragraph, Heracleon discusses the nature of the healing:

Furthermore, he takes (ἐξείληφεν / 40.12) “Your son is alive” as being said in humility by the Savior, since (ἐπεὶ) he neither said “Let him be alive (ζήτω),” nor indicated that it was he who had granted him life. He also states (λέγει δὲ ὅτι / 40.13) that it was after he had gone down to the suffering one, healed him from the disease – that is, from the sins – and given him life through forgiveness that he said: “Your son is alive” (John 4:50a). And he remarks (ἐπιλέγει) on “the man believed” (John 4:50b) that (ὅτι / 40.14) the Maker also is willing to believe that the Savior is able to heal even when he is not present.³¹

This paragraph also has three references to Heracleon, all of which Blanc presents in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three attributed statements as verbatim quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all three. Pagels quotes 40.13 as if directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig initially presents only 40.13 with quotation marks, but later quotes from the other two as if directly from Heracleon.³²

	40.12 ἐξείληφεν	40.13 λέγει δὲ ὅτι	40.14 ἐπιλέγει ... ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Summary	Summary

sin is in opposition to the ordinary human nature. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 281: “Wenn Herakleon die Krankheit des Sohnes in 4,46 als Zustand in ‘Unkenntnis und Sünden’ schildert, dann beschreibt er sie als einen Zustand gegen die eigene Physis des Menschen, der von Kräften beeinflusst ist, die seinem eigentlichen Ziel entgegenstehen. Sie können dem Menschen kein Leben garantieren. Sie gehören wie der Teufel zur Materie und haben folglich auch Teil an seinem leblosen Sein. Er ist nicht zeugungsfähig, wie Herakleon sagt.”

³¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/421–22 (SC 222, 264.30–37; the fourth paragraph of Brooke’s fragment 40): Πρὸς τοῦτοις τὸ “Ὁ υἱὸς σου ζῇ” κατὰ ἀτυφίαν εἰρῆσθαι τῷ σωτῆρι ἐξείληφεν (40.12), ἐπεὶ οὐκ εἶπεν· “ζήτω,” οὐδὲ ἐνέφηγεν αὐτὸς παρεσχῆσθαι τὴν ζωὴν. Λέγει δὲ ὅτι (40.13) καταβάς πρὸς τὸν κάμνοντα καὶ ιασάμενος αὐτὸν τῆς νόσου, τουτέστιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀφέσεως ζωοποιήσας εἶπεν· “Ὁ υἱὸς σου ζῇ.” Καὶ ἐπιλέγει πρὸς τὸ “Ἐπίστευσεν” ὁ ἄνθρωπος· ὅτι (40.14) εὐπιστος καὶ ὁ δημιουργὸς ἐστίν, ὅτι δύναται ὁ σωτὴρ καὶ μὴ παρῶν θεραπεύειν.

³² SC 222, 263; GCS 10, 292; FC 89, 158; Völker, *Quellen*, 81; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 233; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 134; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 84; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 251, 309, 314.

In contrast to previous scholarship, this study holds all three of these references to be summaries from Heracleon's writing. The first is attributed using the verb ἐκλαμβάνω ("take in a certain way") to indicate how Heracleon understood the text. By itself, this would be a mere assertion, but taken together with the two reasons added after ἐπεὶ ("since"), which appear to summarize Heracleon's writing, it constitutes a summary. The stated point about the humility of Jesus's words is in harmony with the two reasons given, and may be either Heracleon's or Origen's conclusion. The two latter statements are attributed to Heracleon with the verbs λέγω ("say," "claim"), and ἐπιλέγω ("say in regard to something," "remark"). Both attributions are presented in indirect speech and introduced by ὅτι ("that"), and thus fulfill our criteria for summaries.

According to Origen's summaries, Heracleon remarked that Jesus's answer is expressed rather modestly, since it neither is put in the third person imperative of a royal command, nor announces his ability to give life to humans. As observed by Wucherpennig, this remark reveals that Heracleon is able to compare the grammatical form used in this sentence to other forms usually employed in the Fourth Gospel, and discuss how the utilized grammar affects the reader's impression of the speaking character.³³ Origen also claims that Heracleon argued that Jesus gave his answer after an out-of-body journey to Cana, where he visited the son, healed him, and forgave his sins.³⁴ If Heracleon interpreted the son as a symbol of the Jewish people, whom he viewed as unable to achieve eternal life by following the Jewish law, this life-giving forgiveness fits the symbolic level of his interpretation well.

In the third summary, the word choice of δημιουργός ("Maker") for the royal official may be Origen's rather than Heracleon's.³⁵ Origen has already

³³ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 305–6. Origen makes a similar reflection on imperative vs. optative forms in Origen, *Or.* 24.5. Cf. Berglund, "Origenes exegetiska metodik i *Om bönen*," 50–51. Cf. also Neander, *Genetische Entwicklung*, 154, who takes this observation as proof of Heracleon's "religiösen Sinn und seinen nicht unklaren Verstand."

³⁴ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 307–9, takes this remark to betray Heracleon's apologetic aspirations: Similarly to how Greek interpreters discussed the physical means through which supernatural events in the Homeric literature took place, Heracleon intends to explain the means by which Jesus healed the royal official's son at a distance. He also, in *Heracleon Philologus*, 314, presents the question of whether physical healing can take place in the physical absence of Jesus as an issue that is typical of the second century.

³⁵ Pace Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 309, who claims this sentence to be a quotation and consequently remarks that Origen's claim that Heracleon interprets the royal official as a symbol of the Maker is here "explizit durch ein Zitat belegt." On this basis he also, in *Heracleon Philologus*, 314–18, analyzes Heracleon's portrait of the Maker in view of contemporary philosophy and of the writings of Philo, and concludes (317) that for Heracleon, the Maker is a personification of God's creative power: "Die schöpferische Kraft wird im Demiurgen als dem Erlöser untergeordnete Gestalt personifiziert. Er gehört nicht mehr dem göttlichen Äon an, sondern ist eine weitere Gestalt, die diesen Bereich hin zum Kos-

claimed that Heracleon identifies the royal official with the Maker, and may have clarified this identification by supplying the key term. In all likelihood, Heracleon's remark on the official's trust in Jesus's abilities is based simply on the Synoptic centurion's assertion "Just say the word, and my servant will be healed (μόνον εἰπὲ λόγῳ, καὶ ἰαθήσεται ὁ παῖς μου)" in Matt 8:8, or its parallel in Luke 7:7. If Heracleon read the son as a symbol of the Jewish people, this comment reflects the contrast – made by Jesus in Matt 8:10–12 and Luke 7:9 – between pagans who accepted Jesus and Jews who rejected him.

C. Passage 40 C: The House of the Royal Official (John 4:51–53)

In the passage's fifth paragraph, the focus shifts to the servants of the royal official:

But the servants of the royal official he takes (ἐξεῖληφεν / 40.15) to be the angels of the Maker, who by saying "Your child is alive" (John 4:51), report that he behaves naturally and normally, and is no longer ill. He believes (νομίζει / 40.16) that it is because of this that the servants report to the official about the salvation of the son, since he also thinks (οἶεται / 40.17) that the angels are the first to consider the actions of the humans in the world, whether they behave soundly and sincerely since the visit of the Savior. As for the seventh hour, he says that (λέγει ὅτι / 40.18) the nature (φύσις) of the healed one is characterized by the hour.³⁶

This paragraph has four statements attributed to Heracleon. Blanc presents all four in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present them as verbatim quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all four. Pagels quotes from 40.17 as if directly from Heracleon. Wucherpennig presents 40.18 as a quotation and renders the other three in italics.³⁷

mos vermittelt. Damit hat Herakleon versucht, auf zeitgenössische philosophische und christlich-theologische Ansätze zu antworten, die in dem Demiurgen eine getrennte göttliche Person sahen."

³⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/423–24 (SC 222, 264.38–266.47; the fifth paragraph of fragment 40 in Brooke's enumeration): Δούλους δὲ τοῦ βασιλικοῦ ἐξεῖληφεν (40.15) τοὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ δημιουργοῦ, ἀπαγγέλλοντας ἐν τῷ "Ὁ παῖς σου ζῇ," ὅτι οἰκείως καὶ κατὰ τρόπον ἔχει, πράσσωσιν μηκέτι τὰ ἀνοικεία· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο νομίζει (40.16) ἀπαγγέλλειν τῷ βασιλικῷ τοὺς δούλους τὰ περὶ τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ σωτηρίας, ἐπεὶ καὶ πρώτους οἶεται (40.17) βλέπειν τὰς πράξεις τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἀνθρώπων τοὺς ἀγγέλους, εἰ ἔρρωμένως καὶ εἰλικρινῶς πολιτεύονται ἀπὸ τῆς τοῦ σωτῆρος ἐπιδημίας. Ἐτι πρὸς τὴν ἐβδόμην ὥραν λέγει ὅτι (40.18) διὰ τῆς ὥρας χαρακτηρίζεται ἡ φύσις τοῦ ἰαθέντος.

³⁷ SC 222, 265–67; GCS 10, 292; FC 89, 158; Völker, *Quellen*, 81; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 233; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 134–35; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 85; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 252.

	40.15 ἐξείληφεν	40.16 νομίζει	40.17 οἶεται	40.18 λέγει ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	Italics	Italics	Italics	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase	Paraphrase	Paraphrase	Summary

All four of the attributed statements are presented in indirect speech. The first three references are made with the verbs ἐκλαμβάνω (“take in a certain sense”), νομίζω (“believe”), and οἶμαι (“think”), all of which suggest that a measure of interpretation may have been added to the reports so introduced. They are, therefore, presented as explanatory paraphrases. The fourth reference is made with the *verbum dicendi* λέγω (“say,” “claim”). It is thus presented as a summary, and may reflect Heracleon’s words more faithfully.

The first point attributed to Heracleon is the view that the servants of the royal official represent the ἄγγελοι (“angels” or “messengers”) of the Maker. Since Heracleon most probably was working from a text in which the servants of the royal official ἡγγειλαν or ἀπήγγειλαν (“reported”) that the son was alive,³⁸ he already had the verb ἀγγέλλω before his eyes. It is, therefore, not unfeasible that he used ἄγγελοι in the sense of “messengers” in this context.³⁹ For Origen, the association of these messengers with the Maker would follow naturally from his interpretive key that Heracleon has identified the royal official with the Maker. This association need not have been present in Heracleon’s writing.⁴⁰

Secondly, Heracleon is said to have stated that the servants report the son now behaves naturally and normally; he is no longer ill. This statement paraphrases the servants’ report in John 4:51 – Ὁ παῖς σου ζῇ (“Your son is alive”) – to clarify that the son is not merely alive, but in a natural and healthy state. It does not need to have anything to do with heterodox views.

In Heracleon’s third comment, the angels appear more like heavenly emissaries than human messengers, and Heracleon may have proceeded to a metaphorical interpretation. He is said to believe that the angels are charged with

³⁸ So P66 8 A C D K W Γ Δ Θ Ψ f³.

³⁹ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 312.

⁴⁰ Pace Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 313, who concludes that, according to Heracleon, both the Savior and the Maker have a court of helpful celestial powers at their disposal, and Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System*, 120, who contends that Heracleon is referring to “die Wirksamkeit der psychischen Engel des Demiurgen an den Pneumatikern.”

the duty of observing human behavior to see whether Christ's actions have led to any change for the better. Such a duty is entirely in line with a plan for human salvation, which suggests that the angels are in the service of the Father and not of an inferior Maker.

The comment about the seventh hour is not connected to Heracleon's previous points. Apparently, Heracleon has noted the specification that the healing occurred at the seventh hour, and remarked that this fact is supposed to tell us something about the φύσις ("nature") of the son. In what way he is using the word φύσις – if this is indeed Heracleon's word choice and not supplied by Origen – is not clear, and the comment is therefore open for interpretation. Given an interpretative context of the Jewish people, Heracleon may be associating the seventh hour to the seventh day, on which Jews are known to take a day of rest.⁴¹ It would appear strange, if he subscribed to the view that humans had one of three specific natures, that he connects the φύσις of the son of the royal official to a number larger than three. Sagnard points, however, to a number of passages in early Christian literature where, he claims, the Maker is associated with the number seven.⁴²

The sixth and final paragraph of Origen's presentation concerns the salvation of angels and humans:

In reference to the whole of "he and the entirety of his house believed" he has described (δηγήσατο / 40.19) it as being said on account of the order of angels and of the humans who, in a narrower sense, belong to his household. "The question is," he says (φησί / 40.20) "whether some of the angels, those who have descended to the daughters of humans, will be saved." He also thinks (νομίζει / 40.21) that the perdition of the humans of the Maker is revealed in "the sons of the kingdom will go out into the outer darkness" (Matt 8:12), and that Isaiah has prophesied about them saying, "Sons I have fathered and raised, but they have rejected me" (Isa 1:2). He calls them foreign sons, an evil and lawless seed, and a vineyard that has only produced thorns. These things (ταῦτα) were said rather daringly and sacrilegiously by Heracleon and would have had to be demonstrated with much elaboration if they had been true.⁴³

⁴¹ Origen associates, in *Comm. Jo.* 13.61/433, the number seven with the concept of rest, and suggests that the seventh hour refers, rather than to the nature of the boy, to the nature of the healing that Jesus performs.

⁴² Sagnard, *La gnose valentinienne et le témoignage de saint Irénée*, 638; cf. Thomassen, "Saved by Nature?," 189.

⁴³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/424–61/427 (SC 222, 266.48–3; the sixth paragraph of fragment 40 in Brooke's enumeration): Ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τὸ "Ἐπίστευσεν αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ οἰκία αὐτοῦ ὅλη" δηγήσατο (40.19) ἐπὶ τῆς ἀγγελικῆς εἰρῆσθαι τάξεως καὶ ἀνθρώπων τῶν οἰκειοτέρων αὐτῷ. Ζητεῖσθαι δὲ φησι (40.20) περὶ τινων ἀγγέλων εἰ σωθήσονται, τῶν κατελθόντων ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων θυγατέρας. Καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων δὲ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ τὴν ἀπώλειαν δηλοῦσθαι νομίζει (40.21) ἐν τῷ. "Οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας ἐξελεύσονται εἰς τὸ σκότος τὸ ἐξώτερον." Καὶ περὶ τούτων τὸν Ἡσαΐαν προφητεύειν τὸ "Υἱοὺς ἐγέννησα καὶ ὕψωσα, αὐτοὶ δὲ μὲ ἠθέτησαν," οὕσιν αὖτε υἱοὺς ἀλλοτρίους, καὶ σπέρμα πονηρὸν καὶ ἄνομον καλεῖ, καὶ ἀμ-

There are three attributed statements here. Blanc presents all three in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present all three as quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize all three.⁴⁴ Pagels does not refer to this paragraph. Wucherpennig presents only the last two references within quotation marks, but treats all three as verbatim quotations from Heracleon.⁴⁵

	40.19 δηγήσατο	40.20 φησί	40.21 νομίζει
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Summary	Quotation	Paraphrase

The first attributed statement is presented in indirect speech using an infinitive construction. The verb used, δηγέομαι (“describe”), is not a *verbum dicendi*, but still refers to what Origen has found in the text rather than in Heracleon’s mind. Reference 40.19 is therefore categorized as a summary. The second statement appears in direct speech and is attributed with a single φησί (“he says”). It is thus presented as a verbatim quotation, as the German scholars claim. The third statement, which is reported in indirect speech by way of an infinitive construction, is attributed with the more interpretive verb νομίζω (“think”). Thus, Reference 40.21 is an explanatory paraphrase.

Quotation 40.20 refers to an often-repeated theme in reflections on the origin of evil.⁴⁶ In Gen 6:2–4, “sons of God” are said to go in to the daughters of humans and produce offspring in the form of giants, thereby spreading evil among humanity.⁴⁷ Angels who have performed such deeds may be in need of salvation, and Heracleon seems to have used this passage to support his view that the servants, who are said to have come to faith in Jesus, are metaphorical representatives for fallen angels. He does, however, leave open the ques-

πελῶνα ἀκάνθας ποιήσαντα. Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τὰ Ἡρακλέωνος, ἅπερ τολμηρότερον καὶ ἀσεβέστερον εἰρημένα ἔχρῃν μετὰ πολλῆς κατασκευῆς ἀποδεῖχθαι, εἴπερ ἦν ἀληθῆ.

⁴⁴ Pettipiece presents the reference to Isaiah in plain text, but adds an attribution to Heracleon, giving the impression that the lack of italics is a mistake.

⁴⁵ SC 222, 267; GCS 10, 292–93; FC 89, 158–59; Völker, *Quellen*, 81–82; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 233–34; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 135; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 252, cf. 325–26.

⁴⁶ Cf. Wis 14:6; Sir 16:7; Bar 3:26–28; 1 En. 6–8; Jub. 7.21–25; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6, Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 3.2.14; Ephrem the Syrian, *Comm. Gen.* 6.3–6.

⁴⁷ Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 160, notes the references to Gen 6:2, Matt 8:12, and Isa 1:2.

tion of whether the specific angels mentioned in Genesis 6 will be able to receive salvation. Considering that this issue borders on Origen's often repeated argument that all creatures, including the devil, is in theory able to repent and be saved, it is surprising that Origen does not offer any further comment on the issue.

Summary 40.19 claims that Heracleon has connected the phrase ἡ οἰκία αὐτοῦ ὅλη (“the entirety of his house”) to both angels and humans. Origen presumes that these angels and humans are associated exclusively with the Maker – the household of the royal official is viewed as a symbol of the household of the Maker – but the statement can as easily be made regarding fallen angels and lost humans in general, who have been associated with the household of the Father in Summary 23.1.

When Origen in Paraphrase 40.21 quotes Matt 8:12 to claim that Heracleon thinks that it speaks about the destruction of the humans of the Maker, he unintentionally clarifies that Heracleon is indeed making a Synoptic comparison, namely with a tradition we know from the Gospel of Matthew.⁴⁸ Origen's quotation of Matt 8:12 is verbatim,⁴⁹ and this particular statement does not appear in the Lukan parallel. That Jesus in this saying speaks about the ultimate perishment of a certain category of humans, namely the Jews who reject him, is a reasonable conclusion, even though the identification of this category with “the humans of the Maker” may be inferred by Origen. If Heracleon, which appears to be clear from the preceding passages, is concerned with the fate of those of the Jews who are in conflict with the Jewish law, it would be entirely logical of him to lift up the Matthean conclusion to the story as warning of a possible perdition. If, when interpreting John 4:46–54 on a more symbolic level, he is concerned with the eternal salvation of the “sons of God” of Gen 6:2–4, the Matthean quotation is applicable to their situation as well.

The second reference in 40.21, the one to Isaiah, demonstrates that Heracleon also has used a prophetic text from the Old Testament to interpret John 4:51–53. The quoted sentence appears in Isa 1:2, the evil and lawless seed in Isa 1:4, and the disappointing vineyard in Isa 5:1–7. The phrase “foreign sons” does not appear until Isa 62:8, where it denotes actual foreigners, but the motif that the sons of Israel have taken up foreign practices recurs earlier in the text. It is not clear whether the “he” who calls “them” is Isaiah or Heracleon, but it is probable that Heracleon has referred to several instances of this

⁴⁸ The connection to Matt 8:12 is previously noted by Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 93; Massaux, *Influence*, 432.

⁴⁹ The excluded δέ is a minimal adaptation. Reading ἐξελεύσονται (“they will go out”) rather than ἐκβληθήσονται (“they will be thrown out”), the quotation follows the original reading of Codex Sinaiticus. Pier Franco Beatrice, “The Apostolic Writings in Heracleon's *Hypomnēmata*,” in *Origeniana Undecima*, ed. Anders-Christian Jacobsen, BETL 274 (Leuven: Peeters, 2016), 799–819, here 809, wrongly claims this word to be quoted by Heracleon, which would make it the oldest known witness to this reading.

theme in Isaiah. As with the Matthean reference, Origen presumes that Heracleon is speaking about a particular category of humans associated with the Maker, while Heracleon is probably referring either to fallen angels or to Jews.

Origen's response, which follows after his comment on the need for an elaborated argument, is focused on the issue of human mortality. He asserts that Heracleon is wrong to suppose the human soul to be mortal, and complains that Heracleon's treatment of this issue is not detailed enough for a proper analysis. Origen's argument is too long to quote in its entirety, but his basic assumption is that the different eternal fates of different humans cannot be explained by the model of three different human natures, since that would imply that a mortal nature could be changed into an immortal one:

I cannot perceive in what sense he even refuses to believe in the immortality of the soul, since he has not grasped how many meanings the word "death" has. Going through every sense with an observing eye and with precision, he would have been able to see if it is mortal in every sense of the word. For if [he intends] that it is capable of sin, and that a sinning soul will die, we would also say that it is mortal. But if he conceives of death as its absolute dissolution and destruction, we would not agree, not even if we could imagine a mortal being that changed into an immortal, or a perishable nature into an imperishable one.⁵⁰

For Origen, it is axiomatic that all immortal beings are such by nature, and that mortal beings cannot be transformed into immortal beings, since that would imply a common nature between the mortal and immortal realms – and, by extension, between creator and creation. For the case of mortal men being granted eternal life, he prefers to use a Pauline model from 1 Cor 15:53, of mortal nature being clothed (ἐνδυομένης) in immortality.

As an additional argument against the model of three distinct human natures, he points to Paul's Damascus experience. According to this model, Paul should, being of a spiritual nature, be able to believe in Jesus immediately and without outer proof. The fact that it takes a supernatural experience to bring Paul to faith in Christ should rather prove that his nature is physical. Against the notion that the angels of the Maker may perceive the thoughts of humans before the Maker himself does, Origen presents a list of Old Testament passages in which the God of the Jews – whom the heterodox presumably identify with the Maker – is described as omniscient.⁵¹ While not unconvincing,

⁵⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.61/427–29 (SC 222, 266.4–268.13; the seventh paragraph of fragment 40 in Brooke's enumeration): Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ πῶς καὶ περὶ ἀθανασίας ψυχῆς ἀπιστεῖ, μὴ ἐκλαβὼν πόσα σημαίνεται ἐκ τῆς "θάνατος" φωνῆς. Καθορῶντα γὰρ ἔδει τὸ σημαινόμενον μετ' ἐπισκέψεως καὶ ἀκριβείας ἰδεῖν εἰ κατὰ πάντα τὰ σημαινόμενα θνητὴ ἐστίν. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ὅτι δεκτικὴ ἁμαρτίας, ψυχὴ δὲ ἡ ἁμαρτάνουσα αὐτὴ ἀποθανεῖται, καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐροῦμεν αὐτὴν θνητὴν· εἰ δὲ τὴν παντελεῖ διάλυσιν καὶ ἐξαφανισμόν αὐτῆς θάνατον νομίζει, ἡμεῖς οὐ προσήσόμεθα οὐδὲ μέχρι ἐπινοίας ἰδεῖν δυνάμενοι οὐσίαν θνητὴν μεταβάλλουσαν εἰς ἀθάνατον, καὶ φύσιν φθαρτὴν ἐπὶ τὸ ἄφθαρτον.

⁵¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.61/431–33.

these arguments seemingly refer to what he has heard other Christians argue, not to what he has quoted from Heracleon.

Lastly, Origen argues that Heracleon's final point can be read as introducing an unwanted, fourth, human nature:⁵²

But that there is a destruction of the animated, as described at the end of our presentation of his [Heracleon's] statements, means that he uses an ambiguity and introduces another, fourth, nature, which is not what he intends.⁵³

This remark most likely refers to Heracleon's application of Jesus's statement "The sons of the kingdom will go out into the outer darkness," which we know from Matthew 8:12, to what Origen describes as "the humans of the Maker" in Paraphrase 40.21. Origen points out a tension between Heracleon's comment and the theory of the three human natures: The animated ones, who are associated with the Maker, are supposed to be predetermined to come to rest in the "intermediate realm" (ἐν τῷ τῆς μεσότητος τόπῳ).⁵⁴ If some of them are to end up in the "outer darkness," Heracleon is introducing a fourth category. However, this difficulty only arises with the presupposition that Heracleon subscribes to the theology of "those who bring in the natures." Both this presumption and the focus on the mortality of the human soul appear to be interpretative keys introduced by Origen rather than inherent to Heracleon's writing. Interpreted without these categories, Heracleon's comment is perfectly reasonable as an assertion that some Jews, despite being members of the chosen people, will reject the invitation of Christ and, consequently, become lost.

In conclusion, we may remark that as far as we can discern Heracleon's treatment of the royal official at Cana from Origen's presentation, it is a reading of John 4:46–54 in conjunction with Matt 8:5–13. Heracleon identifies the royal official with the Synoptic centurion and reads the two narratives as describing the same event. He describes the geographical location of the home of this centurion, notes that Jesus takes a rather humble stance towards him, and remarks on the exceptional willingness of this Roman soldier to trust in Jesus's ability to heal his son, even at a physical distance. On the symbolic level, Heracleon associates the son of the royal official with the Jewish

⁵² It is unclear whether the repeated insistence of Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 83, 85, that Heracleon reads the healing of the royal official's son as a description of the process of salvation of "the *psychic* nature" (85; her italics) is dependent on the ψυχικῶν in this paragraph, or on the ψυχικῶν in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.51/341, both of which appear to be Origen's choice of words rather than Heracleon's.

⁵³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.61/433 (SC 222, 270.42–44; the last paragraph of Brooke's fragment 40): Τὸ δὲ διαφθορὰς εἶναι ψυχικῶν, ἐπὶ τέλει ὧν ἐξεθέμεθα ὑπ' αὐτοῦ εἰρημένων ἀναγεγραμμένον, ὁμωνυμία χρωμένου ἐστὶν καὶ ἑτέραν φύσιν εἰσάγοντος τετάρτην, ὅπερ οὐ βούλεται.

⁵⁴ Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.7.5, quoted on page 25 above.

people, who find themselves in a perilous state, as they are unable to fulfill the Jewish law, which therefore will lead to their death. The servants of the centurion are associated with angels, who observe the actions of humans in the world after the Savior's visit. This association leads Heracleon into further reflection of whether angels – especially those of Gen 6:2–4, who are sexually active among humans – will be saved. In all, Heracleon discusses historical referents of the Johannine and Matthean narratives, and reflects on the terms of salvation for Jews, Gentiles, and angels. These concerns give no support to the claim that Heracleon belongs to the heterodox or “those who bring in the natures.”

Chapter 10

Death and the Devil

This chapter covers the remaining passages, numbered 41–48, where Origen refers to Heracleon in the nineteenth and twentieth books of his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*.

A. Passages 41–42: Hope of Immortality (John 8:21–22)

Book 19 is not extant in its entirety. The remaining fifty pages, which include neither the beginning nor the end of the volume, begin with the lemma of John 8:19, and end within the comments on John 8:25. Since book 20, which is extant in its entirety, covers John 8:37–53, the lost ending of book 19 must have covered 8:26–36. The extant part of book 19 includes two passages where Heracleon is mentioned, both concerning John 8:21–22. In this conversation at the festival of Tabernacles (cf. John 7:2), a group of Jews begin to believe that Jesus is going to kill himself, because he states: “I am going away, and you will look for me, and you will die in your sins. Where I am going, you cannot come.”¹ Origen emphasizes that this exchange is part of a longer conversation, up to and including John 8:58, that takes place by the offering box (γαζοφυλάκιον) in the temple courts.

Then, he turns to Heracleon:

Heracleon, when he quotes the passage with the offering box, says (εἶπεν) nothing about it (αὐτήν). But concerning “Where I am going, you cannot come” (John 8:21) he says (φησί / 41.1) “How can those in ignorance, disbelief, and sins become immortal?” Not even here does he listen to himself! For if those in ignorance, disbelief and sins cannot become immortal, how have the apostles, who once were in ignorance, in disbelief, and in sins, become immortal? Thus, those who are in ignorance, in disbelief, and in sins can become immortal, if they should change, because it is possible for them to change.²

¹ John 8:21: Ἐγὼ ὑπάγω καὶ ζητήσετέ με, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ὑμῶν ἀποθανεῖσθε: ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἔλθεῖν.

² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.14/89–90 (SC 290, 100.36–102.47; Brooke’s fragment 41): Ὁ μὲν-τοι γε Ἡρακλέων ἐκθέμενος τὴν περὶ τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου λέξιν οὐδὲν εἶπεν εἰς αὐτήν. Εἰς δὲ τὸ “Ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἔλθεῖν” φησί· (41.1) πῶς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ καὶ ἀπιστίᾳ καὶ ἀμαρτήμασιν ὄντες ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ δύνανται γενέσθαι; μὴδὲ ἐν τούτῳ κατακούων ἑαυτοῦ. Εἰ

There is only one reference to Heracleon in this passage, introduced by φησί (“he says”). Blanc sets it in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present it as a quotation. Heine and Pettipiece set it in italics. Wucherpennig treats it as a quotation taken directly from Heracleon. All use plain text for the observation that Heracleon has said nothing. Pagels does not refer to this passage.³

	41.1 φησί
Blanc	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics
Pagels	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation

This reference presents a statement in direct speech, attributed with a simple φησί, connected to a specific saying in the Fourth Gospel, and repeated almost word by word in Origen’s response. It is without doubt a verbatim quotation. This quotation is clearly delimited by the participial phrase μηδὲ ἐν τούτῳ κατακούων ἑαυτοῦ (“Not even here does he listen to himself”), in which the singular participle κατακούων does not match the plural subject of the quotation, but must refer to Heracleon.

Origen claims that Heracleon quotes (ἐκτίθημι) the passage (λέξις) with the offering box (γαζοφυλάκιον) without offering a comment. The passage to which Origen refers must include the first half of John 8:20, in which the offering box is mentioned, but cannot include the last half of 8:21 – “Where I am going, you cannot come” – on which Heracleon apparently did comment. Heracleon may have quoted 8:20–21 in one lemma, but commented only on the latter part. Such a practice would not in itself be particularly noteworthy.⁴ More importantly, Origen’s claim reveals that Heracleon quotes, from the Gospel of John, not only the particular words and phrases he wants to comment on, but longer passages. This implies that Heracleon’s writing – like

γὰρ οἱ ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ καὶ ἀπιστίᾳ καὶ ἁμαρτήμασιν ὄντες ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ οὐ δύνανται γενέσθαι, πῶς οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ ποτὲ καὶ ἐν ἀπιστίᾳ καὶ ἐν ἁμαρτήμασιν γενόμενοι ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ γεγόνασιν; Δύνανται οὖν οἱ ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ καὶ ἐν ἀπιστίᾳ καὶ ἐν ἁμαρτήμασιν γενόμενοι γενέσθαι ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ εἰ μεταβάλλοιεν, δυνατόν αὐτοὺς μεταβαλεῖν.

³ SC 290, 101–3; GCS 10, 314; FC 89, 188; Völker, *Quellen*, 82; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 235; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 138; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 280.

⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.10/63, himself quotes the phrase οὐπω ἐληλύθει ἡ ὥρα αὐτοῦ (“his time had not yet come”) in John 8:20 without any other comment than that his earlier comments on similar phrases are as applicable in this context.

Origen's – was a lemmatic commentary, which quoted or paraphrased the commented text piece by piece.⁵

Heracleon's remark conforms to the format of a *hypophora*, a question stated by the speaker in order to be answered within the ensuing analysis.⁶ He has noted that the hearers are depicted as not only ignorant about Jesus, but also disbelieving, which from his point of view may constitute a sin. It then appears natural that they would not be able to follow Jesus into a state of ἀφθαρσία – which can be understood either as immortality or incorruptibility, the first of which is more likely in the context of an inferred suicide. Origen, however, takes Heracleon's remark as an *erotema*, a rhetorical question asserting that ignorant, disbelieving, and failing people never can become immortal. This is probably a misconstrual of Heracleon's point.⁷

The impression that Heracleon is primarily interested in the afterlife is strengthened by the next passage, where Heracleon discusses how the hearers react to Jesus's words:

Indeed, Heracleon takes “Will he kill himself?” to be said in a more straightforward way, and states that (φησὶν ὅτι / 42.1) the Jews said this while thinking evil thoughts, considering themselves superior to the Savior, and assuming that they would end up with God in eternal rest, but the Savior, after having killed himself, in death and destruction, where they did not think they would end up themselves. Word by word he states: (αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν ὅτι / 42.2) “The Jews thought the Savior said: ‘I am about to kill myself and pass into destruction, to where you cannot come.’” But I wonder (οὐκ οἶδα δέ) how he who says “I am the light of the world,” and what follows, can be saying “I am about to kill myself and pass into destruction.” If someone would say that the Savior has not said this, but the Jews have surmised it, he [Heracleon] will clearly say that concerning this the Jews assume that those who kill themselves will perish, but that he [Jesus] did this nonetheless, believing that he would perish and be punished – which would be silly in every way.⁸

⁵ So also Janssens, “Héracléon,” 147.

⁶ Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, 51–52, 124.

⁷ Foerster, *Von Valentin zu Herakleon*, 41–42, and Desjardins, *Sin in Valentinianism*, 61, both lament that Heracleon's comment is not long enough to discern whether he believes those in ignorance to be permanently damned, or presumes the possibility of change. Desjardins speculates (62), based on Heracleon's reference to sons by adoption in Passage 46, that Heracleon may “attribute ignorance to the pneumatics, ignorance and sins to the psychics, and ignorance, sins, and unbelief to the choirs and their ‘adopted’ psychic brethren.”

⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.19/124–26 (SC 290, 122.39–56; Brooke's fragment 42): Καὶ ὁ Ἡρακλέων μέντοι γε ὡς ἀπλούτερον εἰρημένου τοῦ “Μήτι ἀποκτενεῖ ἑαυτόν;” φησὶν ὅτι (42.1) πονηρῶς διαλογιζόμενοι οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ταῦτα ἔλεγον καὶ μείζονας ἑαυτοὺς ἀποφαινόμενοι τοῦ σωτῆρος καὶ ὑπολαμβάνοντες ὅτι αὐτοὶ μὲν ἀπελεύσονται πρὸς τὸν θεὸν εἰς ἀνάπαυσιν αἰώνιον, ὁ δὲ σωτὴρ εἰς φθορὰν καὶ εἰς θάνατον ἑαυτὸν διαχειρισάμενος, ὅπου ἑαυτοὺς οὐκ ἐλογίζοντο ἀπελθεῖν. Καὶ αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν ὅτι (42.2) ὥντο λέγειν τὸν σωτῆρα οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ὅτι ἐγὼ ἑμαυτὸν διαχειρισάμενος εἰς φθορὰν μέλλω πορεύεσθαι, ὅπου ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν. Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ πῶς κατὰ τὸν εἰπόντα· “Εγὼ εἰμι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου” καὶ τὰ ἑξῆς, ἣν λέγειν ὅτι ἐγὼ ἑμαυτὸν διαχειρισάμενος εἰς φθορὰν μέλλω πορεύεσθαι.

Two references to Heracleon are made in this passage. Blanc presents both in plain text, although she quotes the specification of how the Jews would have understood Jesus's words. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both as quotations. Heine presents the first reference in italics and the second as a quotation. Pettipiece italicizes both, and quotes only the words attributed to Jesus. Neither Pagels nor Wucherpennig quote this passage.⁹

	42.1 φησὶν ὅτι	42.2 αὐταῖς λέξεσιν φησιν ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Quotation
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–
Wucherpennig	–	–
Berglund	Summary	Quotation

Both of these references combine the *verbum dicendi* φησὶν (“he says”) with the complementizer ὅτι (“that”).¹⁰ In Reference 42.2, the phrase αὐταῖς λέξεσιν (“with these very words” or “word by word”) unequivocally introduces a verbatim quotation,¹¹ and the ὅτι is redundant. The grammatical shift, in the next sentence, from the third-person ᾤοντο (“They thought”) to the first-person οὐκ οἶδα δέ (“But I wonder...”) implies the start of Origen’s response, and clearly delimits the quotation. In 42.1, the combination of φησὶν and ὅτι implies a summary. This summary may be highly adapted, since it repeats information from the verbatim quotation that follows it – just like Origen’s explanatory paraphrases do. On the other hand, nothing in the grammar of this summary precludes the possibility that it is lifted almost word by word from Heracleon’s writing – as we would assume if the ὅτι was absent. The full range from verbatim quotation to explanatory paraphrase is, therefore, within the range of possibilities in this case.

Ἐὰν δέ τις λέγῃ μὴ τὸν σωτῆρα ταῦτα εἰρηκέναι, τοὺς δὲ Ἰουδαίους αὐτὸ ὑπονενοηκέναι, δηλὸν ὅτι ἐρεῖ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους πεφρονηκέναι περὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι φθείρονται οἱ ἑαυτοὺς διαχειρισάμενοι καὶ οὐδὲν ἤττον ἐποίει ταῦτα πιστεύων φθαρῆσθαι καὶ κολασθῆσθαι· ὅπερ ἦν κατὰ πάντα ἡλίθιον.

⁹ SC 290, 123; GCS 10, 320; FC 89, 196; Völker, *Quellen*, 82; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 235; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 140.

¹⁰ As discussed on page 97, a complementizer such as “that” is a word that combines with a clause or verbal phrase to form a subordinate clause.

¹¹ In Origen, *Cels.* 6.14, the similar formula αὐταῖς γὰρ λέξεσι φησι περὶ τῶν τοιούτων ὁ Παῦλος ὅτι (“For with these very words Paul says about these things that”) introduces a verbatim quotation from Rom 1:18–23.

Heracleon's comment, as preserved in Quotation 42.2, is an explanatory paraphrase of the Fourth Gospel: In his own words, Heracleon expresses a reasonable interpretation of how the hearers understood Jesus's words in John 8:21–22. Origen responds by pointing to another statement by Jesus, which he deems incompatible with the understanding Heracleon ascribes to the audience. This criticism applies, properly speaking, not to Heracleon but to Jesus's hearers, as Heracleon describes them. Origen admits as much in his ensuing *prokatalēpsis*,¹² and resorts to calling Heracleon's interpretation silly (ἡλιθίος) in every way.

B. Passages 43–46: Children of the Devil (John 8:43–44a)

The first time Heracleon is mentioned in book 20 of Origen's *Commentary*, the accompanying statement is not attributed to him, but to the category of τῶν τὰς φύσεις εἰσαγόντων ("those who bring in the natures"), who, in their turn, are said to interpret the text κατὰ Ἡρακλέωνα ("in accordance with Heracleon"):

But from those who bring in the natures (τῶν τὰς φύσεις εἰσαγόντων) into "because my word makes no progress among you" and respond, in accordance with Heracleon (κατὰ Ἡρακλέωνα), that it makes no progress because they are unfit, either in essence or in will, we would like to learn: how would those who are unfit in essence have heard from the Father?¹³

This passage, which is regularly designated "fragment 43," interacts not with Heracleon and his writings, but with a category of later interpreters who may be characterized as "readers" or "followers" of Heracleon.¹⁴ Origen does not include Heracleon in this category,¹⁵ even though he views them as basing their opinions on his. Since the passage does not indicate that the views referenced were expressed in Heracleon's writing, it should not be used to reconstruct the views of Heracleon, but of "those who bring in the natures." Since Origen responds not only to Heracleon but also, apparently, to other interpreters of the Gospel of John, we may have to discern between Heracleon and his later followers in other passages as well.

¹² Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, 104, defines *prokatalēpsis* as anticipation and refutation of possible objections in the minds of the audience.

¹³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.8/54 (SC 290, 184.1–5; Brooke's fragment 43): Πυνθανοίμεθα δ' ἂν τῶν τὰς φύσεις εἰσαγόντων καὶ εἰς τὸ "Ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν" ἀποδιδόντων κατὰ Ἡρακλέωνα ὅτι διὰ τοῦτο οὐ χωρεῖ ὅτι ἀνεπιτήδειοι ἦτοι κατ' οὐσίαν ἢ κατὰ γνώμην, πῶς οἱ ἀνεπιτήδειοι κατ' οὐσίαν ἤκουσαν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς;

¹⁴ See the introduction of this category in chapter 1.

¹⁵ This is also noted by Wucherpfennig in *Heracleon Philologus*, 22.

Four of the passages in book 20 that refer to Heracleon concern John 8:43–44, a Johannine passage in which Jesus talks to a group of Christ-believing Jews, and questions who is really their “father.” The Jews insist that they, as descendants from Abraham, have God as their father, but Jesus objects that their sinful intention to take his life reveals that they have another loyalty: “Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear my word. Your father is the devil, and you want to carry out the desires of your father.”¹⁶ Origen reflects on the double identity of humankind as a divine image formed out of the dust of the earth,¹⁷ and exhorts his readers to be mindful of where their desires originate. “If we perform the works of God and want to carry out his desires, we are children¹⁸ of God, but if we practice those of the devil, and want to carry out his desires, the devil is our father,” he writes.¹⁹ For Origen, the misfortune of finding oneself to be the child of the devil is apparently a risk not only for those practicing evil deeds, but also for those merely inclined to do so. On the other hand, mere intention of performing the works of God is not sufficient to call oneself a child of God – a minimum of action is also required.²⁰

Within this context, Origen also engages Heracleon’s interpretation:

Nevertheless, Heracleon does assume (ὑπολαμβάνει / 44.1) that the cause of their inability to hear the word of Jesus or understand his speech is given in “Your father is the devil” (John 8:44a). He does say with these very words: (αὐταῖς γοῦν λέξεσιν φησί / 44.2) “‘But why can you not hear my word, if not because your father is the devil?’ – in the sense of ‘of the essence of the devil,’ further clarifying their origin (φύσις) to them, having already

¹⁶ John 8:43–44a: διὰ τί τὴν λαλίαν τὴν ἑμὴν οὐ γινώσκετε; ὅτι οὐ δύνασθε ἀκοῦειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν. ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστὲ καὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν. It may be noted that the pronoun “your,” usually utilized in translations of τοῦ πατρὸς here, appears neither in the text of John nor of Origen, which both simply have the definite article. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 343–44, notes that the genitive compound used here is unusual, and argues that it has Semitic origins.

¹⁷ O’Leary, *Christianisme et philosophie chez Origène*, 76–79, notes the contrast between molded dust and divine image, and stresses that this passage illustrates Origen’s Platonic concept of the soul, according to which a human is primarily an immaterial soul that, as a consequence of sin, is located in a physical body. O’Leary also argues that Origen understood the primordial sin as a celestial event, taking place before the creation of the physical world.

¹⁸ The Greek masculine plural υἱοί may include children of both genders, and may therefore be translated either “sons” or “children.” Since the context of John 8:44 does not specify a single gender, I have opted for the latter.

¹⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.23/193 (SC 290, 252.39–42): Καὶ εἰ μὲν ποιῶμεν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ θέλομεν τὰς ἐπιθυμίας αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν, υἱοὶ ἐσμεν τοῦ θεοῦ· εἰ δὲ τὰ τοῦ διαβόλου πράττομεν, θέλοντες ἃ ἐκεῖνος ἐπιθυμεῖ ποιεῖν, ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐσμεν.

²⁰ The term “sons of Abraham” is also taken by Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.4/20, to refer not to physical descendants of the patriarch, but to those who emulate him in knowledge and in practice.

proven that they are neither children of Abraham, or they would not have hated him, nor children of God, since they did not love him.” And if he had understood the “Your father is the devil” (John 8:44a) as we have explained it above, and said: “Since you still are of the devil, you cannot hear my word,” we would also have accepted his explanation. But now, it is clear that he is saying (λέγων / 44.3) that some humans are consubstantial with the devil, as his followers believe, of a different essence than those they call “animated” or “spiritual.”²¹

This passage comprises three references to Heracleon. Blanc, who sets the rest of the passage in plain text, has opening quotation marks at the beginning of 44.2 and closing counterparts before φανερών (“further clarifying”). If this is not a mistake, she indicates that 44.2, up to this point, is a quotation from Heracleon. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present the first two references as quotations, but set the third one in plain text. Heine italicizes all three. Pettipiece sets the first one in plain text and italicizes the other two. All quote the paraphrase of the Fourth Gospel that seems to introduce Reference 44.2. Wucherpfennig argues that 44.2 is a verbatim quotation, and that it is Origen who is speaking in 44.3.²² No conclusions can be drawn regarding Pagels’s view of these references since she never quotes this passage, only paraphrases it.²³

²¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.20/168–70 (SC 290, 238.26–240.43; Brooke’s fragment 44): Ὁ μέντοι γε Ἡρακλέων ὑπολαμβάνει (44.1) αἰτίαν ἀποδίδοσθαι τοῦ μὴ δύνασθαι αὐτοὺς ἀκοῦειν τὸν Ἰησοῦ λόγον μηδὲ γινώσκειν αὐτοῦ τὴν λαλίαν ἐν τῷ “Ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστέ.” Αὐταῖς γοῦν λέξεσιν φησι· (44.2) “Διατί δὲ οὐ δύνασθε ἀκοῦειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν, ἢ ὅτι ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστέ;” ἀντὶ τοῦ “ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου,” φανερών αὐτοῖς λοιπὸν τὴν φύσιν αὐτῶν, καὶ προελέγξας αὐτοὺς ὅτι οὔτε τοῦ Ἀβραάμ εἰσιν τέκνα – οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐμίσουν αὐτόν –, οὔτε τοῦ θεοῦ, διὸ οὐκ ἠγάπων αὐτόν. Καὶ εἰ μὲν τὸ “Ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστέ” ἐξεδέχετο ὡς ἐν τοῖς ἀνωτέρω διηγησάμεθα, καὶ ἔλεγεν· διὰ τὸ ἔτι ὑμᾶς εἶναι ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου οὐ δύνασθε ἀκοῦειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν, κἂν παρεδεξάμεθα αὐτοῦ τὴν διήγησιν. Νυνὶ δὲ δῆλός ἐστιν ὁμοουσιους τινὰς τῷ διαβόλῳ λέγων (44.3) ἀνθρώπους, ἐτέρας, ὡς οἴονται οἱ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ, οὐσίας τυγχάνοντας παρ’ οὗς καλοῦσι ψυχικοὺς ἢ πνευματικοὺς.

²² SC 290, 239–41, GCS 10, 352; FC 89, 241; Völker, *Quellen*, 83; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 235; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 143; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 21–23, 347–48. In addition, Langerbeck, “Anthropologie,” 67, uses both “quote” and “paraphrase” to characterize Origen’s references to Heracleon in this passage: “Zu Johannes 8,44 zitiert bzw. paraphrasiert Origenes den Herakleon ausführlich.”

²³ One of Pagels’s paraphrases seems to be presented as a verbatim quotation taken directly from Heracleon, but this might be a typographical mistake. See Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 102.

	44.1 ὑπολαμβάνει	44.2 αὐταῖς γοῦν λέξεσιν φησι	44.3 λέγων
Blanc	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Plain text	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–
Wucherpfennig	–	Quotation	Paraphrase
Berglund	Paraphrase	Quotation	Paraphrase

The first reference claims that Heracleon ὑπολαμβάνει (“assumes”) that the Johannine Jesus’s statement about the devil being his hearers’ father, in John 8:44a, is presented as an explanation of their inability to hear or, more properly, understand him (cf. John 8:43b). The verb chosen refers not to what Heracleon has expressed explicitly, but to an assumption underlying his reasoning. Therefore, this study concurs with Blanc and Pettipiece, and categorizes this reference as an explanatory paraphrase.

In the second reference, Origen’s introductory phrase αὐταῖς γοῦν λέξεσιν φησί (“he does say with these very words”) unambiguously claims to present a verbatim quotation, as previous scholarship accepts. The term αὐταῖς λέξεσιν is ordinarily used in this sense by Origen, and the emphatic particle γοῦν only stresses this further. What is less clear is the extent of the verbatim quotation, since there are several appositional phrases that can be read either as parts of Heracleon’s original statement or as interpretive comments added by Origen.²⁴ To be grammatically correct, the participles φανερώων (“clarifying”) and προελέγξας (“having already proven”) would need to have the same subject as the finite verb φησί (“he says”). This would make them Origen’s statements about Heracleon. But since these participles aptly describe Jesus’s arguments in the verses preceding John 8:43, it is more likely that they are Heracleon’s statements about Jesus, and that the quotation extends to the end of the sentence.

In the third reference, Origen is clearly expressing his own understanding of Heracleon’s meaning. This is abundantly clear from the preceding, more

²⁴ The most likely candidate for such an inserted comment is the phrase ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου (“in the sense of ‘of the essence of the devil’”) which could be based on Heracleon’s word choice οὐσία (“essence”) in Quotation 45.1, and whose insertion would explain the slight redundancy between the two consecutive explanations given. But since the same information is provided in Quotation 45.1, the potential identification of this phrase as a comment inserted by Origen would have no consequences for our understanding of Heracleon’s exegesis.

hypothetical, understanding, and recognized by the majority of previous scholars. Reference 44.3 is thus an explanatory paraphrase.

If the whole sentence is quoted verbatim, it gives us an unusually clear view into Heracleon's writing, as it includes material of several different kinds: the quotation starts with a statement that can only be put in the mouth of Jesus, and which seems to constitute a paraphrase of John 8:43–44a. This paraphrase could have been placed directly after Heracleon's lemma from the Fourth Gospel – or, even more likely, constitute the lemma that he presents as the basis of his exegesis. After the paraphrase, ἀντὶ τοῦ (here: “in the sense of”) introduces Heracleon's explanation of the meaning of the Johannine text, in which he states that if Jesus's hearers have the devil as their father, it means that they are of the οὐσία (above translated as “essence”) of the devil.²⁵ Thirdly, Heracleon explains that Jesus, who has already argued – based on their negative attitude toward him – that his hearers are children neither of Abraham nor of God, now spells out whose children they are. Thereby, we may see here how Heracleon moves from a paraphrase of the text to explaining its meaning with reference to its literary context. The word φύσις (here: “origin”), which Origen readily associates with the teachings of three human natures, may here be used in an altogether different sense. Most probably, it refers to the “origin” or “birth” that is inherent in Jesus's metaphorical, diabolical fatherhood, but it could also refer to the “character” or “temperament” that Jesus's hearers have revealed in their refusal to love Jesus and in their desire to kill him.²⁶ The term οὐσία (“essence”) may also be used in a looser sense than that of an immutable and inherent human nature, an issue to which we will have to return in the analysis of the next passage.

In his response, Origen makes a sharp distinction between Heracleon and his later readers or followers, as is clear in the shift from singular λέγων (“he is saying”) to plural οἰοῦνται (“they believe”) in the last sentence.²⁷ Although

²⁵ The preposition ἀντὶ can be used in several different senses, including “after,” “opposite,” and “instead of.” This usage, meaning “in the sense of” is not only common in commentary literature, but also necessitated by the context, since ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου conforms closer to the text of the Fourth Gospel than ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου does.

²⁶ For φύσις in the sense of “birth,” see e.g. Empedocles, *Fragments* 8.1, 8.4; Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives* 9.25. For φύσις in the sense of character, see e.g. Empedocles, *Fragments* 110.5; Euripides, *Medea* 103. Cf. Langerbeck, “Anthropologie,” 72, who suggests that Heracleon uses φύσις in two distinct senses: sometimes it denotes the ordinal, “natural” state of humans as originating with the Maker, other times it denotes the ideal state reached by the spiritual ones.

²⁷ This is previously observed by Simonetti, “Eracleone e Origene,” 57; and by Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 23–24: “Origenes selber aber schreibt sie nicht Heracleon zu, sondern seinen Schülern, indem er bei der ersten Aussage im Singular von λέγων und erst bei der zweiten von ὡς οἰοῦνται οἱ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ,” also im Plural von seinen Schülern spricht. Die angeführten Belege, die sich noch um weitere Stellen aus anderen Bänden ergänzen las-

he unequivocally associates the theory of three human natures with this later group, the fact that he here explicitly concludes that Heracleon is expressing the same theory implies that he has not found Heracleon to express his adherence to this belief more clearly elsewhere. It is, therefore, probable that Origen has misinterpreted Heracleon on this point.²⁸

After this interaction, Origen displays his enthusiasm for grammatical details by remarking that in the phrase τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου in John 8:44, the second genitive may be taken as an attribute to the first. Such a reading would imply that the devil has a father, and that Jesus's hearers are siblings of the devil rather than his children.²⁹

When returning to Heracleon's views, he reports:³⁰

On this, Heracleon says (φησὶ / 45.1): "Those to which this word was addressed were of the essence (οὐσία) of the devil." – as if the essence of the devil was another than the essence of other rational beings. In this he seems to me to have suffered something similar to a person who claims that an overlooking eye has another essence than a seeing one, and that a mishearing ear has another essence than one that hears well. For just as what differs in these cases is not the essence – but some cause for mishearing or overlooking occurs – in the same way for everybody who is able to follow reason, the essence that allows him to follow it is the same, whether he accepts the claim or refuses to accept it. For in the case of us humans we would not be able to say in what way the one who has followed reason differs from the one who does not follow it, even if we can say that, after understanding what has been said, one decides to agree with what is said while another rejects it.³¹

sen, zeigen: Origenes hat noch einen Unterschied zwischen Herakleon und den Lehren erkannt, die er als Auffassungen aus seinem Schülerkreis referiert."

²⁸ So also Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 347–48: "Die Identifizierung von οὐσία und φύσις ist daher ein Missverständnis des Fragments, das m. E. schon auf Origenes zurückführbar ist. [...] Jedoch versteht er Herakleons Aussage offensichtlich im Rahmen der valentinianischen Menschenklassenlehre, die Origenes präzisiert immerhin noch als die seiner Schüler (οἱ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ) wiedergibt."

²⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.21/171–75.

³⁰ I have here accepted Preuschen's emendation and translated ἄλλων λογικῶν οὐσίαν ("other rational beings") instead of ἁγίων λογικῶν οὐσίαν ("the rational holy ones"), which is the reading of the manuscript, and of Blanc's edition.

³¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.23/198–201 (SC 290, 254.66–256.80; Brooke's fragment 45): Εἰς ταῦτα δὲ ὁ Ἡρακλέων φησὶ· (45.1) πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου ἦσαν· ὡς ἑτέρας οὐσης τῆς τοῦ διαβόλου οὐσίας παρὰ τὴν τῶν ἁγίων λογικῶν οὐσίαν. Ὅμοιον δὲ ἐν τούτῳ μοι πεπονθέναι φαίνεται τῷ ἑτέραν οὐσίαν φάσκοντι ὀφθαλμοῦ παρορώντος καὶ ἑτέραν ὁρώντος, καὶ ἑτέραν οὐσίαν ἀκοῆς παρακουούσης καὶ ὑγιᾶς ἀκουούσης. Ὡς γὰρ ἐν τούτοις οὐχ ἡ οὐσία διάφορος, ἀλλὰ τι αἴτιον ἐπισυμβέβηκεν τοῦ παρακοῦειν καὶ τοῦ παρορᾶν, οὕτως παντὸς τοῦ πεφυκότος λόγου παρακολουθεῖν ἢ παρακολουθητικὴ οὐσία ἢ αὐτὴ ἐστίν, εἴτε παραδέχεται τὸν λόγον εἴτε ἀνανεῦει πρὸς αὐτόν. Τί γὰρ διαφέρει ἐφ' ἡμῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τὸ παρακολουθεῖν τοῦ μὴ παρακολουθοῦντος οὐκ ἂν ἔχοιμεν εἰπεῖν, εἰ καὶ μετὰ τὸ συνιέναι τῶν εἰρημένων ὁ μὲν τις ἐπικρίνας συγκατέθετο τῷ λεγομένῳ, ὁ δὲ ἀνένευεν πρὸς αὐτό.

The passage makes one reference to Heracleon. Blanc, Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, Heine, Pettipiece, and Pagels all render it as a quotation extending until the ὥς (“thus”) that introduces Origen’s response.³² Wucherpennig stands out by arguing that the quotation extends to the end of the sentence.³³

	45.1 φησί
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Blanc	Quotation
Heine	Quotation
Pettipiece	Quotation
Pagels	Quotation
Wucherpennig	Quotation (longer)
Berglund	Quotation

This reference attributes a statement, presented in direct speech, to Heracleon with a single *verbum dicendi*. It is undoubtedly presented as a verbatim quotation. The only question is where the quotation ends, and although Wucherpennig’s maximalist interpretation is possible, it is more probable that Origen’s response begins at ὥς (“thus”).

