THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PROPHECY IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Alan Douglas Humm

A DISSERTATION

in

Religious Studies

Presented to the Faculties of the University of Pennsylvania

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2008

Robert Kraft

Supervisor of Dissertation

[Signature]

Graduate Group Chairperson
Abstract

The psychology of prophecy in early Christianity

Alan Douglas Humm

Supervised by Robert A. Kraft

This dissertation attempts to analyze prophetic activity in early Christian communities (defined as through the mid third century, CE) with an eye toward understanding the psychological states which lay behind it. Most modern categorical systems fail to adequately describe the bulk of ancient intermediation, largely because they are based on modern observable phenomena in indigenous societies. This study begins by surveying and analyzing the categories which have been used, primarily in cultural anthropology, and then offering a new set of categories, which is largely based on the phenomenology of presenting forms. No effort is made to evaluate the historical subjects' psychological reality, largely because this could not be done with confidence. The language and categories used by the primary background communities (Greek and Hebrew) to describe intermediary activity are discussed. Most discernable cases of Christian prophetism from this period are noted, and some attempt is made to categorize them following to the system described in the first section. The material is reviewed statistically by date, sect, social context, psychological type, and region. A dominance of activity in Asia Minor is noted, as well as peaks during the second quarters of the first and second centuries. Peaks are more likely due to reporting than to increased activity. Not surprisingly, the largest psychological category is “unknown” although the second largest appears to have been “epipnoia.” Social categories are highest in “congregational.”
### Contents

Abstract...........................................................................................................iii

Contents..........................................................................................................iv

Figures...........................................................................................................vi

Abbreviations..................................................................................................vii

Preface: the problem(s) ..................................................................................ix

Definitions.......................................................................................................1

   Category systems..........................................................................................4

      Traditional categories................................................................................5

      Sociological categories.............................................................................9

      Psychological categories...........................................................................30

   Ancient Terminology....................................................................................51

      Hellenistic Greek terminology...................................................................51

      Hellenistic Jewish terminology.................................................................70

   Early Christianity...........................................................................................78

   The post apostolic age..................................................................................116

      From about 80 to 150 CE..........................................................................116

      From about 150 to 200 CE........................................................................143
Introduction

The Proto-unorthodox ........................................... 143

Proto-Orthodox .................................................. 159

The New Prophecy ............................................. 169

Later third century ............................................ 202

Decline .................................................................. 209

Charting the seas ................................................ 216

Reflections and Suggestions .................................. 226

Appendix 1: Glossary ........................................... 230

Appendix 2: Montanist Prophecies ......................... 235

Bibliography ...................................................... 239

Ancient Literature ................................................ 240

Modern Literature ................................................ 246
Introduction

Figures

Figure 1 (painted vase illustration) ......................................................... 62
Figure 2 (total reports by quarter century) .................................................. 216
Figure 3 (reports by sect) ......................................................................... 218
Figure 4 (reports by social context) ............................................................ 219
Figure 5 (reports by psychological type) .................................................... 220
Figure 6 (reports by region) ...................................................................... 221
Figure 7 (reports by region and date) ........................................................ 222
Abbreviations

Modern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Anchor Bible Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALUOS</td>
<td>Annual of the Leeds University Oriental Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JJS</td>
<td>Journal of Jewish Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSOT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JSSR</td>
<td>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NovT</td>
<td>Novum Testamentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTS</td>
<td>New Testament Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDNT</td>
<td>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (see Kittel, Gerhard, et al.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ThZ</td>
<td>Theologische Zeitung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ThLZ</td>
<td>Theologische Literaturzeitung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TU</td>
<td>Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZNW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ancient

Throughout, with a few exceptions, I have translated titles of ancient works into their English equivalents. Some of them the reader may know by their traditional Latin titles, so this is a conversion table from my own English abbreviations to full Latin titles. Names are generally unchanged, and I have not listed completely obvious ones (fragments for fragmenta).

- Ag. Heresies: *Adversus haereses* (Irenaeus) (citations given as traditional I Harvey)
- Ag. Julian: *Contra Julianum imperatorem* 2 (Gregory of Nazianzus)
- Ag. Praxias: *Ad Praxeas* (Tertullian)
- Ant.: *Antiquitates Judaicae* (Josephus)
- Apology of Socrates: *Apologia Socratis* (Xenophon)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>viii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Apos. Trad.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Traditione apostolica</strong> (Hippolytus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attic Nights</strong></td>
<td><strong>Noctes atticae</strong> (Aulus Gellius)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Body of Christ</strong></td>
<td><strong>De carne Christi</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contemplative Life</strong></td>
<td><strong>De vita contemplativa</strong> (Philo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dancing</strong></td>
<td><strong>De saltatione</strong> (Lucian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EH (Eccl. Hist.)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Historia ecclesiastica</strong> (Eusebius)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enc. to the Greeks</strong></td>
<td><strong>Cohortatio ad gentiles</strong> (Pseudo-Justin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ex. Theo.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exerepta ex Theodoto</strong> (Clement of Alexandria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exor.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Protrepticus</strong> (Clement of Alexandria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fasts</strong></td>
<td><strong>De ieiunio adversus psychicos</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Principles</strong></td>
<td><strong>De principiis</strong> (Origen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flight</strong></td>
<td><strong>De fuga in persecution</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>For the orthodox</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos</strong> (Pseudo-Justin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heir</strong></td>
<td><strong>Quis rerum divinarum heres sit</strong> (Philo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Joshua</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jesu Nave</strong> (Origen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor</strong></td>
<td><strong>Paedagogus</strong> (Clement of Alexandria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lysis.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lysistrata</strong> (Aristophanes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medicine Box</strong></td>
<td><strong>Panarion = Adversus haereses</strong> (Epiphanius)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Migr. Abr.</strong></td>
<td><strong>De migratione Abrahami</strong> (Philo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modesty</strong></td>
<td><strong>De Pudicitia</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monogamy</strong></td>
<td><strong>De monogamis</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NT</strong></td>
<td><strong>Novum testamentum graecae</strong> (New Testament)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The soul</strong></td>
<td><strong>De anima</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The supernatural</strong></td>
<td><strong>De superstition</strong> (Plutarch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Veiling virgins</strong></td>
<td><strong>De virginibus velandis</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chastity</strong></td>
<td><strong>De exhortatione castitatis</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pagan religions</strong></td>
<td><strong>De errore profanorum religionum</strong> (Julius Firmicus Maternus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plea for Christians</strong></td>
<td><strong>Legatio sive Supplicatio pro Christianis</strong> (Athenagoras)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presc. ag. Heretics</strong></td>
<td><strong>De praescriptione haereticorum</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peregrinus</strong></td>
<td><strong>De morte Peregrini</strong> (Lucian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public shows</strong></td>
<td><strong>Opuscula</strong> (Pseudo-Cyprian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ref.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Refutatio omnium haeresium</strong> (Hippolytus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Res.</strong></td>
<td><strong>De resurrectione carnis</strong> (Tertullian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Roman Questions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Aetia Romana et Graeca</strong> (Plutarch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To the Greeks</strong></td>
<td><strong>Oratio ad Graecos</strong> (Tatian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>War</strong></td>
<td><strong>De bello Judaico or sometimes Bellum</strong> (Josephus)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface: the problem(s)

Earliest Christianity was, at least to some extent, a prophetic community.¹

That the Pauline communities, and probably a much larger slice of early Christianity regarded enthusiastic or ecstatic experiences (prophetism, glossolalia, etc.) as appropriate, or even normal aspects of Christian life and worship is rarely doubted. This can be established from 1 Corinthians and Revelation, at least, and from Acts, in as much as it is regarded as historical.² References to contemporary prophecy also surface in other Pauline texts,³ and there appears to be a formula for testing prophets in 1 John 4.2f.

There remain, however, two fundamental problems with this portrait of

---

¹ I will attempt to define the terms used for prophetic experience below (see pages 30f). The reader is also referred to appendix I.

² Of course, the reliability of Acts as a source of historical facts is independent of the question of whether it is a reliable portrait of the social world of the early Church. My inclination is to read it as a reasonable characterization of one or two streams of early Christian community life.

³ Appearing in lists in Rom. 12.8, Eph. 3.5; 4.11, and 1 Thess. 5.20. Specific prophecies in 2 Cor. 12.9 (probably in reference to himself), Rom 11.25f, Gal. 5.21, 1 Thess. 3.4; 4.2-6; 5.15-17, 2 Thess. 3.6; 10; 12, and 1 Tim. 4.14... Since we are talking about the community, and not the person of Paul, and particularly since it is merely a backdrop to the focus of this study, I will make no effort to discern differences between proto- and deutero-Pauline texts. The fact that these references span both types simply demonstrates that the phenomenon was not short-lived.
earliest Christianity. The first centers around the problem of homogeneity in first century Christianity and the second reflects our inability to definitively know how early Christian prophecy functioned psychologically, socially or even theologically. That early Christianity lacked homogeneity is footnoted only by those who assert that apostolic orthodoxy was easily recognizable among the various theological positions available. Most scholars make no such assertion, although it is hardly important to this study.

While the evidence clearly suggests that several of the varieties growing out of the Jesus movement were prophetically active, there is little reason to suppose that they all were. Even among related communities, those associated with Paul for example, we would be hard-pressed to argue that prophetic activity functioned in all assemblies in the same way. It is entirely likely that prophetism in the Diaspora was more influenced by analogous activities in surrounding pagan culture, although we have no references to confirm or deny this. It may also be

---

4 There are, of course, exceptions, notably among conservative scholars. See, for example, Wayne Grudem (2000).
5 That is, they had active prophets in their communities.
6 Discussions surrounding the problematic passage in 1 Cor. 11.3-16 may reveal an exception to this statement, if we follow some approaches to interpretation. This appears to be the argument, at any rate, made by Luke Timothy Johnson (1998).
meaningful that there are few references to contemporary prophecy in the New Testament outside of the Pauline and Johannine communities (reading Acts as a product of the Pauline world).\(^7\)

It is also unclear how important prophecy was to the life of the community. Paul seems to upbraid the Corinthians for elevating glossolalia over prophecy in 1 Cor. 12 ff, but elsewhere he says that the Gospel, as preached to them by him, takes precedence over even a message of an “angel from heaven” (Gal. 1.8). Prophecies in the community should not be “quenched” or “despised,” but need to be “tested” and “judged” (esp. by other prophets — 1 Cor. 14.29, 1 Thess. 5.19ff\(^8\)).\(^9\)

If the earliest communities were not homogeneous, there is little reason to expect their daughter communities in the second and third centuries to be otherwise. That lack of expectation does not seem to be disappointed, but

---

\(^7\) Matt. 7.22 comes to mind, although it is obviously somewhat negative regarding pneumatics:

\[\text{Πολλοὶ ἐροῦσιν μοι ἐν ἑκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ. Κύριε κύριε, ό πώ σώ ὄνοματι ἐπροφητεύσαμεν, καὶ τῷ σώ ὄνοματι διαμόνια ἔξεβάλομεν, καὶ τῷ σώ ὄνοματι δυνάμεις πολλάς ἐπούσαμεν (eds. Aland, et al.).}\]

\(^8\) Note here that “abstain from every form of evil” may be a reference to the contents of the prophecy.

\(^9\) The theological place of prophecy in the community is important in recent scholarly discussions about the gospel sayings of Jesus. The suggestion has been made that some could actually have their origin in the oracles of early Christian prophets, speaking with the voice of the Lord. I will return to this later (below p. 99).
prophetism appears to continue in proto-orthodox circles well into the second century, and may have been even more common in some ‘heretical’ Christian communities. Over the next couple of centuries, though, it slowly went into decline. Scholars generally accept that, with the exception of its well known survival in the New Prophecy (Montanist) movement; it had largely died out by the middle of the third century.\(^{10}\)

What we do not fully understand on this last point is why. The most common explanation given for this waning focuses on the solidification of the institutional structures of the Church and the need for doctrinal stability descending from that hierarchy. Prophetism, in particular, became a problem when it potentially conflicted with official positions taken by the church authorities. Both the Didache and Hermas clearly reflect a tightening of controls on itinerant charismatics.\(^{11}\)

---

\(^{10}\) This statement can only be made with confidence about those communities that are usually termed ‘catholic’ or ‘proto-orthodox.’ We do not know to what extent this type of charismatic activity might have been present in some Gnostic or Jewish Christian expressions. We do know that there are historical pockets of overtly prophetic activity throughout Christian history, and, because ‘prophecy’ is a term that often eludes exact definition, it is possible to argue that it continues unabated, recast as inspired biblical interpretation or the like. Also, it is important to note that some forms of the prophetic (oracular dreams and visions, for example) have been a perennial part of the Christian world throughout its history. Exactly what is in decline in this period will need to be addressed after we have discussed the varieties of prophetic phenomena (below, pp. 30ff).

\(^{11}\) Other charismata did not share the same fate. Healing, for example, remains a part of Christian tradition throughout its history, and glossolalia, which may have faded from common
There are plenty of reasons to affirm this largely Weberian analysis, but it is important to remember that most communities that make use of intermediaries have managed to do so without threatening their fundamental belief structures. What would appear similar — tensions between community teachers and ruling authorities — sometimes resulted in the marginalization of the particular teacher (in the case of Origen, waiting until well after he was dead), but never in a community wide rejection of the didactic ministry. While recognizing that tension between charisma of the spirit and charisma of office may have played a rôle, I suspect there must have been more at play.

Besides the centralization of power, there are a cluster of comorbid movements afoot in this period which may have had some connection with the decline of congregational prophecy: escalating asceticism, increased or emerging practice long before prophecy, has enjoyed periodic renaissances, without notable resistance from the ecclesiastical authorities. Modern Pentecostalism, not well received in mainstream Protestant circles, is an exception. Its rejection in those circles may have reflected social or even racial prejudices, although the tension did not immediately disappear with the emergence of the higher class — and whiter — Charismatic movement. I am not aware, however, of modern attacks on these contemporary pneumatics that cite race or social makeup as part of their criticism. This study will occasionally address charismata other than prophetism, if they appear to aid in our understanding of prophetic experience, and it will occasionally step outside the bounds of early Christianity, but the primary focus will be limited to prophecy in the first three centuries (esp. the second).
Introduction

liturgical structuralism, solidifying gynephobia,\textsuperscript{12} and a profound fear of deviation\textsuperscript{13} come immediately to mind. Any of these, with the possible exception of asceticism,\textsuperscript{14} could have encouraged a distrust of pneumatic messengers.\textsuperscript{15}

A recurring focus of this study will be an analysis of the psychological categories and social location of prophetic activity wherever we find instances. The goal here is to construct a map of where and how such activity took place. We will also be interested in how seriously the various communities took these messages (did they change their behavior in response?). Unfortunately, the

\textsuperscript{12} This term, in my opinion, better describes the flavor of 2\textsuperscript{nd} & 3\textsuperscript{rd} century Christian (men’s) attitudes toward women than the more commonly used ‘misogyny.’ It is not a hate so much as a fear — perhaps even a fear of self — that is a play, for the most part, in the rejection of sexuality and its embodiment in the feminine.

\textsuperscript{13} I will often distinguish, for sake of clarity, between heterodoxy and heresy. Heterodoxy is deviation from community beliefs and standards which, however, does not result in expulsion. Heresy is deviation sufficient to require expulsion. In the period under examination, for the Proto-orthodox at least, heterodoxy appears to be a very narrow category.

\textsuperscript{14} Asceticism would probably have the opposite effect, since bodily depravation is one of the better established methods of inducing parasensory and ecstatic experiences.

\textsuperscript{15} A red flag may have gone up on my inclusion of gynophobia as a potential source of early cessationism. There is, however, evidence that women may have been disproportionately represented in the early Christian prophetic community. There were, at least, a high percentage of women prophets among the Montanists, and perhaps among more heretical groups of the second and third centuries as well. In general, unless forbidden by community standards, women appear to be somewhat more likely to develop intermediary skills. There may be psychological or neurological reasons for this, but we will have to know more about the psychology of pneumatic experience before that can be evaluated. I. M. Lewis argues that members of socio-economically lower groups, or decentralized members (which would often include women), of societies in which intermediary activity is allowed may use such skills — consciously or unconsciously — to elevate their own social status (2003).
available tools force us to be largely phenomenological. It is to be hoped that in
the future our understanding of the neurological foundations of the types of
altered experiences that lie behind prophetism will allow us to better understand
this type of activity in the early Christian communities.
Definitions

While not wanting to get lost in pedantry, a clear and unambiguous definition of terms is fundamental to any investigation of prophetic activity. Unfortunately, in this field, both primary and secondary literature is littered with a variety of terms whose meanings, even when dealing with a single author, are clearly anything but unambiguous.\(^{16}\)

The word 'prophet' itself has been used in a range of ways. In common parlance, the term has several meanings. It is often used interchangeably with 'prognosticator'–anyone who predicts the future (more likely to be used if the predictions are correct). It is sometimes used of important religious reformers (e.g. Martin Luther) but more frequently of social reformers like Martin Luther King (see Townes, 1970). Both Martin Luther and John Calvin equated it with inspired preaching.\(^{17}\) In the Hellenistic period, the term \(\pi\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\upsilon\iota\tau\iota\) also had a range of

\(^{16}\) Obviously, some authors have carefully thought through their own terminology. I will survey these where appropriate.

\(^{17}\) Luther's comment on Joel 2.28 (in Lectures on the Minor Prophets):

...when Paul or the other apostles are manifestly interpreting Scripture, this interpretation is prophecy.

Calvin, commenting on Rom 12.6 (in The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Romans and to the
Prophecy meanings, which I will discuss below (pp. 52ff).

In scholarly circles the term is generally limited to a particular communicative role within a religious community. Some will distinguish prophecy from visions, apocalyptic or divination.\(^{18}\) I will use it as an umbrella term that includes all of these, and will make distinctions using other terms (see pp. 30ff). As used in this study:

A prophet is a person who, from her own perspective and usually that of a

Thessalonians):

In the Christian Church, therefore, prophecy at the present day is simply the right understanding of Scripture and the particular gift of expounding it, since all the ancient prophecies and all the oracles of God have been concluded in Christ and His Gospel.

\(^{18}\) David Aune (1983), for example, reflecting a series of discussions in a Society of Biblical Literature seminar (on early Christian prophecy), gives the following definition:

The Christian who functions in the prophetic role... believes that he receives divine revelations in propositional form. (1983, 19)

While this definition leaves visionaries in limbo, it is useful in that it emphasizes the subjective nature of the phenomenon ("believes"). Not all scholars make such a distinction. David Hill, for example, requires that a Christian prophet be

...a Christian who functions within the Church, occasionally or regularly, as a divinely called and divinely inspired speaker who receives intelligible and authoritative revelations or messages which he is impelled to deliver publicly, in oral or written form, to Christian individuals and/or to the Christian community (1979, 5).

This leaves the scholar in the impossible position of having to decide who is "divinely inspired," may force the issue of authority, and even ignoring those two points, is really more adequate as a definition of 'congregational prophecy.' Given the context, we can bypass the strictly Christian features, although 'intelligible' may prove to be a problem.

