



'No small counsel about self-control': *Enkrateia* and the virtuous body as missional performance in 2 Clement

Author:Chris L. de Wet¹**Affiliation:**¹Department of Biblical and Ancient Studies, University of South Africa, South Africa**Correspondence to:**

Chris de Wet

Email:

chrisldw@gmail.com

Postal address:

PO Box 392, UNISA, Pretoria 0003, South Africa

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The question this article addresses is how the encratic, virtuous body in 2 Clement 'speaks itself' as a missional performance. It is in essence concerned with the discourses of corporeal virtuosity in 2 Clement. Firstly, the *agon* motif (2 Clem 7:1–6; 20:1–4) is discussed since it forms the basis metaphor for the understanding of ancient virtue-formation. Secondly, 2 Clement's encratic technologies of soul and flesh as an extension and overamplification, respectively, of the body are examined (2 Clem 9:1–11). In the third instance, the proliferation of visible technologies of the body in 2 Clement are brought into perspective with special emphasis on these technologies as strategies of andromorphism, a crucial element in the understanding of virtue in antiquity (2 Clem 12:1–6). Fourthly, 2 Clement also links concepts of holiness and the pneumatic dimension of spirituality in its argumentation (2 Clem 14:1–5). This needs to be understood in the light of corporeal virtuosity. Finally, the concepts of suffering (2 Clem 19:3–4), martyrdom (2 Clem 5:1–7) and the apocalyptic anti-spectacle (2 Clem 17:1–7) are central in 2 Clement's formulations of the missional performance and are therefore clarified. The intersection of these discourses is where the virtuous body in 2 Clement speaks itself as a missional performance. The study concludes by looking at the implications of the findings for understanding early Christian missionality.

Missionality and the corporeal imagination of 2 Clement

The anonymous author(s) of one of the earliest Christian homilies simply entitled *ΚΑΗΜΕΝΤΟΣ ΙΠΡΟΣ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΙΟΥΣ* 'B' ¹(15:1) writes:

Now I do not think that I have given you any small counsel about self-control, and anyone who takes it will have no cause to regret it, but shall save both himself and me his counsellor. (Donfried 1974:34)²

The pseudonymous mention of Clement in the title, referring to the author of an epistle written earlier to Christians in Corinth, is less meant in the sense of authorship and more in the sense of its theological and ethical continuity with the aforementioned First Epistle of Clement. The occasion of the homily, erroneously called an 'epistle' according to tradition (cf. Parvis 2006: 265–270; Drobner 2007:57–58), is in fact an afterword following a rather destructive schism in the Corinthian Christian community. The details of this schism are delineated in 1 Clement 44:6–45:1:

But you, we observe, have removed a number of people, despite their good conduct, from a ministry they have fulfilled with honor and integrity. Your contention and rivalry, brothers, thus touches matters that bear on our salvation.³

It seems that there was a dispute amongst the Christian leaders in Corinth that led to the excommunication of some of the elders, who then appealed to the Christian leadership in Rome to intervene in the issue. The elders were reinstated and this homily, called 2 Clement, represents their ethical paranaesis after the crisis (Pratscher 2006:597–610). This is especially evident in the many references to repentance in the homily (cf. 2 Clem 8–9, 13, 15–17, 19). Whilst there is some disagreement amongst scholars on the place of writing, I am in agreement with Donfried (1974:1–15) that the homily was probably composed and delivered in Corinth, especially with the allusions to the Isthmian Games in Chapter 7.⁴ The audience would comprise of those Corinthian Christians involved in or affected by the schism, possibly libertine pneumatic who believed that having certain spiritual gifts and divine knowledge gave them superior status.⁵ Whilst the

1. Translation: Clement to the Corinthians (B)

2. Several translations of 2 Clement will be utilised in this study. Mostly, the more recent revision of the *Apostolic Fathers* by Holmes (1992) is cited, but sections from Lake (1977) and Donfried (1974) are also used.

3. Translation by Donfried (1974:8) and Greek text from Lake (1977:84): 'Ὁρῶμεν γάρ, ὅτι ἐνίους ὑμεῖς μετηγάγετε καλῶς πολιτευομένων ἐκ τῆς ἀμέμπτως αὐτοῖς τετιμημένης λειτουργίας. Φυλόνεικοι ἔστε, ἀδελφοί, καὶ ζηλωταὶ περὶ τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς σωτηρίαν; for a study on the background of 1 Clement, see Beyschlag (1966).

4. The question of the provenance of 2 Clement is widely debated. The preference for Corinth was initially proposed by Zahn (in Donfried 1974:2–3) and consequently accepted by several scholars (cf. Donfried 1974; Funk 1902; Krüger 1928; Lightfoot 1890), although interestingly enough rejected by Von Harnack (1897:440–443) and some others (cf. Di Pauli 1903; Knopf 1920). For a full discussion of the *status quaestionis* of 2 Clement, see the study of Baasland (1993:2.27:78–157).

5. This problem has a long history in the Corinthian Christian community, from the time of Paul (Martin 1995:87–103) and later during the composition of 2 Clement (Donfried 1974:8). It was, in fact, a problem already identified by John Chrysostom in the late fourth century in one of the earliest commentaries on 1 Corinthians (cf. *Hom. 1 Cor. 29*; PG 61:239–250).

homily refutes several Gnostic doctrines, it also utilises and reimagines its own distinct Gnostic phraseology. It can be described as an infiltrational approach to subverting certain Gnostic discourses. Its polemic is covert; it aims to bring about change from the inside out. Furthermore, as a homily, 2 Clement becomes a valuable source for social and cultural information (Mayer 2008:565–583) and very useful for cultural historical analysis, the trajectory followed in the present study. Whilst 2 Clement can be described as a primitive Christian homily, very different from the homilies of late ancient authors like Chrysostom and Augustine, it still bears much cultural-historical value.

Moreover, this study is also concerned with the very self-description of the homily as '[Οὐκ] μικρὰν συμβουλίαν...περὶ ἐγκρατείας,' that is, 'no small counsel ... about self-control.' The *leitmotiv* of the homily revolves around the shaping of virtue through self-control or self-mastery, also known as encratism (cf. Chadwick 1962:342–365; Donfried 1974:34–48; Quispel 1985:46–73). Whilst this self-description reveals its main theme, there is also a potent missional⁶ dimension to 2 Clement, which is directly related to its encratic purpose. The missional impetus is especially stated in 2 Clement 2:7: 'So also Christ willed to save what was perishing, and he saved many when he came and called us who were already perishing.'⁷

And, more importantly, in 2 Clement 13:3–4, it is stated:

For when the pagans hear from our mouths the oracles of God, they marvel at their beauty and greatness. But when they discover that our actions are not worthy of the words we speak, they turn from wonder to blasphemy, saying that it is a myth and a delusion.⁸

We see here the fundamental tension of missionality – the need for congruency between proclamation and practice. The author of 2 Clement is very much bothered by this and understands that proclamation is as much an encratic corporeal performance as it is verbal utterance. The somatic interplays between bodily practice and asceticism/encratism have been duly noted by Shaw (1998:17–26). This problem supports the notion that missionality in early Christianity, specifically pre-Constantinian Christianity, was much more complex than simply going out and preaching the gospel to non-believers. Conventional concepts in missiology such as centrifugality and centripetality do not hold in the ancient context, and their use is often anachronistic. In 2 Clement, as in most of the documents of the New Testament, missionality is as much concerned with intra-ecclesiastical management as with approaching outsiders with the gospel message.