In this comment, Heracleon explains that Jesus’s statement that his hearers’ father is the devil (John 8:44a) means that they were of the οὐσία (“essence”) of the devil. The question is in what sense he may have used the word οὐσία. Origen’s concept of a conscious essence, encompassing the cognitive abilities that make rational beings rational, is probably not anticipated by Heracleon.³⁴ One possibility is that οὐσία, which in other contexts may denote the wealth, property, or possessions of a person,³⁵ is used to declare Jesus’s hearers to be the “property” of the devil. Heracleon may be using John 8:34, where Jesus calls every sinner a slave (δοῦλος) of sin, to argue that the hearers are slaves of the devil, rather than his children. By loving and carrying out the desires of their slave-owner and *paterfamilias*, they may grow in loyalty to him, even to the point of deserving to be called his children. Heracleon’s

³² SC 290, 255; GCS 10, 357; FC 89, 248; Völker, *Quellen*, 83; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 236; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 145; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 102.

³³ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 348: “Die οὐσία des Teufels – zitiert Origenes Herakleon weiter – sei verschieden von der οὐσία der Heiligen, die der Vernunft, d. h. dem Logos gemäß leben”.

³⁴ On this point I agree with Langerbeck, “Anthropologie,” 68, who argues that Heracleon’s understanding of the concept of οὐσία surely differed from how Origen took it.

³⁵ Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.92.2; Euripides, *Herc. fur.* 337; Euripides, *Hel.* 1253; Aristophanes, *Eccl.* 729; Lysias, *On the Confiscation of the Property of the Brother of Nicias* 17; Lysias, *On the Refusal of a Pension* 11.

phrase should in that case be translated, “Those to which this word was addressed were the property of the devil.” Another possibility is that οὐσία, in this case, denotes a more temporal state than an essence or inherent nature.³⁶

On this point, the reasoning of Ansgar Wucherpennig is attractive. He argues that Heracleon makes a sharp distinction between φύσις, as an inherent disposition towards certain choices and preferences, and οὐσία, as the actual state in which a person finds himself.³⁷ In consequence, Wucherpennig claims, Heracleon considers Jesus’s hearers to have the φύσις of descendants of Abraham, even though they presently have the οὐσία of the devil.³⁸ Both possibilities appear to be more probable than Origen’s claim that Heracleon used φύσις and οὐσία synonymously to refer to the theory of three human natures.

That Origen’s response is aimed at Heracleon’s third-century readers or followers, rather than at Heracleon himself, is further clarified in his continued argument, in which Origen refutes not Heracleon, but a certain “they” who speak about spiritual (πνευματικός) and earthly (χοϊκός) beings.³⁹ Origen argues that any claim that the essence of the devil differs from that of other rational beings would imply that he is incapable of experiencing what is good, and therefore would put all blame for his behavior on his creator – which would be the most absurd thing imaginable. He insists that it would be irrational to claim that the same types of imagination, thoughts, and memories may occur in different essences; even if the capacity for conscious thought is granted beings with radically different bodies, their intelligence as such would still be of the same essence. Throughout this argument, Origen refers to his opponents using plural pronouns and plural verb forms.⁴⁰ Only at the end of the passage does he declare that the same reasoning may be applicable to one of Heracleon’s claims. At this point, the plural forms referring to Heracleon’s readers or followers are replaced by singular forms:

³⁶ This usage is rare, but Sophocles, *Trach.* 911, uses οὐσία to denote the state of childlessness – a potentially temporal state.

³⁷ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 345: “Das Wort οὐσία [...] ist bei Heracleon nahe an der Grundbedeutung im Sinn von ‘Seinsweise’ gebraucht. Daher bezeichnet οὐσία offenbar eher die faktische Existenz, während φύσις eine ‘physikalische,’ von den konkreten Seinsweise abstrahierte, vorgegebene Einstellung meint. Die abstrakte vorgegebene ‘Beschaffenheit’ (φύσις) realisiert sich in einer konkreten ‘Seinsweise’ (οὐσία).”

³⁸ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 347.

³⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/205–11.

⁴⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/205: ...ὃν φασιν ἐκεῖνοι πνευματικὸν καὶ ὃν λέγουσιν εἶναι χοϊκόν. (“...the one they call spiritual and the one they claim to be earthly.”); 20.24/207: Παραστησάτωσαν (“Let them present...”); 20.24/210: ...μὴ γὰρ παριστάντες ἀποφανοῦνται μὲν, οὐκ ἀποδείξουσιν δέ. (“...for they declare it without proof, and could never demonstrate it.”)

Let these things also be said (εἰρήσθω) regarding Heracleon's point that (λογός εἰπόντος / 46.1) "of the father the devil" corresponds to "of the essence of the father." Furthermore, he [Heracleon] makes a distinction (διαστέλλεται) with reference to "you want to carry out the desires of your father," saying (λέγων / 46.2) that the devil has no will, only desires. The silliness of this statement is self-evident, for anyone would admit that he wants that which is evil. But even if we do not have anything readily at hand to cite, you may examine yourself whether, somewhere in the Scriptures, "to will" is applied to the devil.⁴¹

Two statements are attributed to Heracleon here. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present both as quotations. Blanc, Heine, and Pettipiece quote only Jesus's statements and the paraphrase of it.⁴² Neither Pagels nor Wucherpennig seems to take a stand in these two cases.

	46.1 λογός εἰπόντος	46.2 λέγων
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Plain text	Italics
Pagels	–	–
Wucherpennig	–	–
Berglund	Paraphrase	Summary

The attribution formula used in the first case – τὸν Ἡρακλέωνος λόγον εἰπόντος ("Heracleon's statement saying" or "Heracleon's point that") – seems to be worded in order to refer back to a previously mentioned λόγος, and the content of the attributed statement matches that of Quotation 45.1 precisely. This statement is therefore a paraphrase of the previous quotation. The second statement appears in indirect speech using an accusative-with-infinitive construction, attributed with a single *verbum dicendi*. It is a summary.

Heracleon's summarized claim that the devil has no will, only desires, is reminiscent of Plato's allegory of the chariot, where the soul is likened to a charioteer and a pair of winged horses. While the gods have two good horses, and therefore always act rationally, humans have one white horse, which

⁴¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/211–12 (SC 290, 260.52–60; Part of Brooke's fragment 46): Τοσαῦτα καὶ πρὸς τὸν Ἡρακλέωνος λόγον εἰπόντος (46.1) τὸ "Ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου" ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς εἰρήσθω. Πάλιν εἰς τὸ "Τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν θέλετε ποιεῖν" διαστέλλεται λέγων (46.2) τὸν διάβολον μὴ ἔχειν θέλημα ἀλλ' ἐπιθυμίας. Καὶ ἐμφαίνεται αὐτόθεν τὸ ἀδιανόητον τοῦ λόγου· θέλει γὰρ τὰ πονηρὰ πᾶς ἂν τις ὁμολογήσαι ἐκεῖνον. Συνάξεις δὲ καὶ αὐτός, εἰ καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος ἐν προχείρῳ οὐκ ἔχομεν παραθεσθαι, εἴ που ἐν τῇ γραφῇ τὸ θέλει ἐπὶ τοῦ διαβόλου τέτακται.

⁴² SC 290, 261; GCS 10, 359; FC 89, 250; Völker, *Quellen*, 83; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 236; Pettipiece, "Heracleon," 147.

corresponds to our yearning for good, and one dark horse, symbolizing our passions and irrationality.⁴³ Origen could have argued that the absence of a regulating charioteer in the devil's soul would absolve him of any blame for following his evil impulses,⁴⁴ but this is not the argument he presents in this passage. Rather, he finds it self-evident that the devil has an evil will, and urges his reader to search the scriptures for instances where the devil is the subject of the verb θέλω. It may seem surprising that Origen, who regularly demands scriptural proof for Heracleon's claims, is unable to present evidence in this case – but the phenomenon he asks for is indeed a rarity, and seems to appear only once in the modern New Testament.⁴⁵

Origen's interaction with Heracleon's interpretation continues with more arguments against him:

Thereafter, Heracleon states (φησίν) that (ὡς ἄρα / 46.3) this is said not to the natural sons of the devil, the “earthly ones,” but to the “animated ones,” who have become adoptive sons of the devil – on which ground some people can be called sons of God by nature, and some by adoption. And he [Heracleon] does say that (φησί γε ὅτι / 46.4) these become children of the devil by loving and performing the desires of the devil; they are not such by nature. And he makes a distinction that (διαστέλλεται ὡς ἄρα / 46.5) one must understand the term “children” in three different ways: firstly by birth (φύσις), secondly by choice (γνώμη), and thirdly by merit (ἀξία). “By birth,” he says (φησίν / 46.6), “is the one born by some parent, who therefore is called a child in the proper sense; by choice, when someone, who by his own choice performs the will of someone else, is called a child of the one whose will he performs; by merit, in accordance with how people are called children of hell, darkness, or lawlessness, or the offspring of snakes or vipers.” “For these things,” he says (φησί / 46.7), “do not beget anything of their own nature, for they are destructive and ruin what is thrown into them, but since they have practiced their works, they are said to be their children.”⁴⁶

⁴³ Plato, *Phaedr.* 246a–b, 253c–254e. Langerbeck, “Anthropologie,” 67–68, argues that Origen's presentation reveals him to have an Aristotelian understanding of the concept of will, while Heracleon subscribes to a harder, Socratic–Platonic concept of the will.

⁴⁴ Cf. his response in attribution 47.4 below.

⁴⁵ Luke 4:6. The will (θέλημα) of the devil is mentioned in 2 Tim 2:26. Neither construction seems to appear in the Septuagint.

⁴⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/213–16 (SC 290, 260.62–262.77; Brooke's fragment 46): Μετὰ ταῦτα φησιν ὁ Ἡρακλέων ὡς ἄρα (46.3) ταῦτα εἴρηται οὐ πρὸς τοὺς φύσει τοῦ διαβόλου υἱούς, τοὺς χοϊκοὺς, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τοὺς ψυχικοὺς, θέσει υἱοὺς διαβόλου γινομένους – ἀφ' ὧν τῇ φύσει δύνανται τινες καὶ θέσει υἱοὶ θεοῦ χρηματίσαι. Καὶ φησί γε ὅτι (46.4) παρὰ τὸ ἡγαπηκέναι τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ διαβόλου καὶ ποιεῖν τέκνα οὗτοι τοῦ διαβόλου γίνονται, οὐ φύσει τοιοῦτοι ὄντες. Καὶ διαστέλλεται ὡς ἄρα (46.5) τριχῶς δεῖ ἀκοῦειν τῆς κατὰ τέκνα ὀνομασίας, πρῶτον φύσει, δεῦτερον γνώμη, τρίτον ἀξία· καὶ φύσει μὲν, φησίν, (46.6) ἐστὶν τὸ γεννηθῆν ἐν ὑπό τινος γεννητοῦ, ὃ καὶ κυρίως τέκνον καλεῖται· γνώμη δέ, ὅτε τὸ θέλημα τις ποιῶν τινος διὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γνώμην τέκνον ἐκείνου οὐ ποιεῖ τὸ θέλημα καλεῖται· ἀξία δέ, καθ' ὃ λέγονται τινες γεέννης τέκνα καὶ σκότους καὶ ἀνομίας, καὶ ὄφρων καὶ ἐχιδνῶν γεννήματα. Οὐ γὰρ γεννᾷ, φησί, (46.7) ταῦτα τίνα τῇ ἑαυτῶν φύσει· φθοροποιὰ γὰρ καὶ ἀνα-

In this paragraph, Origen makes five references to Heracleon. Blanc sets all five references in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present them all as quotations. Heine and Pettipiece italicize them.⁴⁷ Pagels refers to this paragraph without quoting from it. Wucherpennig identifies Reference 46.3 as a quotation, and quotes 46.5–7 as one continuous quotation from Heracleon without mentioning Origen’s transmission.⁴⁸

	46.3 φησὶν ... ὡς ἄρα	46.4 φησὶ γε ὅτι	46.5 διαστέλλεται ὡς ἄρα	46.6 φησὶν	46.7 φησὶ
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	–	–	–	–	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	–	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Paraphrase	Summary	Paraphrase	Quotation	Quotation

Of these five references, the last two are the easiest to categorize. There, two statements, presented in direct speech, are attributed to Heracleon using a single φησὶν inserted a few words into the sentence. As recognized by Wucherpennig and others, they are clearly presented as verbatim quotations. Since the ταῦτα (“these things”) of Quotation 46.7 must refer to the last category of Quotation 46.6, it is reasonable to assume that the gap suggested by the renewed attribution formula is a small one.

The middle reference, 46.5, uses διαστέλλω (“distinguish”), a verb that speaks more to the thought expressed in Heracleon’s comment than to the words used to express it. In addition, it uses the complementizer ὡς ἄρα (“that”), which implies the same. Furthermore, we may note that 46.5 not only repeats all the key words of Quotation 46.6, but also describes the distinction made by Heracleon in this quotation. Reference 46.5 is, therefore, an explanatory paraphrase of Quotation 46.6. This case, where the paraphrase is presented together with a verbatim quotation of the statement on which it seems to be based, illustrates that some of Origen’s paraphrases may be astute

λίσκοντα τοὺς ἐμβληθέντας εἰς αὐτά· ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ ἔπραξαν τὰ ἐκείνων ἔργα, τέκνα αὐτῶν εἶρηται.

⁴⁷ SC 290, 263; GCS 10, 359; FC 89, 250–51; Völker, *Quellen*, 83–84; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 236; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 147–48.

⁴⁸ Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 21, 345. In the latter case, Origen’s first attribution is present in his Greek quotation, but curiously left out of his German translation, while the two φησὶ (“he says”) are left standing within the quotation marks, even though they cannot possibly be Heracleon’s words.

observations of the thought Heracleon is expressing: in the quoted comment, he does distinguish between three senses of τέκνα (“children”) – just as Origen claims.

The statement in 46.4 is attributed using a single *verbum dicendi*, accompanied by the intensifying particle γε and followed by ὅτι. Chapter 3 argued that ὅτι, in Origen’s usage, introduces indirect speech and is most often used when making non-trivial adaptations to his sources. Based on this argument, this study concludes that Reference 46.4 is a summary. The intensifying particle suggests that this reference more closely corresponds to Heracleon’s words than the previous one, 46.3, which combines a *verbum dicendi* with the complementizer ὡς ἄρα. Chapter 3 argued that Origen regularly uses ὡς ἄρα to introduce references where he has made extensive adaptations to the source material in order to express the underlying concept or idea behind the words of the previous author. Based on that observation, this study concludes that Reference 46.3 is an explanatory paraphrase. It is presented by Origen before the summary and verbatim quotations, presumably in order to explain how he is reading Heracleon’s comments, and how they may be interpreted in light of the theory of three human natures. We may note that the distinction between “natural” and “adoptive” sons, to which Origen refers, is substantiated by the verbatim quotations, while the connection to the categories of χοῖκοί (“earthly ones”) and ψυχικοί (“animated ones”) is not.⁴⁹ The latter association may therefore be made by Origen, who reads Heracleon’s comments in view of the theory of three human natures.⁵⁰

Based on the verbatim quotations in this passage, we may conclude that Heracleon is performing a word study on τέκνα (“children”) in order to clarify in what sense Jesus is speaking of children of the devil. He makes a useful distinction between one literal and two figurative meanings of the term: children by birth (φύσει), children by choice (γνώμη) such as followers of a philosopher or clients of a patron, and children by merit (ἀξία) – a purely metaphorical sense in which people are said to be children of abstract concepts.⁵¹ Since the concepts in his example are destructive forces, he correctly remarks that these forces could not conceive natural children among humans. We can

⁴⁹ Langerbeck, “Anthropologie,” 69, questions whether the first attributed statement is quoted verbatim: “Aber sind diese Worte wirklich Zitat? Oder sind sie nur vorausnehmende Interpretation des Folgenden durch Origenes? Das ist in der Tat sein übliches Verfahren.” Noting this doubt, Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System*, 123, nevertheless contends that Heracleon is claiming that Jesus in John 8:44a refers to the earthly ones, and in 8:44b to the animated ones.

⁵⁰ I agree with the conclusion of Attridge, “Heracleon and John,” 70: “No, the labels and the rigid anthropology that they import are, as Wucherpfeffennig suggests, an introduction of Origen.”

⁵¹ Pace Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 149, who contends that Heracleon is claiming that individuals actually can become children of the devil in the three ways described.

safely conclude that Heracleon's point is not that Jesus declares his hearers to be naturally born children of the devil, but that he is using τέκνα in a more metaphorical sense: by loving and performing the devil's desires, they have come to deserve this association with the devil. Their inability to hear is fundamentally their own choice.⁵² The word φύσει ("by nature," "by origin," "by birth") is here used to refer to naturally born children without reference to the theory of three human natures.⁵³

Previous scholars, who presume Heracleon to subscribe to the theory of the three human natures, have various ways of making Heracleon's comments conform to the theory. Langerbeck suggests that Heracleon's three categories of increasingly metaphorical children presents his own understanding of the tripartite scheme, according to which the animated ones are "natural human beings," the spiritual ones have become God's children by choice, and the material ones are, by merit, children of the devil.⁵⁴ In view of Heracleon's competence in ancient literary criticism, Langerbeck's suggestion seems unnecessary to explain his statement, but Langerbeck's description of Heracleon's view of humanity as dependent on choice and deeds, rather than inherent nature, is reasonable. With a slightly more complex scheme, Strutwolf contends that Heracleon's first category is the material ones, who by nature are children of the devil and cannot change that by will, since they – just like the devil – have no will, only desires. Heracleon's second and third categories of metaphorical children refer, in Strutwolf's view, to the animated ones, who are able to become either children of God by choice or children of the devil by merit.⁵⁵ Strutwolf's scheme, which also presupposes that Heracleon subscribes to the theory of three human natures, is unnecessary to explain Heracleon's statement here, but it does express Heracleon's view of the ultimate fate of human beings better than Irenaeus's description of "Valentinian" soteriology.⁵⁶

In his response, Origen attributes one more statement to Heracleon:

⁵² On this point, I agree with Thomassen, "Saved by Nature?," 137: "Heracleon takes pain, however, to point out that the word φύσις cannot be appropriately applied to characterize this category of humans. They cannot literally be the children of the devil, since the devil, being an essentially destructive force, has no procreative ability;" Cf. Thomassen's similar argument in Thomassen, "Heracleon," 190–92. Cf. also Harold W. Attridge, "Valentinians Reading John," in *Valentinianism: New Studies*, eds. Christoph Marksches and Einar Thomassen, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 96 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 414–33, who argues that Heracleon's way of focusing on John 8:44 is based on a careful observance of the interwoven Johannine themes of divine sovereignty and human responsibility in the process of salvation, which allows him to get Jesus's point "just right" (428).

⁵³ Cf. Quotation 44.2 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.20/168, quoted on page 288–89, where φύσις is translated "origin."

⁵⁴ Langerbeck, "Anthropologie," 69.

⁵⁵ Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System*, 124.

⁵⁶ Cf. Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.1–7, and the discussion in chapter 1.

After making such distinctions, he has not to any extent supported his own interpretation from the Scriptures. We would respond, however, that if it is not by nature (φύσει) but by merit that they are called children of hell, darkness, and lawlessness – for these things are destructive and ruinous rather than constructive – how can Paul somewhere say: “We were by nature children of wrath like everyone else” (Eph 2:3)? Or let them explain to us how it is not causing ruin and certain destruction by itself, the wrath whose children we were! He also says that (φησὶν ὅτι / 46.8) he says (λέγει) that those are now the children of the devil, not because the devil has borne someone, but since they are performing the works of the devil, they are being compared to him. But how much better would it not be to say this about all the children of the devil, namely that they become like him by performing his works, and that they are not called children of the devil because of their essence or some permanent constitution independent of their actions?⁵⁷

Origen attributes one statement to Heracleon. Blanc renders it in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster present it as a quotation. Heine and Pettipiece both set it in italics.⁵⁸ Neither Pagels nor Wuchterpfennig quote this paragraph.

	46.8 φησὶν ὅτι
Blanc	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation
Völker	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation
Heine	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics
Pagels	–
Wuchterpfennig	–
Berglund	Summary

The reference is made using a single *verbum dicendi* followed by ὅτι, and nothing indicates that a switch to direct speech has been made. According to our criteria, the statement is thus presented as a summary.

⁵⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/216–19 (SC 290, 262.78–264.92; Brooke’s fragment 46): Τοι-
αύτην δὲ διαστολὴν δεδωκώς οὐδὲ κατὰ ποσὸν ἀπὸ τῶν γραφῶν παρεμυθήσατο τὴν ἰδίαν
διήγησιν. Εἵπομεν δ’ ἂν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὅτι εἰ μὴ φύσει, ἀλλὰ ἀξία γεέννης τέκνα ὀνομάζεται
καὶ σκότους καὶ ἀνομίας – φθοροποιὰ γὰρ ταῦτα καὶ ἀναλίσκοντα μᾶλλον ἥπερ συνιστάν-
τα –, πῶς ὁ Παῦλος φησί που τὸ “Ἡμεθα φύσει τέκνα ὀργῆς ὡς καὶ οἱ λοιποί;” ἢ λεγέτωσαν
ἡμῖν ὡς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀναλωτικὸν καὶ μάλιστα κατ’ αὐτὸν φθοροποιὸν ἡ ὀργή, ἥς τέκνα ἡμεθα.
Πάλιν φησὶν ὅτι (46.8) τέκνα τοῦ διαβόλου νῦν λέγει τούτους, οὐχ ὅτι γεννᾷ τινὰς ὁ διάβο-
λος, ἀλλ’ ὅτι τὰ ἔργα τοῦ διαβόλου ποιοῦντες ὁμοιώθησαν αὐτῷ. Πόσω δὲ βέλτιον περὶ
πάντων τῶν τοῦ διαβόλου τέκνων τοῦτο ἀποφαίνεσθαι, ὡς ὁμοιουμένων αὐτῷ τῷ ποιεῖν τὰ
ἔργα αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐ διὰ τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ τὴν κατασκευὴν τὴν χωρὶς ἔργων τέκνων διαβόλου
χρηματιζόντων;

⁵⁸ SC 290, 265; GCS 10, 360; FC 89, 251; Völker, *Quellen*, 84; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 236; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 148.

The summary reads as if it refers to Heracleon's conclusion regarding in what sense Jesus is speaking of children of the devil in John 8:44a. In logical continuity with his previously referenced distinction between children by birth, by choice, and by merit, Heracleon seems to conclude that, since the devil has no children by birth, the sense in which Jesus uses the term is the third one: arguing that his hearers are performing the works (ἔργα) of the devil,⁵⁹ he compares them to the devil by stating that he is their father.⁶⁰ If this conclusion is more or less correctly summarized by Origen, Heracleon's other term, οὐσία, must be understood as referring to the same reality: Jesus's hearers are not consubstantial with the devil – except, perhaps, to the extent that all intelligent beings share the same intelligent essence – but conform, by choice, to his agenda. Both of the alternative senses of οὐσία discussed above are compatible with this view. Based on their loyalty to the devil's cause, Jesus's hearers may be described either as being in the “property” of the devil – among his slaves and possessions – or in the “state” of the devil – in a rebellious relationship to God, they share the devil's perilous predicament.⁶¹

In his response, Origen points out Heracleon's lack of proof from scripture, and presents Eph 2:3 as a counter-example of his own. The author of this passage is, however, not using φύσει (“by nature”) in the same sense as Heracleon does. Heracleon is speaking of natural, biological children in contrast to metaphorical senses of the word – but the author of Ephesians is certainly speaking of “children of wrath” in a metaphorical sense, rather than a biological one. His φύσει refers to a “natural” state in which emotions play a large role in explaining human behavior, which is contrasted to a state of divine grace. This dichotomy of a natural state versus a state of grace is entirely independent of Heracleon's distinction between children by birth, by choice, and by merit, and the “natural” children of wrath in Ephesians are, in Heracleon's nomenclature, children by merit. Origen's counter-example thus fails to refute Heracleon's claim.⁶²

In addition, Origen complains that Heracleon's conclusion would be much better, were it not limited to the metaphor in John 8:44 but extended to all

⁵⁹ The difference between the verbs ποιέω (“do”), which is used here, and πράσσω (“perform,” “accomplish”), which is used in Quotation 46.6, is of no consequence but may illustrate how Origen, when summarizing Heracleon, may alter some of his word choices.

⁶⁰ Pagels describes the situation of these “children of the devil” quite aptly in *Gnostic Exegesis*, 103–4, although her limitation of it to the “soulish ones” appears to be entirely based on her assumption that Heracleon's exegesis is determined by “Gnostic” theology.

⁶¹ A similar conclusion is reached by Thomassen, “Saved by Nature?,” 137: “If those who reject the Saviour are called the devil's children, and are said to share his οὐσία, such statements can only be meant, therefore, in a descriptive sense, as a way of characterizing their behaviour.”

⁶² Pace Strutwolf, *Gnosis als System*, 123–24, who contends that there is no ground for understanding Heracleon's concept of φύσις in any other way than Origen does.

instances where humans are spoken of as children of the devil. He has not, however, demonstrated that Heracleon intended his conclusion to be so limited, and his response seems to be based more on the reasoning of Heracleon's readers or followers than on Heracleon's own words.⁶³

C. Passage 47: Standing in the Truth (John 8:44b)

After concluding his previous interaction with Heracleon's exegesis, Origen turns to the next sentence in the Fourth Gospel, which specifies that the devil "was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him."⁶⁴ Origen remarks that the word ἀνθρωποκτόνος ("murderer" or, more literally, "human-killer") is not necessarily a morally negative term, since it applies equally well to cases where it may have been morally good to kill a human being, such as when David killed Goliath. In the devil's case, Origen continues, the term most likely refers to the story of how he tricked Eve and Adam into eating the forbidden fruit, thereby bringing death to all humanity. Death, Origen remarks, is not only one of God's enemies, but – according to 1 Cor 15:26 – the enemy that will be the last one standing.

Origen then turns to the issue of truth, and observes that the concepts of "standing in" or "having" truth may be taken more or less strictly. "There is no truth in him" could reasonably be read, he argues, as claiming either that the devil is wrong on every point, or that he – although he has many true beliefs – is wrong on one, crucial, point. A third alternative, Origen suggests, would be that the devil, by placing himself in opposition to Christ, who has presented himself as truth personified (John 14:6), has distanced himself from all semblance of truth. In any case, Origen clarifies, the statement should not be read as indicating a particular kind of "devilish" nature:

Therefore, we understand "he does not stand in the truth" (Joh 8:44b) neither as indicating such a nature, nor presenting the impossibility of him standing in the truth. On this Heracleon, however, says (φησι τό / 47.1), "For his nature is not of the truth, but of the opposite of the truth, of falsehood and ignorance (ἐκ πλάνης καὶ ἀγνοίας)." "For this reason," he says (φησὶν / 47.2), "he can neither stand in truth nor have truth in him, since he has un-

⁶³ Pace Thomassen, "Heracleon," 190–92, who contends that Heracleon not only applies "the Valentinian theory of the three human kinds" to the royal official, but also participates in "inner-Valentinian debate" by arguing that one of the three natures, the material, is acquired not by birth, but by behavior. Cf. Thomassen, "Saved by Nature?," 137. Thomassen's hypothesis of partial acceptance, partial rejection, is unnecessarily complex in view of the simpler explanation that Origen reads the theory of three different natures into Heracleon's argument.