I am generally more comfortable with the definition offered by Samuel Storms: "The human report of a divine revelation" (1996, 207), although, of course, that tends to simply redirect the problem of definition onto 'revelation.' In both Hill's and Storms' definitions we are compelled to read 'divine' as including the caveat, "as understood by the community."
Prophecy

community, can and does receive messages and/or revelations from one or more divinities and who delivers them in an interpretable\textsuperscript{19} fashion to their intended audience(s). The inspired interpreter of such a message may also be a prophet.

‘Prophecy’ is that which the prophet speaks/writes\textsuperscript{20} when delivering such a message.

I will also use the term ‘intermediary,’ which is borrowed from Robert Wilson (1980), and specifically refers to a person whose role in the community is to serve as a conduit for supernatural-human communication. This definition would, of course, also encompass the role normally assigned to the priest(ess), but in this dissertation I am limiting it (as does Wilson) to new communication originating with the supernatural.\textsuperscript{21} I will use the term ‘intermediary’ throughout as a general synonym for ‘prophet.’ Although I do not shy away from the traditional terminology, ‘intermediary’ has the advantage of being uncluttered by years of

\textsuperscript{19} I prefer ‘interpretable’ to Hill’s ‘intelligible.’ One person’s clear message could be another person’s gibberish, but that is for the community, not the scholar, to decide. Most prophetic messages do arrive in intelligible format, but, to focus on an example, the Delphic oracle appears to have arrived in some sort of gibberish form from the πυθέω, which was then interpreted by the προφητής for delivery to the inquirer (see below, p. 57). From the point of view of this study, both are prophetic.

\textsuperscript{20} One might also include actions, as in the case of Agabus (Acts 21.10f) and numerous prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures.

\textsuperscript{21} E. E. Evans-Pritchard (quoted in Lessa, 1972, 381) also makes this distinction, speaking of the Nuer prophets:

Whereas in the priest man speaks to god, in the prophet... god speaks to man.
Category systems

There are, as far as I can tell, four basic approaches to categorizing prophetic activity: traditional, sociological, psychological and neurological. While the first is, at one level, outside the scope of this dissertation, it is an important part of the early Christian community's analysis. It is their means of evaluating the truth of the message. Sociological systems, also embraced by cultural anthropologists, look for the role of the intermediary in the community. While useful, this method refrains from evaluating the degree to which a message is purely cognitive. It also tends to lump psychologically disparate categories and separate others that appear to be essentially the same. Psychological categories, are, as the name implies, based on the apparent psychological state of the prophet. The big caveat is that we are entirely dependent on the prophet's report (or, in some cases, the reports of those around her) to determine this. This is always problematic and, in the case of ancient reports, particularly so. Neurology is, when compared to theology, sociology and psychology, a relatively new discipline. Not surprisingly, then, as a method of categorizing religious states of consciousness, it is limited in scope to what has actually been studied — a list that remains fairly short, particularly in the area of intermediary activity. It has, however, in relation to the
subject matter of this study, the greatest potential for providing useful new information.

**Traditional categories**

For the most part, this is a fairly simple system. A prophecy is viewed as either 'true' or 'false,' but for any intermediated community, this is an important distinction, and some groups develop sophisticated methods of determining validity. In communities with at least some level of exclusivity, divine messages

---

22 I.e., a community that makes use of intermediaries. Certain theological features are necessary even to be in this category. The community must believe that the supernatural power(s) are able and willing to communicate with humans, that they are willing to use humans as a medium, and that they are willing to use humans with whom they might actually come in contact (Wilson, 1980). This last point is the breaking point for most modern Western Christians. It is far easier to believe that God might speak to some saintly person (whom I am not likely to meet) than to my next door neighbor (whose cat gets into my flowers).

Of course, for a modern cessationist — a Christian who believes that miraculous gifts were limited to the 'apostolic age' — all such messages are, ipso facto, counterfeit.

23 The vast majority of religious communities believe themselves to be 'right' vis-à-vis their religious competition. Not all religious groups, however, believe that being right is of extreme importance. Most Hindu traditions, for example, perhaps because they vary so widely, have long ago developed a generally liberal view of competing claims. Traditions such as this are accepting of variant, often even distantly varying, beliefs because they can encompass wrong belief into their soteriology. A good practitioner, even of a foreign tradition, may well hope to be reborn as a Hindu.

This is to be distinguished from cultural tolerance which requires that physical (secular) community be kept separate from ethnic / religious beliefs and practices. In the Western world, with certain news-making exceptions, this appears to be on the rise. I think H. L. Mencken expressed this view well:

> We must respect the other fellow's religion, but only in the sense and to the extent that we respect his theory that his wife is beautiful and his children smart.

Religionists, in theory, try to do better, seeking to develop a genuine sympathy for beliefs that
coming from outside the larger analogous community\textsuperscript{24} are virtually always excluded. Christianity, in its conservative flavors at least, clearly occupies this exclusivist world.\textsuperscript{25} Once past the 'with us or against us' test, however, evaluation becomes a bit stickier. Theological orthodoxy is the criterion used in 1 John 4.2 to exclude Docetic messages. Paul asks the prophetic sub-community at Corinth to evaluate one another's revelations (1 Cor. 14.29), but we are not told the criteria. In 1 Thes. 5.19\textit{ff}\textsuperscript{26} he is not much more helpful: keep the good ones, get rid of the bad ones.\textsuperscript{27} The author of the Didache (11) looks for appropriate content and good
differ widely from their own.

\textsuperscript{24} A modern Pentecostal Baptist may well consider a prophecy delivered at the Pentecostal Holiness Church in another town, but is less likely to give credence to a message delivered at a Catholic Charismatic service meeting next door. At the same time, she is far more likely to listen to that than to the communications received from the beyond by a local Spiritualist medium.

\textsuperscript{25} Since the Reformation, the varieties of Christianity have obeyed the Biblical injunction to “be fruitful and multiply.” Many are nowhere near so exclusivist. But others have pulled the envelope of disqualification even tighter.

It is probably obvious, but I will mention anyway, that Christian exclusive claims regarding revelation are extended to include Jewish revelation prior to the birth of Christianity. \textit{Titus} 1.12 includes a quotation from a Greek poet, which is cited as prophecy, and, in the second and early third centuries Justin, Athenagoras of Athens, Theophilus, Clement of Alexandria, and Lactanuius all quote from the Sibylline oracles, and an unknown Christian author apparently feels comfortable adding to it. I do not believe, however, that these exceptions are sufficient to justify tossing the 'home-grown' criterion in early Christian evaluations of prophecy.

\textsuperscript{26} In general, I am simply passing over issues of authenticity in the Pauline corpus. Although there are a handful of scholars who struggle with this book (1 Thes.), it is mostly a non-issue for this study, since we can reasonably assume that this and others like it are products of early Christian thought, and probably from Pauline circles. If the issue is more meaningful to the interpretation of a passage, I will note it there.

\textsuperscript{27} προφητείας μὴ ἐξουθενεῖτε. 21 πάντα δὲ δοκιμάζετε, τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε, 22 ἀπὸ παντὸς...
behavior on the part of the prophet, but cuts him some slack for prophetic actions, as long as he “does not instruct others to do likewise” (11.11). Hermas also looks at behavior (43.7), but adds to this a rejection of prophetic inquiry — true messages should originate in the community and be initiated by the Spirit. Both take a dim view of prophets who ask for remuneration.

Someone who inquires of a false prophet is an idolater, lacking truth, and foolish, since any spirit from God does not need to be inquired of, but, rather, has divine empowerment to say whatever is needed.

How important the verification issue was depends, of course, on how much authority was given to intermediaries. I have addressed this issue elsewhere (p. 99) but it is worth noting that the natural assumption is that revelations were evaluated against a body of received theology/tradition. This, in the earliest period at least, leaves us with a chicken and egg problem if some of their theology, and perhaps even some of their traditions, had their origins in prophetic revelations.

In the examples above, though, note that only John expressly uses theology as a

28 πᾶς δὲ προφήτης δεδοκιμασμένος, ἄληθινός, ποιῶν εἰς μιστήριον κοσμικόν ἐκκλησίας, μὴ διδάσκων δὲ ποιεῖν, οὐκ ἀυτὸς ποιεῖ, οὐ κριθήσεται ἐφ’ ύμων μετὰ θεοῦ γὰρ ἔχει τὴν κρίσιν ἡμῶν γὰρ ἐποίησαν καὶ οἱ ἄρχαιοι προφήται (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).

29 ὁ γὰρ ἐπερώτων ψευδοπροφήτην περὶ πράξεως τινος εἰδωλολάτρης ἐστι καὶ κενὸς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ ἀφρών. 5 πᾶν γὰρ πνεῦμα ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ δοθὲν οὐκ ἐπερωτάται, ἀλλὰ ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν τῆς θεσπίσεως ἀφ’ ἐαυτοῦ λαλεῖ πάντα (ed. Reiling).

30 See below, p. 99.
Prophecy

Traditional systems of organization may also include other factors. Prophecies in scripture obviously outweigh those in the present, even if they may be less applicable to a current situation. Messages delivered by people with greater credibility (e.g. a pastor or elder) have more clout than those given by a new member of the community. Also some of the issues we will be looking at in sociological or psychological categories may impact credibility. So, for example, a reported vision, because it is more dramatic and less common, is likely to have greater impact than an oral message.

Psychological state, or at least perceived state, can be an important social aspect of community evaluation. There is an understandable tendency to assume that people who appear not to be in an altered state are simply speaking in a normal cognitive fashion, and that the ideas they present, or the predictions they make, are simply normal human thoughts and prognostications. The odder a person acts, so the thinking goes, so long as she does not get too abnormal, the more likely it is that we are seeing someone “driven by the spirit.” Most intermediated communities have certain expected altered state behavior to which, if the prophet does not conform, his claim is less likely to be taken seriously.

Mircea Eliade (e.g., 1964, p. 417) is frequently critical of modern shamans because,
in his observation, most have abandoned the genuine primitive trances (which he calls "ecstasy") and become "decadent" (e.g. imitating form and function without any of the personal experiential backbone). In some cases, this decadence involves simply becoming skilled prestidigitators. Others embrace foreign substances in order to induce an altered state. Of course, as we will see below (p. 47), entheogens have a long and respected history in many religious communities. Eliade's negative reaction may reflect his own perennialist infatuation with "ecstasy."

Other communities, and there may be an element of social class involved here, are offended by the more dramatic shows of non-ordinary behavior. Shaking uncontrollably and drooling may gain the prophet credibility in some churches, but get him politely shown the door of others.

**Sociological categories**

In the scholarly world, one would expect that most taxonomies of the

---

31 This is, not surprisingly, what earlier anthropologists assumed from the beginning. Among many Indian fakirs, illusion is not regarded fraud, so long as increases the devotion of the audience. In some cases, as in the example of the shaman sucking out disease (discussed below in note 36), the shaman understands an action to have a magico-scientific function, but allows the patient to perceive it as a more primitive magic, so that it becomes both illusion and ritual power at the same time. I am reminded of the story of Bultmann bragging to Barth that in his (Bultmann's) sermon he had, by carefully choosing words, been able to say one thing (discernable to scholarly insiders) while appearing (to the uninitiated hearer) to be saying something else entirely.
Prophecy

prophetic would be organized around the prophet's function within the community. This is a reasonable way of doing things, and since most scholars who attempt to work with this material are doing so from an anthropological or sociological point of view, it is, for them, the obvious choice. There is, in addition, the simple fact that it is far easier to observe external behavior, and make observations regarding its function in a given society, than to see inside the practitioner's head to find out what is 'really' going on. Erika Bourguignon (1966) argued that even if we see all trances as the same, they must be distinguished because they function and feel different to people in different cultures.32 She is certainly correct. It is unfortunate that her own, highly influential, classifications

32 Bourguignon (1979) used a study by Wallace (1959) to shed light on varying evaluations of trance states. Wallace had compared the experiences of control subjects to Native Americans who used peyote as part of their sacred ritual. While the later had experiences which were shaped by their Native American cultural patterning, the former had individualized and comparatively random hallucinogenic experiences. Using this data, Bourguignon argued that individual cultures helped shape the trance experience for member subjects, while at the same time there was a larger component of trance which could be talked about cross-culturally. She bolstered her work with a statistical analysis of better than 400 small societies world-wide.

...the capacity to experience altered states of consciousness is a psychobiological capacity of the species, and thus universal.... Its utility, institutionalization and patterning are, indeed, features of culture, and thus variable. (1973, 12).

This is obviously true for things other than altered states of consciousness. The eating of pork, for example, is biologically the same for all people, but for the Jew and the Muslim it is an entirely different experience. There are reasons to believe that there are psychological identities between mental states which are admired and cultivated in one culture and mental states which are regarded as pathological or immoral in another (see Goodman, 1988).
Prophecy

systems do not seem to be informed by this criticism, resembling instead a first-pass psychological system informed by anthropological data. There is also the problem that external classifications, even socially based ones, are going to be entirely different than indigenous ones. The difficulty lies in the fact that the emic categories are so diverse under the patina of diverse cultures that we often cannot tell if the same thing is going on, even at a cultural level.

The popularity of social categories for this material has earned it the dubious prize for greatest diversity. The task of applying various models to the data in order to see what seems best to fit, or, perhaps better, to see what can be learned in the attempt to make a fit, is, in some circles, what sociology is all about. It is not surprising that these data are no exception, but the studies are crippled by two fundamental problems. The first is language. The juggling of terminology when discussing the same categories is both confusing and frustrating. One scholar’s ecstasy is another’s trance and another’s mediumship. 33 I will try to normalize the

---

33 Mircea Eliade (1964), for example, seems to subsume all religious altered states of consciousness under ‘ecstasy,’ which he regards as a “primary phenomenon,” not related to any historic movement and

...fundamental in the human condition, and hence known to the whole of archaic humanity (6).

He identifies “possession” and “shamanism” as subcategories (while admitting that possession is
terminology (footnoting as needed) for the purpose of clarity.

The second general problem, as may have become clear from note 33, is that while striving for social or anthropological categories, most systems end up utilizing psychological phenomenology. There is, of course, nothing wrong with this, per se. I will be looking at those categories in the next section, and will make extensive use of them as this study continues. The problem is that in mixing social and psychological categories we become, in most cases, hopelessly mired. The distinction, for example, between shamanic trance, possession trance, and

sometimes a part of the shaman's experience).

For Gilbert Rouget (1985), on the other hand, "ecstasy" best describes the experiences of Teresa of Avila (characterized by solitude, silence, and immobility). "Possession-trance" is distinguished by being the opposite on all points (public, noisy, and kinetic), and always involves amnesia. "Shamanic trance" (which he sometimes just calls "trance," following Bourguignon) does not involve amnesia, but does involve soul-travel (on these points Eliade would strongly concur).

Bourguignon, in her early work (e.g., 1966), distinguished "trance" (which is voluntary) and "possession — trance" (which is involuntary, although it may be desirable). Later she added "possession proper" (see 1976). She renames the first two (appropriately, in my opinion, but adding to the confusion nevertheless) as "voluntary trance" and "involuntary trance." She also speaks of "shamanism" (characterized by soul-journey) and "mediumism" (characterized by loss of both ego center and motor control).

Raymond Firth (1967) distinguished mediumship from possession in that the former involves intelligible communication. Both are to be distinguished from shamanism in that the latter has the shaman "exercising his mastery over [spirits] in socially recognized ways." The medium only has partial amnesia. The degree depends on how extensive the possession is (does it include the head?). Some mediums experience their first possession in the context of religious dance (in a way reminiscent of possession cults), but after that there is no need for either music or kinesis to stimulate the trance. Their role among the Tikopia is often medical.

Larry Peters and Douglass Price-Williams (1980) define "ecstasy" as uncontrolled dissociation, while "trance," associated with shamanism, is compared to waking dream therapy, and is voluntary.
mediumship is made problematic by frequent examples of shamans who insist on ignoring these boundaries. Needed, for cultural anthropology at any rate, are etic categories that are informed by social function rather than by shifting and, frankly, not yet well understood, psychological ones.

‘Shaman,’ for example, is a valid emic category for the Tungus and in true sense applies only in that community. I take no real issue with commandeering emic terminology for etic use, but the big problem with this term is that it is so broad-brushed that it is covers all manner of intermediary and/or healing activity in any pre-modern type community, so long as it is not specifically covered by some other category (such as possession). This is because, for the Tungus, the shaman serves a number of these varying functions in the community. Rather, we should be breaking down the social/religious functions normally associated with shamanism, and locating them under different names. This would enable us to talk intelligently about what are the roles of a particular holy man in this community, or of a particular healer in another.

---

34 Peters and Price-Williams are an exception. In their 1983 paper they, to quote Price-William’s self-analysis in a later paper (1999), “grappled with the problems of definition and differentiation from other magico-religious specialists such as medicine men, sorcerers, priests etc.”
Prophecy

Shamanic intermediaries

For Bourguignon (1966), as well as many scholars following her lead, one of the key features of shamanism is ‘soul-travel.’ This practice, however, has a number of different facets. A soul-traveler might be functioning as a psychopomp, intermediary, spirit-warrior, or simply using it for personal spiritual growth. I am inclined to think of these as separate sociological categories. Any, or all three, might be associated with any particular shaman, but some “shamans” exhibit none of these — in fact do no soul-traveling at all. For these, the key to being shamanic (in terms of etic categories) is often that they serve as pre-modern healers. A shaman-healer can also be a soul-traveler, but it is certainly not

35 “Spiritual growth” is not generally considered a function of the shamanic journey, as, for example, when it is part of a Native American rite of passage into adulthood (see, e.g., Clomstock, 1994), but would, on the other hand, if it were an initiatory vision for someone who is to become a community psychopomp or intermediary (Harner, 1990, Eliade, 1964). Anthropologist Felicitas Goodman has offered workshops in which she trained people to experience such things (1988), and ‘astral projection’ is popular in some Spiritualist circles.

36 A common technique is for the healer to suck the disease out of the body of the patient. She will then pull something out of her mouth and show it to the patient, saying that it is the extracted disease. Healers using this method have been accused of chicanery. Harner argues that, at least for those healers he has studied with, it is more a case of not giving the patient all the details of the shaman’s art. Specifically, the shaman puts in her mouth a leaf, twig, or similar object which is thought to attract the ‘harmful power’ in the patient. When the disease is sucked out of the patient it is trapped in the object in the shaman’s mouth (this also serves to protect the healer herself from infection by the disease). She will then often take the object out, show it to the patient (and those attending), announcing that it is the disease (1990).
necessary. Many native North Americans carefully distinguish between the 'holy man' who is responsible for priestly and intermediary functions, and the 'medicine man' who is the community healer.