6.The terms 'missional' and 'missionality' will be used in this study rather than 'mission' and 'evangelism,' since the latter terms have come to mean verbal proclamation often related to a centrifugal imperative. With 'missional' and 'missionality', discourses related to mission and proclamation are included but aim to be more inclusive in terms of missional *practices*, especially corporeal practices, and not only simple proclamation.

7.Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:140–141): 'οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἠθέλησεν σῶσαι τὰ ἀπολλύμενα, καὶ ἔσωσεν πολλοὺς, ἐλθὼν καὶ καλέσας ἡμᾶς ἡδὴ ἀπολλυμένους.'

8.Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:154–155): 'τὰ ἔθνη γὰρ ἀκούοντα ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ἡμῶν τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς καλὰ καὶ μεγάλα θαυμάζει· ἔπειτα καταμαθόντα τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄξια τῶν ῥημάτων ὧν λέγομεν, ἔνθεν εἰς βλασφημίαν τρέπονται, λέγοντες εἶναι μῦθόν τινα καὶ πλάνην.'

One could certainly not impose such a missiological binary on 2 Clement. Thus, an analysis of 2 Clement calls for the rethinking and redescription of early Christian representations of missionality and κήρυγμα [proclamation].

This study will argue that 2 Clement utilises the discursive formation of the virtuous body as a missional performance for both intra-ecclesiastical regulation and proclamation to outsiders. Why the emphasis on body? Dualistic discourses of body and soul or flesh and spirit permeate the thinking of 2 Clement, and the author cannot conceptualise virtue in any other way than being embodied in the flesh (Glancy 2010:24–27). It will be shown that even concepts like soul and spirit are in essence corporeal discourses and technologies. Thus, in the corporeal imagination of 2 Clement, the virtuous body becomes what I would call a missional performance. The question we are faced with is how 2 Clement constructs this almost theatrical vision of the virtuous Christian body. Put simpler, how does the virtuous body in 2 Clement 'speak itself' as a missional performance? The rhetoric of the body and its performativity lie at the core of this issue and is based on concepts developed by Michel Foucault. Foucault (1972:49) understands discourses as linguistic 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak.' A text, like 2 Clement, therefore participates in a discourse and thereby constructs by means of rhetoric an alternative vision of the world (and/or the embodied self). It then uses language to persuade the audience of the power and reality of this vision. In the case of 2 Clement, this vision of the world and the self is also constructed in negotiation with other ancient identities, for instance Gnosticism (Pratscher 2007:68). A complex grouping or systemic network of related discourses then form what is called discursive formations. In this article, I shall argue that the virtuous body as the visionary 2 Clement imagines it is a discursive formation that consists of several intersectional discourses. The concept of intersectionality originates from feminist social critique and implies that a discourse is activated at an intersectional nexus comprising of statements related to gender, ethnicity, power, patriarchy, et cetera. In this case, one cannot understand the missional discourse of 2 Clement without asking questions about gender and power. Broadly speaking, the article has two sections. Firstly, the elements 2 Clement's construction of the virtuous body will be examined, and secondly, I shall consider how this discursive formation performs itself missionally.

As a brief preliminary excursus, the study will view the development of the concept of ἐγκράτεια [self-control] in Hellenistic antiquity in order to frame encratic statements in 2 Clement. Thereafter, the discourses of corporeal virtuosity in 2 Clement will be delineated. Firstly, the ἀγών [contest] motif (2 Clem 7:1–6; 20:1–4) will be discussed since it forms the basis metaphor for the understanding of ancient virtue-formation. Secondly, 2 Clement's technologies of soul and flesh as an extension and overamplification, respectively, of the body will be examined (2 Clem 9:1–11). Thereafter, in the third instance, the proliferation of visible technologies of the body in 2 Clement will be placed into perspective with special emphasis on these technologies as strategies

of andromorphism, a crucial element in the understanding of virtue in antiquity (2 Clem 12:1–6). Fourthly, 2 Clement also links concepts of holiness and the pneumatic dimension of spirituality in its argumentation (2 Clem 14:1–5). This needs to be understood in the light of corporeal virtuosity. Finally, the concepts of suffering (2 Clem 19:3–4), martyrdom (2 Clem 5:1–7) and the apocalyptic anti-spectacle (2 Clem 17:1–7) are central in 2 Clement’s formulations of the missional performance and should therefore be clarified. The intersection of these discourses is where the virtuous body in 2 Clement speaks itself as a missional performance. The study will conclude with summarising remarks and also by looking at the implications of the findings for understanding early Christian missionality.

Enkrateia in Hellenistic antiquity and 2 Clement

According to its own self-description, self-control [ἐγκράτεια] is one of the central motifs of the homily. The value of self-control experienced an interesting evolution in Hellenistic and Roman antiquity, and the concept is directly related to the formation of antique masculinities. In essence, one cannot separate self-control from male self-fashioning, the discursive process of constructing and caring for one’s own embodied (masculine) identity. Its roots are found in the ancient discourse of οἰκονομία, the art of household management. Household management in antiquity was a highly masculine discourse (Sessa 2011:2–3). In Hellenistic antiquity, many authors understood household management to be a microcosm for the governance of the state. This is called holistic οἰκονομία. One of the most influential Hellenistic authors writing on οἰκονομία was Xenophon. In his *Oeconomicus*, Xenophon equates the management of a household with civic leadership (*Oec.* 5.14–17, 21.2, 21.12; cf. also, *Mem.* 3.4.6 McKeown 2011:165–167). Aristotle, however, is more critical of the notion of οἰκονομία as a model for civic power-relations (*Pol.* 1252a.7–1252b.5). Based on his complex classifications of state forms of power and his conviction that governments differ in kind, Aristotle rejected the concept of holistic οἰκονομία. However, the influence of Aristotle in the late Republican and early Imperial days of Rome was very limited, especially due to the unavailability of certain writings in the library of Theophrastus. According to various ancient catalogues, Aristotle’s *Politica* was virtually unknown in the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods (Lord 1986:141). Xenophon, in contrast, was extremely influential in the development of Roman thought on οἰκονομία since his *Oeconomicus* was translated into Latin by Cicero and cited very often in the agricultural treatises of Cato, Varro and Columella. What is the basis of this form of holistic οἰκονομία? The question of rulership and domination lies at its core. Greek and Roman masculinities were formed by means of the discourse of domination – a man had to control and dominate the other bodies in the household, most notably that of his wife, children and slaves, and also, in the broader military sense, barbarians (cf. Murnaghan 1988:9–22; Walters 1997:29–46). Xenophon and Plato also refer to the concept of ἐγκράτεια especially in relation to the concept of σωφροσύνη, that is, moderation (Foucault 1985:63–65).

Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.1.30) and Plato (*Gor.* 491b) affirm that the good householder must rule over his own desires to achieve σωφροσύνη, very much like he would rule over the bodies of his wife, children and slaves. Foucault’s (1985) remark is significant in this regard:

Enkrateia, with its opposite, *akrasia*, is located on the axis of struggle, resistance, and combat; it is self-control, tension, ‘continnence’; *enkrateia* rules over pleasures and desires, but has to struggle to maintain control. Unlike the ‘moderate’ man, the ‘continent’ one experiences pleasures that are not in accord with reason, but he no longer allows himself to be carried away by them, and his merit will be greater in proportion as his desires are strong ... [T]he term *enkrateia* in the classical vocabulary seems to refer in general to the dynamics of a domination of oneself by oneself and to the effort that it demands. (p. 65)

In this manner, the virtuous, self-controlled body fashions itself by means of self-domination. Discipline is crucial in this instance, and the metaphor of the gymnasium and the contest [ἀγών] occupies a central position.

Encratism and the Ἀγών motif

I shall put forward two examples to illustrate the use of the ἀγών motif in antiquity: firstly, Plato’s use of the metaphor in his *Laws* and then Paul’s use of it in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. Plato points to the importance of training and discipline for the resistance that the body must provide in the contest (*Leg.* 1.647d). Endurance [ὑπομονή] is crucial, as it is necessary in the competition, so too is it important in the control of the passions (cf. Spicq 1930:95–106; Shaw 1996:269–312). In the first book of Plato’s laws, in a dialogue between an Athenian stranger, Cleinias and Megillus, the thrust of this argument is highlighted (*Leg.* 633b.5–633d.3):

Megillus: I think that I can get as far as the fourth head, which is the frequent endurance of pain, exhibited among us Spartans in certain hand-to-hand fights; also in stealing with the prospect of getting a good beating; there is, too, the so-called Crypteia, or secret service, in which wonderful endurance is shown – our people wander over the whole country by day and by night, and even in winter have not a shoe to their foot, and are without beds to lie upon, and have to attend upon themselves. Marvelous, too, is the endurance which our citizens show in their naked exercises, contending against the violent summer heat; and there are many similar practices, to speak of which in detail would be endless.

Athenian: Excellent, O Lacedaemonian Stranger. But how ought we to define courage? Is it to be regarded only as a combat against fears and pains, or also against desires and pleasures, and against flatteries; which exercise such a tremendous power, that they make the hearts even of respectable citizens to melt like wax?⁹

9. Translation by Jowett (2010:11) and Greek text from (Burnet 1967: [TLG]): ME. “Ἐπι τοίνυν καὶ τὸ τέταρτον ἔγωγε περὶ ἡμῶν ἀν λέγειν, τὸ περὶ τὰς καρτερήσεις τῶν ἀληθῶν πολὺ παρ’ ἡμῖν γινόμενον, ἐν τε ταῖς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ταῖς χερσὶ μάχαις καὶ ἐν ἀρπαγαῖς τισιν διὰ πολλῶν πληγῶν ἐκάστοτε γινόμενον· ἐπι δὲ καὶ κρυπτεία τις ὀνομάζεται θαυμαστῶς πολὺπρονος πρὸς τὰς καρτερήσεις, χειμῶνων τε ἀνυποδησῆσαι καὶ ἀστροφῆσαι καὶ ἀνευθεραπεύοντων αὐτοῖς ἐαυτῶν διακονήσεις νύκτωρ τε πλανωμένων διὰ πάσης τῆς χώρας καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέραν. ἐπι δὲ καὶ ταῖς γυμνοπαιδαῖς δεῖναι καρτερήσεις παρ’ ἡμῖν γίνονται τῆ τοῦ πνίγους ῥόμῃ διαμαχομένων, καὶ πάμπολλα ἕτερα, σχεδὸν ὅσα οὐκ ἂν παύσαιτο τις ἐκάστοτε διεξιόν. Αἴθ. Εὐ γὰρ, ὁ Λακεδαιμόνιος ξένη, λέγεις τὴν ἀνδρείαν δέ, φέρε, τί θάμην; πότερον ἀπλῶς οὕτως εἶναι πρὸς φόβου καὶ λύπας διαμάχην μόνον, ἢ καὶ πρὸς πόθου τε καὶ ἡδονῆς καὶ τινὰς δεῖναις θωπείας κολακικῆς, αἱ καὶ τῶν σεμνῶν οἰομένων εἶναι τοὺς θυμὸς ποιοῦσιν κηρίνους.”

Besides being a potent rhetorical tactic, the use of the *ἀγών* motif also shows that active resistance through discipline and training is fundamental to the formation of masculinity and virtuosity (Lecerle 1998:26–27). For Plato, this is more than physical training, although physical exercise and the physique of the body is directly related to the control of the passions. Aristotle promulgates a similar view (*Eth. Nic.* 1104A–1106B). The importance of physical discipline as a civic virtue stands out here, and the same principle, namely that of endurance, is also applicable to the control of the passions. Events like the Spartan social contests and the Olympic Games (to which Plato may be referring) or Isthmian Games (the context of agonistic references in Paul and 2 Clement) were not merely a showcase of physical human endurance, but it also represented the civic values of discipline, endurance and abstinence, those cornerstones of classical virtue discourse. In a document as early as the *Laws*, we already see the complex interchange and development between physical training and the interiorization of its principles. Foucault (1985:63–64) is correct in noting that this evolution would gain much momentum in early Christianity, probably via the teachings of Cynicism and later Stoicism, as well as influence from Second Temple Judaistic wisdom. It was not simply a gradual interiorization of the rules of *ἐγκράτεια* but rather a ‘restructuring of the forms of self-relationship’ (Foucault 1985:63). Thus, the encratic principles and technologies of the classical period are here essentially redefined and restructured in the language of the new Christian ethic that someone like Paul would promote. Hence the same reasoning would become very prevalent in early Christianity, with Paul writing the following in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27:

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified (ESV).¹⁰

In both Plato and Paul, although with slightly different emphases, we have the most important element in the practice of *ἐγκράτεια*, namely the agonistic dimension. However, we cannot simply focus on the continuities. It would in fact be the various discontinuities between Plato and Paul that are of interest. The difference, and thus development, between Plato and Paul is that Paul is less concerned with the physical, athletic training of the body and much more concerned with moral self-control and abstinence (Pfitzner 1967:82–98).¹¹ This is representative of the restructuring of encratic values mentioned above. If we look at some of Paul’s near-contemporaries, the picture becomes somewhat clearer and lines of continuity more pronounced. Stoic contemporaries of Paul, like Epictetus (*Diss.* 4.4.11–13)

10. Greek text: SBLGNT: ἵπας δὲ ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐγκρατεύεται, ἐκεῖνοι μὲν οὖν ἵνα φθαρτὸν στέφανον λάβωσιν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄφθαρτον. ἐγὼ τοίνυν οὕτως τρέχω ὡς οὐκ ἀδήλωσ, οὕτως πυκτεύω ὡς οὐκ ἄερα δέρον· ἀλλὰ ὑποπιᾶζω μου τὸ σῶμα καὶ δουλαγωγῶ, μή πως ἄλλοις κηρύξας αὐτὸς ἀδόκιμος γένομαι.