⁶⁴ John 8:44b: ἐκεῖνος ἀνθρωποκτόνος ἦν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐκ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ.

truth as a characteristic of his own nature, and he by nature cannot ever speak the truth.” And he [Heracleon] says that (λέγει δ’ ὅτι / 47.3) not only is he [the devil] himself a liar, but also his father – understanding “his father” as his nature in an idiosyncratic manner, since it consists of falsehood and untruthfulness. But all this protects the devil from all blame, accusation, and condemnation. For no one would reasonably blame, accuse, or condemn someone without capacity for the better. According to Heracleon (κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα / 47.4), the devil is therefore unfortunate rather than blameworthy. What has to be realized here is that just like the devil is not standing in the truth, because truth is not in him, so also those whose father is the devil are not standing in the truth, because truth is not in them. All who are still performing sins are such, even if they claim to belong to Christ, for everyone who commits sin is a child of the devil.⁶⁵

In this passage, Origen attributes four statements to Heracleon. Blanc presents only the first of these references as a quotation, leaving the other three in plain text. The first three are presented as quotations by Preuschen, Völker, and Foerster. The fourth reference is left in plain text by Preuschen, and left out by Völker and Foerster. Heine puts the former two within quotation marks and merely italicizes the latter two. Pettipiece italicizes the three first ones, but leaves the fourth one in plain text. Pagels quotes the words ἐκ πλάνης καὶ ἀγνοίας (“falsehood and ignorance”) stating that Heracleon here describes the “demonic” nature of the “hylics.” Wuchterpfennig uses Reference 47.1 as an example of a quotation, and treats 47.1–3 as a single quotation taken directly from Heracleon.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.28/252–55 (SC 290, 280.33–282.54; Brooke’s fragment 47): Ἡμεῖς μὲν οὖν τοῦ “Ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐχ ἔστηκεν” ἀκούομεν οὐχ ὡς φύσιν τοιαύτην ἐμφαίνοντος, οὐδὲ τὸ ἀδύνατον περὶ τοῦ ἐστηκέναι αὐτὸν ἐν ἀληθείᾳ παριστάντος· ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων εἰς ταῦτά φησι τό· (47.1) Οὐ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἡ φύσις ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, ἐκ πλάνης καὶ ἀγνοίας. Διό, φησὶν, (47.2) οὔτε στήναι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ οὔτε σχεῖν ἐν αὐτῇ ἀλήθειαν δύναται, ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ φύσεως ἴδιον ἔχων τὸ ψεῦδος, φυσικῶς μὴ δυνάμενός ποτε ἀλήθειαν εἰπεῖν· λέγει δ’ ὅτι (47.3) οὐ μόνος αὐτὸς ψεύστης ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ, ἰδίως “πατήρ αὐτοῦ” ἐκαμβάνων τὴν φύσιν αὐτοῦ, ἐπεὶ περ ἐκ πλάνης καὶ ψεύσματος συνέστη. Ταῦτα δὲ ὅλα ρύεται τὸν διάβολον παντὸς ψόγου καὶ ἐγκλήματος καὶ μέμψεως· οὐδεὶς γὰρ εὐλόγως ἂν ψέξαι ἢ ἐγκαλέσαι ἢ μέμψαιτο τῷ μὴ πεφυκότι πρὸς τὰ κρείττονα. Ἀτυχὴς οὖν μᾶλλον ἢ ψεκτὸς ὁ διάβολος κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα (47.4) ἐστίν. Ἰστέον μέντοι γε ὅτι ὥσπερ ὁ διάβολος ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐχ ἔστηκεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἀλήθεια ἐν αὐτῷ, οὕτως καὶ οἱ ἐκ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ὄντες ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ οὐχ ἔστήκασιν, ὅτι ἀλήθεια οὐκ ἔστιν <ἐν> αὐτοῖς. Πάντες δὲ τοιοῦτοι οἱ ἔτι ποιοῦντες ἁμαρτίας καὶ λέγωνσιν εἶναι Χριστοῦ· “Πᾶς γὰρ ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐκ τοῦ διαβόλου γεγέννηται.”

⁶⁶ SC 290, 281–83; GCS 10, 365; FC 89, 259; Völker, *Quellen*, 84; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 237; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 150; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 104; Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 21, 344.

	47.1 φησι τό	47.2 φησίν	47.3 λέγει δ' ὅτι	47.4 κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα
Blanc	Quotation	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Plain text
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	–
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	–
Heine	Quotation	Quotation	Italics	Italics
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Plain text
Pagels	–	–	Quotation	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	–
Berglund	Quotation	Quotation	Summary	Paraphrase

The first two of these references are made using a single *verbum dicendi* and direct speech, which indicates that Origen is presenting the attributed statements as verbatim quotations from Heracleon. In the first case, the verb is combined with the definite article τό, which he regularly uses to refer to specific words and phrases in already quoted passages in the Gospel of John. Even though this sentence from Heracleon's writing has not been quoted before, the inclusion of the definite article strengthens the impression of a verbatim quotation.⁶⁷ The conjunction διό (“for this reason”), which appears immediately before the second reference, may be included in the second quotation, but the direct causal relation between the two quotations could also be constructed by Origen.

The third reference is made with the formula λέγει δ' ὅτι (“and he says that”). Chapter 3 argued that such a combination of a *verbum dicendi* with ὅτι implies that the attributed statement is presented as a summary. There is nothing in this short statement that implies direct speech. Despite the unanimity in previous scholarship that Reference 47.3 is a quotation, this study therefore concludes that it is a summary. The fourth reference, made with the formula κατὰ τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα (“according to Heracleon”) clearly expresses a logical conclusion made by Origen, based on Heracleon's comments, and it is widely recognized in previous studies that this is not a verbatim quotation. Reference 47.4 is an explanatory paraphrase.

The two quotations indicate that Heracleon viewed the devil as having a particular φύσις (“nature”) connected to deceit and ignorance, which made him unable to speak truthfully. They may be read with an understanding of φύσις similar to that of “those who bring in the natures” – an immutable inherent condition controlling the ultimate destination of individual human beings – but also with a less strict understanding, such as “character” or “temperament,” as suggested above.

⁶⁷ Ekkehard Mühlenberg, “Wieviel Erlösungen kennt der Gnostiker Herakleon?,” ZNW 66.3–4 (1975): 170–93, here 172, calls this quotation “wörtlich.”

In his response, Origen repeats his criticism that, if the behavior of the devil is explained as a consequence of his inherent nature, there is nothing morally wrong with his actions:⁶⁸ If the devil is evil to the core, and lacks any inclination towards the better – in the words of Plato’s allegory of the chariot,⁶⁹ if both of his horses are black – then, Origen argues, the devil is not making any choices that can be characterized as morally wrong, he is simply playing out his nature. Origen also extends the metaphor of lacking inner truth from the devil to all human sinners: all who continue to commit sin share the devil’s perilous state of standing outside of the truth.

D. Passage 48: The Last Judge (John 8:50)

The topic of the last extant passage in which Origen interacts with Heracleon is Jesus’s declaration that “I do not seek my own glory; there is one who is seeking it, and he is the judge” in John 8:50.⁷⁰ Origen argues that Jesus claims that the Father seeks the glory of Christ in every one who has received him, and will judge them based on the extent to which they strive for virtue. He finds the declaration to be in disagreement with John 5:22–23, where the Johannine Jesus asserts that the Father will not judge anyone, but has given all judgment to the Son. This difficulty is resolved, in Origen’s view, by the notion that, since the Son performs his judgment by delegation from the Father, his judgment properly belongs to the Father himself: Jesus will not judge his believers’ success in bringing him glory out of his own accord; he will do so only because the Father has so decided.⁷¹

Heracleon, by contrast, seems to have interpreted the statement as referring not to the Father, but to Moses:

Heracleon, however, does not refer “there is one who is seeking it, and he is the judge” to the Father, since he says (τοιαῦτα λέγων / 48.1): “The one who seeks and the one who judges is the one who gives me justice, the servant appointed for this task, who does not carry the sword in vain (cf. Rom 13:4), the officer of the king. This is Moses, in accordance with what he had proclaimed to them when he said: ‘in whom you have placed your hope’ (cf. John 5:45).” Then he adds that (ἐπιφέρει ὅτι / 48.2) the one who judges and punishes is Moses, that is, the lawgiver himself. After this Heracleon raises an objection to himself, saying (λέγων / 48.3): “Then why does he [Jesus] not say that all judgment is handed over to him [Moses]?” And, believing that he is resolving this objection he says (φησὶν / 48.4): “He speaks well, because the judge judges as a servant who carries out his [Jesus’s] will, as it also appears to be done among humans.” But even in this way he [Heracleon] is unable to demonstrate how he [Jesus] attributes the judgment to someone else, who is inferior to the

⁶⁸ Cf. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/202.

⁶⁹ Cf. Plato, *Phaedr.* 246a–b, 253c–254e, and the discussion of Summary 46.2 above.

⁷⁰ John 8:50: ἐγὼ δὲ οὐ ζητῶ τὴν δόξαν μου· ἔστιν ὁ ζητῶν καὶ κρίνων.

⁷¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.36/322–38/357.

Savior according to what he [Heracleon] believes, to the Maker, as it is written with absolute clarity, “for the father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son” (John 5:22), and, “He has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man” (John 5:27).⁷²

Four statements are attributed to Heracleon in this passage. Blanc puts quotation marks only on the third one, and sets the others in plain text. Preuschen, Völker, Foerster, and Heine present all four as quotations. Pettipiece italicizes all four. Pagels presents the first one as a quotation taken directly from Heracleon, but does not discuss the other three. Wucherpennig presents all four as if he quoted Heracleon directly.⁷³

	48.1 τοιαῦτα λέγων	48.2 ἐπιφέρει ὅτι	48.3 λέγων	48.4 φησὶν
Blanc	Plain text	Plain text	Quotation	Plain text
Preuschen	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Völker	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Foerster	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Heine	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Pettipiece	Italics	Italics	Italics	Italics
Pagels	Quotation	–	–	–
Wucherpennig	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation	Quotation
Berglund	Quotation	Summary	Quotation	Quotation

Three of these four references are made with a single *verbum dicendi*, and the attributed statements appear in direct speech. We may, therefore, conclude that References 48.1, 48.3 and 48.4 are presented as verbatim quotations. The exception, 48.2, is attributed using the verb ἐπιφέρει (“he adds”), accompanied by the complementizer ὅτι (“that”). This verb suggests a gap in the quo-

⁷² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.38/358–62 (SC 290, 230.43–332.60; Brooke’s fragment 48): Ὁ μέντοι γε Ἡρακλέων τὸ “Ἔστιν ὁ ζητῶν καὶ κρίνων” οὐκ ἀναφέρει ἐπὶ τὸν πατέρα, τοιαῦτα λέγων. (48.1) ὁ ζητῶν καὶ κρίνων ἐστὶν ὁ ἐκδικῶν με, ὁ ὑπὲρ τῆς ὁ εἰς τοῦτο τεταγμένος, ὁ μὴ εἰκῇ τὴν μάχαιραν φορῶν, ὁ ἐκδικὸς τοῦ βασιλέως. Μωσῆς δὲ ἐστὶν οὗτος, καθ’ ἃ προεῖρηκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων. “Εἰς ὃν ὑμεῖς ἠλπίζατε.” Εἰτ’ ἐπιφέρει ὅτι (48.2) ὁ κρίνων καὶ κολάζων ἐστὶν Μωσῆς, τουτέστιν αὐτὸς ὁ νομοθέτης. Καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο πρὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐπαπορεῖ ὁ Ἡρακλέων λέγων. (48.3) πῶς οὖν οὐ λέγει τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν παραδεδόσθαι αὐτῷ; Καὶ νομίζων λύειν τὴν ἀνθυποφορὰν ταῦτα φησιν. (48.4) καλῶς λέγει. ὁ γὰρ κριτὴς ὡς ὑπὲρ τῆς τὸ θέλημα τοῦτου ποιῶν κρίνει, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων φαίνεται γινόμενον. Πῶς δὲ ἄλλω τινὶ ἀνατίθῃσι τὴν κρίσιν ὡς ὑποδεεστέρω τοῦ σωτήρος, καθ’ ὃ νομίζει, τῷ δημιουργῷ, οὐδ’ οὕτω ἀποδείξαι δύναται, σαφῶς γεγραμμένου τοῦ “Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ κρίνει οὐδενά, ἀλλὰ τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν δέδωκεν τῷ υἱῷ” καὶ τοῦ “Ἐξουσίαν ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ κρίσιν ποιεῖν, ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστίν.”

⁷³ SC 290, 331–33; GCS 10, 380; FC 89, 279–80; Völker, *Quellen*, 84–85; Foerster, *Gnosis*, 237–38; Pettipiece, “Heracleon,” 152; Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 62; Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 296–98.

tation, and the ὅτι suggests that the mode of attribution may have changed from verbatim quotation to a slightly freer rendering; we may cautiously conclude that Reference 48.2 is presented as a summary.⁷⁴

In his interpretation of John 8:50, Heracleon apparently discusses who Jesus may be referencing as “the one who seeks and judges” – just like Origen does. By contrast to Origen, however, Heracleon concludes that this ultimate judge is not the Father, but Moses, the originator of the Jewish legislation. This identification suggests that Heracleon is interpreting Jesus’s declaration in view of the specification, given in John 8:31, that Jesus, at this occasion, is speaking to a group of Jews who had come to trust him – a context in which Moses as the ultimate judge is quite reasonable.

To provide support for his interpretation, Heracleon refers to two passages from the early Christian literature: First, his phrase ὁ μὴ εἰκῇ τὴν μάχαιραν φορῶν (“who does not carry the sword in vain”) is a reference to Rom 13:4, where Paul uses a similar phrase to refer to the human authorities whose work is not entirely unrelated to the service of God.⁷⁵ The term ἔκδικος (“officer”) is also taken from Rom 13:4, and the word choice τεταγμένος (“appointed”) is likely also influenced by Paul’s plural form τεταγμένοι (“appointed”) in Rom 13:1. Although Paul is clearly speaking of Greco-Roman authorities rather than Jewish ones, he does refer to specific commandments in the Mosaic law in Rom 13:9, so Moses is not entirely irrelevant for this passage. Secondly, the phrase εἰς ὃν ὑμεῖς ἠλπίζατε (“in whom you have placed your hope”) is an allusion to John 5:45, where Jesus explains to another group of Jews, who seem to be rejecting him, that Moses, in whom they have placed their hope, will be the one accusing them before the Father. Heracleon associates the judicial concepts of κατηγορέω (“accuse”) and κρίνω (“judge”) with one another, and concludes that Jesus in John 8:44 is referring to the same idea as in John 5:45.⁷⁶

Like Origen, Heracleon notes the discrepancy between John 8:50 and John 5:22, where Jesus asserts that the Father has assigned all judgment to the Son. If Moses is the one serving as judge, why has Jesus stated that the judgment has been handed over to the Son rather than to Moses? By comparing the situation in Jesus’s metaphor to that in contemporary legal practice, he finds a solution: human judges regularly judge not in their own power, but as servants of a ruler or a republic. Similarly, Jesus may have received judicial power from the Father, but still be delegating the task of judging to Moses.

⁷⁴ Cf. the example discussed on pages 100–101, where Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.15/106, presents two short verbatim quotations from Romans, the latter of which is introduced with ἐπιφέρει (“he adds”) without ὅτι (“that”).

⁷⁵ Heracleon’s use of Rom 13:4 is previously pointed out by Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 101; Massaux, *Influence*, 438.

⁷⁶ Heracleon’s use of John 5:45 is also noted by Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 155.

In his interpretation of John 8:50, Heracleon makes use of the setting of the Johannine scene in John 8:31, the context of similar statements including those in John 5:22 and 5:45, and Pauline parallels such as Rom 13:1–10. This illuminates Heracleon’s methodological way of referring to parallel passages within a corpus of early Christian literature to interpret the Gospel of John. As Origen points out, Heracleon’s reference to John 5:22 is a hypothetical objection from an imagined listener – Origen uses the verb *ἐπαπορέω* (“raise a new doubt”) – and his solution is an answer to such a hypothetical objection, an *anthypophora*.⁷⁷ This identification illustrates that Origen has some competence in rhetorical analysis, and suggests that Heracleon also possesses basic rhetorical competence.

In his response, Origen presupposes that “Moses” in Heracleon’s comment is a metaphor for a Maker (*δημιουργός*) who is inferior to Christ, and points to John 5:22 and 5:27, where judicial power is said to be handed over specifically to the Son. However, since Heracleon is well aware of at least John 5:22, to which he has referred himself, and explained the discrepancy by stating that Moses judges as the servant of Christ, to whom the judicial authority has been given by the Father, Origen’s objections are beside the point. In addition, since Origen has not presented any previous evidence that Moses is a metaphor for the Maker, this identification appears to be something Origen reads into Heracleon’s comments.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Cf. Anderson, *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, 19–20.

⁷⁸ Pace Pagels, *Gnostic Exegesis*, 86–87, who claims that reading various Old Testament figures as metaphors for the Maker is a defining feature of Heracleon’s exegesis: “It is essential to recall that throughout his exegesis Heracleon interprets the figures of Abraham, Moses, and Jacob metaphorically. Each of these figures serves as a variant metaphor for one referent – the demiurge. Which metaphor is used depends on which aspect of the demiurge’s activity is being stressed in each case. When he appears as lawgiver and judge, he is represented as Moses (CJ 20.38); when he appears as progenitor of psychic mankind, as the ruler (CJ 13.60) and as the father Abraham (CJ 20.20); when he appears as shepherd, as Jacob (CJ 13.10).”

Concluding Discussion

This monograph has addressed two prevalent problems in previous research on Origen's references to Heracleon. First, scholars have habitually taken every view and statement attributed to Heracleon as the equivalence of a verbatim quotation, with no consideration for how Origen may have adapted his presentation of his predecessor's interpretations to suit his own purposes. Secondly, Heracleon has regularly been presupposed to be a "Valentinian" whose beliefs conform to the descriptions in heresiological literature such as Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*. He has been presumed to believe in an eternal Fullness (πλήρωμα) populated by thirty divine eons (αἰῶνες), in an ignorant Maker (δημιουργός) who has created the material world in opposition to the higher divinities, and in a soteriology where the eternal fate of human beings is determined by an inherent nature that is either earthly (χοϊκός), animated (ψυχικός), or spiritual (πνευματικός).

A. The Tasks of This Investigation

In response to these two problems, this study has used variations in Origen's attribution formulas to evaluate, in every particular case, whether he is presenting a verbatim quotation or a more adapted rendering of Heracleon's views. The more dependable references have been used in an attempt to reconstruct Heracleon's reasoning within a framework given not by heresiological allegations, but by his own exegetical methodology and by the early Christian writings to which he himself refers. Thirdly, the views and concerns exhibited in Heracleon's exegesis have been compared to the views used by Origen to define two categories of exegetical opponents: the heterodox, who attribute the Old Testament to an ignorant and inferior creator god, and "those who bring in the natures," who claim that the eternal fate of human beings is determined by their inherent nature as being either "spiritual," "animated," or "earthly."

The introduction specified the material for this investigation: the forty-eight passages in Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John* in which Origen refers to Heracleon. This chapter also discussed the problematic categories of "Gnostics" and "Valentinians," which are based on descriptions in heresiolog-

ical literature, and therefore may distort rather than aid our understanding of the early Christian literature it is used to describe. The second chapter described a perspective on Heracleon that is independent of how we understand his theological views: that of ancient literary criticism, a methodology used to produce commentaries to the classical Greek literature before Heracleon's time, which he has been found to use in his Johannine exegesis.

Chapter 3 developed the method of quotation analysis used in the subsequent chapters. After establishing that ancient authors regularly adapt what they quote to better fit the style and argumentative needs of the passage in which the quotation is inserted, the chapter reported on results from previous studies on the quotation practices of authors such as Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Caesarea. An analysis of the various ways in which Origen introduces references to previous, independently preserved, writings demonstrated that certain of the variations in Origen's attribution formulas correlate to a variance between verbatim quotations and more adapted renderings. This variance was conceptualized into four specific categories of references:

1. *Verbatim quotations* – references where the attributed statements are presented as transmitting Heracleon's actual words, with only minimal adaptations such as spelling and a dropped or added δέ ("but" or "and"), γάρ ("for") or διό ("for this reason").
2. *Summaries or non-interpretive rephrasings* – references presented as transmitting Heracleon's actual point, but not necessarily his words, with adaptations aimed at brevity, clarity, and possibly the choice of key terms that fit with the new context.
3. *Explanatory paraphrases* – references presented as revealing the argument or principle behind Heracleon's interpretation, with more radical adaptations aimed at reinterpreting his words in line with contemporary "Valentinian" thought.
4. *Mere assertions* – references where Heracleon's views are presented without any stated basis in his writings.

Based on a combination of linguistic theory and observations of Origen's quotation practices, the following connections between attribution formulas and modes of attribution in Origen's usage were established:

- (a) Statements attributed to Heracleon with a *verbum dicendi* and presented in direct speech (*oratio recta*) are presented as verbatim quotations, whether or not this is made explicit by use of a phrase such as αὐταῖς λέξεσιν ("with the same words").

- (b) Statements attributed with a *verbum dicendi* but presented in indirect speech (*oratio obliqua*) – whether by use of an infinitive construction or a complementizer¹ such as ὅτι – are presented as summaries.
- (c) Statements attributed with a verb that refers to Heracleon's thoughts rather than his words, such as οἶμαι or νομίζω (“think” or “believe”), or in other ways indicate that Origen's presentation is separated from Heracleon's words by a process of interpretation, are presented as explanatory paraphrases.
- (d) Statements attributed to Heracleon where neither the attribution formula nor the context provides a connection to Heracleon's words are presented as mere assertions.

In chapters 4 to 10, this methodology has been applied to each of Origen's references to Heracleon, in order to identify whether the attribution is presented as a verbatim quotation, a summary, an explanatory paraphrase, or a mere assertion. Less clear cases have been compared to clearer ones in order to categorize every reference in one of the four categories.

In a second step of the analysis, Heracleon's reasoning has been reconstructed without presuming that his views conformed to those described in heresiological sources. These reconstructions have been based primarily on verbatim quotations, and secondarily on summaries. Explanatory paraphrases have been brought into the analyses in some cases where they add relevant information not present in the more trustworthy material, or where the paraphrases fit well into the picture given by the quotations and summaries. The reconstructions have demonstrated that Heracleon regularly discusses historical, narrative, and metaphorical interpretations of the Fourth Gospel entirely within a frame of reference given by the Gospel of John, another gospel tradition that is similar to the Gospel of Matthew, and a collection of Pauline epistles – that is, in the perspective of a corpus of New Testament literature. For the most part, heterodox views are introduced only in Origen's interpretation of and response to Heracleon's comments.

The present study makes two considerable omissions. First, it only takes Origen's references to Heracleon into account, and ignores references made by Clement, Irenaeus, Tertullian, the author of the *Elenchos*, Theodoretus, and Photius. Although the vast majority of the extant material on Heracleon is located in Origen's *Commentary*, at least the two references in Clement merit further research. Secondly, this study neglects to make any substantial comparisons of Heracleon's interpretations to the literature usually considered “Valentinian,” such as the Gospel of Truth, the Tripartite Tractate, the

¹ As specified on page 97, a complementizer is a function word or morpheme that combines with a clause or verbal phrase to form a subordinate clause.

Gospel of Philip, the Interpretation of Knowledge, A Valentinian Exposition, or Clement's *Excerpts from Theodotus*. This omission removes a body of valuable comparative material from consideration, but it also serves to allow other comparative material – early Christian writings to which Heracleon himself refers – to play out their full potential. By neglecting, at least for the time being, how “Valentinian” Heracleon is, we have been able to fully recognize how Matthean and Pauline Heracleon's exegesis of the Fourth Gospel is. Future comparisons of Heracleon and “Valentinian” literature should not be based on the assumption of a shared heterodox theology similar to the one described by Irenaeus, but remain open to reevaluations of the material on both sides of the comparison.

In the three following sections, the results of this investigation will be summarized and discussed in regard to the three aims of this study: Origen's presentation of Heracleon's work, the form and content of Heracleon's writing, and Heracleon's views in relation to the heterodox and “those who bring in the natures.” A fourth section will discuss implications for future scholarship on the early Christian movement. All conclusions will be made with reservation for the limitations of this study: Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* is only fragmentarily preserved, we are entirely dependent on the transmission of his adversaries, only the references by Origen are considered, and no substantial comparisons to “Valentinian” literature have been made.

B. Origen's Presentation of Heracleon's Work

In total, this study has identified more than fifty verbatim quotations from Heracleon in Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, a little over seventy summaries of his interpretations, just under sixty explanatory paraphrases, and five mere assertions. Even though many of the statements he attributes to Heracleon are frustratingly short, in aggregate the almost two hundred references comprise ample material to evaluate how Origen chose to present the exegetical work of his literary-critical predecessor.

I. A Wide Variety of Material

The most dependable of Origen's references to Heracleon are what we have identified as verbatim quotations. For ease of reference, all quotations are presented in tabular form in an appendix to this monograph. This material includes quotations of a single word, such as Quotation 9.1: Βηθανία (“in Bethany”).² It also includes quotations of sentence fragments, such as Quota-

² Heracleon, Quotation 9.1 *apud* Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.40/204.

tion 17.2: κοσμική γὰρ ἦν (“...for it was of this world”).³ There are quotations of short but complete sentences, such as Quotation 45.1: πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου ἦσαν (“Those to which this word was addressed were of the essence of the devil.”). And there are also quotations of complex sentences that appear to reflect Heracleon's complete point, such as Quotation 12.1:

This is the great festival. It symbolized the passion of the Savior, when the lamb was not only slaughtered, but also offered recreation by being eaten: when it was sacrificed, it signified the Savior's passion in this world; when it was eaten, it signified the recreation at the wedding banquet.⁴

Quotations are most often presented in conjunction with summaries, whereby Origen either substantiates a summary by way of a quotation, or varies his presentation by alternating between summaries and quotations. Some quotations are repeated, in whole or in part, within Origen's response, which helps to clarify where they begin and end. At other times, most clearly in Passage 35, Origen presents a series of verbatim quotations from Heracleon with short responses.⁵ The ample presence of material presented as verbatim quotations demonstrates not only that Origen had access to Heracleon's words in writing, but also that he studied and considered what Heracleon had to say on the Gospel of John, and that he found it worthwhile to transmit some of Heracleon's *ipsissima verba* to his own readers. This practice suggests that he saw value in Heracleon's exegetical work, and ensures that Origen's view on Heracleon is not exclusively based on prejudice.

Summaries, or non-interpretive rephrasings, comprise the largest of the four categories of references. The summaries vary in length and complexity. Some of them appear to summarize longer passages in Heracleon's writing,⁶ while others may be light rephrasings of his prose.⁷ Since ancient authors sometimes switch rather abruptly from indirect to direct speech within a given speech report, some verbatim quotations may be hidden among the summaries, presented as they are in a form that is indistinguishable from that of a summary.⁸ For instance, the complementizer ὅτι (“that”), which is regularly used by Origen to introduce summaries, may also be used to introduce verbatim quotations. The summaries do not generally repeat what is also

³ Heracleon, Quotation 17.2 *apud* Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/57.

⁴ Heracleon, Quotation 12.1 *apud* Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.19/117 (SC 157, 452.40–44): Αὕτη ἡ μεγάλη ἑορτή· τοῦ γὰρ πάθους τοῦ σωτῆρος τύπος ἦν, ὅτε οὐ μόνον ἀνηρείτο τὸ πρόβατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνάπαυσιν παρείχεν ἐσθιόμενον, καὶ θυόμενον <μέν> τὸ πάθος τοῦ σωτῆρος τὸ ἐν κόσμῳ ἐσήμαινεν, ἐσθιόμενον δὲ τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν τὴν ἐν γάμῳ.

⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.49/322–24.

⁶ Cf. Summary 15.2 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.37/249.

⁷ Cf. Summary 8.3 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/197.

⁸ One possible example is Summary 1.8 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/103.

given in verbatim quotations, but tend to give additional information about Heracleon's comments. The fact that summaries, which are more adapted than verbatim quotations but less than explanatory paraphrases, are the most common category implies that Origen most often aims neither to transmit Heracleon's *ipsissima verba* nor to interpret his underlying ideas, but to present his interpretations in a way that is understandable and relatable for his readers.

The explanatory paraphrases are slightly more numerous than the verbatim quotations. The recurrent observation that many paraphrases are based on material which is also presented in the form of summaries and quotations demonstrates that the function of the paraphrases is to go beyond the surface of Heracleon's presentation in order to express what Origen infers to be the ideas behind his interpretations.⁹ In other cases, paraphrases appear to be independent from summaries and quotations, and may indeed comprise accurate information about Heracleon's comments that is not available in other forms – but such information can only be used with caution.¹⁰ In addition, some paraphrases are presented as hypothetical examples of what Heracleon (or his followers) may have to say on a given issue – examples of where their way of reasoning might lead.¹¹ Such cases do not reflect actual scriptural interpretations by Heracleon, but do illustrate how Origen conceptualizes his theology. The presence of explanatory paraphrases in Origen's presentations indicates that Heracleon's comments did not always express heterodox theology clearly enough to be refuted based solely on what they stated; For his audience to recognize the underlying ideas, Origen had to express them himself.