The primary job of the psychopomp (one of the most common shamanic roles) is to guide the spirit of the deceased to the next world (Eliade, 1964). In many religious systems this job is reserved for deities (Hermes, for example,

---

37 A Tungus shaman is also a healer, which is why both the social roles of folk healer and soul-traveler are associated with shamanism. Admittedly, shamanic healers often use trance-like or similar altered states of consciousness to diagnose diseases. Perhaps this is the basis for the healer = shaman evaluation.

38 As does, e.g., Black Elk (Black Elk & Neihardt, 1988).

Winkelman (1989) does distinguish among several categories which he associates with different types of culture. Hunting-gathering societies have soul-traveling shamans, usually male, with high social status. Their trances are frequent, voluntary, and self-controlled. In agricultural societies, we find shaman-healers, again usually male, but with low social status, and similar self-directed soul-travel. Once these agricultural cultures become sedentary and trans-local, they transition to use of mediums and healers (distinguished). The mediums are usually women of lower social power. Their trances are spirit-controlled. The healers, on the other hand, have high social status and only infrequent trances. Note that shamans, shaman-healers and mediums never occur in the same society. Winkelman argues from this that they are the same thing, adapted to different types of culture.

I am not convinced, but at least Winkelman appears to be looking at social categories (however fuzzily defined). At a psychological level, mediums and shamans are not the same type of thing at all. Both their experiences and their means of stimulating those experiences are quite different (see Rouget, 1985). They may, however, be serving the same function in their relative social contexts. It is also not clear where he would put apocalypticists? They have shaman-like experiences in sedentary trans-local societies (in which mediums, or something like it, often coexist). Unlike shamanic soul-travelers, though, they do not control their own experiences.

Note also, that (according to Black Elk, among others) the medicine man is separate from the holy man in Lacota-sioux society. The Lacota were hunter-gatherers in Black Elk's day, which either creates an issue for Winkelman, or requires another category in his chart (the hunter-gatherer healer).
Prophecy

among the ancient Greeks\(^{39}\), angels, or previously departed friends and relatives (a feature of many modern near death experiences [NDEs]). For a significant number of indigenous communities, though, it is a role assigned to a specialist. We also find something like this with modern spiritualists, among whom it is a standard technique used when attempting to de-haunt a house. De-haunters are never called shamans, although I fail to discern the sociological distinction, except in that the "primitive" communities have figured out what the "modern" have not — that preventing a haunting is easier than getting rid of one.\(^{40}\)

Obviously, the shamanic function which most interests us in this study is that of intermediary. The primary way that the shaman fills this role is as soul-traveler, although possession is often among her bag of tools as well. It is not surprising that there is no single presenting form, but the following description, based on Knud Rasmussen’s observations of an Eskimo community, is illustrative:

The shaman’s journey is commissioned by either the whole community or an

\(^{39}\) E. R. Dodds (1957) argues that shamanism was imported into Greece from the north, and while not present in classical culture, it left its mark in stories of legendary characters who are said to be able to do the things that shamans do. Of these, Orpheus would be the most famous, although this is not to imply that Orphism is shamanic. More importantly, it leaves its mark in the concept of the ‘occult self’ (ψυχή or δαίμον) who coexists with, but survives the body. This, according to Dodds, is at the core of the Greek concept of transmigration.

\(^{40}\) It must be admitted, though, that exorcisms make better entertainment than prophylaxis.
individual. The shaman sits behind a curtain, wearing only kamiks (boots) and mittens, while the community members sit on other side of the curtain singing songs and occasionally making ritual responses. Once the shaman has entered his trance, it is not unusual that his clothes (which he is not wearing) will begin to fly around over the heads of those present, and they may hear voices of the shaman's "namesakes," who are there to help him. He travels down into the earth to the home of Takánakapsâluk, goddess of the sea, where he combs her hair and asks for her help. If it is a community problem, it is usually a question of asking her to release the animals so they can be hunted. Ordinarily there are issues of taboo violations which have caused the problem. When the shaman returns to the surface, he reveals the cause. At this point, the violations must be confessed by community members. In case of community problems, many of those present will volunteer areas of personal violation. After this, names (usually most of the women) are called out, and those named are expected to make further confession. If the person is not present, s/he is fetched (Rasmussen, 1972).

More than one psychological category of intermediary activity appears to be at work here. It is hard to know what to do with the flying clothes, but the voices appear in other descriptions of, in particular, tundric shamanic activity. Waldemar Bogoras (1909/1972) describes similar phenomena among the
Chukchee, which he believed to be some sort of ventriloquism, although he admitted that it far outshone the abilities of European and American voice throwers.

The "separate voices" of their calling come from all sides of the room, changing their place to the complete illusion of their listeners. Some voices are at first faint, as if coming from afar; as they gradually approach, they increase in volume, and at last they rush into the room, pass through it and out, decreasing, and dying away in the remote distance (1909/1972, 384).

It is clear from this account, and there are many others like it, is that the soul-traveling intermediary often mediates in both directions. Specifically, she brings messages back from the supernatural which direct the community’s relationship with that world, but at the same time, she carries messages to the Powers, and as with the hair combing feature, may placate them.

**Apocalyptic and heavenly tours**

Due to the obvious external similarities, it is tempting to locate the **heavenly tourists** of apocalyptic literature with these soul-travelers. There is, as Eliade (1964) points out, a clear apocalyptic bent among those whom he identifies as

---

41 Christopher Rowland (1982) would prefer that we distinguish between tours of heaven/hell and apocalyptic invocations of the future/past. I am obviously discussing the tours, but I have made no effort to distinguish the two either theologically or in terms of target communities. When I use such phrases as ‘apocalyptic literature,’ unless I specify, I mean both temporal and spatial tourists.
Prophecy

shamans. While apocalypticists do bring a message of hope to the dispossessed community (good for us, bad for them), it is not unknown for them to direct specific requests for improvement at specific members. However, it seems to me that the social function is entirely different, and it is social function, after all, that we are currently examining. Apocalypticists do not, as I noted above (note 38), control their own experience. While this has psychological implications, it also has impact for the community, since they cannot inquire of the prophet in times of stress. Nevertheless, it is possible that there is a line of decent from the travelers to the tourists, and that the differences have grown out of the larger changing societal backdrop.

There is a valid issue as to whether to consider apocalyptic literature prophetic at all. Pseudonymity appears to be normative (John is the major exception), which may suggest a lack of direct connection to any particular community, although, alternatively, it could be symbolic, and easily translated by

42 The letters of Revelation come to mind, as does the demand for reconciliation aimed at the antagonistic bishops in Saturnus' vision in Perpetua (Himmelfarb, 1993).
43 Inquiry is made of Daniel, but it is not in the apocalyptic section. The usefulness of these stories may not really depend on ones analysis of their historicity. If they are fiction, they are intended to mirror (idealized) reality. But they are stories of an ideal wise man, in touch with God, not of an apocalypticist.
the author's target group. In the case of tours, however, we do have at least one
other case where we are told both the name of the visionary and the community of
which she is a part — Perpetua. This recommends the possibility that some of this
literature represents real experiences targeted at real communities. Of course, the
martyrs probably would not have been regarded as community prophets until
after their death, which once again puts us outside the primary goals of this study.

Possession

'Possession' is one of those words which have been used by a large number of
scholars to serve a large number of purposes. Particularly in Biblical scholarship,
it is often simply used as a convenient synonym for the equally ill-defined
'ecstasy,' meaning, "any altered stated of consciousness which seems to lead to
prophetic behavior." Even in this study, it will have to do double duty, being
used here to describe an observable category of religious activity, and again when
we are talking about psychological categories to refer to specific loss of motor
control to a perceived outside power.

That loss, whether real or implied, is fundamental to the social category as
well. The spirit, as Goodman puts it,

---

44 See Humm (1985) for various alternate approaches to pseudonymity.
...so conjured, summoned, brought in, is of overpowering might and will take control of such a borrowed body. The mediums,\textsuperscript{45} humans undergoing a possession experience, turn into the spirit's tabernacle, its canoe, or its horse. It will shake them, make them dance; it might take over their tongues and speak through their mouths. Only the termination of the ritual can break its hold over the human host. Possession, however also brings with it a number of blessings, well-being as well as prestige for the medium (1988, 47f).

Although there is no unity of practice among groups that claim to utilize possession, there is a certain commonality among those who trace their practical ancestry to the African Yoruba. Foremost among these are practitioners of voudoun, particularly in Cuba, and the Condomblé in Brazil. Ester Pressel described an Ubanda (Sân Paulo, Brazil) ceremony that involved possession. The Ubanda are a syncretistic group, drawing, on the one hand, from Latin American Catholicism, and on the other, from the Condomblé. This possession ceremony is

\textsuperscript{45} Goodman uses “medium” to mean, ‘the person who is possessed.’ In normal contemporary Western parlance it is used more specifically of those who practice Spiritualist mediumship, sometimes referred to as ‘channeling.’ Both are correct uses, but the two categories of possession must be distinguished. Goodman is describing Yoruba style possession, which is highly kinetic and musicated (Rouget's term, meaning that it is driven by another person playing a musical instrument), usually by drumming. Spiritualist possession is usually sedentary and generally lacks musical accompaniment. The goal of the Spiritualist is virtually always limited to communication with the possessing spirit. In contrast, the Yoruba seek primarily to embody the spirit, which may or may not include communication. I will generally use ‘medium’ as a general term covering both categories, unless the context makes it clear what is being discussed. ‘Channeling’ is reserved for the Spiritualist type medium and ‘incorporation’ or ‘mount’ for those who seek to embody the deity or spirit.
clearly illustrative of the later.

About an hour before the service is to start, the *cavalos* begin to arrive. Today they have been preparing their bodies through diet, avoidance of alcohol, and by taking a ritual bath. They change into (generally) white, ritual garments, adding markers showing which of the spirits possess them. As the service begins, drummers begin a particular rhythm, and the *cavalos* begin to dance to it. The audience joins by singing songs to the *orixas*, or other spirits. An assistant brings an incense burner with various herbs around to the musicians, mediums, and the audience. The mediums prostrate themselves before the altar. After more drumming and singing, a collection may be taken, and there may be a short sermon.

After a couple of hymns of invocation the *cavalos* begin to spin rapidly, jerking their heads in opposing directions. At this point, the spirits come onto the *cavalos*. Their faces change, reflecting the possessing spirit's nature, and they may begin to mimic behaviors (such as shooting arrows) associated with the individual spirits. They may shout in the language of the spirit's origin. When the drumming stops,

---

46 The *cavalos* (literally, 'horses') are the people who will receive the possessing spirits (the mounts).
they take up stations and wait for audience members to approach them for "consultations." The spirit is often provided with a cigar by an assistant. Consultations may include issues of illness, employment, business, family difficulties, or any matter which the spirits might reasonably be expected to address. The spirit advises, including suggesting rituals and prayers, and then passes her hand over the congregant several times, removing "bad fluids." They embrace and the congregant returns to his seat. During the consultation period, drumming and singing continue intermittently.

Before departing, the spirit will shake the cavalos's clothing and pass her hand over her head several times (disposing of evil fluids). After more shaking, the spirit departs. An assistant may be needed to catch the disoriented cavalo at this point. A special song of dismissal is sung, and the cavalos return to the dressing rooms and change back into normal clothing (Goodman, Henney, & Pressel, 1974).

It is not clear at all what connection, if any, this sort of incorporation has with the non-kinetic spirit manifestation we find in modern spiritualism. Nicholas Firth, who did most of his field work among the Tikopia (at the southern tip of the Solomon Islands) distinguished "mediumship" (what I am calling channeling)
Prophecy

from “possession” (incorporation). The former, he argues, but not the latter, involves intelligible communication (1967).47 This ‘non-communicative’ view does not seem to be supported by the experiences of the Ubanda, nor does it by most American practitioners of incorporation.48 This may simply be a case, a favorite among perennialists, of the same psychological phenomenon being transported into very different cultures, and then emerging with a phenomenology appropriate to its setting. On the other hand, if the oral aspects (consultations) are not native to this type of possession, then the resemblance between channeling and incorporation largely disappears.

Charismatic prophecy

What I am terming “Charismatic prophecy” is the dominant form of intermediary activity among European derivative49 Pentecostals and Charismatics. The meeting I have described here is from an ethnically mixed North American

47 The Tikopia had channelers, but not mounts.

48 However, it is worth noting that for the Yoruba, from whom these groups ultimately derive, the possession dance does not involve consultation. For them, communication with the other world is primarily done through a form of (non-inspirational) divination known as Ifá. The consultations, in fact, look a good deal more like the sort of intermediary activity that I will describe next under Charismatic prophecy.

49 I make this qualification because Native American Pentecostals, such as the ones among whom Goodman did field study (Goodman, Henney, & Pressel, 1974) look very different to me. Some of this may be due to her own interpretative framework, but in any case they need to be viewed separately.
congregation (whites, blacks, Hispanics and a few Asians). It is much less
demonstrative than some others I have witnessed, but it does provide a nice
contrast to the Ubanda service described above.

The music begins more or less on time. It is loud and rhythmic. The band
consists of two guitarists, an electric keyboardist, a drummer and a bass player.
There is a set of congas on the stage which are played on other occasions, although
not tonight. The worshipers are still milling around when the music starts and
begin to find their seats. Other worshipers still arrive, and continue to do so for at
least another twenty minutes. Being on time does not appear to be a requirement.
Songs run 5-7 minutes each. Shorter songs are lengthened by repetition. All but
one of the songs is well known to the worshipers. The last one is new, but most
quickly join in as soon as they are familiar enough with the tune (from hearing —
there is no sheet music — although the lyrics are projected onto a couple of screens
at the front). After about twenty minutes, the music dies down and one of the
pastors moves up to the front.

Tonight is not the usual fare — it is a prophetic presbytery.\textsuperscript{50} There are two

\textsuperscript{50} I am not sure where the terminology (presbytery) comes from. Etymologically, and as used in
other denominations, this should indicate a gathering of elders. Community elders are present
Prophecy

prophets present from sister congregations on the other side of the country. One of the local leaders, also known for his prophetic abilities, is sitting with them. After just a few words from the officiating pastor, one of the other pastors goes out into the congregation and selects a couple. They are brought up to the front and seated in chairs set there for that purpose. The congregation falls silent, but the band continues to play quietly in the background. They are improvising around a segment of one of the worship tunes from earlier that evening.51

After a short prayer, one of the visiting prophets comes up and stands behind the selected couple. He has a message for them from God. He speaks over them together, as a couple, and over each of them individually, laying his hands on them. It is personal but positive. God is pleased with them and wants to bring them into positions of greater leadership within the community. The husband has been a pillar of mercy in his work place, which the Lord commends. She has been a prayer warrior, and God has withheld potential misfortune among her

---

51 Although the worship team (the band) virtually always leads the congregation in singing a number of tunes, it is not at all the rule that they play throughout the period of personal prophesying. Not all prophesiers consider it helpful, and at this meeting, it appeared that the first prophet to come forward was surprised by it, and took a minute to get comfortable with it.
acquaintances because of her prayer. God will set her up as a prayer leader in the congregation. Leadership will listen to her.

When the first prophet is finished speaking, the other visiting prophet comes up and speaks over them in a similar fashion.

The prophesying continues for about fifteen minutes, after which the church leadership prays for the couple, and they are allowed to return to their seats. At this point, the band leads the worshipers in another song, and a second couple is summoned. The band improvises on another tune, and the process is repeated. This continues throughout the evening. All in all, about six couples or singles are brought forward. The process will repeat itself in two subsequent meetings over the next two days.

Although it does not take place at the meeting just described, it is common at a prophetic gathering for the prophet to give a message to the congregation before launching into personal prophecy.

It is worth noting that the congregational leaders sought to fulfill the portions of the message regarding the couple's increased opportunities for service. They were given a broader range of responsibility in the community within the next six months or so. More dramatically, in a similar meeting, the community's senior pastor was instructed (by the prophet) to step down and another was elevated into
his place. The leadership did as instructed by the Spirit (the former senior pastor
is still a pastor, but in a less visible role). Most prophecies are not so dramatic, and
some are ignored by community members and leaders.

Other than studies of "speaking in tongues," these Pentecostal groups have
not attracted a great deal of interest among anthropologists,\(^52\) and Charismatics
even less so. There are, however, obvious points of contact between this group
and others. The Ubanda obviously come to mind, although not necessarily other
examples of possession. Some shamanic activity bears a remarkable resemblance\(^53\)
(although not the Eskimo soul-traveler we saw above). In addition, some "New
Age" intermediary activity is not far removed.

_Congregational vs. private prophecy_

All of the types of intermediary activity we have looked at so far have been set
in gatherings of a social/religious body. They have also tended to feature
specialists. The first attribute is, to some extent, defined by the field of study:

\(^52\) There are exceptions, of course, most notably Mary Douglas' analyses in the area of their social
organization, which, however, are not central to the scope of this study. Also, Bourguignon and her
students have done a number of interesting studies (including Esther Pressel's study of the Ubanda,
cited above, pp. 21f) on Latin American groups, some of whom call themselves "Pentecostal."
These are important groups, of course, but I am not sure how they relate to the Anglo-American
groups. From the descriptions, they look quite different, both socially and in the apparent
psychological nature of their prophetism.

\(^53\) Eliade (1964) describes strikingly similar community worship.
sociology. The truth is that private religion is often not observable and is rarely the target of ethnography. This is consistent with the primary goals of this investigation. I am, after all, asking whether changes in corporate worship lead to changes in corporate intermediation. Community is also built into my definition (above, p. 2). However, when we begin looking at the historical data, we will see that much of it does not take place in a corporate setting. When, in Acts 20.17, Paul enters a trance and God tells him to leave Jerusalem, it impacts the community only in that Paul will no longer be with them. We will be looking at numerous trances, visions, and spiritual impressions that do not take place in a communal setting, but it is important to keep in mind that this is a secondary target. My primary interest is congregational prophecy.

The emphasis on specialists has more to do with the communities and individuals being observed, and perhaps with the prejudices of the observers. For example, among the Chukchee, Eliade tells us (1964, 252), each family has a drum and will sometimes corporately imitate the shaman. Members of the family imitate 'possession by the spirits' in shamanic fashion, writhing, leaping into the air, and trying to emit inarticulate sounds which are supposed to

54 There are borderline instances. If a community member has a vision and shares it with her community, it becomes congregational, although still not as useful for this study.
be the voice and language of the ‘spirits.’ Sometimes even, shamanic cures are attempted and prophecies uttered, to which no one pays any attention (252).

This family shamanism is done by day, while the professional works at night.

Waldemar Jochelson (cited in Eliade) argues that family shamanism predates the professional version. Eliade, agreeing with Bogoras, maintains that it is just a poor imitation. I am inclined to lean toward Jochelson’s view, although this does not preclude influence going the other direction as well, simply because I think that specialists tend to be secondary to practice. In any case, I would not degrade it as irrelevant as Eliade seems to. This prejudice against non-professionals seems entirely presumptive, especially in light of the fact that Eliade repeatedly accuses the professionals of ‘decadence’ compared to their predecessors. The point, in any case, is that Eliade’s emphasis on specialists derives more from his anti-amateur animosity than from the data.