11. I am obviously not implying that physical training is the single determining factor in Plato’s view of the body in this instance, since it is well known that Plato also envisions the training of the soul so that it may eventually leave the body. However, physical training is still an important value to Plato, probably more so than in Paul’s thinking.

and Seneca (*Vit. Beat.* 9.3; *Ep.* 17.1), constantly emphasise the futility of physical and athletic training in the light of moral *ἐγκράτεια* (Thiselton 2000:713). There is little profit in training a body physically if the passions are not mastered. Physical training and the mastery of the passions, however, were still very closely related to each other in the days of Paul and Seneca. This discourse is therefore not monolithic but complex in its varied manifestations and representations in social formation and reproduction. The theme of *ἐγκράτεια* is also prevalent in the works of Philo (*Spec. Leg.* 4.99).

Paul, like his contemporaries, understands the importance of promoting a rhetoric of *ἐγκράτεια* in his virtue discourse. Whilst the importance of physical training had much importance in Plato, the writings of Paul and other early Christian documents would substitute the physical training of the athletic *ἀγών* with the *ἀγών* of martyrdom (Shaw 1996:269–281).

Due to its geographical context, namely Corinth, the author of 2 Clement is, like Paul, in a convenient location to use the agonistic metaphor. The homily reads (2 Clem 7:1–3):

So then my brothers and sisters, let us then compete in the games, realizing that the competition is at hand. While many come to enter earthly competitions, not all are crowned, but only those who have trained hard and competed well. Let us compete, therefore, that we may all be crowned. Let us run in the straight course, the heavenly competition, and let many of us come to enter it and compete, so that we may also be crowned. And if we cannot all be crowned, let us at least come close to it.¹²

The very same rhetoric seen with Paul is present here although 2 Clement seems to stress that many are able to achieve in the contest, an emphasis slightly absent in 1 Corinthians 9:24–27. For 2 Clement, the primary contest here is the ‘heavenly competition,’ perhaps better translated by Lake (1977:139) as the ‘immortal contest’ [*ἀγῶνα τὸν ἄφθαρτον*; 2 Clem 7:3]. The emphasis on the immortal contest is in no way a reference to an acorporeal contest but rather to the fact that it is no physical athletic contest. The rules of the game are different, and, as it will be shown, an alternate scopic economy is active. Corporeality plays a very important role in 2 Clement, and the emphasis would move from the athletic competition to the contest of martyrdom and the ephemeral struggle against the passions. It was already stated in 2 Clement 5:1–7. Knopf (1920:159–165) is probably correct in suggesting that this section refers to martyrdom (cf. also Lohmann 1989:99–101). Whilst some like Donfried (1974:118–119; cf. Pratscher 2007:100) deny this, the reference to the wolves tearing the lambs to pieces (2 Clem 5:4) and the agonistic discourse in 2 Clement 7 serve as an affirmation. It would be difficult, taking into account the period, language and context of 2 Clement, that martyrdom would not be an issue. The spectacle of the games is now replaced by the spectacle of the arena of the martyrs. As the athletic games were directly related to the formation of virtue and *ἐγκράτεια*, so too the early Christian martyr narratives may

12. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:146–147): Ὡστε οὖν, ἀδελφοί μου, ἀγωνισώμεθα εἰδοῦτες, ὅτι ἐν χερσίν ὁ ἀγὼν καὶ ὅτι εἰς τοὺς φθαρτοὺς ἀγῶνας καταπέουσιν πολλοί, ἀλλ’ οὐ πάντες στεφανοῦνται, εἰ μὴ οἱ πολλὰ κοπίσαντες καὶ καλῶς ἀγωνισάμενοι. ἡμεῖς οὖν ἀγωνισώμεθα, ἵνα πάντες στεφανωθῶμεν. ὥστε θέωμεν τὴν ὁδὸν τὴν εὐθείαν, ἀγῶνα τὸν ἄφθαρτον, καὶ πολλοὶ εἰς αὐτὸν καταπέσομεν καὶ ἀγωνισώμεθα, ἵνα καὶ στεφανωθῶμεν· καὶ εἰ μὴ δυνάμεθα πάντες στεφανωθῆναι, κἂν ἐγγὺς τοῦ στέφανου γενώμεθα.

be understood as corporeal performances of Christian virtue; suffering bodies speaking the language of ἐγκράτεια. Second Clement 5:6 is very clear about the fact that one overcomes the persecution of this age and obtains the salvation by ‘... living a holy and righteous life, and to regard these worldly things as alien to us, and not to desire them...’ (cf. Lohmann 1989:99–101 for more on 2 Clement’s eschatology).¹³

It is here that the visibility and performativity of virtue, as a missional strategy, is highlighted. The display of corporeal virtuosity, not in athletics, but in the forsaking of the world and in the arena of the martyrs, serves a kerygmatic interest (2 Clem 13:3–4). The anti-cosmic rhetoric displays the homily’s Gnostic tendencies, but it also provides the logical framework for the introduction of the apocalyptic anti-spectacle in 2 Clement. Whilst Christians contend and suffer in the current reality, the apocalyptic eschatology of 2 Clement also introduces the thought of an inverted spectacle in heaven where the unrighteous will suffer (2 Clem 7:6; citing Mk 9:44, 46:48): ‘... [T]heir worm will not die and their fire will not be quenched, and they will be a spectacle for all flesh’ (cf. also: 2 Clem 17:5).¹⁴ Heaven is also an empire of torture and retribution, and the optics and politics of the spectacle are inverted in this new apocalyptic reality (2 Clem 17:7):

But the righteous who have done good, and have endured torture, and have hated the indulgences of the soul, when they see how those who have done amiss, and denied Jesus by word or deed, are punished with terrible torture in unquenchable fire, shall give ‘glory to their God...’¹⁵

This text, disturbingly, inverts the earthly reality. The heavenly empire [βασιλεία] is not much different from the Roman Empire. It also has spectacle and also has a propensity to torture those who do not confess its heavenly emperor. Those who have overcome, specifically those who have ‘hated the indulgences of the soul,’ are now the spectators and not the spectacle.

Soul and flesh as corporeal strategies

How does the concept of ‘soul’ [ψυχή], being so central to 2 Clement’s thinking, fit into the discourse of ἐγκράτεια? Christian living is essentially defined by means of the disciplining of the bodily passions. There was, however, a very important development in ancient thought regarding self-control. In Stoic philosophy, the notion of the soul would become a crucial aspect of ἐγκράτεια. An author like Seneca would often refer to the soul of a person as the most important dimension of their existence. A slave, for instance, could be enslaved in body, but his or her soul may be free (Seneca *Ep.* 47.17–18). The training and disciplining of the

soul now becomes the medium through which the corporeal passions are controlled. It would also occupy a central place in early Christian thinking regarding ἐγκράτεια.

We can surmise that the soul is not an acorporeal or anticorporeal phenomenon that opposes the body, although his illusion is often presented. The soul, in fact, becomes a potent corporeal technology for self-control (2 Clem 10:4–5, 12:2–6, 16:2, 17:7). This functioning of soul will be explained in more detail in the following section when analysing 2 Clement 12:2–6. Hence we find the strong conceptual links between the training of the soul, r psychagogy, and the training of the body, self-control (2 Clem 10:4–5, 12:2–6, 16:2, 17:7). The training of the ‘soul’ is in fact the training of the body by means of the technology of ‘soul’ – probably the closest ancient equivalent to what we call psychology today. Foucault (1977:29) argues that the excess power exercised on the body has led to corporeal duplication. The soul is a uplication of the encratic body. He states (Foucault 1977:29): ‘Rather than seeing this soul as the reactivated remnants of n ideology, one would see it as the present correlative of a certain technology of power over the body.’