The mere assertions are few in number, and easily recognizable as heresiological allegations. Origen's presentation of Heracleon as an acquaintance of Valentinus in Assertion 1.1, for instance, conforms to the heresiological pattern of presenting a genealogical chain of heterodox teachers, presumably sharing the same false ideas:

...Heracleon, who is said to be an acquaintance of Valentinus....¹²

⁹ Cf. for instance Paraphrases 6.1 and 6.3, both in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.23/126, which do not add any information not also given in Quotation 4.1 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.15/92 and Quotation 6.2 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.23/126.

¹⁰ For example, the connection between reaping and resting in Paraphrase 34.3 (in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.46/299) is not given elsewhere.

¹¹ Cf. Paraphrase 3.2 on the speaker of John 1:16–17 (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.3/14) and Paraphrase 33.1 on the meaning of the harvest in John 4:35–38 (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.44/294).

¹² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/100 (SC 120 bis, 274.71–72): ...τὸν Οὐαλεντίνου λεγόμενον εἶναι γινώριμον Ἡρακλέωνα....

In Assertion 5.13, Origen accuses Heracleon of despising the whole of the Old Testament when he fails to realize that several Jewish prophets, not only John the Baptist, have been the subjects of prophecy:

Truly, he has ventured to say this as one who despises what is called the Old Testament, and has not observed that Elijah himself has also been the subject of prophecy.¹³

In Assertion 8.8, Origen claims that Heracleon's interpretation of John 1:27 is exceedingly impious, since it is based on his belief that the Maker (δημιουργός) of the physical world is inferior to Christ:

...for he believes that the Maker of the world, who is inferior to the Christ, admits this in these words.¹⁴

In Assertion 15.3, Origen connects Heracleon's identification of the "third day" as ἡ πνευματικὴ ἡμέρα ("the spiritual day") to a heterodox theory regarding the three human natures:

...the spiritual day, in which they think the resurrection of the assembly is signified. A logical consequence of this would be to say that the first [day] is the earthly day, and the second the animated one, since the resurrection of the assembly did not occur on these days.¹⁵

Finally, in Assertion 33.2, Origen points to the three human natures as the basis for his constructed example of what Heracleon ἐρεῖ γε ("will certainly say") about the harvest in John 4:35–38:

According to Heracleon, [this is] because of their constitution and their nature....¹⁶

In these assertions, Origen is stating something about Heracleon's beliefs that he has not actually found in his writing, but which explains why his interpretations must be rejected even when he does not state anything that is perceptibly false or sacrilegious: Origen is certain that his exegesis is based on false, heterodox teachings.

¹³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/117 (SC 157, 216.26–28): Ἀληθῶς δ' ὥς καταφρονῶν τῆς παλαιᾶς χρηματιζούσης διαθήκης καὶ μὴ τηρήσας καὶ αὐτὸν Ἡλίαν προφητευόμενον τοῦτ' ἀπετόλμησεν εἰπεῖν.

¹⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/200 (SC 157, 278.40–42): Οἶεται γὰρ τὸν δημιουργὸν τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάττωνα ὄντα τοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦτο ὁμολογεῖν διὰ τούτων τῶν λέξεων....

¹⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.37/249–50 (SC 157, 530.57–61): ...τὴν πνευματικὴν ἡμέραν, ἐν ἣ ὁῖονται δηλοῦσθαι τὴν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀνάστασιν. Τούτῳ δὲ ἀκόλουθόν ἐστιν πρῶτην λέγειν εἶναι τὴν χοϊκὴν ἡμέραν καὶ τὴν δευτέραν τὴν ψυχικὴν, οὐ γεγεννημένης τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἐν αὐταῖς.

¹⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.44/294 (SC 222, 190.8–9): Κατὰ μὲν τὸν Ἡρακλέωνα διὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν φύσιν....

II. A Clear Heresiological Bias

It must be noted that the heterodox theological positions to which Origen connects Heracleon tend to appear in the form of assertions and explanatory paraphrases rather than in summaries and quotations. We have already noted how Origen's assertions, although few in number, manage to state that Heracleon despises the Old Testament, believes in an inferior Maker of the material world, and subscribes to the theory of the three human natures. Many of the paraphrases are based on the same assumptions. Paraphrase 1.4 presumes that Heracleon's exclusion of what is beyond the world from the πάντα ("all things") that came into being through the Word (John 1:3) is made to accommodate for the thirty divine αἰῶνες ("eons") in the πλήρωμα ("Fullness").¹⁷ Paraphrase 13.3 presupposes that he is viewing different parts of the Jerusalem temple as symbols of οἱ πνευματικοί ("the spiritual ones") and οἱ ψυχικοί ("the animated ones").¹⁸ Paraphrases 17.7, 24.3, 24.5, and 37.2 all assume that Heracleon views the Samaritan woman, whom Jesus encounters at Jacob's well, as a representative of οἱ πνευματικοί, while her Samaritan compatriots are symbols of οἱ ψυχικοί.¹⁹ And the paraphrases in Passage 40 postulate that Heracleon interprets the royal official as a metaphor for the Maker, and his son as a representative of οἱ ψυχικοί, who are especially associated with this figure.²⁰ Whenever we encounter these views in relation to Heracleon, we should be aware of the possibility that Origen is presupposing them to be behind Heracleon's comments – based on his expectations of what a disciple of Valentinus ought to believe – rather than finding them expressed there.

In addition, when Origen criticizes Heracleon for interpreting the Fourth Gospel in the wrong way, he most often points not to his erroneous dogmatic presuppositions, but to his flawed argumentation and insufficient presentation of evidence. In a number of instances, Origen points out flaws in Heracleon's logic,²¹ explains how his point is disproved by certain Scriptural passages,²² or that he simply lacks proof,²³ and characterizes his interpretations as forced,²⁴ unsupported,²⁵ and invented at random.²⁶ This phenomenon suggests that while Heracleon's methodology was easily accessible through his written comments, and thereby readily available to criticize, the heterodox views that

¹⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/100.

¹⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.33/211.

¹⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/63, 13.25/149, 13.51/341.

²⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/416–61/433.

²¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.31/188, 20.8/54, 20.23/198–200, 20.28/254.

²² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/201–2, 20.38/362.

²³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/113, 6.21/115, 6.60/306, 13.10/66, 13.19/116, 13.31/192, 13.32/202, 13.49/324.

²⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/100–101, 2.21/137, 13.11/68, 13.17/102, 13.38/248, 13.46/300.

²⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/113.

²⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.15/93

Origen expected to find in Heracleon's interpretations were difficult to track down in his writing to cite and point out.

As concluded in two previous studies, Origen's stance toward Heracleon vacillates from general renunciation and emphatic criticism, via considered disagreement and hypothetical approval, all the way to agreement and praise.²⁷ His presentation of material from Heracleon's writing is visibly impacted by this variance. Origen is typically more interested in explaining exactly what is wrong with Heracleon's interpretation – or, in the case of hypothetical approval, what could be so wrong that it necessitates rejection just in case – than with understanding the point Heracleon is trying to make and evaluating its potential value. In cases where Origen finds heterodox theology in Heracleon's comments, it is, therefore, far from certain that he gets Heracleon's original point across.

Although it may be difficult to determine why, exactly, Origen connected Heracleon's comments to heterodox ideas that were not expressed in his writing, it is straightforward to suggest two possible reasons: Perhaps Origen first encountered Heracleon's name through the mediation of heresiological descriptions much like Irenaeus's, and simply kept his initial impression of Heracleon's theology as his main interpretive key to his writing. Perchance it was mainly "those who bring in the natures" who read and appreciated Heracleon's exegesis in Origen's time, which would explain why it never occurred to Origen that Heracleon could have any other opinions than his later readers.²⁸

If we want to believe Origen's assertions that Heracleon despises the Old Testament, believes that the physical world is created by an ignorant Maker in opposition to the higher gods, and thinks that the eternal fate of individual humans is determined by their inherent natures, we have to find another explanation for why Origen does not demonstrate these beliefs in the form of verbatim quotations or summaries. If there were passages where Heracleon clearly expressed these heterodox views, why did Origen choose not to quote them? If no such passages were available to him, Heracleon's heterodox views may have been simply presumed by Origen.

²⁷ Berglund, "Vacillating Stances"; Dunderberg, "Recongnizing the Valentinians," 49–52. See the summary of these studies on pages 73–76 above.

²⁸ Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 338–39; Attridge, "Heracleon and John," 68–69, both suggest that Origen derives his understanding of Heracleon's theology from heresiological literature such as Irenaeus's *Against Heresies*.

C. The Form and Content of Heracleon's Writing

Heracleon is generally considered to have written an exegetical commentary to the Gospel of John, to which Origen is referring in Passages 1–48.²⁹ Pier Franco Beatrice has argued that the prominence of references to the Fourth Gospel is due only to the selection made by Origen, and that Heracleon rather seems to be writing a larger “theological treatise” organized not based on the order of passages in the Gospel of John, but on theological themes.³⁰ Although this alternative is within the realm of possibility, the fragmentary nature of the evidence makes it even harder to defend than the more straightforward alternative of a writing organized by Johannine passage. It is easy to imagine that the non-extant portions of Origen's commentary included additional references to Heracleon and responses to his interpretations of other parts of the Fourth Gospel.

I. A Continuous Commentary on the Gospel of John

It is clear that Heracleon is referring to and commenting on the Gospel of John. The first reference to Heracleon's writing that we have identified as a quotation, Quotation 4.1,³¹ clearly summarizes the information given in John 1:19–21,³² and Quotations 5.6 and 6.2 refer to the same passage.³³ Quotation 8.1, which is repeated in 8.2, and Quotation 8.5 are explicitly identified as interpretations of John 1:26–27.³⁴ Similarly, Quotation 10.3 is a comment to John 1:29, and Origen identifies it as such.³⁵ Heracleon's comment to the “cleansing” of the temple in Quotation 13.10 clearly refers to the whip made of cords (John 2:15), which is not mentioned in the Synoptics.³⁶ His remarks that Jesus was not asking the Samaritan woman to call a man of this world because her husband was in the eternity, in Quotations 18.3 and 18.6,³⁷ seem indeed to be comments on John 4:16–18, just like Origen sets them out to be. His obser-

²⁹ de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 75–80; Poffet, *Méthode*, 3–5, 17–19, 275–76; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 32–42, 372–81; Pettipiece, “The Nature of ‘True Worship,’” 379–80; Dunderberg, *Beyond Gnosticism*, 7; Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 151–52; Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 173–77; Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 524–28.

³⁰ Beatrice, “Greek Philosophy and Gnostic Soteriology,” 191–97; cf. Beatrice, “Apostolic Writings,” 799.

³¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.15/92.

³² Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 196, identifies this reference as a summary of John quoted verbatim by Origen.

³³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/112, 6.23/126.

³⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/194–99.

³⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.60/307.

³⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.33/215.

³⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.11/67, 13.11/70.

vation that only a prophet can know everything, in Quotation 19.2,³⁸ and his analysis of the Samaritan woman, in Quotations 19.4 and 19.5,³⁹ fit perfectly with the turn of the conversation in John 4:19–20. Similarly, his reflection on what it means that the woman left her water jar with Jesus when she went to announce his arrival to the townspeople, in Quotation 27.2,⁴⁰ would be hard to make without referencing John 4:28. Furthermore, his comments on the harvest and the reaper in Quotations 32.3, 34.2, 35.1–2, and 36.1–2 are well connected to Jesus's simile in John 4:35–38,⁴¹ and Quotation 38.1 undoubtedly points to a single preposition in John 4:40.⁴² Finally, Quotation 42.2 is plainly an interpretation of John 8:21–22,⁴³ Quotations 44.2 and 47.1–2 of John 8:43–44,⁴⁴ and Quotation 48.1 of John 8:50.⁴⁵ That Heracleon is commenting on the Fourth Gospel is abundantly clear even without considering Origen's summaries and explanatory paraphrases.

The fact that Origen explicitly remarks that Heracleon has said nothing about a particular Johannine sentence, John 4:32 in Passage 29 and 8:20a in Passage 41,⁴⁶ indicates that this situation was in some way noteworthy and that Heracleon presented systematic comments to continuous sequences within the Fourth Gospel, rather than *ad hoc* comments to specific passages.⁴⁷ The idea that Heracleon commented on continuous sequences is also supported by Origen's way of connecting Heracleon's comments to three longer sequences of Johannine verses, namely John 1:16–29 in Passages 3–10, John 4:13–42 in Passages 17–39, and John 4:46–53 in Passage 40.⁴⁸ By correlating the Johannine passages to which Heracleon refers to the gospel text covered by Origen in the volume in which his references to Heracleon appear, we can identify several minor and major gaps in Heracleon's coverage of the Gospel of John.⁴⁹

³⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.15/91.

³⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.15/92.

⁴⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.31/187.

⁴¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.41/271, 13.46/299, 13.49/322–24, 13.50/336–37.

⁴² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.52/349.

⁴³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.19/125.

⁴⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.20/168, 20.28/252–53.

⁴⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.38/358.

⁴⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.34/225 (SC 222, 152.49–50): Οὐδὲν δὲ εἰς τὴν λέξιν εἶπεν ὁ Ἡρακλέων. Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 19.14/89 (SC 290, 100.36–37): Ὁ μέντοι γε Ἡρακλέων ἐκθέμενος τὴν περὶ τοῦ γαζοφυλακίου λέξιν οὐδὲν εἶπεν εἰς αὐτήν.

⁴⁷ On this point I agree with Bastit, "Forme et méthode," 154–55.

⁴⁸ Pace Beatrice, "Greek Philosophy and Gnostic Soteriology," 194., who maintains that "the long sequential exegesis of John 4" gives what "is clearly a distorted impression!" It is altogether true that Origen's selection may give a distorted view of Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*, but it is far from clear that long sequential exegesis is overrepresented.

⁴⁹ Cf. Wucherpennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 13–14; Thomassen, "Heracleon," 175–77.

In the table below, the two columns furthest to the left are the volumes of Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, and the parts of the Gospel of John that are covered in each volume. The middle two columns enumerate the passages in which Origen interacts with Heracleon's interpretations, and the Johannine passages to which his interpretations refer. In the two columns to the right, minor and major gaps in Heracleon's coverage of the Fourth Gospel are identified. Gaps of at most a few verses are, in this context, considered minor.

Origen	John	Heracleon	John	Minor gap	Major gap
Book 1	1:1a			1:1–2	
Book 2	1:1b–7	Passages 1–2	1:3–4	1:5–7	1:8–15
Book 6	1:16–29	Passages 3–10	1:16–29		1:30–2:11
Book 10	2:12–25	Passages 11–16	2:12–20	2:21–25	3:1–4:12
Book 13	4:13–54	Passages 17–39	4:13–42	4:32	
		Passage 40	4:46–53	4:43–45	5:1–8:19
Book 19	8:19–25	Passages 41–42	8:21–22	8:20a, 23–24	8:25–36
Book 20	8:37–53	Passages 43–47	8:43–44	8:37–42, 45–49	
		Passage 48	8:50	8:51–53	8:54–21:25
Book 28	11:39–57				
Book 32	13:2–33				

The major gaps in Heracleon's comments are of no significance. Most of them are easily explained by the fact that our main source is extant only in nine out of the original thirty-two books, and a gap in Origen's commentary leads to an unavoidable gap in Heracleon's comments.⁵⁰ Origen's silence on Heracleon in books 28 and 32 may be explained by any number of reasons: Heracleon may never have commented beyond chapter 8, just as Origen himself never commented beyond John 13:33, Origen may have lacked access to the latter parts of Heracleon's commentary, or the interest in Heracleon's interpretation may have faded by the time Origen reached John 11. No conclusion regarding Heracleon's interest for these parts of the Fourth Gospel may be drawn from such a lack of evidence.

The minor gaps are more intriguing. To the list of John 4:32 and 8:20a, which Origen helpfully points out, may be added John 1:1–2, 1:5–7, 2:21–25, 4:43–45, 8:37–42, 8:45–49, and 8:51–53 – all of which Origen discusses without referring to any interpretations by Heracleon. Most of these cases, however, consist of one or a few verses adjacent to passages that Heracleon does inter-

⁵⁰ Origen's commentary remains silent on John 1:8–15 (these verses were covered in the lost books 3–5), on 1:30–2:11 (treated in books 7–9), on 3:1–4:12 (books 11–12), on 5:1–8:18, (books 14–18 and the lost beginning of book 19), on 8:26–36 (the lost end of book 19), on 8:54–11:38, (books 21–27), on 12:1–13:1 (books 29–31), and on 13:34–21:25, since Origen seems never to have completed his commentary.

pret. A simple explanation of this phenomenon is, therefore, that Heracleon treats the Johannine text in larger chunks than Origen does. When Origen notes that Heracleon says nothing about John 4:32 and 8:20a, it may simply mean that Heracleon comments on longer passages – say, 4:31–38 and 8:12–20 – and sometimes leaves a particular verse without comment. Considering that Origen himself, in the first five books of the commentary, only covers the first fifteen verses of the Fourth Gospel, it is not hard to imagine a previous commentary to be shorter. For a modern commentator it may be unimaginable to write a commentary on the Gospel of John without offering any comment on the first two verses of the prologue, but Heracleon may have found the third verse to be the first to prompt his response, or his students may have neglected to take notes from his introductory lecture on John.⁵¹ The somewhat larger gap of 2:21–25 may be explained in part by Origen's extended interaction with "those who are slaves of the letter" (τοὺς τῇ λέξει δουλεύοντας) in his comments on 2:21–22. After his criticism of those who refrain from metaphorical interpretations, Origen may have considered it redundant to refute another type of flawed interpretation of the same Johannine passage. The remaining gap of 2:23–25 appears at the very end of the tenth book of Origen's commentary. Origen may have found Heracleon's comments on these verses to be of minor interest, or refrained from interacting with them out of a concern to fit the tenth book on a single papyrus roll.

Although it is more difficult to explain why there are so few references to Heracleon in Book 20 – where we learn of Heracleon's comments on John 8:43–44, 50, but nothing about 8:37–42, 8:45–49, or 8:51–53 – there is no need to deduce that Heracleon is not writing a systematic commentary. Heracleon may not have had a lot to say about the second half of John 8, or Origen may have lost most of his interest in responding to him by this time – which would be consistent with his apparent disinterest in Books 28 and 32.⁵²

In this context, we should also note the apparent lack of a traditional introduction to Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*, addressing the standard introductory questions of (1) the aim of the Fourth Gospel, (2) its utility, (3) its place in an order of lecture, (4) the reason for its title, (5) its authenticity, and (6) the disposition of the work as a whole.⁵³ As pointed out by Agnès Bastit, the over-

⁵¹ Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 83, concludes that Origen must have agreed with Heracleon's interpretation of John 1:1–2. His argument is overconfident, since we do not know that Heracleon made a comment on these two verses to which Origen had access, and since in other instances where Origen agrees with Heracleon, he states this explicitly. See Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/115, 6.23/126, 6.39/197–99, 13.10/59, 13.10/62, 13.16/95, and the discussion in Berglund, "Vacillating Stances," 548–53.

⁵² Bastit, "Forme et méthode," 152, argues that Origen's selection is polemically based, which may make him less interested in mentioning points in Heracleon's exegesis that he already has refuted once.

⁵³ Cf. pages 63–64.

all quality of Heracleon's comments would suggest the existence of such an introduction.⁵⁴ Since Origen makes no mention of it, not even to support his assertions regarding the ideas on which Heracleon's exegesis was based, we have to assume either that Heracleon's introduction was never produced, that it was never written down, or that it never reached Origen.

Since Origen repeatedly, and sometimes emphatically, laments Heracleon's lack of extensive argumentation for his points, we may conclude that Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* were considerably shorter than Origen's comments. Origen typically presents long, detailed arguments intended to convince his reader – Heracleon's comments seem to have been brief, stating his conclusions without extensive argumentation. While Origen's commentary reads as a transcription of his actual lectures on John as given to his students, Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* may have been more similar to a collection of notes on John, on which he intended to expand while teaching. It could also have consisted of incomplete transcripts of his lectures, never intended to reach anyone who had not been present at the original teaching event. That such writing styles would be more susceptible to subsequent misunderstandings is easy to imagine.

Heracleon appears, thus, to offer systematic comments on continuous sequences of Johannine material. His comments to various gospel passages are not offered *ad hoc*, but part of a continuous commentary on – at the very least – a large portion of the Gospel of John. Whether Heracleon managed to complete his work into a commentary on the whole Fourth Gospel, and whether he was involved in giving the work its written form, is less certain. If Heracleon's *hypomnēmata* entered distribution not in the form of a finished manuscript by Heracleon's hand, but as a compilation of notes taken by one or more of his students, it may have lacked notes from certain lectures, including the introduction to the subject as well as any lectures on the later chapters of the Gospel of John.

II. Heracleon's Use of Other Early Christian Literature

Heracleon's references to other early Christian literature – including Gospels, Pauline letters, and the Preaching of Peter – has proven to be a key factor in understanding his interpretations of the Fourth Gospel.

Although Heracleon's exegesis has often been claimed to be determined by his "Valentinian" theology, he is not generally considered to be using a corpus of early Christian writings that is significantly different from other second-century Christians. An exception to this rule is Walther von Loewenich who, in 1932, argued that Heracleon appealed to "Valentinian" writings, which for

⁵⁴ Bastit, "Forme et méthode," 154.

him had apostolic and prophetic authority.⁵⁵ A more common view has been that Heracleon's willingness to engage with the supposedly "Gnostic" Gospel of John marks him as belonging to a heterodox sub-group among second-century Christians, but the notion that most prominent early Christian authors were hesitant towards the Fourth Gospel has been thoroughly confuted by Charles E. Hill.⁵⁶ Einar Thomassen summarizes the consensus in current scholarship well when – explicitly dependent on Brooke's index of scriptural references from 1891 – he maintains that Heracleon used the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John, a collection of Paul's letters, the Old Testament book of Isaiah, and the Preaching of Peter.⁵⁷ In broad terms, this assessment will be confirmed in the argument below.

An exceptional insight into which pieces of early Christian literature Heracleon used is given by Quotation 46.6.⁵⁸ There, Heracleon aims to prove that there is a metaphorical sense in which people may be called "children" of fierce animals or abstract concepts. As part of his argument, he presents a short list of examples: "...in accordance with how people are called children of hell, darkness, or lawlessness, or the offspring of snakes or vipers" (καθ' ὃ λέγονται τινες γεέννης τέκνα καὶ σκότους καὶ ἀνομίας, καὶ ὄφρων καὶ ἐχιδνῶν γεννήματα). In order to be convincing, these examples cannot be chosen at random, but have to be taken from a body of literature with which his audience is familiar – such as a collection of early Christian literature.⁵⁹ Although it is difficult to eliminate the possibility that Heracleon used the Acts of Thomas or Clement's *Exhortation to the Greeks*, a small and simple corpus

⁵⁵ Loewenich, *Johannes-Verständnis*, 83: "Her. nimmt sich das Recht zu diesem Zusatz durch Berufung auf Schulschriften, die für ihn apostolische und prophetische Autorität haben." While a thorough investigation of Heracleon's use of "Valentinian" writings is outside of the scope of this study, I have not noticed any explicit appeals to such literature.

⁵⁶ Hill, *The Johannine Corpus in the Early Church*, 465–75; Hill, "The Orthodox Gospel"; cf. Perkins, "Valentinians and the Christian Canon," 378–80.

⁵⁷ Thomassen, "Heracleon," 193–94. Cf. Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 108. Thomassen is confident that Heracleon's Pauline collection included Hebrews, but the datum that only the high priest entered the holy of holies (Paraphrase 13.3) could well have come from sources other than Hebrews 9:7, and the use of Hebrews in Summary 32.2 is uncertain. Moreover, Heracleon's use of Ps 69:10, which is included in Brooke's index, should be taken as a use of the quotation of the psalm in John 2:17.

⁵⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/215.

⁵⁹ Children (τέκνα) of hell (γεέννα) appear in Matt 23:15 and Acts of Thomas 74.5, the latter of which pairs the expression with children of perdition (ἀπωλείας), an example that does not appear in Heracleon's list. Sons (υἱοί) of darkness (σκότος) appear in 1 Thess 5:5 alongside sons of light (φῶς), day (ἡμέρα), and night (νύξ). Sons of lawlessness (ἀνομία) appear in Ps 88:23 LXX, Hermas, *Vis.* 3.6 (14), and Clement, *Prot.* 2.27.3. A person of lawlessness and a son of perdition (ἀπωλεία) is mentioned in 2 Thess 2:3. Offspring (γεννήματα) of snakes and vipers appear in Matt 3:7, Matt 12:34, Matt 23:33, Luke 3:7, and Acts of Philip 130.1.

from which Heracleon would have been able to assemble this list is the combination of the Seven Woes that we know from Matt 23:13–36, and Paul’s two letters to the Thessalonians. The Seven Woes have both υἱὸς γεέννης (“a son of hell”) in Matt 23:15 and ὄφεις (“snakes”) and γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν (“offspring of vipers”) in Matt 23:33,⁶⁰ while 1 Thess 5:5 has sons of darkness (σκότος) and 2 Thess 2:3 speaks of ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς ἀνομίας, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας (“the man of lawlessness, the son of destruction”). The compact nature of this combination makes it probable that this is where Heracleon found these examples.⁶¹

That Heracleon has some knowledge of Genesis, or of traditions stemming from this book, is clear from Quotation 40.20, where he states: “The question is whether some of the angels, those who have descended to the daughters of humans, will be saved.” The tradition of angels or “sons of God” having intercourse with human women is expressed in Gen 6:2–4, but also appears in later literature, such as 1 Enoch 6–8 and Jubilees 7:21–25. Heracleon does not specify a source, but simply presumes the tradition to be known and accepted by his audience.

A clearer case of Old Testament use is Paraphrase 40.21, where Origen claims Heracleon to have referred to both Matt 8:12, on the “sons of the kingdom” who go out into darkness, and to a larger context within the book of Isaiah, including the children who have rejected their father in Isa 1:2, the evil seed of 1:4, and the unproductive vineyard of 5:1–7. All of these passages are applied to the fallen angels of Gen 6:2–4, in the context of interpreting the statement that “he and his entire house believed” in John 4:53. Origen’s presentation of Heracleon’s interpretation of this verse implies that he referred to Old and New Testament material in similar ways in the same context, which suggests that his corpus comprised material from both Testaments.

Gospel material recurs several times in Heracleon’s interpretations.⁶² The analysis of Passage 40 above demonstrated that Heracleon used Matt 8:5–13 to interpret the healing of the son of a royal official in John 4:46–54.⁶³ Paraphrase 33.1 is presented as a hypothetical example, but depicts an explicit reference to Matt 9:37 as something Heracleon “will certainly say” – which

⁶⁰ A background in Matt 23 is previously suggested by Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 99; Massaux, *Influence*, 432–33.

⁶¹ Pace Beatrice, “Apostolic Writings,” 810. Beatrice provides an extensive list of Synoptic passages that he claims to be “clearly echoed in Heracleon’s commentary on John 8.44” – but is clearly overestimating Heracleon’s use of other early Christian literature by enumerating several similar examples of which Heracleon only needed one. I do agree with Massaux, *Influence*, 432–33, who argues that Heracleon is using Matthean material here. Cf. Berglund, “Literary Criticism in Early Christianity,” 39–42.

⁶² Beatrice, “Apostolic Writings,” 808–10, lists many of the Gospel references mentioned below, and Massaux, *Influence*, 426–39, suggests most, if not all, of the Matthean ones.