**Psychological categories**

Some of these sociological categories are likely to be of interest to us at a later point, but since this study is more oriented toward the psychological factors in prophetic behavior, I am going to attempt to organize the data from the point of view of the (apparent) psychological state of the prophet. However, this organizing principle must be subsumed under the overall category of
intermediary activity. This is delimited by its function within the religious community. Soul-travel and mystical states, for example, are excluded if their sole function is personal.\textsuperscript{55} Purely pathological states are also only marginally helpful. In both these cases, however, the borders can become blurred. So, for example, a person may exhibit behavior similar to that of a schizophrenic, but she may be a prophet (from our perspective) if she functions within a religious community as an intermediary. Alternatively, a mystic may be in search of personal growth, but becomes an intermediary if his experience includes a message or vision whose intended audience is the larger religious community (or some subset thereof).\textsuperscript{56}

From a psychological or neurological point of view, the mental state of the prophet at the time that she receives her message is subject to a range of opinions, 

\textsuperscript{55} This excludes some forms of glossolalia as well, although not all.
\textsuperscript{56} I have not included meditative states in this list for the simple reason that they never, to my knowledge, feature in intermediary activity. I obviously need to qualify this. 'Meditation' is sometimes used in English to describe thinking, or letting one's mind wander. These activities can certainly lead to varieties of inspiration at least (see below, pp. 42/). As I am using the term I am referring to altered states of consciousness brought on by focused attention. This leads to a range of experiences, the extent of which has not been fully explored, although d'Aquili, et al. (1999 & bibliography), have shown that at least two can be distinguished in CAT scans: what they call "absolute unitary being" (AUB) and contemplative meditation. Externally, and even within their respective communities, these experiences appear to be the same, but inside the brain they show up quite differently. D'Aquili's team argues that contemplative meditation is merely a "lesser form" of AUB. I do not find the evidence for this conclusion compelling, but it is worth noting that outwardly similar psychological phenomena may be quite different on the inside, and this observation can just as easily be applied to other presenting forms of altered states.
Prophecy

not always clearly stated. Some scholars are on the same general page as Luther and Calvin (that prophecy is hardly distinguishable from preaching). In which case prophecies are products of normal cognitive processes, and are delivered in normal rational states of mind. Others find the line between prophetism and schizophrenia very fine indeed. For obvious reasons, the perceived psychological state of the prophet has a direct impact on modern analyses. Apocalyptic, for example, has often been read as purely literary, in which case it is entirely appropriate to look for literary influences and sources, and to discuss the author's intention. Some more recent scholars, however, reappraising the psychological state of the prophet, are beginning to take more seriously the apocalypticist's claim to be reporting a visionary experience (e.g. Stone, 1984; Halperin, 1993; Himmelfarb, 1993). Using this approach, literary influence and author's intention, while still important, take on a different cast.

It would be hard to argue that prophetic activity in the Hellenistic period, or

__________

57 So Rowley (1964), Collins (1984), and a host of others. There are connections between different apocalyptic reports which are most easily interpreted, at a scholarly level, if they are literary dependencies. Carl Jung, and hosts of others in the psychoanalytical world, would have no difficulty with the non-rational or subconscious self producing images that reflect symbolic patterns that either draw from their environment or (in Jung's case) from a collective unconscious of some variety. Believers, of course, have never had a problem with God delivering similar messages to different people.
any other, was never cognitive.\textsuperscript{58} If nothing else, we have to account for fraud.\textsuperscript{59}

However, it is extremely difficult to make the case that conscious cognition was the implied source of revelation. Scholars of the Jewish Scriptures are divided over the extent to which the prophets of ancient Israel were driven by what William Braud calls “non-ordinary and transcendent experiences” (NTE) (Braud, 2003).\textsuperscript{60}

However, it is rarely doubted that NTEs of some variety underlie most New Testament prophecy. Certainly both \textit{Revelation} and the experience that Paul recalls in 2 Cor. 12.1-5, claim, at least, not to be fully cognitive. Other instances, specifically those in \textit{Acts} and \textit{1 Corinthians} appear to most scholars, me included, as the results of NTEs, but it is possible to make the case that they derive from normal conscious mental states, presumably understood as infused by the

\textsuperscript{58} By ‘cognitive’ and ‘normal mental state’ I mean ‘deriving from that state of mind that we associate with normal healthy waking mental processes,’ productions, primarily, of the conscious intellect. I do not mean to imply that abnormal states are by contrast unhealthy, merely less common.

\textsuperscript{59} Following our definition, fraud is not really prophetic, but it may well be perceived as prophetic by the target community. It is often presumptuous to assume that the modern scholar can tell the difference if the target community could not.

\textsuperscript{60} These “include, but are not limited to, mystical, spiritual, and paranormal experiences.” They would presumably be a religious subset of what Etzel Cardeña, \textit{et al.} call “anomalous experiences” (2002, 3f). Prophetic experience in emphasized by Gunkel, Duhm, Hölscher, Lindblom & Robinson. Cognition is emphasized by Skinner, Mowinkel, and Huffman (Hayes, 1979). However, it is clear that the New Testament authors viewed the revelations in the Jewish Scriptures as supernatural in origin (2 Tim. 3.16f, Heb. 1.1, etc.).
Prophecy

indwelling Spirit of God.\textsuperscript{61}

Just as in sociology, the vocabulary used for prophetic NTEs varies widely from discipline to discipline, and even within a scholarly community. Needless to say this can lead to confusion, so I will try to specify, as closely as possible, how I am using the various terms within the scope of this study. At this point I need to lay out a basic taxonomy of mental states associated with prophecy.

\textit{Dissociation}

In the field of psychology, a number of types of altered states of consciousness are subsumed under the term \textit{dissociation}.\textsuperscript{62} I will be generally following the lead of the psychologists in this case, although only to the extent of the phenomenology, not necessarily embracing any particular psychological model for etiology.\textsuperscript{62} \textit{Webster's Medical Dictionary} (2002) gives the following definition:

\begin{quote}
A psychological defense mechanism in which specific, anxiety-provoking thoughts, emotions, or physical sensations are separated from the rest of the psyche.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{61} Obviously, this is Calvin's view, driven by theological considerations. It is not clear to me whether Luther would agree, based on the quotation given above (note 17). He may simply be saying that the apostles spoke with the same authority as prophecy. E. Earle Ellis has, somewhat prolifically, argued that early Christian prophecy is usually a form of 'inspired' preaching or teaching (esp., 1970, 1974, 1977, and 1978). I would disagree on the 'usually,' but am inclined accept that this was a category of prophetic activity in the early Church, largely depending on what is meant by 'inspired.'

\textsuperscript{62} Etiology is sometimes incorporated into the definition, in my view inappropriately. So, for example, \textit{Stedman's Medical Dictionary} (2002) defines dissociation (within psychology) as
The separation of whole segments of the personality (as in multiple personality) or of discrete mental processes (as in the schizophrenias) from the mainstream of consciousness or of behavior with loss of integrated awareness and autonomous functioning of the separated segments or parts.

In terms of NTEs, this mental state can be subdivided into the subcategories of ecstasy, possession, and parasensory experience.

**Ecstasy**, as used in this study, is any mental state in which the subject perceives herself to be apart from the body, or at least unaware of bodily context (Wilson, 1980). This essentially follows the etymology. Modern "out of body experiences" (OBE) are obviously examples, although they are rarely prophetic. Paul describes an ecstatic experience, a tour of heaven apparently, in 2 Cor. 12.1-5. Obviously, most apocalyptic reflects a claim, at least, to describe experiences of this nature. Shamanic journeys (although not generally other shamanic activities) fall into this category, and some mystical experiences, such as those of Teresa of Ávila, appear to drink from this well.

Teresa calls her own experiences of this type *arrobamiento*, often translated

Needless to say, this eliminates from consideration experiences with a neurological basis, not to mention divine origin. It also leaves us without terminology for these phenomena.

63 Modern students of religion often refer to any sort of NTE as 'ecstasy.' Cultural anthropologists tend to be slightly more careful in their use of the term, but it can still refer to a wide range of experiences. The most frequent problem is the failure to distinguish between mystical experiences, out of body experiences (OBEs), and possession (Rouget 1985).
'rapture,' which is, I suppose, as good a term as any. Rapture may, or may not, be prophetic (that is, containing some sort of message for either the subject or her community). Gilbert Rouget is anxious to distinguish it from the shaman's journey based on social context and induction technique. Those, he claims, pursuing rapture are solitary and silent. The shaman is generally surrounded by her community and musicated (usually by herself — playing drums, guitars, etc.). Rouget does not address apocalyptic or OBEs, but once we throw them into the mix we have possibly as many as five separate experiences which I have chosen to lump under 'ecstasy.' It is also possible that we have as few as one. It should be obvious that most of these reside in different social categories. If that is Rouget's point, then it is well taken. That may, in itself, be enough to make the argument that they differ psychologically. It is not clear at all whether they are different at a neurological level.\textsuperscript{65}

\textsuperscript{64} Since, at a literary level, apocalyptic can be subdivided into at least two categories: tours of heaven/hell and visions of the future (or past).

\textsuperscript{65} Teresa's experience (headaches, visions, occasional loss of consciousness, a four-day coma) has received some attention from the medical community. Most influential has been the historical diagnosis of temporal epilepsy put forward independently by Drs. Pierre Vercelletto (2000) and Esteban Garcia-Albea (2006) (cited from Kristeva, 2006). Assuming this temporal epilepsy approach, Mark Salzman's novel \textit{Lying Awake}, asks what would happen if a visionary whose experiences had a physical basis were to receive medical treatment.

Earlier physicians had assigned Teresa the now obsolete diagnosis, "hysteria" (Evelyn
In the case of **possession**, the subject’s perception may vary, but the community believes that her body has been entered by a spirit or divinity that speaks (or moves) through the subject, without the subject’s participation (Wilson, 1980).\textsuperscript{67} It is not unusual that the possessed does not remember the experience, and has to be told what happened during her absence.\textsuperscript{68}

It is useful to distinguish between **channeling** and **incorporation**.\textsuperscript{69} The former usually does not involve amnesia,\textsuperscript{70} and is not stimulated by dancing or

---

Underhill, 1911). Roland Fischer (1971), not so interested in pathology, argues for a continuum of experience with trophotropic ("Samadhi") on one side (characterized by lower EEG frequencies) and ergotropic (rapture) on the other. "Normal" is in the middle. Recovery from intense ergotropic excitation can result in a rebound to trophotropic states.

Others have made similar after-the-fact diagnoses of Paul, Hildegard, and numerous historical figures whose experiences are described in primary literature. To assume that all such experiences are derived from pathology is parsimonious and probably reductionistic. To assert that none are is to be in denial. Both Newberg (2001) and Carter (1999), discussing subjective contact with the divine in normal people, suggest that (if we assume the existence of God) humans may have been designed with the ability to sense such things. The same could be said of certain "pathologies." This, however, is theological speculation, which, per se, is outside the goals of this study (see Bache, 1982; Albright, 2001; Persinger, 1987).

\textsuperscript{66} See my longer discussion of this phenomenon above under sociological categories, p. 20ff.

\textsuperscript{67} Johannes Lindbloom (1957) notes that possession and ecstasy are not always distinct. In rare cases, the prophet can be experiencing a tour of Heaven, for example, while her body is, according to the testimony of those present, possessed and communicating independent information to the community.

\textsuperscript{68} Rouget (1985) considers amnesia a defining characteristic of possession-trance. For him, this is a key characteristic in distinguishing from ecstasy which, he says, is always remembered.

\textsuperscript{69} See above, note 45, on distinguishing terminology. Goodman and a significant body of social scientists use the term ‘possession-trance’ for what I am calling ‘incorporation.’ I do not like the term, but at least it is fully descriptive and unambiguous.

\textsuperscript{70} One former channeler I spoke to said that while she remembered her sessions, her memories
Prophecy

music. The latter involves both of these in virtually all cases.

While it is possible to argue that possession is unrepresented in earliest Christianity, there are a couple of probable biblical examples. One of these is the story of the 'Witch' of Endor (1 Sam. 28.3-24), and the other is the woman at Ephesus who loudly proclaims that Paul is 'come from God' (Acts 16.16-18). Both of these look like examples of some sort of mediumship. In the modern world, possession is characteristic, on the one hand, of spiritualist mediums (channelers), and on the other hand, of mounts among the Condomblé and in Santeria (both incorporation). Total bodily possession is the rule, but not necessary. Partial possession, such as in 'automatic writing' is not uncommon in spiritualist circles. In the ancient world, Bacchants and Corybantes, described by Plato, have a strong resemblance to African incorporation rites like those of the Condomblé. The of the experiences were often hazy.

This argument will become much more difficult if we stretch 'earliest' far enough into the second century to include the New Prophecy (Montanism). It is still possible to argue it here as well, but it requires fighting against the most obvious interpretation of the data. It is also possible to argue for possession backwards from the Montanists to the earlier period, but I view this as equally difficult in view of the control that Paul seems to assume the prophets have over themselves in, especially, 1 Cor. 14.

The description of the Ubanda above (pp. 21ff) is an example of incorporation.

Among the Condomblé, the dance of the possessed may be more important than any message. This is certainly true of healing trances, such as the tarantella.

It will be recalled that Firth argued that degree of amnesia was dependent on whether the possessing spirit's control extended to the head (n. 33). Presumably, it often did not.
Prophecy

pythia at Delphi, in contrast, was more likely to be a channeler of some variety.

Parasensory experiences\(^\text{75}\) are among the most commonly described in biblical (and surrounding) literature. These are experiences in which one or several of the subject's natural senses report when there is no apparent external stimulus. Visions of angels, saints or departed acquaintances are among the most common (Jdg. 13.1-18; Mk. 1.9-11; Acts 12.6-15). Usually, in these cases, others that might be present do not share the experience, although there are exceptions.\(^\text{76}\)

Simply hearing voices is also not uncommon (less so in the Bible, but note 1 Sam. 3.1-17).\(^\text{77}\)

Other senses also come into play occasionally, although without a verbal or visual component, these are less likely to be viewed as intermediary. A subjective drop in temperature frequently accompanies ghost experiences.

Reports of near death experiences sometimes include accompanying smells and

\(^{75}\) My terminology. Psychologists often subsume these under dissociation. Needless to say, many of these are also symptomatic of schizophrenia.

\(^{76}\) Paul's Damascus road experiences. There are problems. Paul tells the story differently than we first encounter it. The original version is in Acts is in 9.1-18, but he recounts it in 22.6-16 and again in 26.12-18. Paul's version differs in the minor detail of what the traveling companion see and hear. Medjugorje can be cited as an example of a shared vision.

\(^{77}\) In Rabbinic literature, when God speaks using a disembodied voice that is called the קולן (daughter of voice) (Rothkoff, 1971). It is one of the last remaining acceptable intermediary experiences in the Talmudic period.
tactile sensations, and Elijah, of course, senses a light breeze (1 Kings 19.12).

**Enthusiasm**

This is technically not a prophetic state, but it is often related. It is derived from the Greek ἐνθυσίασμος meaning "engodded" and I will return to the Greek term presently, but it has acquired a range of meanings in religious studies as well as the obvious popular usage. As I will generally use the term (unless the context indicates that I am talking about the Greek word group) it refers to a state of extreme religious emotion often characterized by reduced motor control and a perceived heightened state of religious consciousness. It sometimes leads to prophecy, but certainly not always.

**Epipnoia**

A type of prophetic experience, which I will call 'epipnoia,' may be a light form of possession. The primary difference, as Rouget points out, lies in the

---

78 Terminology in this area is not well established. Rouget (1985) calls it 'inspiration.' It is sometimes called 'enthusiasm.' Both of these terms could be useful, but have too many other technical and non-technical uses which may be needed as this study progresses. I have just discussed how I will use "enthusiasm." Epipnoia is, of course, simply a Greek term which, while not common, often means something like 'inspired' (literally, 'breathed on'). I do not, however, intend to be constrained by the Greek use of the term. Readers not familiar with Greek should note that the associated adjective will be 'epipneumatic.'
degree to which the subject participates. The *epipneumatic* prophet believes that she has been overshadowed by the divinity and that (in the case of prophecy) the divinity speaks through her. She is "invested" by the spirit, but is not controlled by it (Rouget, 1985), and does not generally speak of being entered by a spirit, or at least not in the same sense as in possession. Epipneumatics are characteristically fully aware, and can participate in, or even alter, the content of the message or behavior (if one is prophesying it is a message, but epipneumatic behavior can also include tongues, dancing, etc.). Paul’s admonition to the Corinthian prophets that they should take turns in an orderly fashion, and to glossolalists that they should limit their expression, suggests that the pneumatic activity at Corinth, at least, was most likely of this variety.

79 He actually identifies three types of possession: possession proper (more or less the same as my use of the term *possession*), inspiration, and communion. Inspiration is, as mentioned in the previous note, simply his term for what I am calling epipnoia. The latter appears to be a more private form in which the subject encounters the spirit internally, experienced as communion, revelation or illumination. It seems to me that the last category is simply a variation on epipnoia, distinguished by whether the experience is private or public. However, many of the experiences we have and will be examining can have both public and private manifestations. Furthermore, the messages can be targeted at either the prophet himself, at some other individual(s), or at the community in general. These distinctions are not unimportant, particularly to an anthropologist like Rouget, but I do not think they require different terminology when we are talking about the psycho-neurological categories of NDEs.

80 On the relationship between tongues and prophecy, it is interesting that in one instance (3.12.1513.12.17) in which Irenaeus quotes Acts 10.46, where Luke has γλῶσσας Irenaeus reads προφητεύοντας (Paul, 1998).
Most modern Pentecostal and Charismatic prophecy falls into this category.\textsuperscript{81} I would also include such modern phenomena as Ouija boards and many ESP experiences (although the latter rolls over into the next category as well). The Yoruba ifá (mentioned above, note 48) also looks like epipneumatic prophecy, and Socrates, who took dreams and oracles seriously, was probably also an epipneumatic when, according to Xenophon, he obeyed an inner voice which, he called "the voice of God" (Dodds, 1957).\textsuperscript{82}

Epipnoia, and sometimes much more, comes into the process of prophetic interpretation of scripture. While it is possible to interpret sacred texts at a strictly cognitive level, the prophetic interpreter is one who can obtain the appropriate interpretation for this community, at this time, directly from the divine source. While to my knowledge this terminology is never used in primary literature, the concept is probably present in Ezra-Nehemiah, clearly at Qumran (Humm, 1985), and throughout the history of Christianity continuing into the modern period.\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{81} This is not to say that members of these groups do not occasionally have visions, hear voices or have ecstatic experiences.
\textsuperscript{82} \textit{ἐπιπνοία} μοι φωνή φαίνεται (Xenophon, \textit{Apology of Socrates} 12; ed. Marchant).
\textsuperscript{83} It is interesting that many Pentecostal groups were admitting women to the pulpit long before their larger denominational cousins, while simultaneously maintaining a conservative position on biblical inerrancy. This apparent contradiction (in light of such passages as 2 Tim. 2.12) may be
While prophetic interpretation is generally applied to the interpretation of scripture, in communities where there are other active prophets of the dissociative or epipneumatic variety, the prophet interpreter may also serve as a decoder or expander of other's prophetic revelations. In the eyes of at least one scholar, this decoding may lie behind the pneumatic manifestation which is usually translated "discerning spirits" (διακρίσεις πνευμάτων) in 1 Cor. 12.10 (Dautzenberg, 1971 & 1975).