Having extrapolated the psychic power dimension of 2 Clement, it should also be noted that the concept of flesh [σάρξ] features extensively in the document. Flesh in 2 Clement should be understood as the material human body, and the rhetoric of flesh serves as an overamplification of the material body as a polemic against Gnostic tendencies present in the church. If the term ‘body’ [σῶμα] had been used, it could still have been interpreted as a spiritual body.¹⁶ It should be noted here that 2 Clement employs several Gnostic terms but also refutes some basic Gnostic concepts. Donfried (1974:112) makes a crucial observation in this regard: ‘... [Second] Clement was written in an environment of incipient gnosticism. While taking over certain “gnosticizing” phraseology, our author is at the same time reinterpreting it.’ In 2 Clement 9:1–5, the author states:

And let none of you say that this flesh is not judged and does not rise again. Think about this: In what state were you saved? In what state did you recover your sight, if it was not while you were in this flesh? We must, therefore, guard the flesh as a temple of God. For just as you were called in the flesh, so you will come in the flesh. If Christ, the Lord who saved us, became flesh (even though he was originally spirit), and in that state called us, so also we will receive our reward in this flesh.¹⁷

The importance of the material body, that raw rhetoric of fleshiness, indicates the importance and power the author understands the physical body to possess. The flesh as material body serves as a polemical strategy against Gnostic tendencies, but it also reminds the audience of the power

13. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:144–145): ‘... εἰ μὴ τὸ ὄσιως καὶ δικαίως ἀναστρέφεσθαι καὶ τὰ κοσμικὰ ταῦτα ὡς ἄλλοτρια ἡγεῖσθαι καὶ μὴ ἐπιθυμῆν αὐτῶν ...’

14. Translation and Greek text: Lake (1977:138–139): ‘... τὴν σφραγίδα ὁ σκόληξ αὐτῶν οὐ τελευτήσει καὶ τὸ πῦρ αὐτῶν οὐ σβεσθήσεται, καὶ ἔσονται εἰς ὄραση πάση σαρκί.’

15. Translation and Greek text: Lake (1977:158–159): ‘οἱ δὲ δίκαιοι εὐπραγήσαντες καὶ ὑπομειναντες τὰς βασάνους καὶ μισήσαντες τὰς ἡδουπαθείας τῆς ψυχῆς, ὅταν θεάσονται τοὺς ἀστοχῆσαντας καὶ ἀρηνησαμένους διὰ τῶν λόγων ἢ διὰ τῶν ἔργων τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ὅπως κολάζονται δειναῖς βασάνοις πυρὶ ἀσβέστω, ἔσονται δόξαν διδόντες τῷ θεῷ αὐτῶν λέγοντες ...’

16. For an excellent problematisation of ‘flesh’ and an interesting discussion on ‘flesh as the site of divine becoming,’ especially in the *Apocryphon of John* and Origen’s works, where the complexities of flesh as a socio-historical and cultural-symbolic device are highlighted, see the discussions in Burrus (2008:57–73).

17. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:148–149): ‘Καὶ μὴ λεγέτω τις ὑμῶν, ὅτι αὐτὴ ἡ σὰρξ οὐ κρινεταὶ οὐδὲ ἀνίσταται. γινώτε: ἐν τίνι ἐσώθητε, ἐν τίνι ἀνεβλέψατε, εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ταύτῃ ὄντες; δεῖ οὖν ἡμᾶς ὡς ναὸν θεοῦ φυλάσσειν τὴν σάρκα. ὃν τρόπον γὰρ ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἐκλήθητε, καὶ ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ ἐλεύσεσθε. εἰ Χριστὸς ὁ κύριος ὁ σῶσας ἡμᾶς, ὢν μὲν τὸ πρῶτον πνεῦμα, ἐγένετο σὰρξ καὶ οὕτως ἡμᾶς ἐκάλεσεν· οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ σαρκὶ ἀποληγόμεθα τὸν μισθόν.’

and importance of the body as a site of resistance and a site of reward. Virtue is written on the flesh, in very much the same way that Christ became flesh. Virtue becomes a visible symbolic tattoo, a sarcography of sorts that rests on eternal foundations, namely the incarnation of Christ and the resurrection of the saints. The common rhetorical scenes between the Gospel of John and 2 Clement are quite apparent (Pollard 1970:23–48). Both restore a carnal preference in their theologies, possibly as a response to Docetic and Gnostic tendencies that tended to over-emphasise Paul's negative view of the flesh. However, there is something more behind this text. Despite its developed apocalyptic eschatology and anti-cosmic rhetoric, virtue and self-control is very much realised and present in the flesh, and the flesh is not negated by the apocalyptic turn of events expected by the author in the near future (Pratscher 2007:125–141). The flesh occupies a prominent place in this apocalypticism. It should also be remembered that the opponents of the homily were most likely libertine pneumatic, who believed in a realised eschatology and soteriology. Whilst the passage bears remarkable resemblance to 1 Corinthians 15:35–50, the author is not in line with typical Pauline thinking. Rather, 2 Clement reimagines the flesh as eternal. In Paul's thinking, the corruptible body will be replaced with the incorruptible – the flesh is not eternal and will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 15:50), but for 2 Clement, this flesh is eternal and the site of divine reward. The carnality of the body resurrected is all but downplayed. This new carnal *imaginaire* does not only reshape eschatology and apocalyptic, but it also re-describes the concept of ἐγκράτεια. The new hieratic dimension of ἐγκράτεια in the text is seen in the use of the word 'guard' [φυλάσσω]. More specifically, the practice of ἐγκράτεια is likened to the process of guarding a temple. The sense of guarding here is not only one of protection but also rather a sense of keeping watch or surveillance. Surveillance is a crucial aspect of discipline (cf. Foucault 1977:195–230). It is often used in the sense of guarding one's purity [ἀγνή], a term especially related to feminine chastity, sexual abstinence and martyrdom. There is then also a virginal sense present here in very much the same way a virgin was guarded and monitored by her custodian. Both references to keeping watch as well as the temple imply a pastoral governmentality in service of self-fashioning. The main task of the pastor is to keep watch, and each person is the priest or overseer of his or her own temple of flesh. Virtue for 2 Clement is not only controlling one's passions but also keeping watch over one's flesh. The introduction of this new scopical economy of virtue already nuances to the fact that the flesh is the object of the spectacle, flesh is something that is visible and open to voyeurism not only from oneself but also from others, specifically, non-believers (2 Clem 13:3–4). The discipline and auto-surveillance of the flesh becomes a spectacle, an opportunity for corporeal performance, in which the flesh interplays from being a site of resistance to a site of proclamation. This is emphasised in the final verse of chapter 9 where the author again reminds the audience that it is not only by verbal means that God is honoured but more importantly, by *doing* his will. Corporeal and carnal performativity as proclamation rests on the basis of

practice. This is also why people will be judged by their deeds (2 Clem 11:6). The objects that should be mastered, the pleasures of the present, are also framed apocalyptically (2 Clem 10:4): 'For they do not know how great torment the pleasure of the present bring, and what delight the promise of the future brings.' The contrast between the pleasures of the present and the future also elevates the concept of ἐγκράτεια to an apocalyptic plane.