⁶³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/416–61/433. See the analysis in chapter 9.

would be counterproductive if Heracleon did not regularly refer to Synoptic material.⁶⁴ In Summary 40.6, Origen claims that Heracleon presents Matt 10:28 as proof of the mortality of the human soul.⁶⁵ In Summary 10.1, the notion that John is both a prophet and something more than a prophet seems to build on Jesus's saying in Matt 11:9 or its parallel in Luke 7:26.⁶⁶ Paraphrase 5.11 quotes Luke 7:28 and suggests that Heracleon has used it or its parallel in Matt 11:11 to argue that John is the greatest of all the prophets.⁶⁷ Paraphrase 28.2 is difficult to use because of a lacuna, but it does suggest that Heracleon referred to the parable of the ten bridesmaids, which we know from Matt 25:1–13.⁶⁸ The point that John the Baptist is of the Levite tribe, which is mentioned in Quotation 5.9,⁶⁹ is never mentioned in the Gospels, but may be discerned from the fact that his father was a priest and his mother a descendant from Aaron. Both these points are mentioned in Luke 1:5 as well as in the Gospel of the Ebionites.⁷⁰

Pauline material is also frequently used by Heracleon.⁷¹ The clearest case is the explicit reference to the Pauline expression λογικὴν λατρείαν ("a rational service") of Rom 12:1, which Heracleon is using in Quotation 24.2 to discuss what it means to worship in spirit and truth.⁷² Quotation 48.1 clearly, albeit implicitly, uses Rom 13:4 to reflect on the role of judge referenced by Jesus in John 8:50.⁷³ In Summary 22.7, the distinction between serving the creation and serving the creator alludes to Rom 1:25, which makes the same distinction.⁷⁴ Likewise, the claim in Summary 40.10, that death is the end of the law, is probably dependent on Rom 6:20–23.⁷⁵ Summary 40.8 comprises a quotation from 1 Cor 15:54 that Origen claims that Heracleon has referred to in order to argue that the human soul is perishable and mortal, and needs to be clothed in imperishability and immortality.⁷⁶ The suggested references to the Letter to the Hebrews are less certain, since the information that only the high priest was allowed to enter the holy of holies may have reached Heracleon by

⁶⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.44/294.

⁶⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/417.

⁶⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.60/306.

⁶⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/116.

⁶⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.32/200–202.

⁶⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/115.

⁷⁰ Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.13.6 (GCS 25, 350.10–12): ...ὅς ἐλέγετο εἶναι ἐκ γένους Ἀρὼν τοῦ ἱερέως, παῖς Ζαχαρίου καὶ Ἐλισάβετ.... Cf. Wuchterpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 198.

⁷¹ Beatrice, "Apostolic Writings," 805–8, suggests a number of additional points of contact with Pauline literature, which invariably are less certain than the ones enumerated here.

⁷² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.25/148.

⁷³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.38/358.

⁷⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.19/118.

⁷⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/420.

⁷⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/418.

other means, and since the use of Heb 3:7–4:11 is merely implicit, and based only on a paraphrase.

Lastly, Summary 21.2 explicitly claims that Heracleon has presented multiple quotations from the Preaching of Peter, and conveyed “as a teaching by Peter” that both the Gentile and Jewish worship traditions are inferior to the Christian one.⁷⁷ From a more extensive presentation of the same material by Clement of Alexandria,⁷⁸ we know a bit more about what this writing is teaching in the context quoted by Heracleon: it claims that there is one God, “the unmade who has made everything with his mighty word,”⁷⁹ and that this God should be worshiped neither in the way of the Gentiles nor as the Jews do. We may also note that Clement presents the Preaching of Peter as conveying the teaching of the apostle Peter himself, just as Origen claims Heracleon to have done.

The table below gives an overview of all early Christian texts that are found to be used by Heracleon, whether the reference is implicit, explicit, or even a quotation, which passage of the Fourth Gospel is under consideration, and in which reference, or at least passage, it is located. In implicit cases, parallel texts may be under discussion rather than the ones suggested, and all references, but especially those located in paraphrases, are subject to Origen’s misrepresentation. That Heracleon shows a preference for a Matthean tradition should come as no surprise, since such a preference is exhibited in most early Christian literature, as well as in the numbers of extant early manuscripts.⁸⁰ The many references to material found in the Gospel of Matthew are not enough to prove that the collection of gospel material to which Heracleon has access is identical to the canonical Gospel of Matthew, but the numerous points of contact necessitate, at the very least, that Heracleon’s gospel and the Gospel of Matthew have large overlaps. Since there is only one reference to the Gospel of Luke that cannot be replaced by its Matthean parallel, and since Heracleon may have found the information that John was of the Levite tribe elsewhere, we cannot conclude from Origen’s references that Heracleon knew Luke, only that his knowledge or gospel material was not strictly limited to the canonical Matthew.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.17/104.

⁷⁸ Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 6.5/39.1–41.4.

⁷⁹ The Preaching of Peter *apud* Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 6.5/39.3. Cf. the longer quotation on page 211.

⁸⁰ Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field*, 8.

⁸¹ The question of Heracleon’s use of Luke will have to be revisited in future studies of Clement’s references to Heracleon, since many scholars take the reference to Heracleon in Clement, *Strom.* 4.9/71–73, to be a comment on Luke 12:8, while Massaux, *Influence*, 434, argues that Heracleon is using a Matthean tradition. Cf. Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*, 33, 35; Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*, 11, 280 n. 37; Bastit, “Forme et méthode,” 151; Thomassen, “Heracleon,” 175.

Text	Kind	Passage	Reference
Gen 6:2–4	Implicit	John 4:53	Quotation 40.20
Isa 1:2, 1:4, 5:1–7	Quoted	John 4:53	Paraphrase 40.21
Matt 8:12	Quoted	John 4:53	Paraphrase 40.21
Matt 8:5–13	Implicit	John 4:46–54	Passage 40
Matt 9:37	Quoted	John 4:35	Paraphrase 33.1
Matt 10:28	Quoted	John 4:47	Summary 40.6
Matt 11:7–15	Implicit	John 1:21	Passages 4–5
Matt 11:9 // Luke 7:26	Implicit	John 1:29	Summary 10.1
Matt 11:11 // Luke 7:28	Quoted	John 1:23	Paraphrase 5.11
Matt 13:24–43	Implicit	John 4:35–38	Summary 32.2
Matt 13:36–43	Implicit	John 4:37	Quotation 35.2
Matt 21:13	Implicit	John 2:16	Quotation 13.10
Matt 23:15	Implicit	John 8:44	Quotation 46.6
Matt 23:33	Implicit	John 8:44	Quotation 46.6
Matt 25:1–13	Explicit	John 4:31	Paraphrase 28.2
Luke 1:5	Implicit	John 1:19	Quotation 5.9
Rom 1:25	Implicit	John 4:23	Summary 22.7
Rom 6:20–23 // 7:13	Implicit	John 4:47–50	Summary 40.10
Rom 12:1	Explicit	John 4:24	Quotation 24.2
Rom 13:4	Implicit	John 8:50	Quotation 48.1
1 Cor 15:54	Quoted	John 4:47	Summary 40.8
1 Thess 5:5	Implicit	John 8:44	Quotation 46.6
2 Thess 2:3	Implicit	John 8:44	Quotation 46.6
Heb 3:7–4:11	Implicit	John 4:35–38	Summary 32.2
Heb 9:1–10	Implicit	John 2:14	Paraphrases 13.2–3
Preaching of Peter	Explicit	John 4:21	Summary 21.2

Despite the many uncertainties concerning individual references, the overall picture is clear enough: As this study has demonstrated on multiple occasions, Heracleon's interpretation of the Fourth Gospel does not consider this Gospel in isolation, but makes use of a corpus of early Christian literature, including a Synoptic Gospel tradition that is similar to the Gospel of Matthew, a collection of Pauline letters, the Preaching of Peter, and – with high probability – some Old Testament material.⁸² All of these writings were used by other Christians in the same era, and there is no reason to believe that Heracleon's corpus differed, in any significant way, from that of other Christians of his time.⁸³ His way of using Matthew and Paul to interpret John may mark him as a competent literary critic, but not as a heterodox.⁸⁴

⁸² I agree with Massaux, *Influence*, 438–39, that Heracleon makes regular use of both a Matthean and a Pauline tradition, but cannot concur with Massaux that his use of Paul is less significant than his use of Matthew, or that his Matthean gospel is, necessarily, identical to the canonical version.

⁸³ The argument in Einar Thomassen, "Some Notes on the Development of Christian Ideas about a Canon," in *Canon and Canonicity: Essays on the Formation and Use of Scrip-*

D. Heracleon among Other Early Christians

In the introduction to this monograph, we became acquainted with two categories used by Origen to denote some of his exegetical opponents – interpreters of early Christian literature whose views he sets out to refute. The following two sections will relate Heracleon’s views, as they may be discerned from Origen’s references, to these two categories. First, we will look at Heracleon’s concept of a Maker (δημιουργός), and how it relates to Origen’s category of οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι (“the heterodox” or “those with different views”). In the first book of his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Origen specifies that this group “attributes the two testaments to two gods” (δυσὶ θεοῖς προσάπτουσιν ἀμφοτέρως τὰς διαθήκας) and believes the Jewish prophets to be ignorant of the new God introduced by Christ.⁸⁵ Then, the perspective will be widened, and Heracleon’s position vis-à-vis other categories of early Christians discussed.

I. Heracleon and the Heterodox

The noun δημιουργός is a recurrent one in Origen’s references to Heracleon. It could be used to denote any skilled workman or craftsman, but is used in Plato’s *Timaeus* to refer to a subordinate deity who fashions the sensible world in the light of eternal ideas. Since it is used by early Christian heresiologists to denote the creative agent in a world-view where the supreme being is uninterested in the physical world, which is created as a mistake or in opposition to him by a lower divinity, it is understandable that its frequency has been taken as proof of Heracleon’s adherence to such a view. However, it is not only on the lips of Heracleon that this term appears. Origen is himself using it as a neutral term, denoting the creator of the physical world independently of one’s theology of creation.⁸⁶ In order to gauge in what sense Herac-

ture, ed. Einar Thomassen (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum, 2009), 9–28, here 18, that the “Valentinians” accepted the gospel narratives only insofar as they could ascribe symbolic meaning to the “deeds of the Saviour” described therein, can neither be sustained nor falsified by the extant material from Heracleon. Considering that the gospels, to a large extent, consist of sayings material and descriptions of supposedly significant deeds, Thomassen’s criterion appears to demand too much of the limited material available, and be based mainly on the expectation that “Valentinian” interaction with gospel material should be significantly different from that of other Christians.

⁸⁴ Attridge, “Heracleon and John,” 58, describes similar exegetical practices in Origen, and concludes: “Origen very definitely reads the Fourth Gospel canonically. He interprets John by Paul and vice versa, without noting tensions or differences.” This conclusion applies equally well to Heracleon.

⁸⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 1.13/82.

⁸⁶ This is clear from Paraphrase 1.7 and the response to it in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/102–3, where Origen argues that the world was created by the δημιουργός through the λόγος, and not the other way around. The same usage is also attested in Clement, *Strom.* 4.13/90

leon is using the word, we must therefore consider the context and intent of every case, with consideration for the possibility that Origen might be misrepresenting him. This work has mainly been done in the previous chapters, but will be recapitulated and concluded below.

Some of the instances where the word δημιουργός is attributed to Heracleon appear to be cases where Origen is reading the theology of the heterodox into Heracleon's comments. This is the case in Assertion 8.8, where Origen claims Heracleon interprets John the Baptist as a metaphor for the Maker.⁸⁷ This is also the case in Origen's response to Quotation 48.4, where Origen assumes that Heracleon's attribution of the final judgment to Moses is equivalent with attributing it to the Maker.⁸⁸ But most importantly, this is the case in Passage 40, where Origen interprets Heracleon's comments with the assumption that he is viewing the royal official of John 4:43–54 as a symbol of the Maker. This assumption seems to be based on a claim by Irenaeus that the "Valentinians" habitually viewed the centurion of Matt 8:9 – to which Heracleon referred in his comments – as a metaphor for the Maker.⁸⁹ The assumption is apparent in Paraphrase 40.1,⁹⁰ where Origen presents it as his interpretive key for the passage, and recurs in Summary 40.14, Paraphrase 40.15, and Paraphrase 40.21,⁹¹ where Origen has written the term δημιουργός into his presentation of Heracleon's comments.

The clearest evidence of Heracleon's distinction between the Father of Christ and the Maker of the physical world is found in Quotation 20.5. In this context, Heracleon is interpreting Jesus's assertion, in John 4:21–24, that the time has come to worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem (οὔτε ἐν τῷ ὄρει τούτῳ οὔτε ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις), but in spirit and truth (ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ). According to Paraphrase 20.4,⁹² he interprets the two locations as metaphors for two different worship traditions – "this mountain" indicating the various polytheistic worship traditions in the Greco-Roman world, and Jerusalem representing Second Temple Judaism. These two alternatives are contrasted with a third way, which he deems to be superior:

(GCS 15, 287.27–29): τὸν μὲν γὰρ δημιουργὸν ὡς θεὸν καὶ πατέρα κληθέντα εἰκόνα τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ θεοῦ καὶ προφήτην προσεῖπεν ("For the Maker, called God and Father, he [Valentinus] labels an image and prophet of the true God.")

⁸⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/200.

⁸⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.38/361–62.

⁸⁹ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.7.4. See the quotation on page 267.

⁹⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/416.

⁹¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/422, 13.60/423, 13.61/427.

⁹² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.16/95.

[Thus] you as spiritual people will worship neither the creation nor the Maker, but the Father of Truth.⁹³

Given the context of Greco-Roman religion and Second Temple Judaism, it is clear that Heracleon regards the former as a way of worshiping the creation rather than the creator, in all likelihood informed by Paul's expression of the same distinction in Rom 1:23–25. It is also clear that he views Judaism as a worship not of the highest God – here denoted ὁ πατήρ τῆς ἀληθείας (“the Father of Truth”) – but of a distinct being, ὁ δημιουργός (“the Maker”), even though the role played by this Maker is not described in any detail.

Some information of how Heracleon views the Maker's involvement with creation is given in Summary 1.8. While discussing the significance of the statement πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (“Everything came into being through him”) in John 1:3, Origen gives a glimpse of Heracleon's hierarchy of creators:

For he [Heracleon] says that in order that “through him” be understood in this way, the Word did not make [the world] himself, caused by the activity of someone else, but someone else did, because of his activity.⁹⁴

Instead of interpreting John 1:3 as expressing the subordinate role of the λόγος as the creative agent of God, Heracleon reads it as expressing his superordinate role as initiator of the actual creative work of a lower creative being, here designated simply as ἕτερος (“someone else”). Heracleon distinguishes between the more abstract role of the one effectuating or causing the creation (ἐνεργέω), and the more concrete activity of carrying out the work (ποιέω). He attributes the former to the divine Word, and the latter to the Maker, who works at the command of the λόγος. Nothing precludes that the Father sits at the top of this causal chain, as the first mover who sets into motion the Word, who initiates the action of the Maker.⁹⁵

The same model of a subordinated creative agent, who might be regarded as the actual recipient of Jewish animal sacrifices intended for the highest God, is under consideration in the second paragraph of Passage 22, where Origen is describing Heracleon's interpretation of the second half of Jesus's abovementioned saying – the meaning of worshiping “in spirit and truth.”

To explain that God is to be worshiped “in spirit and truth” he says that (Summary 22.5) the prior worshipers worshiped, in flesh and illusion, what was not the Father. Therefore – according to him (Paraphrase 22.6) – all those who have worshiped the Maker are mistaken. And Heracleon does add (Summary 22.7) that they served the creation rather than the

⁹³ Heracleon, Quotation 20.5 *apud* Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.16/97: Ὑμεῖς [οὖν] οἰοῦνται οἱ πνευματικοὶ οὐτε τῇ κτίσει οὐτε τῷ δημιουργῷ προσκυνήσετε, ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρὶ τῆς ἀληθείας.

⁹⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.14/103 (Summary 1.8 of Heracleon): φησὶ γάρ ὅτι οὐχ ὡς ὑπ' ἄλλου ἐνεργοῦντος αὐτὸς ἐποίησεν ὁ λόγος, ἵνα οὕτως νοηθῇ τὸ δι' αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ ἐνεργοῦντος ἕτερος ἐποίησεν.

⁹⁵ This three-level interpretation of Heracleon's thought is suggested by de Faye, *Gnostiques et gnosticisme*, 82.

true creator – which is Christ, if indeed “all things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.”⁹⁶

According to these summaries, it was Heracleon’s view that worshipers before the arrival of Christ – that is the Jews and the Gentiles – had the wrong ideas about the highest God, and that their worship practices – ἐν σαρκί (“in flesh”) may refer to animal sacrifices – were misdirected, so that they ended up worshipping created beings rather than the true creator. Origen’s paraphrase that all who have worshiped the Maker are mistaken is thus correct, if δημιουργός is understood to refer to a lower creative agent that is himself created. Heracleon would, however, agree that the true creator, which is Christ, should be worshiped.

The view that Second Temple Judaism amounts to worship of created beings is not unique to Heracleon. In fact, we have already met it in one of the writings to which Heracleon himself refers. Within Clements’s previously mentioned presentation of the Preaching of Peter, he presents the following quotation:

And do not revere as the Jews do, for they believe that only they know God, even though they do not understand him, and serve angels and archangels, Mēn and Selēnē. If Selēnē does not appear, they do not celebrate the so-called first Sabbath, nor do they celebrate the new moon, the unleavened bread, the festival, or the great day.⁹⁷

Similarly to Heracleon, the Preaching of Peter exhorts its readers to not worship God in the Jewish way, since the Jews suffer from misconceptions of the divinity and their worship serves only lower beings. Since the Preaching describes the Jewish adherence to a lunar calendar as a service of lunar divinities, the reference to “angels and archangels” may be a reference to Jewish animal sacrifices, which turns out to serve lower beings who have assisted in carrying out the work of creation. Since Heracleon used this writing, his theology of creation may have originated in the Preaching of Peter.

There is no doubt that Heracleon makes a distinction between the supreme God, whom he calls ὁ πατήρ τῆς ἀληθείας (“the Father of Truth”), and the creator of the physical world, whom he denotes by the term ὁ δημιουργός

⁹⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.19/117–18 (SC 222, 92.15–22): Πρὸς τούτοις τὸ “Ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ προσκυνεῖσθαι τὸν θεὸν” <δι>ηγούμενος λέγει, ὅτι (22.5) οἱ πρότεροι προσκυνηταὶ ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ πλάνῃ προσεκύνουν τῷ μὴ πατρί, ὥστε κατ’ αὐτὸν (22.6) πεπλανῆσθαι πάντας τοὺς προσκεκνηκότας τῷ δημιουργῷ. Καὶ ἐπιφέρει (22.7) γε ὁ Ἡρακλέων ὅτι ἐλάτρευον τῇ κτίσει, καὶ οὐ τῷ κατ’ ἀλήθειαν κτίστη, ὅς ἐστιν Χριστός, εἰ γε “Πάντα δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδέν.”

⁹⁷ Preaching of Peter *apud* Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 6.5/41.2–3 (GCS 15, 452.7–12): μηδὲ κατὰ Ἰουδαίους σέβεσθε· καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι μόνοι οἰόμενοι τὸν θεὸν γινώσκειν οὐκ ἐπίστανται, λατρεῦοντες ἀγγέλοις καὶ ἀρχαγγέλοις, μηνὶ καὶ σελήνῃ. καὶ ἐὰν μὴ σελήνη φανῇ, σάββατον οὐκ ἄγουσι τὸ λεγόμενον πρῶτον, οὐδὲ νεομηνίαν ἄγουσιν οὔτε ἄζυμα οὔτε ἑορτὴν οὔτε μεγάλην ἡμέραν.

(“the Maker”) – but his distinction does not match the one Origen attributes to οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι (“the heterodox”). Since the creation, in Heracleon’s view, was carried out in cooperation between God and the Maker, there is no indifference of God towards matter, no conflict between Christ and Maker, and no ignorance of the higher divinity on the Maker’s part. Heracleon’s lower creator is not an ignorant competitor, but an assistant who cooperates with the divine Word in carrying out the creative process envisioned by the Father. In relation to Origen’s category of οἱ ἑτερόδοξοι (“the heterodox”), Heracleon may fulfill the basic premise of distinguishing between Father and Maker, but he does not fit the description of a category of interpreters who attribute the two testaments to different gods and believe that the Jewish prophets were ignorant of the highest God.

II. Heracleon and “Those Who Bring in the Natures”

Another of the categories construed by Origen to denote his exegetical opponent is οἱ τὰς φύσεις εἰσάγοντες (“Those who bring in the natures”). Origen views this category as a sub-category of the heterodox, and defines it by their characteristic teaching that there are some people who, by nature and original constitution, are πνευματικοί (“spiritual”), while others are ψυχικοί (“animated”), or merely χοϊκοί (“earthly”). In this teaching, the spirituals are saved by nature, incapable of perishing, while the earthly ones are predestined for perdition.⁹⁸ Origen also specifies that these are followers both of Valentinus and of Heracleon,⁹⁹ and that they believe that the spirituals are “children of God by nature” who are “uniquely capable of receiving the words of God.”¹⁰⁰

Words like φύσις (“nature”) and πνευματικός (“spiritual”) recur in Origen’s references to Heracleon, so it is not surprising that scholars have taken for granted that he is one of “those who bring in the natures.” However, many such instances are not quotations or summaries, but assertions and paraphrases, where Origen speaks of the ideas he discerns to be behind Heracleon’s interpretations. In Passage 33, Origen construes a hypothetical example of what Heracleon “will certainly say” (ἔρεῖ γε ὁ Ἡρακλέων), within which he asserts that Heracleon believes some people will be suitable for salvation “because of their constitution and their nature” (διὰ τὴν κατασκευὴν αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν φύσιν).¹⁰¹ This is not something Heracleon has actually expressed, and should not be considered to be trustworthy information about his views. In Paraphrase 46.3, Origen construes a connection between Heracleon’s word

⁹⁸ Origen, *Princ.* 3.1.8. See the quotation on page 32.

⁹⁹ Origen, *Cels.* 5.61; *Comm. Jo.* 20.20/170 (Paraphrase 44.3).

¹⁰⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.33/287 (SC 290, 296.2–298.4): ...λέγοντες εἶναι φύσει καὶ ἐκ πρώτης κατασκευῆς υἱὸς θεοῦ, μόνον διὰ τὸ πρὸς θεὸν συγγενὲς δεκτικούς τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ῥημάτων....

¹⁰¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.44/294–95.

study on how people can be called children by birth, by choice, or by merit, and the unrelated idea that people are born to be either spiritual, animated, or earthly.¹⁰² This connection informs us of how Origen understood the views of his opponents, not of how Heracleon reasoned. And in the two instances where Heracleon is said to commend the Samaritan woman for her inherent nature – Paraphrases 17.7 and 19.3 – Origen may have used the word φύσις (“nature”) not because it was present in his source, but in order to clarify what he took to be the idea behind Heracleon’s comment.¹⁰³ Similarly, whenever the Samaritan woman is called πνευματική (“a spiritual woman”), this expression appears on the lips of Origen, not Heracleon.¹⁰⁴

Heracleon’s own idea of spiritual people seems, rather, to be similar to Paul’s concept of a more mature, intellectual Jesus-follower, as opposed to a less insightful one.¹⁰⁵ A Pauline perspective seems to be at play already in Paraphrase 2.1, where Heracleon is said to read “spiritual humans” into John 1:4, since Origen in his response claims that Heracleon has not observed “what else is said in Paul about the spiritual ones.”¹⁰⁶ This objection would come most naturally if Heracleon already had referred to Paul. When Heracleon proclaims that “you as spiritual people will worship neither the creation nor the Maker, but the Father of Truth” in Quotation 20.5,¹⁰⁷ there is no mention of φύσεις (“natures”), and “spiritual people” appears to denote Christians who know whom they worship, contrasted with Gentiles and Jews. When Heracleon, in Quotation 24.2, calls on his audience to worship πνευματικῶς (“spiritually”), he does not contrast this ideal to an “animated” or “earthly” worship, but adds: οὐ σαρκικῶς (“not in the way of the flesh”):

Believing that he is explaining “those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24) he [Heracleon] says (Quotation 24.2): “in a way that is worthy of the one being worshiped – spiritually, and not in the way of the flesh, for those who are of the same nature as the Father are also spirit, those who worship in truth and not in illusion, just as the apostle also teaches when he calls such a piety ‘a rational service.’ (λογικὴν λατρείαν; Rom 12:1).”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.24/213.

¹⁰³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/63, 13.15/92.

¹⁰⁴ The expression appears five times in Passage 18 (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.11/73–74) and once in Passage 27 (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.31/191). The woman is also said to have a spiritual nature in Paraphrase 24.5 (Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.25/149). All seven instances are located not in Origen’s presentations of Heracleon’s interpretations, but in Origen’s responses.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Gal 6:1 and 1 Cor 2:11–3:3.

¹⁰⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 2.21/137–39: καὶ τὸ περὶ τῶν πνευματικῶν παρὰ τῷ Παύλῳ λεγόμενον.

¹⁰⁷ Heracleon, Quotation 20.5 *apud* Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.16/97: Ὑμεῖς [οὖν] οἰονεῖ οἱ πνευματικοὶ οὔτε τῇ κτίσει οὔτε τῷ δημιουργῷ προσκυνήσετε, ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρὶ τῆς ἀληθείας.

¹⁰⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.25/148 (SC 222, 110.4–112.10): τὸ δὲ “τοὺς προσκυνοῦντας ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ δεῖ προσκυνεῖν” σαφηνίζειν νομίζων φησὶν (24.2)· ἀξίως τοῦ προσκυ-

This contrast between spirit and flesh appears to be Pauline in nature, and unrelated to the theory of the three natures. This impression is strengthened by Heracleon's explicit reference to the apostle's words in Rom 12:1, where Paul urges his readers to not conform to the present world, but to present their bodies as living sacrifices and be transformed by the renewing of their minds. Heracleon seems to have taken this as an exhortation to emulate the worship of the spiritual world, where spiritual beings worship in spirit and truth. The phrase αὐτοὶ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως ὄντες τῷ πατρὶ ("those who are of the same nature as the Father") may well include the λογός, which would explain how Heracleon understood Paul's expression λογικὴν λατρείαν: a service such as the one the λογός is giving.

In the same way, when the adjective ψυχικός ("animated") is applied to human beings in Origen's references to Heracleon, it is invariably in Origen's paraphrases and responses, and not in the summaries and quotations. In Passage 15, Origen extrapolates from Heracleon's τὴν πνευματικὴν ἡμέραν ("the spiritual day") to a three-day period including an animated and an earthly day.¹⁰⁹ In Paraphrase 37.2, Origen associates Heracleon's mention of πολλοί ("many") to the notion that the animated ones are many, but the spiritual ones few.¹¹⁰ And in Paraphrase 44.3, it is Origen who claims that Heracleon agrees with those who call people ψυχικοί ("animated") and πνευματικοί ("spiritual").¹¹¹

In the only case where Heracleon seems to have used the adjective, it is used to denote a place. In Summary 13.1, Origen states that Heracleon interprets Jesus's climb up to Jerusalem in John 2:13 as a metaphor for his ascent from material things to the place of the soul:

...Heracleon, who says (Summary 13.1) that the climb up to Jerusalem signifies the Lord's ascent from material things to the place of the soul, which is an image of [the heavenly] Jerusalem.¹¹²

Heracleon's contrast between material things and the place of the soul appears to be made not between different kinds of people, but between the material miracle at the wedding at Cana and the more intellectual challenge Christ presents in the temple courts. While the miracle former demonstrates his extraordinary power over matter, the latter requires no unusual physical

νουμένου πνευματικῶς, οὐ σαρκικῶς· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως ὄντες τῷ πατρὶ πνεῦμα εἰσιν, οἵτινες κατὰ ἀλήθειαν καὶ οὐ κατὰ πλάνην προσκυνοῦσιν, καθὰ καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος διδάσκει λέγων λογικὴν λατρείαν τὴν τοιαύτην θεοσέβειαν.

¹⁰⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.37/250.

¹¹⁰ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.51/341.

¹¹¹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.20/170.

¹¹² Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.33/210: ...Ἡρακλέωνος, ὅς φησι (13.1) τὴν <εἰς> Ἱεροσόλυμα ἄνοδον σημαίνει τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑλικῶν εἰς τὸν ψυχικὸν τόπον, τυγχάνοντα εἰκόνα τῆς Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἀνάβασιν τοῦ κυρίου.

ability, but demonstrates his authority over religious practices: Christ's actions have moved from the arena of material things to that of the human soul (ψυχή).

The deterministic soteriology associated with "those who bring in the natures" is likewise absent from Heracleon's interpretations. When Heracleon displays interest in the salvation of people, it is humans in general, or the Jewish people in particular, that is under consideration – not a category of people with a distinct animated nature, differentiated from a material or a spiritual one. Heracleon's interest in missionary activities is prominent in his reflections on Jesus's food and harvest metaphors in John 4:34–38. Based on Jesus's claim that he finds nourishment in fulfilling the work his Father has assigned to him, Heracleon proclaims that the Savior was sent to the world for people to know the Father and be saved:

Heracleon says (Summary 31.1), on account of "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me," that the Savior explained to the disciples that this was what he discussed with the woman, saying that his own food was the will of the Father, for this was his nourishment, his rest, and his strength. He said that the will of the Father was for humans to know the Father and be saved. This was the Savior's work, for which he was sent to Samaria – that is, to the world.¹¹³

In this summary, Origen clearly states Heracleon's view on Christ's mission in the physical world: he is sent by the Father to let humans be saved by getting to know the Father. This mission is not limited to a group of people with a certain inherent nature, but aimed at the whole of humanity.