Closely related to this is orative prophecy. This looks like a sermon to the external observer, but from the speaker's point of view, and possibly also from the community's he is speaking directly from the prompting of the divinity.¹⁴

Intuition is, to a large extent, a less intense form of epipnoia. Besides what we normally call intuition, I would include premonitions, telepathy, and many less dramatic ESP experiences. In early Christian literature (canonical and otherwise) explained by their view that preaching was primarily prophetic rather than didactic. Women are, of course, graced with prophetic roles both in the New Testament and (to a somewhat lesser extent) in Jewish Scriptures (see Acts 21.9, 1 Cor. 11.5, 2 Kings 22.14).

¹⁴ I had a conversation with a Pentecostal preacher once in which I asked him how he prepared his sermons. His response was, "I prepare my heart." He would not know what he was going to speak about until he was at the pulpit, and even then might have no idea where he was going to end up. From his point of view, this allowed him to be entirely directed by the Holy Spirit. I do not know whether he viewed his sermons as extended prophecies, although he may have. Certainly others in that tradition have seen their messages that way.
this sort of thing is rarely reported, or is elevated to a higher level after the fact, if
the intuition proves accurate. This phenomenon, of course, continues in the
modern period as well.

**Divination**

I use the term ‘divination’ differently than is characteristic of most modern
writers. For most writers the term denotes any communication with the
supernatural that violates traditionally accepted modes. Consequently,
everything from entrail reading to necromancy can fall into this category, but not
Urim and Thummim or angelic visitations. However, in this study, the word will
have a much narrower scope, delimited by method rather than morality.

Divination, while you are reading this dissertation, is any means of

---

85 ‘Traditionally’ may be defined in terms of the observer’s culture, or in terms of the observed’s. Which is intended usually has to be gleaned from the context.

86 Necromancy is, properly, communication with the dead. It usually takes the form of
possession, although nineteenth century favorites like table tapping (which I would be inclined to
consider epipneumatic) probably fall into this category as well. The distinction between the dead
and other spirits is blurred in modern Spiritualism, as in many world religious traditions, and the
term necromancy is viewed as pejorative and rarely used.

87 We are once again running into the old functional vs. descriptive conflict. Functional, in this
case, referring to categories based on how something functions in the (religious) community, and
descriptive referring to the psycho-neurological state of the prophet at the time of the revelation.
There is, of course, nothing wrong with functional categories, and they are to be expected when
reading cultural anthropology, but they are less useful for our immediate purposes. It is
unfortunate that we have a limited vocabulary to work with, such that the discipline must be
determined in order to discern the meaning of the words (compare ‘cult’ and ‘fetish’). Lessa &
Vogt’s distinctions (next note) are useful, but I prefer to just limit the reference of the term.
communication with the supernatural that is based on the interpretation of (apparently) random phenomena in nature.\textsuperscript{88} By far the most common example is astrology. The random phenomena in this case would be the location, in the skies, of stars and planets at any given time. No altered state of consciousness is needed (although a computer helps). Books are, and have been available in the West, at least since the 3rd century, BCE, to aid in interpreting this data. Divination also includes such ancient favorites as casting lots,\textsuperscript{89} haruspices and dream interpretation. Modern varieties include tarot cards, palm reading and tealeaves.\textsuperscript{90}

In the ancient world, as today, all the hopeful practitioner needs is a little training — knowing what to look for and what it means when found.\textsuperscript{91} (Being a \textit{bona fide}...}

\textsuperscript{88} Lessa & Vogt (1972, following Turner (1961)) distinguish two types of divination: inspirational and non-inspirational. Inspirational includes shamanism, crystal gazing and shell hearing. Non-inspirational subdivides into fortuitous (finding meaning in random events such as black cats, broken mirrors, etc) or deliberate (reading random phenomena — astrology, scapulimancy, chiromancy, etc). Obviously, my definition corresponds to their non-inspirational category. Dodds appears to use the modifier ‘inductive’ for divination in this category (1957).

\textsuperscript{89} Including, presumably, the Urim and Thummim.

\textsuperscript{90} Scrying, the reading of crystal balls, bowls of liquid, etc. is often located in this category. I am more inclined to see it as an aid to epipnoia (as do Lessa & Vogt, 1972).

\textsuperscript{91} In his 1957 (1972) study Omar Khayyam Moore argued that divination provides random responses to inquiries. He noted that this randomness may prove useful to communities under certain circumstances. Where it is used to determine where to hunt (in times where normal hunting patterns have failed), it is likely to send hunters into places they would not normally choose. Since normally chosen areas are likely to be ‘hunted out,’ new areas may better serve the community. Divination provides that randomness.

Underlying this is, of course, the community belief that such phenomena are not truly random,
Prophecy

priest(ess), though, may help in getting others to believe your interpretations.)

The big difference between divination and other forms of prophecy we have considered is the fact that no NTE is required. However, it should be added that the most skilled practitioners are generally at least intuitive, if not fully epipneumatic,\textsuperscript{92} mixed in with the purely cognitive aspects of their work.\textsuperscript{93}

The only instance of early Christian divination that I know of is the casting of lots to determine Judas’ successor. Luke places this before Pentecost, and therefore before the reception of the Spirit by the Christian community. This in itself may be significant, but at least as far as what is reported in surviving literature, it was not a normal method for determining the will of God after that point.

\textsuperscript{92} Professional ‘psychics’ are often accused of simply having well developed powers of observation. If these powers of observation are unconscious, I would argue that is hardly to be distinguished from intuition. However, it is outside the scope of this study to distinguish ‘true’ intermediaries from frauds.

\textsuperscript{93} The distinction between NTE-based and cognitive interpretation of dreams is at the root of the story of Daniel and the ‘Chaldeans’ in Nebuchadnezzar’s court (Dan. 2). However, it does not seem to underlie Joseph’s skill as compared with Pharaoh’s magicians in Gen. 41. I am not sure whether the same sort of contrast is at play in Matthew, where Joseph has to hear in a dream what the μάγους, highly trained diviners, should have known.
Prophecy

Entheogens

Entheogens, drugs used to stimulate an altered state for mystical or intermediary purposes, have a long and well studied history. Soma, a frequent topic in the Rig Veda, is generally held to have been such a substance, which some believe to be extinct, but many argue to be the hallucinogenic mushroom amanita muscaria (Roberts, 1968). Much legal ink has, of course, been spilled over the status of Native American use of, in particular, the peyote cactus as a frequent part of their ritual life. Ayahuasca is a hallucinogen important among the shamans of the Peruvian Amazon (Harner, 1990), and alcohol and tobacco are frequent shamanic aids elsewhere (Eliade, 1964).94

The list could, of course, go on. I would not be inclined, however, to consider drug-induced experiences as a type of intermediation, per se. Rather, in the same category as fasting, rhythm, dancing and extended meditation, entheogens are a means of stimulating such experiences as ecstasy, possession, and even epipnoia. In Wallace’s 1959 study, which I noted earlier (note 32) he showed that, at least in the case of the Peyote Cult, the cultural expectation of entheogen users tended to

---

94 As mentioned earlier (p. 9), Eliade is sometimes critical of the “decadence” of shamanic traditions who have embraced entheogens relatively recently in their history. He seems to feel that by this they have cheapened their own prophetic tradition (e.g., 1964).
Prophecy
direct their experiences in socio-religiously appropriate directions. It is certainly worth taking note if an NTE has a chemical etiology, but it does not necessarily reduce its value, or credibility, for the target community.

Every so often a scholar will suggest that entheogens were used within groups of intermediaries in ancient or Hellenistic Palestine. The best known of these was John Allegro (1970) who made such a claim regarding the origins of Christianity. It was not well received, but it would be very difficult to make the case that the ancient Jews were unaware of psychoactive substances. However, any argument (positive or negative) regarding use of entheogens in any period of Jewish or early Christian history is largely from silence.

Dreams

One of the most ordinary of our ‘non-ordinary’ experiences, dreams, nevertheless played an important rôle in ancient (as well as modern)

---

95 It is worth noting, in light of Eliade’s criticism in the previous note, that the Peyote Cult is only a little over 100 years old, growing, perhaps, out of the same kind of political and economic forces that lead to the Ghost Dance movement (Barber, 1941).

96 Huston Smith (2000) has made a relatively recent contribution to the study of this area of religious experience, including a response to his own experience in this area. Harner (1990) also describes his first shamanistic journey, which was entheogenically stimulated.

97 Between 17 and 38 percent of studied subjects claim to have had a precognitive dream (e.g., one presumably predicting the future). They decline with age, are more likely to be reported by women than men, and can be induced. (Emery, 1991, Haraldsson, 1975, Lange, Schredl, & Houran, 2001, Palmer, 1979).
communication with the divine. They feature, of course, in early Christianity and Biblical Judaism as well. If someone says they have had a dream, it would be unusual to doubt their report, but it is another thing entirely to determine if one is of supernatural origin. Artemidorus (1.2), along with other Hellenistic sources, identified three types of prophetic dreams: symbolic (always requires interpretation), visionary (including a preenactment of something in the future), and oracular (visitation by a deceased relative, friend, famous person or divinity) (Dodds, 1957, 107). When found in ancient reports, any of these can be purely literary. To my knowledge, the second category is not found in our literature.

---

98 Dodds (1957) has an excellent chapter on dreams in the classical Greek world, from which I will only highlight a few points, and of course, there is Philo’s Dreams (De somniis).

99 They can in modern reports as well, to be sure, but modern writers are less likely to compose a dream as a feature of an otherwise factual account, which the ancients might. Moderns do not generally put much weight on dreams unless they have psychological significance or end up impacting ‘real’ behavior. When they are reported, however, they may undergo modifications, which the reporter believes to be minor. Freud noted that dream reports are frequently modified by those reporting them in order to eliminate their ubiquitous surrealism. He called this “secondary elaboration” (1913, 391).

100 It is, however, one of the most common, and by far the easiest to study. Lange, Schredl, & Houran (2001) studied precognitive dreams. In order to qualify for the study, a dream needed to be recorded (or told) prior to its supposed fulfillment. They found a high correlation with (a) frequency of dream recall, and (b) tolerance for ambiguity. As with many such studies, the results seem (after the fact) obvious, since dreams must be recalled to be meaningful and are not likely to exactly pre-play future events.

The first correlation is not necessarily so obvious, though. Since most of us only remember a fraction of our dreams after the first few minutes of being awake, except for habitual dream recorders, simply remembering would normally be an indication that the dreamer regarded the
We will be seeing examples of the other two.

Most dreams are unexpected, but on occasion people will specifically seek a prophetic dream. Methods vary from fasting to cutting off body parts, but by far the most common, then as well as now, is incubation (sleeping in a sacred space) (Dodds, 1957). Again, although there are Biblical examples of accidental incubation, I am unaware of this as a self-conscious method in our literature. I am inclined to think, however, given the early Church’s view of martyrdom, that for Perpetua and her companions, prison becomes a type of sacred space.

Prophetic office

When a person’s position in the community is such that her statements are viewed as authoritative divine communications, and especially when their authority goes beyond the lifespan of the speaker, she becomes functionally experience as somehow significant. Of course, this could lead her to be on the lookout for a fulfillment.

Pharaoh’s dream of the cows and corn is a perfect example of the second correlation, as are most dreams described in biblical literature.

Incubation is still used today in Greece, according to Dodds (1957), as well as in Morocco (Llewelyn-Davies & Fernea, 1980s).

Jacob’s dream at Bethel is an example (Gen. 28.10-19). This story is, in fact, an etiology for Bethel’s becoming a sacred space, and I would not be surprised if one of its functions was as a site for incubation.

Surely in the “martyr cults,” something like incubation was practiced, but of course, simply waiting for martyrdom makes one holy enough not to need to find a “sacred space.”

If the authority of her statements does not go beyond her life-span, that is merely authority of
prophetic for that community. In some, although not all, such statements become prophetic for the community only if they are made in the appropriate context. Obviously, the Pope fills this rôle in modern Roman Catholicism when he speaks ex cathedra. In John 11.49-52, the high priest Caiaphas' argument for political expediency is taken by John as a prophecy, resulting from Caiaphas' office. This is true even though it is not an official proclamation and in spite of the fact that, for John, its prophetic meaning is far different from Caiaphas' intention.105

Ancient Terminology

Hellenistic Greek terminology

Since we will eventually be looking at Hellenistic Christianity, it is probably appropriate, at this time, to look at how the various words for intermediary activity were used in that period. For the early Christians, particularly in the second and third centuries, both the language and the concepts associated with prophecy would be shaped by two forces: the Hellenistic world and Judaism.

105 This last point is a frequent characteristic of interpretation of prophecy. Since it is God who is the real author, not the prophet, the interpreter is not limited to the intention of the speaker (even when that can be known unambiguously).
Obviously, the most important Greek term for Hellenistic Judaism and early Christianity is the word from which we derive prophet: προφήτης. However, the basic meaning of the term in Greek, straying a good deal from Jewish-Christian usage (Hill, 1979), is something like ‘interpreter, proclaimer, spokesperson.’

Krämer’s highly influential study focuses this, saying, “every [προφήτης] declares something which is not his own” (1964). In Hellenistic Greek this acquires a range of applications:

- Dio Crysostom: a philosopher is “a prophet of immortal nature”
- Lucian of Samosata: a teacher seeks to be a “prophet of truth and candor”
- Plutarch: Epicurians are “prophets of Epicurus”
- Diodorus Siculus: written history is the “prophetess of truth”
- Dioscurides of Cilicia: a botanist is called a prophet
- Galen of Pergamum: a medical quack is called a prophet (794 condensed by Grudem, 2000, 34f)

The upshot is that, in Hellenistic Greek, a προφήτης is not necessarily an intermediary, as we have been using the term, although he may be one, if he

---

106 Πρό = before, on behalf of + φημέ = to say. So we have, “one who speaks before or on behalf of” without specifying whether ‘before’ means ‘in front of’ or ‘beforehand.’ Liddell and Scott (1889) say it is first, “one who speaks for a god and interprets his will,” but include “interpreter” and “proclaimer” later in their definition. Numerous scholars have been anxious to distance it from ‘predictor’ (although ancient writers are not necessarily so careful), so it is sometimes given as ‘forthteller’ which is fine, but perhaps somewhat simplified, as we will see.
receives his message from a divinity. On the other hand, an intermediary, by definition, speaks for another, and is therefore always a ἔφημος.

Language used in connection with the oracle of Apollo at Delphi, supports this argument, up to a point. The oracle was accessed through several steps. In the first, the inquirer delivered his request to a priest, who then delivered it to the pythia. She, sitting on a sacred tripod (the seat of Apollo), would receive a message from the deity. After this the priest would provide an interpretation, or perhaps versification, and deliver that to the inquirer. The pythia went by a number of names, but the man who interpreted and delivered the oracle to the

107 Some scholars (e.g. Hill, 1979, Ellis, 1978) have used this to argue that prophecy in the early Christian era and earlier in Judaism was essentially cognitive, rather than NTE based. I believe the evidence militates against this, although admittedly, some cognitive literary productions were passed off as prophecy, and some communities may have elevated charismatic (in the sociological sense) leaders to the point where they regarded all their utterances as prophetic.

There are also non-NTE based categories, as noted earlier, especially divination and prophetic office. I have already argued that divination was not a significant part of early Christian intermediation. We will have to return to the question of prophetic office.

108 See below, under mantic μαχία (p. 57) for a discussion of this message receiving process.

109 The need for a priest interpreter creates a problem. It suggests that the pythia’s message might be unintelligible to the inquirer, perhaps even appearing as complete gibberish. This interfaces nicely with the entheogen theory (for which see pp. 47f), although, of course, some sort of glossolalia is still possible without a chemical intermediary. However, it fails to take into account reports of direct communication with the pythia (see note 110). I am inclined to think that the pythia’s oracles were sometimes intelligible, although perhaps not always slick. In any case we are covering a very long period of activity, and it is plausible that all of these could have been true at different times, or variously in the same time period. The priests, consequently, sometimes versified, sometimes edited, and often up-classed the message for the enquirer.

110 According to Strabo (9.3.5) the temple kept poets on staff for this purpose, although he also says that she sometimes delivered her oracle already in versified format.
Inquirers were called the προφήτης (Krämer, 1964). In Delphi, then, the προφήτης delivers the message, but does not originate it, nor does he even receive it directly from the god. To be fair though, in many instances he is not a mere messenger; he transforms the divine message from the less intelligible into a meaningful oracle. Unless there is a divinatory method to his technique (of which we are not aware), this essentially makes him a prophetic interpreter.

Before, however, we dismiss the term as consistently secondary (as do Krämer and those dependent on him), we need to look a little closer at the terminology associated with tripod oracles (such as the one at Delphi). The pythia might be

111 This role for the προφήτης is supported in Plato's Timaeus 72, where several intermediary terms (ἐνθέος, μαντείας & προφήτης) come together in one passage. Here the προφήτης is clearly the interpreter/judge of the message delivered by the one who is ἐνθέος. The context suggests that he sees it in the same category as dream interpretation.

In a story retold by Strabo (Geog. 9.2.4) the Boeotians, anticipating conflict with the Pelasgians, went to the oracle at Dodona, who (apparently the προφήτης herself) told them that they would be successful if they committed sacrilege. They suspected treachery, especially in light of her family connections to the Pelasgians (who had probably also consulted her). They killed her on the spot, arguing that either she was sincere, in which case they were obeying the oracle, or she was trying to entrap them, in which case she deserved it. All this lead to a trial presided over by the other two priestesses (there were always three) and two unidentified men. The decision split along gender lines, resulting in acquittal. As a result of this, only men were allowed to prophesy to Boeotians in Dodona (ἐκ δὲ τούτων Βοιωτῶν μόνοις ἄνδρας προθεσπίζειν ἐν Δωδώνη (ed. Meineke)).

This may mean that from that point onward Boeotian inquirers had to consult through the male προφήται, or it might mean that men performed the inquiry themselves if Boeotians were involved. I am inclined toward the men-as-buffers approach, particularly since that is consistent with practice at Delphi.

112 Technically, if it is divination, that is simply another intermediation technique.
referred to using a range of terms, including πυθάς, of course, some form of ἐνθεος, μάντις, προμαντίς or προφήτις (reflecting her rôle as mouthpiece of the god). Of course, the careful reader will have noticed προφήτις on this list. Since this is merely the feminine form of προφήτις, and it is being used of the intermediary herself, it creates a tension with the secondary rôle we have so far assigned to προφήτις. This form of the term is relatively rare, and outside of Jewish and Christian literature consistently (where it can be determined) designates a tripod oracle like the one at Delphi, and usually the Delphic oracle herself. While it is possible that it refers to her office as priestess (as it is often rendered in modern translations), rather than to her mantic functions, the latter is more likely.

