

Hylomorphism in Origen as a Background to Gregory's Anthropology

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Origen's repeated criticisms of major Aristotelian tenets (similar to Plotinus' and Porphyry's criticisms) and the absence of Aristotle from the list of Origen's favourite readings according to Porphyry do not mean that he had a poor knowledge of Aristotelian texts and doctrines; on the contrary, I argued (in a substantial essay in *Philosophie Antique*) that he had a good knowledge of Aristotelianism, probably also through Alexander of Aphrodisias – further research is needed and underway.

Origen also deployed Aristotelian doctrines, and one interesting example seems to be hylomorphism. This paper will investigate the way Origen used a version of hylomorphism to account for the structure of human body (in terms of *eidos* + *hyle* as *hypokeimenon*) and the possibility of its resurrection, as well as, apparently, for the whole created world (in a separate treatment).

Later, a Neoplatonist who was acquainted with Origen as well as with Plotinus and Porphyry, Proclus, interpreted Aristotle's hylomorphism as an adaptation of Plato's teaching that was good for the physical realm. Consistently, hylomorphism was how Proclus accounted for beings in 'this cosmic order' as opposed to the 'intelligible or intellectual cosmic orders'. The terms he used are the same as Origen's.

Origen's notion of *eidos* was misunderstood by Methodius, with whose works Gregory of Nyssa was familiar, as well as with those of Origen. Gregory, as I argue elsewhere, did not criticise Origen about the soul-body relation, as is often maintained. But was Origen's use of hylomorphism received by Gregory of Nyssa? Hylomorphism was taken up by Nazianzen as a theory that accounts for all material creatures. But what about Origen's use of hylomorphic theories in Nyssen? I shall suggest that Gregory had Origen's theory in mind in relation to the resurrection. He also knew the *Dialogue of Adamantius*, where Adamantius teaches the same as Origen did - not accidentally, the Philocalists (according to tradition, the Cappadocians) identified Adamantius here with Origen.