In addition, Jesus's metaphor of the fields being white for harvest, in John 4:35, prompts Heracleon to reflect, in Summary 32.2 and Quotation 32.3, that some people are already in full bloom, ready to be gathered into the barn, while others are in the process of growth, and yet others are already sowers themselves.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, Jesus's words on the sower and the reaper in John 4:36–38 get him to colorfully describe, in Quotation 36.2, the toil of the sowers who dig the frozen earth, and identify them, in Quotation 36.1, as οἱ τῆς οἰκονομίας ἄγγελοι ("the messengers of the plan"), an enigmatic expression that might denote the Jewish prophets.¹¹⁵ In aggregate, these comments reflect a strong interest in spreading the Christian message. This interest is likely to be

¹¹³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.38/247–48: Ὁ δὲ Ἡρακλέων διὰ τοῦ "Ἐμὸν βρώμα ἐστὶν ἵνα ποιήσω τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πέμψαντός με" φησι (31.1) διηγείσθαι τὸν σωτήρα τοῖς μαθηταῖς, ὅτι τοῦτο ἦν, ὃ συνεζήτει μετὰ τῆς γυναίκος, βρώμα ἴδιον λέγων τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρός· τοῦτο γὰρ αὐτοῦ τροφή καὶ ἀνάπαυσις καὶ δύναμις ἦν. Θέλημα δὲ πατρός ἔλεγεν εἶναι τὸ γινῶναι ἀνθρώπους τὸν πατέρα καὶ σωθῆναι, ὅπερ ἦν ἔργον τοῦ σωτήρος τοῦ ἕνεκα τούτου ἀπεσταλμένου εἰς Σαμάρειαν, τούτέστιν εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

¹¹⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.41/271.

¹¹⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.50/336.

linked to his view of humanity as afflicted with sin, which is apparent from Quotations 40.11 and 41.1.¹¹⁶

We may, therefore, conclude that Heracleon did not subscribe to the theory of the three human natures, and its accompanying deterministic soteriology, but that Origen read this theory into his comments on the Fourth Gospel. Heracleon's soteriology appears to be rather typical for an early Christian context: he displays an interest in spreading the invitation of Christ among a humanity afflicted by sin, in order that people may be saved.

III. Heracleon and Orthodoxy

So far, this investigation has managed to avoid using any particular designation for those second-century Christians who were not denounced in heresiological literature. However, given the above conclusion that Heracleon fits neither Origen's definition of the heterodox, since his Maker is a cooperative rather than competitive creative agent, nor his description of "those who bring in the natures," since he seems to consider all humans to be in need of salvation, it is worthwhile to discuss his proximity to theological views that lean more towards orthodoxy.¹¹⁷

To discuss the second-century Christian movement in terms of what Christians of the fourth century regarded as orthodox is unavoidably anachronistic. Although it is apparent that there are some ideas that appear both in the earliest Christian literature and in the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed,¹¹⁸ larger and more specific continuities cannot simply be assumed, but have to be demonstrated on a case-by-case basis. Issues that were sharply defined and violently controversial in the lead-up to the ecumenical councils may well have passed completely unnoticed by individual second-century authors, and the boundaries drawn at Nicea and Constantinople cannot easily be extended into their anteriority.¹¹⁹ A second-century counterpart to orthodoxy must therefore be based either on how first-century Christian writings describe the Christian faith, or on the boundaries drawn up in second-century heresiological literature.

¹¹⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/420, 19.14/89.

¹¹⁷ Annette Yoshiko Reed's term "retrospectively orthodox," advocated in Jorgensen, *Treasure Hidden in a Field*, 17–18, is an attractive term for early Christian groups, authors, texts, and doctrines that avoided denunciation by heresiologists. The term cannot, however, easily be applied to Origen, who was denounced as a heretic in the sixth century. See Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*, 85–158.

¹¹⁸ One simple example is Christ's death and resurrection, which are mentioned both in the Creed and in 1 Thess 4:14: εἰ γὰρ πιστεύομεν ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἀνέστη... ("If we believe that Jesus died and rose again...").

¹¹⁹ The ways in which the concept of "heresy" is developed as a rhetorical strategy to get one's own view accepted as orthodoxy are traced out in Le Boulluec, *La notion d'hérésie*.

Lewis Ayres appeals to both of these corpora in his attempt to construct a clean boundary between two sides of second-century Christianity. He identifies a narrative pattern that recurs not only in several New Testament writings, but also in what he calls the “proto-orthodox” writings of the second century.¹²⁰ Although Ayres paints his pictures in broad strokes, it is clear that his scheme includes (1) an idea of an original unity between the Father and the Son, (2) a notion that the Son has shared the material conditions of humanity, and (3) the concept of an invitation to Christian believers to share the Son’s eternal existence. Expressed in modern theological terms, this would be the doctrines of Christ’s divinity, the Incarnation, and the possibility of human salvation. Ayres traces this pattern not only to the Gospels of Matthew and John and the Letter to the Hebrews, but also to Irenaeus’s *Against Heresies* and Tertullian’s *Against Marcion*.¹²¹ He claims that it is “present in (or at least not directly contradicted by) all the surviving Christian texts that can plausibly be dated before c. 120,”¹²² which would make it a good candidate for a measure of “proto-orthodox” continuity from the first century, through the second, into later times.

All three points of Ayres’s pattern of second-century “proto-orthodoxy” are well attested in Origen’s references to Heracleon. Summary 5.1 clearly identifies the Savior (σωτήρ) – Heracleon’s usual term for the human Jesus – with the divine Word,¹²³ and Summary 22.7 calls him the true creator.¹²⁴ These two points express Christ’s original unity with the divine Father. In addition, Quotation 8.5 speaks of the Savior descending from his majesty and taking flesh,¹²⁵ Quotation 22.3 attests to the fact that he was born in Judea,¹²⁶ and Summary 28.1 expresses the expectation that he would eat some of the food bought by the disciples in Samaria.¹²⁷ Together, these three comments attest to Heracleon’s belief in the Incarnation. When it comes to the invitation to salvation, Quotation 40.11 expresses the mortal peril of humans afflicted with sin,¹²⁸ and Summary 31.1 proclaims that the work for which the Savior was sent to the world was to invite humans to know the Father and thus be

¹²⁰ Ayres, “Continuity and Change,” 107–12.

¹²¹ Ayres, “Continuity and Change,” 108–15, referring to Irenaeus, *Haer.* 5, and Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.4, 5.7.

¹²² Ayres, “Continuity and Change,” 110.

¹²³ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.20/108: Ὁ λόγος μὲν ὁ σωτήρ ἐστίν....

¹²⁴ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.19/118: ...τῷ κατ’ ἀλήθειαν κτίστη, ὃς ἐστὶν Χριστός....

¹²⁵ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/198: ...κατέλθη ἀπὸ μεγέθους καὶ σάρκα λάβη....

¹²⁶ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.19/115: ...ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐγενήθη....

¹²⁷ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.32/200: ...ἐβούλοντο κοινωνεῖν αὐτῷ ἐξ ὧν ἀγοράσαντες ἀπὸ τῆς Σαμαρείας κεκομίσκισαν.

¹²⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.60/420: Πρὶν τελέως [οὖν] θανατωθῆναι κατὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας δεῖται ὁ πατήρ τοῦ μόνου σωτήρος, ἵνα βοηθήσῃ τῷ υἱῷ.

saved.¹²⁹ Furthermore, Jesus's words about the fields being "white for harvest" prompted Heracleon to extensive reflection on how ready different people are to be gathered into the barn of Christ.¹³⁰ To the extent Ayres's narrative pattern can be utilized to define a second-century equivalent of fourth-century orthodoxy, Heracleon fulfills his criteria and should be counted among the "proto-orthodox."

Undeniably, more restrictive schemes can be constructed that exclude Heracleon's attribution of some of the work of creation to a cooperative Maker, and a role in the final judgment to Moses. Irenaeus, whose rejection of Heracleon seems to be based mostly on his association with Valentinus,¹³¹ specifies that the worldwide Christian community (ἐκκλησία) believes in one God, who is the creator of heaven and earth,¹³² and awaits Christ's return to perform a just judgment toward all.¹³³ Although a lenient interpretation of these criteria might allow for subordinate creative and judicial assistants, such as Heracleon's Maker and Moses, a strict interpretation would exclude his theology from that of Irenaeus's community. One interpretation has no obvious priority over the other. In any case, Irenaeus's creed cannot be presumed to express a universally accepted boundary for the Christian movement, but should be viewed as part of an effort to create an orthodoxy that does not yet exist, and toward which Heracleon cannot be expected to take a stand.

IV. Heracleon and Origen

The realization that Heracleon expresses several of the bearing elements in a pattern narrative that could be used to define a second-century counterpart to orthodoxy, accentuates the large extent to which Origen's negative responses are determined by prejudice. Had Origen not been obliged to denounce Heracleon as a heterodox, based on his association to the heterodox and to "those who bring in the natures," he would probably have shown a much greater appreciation of his predecessor's exegetical approach.

That much of Origen's reception of Heracleon's comments is determined by heterodox associations is clear not only from the assertions, where Origen, without quoting any evidence, declares that Heracleon despises the Old Testament,¹³⁴ believes that the material world is created by an ignorant lower

¹²⁹ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.38/248: Θέλημα δὲ πατὴρ ἐλεγεν εἶναι τὸ γινῶναι ἀνθρώπους τὸν πατέρα καὶ σωθῆναι, ὅπερ ἦν ἔργον τοῦ σωτῆρος τοῦ ἕνεκα τούτου ἀπεσταλμένου εἰς Σαμάρειαν, τουτέστιν εἰς τὸν κόσμον.

¹³⁰ See Passage 33 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.44/294–95.

¹³¹ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.4.1.

¹³² Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.2.1: ...τὸν πεποιηκότα τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν....

¹³³ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 1.2.1: ...καὶ κρίσιν δικαίαν ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι ποιήσεται....

¹³⁴ Assertion 5.13 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.21/117.

divinity,¹³⁵ and thinks that people's eternal fates are determined by their inherent nature.¹³⁶ Above all, it is clear from cases where he states that he would have been ready to accept, or even approve, Heracleon's interpretation – had there not been a connection to heterodox theology.

Take, for instance, his response to Summary 23.1:¹³⁷

Heracleon says that what belongs to the Father's house, which is sought after so that the Father may be worshiped by the members of his household, is lost in the deep forest of deception. Had he then been looking to the story of the lost sheep or of the son who fell away from his father, we would even have approved of this description. But since those who are of his opinion are inventing fiction, I cannot see that they present anything with clarity about the lost spiritual nature. They teach us nothing articulate about the times and eternities before it was lost, for they cannot even make their own teachings clear. Therefore, we happily dismiss them with these criticisms.¹³⁸

After summarizing Heracleon's remark that some people, who properly belong to the household of the Father, are "lost in the deep forest of deception," Origen acknowledges that under certain circumstances, he would have been prepared to approve of this interpretation of John 4:23. But since he associates Heracleon's comment not with a metaphor for the perilous condition of humanity in general – such as the parable of the lost sheep – but to the status of the spiritual human nature according to "those who bring in the natures," he must condemn the interpretation. Since Heracleon seems not to have mentioned the three human natures here, Origen's disapproval of Heracleon is not determined by what Heracleon actually expresses, but by the frame of reference into which Origen puts it.

The same is true in other cases. Heracleon's commendation of the Samaritan woman's responsiveness toward Jesus is refuted because Origen associates it with the idea of a superior spiritual nature.¹³⁹ His interpretation of Jesus's remark, "Your father is the devil," in John 8:44a would have met Origen's approval, had it not been connected to the three natures.¹⁴⁰ And Heracleon's

¹³⁵ Assertion 8.8 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 6.39/200.

¹³⁶ Assertions 15.3 and 33.2 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 10.37/249–50, 13.44/294.

¹³⁷ The full analysis of this passage begins on page 219.

¹³⁸ Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.20/120–22 (SC 222, 94.1–15): Ἀπολωλέναι δὲ φησιν (23.1) ὁ Ἡρακλέων ἐν τῇ βαθείᾳ ὕλῃ τῆς πλάνης τὸ οἰκεῖον τῷ πατρὶ, ὅπερ ζητεῖται, ἵνα ὁ πατὴρ ὑπὸ τῶν οἰκείων προσκυνῇται. Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἑώρα τὸν περὶ τῆς ἀπωλείας τῶν προβάτων λόγον καὶ τοῦ ἀποπεσόντος τῶν τοῦ πατρὸς υἱοῦ, κἂν ἀπεδεξάμεθα αὐτοῦ τὴν διήγησιν. Ἐπεὶ δὲ μυθοποιοῦντες οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς γνώμης αὐτοῦ οὐκ οἶδ' ὅ τί ποτε τρανῶς παριστάσιν περὶ τῆς ἀπολωλείας πνευματικῆς φύσεως οὐδὲν σαφὲς διδάσκοντες ἡμᾶς περὶ τῶν πρὸ τῆς ἀπωλείας αὐτῆς χρόνων ἢ αἰώνων – οὐδὲ γὰρ τρανοῦν δύνανται ἑαυτῶν τὸν λόγον –, διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὺς ἐκόντες παραπεμψόμεθα, τοσοῦτον ἐπαπορήσαντες.

¹³⁹ Paraphrase 17.7 and its response in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/63–64. See the analyses on pages 191–194 and in Berglund, "Vacillating Stances," 553–56.

¹⁴⁰ Passage 44 in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 20.20/168–70. See pages 288–89.

remark that Jacob's well cannot provide eternal life is rejected based on the presumption that he despises the Old Testament.¹⁴¹

Had Origen not found himself caught in a quarrel with Heracleon due to his presumed heterodoxy, the many similarities between the *modi operandi* of these two early exegetes would have played out differently. Heracleon and Origen were both biblical interpreters with enough appreciation of the Gospel of John to write or lecture extensively on this particular text. Both were keen to compare the Johannine narratives with their Synoptic parallels, and to use Pauline material to guide and delimit their interpretations. Although Heracleon did not match Origen's knowledge of and interest in the Old Testament, and Origen did not share Heracleon's acceptance of the Preaching of Peter, neither author rejected completely what the other included in his corpus. They were both pioneers in using literary-critical methods to analyze the early Christian literature, and demonstrate great interest in reaching beyond the surface level of the text to explore deeper, symbolic implication regarding eternal realities and salvation history. Heracleon seems less interested than Origen in pure philosophical speculation, and more anchored in his determination to have the Christian message spread to a wider audience – but even this is an interest shared with Origen. Their main difference is that while Origen frequently offers extensive argumentation even on minor points, Heracleon's comments tend to be brief. Had Origen approached Heracleon with an attitude of trust rather than suspicion, he could have found a colleague to appreciate, build on, and recognize as an important predecessor in the development of early Christian exegesis.

Had the roles been reversed, and Heracleon been the younger of the two, there is reason to believe that he would have greatly appreciated Origen's exegesis and become an enthusiastic student of his works. Their areas of interest overlap to such an extent that it is difficult to imagine that Heracleon's actual teachers shared his passions as much as Origen did, and the more idiosyncratic ideas Heracleon actually expressed may have appeared comparable to Origen's own more speculative ideas.¹⁴² That Heracleon did not express his appreciation of Origen in a way similar to Gregory's *Address of Gratitude to Origen* is more a consequence of temporal separation than of their theological differences.

V. Heracleon and the Christians of the Second Century

A scholar who sets out to perform a larger study generally hopes to add to the knowledge of the world – to provide new information that expands humanity's body of expertise. By removing from the body of generally accepted facts

¹⁴¹ Summary 17.1, Quotation 17.5 and their responses in Origen, *Comm. Jo.* 13.10/57–61. See pages 187 and 189–90.

¹⁴² Most notably the pre-existence and eventual salvation of all human souls.

the notion that Heracleon was a member of an organized heterodox version of Christianity, this study may have achieved the opposite. However, such subtraction of knowledge needs also be part of the study of early Christianity, if it is to produce anything that approaches an accurate depiction of the Christian movement in the second century. In the case of Heracleon, it should be considered a step forward to gain a picture of one of the first commentators on New Testament literature that is based not on the undemonstrated accusations of his adversaries, but on what we can discern of his own words and interests.

Previous scholarship has worked from the assumption that Heracleon represents a particular point of view on the early Christian literature, in competition with – or even opposition to – what later became orthodoxy. Heracleon has been contemplated through the lenses of “heresy,” “Gnosticism,” and “Valentinianism,” and his interpretations have been presumed to read a certain set of heterodox doctrines into the Fourth Gospel. The depiction of Heracleon developed in this monograph differs radically from these traditional assumptions. On point after point, in passage after passage, this study has demonstrated Heracleon’s dependence not on “heretical,” “Gnostic,” or “Valentinian” doctrines, but on a collection of Pauline letters and a gospel tradition similar to the Gospel of Matthew.

Regardless of his relation to Valentinus, the exegete we encounter in Origen’s references to Heracleon is a Christian, a believer in the idea that a divine being, the Word, has transcended the chasm that separates the creator from his creation to live the life of a human being. This Heracleon recognizes a corpus of early Christian literature to which he turns to make sense of what he reads in the Fourth Gospel, a corpus that contributes more to the shaping of his scriptural interpretations than any heterodox dogmatic views he may have learned from teachers such as Valentinus. His concept of a created Maker that was charged with carrying out the work of the creation based on the plan of the Word may not conform to the ideas of later orthodoxy, but is not enough to confine him to a minority sub-group within the second-century Christian movement.

As a consequence of removing Heracleon from the “Gnostic” or “Valentinian” fold, this study places him in a central position in the second-century development of Christianity. In an era before Christianity became a state-sponsored religion, Heracleon displays an understandable concern with spreading the faith. At a stage when the New Testament canon is not yet established, Heracleon provides an early datapoint of a Christian author who used a corpus of early Christian literature to interpret a Gospel. At a point in time when many references to New Testament literature are remarkably vague and non-literal, Heracleon seems to be able to alternately quote and paraphrase both a Matthean and the Johannine Gospel. And while other Christians still were engaged in rewriting the handed-down stories about

Jesus and the early Christians into new narratives, Heracleon gave his contributions the form of a commentary – a literary form that remains an important genre of exegetical writing to this day. In the absence of a perceived here-siological boundary between him and the early Christians who formed later traditions, Heracleon's comments are available as examples to many potential studies in the future.

E. Implications for Future Scholarship

The main contributions to future scholarship of this study are a methodology for quotation analysis, a new basis for considering Heracleon, and new insights into early Christian diversity.

I. A Methodology for Quotation Analysis

An underappreciated difficulty in working with ancient writings that are only available as references made by other authors is that ancient authors habitually adapted what they quoted and summarized to fit the style, grammar, and argumentative needs of the context into which the references were inserted. Although there are contexts where we can identify longer, largely unaltered excerpts from previous works, many other references appear in argumentative contexts, where the quoting author has other aims than the trustworthy transmission to his readers of the words of a previous writer. Secondary material similar to Origen's references to Heracleon must, therefore, be meticulously evaluated with regard to the needs, preferences, and prejudices of the quoting author.

Even if the four categories utilized in this study – with their associated extents of expected adaptations – are tailored for the material of this particular study, similar categories should be useful for discussing the dependability of other ancient references. Although the specific criteria used to establish in what mode Origen attributes words, statements, and interpretive moves to Heracleon are thoroughly dependent on Origen's own usage, similar criteria could be developed by which to evaluate quotations and references by other ancient authors. Although the general applicability of this methodology remains to be demonstrated, the basic procedure followed in chapter 3 – to use references to known works in order to establish criteria by which to evaluate references to unknown works – should be able to provide future studies of secondary material with a more secure footing.

Several ancient writings whose study could benefit from this methodology can be readily identified. A prime candidate is Origen's *Against Celsus*, the other work where he presents and responds to the views of an adversary. Both the classic English translation by Henry Chadwick and the more recent Ger-

man edition by Michael Fiedrowicz and Claudia Barthold identify quotations that could be discussed in view of the findings of the present study, as could the recent reconstructions of Celsus's original writing by Johannes Arnold.¹⁴³ Close at hand are also Clement's *Excerpts from Theodotus*, where another Alexandrian scholar presents the views of a different early Christian teacher associated with Valentinus.¹⁴⁴ Although neither of these writings are expected to provide as much difficulty as Origen's references to Heracleon, careful scrutiny is never made in vain.

II. A New Basis for Considering Heracleon

Most previous consideration of Heracleon in modern scholarship has found its starting point not in an edition of Origen's *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, but in one of the collections of Heracleon's "fragments" provided by Brooke, Völker, or Foerster.¹⁴⁵ While handy and accessible, such collections tend to erase the context in which the references appear, and give the impression that all references are, in general, equally trustworthy – or they would not appear in the collection. By combining easy access to all of Origen's references to Heracleon with thorough evaluations of their trustworthiness and discussion of how they may be understood without presuming that they are determined by heterodox theology, this monograph is well positioned to provide a new starting point for future consideration of Heracleon.

Given the analyses in this study, the silent assumption that everything Origen attributes to Heracleon is as trustworthy as an independent manuscript tradition should no longer be viable. Even those who insist on viewing Heracleon as a member of a sub-group in opposition to other second-century Christians should be able to appreciate the difference between verbatim quotations, summaries, explanatory paraphrases, and mere assertions in Origen's references to Heracleon – and recognize the importance of building any reconstruction of Heracleon's words and views on the former material rather than the latter. Thereby, this monograph will provide a more secure basis for future studies, where Heracleon may be evaluated based on his own work, rather than on the allegations of his adversaries.

¹⁴³ Origen, *Contra Celsum*; Origenes, *Contra Celsum: Gegen Celsus*, ed. Michael Fiedrowicz, trans. Claudia Barthold, *Fontes Christiani* 1–5 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2011); Johannes Arnold, *Der Wahre Logos des Kelsos: Eine Strukturanalyse*, JAC Ergänzungsband 39 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2016).

¹⁴⁴ Clement of Alexandria, *The Excerpta Ex Theodoto of Clemens of Alexandria*, ed. Robert Pierce Casey, trans. Robert Pierce Casey, *Studies and documents* 1 (London, 1934); Clement of Alexandria, *Extraits de Théodote*, ed. François Sagnard, trans. François Sagnard, SC 23 (Paris: Cerf, 1948); Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata, Buch VII und VIII; Excerpta ex Theodoto; Eclogae propheticæ; Quis dives salvetur; Fragmente*, eds. Otto Stählin and Ludwig Früchtel, GCS 17:2 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1970).

¹⁴⁵ Brooke, *The Fragments of Heracleon*; Völker, *Quellen*; Foerster, *Gnosis*.

Two considerable areas of interest for the study of Heracleon are left out of the present project: the passages where Heracleon is mentioned in ancient writings other than Origen's *Commentary*,¹⁴⁶ and comparisons of Heracleon's interpretations to contemporary literature other than the early Christian writings to which he refers himself.¹⁴⁷ Both may be supplemented in future studies.¹⁴⁸ Heracleon's affinity to what is now known as "Valentinian" literature should clearly not be ruled out in advance of the comparisons omitted in this monograph, but such comparisons should not be based on the assumption of a cut-and-dried "Valentinian" theology shared by all parties involved, and neatly conceptualized by Irenaeus. Rather, they should allow the authors under study to be individuals in conversation with a larger complex of early Christian ideas – some of which they find to be more obvious, attractive, or controversial than others. Heracleon's liberation from the confines of "Valentinianism" opens him up also for comparisons with early Christian works not associated with Valentinus and, therefore, not previously analyzed in conjunction with Heracleon's *hypomnēmata*.

III. *New Insights into Early Christian Diversity*

With its detailed investigation of Origen's presentation of and responses to Heracleon's comments on the Fourth Gospel, this study also gives new insights into the diversity of the Christian movement in the second and third centuries. Where previous scholars have presumed a "Valentinian" movement with a more-or-less consistent theology from Valentinus to the Tripartite Tractate, we can now discern Heracleon's views from the presumably later teachings of "those who bring in the natures." Similarly, early Christian ideas concerning created assistants involved in the creation of the material world can be differentiated from the notion that the world is created by an ignorant lower deity in opposition to the Father of Christ.

From the results of this study, it is clear that the neat divisions of second-century Christians into one category whose ideas we recognize as unmistakably Christian, and other groups whose theology we characterize as "different" in some key ways, can distort and obfuscate our view of early Christianity rather than render clarity. Such categorizations invariably have roots in heresiological efforts to present one's own views as the only acceptable option available, and construct an orthodox unity that is not yet at hand. The very existence of such efforts indicates that the views the heresiologists perceived

¹⁴⁶ Irenaeus, *Haer.* 2.4.1, Tertullian, *Val.* 4.1, *Elenchos* 6.p.4, 6.29.1, 6.35.6, Clement, *Strom.* 4.9/71–72; *Ecl.* 25.1, Theodoretus, *Haereticarum fabularum compendium* 1.8, Photius, *Ep.* 134. Cf. pages 2–3.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. page 9.

¹⁴⁸ Comparisons to Greek philosophical literature have been attempted – probably to the extent possible – in Wucherpfennig, *Heracleon Philologus*.

as problematic were present within a community the heresiologists recognized as their own, not as alternative ideas among distant others.

Once we start categorizing early Christians as either “Sethians,” “Valentinians,” or “Proto-Orthodox,” it becomes exceedingly difficult not to view this label as the defining feature of every particular individual. Any difference in outlook between one author and the next can be construed as a defining characteristic of their respective communities, and every point of contention that appears within a given category becomes a sign of fragmentation within that particular movement. Taken to its logical extreme, this way of thinking leads to a depiction of the early Christian movement as a fractal image of ever-smaller, but irreconcilable conflicts. Such a model is not necessarily superior to the alternatives.

Since scholars began to distrust the heresiologists’ image of one singular, consistent, and original version of Christianity threatened by a multitude of divergent heresies,¹⁴⁹ several different metaphors for early Christian diversity have been proposed. The popular figure of a horse race is proposed by Philip Rousseau, who criticizes the fixation on the eventually successful competitor represented by what we retrospectively recognize as orthodoxy by stating: “That is like watching the rerun of a race while fixing your eyes confidently on the outsider you now know to have won as he inches unexpectedly forward along the fence.”¹⁵⁰ But this image implies a competition between cut-and-dried dogmatic alternatives. Horses do not change by racing each other, but remain the same animals whether they win or lose, although we have all reason to believe that much of the development of early Christian ideas took place through the means of dialogue and debate. Furthermore, each competitor in a race can only ride one horse at a time, which necessitates that every change of opinion among early Christian thinkers is a radical conversion.¹⁵¹

A model in which the alternatives are allowed to change, albeit mainly by internal causes, is proposed in *Trajectories through Early Christianity* by James M. Robinson and Helmut Koester.¹⁵² Robinson is critical of static descriptions of the New Testament’s Jewish, Greek, or “Gnostic” backgrounds or environments. Recognizing that the trajectory of a ball or bullet is largely determined by its initial position and velocity, he emphasizes that the early Christian bodies of his metaphor are rockets moving through “conflicting

¹⁴⁹ The 1934 publication of Bauer’s *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* was probably the decisive step in this process.

¹⁵⁰ Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt*, 2nd ed., *The Transformation of the Classical Heritage* 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 19.

¹⁵¹ Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 7–10, points out both of these drawbacks as well as numerous advantages of the metaphor in comparison to the depiction of the heresiologists.