113 On the Perseus database it has a frequency ratio of 0.04 per 10,000, compared to a maximum frequency of 0.96 for προφήτις. This reflects 19 instances compared to 466 at the time of this study. Of course, Perseus is not an exhaustive database, at least not in 2006, although I suspect that it is representative of classical literature. The ratio is less likely to change than the numbers if this were run on a larger text-base such as the TLG. The TLG does contain a greater percentage of Christian and Jewish translations texts (the LXX, for example). This actually makes it less accurate for our purposes at this point in the study, and would certainly increase the distance in ratio between the two forms of the word.

114 It would be hard to establish this, and it would leave us wondering why it is not used for non-mantic priestesses. In contrast, Plato uses the usual word for priestess (ἰερέα) for a mantis in Phaedrus, where Socrates is made to say ἢ τε γὰρ δὴ ἐν Δελφοῖς προφῆτις αἱ τ´ ἐν Δωδώνῃ ἱερέαι μανεῖσαι ... ἵππασαντο (244a-b; ed. Burnet).
Mavía

A more characteristic word used for Greek intermediary activity is μανία. However, as its obvious etymological connection to ‘mania’ suggests, it has a wider meaning than just some type of prophecy. Plato lists it as one of the diseases of the soul in the Timaeus (86b), although in Phaedrus, an earlier work, he says it can be subdivided into human diseases on the one hand, and a “divine state which releases us from the customary social norms” on the other.¹¹⁵ He then¹¹⁶ distinguishes four types of divine μανία:

- Mantic, inspired by Apollo
- Ritual, inspired by Dionysus
- Poetic, inspired by the Muses
- Erotic, inspired by Eros and Aphrodite (265a-b) ¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Μανίας δὲ γε έιδη δύο, τὴν μὲν ύπο νοημάτων ἀνθρωπίνων, τὴν δὲ ύπο θείας ἔξαλλαγής τῶν εἰωθότων νομίμων γιγνομένη (ed. Burnet). It should be noted, however, that in Timaeus (72), where μανία is disease, disease is presented as one of the sources of prophetic visions, etc., which require the services of a μανίακος to decipher (see n. 111).

¹¹⁶ Technically, he is summarizing an earlier argument in 244, to which I will now turn. Gilbert Rouget (1985, 199) believes that Plato is only half serious in this discussion, since he is clearly mocking Ion in Ion 535b-c. This may be true, although it is not so clear that he is similarly mocking Phaedrus. In any case, I believe we can take his categorization seriously, if not his evaluation of the positive value of the categories.

It should also be noted that Plato’s limitation of divine μανία to these four formal categories does not prevent him from using the word group in other intermediary, or at least magico-religious, contexts.

¹¹⁷ Τῆς δὲ θείας τετάρτων θεών τέταρτα μέρη διελόμενοι, μαντικὴν μὲν ἐπίπτουσιν Ἀπόλλωνος θέντες, Διονύσιος δὲ τελεστήν, Μοῦσαν δ’ αὖ ποιητικὴν, τετάρτην δὲ ἀφροδίτης καὶ Ἐρωτός, ἐφωτικὴν μανίαν ἐφήσαμεν τε ἀριστὴν εἶναι (Phaedrus 265b; ed. Burnet).
Mantic μανία, for all intents and purposes, refers to the tripod oracles at Delphi, Dodona, and elsewhere. The pythia's importance to the Greek community is unquestioned. Her psychological state, however, is often a matter of debate. Plato suggests that she is in "inspired ecstasy" (e.g. a possession state). Pierre Amandry (1950, 234f) puts her "in a state of grace resulting from the accomplishments of the rites" (tr. Dodds, 1957, 87 n. 41). This would presumably be some form prophetic office, activated by the ritual, although one could argue for epipnoia. I am inclined to think that if it were merely an office supported by ritual power the officials in charge would tend to select women of greater social rank to fill the post. Plutarch says the pythia in his day was an uneducated farmer's daughter (Pyth. Orac. 22, 405c). Amandry's main, and not unreasonable, argument hinges on a rejection of frenzied activity usually associated with incorporation, and sometimes (e.g. Lucan 5.200ff) reported of the pythia. Dodds, however, points out that mediums are not generally frenzied, and it is quite

---

118 These two oracles were closely connected. The tripod at Delphi, according to Strabo, was replaced annually, and the discard was carried up to Dodona (Geog. 9.2.4). Of course, this could simply be a story told to elevate Delphi over her sister sanctuary.

119 Plato, I believe, would similarly reject Amandry's argument. Remember that we came to this discussion of the pythia by way of Plato's discourse on μανία. He comments that while the pythia "were mantic, they conferred great benefits on Hellas, publicly and privately, but in their senses, [they conferred] none or few." [μανείσατα μὲν πολλὰ δὴ καὶ καλὰ ίδια τε καὶ δημοσίᾳ τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἣν θανάσαντο, σωφρονουσαὶ δὲ βραχέα ἡ οὐδὲν (ed. Burnet)] (Phaedrus 244b).
possible to be possessed without "hysterical excitement" (87 n. 41). The ritual referred to here is described by Dodds:

She bathed, probably in Castalia, and perhaps drank from a sacred spring; she established contact with the god through his sacred tree, the laurel, either by holding a laurel branch, as her predecessor Themis does in a fifth-century vase painting, or by fumigating herself with burnt laurel leaves, as Plutarch says she did, or perhaps sometimes by chewing the leaves, as Lucian asserts; and finally she seated herself on the tripod, thus creating a further contact with the god by occupying his ritual seat. All these are familiar magical procedures, and might well assist the autosuggestion.... (1957, 73)

According to some traditions (e.g. Strabo, Geography 9.3.5), she was intoxicated by the vapors which rose from the ground there (Hill 1979, 10—presumably the breath of a dragon — πυθόμαν — killed by Apollo). Dodds (1957, 73f) makes a strong argument against this. The anti-supernaturalist motivations of the stoic sources of this ancient theory make it suspect, he argues, particularly in light of Plutarch's investigation and rejection of this theory. He further cites the failure of archaeologists to find any evidence of a chasm or a source of vapors (ancient or modern) (citing Courby, 1927, II.59ff). However, recent geological studies have arrived at different conclusions. Finding two intersecting faults immediately below the temple, and ethylene, ethane and methane present in gasses at nearby springs, Jelle de Boer and colleagues have argued for a reevaluation of the entheogenic theory (de Boer, 2001). Other entheogenic
methods have been tested and found wanting — e.g. chewing, or inhaling the fumigations of laurel leaves (Oesterreich 1974, 319 n. 3), although it should be noted that the ancient Greeks were not necessarily the careful botanists of the modern world, and δάφνη may not (always) mean the plant we call ‘laurel’ (Osborne, 2006, Ott, 1998).

In my opinion, the current evidence points toward entheogenic epipnoia or mediumship, perhaps from more than one induction source. It is important, though, not to downplay other aspects in making this judgment. As in modern possession cults (Rouget, 1985, 47ff), the pythia had to pass through a period of training which would teach her how to control the chemical experience so that it produced the expected intermediary results. Also, Amandry’s (1950) and Dodds’ (1957) arguments, noted earlier, are (in spite of their differences) quite justified in emphasizing the importance of the immediate ritual preparation. This is also a feature of modern shamanistic trance, where chemical assistants are not at

---

120 This may even explain the somewhat diverse reports from the ancient world, although other explanations are possible. It is likely that some reports are more sensationalist than accurate (Amandry, 1950). In addition, even in the most conservative of cultures, there is no reason to assume that an oracular institution would remain completely static throughout a millennium of reported operation.

121 Once again, Wallace’s 1959 study of Peyote use comes to mind (see p. 47).
all uncommon (Eliade, 1964). The experienced intermediary knows how to use, rather than be controlled by, entheogens.\textsuperscript{122}

Plato also includes the sibyls in the category of mantic μανία, and so, presumably, he would also other peripatetic intermediaries, such as Bakis.\textsuperscript{123}

Unfortunately, as with the classical prophets, there is not enough information to allow us to intelligently speculate on the psychological nature of their experiences.

Ritual \textsuperscript{124}μανία is a little harder to pinpoint. In \textit{Phaedrus} 244, Plato has Socrates give an expanded explanation:

\begin{quote}
In fact, congenital dissociative\textsuperscript{125} mania can be used to treat those diseases
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{122} This is not entirely unlike the way shamans in some cultures are trained to use, rather than be controlled by, experiences that western medicine would regard as psychologically or neurologically pathological. Passing through an induced crisis is sometimes part of the process of becoming a shaman. Compare, for example, Black Elk's description of his crisis (not chemically induced) and admission into the world of the Oglala holy man (Black Elk, & Neihardt, 1988).

\textsuperscript{123} Not all scholars are in agreement as to whether Bakis was an individual, or whether it is a term describing a class of wandering intermediaries. If he was an individual, he would presumably have been active around 700-500, BCE (Aune, 1983, 38). It is, of course, not necessary to choose, as it is easy to imagine an individual whose charisma makes him eponymous to a class of similar prophets.

\textsuperscript{124} Τελεστικός (ritual) appears twice in Plato and once in Plutarch. In Plutarch (\textit{Lives Sol.} 12,4) and in one of the Plato references (\textit{Phaedrus} 248) all we can conclude is that the linguistic context is intermediary (ἐνθουσιαστικός and μαντικός respectively). It is presumably derived from τελέω, one of whose meaning is "to initiate [in the mysteries]" (Liddell & Scott, 1889).

\textsuperscript{125} ἐγγενομένη καὶ προφητεύσασα. For obvious reasons, most translators render προφητεύσασα as 'prophetic.' I believe 'prophetic' in modern English connotes other things than Plato intends. I realize my choice may be equally problematic. ἐγγενομέναi can mean "innate" (Liddell & Scott, 1889), which is why I chose "congenital." If it is useful for treating afflictions that arise from ancestral offenses, as Plato suggests, there is some logic in thinking the μανία is, in Plato's thinking, inherited as well.
Prophecy

and calamities which have come from ancient offenses, committed by some ancestor. [It does this] by employing prayer and worship of [certain] gods, from whom one acquires [appropriate] purification and rituals. Those who participate promote self-healing, through being properly entranced and possessed, finding in this a release from both present and future symptoms (244d-e).

Apparently, μανία can be used to cure certain kinds of ailments. The kind of ailment is suggested when, later in Phaedrus, Plato identifies ritual μανία with Dionysus (265a-b, quoted above, p. 57). Boyancé (1932, 65) says that, prior to the establishment of the cult of Dionysus, frenzy overtook people, especially women, and that the establishment of the cult brought the cure. That cure, Rouget argues (1985, 65), consists of the possession experience, which is characterized by foaming

126 καθαρμῶν τε καὶ τελετῶν. Perhaps “purification rituals.”

127 μανέντι, following Rouget 1985, 193. That this is the same word used for ‘mantic’ μανία should not be overlooked. In spite of Plato’s complaining earlier about the ‘tasteless’ insertion of a ‘τ’ in μανία, there is little doubt, in my mind, that for him mantic is a narrower category, corresponding to the prophetic. An alternate translation for this phrase (μανέντι τε καὶ κατασχομένω) might be “prophetically possessed.”

128 ἀλλὰ μὴν νόσων γε καὶ πόνων τῶν μεγίστων, ἄ δὴ παλαιῶν ἐκ μηνιμάτων ποθὲν ἐν τις τῶν γενῶν ἡ μανία ἐγγενομένη καὶ προφητεύσασα, οἷς ἔδει ἀπαλατήν ήπέτε, καταφυγοῦσα πρὸς θεῶν εὐχάς τε καὶ λατρείας, ὥστε δὴ καθαρμῶν τε καὶ τελετῶν τυχοῦσα ἐξάντη ἐποίησε τὸν [εἰκόνης] ἐχόντα πρὸς τὸν παρόντα καὶ τὸν ἐπείτα χρόνον, λυσίν τῷ ὀρθῷς μανέντι τε καὶ κατασχομένω τῶν παρόντων κακῶν εὑρομένη (ed. Burnet). Note that, in my translation, I have swapped the first two clauses in pursuit of better English sense.
at the mouth, rolled back eyes (Euripides, *Bacchae* 1122; Lucian, *Alexander* 13), with flung back head and arched body (as in the illustration—Figure 1), under the influence of music, dance, or alcohol\(^{129}\) (or all three).

Dodds, essentially in agreement, adds that, in Greece at any rate, the prophetic aspects are “absent or quite subordinate” (69). He argues that while intermediation is a part of Bacchic prophesy outside of Greece,\(^ {130}\) the tripod oracles

---

\(^{129}\) Alcohol is certainly not the least common entheogen, although I suspect it may be one of the least effective. Its use in the cult of Dionysus should raise no eyebrows, and may have been more important for loosening the feet than the voice of the deity. Sexual aspects of the Bacchants’ ritual are widely reported among the ancients, and also widely doubted among modern scholars. That aspect is outside the scope of this study, except to note that in some traditions such things form part of an induction ritual.

\(^{130}\) Euripides, for example, has Dionysus associated with “ecstatic prophecy” (*Bacchae* 298ff). Dodds also notes that in the Roman period there was a Dionysus trance oracle, with a male priest, at Amphikleia in Phocia (*Paus. 10.33.11*), but finds no evidence of this earlier (86 n. 30).
made it unnecessary on the peninsula. I think this is unlikely. As he later points out, Apollo was a high class god, and communicated with high class (male) clientele, but Dionysus, and Plato probably intends for us to include Cybele and her Corybantes as well (Dodds, 1990/1965, Rouget, 1985), was available to all. That the latter should keep silent seems as likely as that only high class men would have any desire to hear from the divine. This is also supported by the observation that possession cults in other times and places have characteristically had an intermediary dimension. However, neither Plato, nor anyone else, gives us much of a window into this world.

All the evidence, however, seems to point toward the prophetic state that I have labeled incorporation. Also, it is clear that both music and dance are an important part of these (as well as other incorporation) rites. It is worth noting that (in contrast to the experience of the pythia) ritual μανία appears to be collective and perhaps, as Dodds suggests “highly infectious” 69. It may, in fact,

Dodds also notes that in the Roman period there was a Dionysus trance oracle, with a male priest, at Amphikeia in Phocia (Paus. 10.33.11), but finds no evidence of this earlier (86 n. 30).

131 As time progressed, the cult of Dionysus went mainstream, and both its cathartic healing aspects and the prophetic either went underground into esoteric societies, or were transferred to the Corybantes (Dodds, 1957).

132 “Characteristically,” but not “necessarily.” It will be recalled that the Yoruba, and derivative mounts, do not intermediate. In the case of the Yoruba, this is balanced by the general availability of ifá prophets (see above, note 48).
Prophecy

not be that far distant from what is described in 1 Sam. 10.5-12 (vide 19.20-24),
where Saul, on coming in contact with the ‘sons of the prophets,’ begins to
prophesy.

Plato’s third category of good μανία requires only a few comments. This is
the μανία of poetry (ποιητική) — which, in Plato’s time, included music).

The third variety of possession-μανία is from the Muses. Taking a tender
and unspoiled soul, it stirs and inspires it to songs and other poetry....
However, whoever comes to the gates of poetry without the Muse-μανία,
convinced that art can be created from skill alone, will fail, since the art of
sanity will always be overshadowed by the art of μανία (Phaedrus 245a).

Socrates is made to arrive at the same conclusion in the Apology (22), although he
is perhaps less kind to the ποιηταί, whom he accuses of not understanding even
their own poems. The connection between poetry and prophecy should not be too
much of a surprise. Most of the early Delphic oracles were in verse, as are most of
the oracles of the classical prophets in the Hebrew Bible.

---

133 Or, perhaps, inexperienced.
134 ἐκβαίνειν — literally, “to Bacchize.” Liddel & Scott give for it, “to excite to Bacchic frenzy,
to make frantic.”
135 ἀτέλεις — failure - can also mean “uninitiated in the mysteries,” which we should probably
view as an intentional double-entendre here.
136 τρίτη δὲ ἀπὸ Μουσών κατοκυχή τε καὶ μανία, λαβοῦσα ἀπαλήν καὶ ἄβατον ψυχὴν,
ἐγείρουσα καὶ ἐκβαίνεινα κατὰ τε φίδας καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἄλλην ποίησιν, μουρία τῶν παλαιῶν
ἔργα κοσμοῦσα τοὺς ἐπιγιγνομένους παιδεύει δὲ δ’ ἄν ἀνευ μανίας Μουσών ἐπὶ ποιητικὰς
θύρας ἀφίκεται, πεισθεῖς όρα ἐκ τέχνης ἰκανοὺς ποιητὰς ἔσομενοι, ἀτέλεις αὐτός τε καὶ ἡ
ποίησις ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν μανικεμένων ἢ τοῦ σωφρονούντος ἡμανίσθη (ed. Burnet).
The close connection between verse and music may simply be a feature of Greek language and culture which clouds Plato's view, although, even in his own day they were beginning to separate. Whether he would have viewed music as similarly inspired, or have seen music as a tool in stimulating inspiration, we cannot know with certainty. However, it is worth noticing that in Phaedrus 248 he does separate them in his division of types of souls that fall to earth. In this list which contains nine types (by order of spirituality), the musician/lover is second (after the philosopher), whereas the poet/artist is sixth.

Plato's final subdivision of positive μανία is the erotic. Given formative Christianity's negative view of this aspect of human experience, it is unlikely that we will be able to mine for very much in this area, but there may be a couple of insights from modern neurology and psychology. First, brain scan studies of orgasm (Georgiadis, et al. 2006), particularly in women, have revealed a similar shut-down of most areas of brain activity that d'Aquili, et al. discovered in absolute unitary experience (1999). It is not the same part of the brain that remains active, but Plato may have been right in perceiving that religious and erotic

137 Enc. Art. In Perseus
ecstasy have more in common than ascetic Christianity would have liked to admit.\textsuperscript{138} Freud would, of course, have argued that suppressed sexuality emerges, or can be directed, elsewhere. The sexual dynamic in later mystical Christianity is well attested. It is not beyond the pale to argue that this may underlie some prophetic experience, particularly among the Montanists, who emphasized the importance of celibacy, even to the point of severing existing marriages.\textsuperscript{139}

\textit{Mάντις, ἐνθεος, κατοκωχή, etc.}

Plato argued that μάντις was cognate with μανία (Phaedrus 244d). For him, μανία was the older, and more correct, term. He may have been right, on the etymology at least, but in general use, μανία had too much ambiguity (or useful ambivalence). In contrast, if someone was said to be mantic, it fairly consistently meant that a deity was speaking through him. For most Greeks, including Plato, this meant that they were in some way possessed, or \textit{occupied}, by the deity (κατοκωχή). Being so occupied, the person might be said to be \textit{enthused} (ἐνθεος, ἐνθουσιασμός), literally, with a god inside. Λαμβανω (to take hold of) may be

\textsuperscript{138} Practitioners of some forms of Tantric Yoga, however, will not find this surprising.