Andromorphism and the carnal performance of virtue

With the importance of carnal performances of virtue comes the proliferation of andromorphic visibility. This is especially prevalent in 2 Clement 12:2–6:

For the Lord himself was asked by someone when his kingdom would come, he said: 'When the two shall be one, and the outside like the inside, and the male with the female neither male nor female.' Now 'the two are one' when we speak the truth among ourselves, and there is one soul in two bodies without deception. And by the 'the outside like the inside' he means this: the 'inside' signifies the soul, while the 'outside' signifies the body. Therefore, just as your body is visible, let your soul be evident in good works. And by 'the male with the female neither male nor female' he means this: that when a brother sees a sister, he should not think of her as female, nor she think of him as male. When you do these things, he says, the kingdom of my Father will come.¹⁸

This is certainly one of the most interesting pericopes in 2 Clement, and it has merited much discussion. The potent apocalypticism and anti-Gnosticism is quite evident in this section. This, along with the previous section discussing the flesh, may indicate that some members in the congregation held the view that, as Donfried (1974:152) has argued: 'the true gnostic could already participate in the kingdom ...' So what implications does the coming of the apocalyptic ἔσχατον [end of days] have for the virtuous body and its missional performativity? The citation has been notoriously difficult to trace. According to Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 3.92), a similar saying is used by the Valentinian Julius Cassianus, and Clement believes it to come from the *Gospel of the Egyptians*. There is, however, still some uncertainty about this (cf. Baarda 1983:261–288; Petersen 2005:35–39), and there are very similar sayings in Logion 22 and 114 of the *Gospel of Thomas*, as well as allusions in the early 3rd-century *Acts of Thomas*.¹⁹ A link with Paul's baptismal formula in Galatians 3:28 is also plausible, especially with 2 Clement's focus on keeping one's baptism pure like the flesh should be kept pure (2 Clem 6:9). The more important section here is the author's

18. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:152–153): 'ἐπερωτηθεὶς γὰρ αὐτὸς ὁ κύριος ὑπὸ τίνος, πότε ἔξει αὐτοῦ ἡ βασιλεία, εἶπεν: Ὅταν ἔσται τὰ δύο ἓν, καὶ τὸ ἔξω ὡς τὸ ἔσω, καὶ τὸ ἄρσεν μετὰ τῆς θηλείας, οὐτε ἄρσεν οὐτε θῆλυ. τὰ δύο δὲ ἓν ἔστιν, ὅταν λαλῶμεν ἑαυτοῖς ἀληθεῖαν καὶ ἐν δυοῖν σώμασιν ἀνυποκρίτως εἴη μία ψυχὴ. καὶ τὸ ἔξω ὡς τὸ ἔσω, τοῦτο λέγει: τὴν ψυχὴν λέγει τὸ ἔσω, τὸ δὲ ἔξω τὸ σῶμα λέγει. ὃν τρόπον οὖν σου τὸ σῶμα φαίνεται, οὕτως καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ σου δηλὸς ἔστω ἐν τοῖς καλοῖς ἔργοις. καὶ τὸ ἄρσεν μετὰ τῆς θηλείας, οὐτε ἄρσεν οὐτε θῆλυ, τοῦτο λέγει: ἵνα ἀδελφοὶ ἰδοὺν ἀδελφὴν οὐδὲν φρονῆν περὶ αὐτῆς θηλυκόν, μηδὲ φρονῆν τι περὶ αὐτοῦ ἀρσενικόν. ταῦτα ὑμῶν ποιοῦντων, φησὶν, ἐλεύσεται ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς μου.'

19. Even citations from the New Testament in 2 Clement are problematic and complex, as Petersen (2006:389–419) has demonstrated in his text-critical re-evaluation of Lightfoot's text (cf. also: Gregory & Tuckett 2005:251–292). For a discussion of the intertextuality of the Jesus sayings between the *Gospel of Thomas* and other early Christian literature including 2 Clement, cf. Van Aarde (2004:712).

midrashic exposition. We have mentioned above that the concept of the 'soul' in fact functions here as a duplication of the power over the body. Whilst the soul certainly has some metaphysical value to 2 Clement, the psychic life of believers need to become congruent, that is, the same technologies of the soul should be exercised over all Christian bodies. This psychic universalism and congruency is affirmed by the second exposition stating that the outside should become like the inside, the body resembling the soul, its true duplication. There may even be some Stoic influence present here where the same ἡγεμονικόν [guiding principle or ruling force] in the centre of the *Logos* is found in all human beings (cf. Meijer 2008:5–7). The opposite of this unity is the notion of being διψυχος [double-minded], as found in the previous chapter (2 Clem 11:2, 5; 19:2). The term διψυχος here indicates an ontological disunity in the technologies that ought to shape the virtuous body,²⁰ a psychic dichotomy that is not only separate but also contrary and oppositional – the result of psychic individualism and incongruity. It is also a common motif in the Epistle of James and Shepherd of Hermas in which it also functions alongside discourses of ἐγκράτεια and desire (cf. Wudel 2004:39–49; Lipsett 2011:32–40, 140–141). Moreover, the emphasis on practice is repeated here – the apocalyptic state of the body is visible in good works, that is, practice. The implication is that, when all Christian bodies are congruent with the same psychic technologies, the end is nigh. The final clause, stating that 'male will be with female, neither male nor female,' is somewhat more complex. From the author's exposition of this saying, the implication is primarily ethical. Gender, in the thinking of 2 Clement, plays a deciding role in the formation of virtue. It should be remembered here that one of the four classical cardinal virtues is ἀνδρεία [manliness], which is specifically related to manliness and central to the Greek framework of virtue [ἀρετή].²¹ Whilst this citation, along with those from the *Gospel of Thomas* and Galatians 3:28, may seem to point to some equality between the sexes, it is not necessarily the case. In the first instance, there is a rather complex somatology that is operational behind these words. In antiquity, there were some views that the archetypal human being was an androgyne, a being that did not have a particular ethnicity, status or gender. This concept is present in Plato's *Symposium* 189c–193e, in the speech of Aristophanes. In this argument, the archetypal human being is divided into three categories according to gender; it was a dual human being, a combination of male and female; male and male and female and female. Zeus later split them, and thus there is this longing and desire for one's 'other half.' However, both Fatum (1995:63–65) and Vorster (2008:97–132) are correct in noting that arguments like those in Plato's *Symposium* as well as Galatians 3:28 are by no means liberal equations of same-sex relations. The most attention is given to male and male relationships. Furthermore, Plato seems to have changed his mind later by stating that same-sex relationships

20. For a discussion of the antecedents and development of the term διψυχος, cf. Seitz (1947:211–219).

21. The four cardinal virtues as identified by Plato in the fourth book of his *Republic* are: σωφροσύνη [moderation; see the discussion above at point 2], φρόνησις [prudence], δικαιοσύνη [righteousness or justice] and ἀνδρεία [manliness] (cf. Carr 1988:186–200).

are contrary to nature (*Leg.* 636b–c, 836a–837a; cf. Brooten 1996:41). The important aspect that we find here, however, is the conceptual links between the unification and division of the sexes and the birth of lust. Lust is seen as the product of the separation of the sexes and the longing for the other half, something, according to Plato, Zeus did not foresee. The unification of the sexes then represents the final renunciation of lust (Hogan 2008:72–76). This is why some groups like the Naassenes, according to Hippolytus, renounced sexual intercourse since it leads to death (Donfried 1974:153). Sexual abstinence is thus central ethical theme in 2 Clement.