¹⁵² James McConkey Robinson and Helmut Koester, *Trajectories through Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971).

gravitational fields,” thereby possessing a limited ability to choose their own courses in interaction with the general trends of society.¹⁵³ Although this metaphor nicely captures the interaction between an insignificant Christian movement and an indifferent larger world, it fails to recognize the formative interaction between the Christian alternatives. In all likelihood, differing Christian ideas impacted each other far more than could be captured by the negligible gravitational field of a moving rocket or the spectacular complexity of a docking maneuver.¹⁵⁴

Without offering a metaphor of his own, Larry W. Hurtado has argued that any model of early Christian diversity should take into account what he calls the “interactive diversity” of the early Christian movement. As Hurtado points out, early Christians did not only state their different points of view, but also engaged in networking activities, such as the exchange of written documents, extensive travel between cities, and an expressed solidarity that extended beyond their local communities.¹⁵⁵ This interaction clearly spanned all the way from cordial acceptance to vitriolic condemnation, but the practice witnesses, nevertheless, to an engagement that must have contributed to the development not only along, but also across, what can be construed as trajectories.¹⁵⁶

The metaphor of a scientific laboratory,¹⁵⁷ originally proposed by Winrich Löhr and subsequently advocated by Christoph Marksches and Judith Lieu,¹⁵⁸ rectifies this deficiency. In a laboratory, one certainly expects a dynamic interaction between “raw materials” of different origins, both as the outcome of meticulously planned and organized experimentation, and as the unforeseen

¹⁵³ James McConkey Robinson, “Dismantling and Reassembling the Categories,” in *Trajectories through Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 1–19, here 13–15.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. the similar criticism in Larry W. Hurtado, “Interactive Diversity: A Proposed Model of Christian Origins,” *JTS* 64.2 (2013): 445–62, here 447–52.

¹⁵⁵ Hurtado, “Interactive Diversity,” 452–54.

¹⁵⁶ Hurtado, “Interactive Diversity,” 459–62, esp. 459: “Along with a genuine diversity and diachronic development, we also have to take on board adequately the complexity of frequent and varied interaction of the diverse Christian circles, which do not readily fit into neat trajectories.”

¹⁵⁷ Winrich Alfried Löhr, “Epiphanes’ Schiff ‘Περὶ δικαιοσύνης’ (= Clemens Alexandrinus, Str. III,6,1–9,3),” in *Logos: Festschrift für Luise Abramowski zum 8. Juli 1993*, eds. Hanns Christof Brennecke, Ernst Ludwig Grasmück, and Christoph Marksches (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993), 12–29, here 29: “Das 2. Jahrhundert könnte man als eine Art Labor der altkirchlichen christlichen Theologie betrachten: Hier wurden radikale theologische Konsequenzen gezogen und kühne, oft überspannte Konzeptionen durchdacht; zuweilen wohl auch im praktischen Lebenswollzug ausprobiert.”

¹⁵⁸ Christoph Marksches, “Kerinth: Wer war er und was lehrte er?,” *JAC* 41 (1998): 48–76; Judith Lieu, “Modelling the Second Century as the Age of the Laboratory,” in *Christianity in the Second Century: Themes and Developments*, eds. James Carleton Paget and Judith Lieu (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 294–308.

consequences of more-or-less happy accidents. In both cases, the interaction may result in something that goes beyond a simple selection between clear-cut alternatives, which matches the development of early Christian ideas better than the metaphors of a rocket or a horse race. On the other hand, the metaphor overestimates the level of organization among early Christians: in order for a laboratory to function, someone has to pay the rent, order supplies, give ut keys, and assign workbenches. Such activities presuppose a level of authority and control that was, in all probability, absent from the second-century Christian movement. In addition, the metaphor has the disadvantage that few scholars of early Christianity have any extended experience of its vehicle, as we work not in labs, but in offices and libraries.

A metaphor that might capture the unorganized dynamic interactivity of early Christian diversity, and facilitate the interaction of modern scholars with early Christian authors, is that of a scholarly conference. In the second century, this would entail an utterly disorganized conference, where no abstracts have been sent in and approved in advance, no chairs appointed for the various sessions, no schedules distributed, and no meals or accommodation planned. Imagine a chaotic colloquium where scholars of wildly varied backgrounds jockey for position in the lines to the lecterns and eloquently expend every inch of their rhetorical abilities to gain anyone's attention, while people come, go, chat, and jeer like in any town square. No wonder that some organizational authority eventually appeared among these quarreling colleagues, in the form of the ecumenical councils, to put down some rules and establish a platform for continued discussion – a platform that some accepted, while others rejected it.

At this centuries-long conference, Heracleon was one of the earliest speakers, before the establishment of any strict scriptural, dogmatic, or episcopal authority. Even though he might have misunderstood most of what his predecessor had to say, we should appreciate that Origen took the time to listen.

Appendix

Origen's Verbatim Quotations from Heracleon

Quotations 1.5, 1.6 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 2.14/100–101	...τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ τῇ κτίσει.	...of that which is in the world and in the creation.
Quotation 2.3 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 2.21/137	Αὐτὸς γὰρ τὴν πρώτην μόρφωσιν τὴν κατὰ τὴν γένεσιν αὐτοῖς παρέσχε, τὰ ὑπ' ἄλλου σπαρέντα εἰς μορφήν καὶ εἰς φωτισμὸν καὶ περιγραφὴν ἰδίαν ἀγαγὼν καὶ ἀναδείξας.	For he granted them their first formation himself, at their creation, as he brought what had been sown by someone else into form, into light and its own individuality, and displayed them.
Quotation 4.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.15/92	Ἰωάννης ὡμολόγησεν μὴ εἶναι ὁ Χριστός, ἀλλὰ μηδὲ προφήτης μηδὲ Ἡλίας.	John acknowledged that he was neither the Christ, nor a prophet, nor Elijah.
Quotation 5.6 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.21/112	Αὐτὸς δὲ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ ἐρωτώμενος ἀποκρίνεται ὁ Ἰωάννης, οὐ τὰ περὶ αὐτόν.	But it is John himself, not what is around him, that answers when he is asked about himself.
Quotation 5.8 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.21/115	...ὅτι τούτοις προσήκον ἦν περὶ τούτων πολυπραγμονεῖν καὶ πυνθάνεσθαι, τοῖς τῷ θεῷ προσκαρτεροῦσιν.	...because it was appropriate for them, who were in the service of God, to investigate and inquire about these things.
Quotation 5.9 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.21/115	...ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκ τῆς λευιτικῆς φυλῆς ἦν.	...because he was also from the Levite tribe.
Quotation 6.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.23/126	...οἷς μόνοις ὀφείλεται τὸ βαπτίζειν....	...who alone are obliged to baptize....
Quotations 8.1, 8.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.39/194, 197	Ἡδὴ πάρεστιν καὶ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ ἐν ἀνθρώποις, καὶ ἐμφανὴς ἔστιν ἤδη πᾶσιν ὑμῖν.	He is already present, he is in the world and among humans, and he is already visible for all of you.

Quotation 8.5 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.39/198	Οὐκ εἰμι ἐγὼ ἱκανός, ἵνα δι' ἐμὲ κατέλθῃ ἀπὸ μεγέθους καὶ σάρκα λάβῃ [ὡς ὑπόδημα], περὶ ἧς ἐγὼ λόγον ἀποδοῦναι οὐ δύναμαι οὐδὲ διηγήσασθαι ἢ ἐπιλύσαι τὴν περὶ αὐτῆς οἰκονομίαν.	I am not important enough that he on my account would descend from his majesty and take a flesh as a sandal. I cannot give account of this, and neither describe nor explain its plan.
Quotation 9.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.40/204	Βηθανία	...in Bethany....
Quotation 10.3 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 6.60/307	Τὸ δὲ τέλειον εἰ ἐβούλετο τῷ σώματι μαρτυρῆσαι, κριὸν εἶπεν ἂν τὸ μέλλον θύεσθαι.	But if he wanted to testify to the perfection of the body, he would have spoken of a ram about to be sacrificed.
Quotations 11.3, 11.4 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 10.11/48, 58	Διὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲ πεποιηκώς τι λέγεται ἐν αὐτῇ ἢ λελαληκώς.	Therefore, he is not said to have done or said anything there.
Quotation 12.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 10.19/117	Αὕτη ἡ μεγάλη ἑορτή· τοῦ γὰρ πάθους τοῦ σωτῆρος τύπος ἦν, ὅτε οὐ μόνον ἀνηρεῖτο τὸ πρόβατον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀνάπαυσιν παρείχεν ἐσθιόμενον, καὶ θυόμενον <μέν> τὸ πάθος τοῦ σωτῆρος τὸ ἐν κόσμῳ ἐσήμεινεν, ἐσθιόμενον δὲ τὴν ἀνάπαυσιν τὴν ἐν γάμῳ.	This is the great festival. It symbolized the passion of the Savior, when the lamb was not only slaughtered, but also offered recreation by being eaten: when it was sacrificed, it signified the Savior's passion in this world; when it was eaten, it signified the recreation at the wedding banquet.
Quotation 13.10 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 10.33/215	Οὐ γὰρ ἐκ δέρματος νεκροῦ ἐποίησεν αὐτό, ἵνα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν κατασκευάσῃ οὐκέτι ληστῶν καὶ ἐμπόρων σπῆλαιον, ἀλλὰ οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ.	He did not make it out of dead leather, for he wanted to make the assembly no longer a den of robbers and merchants, but into a house of his Father's.
Quotation 16.3 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 10.38/261	Ὁ τετράς ἐστίν ἡ ἀπρόσπλοκος.	The number four is the unmixable [element].
Quotation 17.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 13.10/57	...κοσμικὴ γάρ ἦν.	...for it was of this world.

Quotation 17.5 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.10/60</i>	Αἰώνιος γὰρ ἡ ζωὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ μηδέποτε φθειρομένη, ὡς καὶ ἡ πρώτη ἢ ἐκ τοῦ φρέατος, ἀλλὰ μένουσα· ἀναφαίρετος γὰρ ἡ χάρις καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν καὶ μὴ ἀναλίσ- κομένη μηδὲ φθειρομένη ἐν τῷ μετέχοντι αὐτῆς.	For his life is eternal and nev- er decays – as does indeed the first, the one from the well – but lasts. For the grace and the gift of our Savior are imper- ishable, and are neither con- sumed nor decayed in the one who takes part in it.
Quotation 18.1 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.11/67</i>	Δῆλον ὅτι τοιοῦτό τι λέγων, “εἰ θέλεις λαβεῖν τοῦτο τὸ ὔδωρ, ὕπαγε φώνησον τὸν ἄνδρα σου.”	It is clear that he [Jesus] is saying something like: “if you want to receive this water, go call your husband.”
Quotation 18.3 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.11/67</i>	Οὐ γὰρ περὶ ἀνδρός κοσμικοῦ ἔλεγεν αὐτῇ, ἵνα καλέσῃ, ἐπεί- περ οὐκ ἠγνόει ὅτι οὐκ εἶχεν νόμιμον ἄνδρα.	He did not speak to her about calling for a man of this world, since he was not unaware that she did not have a lawful hus- band.
Quotation 18.6 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.11/70</i>	...ἐπεὶ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ οὐκ εἶχεν ἄνδρα ἢ Σαμαρεῖτις· ἦν γὰρ αὐτῆς ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι.	...since the Samaritan did not have a husband in the world, for her husband was in the eternity.
Quotation 18.7 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.11/71</i>	Ἐξ ἀνδρας ἔσχες.	Six men have you had.
Quotation 19.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.15/91</i>	...προφήτου γὰρ μόνου, ἐστὶν εἰδέναι τὰ πάντα·	...for only a prophet can know everything.
Quotation 19.4 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.15/92</i>	Πεπεισμένην τέ αὐτὴν ὅτι προφήτης εἶη, ἐρωτᾷ αὐτὸν ἅμα τὴν αἰτίαν ἐμφαίνουσιν δι' ἣν ἐξεπόρνευσεν, ἅτε δι' ἄγνοϊαν θεοῦ καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὸν θεὸν λατρείας ἀμελήσασαν καὶ πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὸν βίον αὐτῇ ἀναγκαίων, καὶ ἄλλως ἀεὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ τυγχάνου- σαν·	After being persuaded that he was a prophet, she asked him, and revealed at the same time the cause for her sexual beha- vior, since she was ignorant of God and neglected both his worship and everything that was essential to her in life, and always found herself in unfor- tunate circumstances in life.
Quotation 19.5 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.15/92</i>	Οὐ γὰρ ἂν αὐτὴ ἤρχετο ἐπὶ τὸ φρέαρ ἔξω τῆς πόλεως τυγχά- νον.	For [otherwise] she would not have come to the well that was outside of the town.

Quotation 20.3 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.16/95</i>	...μέρος ἐν ὃ διάβολος ὅλης τῆς ὕλης ἦν, ὃ δὲ κόσμος τὸ σύμπαν τῆς κακίας ὁρος, ἔρη- μον οἰκητήριον θηρίων, ᾧ προσεκύνουν πάντες οἱ πρὸ νόμου καὶ οἱ ἐθνικοί·	...the devil was one part of the entirety of matter, and the or- der was the whole mountain of evil, a deserted den of wild animals that all those who lived before the law was given, as well as the non-Jews, were worshipping.
Quotation 20.5 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.16/97</i>	"Ὑμεῖς οὖν οἰονεῖ οἱ πνευ- ματικοὶ οὐτε τῇ κτίσει οὐτε τῷ δημιουργῷ προσκυνήσετε, ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρὶ τῆς ἀληθείας	[Thus] you as spiritual people will worship neither the cre- ation nor the Maker, but the Father of Truth.
Quotation 20.6 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.16/97</i>	Συμπεριλαμβάνει γε αὐτὴν ὡς ἤδη πιστὴν καὶ συναριθ- μουμένην τοῖς κατὰ ἀλήθειαν προσκυνηταῖς.	He [Jesus] does include her, as already a believer, and counts her among those who worship in accordance with the truth.
Quotation 22.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.19/114</i>	Οὗτοι γὰρ ᾗδεσαν τίνι προσ- κυνοῦσιν κατὰ ἀλήθειαν προσκυνοῦντες.	For they worship in truth and know whom they worship.
Quotation 22.3 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.19/115</i>	...ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐν αὐτοῖς – οὐ γὰρ εἰς πάντας αὐτοὺς εὐδόκησεν – καὶ ὅτι ἐξ ἐκείνου τοῦ ἔθνους ἐξηλθεν ἡ σωτηρία καὶ ὁ λόγος εἰς τὴν οἰκουμένην.	...he was born in Judea – but [it is] not among them, for it was not all of them who ap- proved of him – and because it is from this people that the salvation and the Word have come out into the world.
Quotation 24.1 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.25/147</i>	...ἄχραντος γὰρ καὶ καθαρὰ καὶ ἀόρατος ἡ θεία φύσις αὐτοῦ	...for his divine nature is irreproachable, pure, and invisible.
Quotation 24.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.25/148</i>	...ἄξιως τοῦ προσκυνουμένου πνευματικῶς, οὐ σαρκικῶς· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως ὄντες τῷ πατρὶ πνευμά εἰσιν, οἵτινες κατὰ ἀλήθειαν καὶ οὐ κατὰ πλάνην προσκυνοῦσιν, καθὰ καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος διδάσ- κει λέγων λογικὴν λατρείαν τὴν τοιαύτην θεοσέβειαν.	...in a way that is worthy of the one being worshiped – spiritually, and not in the way of the flesh, for those who are of the same nature as the Fa- ther are also spirit, those who worship in truth and not in delusion, just as the apostle al- so teaches when he calls such a piety a 'reasonable service.'

Quotation 26.1 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.28/172</i>	Γίνωσκε ὅτι ἐκεῖνος, ὃν προσδοκᾷς, ἐγὼ εἰμι, ὁ λαλῶν σοι.	"You should know that the one whom you are expecting is me, the one who is speaking to you."
Quotation 26.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.28/172</i>	Ἦλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ πρὸς αὐτόν, δι' οὓς ἐληλύθει εἰς τὴν Σαμάρειαν.	The disciples on whose account he had come to Samaria came to him.
Quotation 27.1 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.31/187</i>	...τὴν δεκτικὴν ζωῆς ὑπολαμβάνει [...] ἐννοίαν τῆς δυνάμεως τῆς παρὰ τοῦ σωτῆρος....	...the disposition capable of receiving life [...] concept of the power that is from the Savior....
Quotation 27.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.31/187</i>	"Ἦντινα καταλιποῦσα παρ' αὐτῷ, τουτέστιν ἔχουσα παρὰ τῷ σωτῆρι τὸ τοιοῦτο σκεῦος, ἐν ᾧ ἐληλύθει λαβεῖν τὸ ζῶν ὕδωρ, ὑπέστρεψεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον εὐαγγελιζομένη τῇ κλήσει τὴν Χριστοῦ παρουσίαν· διὰ γὰρ τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος προσάγεται ἡ ψυχὴ τῷ σωτῆρι.	Leaving it with him – that is, keeping this vessel, in which she had come to get the living water, in the presence of the Savior – she returned to the world to announce to the called ones the good news of the arrival of the Christ, for it is through the spirit, and by the spirit, that the soul is brought to the Savior.
Quotation 27.4 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.31/191</i>	...καὶ ἦρχοντο διὰ τῆς πίστεως πρὸς τὸν σωτῆρα.	...and they came by faith to the Savior.
Quotation 32.3 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.41/271</i>	Αἱ μὲν γὰρ ἤδη ἑτοιμοὶ ἦσαν, αἱ δὲ ἔμελλον, αἱ δὲ μέλλουσιν, αἱ δὲ ἐπισπείρονται ἤδη.	Some were already ready, but some were about to be, some are now about to be, and some are already sowers themselves.
Quotation 34.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.46/299</i>	θεριστὴν ἑαυτὸν λέγει ὁ σωτῆρ.	The Savior speaks of himself as a reaper.

Quotation 35.1 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.49/322–23</i>	Χαίρει μὲν γάρ ὁ σπείρων ὅτι σπείρει, καὶ ὅτι ἤδη τινὰ τῶν σπερμάτων αὐτοῦ συνάγεται ἐλπίδα ἔχων τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ περὶ τῶν λοιπῶν· ὁ δὲ θερίζων ὁμοίως ὅτι καὶ θερίζει· ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν πρῶτος ἤρξατο σπείρων, ὁ <δὲ> δεύτερος θερίζων. Οὐ γὰρ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ ἐδύναντο ἀμφοτέροι ἄρξασθαι· ἔδει γὰρ πρῶτον σπαρῆναι, εἴθ' ὥστερον θερισθῆναι. Πausαμένου μέντοι γε τοῦ σπείροντος σπείρειν, ἔτι θεριεῖ ὁ θερίζων· ἐπὶ μέντοι τοῦ παρόντος ἀμφοτέροι τὸ ἴδιον ἔργον ἐνεργοῦντες ὁμοῦ χαίρουσιν κοινὴν χαρὰν τὴν τῶν σπερμάτων τελειότητα ἡγοῦμενοι.	For the sower rejoices because he sows, and, since some of his seeds are already being gathered, because he has this hope also for the rest. The reaper does the same, because he also reaps. But the sower began as the first, and the reaper as the second, for it was not possible for both to begin at the same time – it was necessary to sow first, and then reap later. When the sower has ceased to sow, the reaper will reap. In the present, while they both perform their own work, they rejoice together, regarding the fruition of the seeds as their mutual joy.
Quotation 35.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.49/324</i>	'Ο μὲν γὰρ ὑπὲρ τὸν τόπον υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου σπείρει· ὁ δὲ σωτὴρ, ὦν καὶ αὐτὸς υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου, θερίζει καὶ θεριστὰς πέμπει τοὺς διὰ τῶν μαθητῶν νοουμένους ἀγγέλους, ἕκαστον ἐπὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν.	For the son of man who is above the place sows, but the savior, who also is a son of man, reaps and sends as reapers the messengers, signified by the disciples, each for his own soul.
Quotation 36.1 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.50/336</i>	Οἱ δὲ κεκοπιακότες εἰσὶν οἱ τῆς οἰκονομίας ἄγγελοι, δι' ὧν ὡς μεσιτῶν ἐσπάρη καὶ ἀνετράφη.	But those who have worked hard are the messengers of the management, the agents through whom they were sown and grown.
Quotation 36.2 <i>Comm. Jo. 13.50/337</i>	Οὐ γὰρ ὁ αὐτὸς κόπος σπειρόντων καὶ θερίζοντων· οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐν κρίει καὶ ὕδατι καὶ κόπῳ τὴν γῆν σκάπτοντες σπείρουσιν καὶ δι' ὅλου χειμῶνος τημελοῦσιν σκάλλοντες καὶ τὰς ὕλας ἐκλέγοντες· οἱ δὲ εἰς ἔτοιμον καρπὸν εἰσελθόντες θέρους εὐφραίνόμενοι θερίζουσιν.	The labor of those who sow is not the same as that of those who reap. For the former ones sow by digging in the earth in frost, water, and labor, and through the whole winter they take care of hoeing and picking the weeds. But the latter ones come to a ripe crop in the summer, and enjoy themselves while they reap.

Quotation 38.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 13.52/349	“Παρ’ αὐτοῖς” ἔμεινεν καὶ οὐκ “ἐν αὐτοῖς” καὶ δύο ἡμέρας, ἦτοι τὸν ἐνεστῶτα αἰῶνα καὶ τὸν μέλλοντα τὸν ἐν γάμῳ, ἢ τὸν πρὸ τοῦ πάθους αὐτοῦ χρόνον καὶ τὸν μετὰ τὸ πάθος, ὃν παρ’ αὐτοῖς ποιήσας πολλῶ πλείονας διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου λόγου ἐπιστρέψας εἰς πίστιν ἐχωρίσ- θη ἀπ’ αὐτῶν.	“With them,” and not “in them,” he remained for “two days” – either the present age and the next one, which is at the wedding, or the period be- fore his passion and that after his passion, when he departed from them after being ‘with them,’ causing many more to turn to faith through his own words.
Quotation 39.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 13.53/363	Οἱ γὰρ ἄνθρωποι τὸ μὲν πρῶ- τον ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων ὁδηγού- μενοι πιστεύουσιν τῷ σωτῆρι, ἐπὰν δὲ ἐντύχωσιν τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ, οὗτοι οὐκέτι διὰ μόνην ἀνθρωπίνην μαρτυρίαν, ἀλλὰ δι’ αὐτὴν τὴν ἀλήθειαν πισ- τεύουσιν.	For people first come to trust the Savior after being guided by people, but when they en- counter his words, they no longer believe solely based on human testimony, but also based on truth itself.
Quotation 40.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 13.60/416	Βασιλικὸς ὠνομάσθη, οἶονεῖ μικρὸς τις βασιλεὺς ὑπὸ καθο- λικοῦ βασιλέως τεταγμένος ἐπὶ μικρᾶς βασιλείας.	He was called a royal official, namely a little king, appointed to a small kingdom by a high- er king.
Quotation 40.11 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 13.60/420	Πρὶν τελῶς [οὖν] θανατωθῆ- ναι κατὰ τὰς ἁμαρτίας δεῖται ὁ πατὴρ τοῦ μόνου σωτῆρος, ἵνα βοηθήσῃ τῷ υἱῷ.	[So,] before he was completely put to death in accordance with his sins, the father begged the only Savior to rescue his son.
Quotation 40.20 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 13.60/425	Ζητεῖσθαι δὲ περὶ τινων ἀγγέ- λων εἰ σωθήσονται, τῶν κατ- ελθόντων ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώ- πων θυγατέρας.	The question is whether some of the angels, those who have descended to the daughters of humans, will be saved.
Quotation 41.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 19.14/89	Πῶς ἐν ἀγνοίᾳ καὶ ἀπιστίᾳ καὶ ἁμαρτήμασιν ὄντες ἐν ἀφθαρ- σίᾳ δύνανται γενέσθαι;	How can those in ignorance, disbelief, and sins become im- mortal?
Quotation 42.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 19.19/125	ᾧ ὧντο λέγειν τὸν σωτῆρα οἱ Ιουδαῖοι ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐμαυτὸν δια- χειρισάμενος εἰς φθορὰν μέλ- λω πορεύεσθαι, ὅπου ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν.	The Jews thought the Savior said: “I am about to kill myself and pass into destruction, to where you cannot come.”

Quotation 44.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.20/168	“Διατί δὲ οὐ δύνασθε ἀκοῦειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν, ἢ ὅτι ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ διαβόλου ἐστέ;” ἀντὶ τοῦ “ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου,” φανερώων αὐτοῖς λοιπὸν τὴν φύσιν αὐτῶν, καὶ προελέγξας αὐτοὺς ὅτι οὕτε τοῦ Ἀβραάμ εἰσιν τέκνα – οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐμίσουν αὐτόν –, οὕτε τοῦ θεοῦ, διὸ οὐκ ἠγάπων αὐτόν.	“But why can you not hear my word, if not because your father is the devil?” – in the sense of “of the essence of the devil,” further clarifying their origin to them, having already proven that they are neither children of Abraham, or they would not have hated him, nor children of God, since they did not love him.
Quotation 45.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.23/198	Πρὸς οὓς ὁ λόγος ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ διαβόλου ἦσαν.	Those to which this word was addressed were of the essence of the devil.
Quotation 46.6 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.24/215	Καὶ φύσει μὲν, φησίν, ἐστὶν τὸ γεννηθὲν ὑπὸ τινος γεννητοῦ, ὃ καὶ κυρίως τέκνον καλεῖται· γνώμη δέ, ὅτε τὸ θέλημά τις ποιῶν τινος διὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γνώμην τέκνον ἐκείνου οὗ ποιεῖ τὸ θέλημα καλεῖται· ἀξία δέ, καθ’ ὃ λέγονταί τινες γεέννης τέκνα καὶ σκοτούς καὶ ἀνομίας, καὶ ὄφρων καὶ ἐχιδνῶν γεννήματα.	By birth is the one born by some parent, who therefore is called a child in the proper sense; by choice, when someone, who by his own choice performs the will of someone else, is called a child of the one whose will he performs; by merit, in accordance with how people are called children of hell, darkness, or lawlessness, or the offspring of snakes or vipers.”
Quotation 46.7 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.24/216	Οὐ γὰρ γεννᾷ ταῦτά τινα τῇ ἑαυτῶν φύσει· φθοροποιὰ γὰρ καὶ ἀναλίσκοντα τοὺς ἐμβληθέντας εἰς αὐτά· ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ ἔπραξαν τὰ ἐκείνων ἔργα, τέκνα αὐτῶν εἴρηται.	For these things do not beget anything of their own nature, for they are destructive and ruin what is thrown into them, but since they have practiced their works, they are said to be their children.
Quotation 47.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.28/252	Οὐ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἡ φύσις ἐστὶν αὐτοῦ, ἀλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, ἐκ πλάνης καὶ ἀγνοίας.	For his nature is not of the truth, but of the opposite of the truth, of falsehood and ignorance.

Quotation 47.2 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.28/253	Διὸ οὔτε στήναι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ οὔτε σχεῖν ἐν αὐτῷ ἀλήθειαν δύναται, ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ φύσεως ἴδιον ἔχων τὸ ψεῦδος, φυσικῶς μὴ δυνάμενός ποτε ἀλήθειαν εἰπεῖν.	For this reason he can neither stand in truth nor have truth in him, since he has untruth as a characteristic of his own na- ture, and he by nature cannot ever speak the truth.
Quotation 48.1 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.38/358	Ὁ ζῆτῶν καὶ κρίνων ἐστὶν ὁ ἐκδικῶν με, ὁ ὑπηρέτης ὁ εἰς τοῦτο τεταγμένος, ὁ μὴ εἰκῇ τὴν μάχαιραν φορῶν, ὁ ἔκδι- κος τοῦ βασιλέως. Μωσῆς δέ ἐστὶν οὗτος, καθ' ἃ προείρη- κεν αὐτοῖς λέγων. "Εἰς ὃν ὕμεῖς ἠλπίσατε."	The one who seeks and the one who judges is the one who gives me justice, the servant appointed for this task, who does not carry the sword in vain, the officer of the king. This is Moses, in accordance with what he had proclaimed to them when he said: "in whom you have placed your hope."
Quotation 48.3 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.38/360	Πῶς οὖν οὐ λέγει τὴν κρίσιν πᾶσαν παραδεδοσθαι αὐτῷ;	Then why does he [Jesus] not say that all judgment is hand- ed over to him [Moses]?
Quotation 48.4 <i>Comm. Jo.</i> 20.38/361	Καλῶς λέγει· ὁ γὰρ κριτὴς ὡς ὑπηρέτης τὸ θέλημα τούτου ποιῶν κρίνει, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων φαίνεται γινόμενον.	He [Jesus] speaks well, be- cause the judge judges as a servant who carries out his [Jesus's] will, as it also appears to be done among humans.

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