\textsuperscript{139} The sexual dynamics in Perpetua's dream-vision of battle with the Egyptian (see below, p. 189) are obvious enough. However, since she is not celibate (although she is isolated from her husband), I am less inclined to see erotic undertones. It is rife with gender issues, of course, but they are outside the scope of this study.
used to describe the process by which a god takes control.\footnote{In Herodotus 4.79.4, for example, Skyles says, “You laugh at us, Scythians, since we Bacchantize and the God takes hold of us...” [ἡμῖν γὰρ καταγελάτη, ὦ Σκύθαι, ὃι βακχεύομεν καὶ ἤμετρος ὁ θεός λαμβάνει... (ed. Godley)] (Rouget 1985, who informs much of this paragraph).} Less frequently a prophet might be said to be breathed on (ἐπιπνοια — the work behind my coined term, “epipnoia”), and, of course, driven mad (either μανώμενος — from μανία — or ἐκφον = irrational).

While the Greeks clearly had a concept of possession, they did not necessarily differentiate between incorporation and channeling, or possibly even inspiration. Plato may have been trying to do this when he distinguished mantic and telestic μανία. If this is the case, then he is telling us that the mantic types — tripod oracles, the Sybil (Phaedrus 244b), and even the lover (Symposium 179a) — are channeling. The poet is of unspecified type, although she is possessed (Ion 534b).\footnote{Although the Greeks probably knew both of the categories that I have subsumed under “possession,” and called both κατοκωχή, the passage in Ion is problematic. Plato is toying with Ion, to be sure, but manages to convince him that when he performs Homer, he is possessed by him. Although it is easy to see where Plato is going with this, it illustrates the problem that he is not using the term (or ἐνθος, which also appears in the passage) in the narrow sense that would make this investigation easier.} Telistic μανία, on the other hand, clearly resembles incorporation. Only here do we find the arched body with head flung back (painted vases), foaming at the mouth, rolled back eyes (Euripides, Bacchae, 1122), and all under the influence...
of music or dance. Here we have the characteristic amnesia, and the immunity
to pain (carrying fire on their heads without being burned—Euripides, above),
which are clearly present in modern examples of incorporation. Euripides also
makes it clear that this possession was intermediative (unlike what we find among
the Yoruba, for example):

But this divinity is a mantis, since maniacal
Bacchantism is replete with manticism;
whenever the god fully enters the body
he makes the maniac predict the future (Bacchae 298ff).

On the dark side, mantics came also to be identified with magic. Xenophanes
uses “manticism” (μαντική) for divination, which he attacked, finding natural
explanations for usually portentous phenomena (Cic. Div. 1.5; Aetius, 5.1.1; Dodds,
1957). This is only slightly stretched from uses of mantis at which we have

---

142 All of this could be faked, of course, as does Lucian’s Alexander.
143 Various modern examples of trance demonstration of immunity to pain, etc.
144 298 μάντις δ’ ὁ δαιμών ὁδὲ: τὸ γὰρ βασχεύσιμον
καὶ τὸ μανιώδες μαντικὴν πολλὴν ἔχει
ὅταν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἐς τὸ οὐμ’ ἐλθῇ πολὺς,
λέγειν τὸ μέλλον τοὺς μεμηνώτας τοιεὶ (ed. Murray).
My translation is, admittedly, a little stilted in an effort to allow cognates to read through. It is
true that μανία and its related forms lie behind the English words mania, maniac, etc., however, the
primary meaning in this context is somewhere between “frenzied” and “prophetic” — which is not
to say that “crazy” is not slinking in the background somewhere, from Euripides’ point of view.
looked. Somewhat more sinister, however, the sorceress (φαρμακίς) Theoris is called a mantis by Harpocration (while Plutarch calls her a ἰέρεις — Dem. 14). She is accused of “sorcery and enchantment” (τὰ φάρμακα καὶ τὰς ἐπωδὰς (Demosthenes, Ag. Aristogeiton 1.25.80; ed. Butcher)). In Rep. 364c, Plato makes reference to the performance of curses (κατάδεσμοι) by “vagabonds and mantics” (ἀγύρται καὶ μάντεις) on behalf of clients (Dodds, 1957, 204 n. 95).

**Dance and trance**

Not so quick to separate the tripod oracles from the Bacchants, Dodds (1957) suggests that the ritual dances at Delphi may have been in imitation of the Bacchic (and similar) dances, and may have produced trance as late as Plutarch’s time. I am less inclined to pull the pythia into the circle of the incorporated, simply because at the time of the oracle she is sitting in her chamber. This hesitance is by no means ironclad, however. The Ubanda *cávalos* (see above, pp. 21f) move smoothly from incorporated dance/performance into readings, and it would not

---

145 Plato is also cautiously contemptuous of divination (*Phaedrus* 244cd; Dodds, 1957).
146 On a slight detour to the main topic of this study, the use of ἐπωδὰς as a type of magic illuminates a connection between music and magic which may have been at play later in the Church’s rejection of instruments in worship. It must be noted, though, that the term implies singing (which the Church never rejected) rather than instrumental music.
147 Ἀγύρτης carries with it much of the feel of “gypsy,” as used in modern English. I refrain from using that term simply because it also refers to an ethnic group. According to Liddell & Scott, it can mean “a begging priest of Cybele.” This would certainly fit the context.
be unreasonable to argue for such a thing among the tripods, although there are also abundant of examples of people entering some sort of trance state with no assistance at all. Rouget (1985) and Dodds are in agreement over the power of dance to invoke the divine, both individually and corporately (although Rouget is speaking of Bacchants and Corybantes).

**Hellenistic Jewish terminology**

While Greek usage is important, the Jewish Scriptures along with the religious and linguistic developments in (especially Hellenistic) Judaism provided the primary, conscious and welcome influences for early Christianity. The term ‘prophet’ (προφήτης / נביא) had, long before the Jesus movement, become a technical term in Judaism for the prophets in certain writings (or their authors) that later became canonical. In classical Greek, προφήτης may not be specific to divine communication, but the Hellenistic Jewish choice of a word meaning “proclaimer,” or “interpreter” to translate נביא should not be downplayed. Both senses appear in Jewish thought. The נביא is, like the προφήτης, a secondary proclaimer of someone else’s message (God’s). There is at least one instance where a prophet functions as a secondary proclaimer for another prophet (2 Kings 9.1-3).

In the late Persian period it is possible to see a loosening of categories. In
Chronicles, for example, prophecy is identified with sacred music and historiography. Somewhat later, in the Hellenistic wisdom literature (and also later in Philo) wisdom is identified as prophetic in nature. In spite of this loosening, there are only a handful of references to post-canonical προφήται, prior to its use in early Christian circles, and they are by far the exception, rather than the rule. This does not keep the phenomenon of intermediary activity from being present at least up until the time of the Bar Kosiba Revolt, but it is generally described rather than named. In some circles, as early as the mid-second century, BCE, all contact with the divine is thought to be a thing of the past (and the future). The author of I Maccabees has the fate of the stones from the defiled altar put in limbo “until a prophet comes to discern what should be done with them” (I Macc. 4.44-46). By the Mishnaic period, this was the normative view.

A related term, ψευδοπροφήτης has no direct correspondence in the Hebrew

---

148 Several references.
149 Some more references.
150 Even those few instances where it appears, e.g. in Josephus, are not quietly accepted by scholarship (Humm, 1985).
152 καὶ ἀπέθεντο τοὺς λίθους ἐν τῷ ὅρει τοῦ οἴκου ἐν τόπῳ ἐπιτηδεὺς μέχρι τοῦ παραγενηθῆναι προφήτην τοῦ ἀποκριθῆναι περὶ αὐτῶν. (4.46; ed. Rahlfs).
Prophecy

Bible. It appears in the LXX ten times (nine in Jeremiah).\(^{153}\) The Hebrew vorlage is always simply נב נב (Reiling, 1971, 147). Apparently, נב, in Jeremiah's time, simply referred to a particular variety of intermediary,\(^{154}\) without built-in judgment regarding the quality or even the (supernatural) source of the message. By the time the Greek translators were at work, however, προφήτης (in the Jewish context) meant a true Yahwistic prophet (Reiling, 1973). Jeremiah's opponents could not have the same title, so ψευδοπροφήτης was applied, or perhaps coined. By the birth of Christianity, the term was well ensconced in the language, and is regularly used by Jewish and Christian writers throughout the period under investigation. Josephus found it useful for people who stirred up messianic


\(^{154}\) It may be contrasted in 27.9 with בד (diviner), מים (dreamer), וּבֶד (soothsayer?) and מִשֶּׁנ (magician). The Greek terms used here by the LXX are verbal forms of μάντις, εὐνύπτυς, λεγόμενος, οἰωνίσματος, and φαρμακός. The Septuagint elsewhere carefully distinguishes between προφήτης and μάντις — using the former for approved utterances and the latter for false prophecy and "divination" (where it is forbidden), e.g. Deut. 18.14 (Reiling, 1973).

Μανία, in the LXX usually refers to "anger." One exception may be Ps 39.5 [Eng. 40.4]. Here καὶ οὐκ ἐνέβλεψεν εἰς ματαιότητας καὶ μανίας ψευδείς (ed. Rahlfs) translates

לא ת/swagger אלrodemim Nhà cóm

would normally be rendered "turn aside to lies," as does the KJV, but since הוב can also mean "an idol," many modern translations give this as "go astray after false gods" (NRSV). It is possible that the LXX's μανίας means either "crazy" or "angry," but I am inclined to wonder if the translator is using both words (μανίας ψευδείς) to cover the ambivalence of הוב: "false prophets." מִשֶּׁנ would then presumably be covered by εὐνύπτυς in the translator's mind.
expectation (whether or not they claimed to be hearing from divine sources) (Barnett, 1981, 679-697). It was similarly appropriate for any prophetic claimants whom an author believed to be either fraudulent or drawing from inappropriate supernatural sources (usually demons).

**Qumran, Philo & Josephus**

If προφήτης / קבר generally refers to Biblical prophets, other terminology fills in the gap for living prophets. At Qumran, at least, מַשָּׁר (one who has) understanding) comes to be used for a prophetic interpreter, particularly of prophecy (Bruce, 1961, 227ff). This may be under the influence of its use in Daniel (9.22, 11.33, & 12.10). Here we have frequent claims to be receiving directly from the holy spirit, and to know from God the true interpretation of obscure (or not so obscure) and eschatological passages in the Hebrew scriptures. This usage also illustrates another move towards a more inclusive scope for intermediary activity. By the later Second Temple period a prophet can also be an inspired interpreter of another prophet’s message. Some scholars (e.g. Ellis and Hill) see this as the primary (or even only) function of the prophet in earliest Christianity. While I disagree with this formulation, it is certainly possible that it was viewed as one of

---

155 In Hermas, κανός is the negation of choice, rather than ψευδο- (Reiling, 1973, 35).
the forms that prophecy could take. If it was still seen that way into the late second century, it could easily explain how congregational prophecy was absorbed into the pastoral office.

Philo is often accused of drinking more deeply from the cup of Platonism than from the chalice of Judaism. While there is some truth in this, it is not entirely fair. The measuring stick used is usually Palestinian Judaism separated from him by at least a hundred years. His view of prophecy, however, could easily be used against him. He borrows most of the nomenclature of Greek intermediary activity, and perhaps some of his interpretive framework.\textsuperscript{156} Aune (1983, 147) accuses him of simply substituting “the term ‘prophecy’ for the Platonic term ‘recollection.’”\textsuperscript{157} I think, however, that Aune may be beginning in the wrong place. Unless we disbelieve Philo, he is describing his own NTE, and it is particularly interesting that it seems to take the form of possession.\textsuperscript{158}

\textsuperscript{156} Abraham’s status as prophet is described using such terms as \textit{εἴκοσις}, \textit{θεοφόρητος} (Heir 258), \textit{ἐνθεός}, \textit{κατοκωχή}, and \textit{μανια} (250), as well as \textit{προφήτεια}.

\textsuperscript{157} The Platonists believed that everyone was born with an innate knowledge of all things. Once trapped in the body we forget. The process of recovering that true knowledge is called recollection. They may have thought that intermediaries, at least sometimes, possessed a shortcut to that knowledge. It is probably reductionist simply to cram Philo into this mold, but it would also be characteristic of him to find a context for his experience that fit both the Platonic and the Jewish worldview (as he understood them).

\textsuperscript{158} Hill, too, is highly critical of Philo’s concept of contemporary prophecy; he calls it
He says he is inspired “even as the prophets are inspired” (*Heir* 69f).

Being empty I become suddenly full. thoughts flurrying on me invisibly from above, as if divinely possessed like a Corybant, and all not knowing — the place, those with me, what I say, what I write. I found scattered interpretations, enjoyment of light, strength of vision, clarity in important matters, whatever might be seen in a vision (*On Migr. Abr.* 35).159

This is highly reminiscent of some modern “enlightenment” experiences (Ellwood 1998), except for his reference to Corybantic frenzy. The amnesia is not a problem. In any case this, his own non-ordinary experience, is the basis for his understanding of the psychology of prophecy.

For Philo, prophecy was something in which “divine reason passed into [the prophet] and he became the mouthpiece of God” (*Heir* 263-66). The prophet’s mind does not participate in the utterance when God speaks through him (Sandmel, 1978). Nevertheless, it is made available by the “holy word” (ιερὸς

...either an acute Hellenization of the Jewish concept of prophecy, or a Hellenistic view of prophecy justified on a biblical basis....”

It is, he says, a “significant departure” from contemporary Jewish literature. My impression, though, is that Jewish literature in this period is not all that consistent. In any case, other than the passage in 1 Macc. 4.44-46, discussed above, I do not see Josephus significantly departing, other than that he is thoroughly Hellenistic in language, as we will see.

159 ἐστι δὲ ὦτε κενὸς ἐλθὼν τλήρης ἐχαίρης ἐγενόμην ἐπινεφρομένων καὶ στειρομένων ἀνωθὲν ἀφανὸς τῶν ἐνθυμιμάτων, ὡς ὑπὸ κατοξής ἐνθέου κορυφαντάν καὶ πάντα ἁγνοεῖν, τὸν τόπον, τοὺς παρόντας, ἐμαυτόν, τὰ λεγόμενα, τὰ γραφόμενα. σέξεδον γὰρ ἐμεμνεύει εὑρεσιν, φωτὸς ἀπόλαυσιν, ὀχυρωκεκτάτην ὤψιν, ἐνάργειαν τῶν πραγμάτων ἀριθμοτάτην, οἵα γένοιτ’ ἀν δ’ ὀρθαλμῶν (ed. Wendland).
λόγος) to anyone who is worthy (παντὶ δὲ ἀστείῳ) (Heir 259).  

A prophet is not his own spokesperson, in everything he speaks for another, carries the other’s message. The untrustworthy may not be an interpreter of God, so that a rascal can never be entranced. Only the wise is fit, since only such can be the (musical) instrument of God, sounding and invisibly blown into by him. Consequently, all those recorded as just sooner or later are possessed and prophesy (Heir 259-260).

Josephus refrains from using προφήτης of anyone not found in the canon.

In spite of this, he probably believed himself to be in the prophetic tradition as a sacred historiographer (Humm, 1985). Also supporting this self-image, he had a series of dreams predicting the future, and claims to have been skilled as an interpreter of “ambiguous utterances of the Deity.” As a result of this he was “inspired (ἐνθοὺς γενόμενος) to read [the dreams’] meaning” (War 351-4). He uses the term μάντις in reference to himself, and to some Essene seers and foretellers (of whom he approves) (Reiling, 1973), so he does not seem to have the

---

160 The universal availability of prophecy may derive from Moses’ desire that “all the LORD’s people were prophets” (Num. 11.29).
161 προφήτης γὰρ ἂν μὲν οὐδὲν ἀποφθέγγεται, ἄλλοτρα δὲ πάντα ὑπηρεύοντος ἐτέρου φαύλῳ δ’ ὑπὸ τιμὸς ἐρμήνευ θεοῦ, ὡστε κυρίως μορφὴς οὐδεὶς ἐνθουσία, μόνῳ δὲ σοφῷ ταύτ’ ἐφαρμόστη, ἐπεὶ καὶ μόνος ὄργανον θεοῦ ἦστιν ἥχειν, κρουὸμενον καὶ πληρόμενον ἀσφάτως ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ. 260 πάντας γοὺς ὑπὸ οὐνάν ἀνέγραψε δικαίως κατεχομένους καὶ προφητεύοντας εἰσήγαγεν (ed. Wendland).
162 There are three exceptions. He uses προφήτης of John Hyrcanus twice (Ant. 13.299 and parallel in War 1.68), and προφήτης in Ant. 1.240f of an historian. The other instance of προφήτης (War 6.286) refers to hired charlatans, and is either sarcastic or a mistake (Aune 1982).
same negative view of the term as does the LXX, noted above. *Ψευδοφορήτης*
he reserves for failed revolutionaries (as noted above — *Ant.* 20.97f, 169ff, *War*
2.261-264), and one who promises divine intervention for Jerusalem during the
siege (*War* 6.283ff). Exercising excellent hindsight, I am inclined to agree with
him.

In terms of the categories of prophecy that we looked at earlier, Josephus’
form of prophecy includes precognitive dreaming and prophetic interpretation,
both of his own dreams and of scripture. From his own point of view, it also
included sacred historiography, an opinion perhaps supported by the theology of
the Chronicler (see note 148, above).
Early Christianity

Among the early Christians, of course, the term προφητης was revived for a contemporary practice. To a great extent this was more a revival of terminology than of action, which may even have had a polemical motivation. As a phenomenon, intermediation was still present in Judaism, but under other names (Humm, 1985). Many early Christians believed that in fulfillment of eschatological prophecies (e.g. Joel 2.28f quoted in Acts 2.17f), the Holy Spirit had, since the resurrection and ascension, been made available to all the faithful. Connected with this belief prophetic activity became comparatively common among Christians. We cannot be sure to what extent this reflected the shift of meaning that the idea of 'prophecy' might have undergone in second temple Judaisms.163

There is evidence for each of these second temple approaches in early Christianity, but the activity described by Paul, and to a lesser extent, by Luke, only partially

163 There is, of course, little homogeneity among forms of Judaism in this period, but surviving literatures have certain common features. Προφητης (as opposed to ἐνθεος, μάντις, or similar terms) is generally a term for characters from Jewish Scriptures who speak for God. It is rarely used (once in Josephus) of contemporary characters. This is partly due to archaism, but partly to the concept having a certain mystique around it, such that it could not be applied to anyone of whose shortcomings one might be aware.
resembles attested Jewish parallels.\textsuperscript{164} Later Christian versions of prophecy, and use of the term, are generally filtered through its usage in the earliest Church, but we need to be careful to remember that our window into first century Christianity is somewhat limited (mostly Pauline). It is not even entirely clear that all Christian communities were prophetically active, but we can be sure that other streams existed, and that they also fed into the second and third century practice. In that later period, however, Christian uses of the terms derived from προφητεία have as their antecedents the (Old Testament) canonical prophets in the vast majority of cases. There are exceptions, as we shall see, but there is a tendency to use other language for contemporary intermediaries.