Furthermore, one should not be misled by the term 'androgyny,' which is in fact a misnomer in the context of antiquity and one laden with subtle yet significant gender politics. Vogt (1995:170–186) has shown that this concept was not uncommon in Christian Gnosticism. Both Martin (2006:84–85) and Vorster (2008:100–112) note that the transformation into an androgynous being did not imply a gender-fusion of male and female. The transformation is rather a veiled process of masculinisation, a result of a highly phallogocentric or phallocratic society (Kartzow 2009:25) and one that also held a one-sex view of the body (this theory is proposed by Laqueur [1990]). Martin states (2006):

What we see as soteriological androgyny in ancient texts is only misleadingly called 'androgyny,' that is, male combined with female. It is actually the subsuming of the weaker female into the stronger male, the masculinization of the female body, the supplying of male 'presence' (heat, for instance) for the former experience of female absence (cold, understood as a lack of fire)... Ancient androgyny...embodies [*his italics*] the unequal hierarchy of male over female; it does not dispense or overcome it. (p. 84)

In texts like those of 2 Clement 12:5, we do not have the negation of gender difference and the equalisation of gender roles. Rather, the masculinisation represents the highest process of virtue formation. The seeming equality is rather a socio-rhetorical and cultural strategy, a type of policy or propaganda. In some texts, this andromorphism is difficult to spot, for instance in the *Gospel of Thomas* logion 22 (cf. Hogan 2008:74–76). It does, however, slip in logion 114 in Peter's negative views of Mary, and women in general:

Simon Peter said to them, 'Mary should leave us, for females are not worthy of life.' Jesus said: 'Look, I shall guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter heaven's kingdom.'²²

The conceptual links between Plato, the *Gospel of Thomas* and 2 Clement 12 are clear. The virtuous body is a veiled male body that has conquered female weakness. For 2 Clement, this andromorphism indicates the overcoming of lust. The apocalyptic virtuous body is a masculinised body, a male body. In order to be virtuous, lust must be overcome, and it can only be overcome by means of andromorphism. From the views in 2 Clement 9, this androform body is still physical and fleshly.

22. Translation and Coptic text: Meyer (1992:63): 'πῆχε σιμων πετρος ναυ γε μαρεναριζαμ ει εβολ ηζητηι γε πισιομε ηρωα αν ηρωηη πεχε ις γε ειςζηητε ανος ηηδωκ ημοσ γε καδσ εειηδασ ηροογτ ωηα εσηδω πε ρωδσ πογπηδ εδωηη εδωηη η ηωτηη ηροογτ γε εζηηη ηημ εσηδασ ηροογτ σηδωκ ερογτη ετημητερο ηηπηγε.'

The virtuous body then, according to 2 Clement, is a material fleshly (androform) body, one that has reached a point of congruity in terms of its duplicate psychic technology, and not dipsychic, leading to an external manifestation of virtue in the form of veiled andromorphism. The dichotomies in this section also imply a parallelism:

Outside → Inside
 Body → Soul
 Female → Male

The author would introduce yet another dualism in this equation, namely that of spirit or flesh and Christ or church in 2 Clement 14. This parallelism is also used as a strategy for the formation of virtuous corporeality. The notion of a pre-existent, spiritual church is also common in Gnostic literature, namely the *Tripartite Tractate* and the *Treatise of Three Natures* (Donfried 1974:160). As there was a Christic incarnation, 2 Clement also assumes an incarnation of the church linked to the incarnation of Christ. The conjugal nature of the relationship between Christ and the church is typically Pauline. The ecclesiocentric incarnation may also form part of the homily's anti-Gnostic polemic. The emphasis on the church as being female is related to the concepts of purity, also seen in previous chapters (2 Clem 5:6; 6:9; 8:4; 15:3). Regarding the infusion of purity and female subjectivity, Schottroff (2004) states:

Women embraced this concept [*holiness*] more actively than men. They were willing to leave their nonbelieving husbands and even their impure children ... Women expressed their bonds to Christ and God by praying and prophesying openly in the communities' worship services. Paul, and perhaps some other men, tried to hinder those women, arguing that their symbolic equality contradicted their subordination ordained by God and nature. Holiness is a concept for life, hotly debated, and employed aggressively especially by women. (pp. 92–93)

Purity and holiness are foundational to virtue in 2 Clement (Stegemann 1974:115–117; Pratscher 2006:597–610). Feminine virtue in antiquity was especially defined according to purity maps and especially codes of modesty and chastity. Codes of purity were central to the formation and regulation of female bodies in antiquity, and women were thus very much concerned with issues of purity. Furthermore, the human creation narrative of Genesis also features in the background, as the homily reads (2 Clem 14:2):

Now I do not suppose that you are ignorant of the fact that the living church is the body of Christ, for the scripture says, "God created humankind male and female." The male is Christ, the female is the Church.²³

It implies that as Eve was formed from the flesh of Adam, so too the church was formed from the flesh of Christ (2 Clem 14:3): 'Now the church, being spiritual, was revealed in the flesh of Christ ...'²⁴ The concepts of 'spirit' and 'spiritual' function here in very much the same way as 'soul,' and it

23. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:156–157): 'οὐκ οἶομαι δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ὅτι ἐκκλησία ζῶσα σῶμα ἐστὶν Χριστοῦ· λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή: Ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ· τὸ ἄρσεν ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς, τὸ θῆλυ ἡ ἐκκλησία· καὶ ἔτι τὰ βιβλία καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι τὴν ἐκκλησίαν οὐ νῦν εἶναι, ἀλλὰ ἀνωθεν. ἦν γὰρ πνευματικὴ, ὡς καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἡμῶν, ἐφανέρωθη δὲ ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν, ἵνα ἡμᾶς σώσῃ.'

24. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:156–157): 'ἡ ἐκκλησία δὲ πνευματικὴ οὐσα ἐφανέρωθη ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ Χριστοῦ ...'

seems as if 2 Clement does not always discern very clearly between flesh and body, and soul and spirit. Whilst the soul may be described as an intra-corporeal technology, spirit is perhaps more an extra-corporeal technology, something more metaphysical than soul. Whilst the soul becomes a micro-duplication of the flesh, the flesh is a macro-duplication of the spirit, and in the same way that 2 Clement wants congruity between the soul and the flesh, at the end there should also be congruity between the flesh and the spirit. The flesh is duplicated in the spirit (2 Clem 14:3): 'For the flesh is a copy [*anti-type*] of the spirit. No one, therefore, who corrupts the copy will share in the original.'²⁵ The homily speaks of the flesh as the anti-type [ἀντίτυπος] of the spirit whilst the spirit represents the original [αὐθεντικόν], probably relating to a metaphysical pre-existence of a material being. For 2 Clement, spiritual refers to both a pre-carnal dispensation as well as the destination of the carnal, its final, perhaps even pre-lapsarian, stasis (2 Clem 14:3). Such male or female conjugal dichotomies, called syzygies, are very common in Valentinian Gnosticism. It often includes pairings between Abyss and Ennoia, Mind and Truth, Word and Life, and finally, Man and Church. The latter may be a duplication of Christ and the church (Donfried 1974:160–166).

As a discourse in the formation of the virtuous body, 'spirit' serves as an authorising discourse in promoting Christian purity and holiness, values essentially related to femininity and hence, ecclesiological. 'Spirit', like 'soul', is therefore also pervasive corporeal strategies and encratic technologies. The homily also reads (2 Clem 14:3): 'This, therefore, is what he means brothers and sisters: guard the flesh in order that you may receive the Spirit.'²⁶ There is thus a metaphysical development in the formation of the virtuous body. There is first the congruent duplication of the soul in the body, the male in the female, and now, from flesh to spirit. The concept of guarding the flesh is again present. The warning is repeated in 2 Clement 14:4:

Now if we say that the flesh is the church, and the Spirit is Christ, then the one who abuses the flesh abuses the church. Consequently, such a person will not receive the Spirit, which is Christ.²⁷

Whereas ἐγκράτεια was exemplified in the soul and body dichotomy, purity [ἀγνῆ] is the determining characteristic of the flesh and spirit dichotomy. The word ἀγνῆ has a specific cultic nuance (especially related to baptism and martyrdom in 2 Clement) and also occurs in 1 Clement 38:2 in the same sense as in this instance. In Hellenistic writings, it was especially used in the sense of referring to a woman's chastity. The current state of the flesh is therefore a state prone to weakness in terms of virtue, a feminine state, one that should be guarded from defilement and kept pure and chaste. The motif of sexual abstention resurfaces. In the last days, the

25. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:156–157): 'ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ αὐτῆ ἀντί-τύπος ἐστὶν τοῦ πνεύματος· οὐδεὶς οὖν τὸ ἀντίτυπον φθείρας τὸ αὐθεντικὸν μεταλήψεται. ἄρα οὖν τοῦτο λέγει, ἀδελφοί·'

26. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:156–157): 'ἄρα οὖν τοῦτο λέγει, ἀδελφοί· τηρήσατε τὴν σάρκα, ἵνα τοῦ πνεύματος μεταλάβητε.'

27. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:156–157): 'εἰ δὲ λέγομεν εἶναι τὴν σάρκα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα Χριστόν, ἄρα οὖν ὁ ὑβρίσας τὴν σάρκα ὑβρίσεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. ὁ τοιοῦτος οὖν οὐ μεταλήψεται τοῦ πνεύματος, ὅ ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός.'

feminine will be replaced and subsumed in the masculine and andromorphed, and the climax of the formation of the virtuous body is achieved.

This is then the final step in the formation of the virtuous body in 2 Clement. Its status and stasis on earth is mostly incomplete and incongruent with the soul and spirit. The culmination of virtue is an apocalyptic event. We can now briefly summarise how 2 Clement constructs the virtuous body. The homily shows much continuity with both Hellenistic philosophical formations, especially from Platonism and Gnosticism, but it also exhibits subtle Pauline allusions and interpolations. There is, however, also discontinuity and development, and 2 Clement is somewhat unique in its covert subversion of Platonic and especially Gnostic discourses. The value of ἐγκράτεια is at the centre of virtue formation, and the virtuosity is seen as the congruence between the flesh and its duplicate technologies of soul and spirit. The very nature of this transformation is andromorphic, an ontological subsumption of the inferior feminine into the stronger masculine. On earth, it is a visible contest, a corporeal performance, embodied in the resistance of the passions and the protection of purity. How is this a missional performance, or rather, how does the virtuous body 'speak itself' as a missional performance?

Conclusion: Virtue and missional performativity

The formation of virtue must then, finally, serve as a spectacle or performance to unbelievers, providing to it a missional dimension. Proclamation in this instance is a strategic somaphonology. It does not consist of words as such but as encratic and agonistic corporeal performances. This is evident from 2 Clement 13:3–4:

For when the pagans hear from our mouths the oracles of God, they marvel at their beauty and greatness. But when they discover that our actions are not worthy of the words we speak, they turn from wonder to blasphemy, saying that it is a myth and a delusion.²⁸

From this statement, it becomes clear that the lines between early Christianity and other Greco-Roman religious and philosophical movements were quite opaque. The missional dimension here is not one of evangelisation as such. Rather, missional performance becomes a search for the legitimacy and validity of Christianity not *against* other Graeco-Roman religions but *as* a Graeco-Roman religion. The strategy of resemblance is powered by the proliferation of ἐγκράτεια as a core virtue in Christianity. In doing this, Christianity seems less alien to the non-Christian optic and shows itself to be compatible and at home in the ancient Mediterranean.

Virtue formation was the nominal factor in Graeco-Roman religion and philosophy, and on a higher level of abstraction, the early Christians would develop their own version

28. Translation and Greek text: Holmes (1992:155): 'τὰ ἔθνη γὰρ ἀκούοντα ἐκ τοῦ στόματος ἡμῶν τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς καλὰ καὶ μεγάλα θαυμάζει· ἔπειτα καταμθόντα τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄξια τῶν ῥημάτων ὧν λέγομεν, ἔνθεν εἰς βλασφημίαν τρέπονται, λέγοντες εἶναι μῦθόν τινα καὶ πλάνην.'

thereof. The display and performance of embodied virtue, whether in the everyday life of ancient society or in the horrid spectacle that is the arena of the martyrs, becomes a potent missional strategy. Whilst early Christian mission has often been understood in terms of κήρυγμα, verbal proclamation, the performative somaphonology of virtuous corporeality would resonate more with the virtue-seeking antique ear than verbal arguments despite the high value of rhetorical prowess in antiquity. Verbal proclamation and rhetorical sophistication is not negated by this, but complemented. The tension between word and practice is one that 2 Clement's missional performance aims to resolve, and it is done in a creative way. The virtuous body is constructed from a reimagined Hellenistic and Gnostic phraseology with the purpose of infiltration rather than confrontation.

The spectacle of performative virtuosity proclaims the Christian message in the same terms as other Graeco-Roman religions. This missional performance is displayed in everyday life, especially as manifest in the ascetic dynamic between men and women but also in the scenes of death and torture of the martyrs. It relies on the virtue-centred voyeurism of the ancients, a voyeurism shared in the athletic contests so central to civic life. As the flesh of athletes are scrutinised, so too the flesh of Christian virtuosos will be scrutinised. This performance will also be continued in the ἔσχατον, and the finale of this missional performativity is seen in the apocalyptic, anti-cosmic spectacle, in which the wicked are tortured and punished, and the righteous rejoice.

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