Besides προφητεία, the most important single term in early Christianity for intermediary activity was \textit{revelation} (ἀποκάλυψις). It is a frequent term used for any God-given revelation, not just for the variety that moderns would call apocalyptic. In 1 Cor. 14.30, it appears to be divine insight that leads to prophecy.

\textsuperscript{164} Walter Schmithals (1969) argued that the office of προφητεία (along with those of ἀπόστολος and even διδάσκαλος) was incorporated into proto-orthodox Christian circles from a pre-existing (or at least contemporaneous) Gnosticism. This proposition, it should be noted, depends on a controversially early date for the origins of Gnosticism (see, contra., Schütz, 1975). In any case, his argument is stronger for ἀπόστολος (which is, to be sure, the thrust of his study) than for either προφητεία or διδάσκαλος, and the latter two largely hinge on acceptance of the former.
"Ecstasy" (ἐκστασίας) is used for "trance" three times in the New Testament (Acts 10.10; 11.5; 22.17). It is used less frequently in the Greek Christian literature of the post-apostolic period (Oepke, 1964), however the Latin cognate (ecstasis) is the word that Tertullian normally uses for the prophetic altered state, and it sometimes appears with prefixes. New Testament visions (ὁραμα, ὁρασία) are fairly common. Prophecies are often said to be by or through the Holy Spirit (especially in Acts), or, sometimes, the Lord.

Paul's letters

Probably the earliest surviving Pauline text on prophecy is 1 Thes. 5.19-21.

Do not quench the Spirit; do not nullify prophecy; evaluate everything; embrace what is good; keep away from any kind of evil.

It tells us two things: some people disapproved of prophecy and not all prophetic

165 The first two describe Peter's rooftop vision of the unclean animals, and the third refers to Paul being told by God to leave Jerusalem. The other four New Testament uses, all in the Gospels, are in the semantic domain of "amazed." In an interesting variation in Acts 23.11, the Lord is made to stand by (ἐπιστάς) a presumably sleeping Paul in order to deliver a message.

166 Things attributed to the Lord are sometimes ambiguous. In 1 Cor. 7, Paul carefully distinguishes his own opinion from things that come from the Lord. In v. 8 he says, "I say..." (λέγω), and then in v. 10 we read, "not I but the Lord..." (οὐκ ἐγώ ἀλλὰ ὁ Κύριος), and finally in v. 12, "I say (not the Lord)..." (λέγω ἐγώ, οὐκ ὁ Κύριος). V. 10f contains a restriction on divorce and remarriage which could be based on Jesus' similar restriction which is preserved in Matt. 5.31f. Paul would not have known Matthew, but it is entirely likely that he would know this part of the Jesus tradition. On the other hand, he could be telling the Corinthians that that part of his discourse he has received prophetically. I tend to lean toward the first interpretation.

167 τὸ πνεῦμα μὴ σβήνυτε, προφητεύετε μὴ ἐξουθενεῖτε· πάντα δὲ δοκιμάζετε, τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε, ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ ἀπέχεσθε (eds. Aland, et al.).
content was worthwhile. These two things may be connected. The greatest threat to intermediary activity is conflict between the spirit and the fixed tradition. Paul, obviously a stickler for his version of fixed tradition, however, refused to muzzle prophets. He does encourage the community to evaluate them in light of received teaching. It has been a truism in scholarship, at least since the mid twentieth century, that the Jesus movement diversified very early on. Some of this diversity certainly derived from worldview conflicts between the parent Jewish community and the recently converted Gentiles.\textsuperscript{168} But it may well be the case that some of the new ideas came directly from the communities' intermediaries.\textsuperscript{169}

We get the longest dedicated discussion of prophecy and other pneumatic gifts in 1 Cor. 12-14. The list in 12.8-11 can be broken down into three categories: supernatural knowledge ("word of knowledge," "word of wisdom"), supernatural power (faith, healings, miracles), and supernatural speech (prophecy, discernment of spirits, foreign tongues, interpretation of tongues).\textsuperscript{170} Of these, the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item This is not to down play the liberalizing impact coming from some Diaspora Jews, possibly cut from a mold much like Philo's.
\item Christians (at least of Pauline descent, probably others as well) seem to have managed this problem for some time, but it was still present when Irenaeus warned that true prophecy was beginning to disappear as a result of ongoing struggles with enthusiasts who did not keep their prophesies orthodox (Ag. Heresies 3.9.9; Hill, 1979).
\item \(\omega\ \mu\varepsilon\nu\ \gamma\alpha\rho\ \delta\iota\delta\iota\tau\alpha\iota\\tau\ \pi\nu\varepsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\varsigma\ \delta\iota\delta\iota\tau\alpha\iota\lambda\omega\varsigma\ \nu\\omicron\sigma\phi\iota\varsigma\varsigma\varsigma,\ \alpha\lambda\lambda\omega\ \delta\epsilon\\nu\ \lambda\omicron\nu\varsigma\ ο\gamma\nu\ν\sigma\varepsilon\varsigma\varsigma\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\ \tau\omicron\)
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
words of knowledge and wisdom and the discernment of spirits remain open to
diversity of interpretation. The primary issue on the first two is whether they are
to be considered supernatural in nature. Knowledge and wisdom can certainly be
considered gifts, and no doubt the author of *Wisdom* would be quite comfortable
with them on the list. Nevertheless, their placement in company with the
evidently supernatural other list items suggests some type of special knowledge or
wisdom which does not derive from the usual sources. Discernment of spirits is
generally taken to mean judging the content of other intermediaries' revelations.
This is what Paul seems to be admonishing the Thessalonians to do in the passage
discussed above. However, Gerhard Dautzenberg (1971, 1975) has argued that the
phrase should be read as “interpreting [revelations of] the spirits.” Seen this way
the *discerner* has to the *prophet* much the same kind of relationship that the

αὐτὸ πνεῦμα, ἐτέρῳ πίστει ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ πνεῦματι, ἄλλῳ δὲ χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων ἐν τῷ ἐνι
πνεῦματι, ἄλλῳ δὲ ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων, ἄλλῳ [δὲ] ἰδιοφηνία, ἄλλῳ [δὲ] διακρίσεις
πνευμάτων, ἐτέρῳ γένη γλωσσῶν, ἄλλῳ δὲ ἐρμηνεία γλωσσῶν πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνέργει τὸ ἐν
καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα, διαφορὰν ἰδιὰ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βουλέται (eds. Aland, et al.).

The supernatural 'gifts' listed here are usually referred to as ’charismata' or 'charismatic gifts,'
but Paul’s terminology is to call them “manifestations of the Spirit.” In the 1 Cor. lists, only *healings*
(pl.) are called charismata (consistently on both terminology and number — e.g. 12.28 & 30). He
does use the term for the list in *Rom.* 12, which, except for the presence of prophecy is largely of the
non-supernatural (e.g. non-pneumatic) variety. Deutero-Paul says of the offices (if that is an
appropriate term) in *Eph.* 4.11 that Christ “gave (ἔδωκεν)” them, which does means that they were
‘gifts,’ but as long as we are being precise about terminology, it is not the same.
προφήτης has to the pythia at Delphi. Those present may understand the words of the revelation, but the discerner is required to reveal what it means. In spite of Dautzenberg’s arguments, most scholars continue to support the traditional understanding.\textsuperscript{171}

One of the most important characteristics of prophecy at Corinth for this study is that it appears to be primarily congregational. Prophecy occurs in and for the assembly of believers. The messages in prophecy are for others’ “up-building, encouragement, and consolation” (14.3)\textsuperscript{172} and to convert the visiting unbeliever when “the inner secrets are uncovered” (14.25).\textsuperscript{173} We cannot know the exact nature of these gatherings,\textsuperscript{174} and we are thus denied a sense of the importance of intermediation in them. There are, however, some clues. In an intriguing passage Paul exhorts:

\begin{quotation}
\textit{1, too, am inclined to see the discerner as a judge between true and false revelations. The same word (διακρίνως) is used in 14.29, where, after a couple of prophecies the other prophets are enjoined to discern. My inclination is to assume that both passages should have the same meaning, and “judging” makes more sense to me in the latter. It is possible, however, that they are independent of each other (the latter does not add the πνευμάτων), and if that is the case it could easily go the other way. πνευμάτων is a little odd anyway, but it is consistent with 14.32. Pentecostals and Charismatics generally read this such that the spirits being discerned between are the Holy Spirit on the one hand, and not-so-holy spirits on the other.}
\end{quotation}

\begin{quotation}
\textit{\textsuperscript{171} \textsuperscript{172} \textsuperscript{173} \textsuperscript{174} Wayne Meeks (1983) makes a respectable attempt in his chapter on ritual.}
\end{quotation}
Consider, brethren, when you gather, each one brings a worship song, each a teaching, each a revelation, each a tongue, each an interpretation; everything should be for upbuilding. If it is a tongue you are speaking then by two or three, one by one, then someone should interpret; without an interpreter you should stay quiet in the assembly (just speak to yourself and God). Prophets, too, should speak by two or three and the others should discern. If someone sitting there has a revelation, the first should be quiet. You can all speak if you take turns in prophesying, so that all can learn and be encouraged. The spirits\textsuperscript{175} of the prophets submit to the prophets. God is harmonious, not disorderly (14.26-33).\textsuperscript{176}

It would appear that at least during some portion of the regular meeting there would be enough enthusiastic activity going on that it required an exhortation to self control and perhaps even some external control. The list of things that “each one has” is also worthy of examination.\textsuperscript{177} ‘Tongues’ and ‘interpretation’ are

\textsuperscript{175} Whether this is the Holy Spirit, some sort of intermediating angel, or the prophet’s inner self is not entirely clear, but the plurality of spirits disinclines toward the first.

\textsuperscript{176} 26 Τι οὖν ἐστιν, ἄδελφοι ὅταν συνερχησθεί, ἔκαστος φαλάμον ἔχει, διδαχὴν ἔχει, ἀποκάλυψις ἔχει, γλῶσσαν ἔχει, ἐρμηνείαν ἔχει; πάντα πρὸς οἰκοδομὴν γίνεσθαι. 27 εἴτε γλῶσση τις λαλεῖ, κατὰ δύο ή τὸ πλείουστον τρεῖς, καὶ ἀνὰ μέρος, καὶ εἰς διερμηνευτὴν. 28 ἓν δὲ μὴ ἡ διερμηνευτής, συγάτῳ ἐν εἴκλησίᾳ, ἐαυτῷ δὲ λαλεῖται καὶ τῷ θεῷ. 29 προφήτης δὲ δύο ή τρεῖς λαλεῖτωσαν, καὶ οἱ άλλοι διακρίνετωσαν. 30 ἓν δὲ άλλῳ ἀποκάλυψη καθημένῳ, ὁ πρώτος συγάτω. 31 δύνασθε γάρ καθ’ ἃ πάντες προφητεύειν, ἵνα πάντες μανθάνωσιν καὶ πάντες παρακαλῶνται. 32 καὶ πνεύματα προφητῶν προφητεύεις ὑποτάσσεσαι. 33 οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἀκαταστασίας ὁ θεὸς ἀλλὰ εἰρήνης (eds. Aland, et al.).

\textsuperscript{177} It is not immediately obvious that any of this activity (except tongues) has to be pneumatic. The context, however, does seem to imply it, and I will argue that it can be taken that way, but it is possible to make sense out of the passage without this. It is also not clear whether Paul regards this situation as good, but from the point of view of this study it is more important that the Corinthians were able to identify with the description.
probably pneumatic\textsuperscript{178} (that is, NTE based), as is ‘revelation’ (\textit{apokalypsis}), but ‘hymn’ and ‘lesson’ (\textit{diakhor}) do not seem to be. \textit{Apokalypsis} is almost always a technical term for either a mystery or some other kind of NTE based revelation.\textsuperscript{179} Certain types of psalmody were regarded in some Jewish circles as a form of prophecy in the second temple period,\textsuperscript{180} and this may be evidence that this attitude was carried over into Christianity. It could, just as easily, be someone bringing in their favorite spiritual song to share with the assembled group, though. It is also possible in this context that \textit{diakhor} (‘lesson’) could refer to the type of prophecy that is characterized by encouragement and exhortation rather than to non-ecstatic teaching.

\textit{Acts}

There are two ways to approach the descriptions of prophetism in the \textit{Acts of}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{178} I am assuming that ‘interpretation’ means interpretation of tongues, as elsewhere in this chapter. Taken together, tongues and interpretation are a functional equivalent of prophecy. If, alternatively, ‘interpretation’ means something like an explanation of Scripture, then it could still be ‘in the Spirit,’ or the result of a revelation. The reporting of a revelation need not be pneumatic to be regarded as a pneumatic activity, as long as the underlying revelation was the result of an NTE.

\footnote{179} It is far from clear what, exactly, is the difference between some of these intermediative categories.

\footnote{180} The books of Chronicles (written well into the Second Temple period) suggest strongly that the writing of psalms, and perhaps the leading of corporate worship, are forms of prophecy. This is in turn supported by at least one rabbinic source (Midrash Tehilim), and perhaps at Qumran (Blenkinsopp, 1977, Humm, 1985).}

the Apostles. One is to view them as para-historical. By that I mean that they are taken to be based in historical tradition or reports, rather than pure fabrication or pure folklore.\textsuperscript{181} This approach does not require the historian to read them as pure history,\textsuperscript{182} but it does assume is that the characters are real, and the events described generally have antecedents in things that happened, even if features of those events and people are lost (or added) through transmission and editorial shaping. The other approach is to view \textit{Acts} as a purely literary production of the late first or early second century. Read this way, it tells us almost nothing about earliest Christianity, but can, with sufficient cleverness, allow us to read into it much that we would like to know about the period in which it was written.

Which approach we take largely hinges on the question of when it was written. This is an important issue, not just because a later date makes the data more difficult to use for the earliest period, but because the editorial decisions, even assuming accurate records, will be shaped by the author’s social-theological context — a context which, in first century Christianity, was rapidly developing.

\textsuperscript{181} Of course, folklore and history are merely different ways of shaping a contemporary context. Generally, “history” has more facts in it. Finding them is another problem.

\textsuperscript{182} OK, there is no such thing as ‘pure’ history, if by that we mean unbiased as-they-happened facts.
Particularly if we take the second approach, the degree to which Acts can serve as a useful window into formative Christianity depends largely on whether we can figure out which part of the structure we are looking into. Unfortunately, I am not sufficiently convinced by any of the scholarly attempts to date the work. The termina established by the nineteenth century giants are still the termina of the early twenty-first century (although I suspect the scholarly needle has shifted the latest possible date to a little earlier in the second century, and two-source orthodoxy has muscled the earliest up to around 80).

If Acts is late enough no longer to be reliable for earliest Christian practice, then I am inclined to view it as consistent with Flavian period proto-orthodoxy. The prophetic activity it describes resembles what little we know about actual practice in that period. Further, by way of contrast, it resists the fabular sensationalism of later acts, whose archaism makes the apostles into powerful

---

183 By “formative Christianity” I mean that period during which it was being shaped into what we know (once again with excellent hindsight) it was destined to become. Admittedly, there are several temporal candidates. I am using this term to describe the period in Christian history that spans the gap between the apostolic age and the legalization of Christianity under Constantine.

184 Baur on the one extreme — putting it well into the second century — and Harnack on the other — seeing it written during the period of Paul’s imprisonment (Brown, 1997).

185 One of the assumptions that I intend to make, with only limited caveat, is that we are not in a position to distinguish among the varieties of formative Christianity using either the social functions, or psychological media, of prophetism.
wielders of sacred magic (compare the Acts of Peter). Of course, this resistance (hardly complete) may be part of Luke's editorial contribution.

Luke as historian should, I believe, be taken with the same degree of credulity that the careful historian applies to Eusebius. In other words, he is not a fabulist, or even a composer of historical fiction, but it is likely that he believes and transmits reports that the modern researcher would dismiss.

David Hill (1977, 1979) criticizes the book of Acts as a source of historical information about prophecy because he believes that the author has imposed his concept of prophecy, derived from his time (Hill thinks ca. 90), on the earlier Pauline period. From Hill's point of view, prophecy in the primitive Church was cognitive (non-NTE) and differed only in content from teaching. He is therefore offended by examples of prophetic prediction in Acts, particularly those attributed to Agabus, which he says "reveal the imprint of Lucan formation and theological tendenz" (Hill, 1977, 124). Even if we were to accept his analysis of the nature of

186 There are, admittedly, a smattering of events in Luke's history that invite comparison (the deaths of Ananias and Saphira, Damascen Ananaias's appraisal of Paul's conversion, the raising of Tabitha, Peter's release from prison, and perhaps the blinding of Bar-Jesus).

187 I neither reject nor embrace the traditional view that the author, or editor, of Luke-Acts was named Luke. It is convenient to call him (or her) by a name.
early Christian prophecy, the circumstances that would cause the community\textsuperscript{188} to move from rationally obtained 'revelation' to the dissociative or even epipneumatic variety would be unusual. Cultural anthropologists and historians more frequently find movement in the opposite direction (see Wilson, 1980; Lewis, 1971).\textsuperscript{189}

Much more dangerous for \textit{Acts} would be the suggestion that prophecy in \textit{Acts} represents a fictional idealization in a historical context where ecstasy is no longer recognized. This is, no doubt, possible.\textsuperscript{190} The presence of ecstatic activity in

\begin{quote}
188 It is entirely possible that one or several of the varieties of first century Christianity reflected Hill's model, and \textit{1 Corinthians} may even reflect a tension between the two models in a single community. If this is the case, \textit{Acts} seems to stand with the pneumatics.

189 There can, of course, be revival movements, like Montanism, or modern Charismaticism, where enthusiasm is embraced over against a well-established religious authority.

190 This proposition is strengthened by the fact that Luke presents 'tongues' in ch. 2 as real languages understood by passersby. This does not match the known characteristics of glossolalia as it occurs in numerous enthusiastic groups (including Pentecostals), and does match well the phenomenon with which Paul is familiar in \textit{1 Corinthians}. If Luke is unfamiliar with tongues he is unlikely to be familiar with enthusiastic prophecy. However, as noted earlier, I am not inclined to assume that Luke is making things up; rather he is usually interpreting and passing on traditions. Even if he knows non-linguistic glossolalia, he is not likely to substitute them for the tradition of the miraculous reversal of Babel in \textit{Acts} 2. This applies equally well to the tradition he receives about prophecy. On the other hand, the reversal of Babel has a literary ring, and may be Luke's contribution, and real languages may sit better with his "rationalism."

While modern research has concluded that glossolalia is non-linguistic, I would caution against the conclusion that this was clear to the tongue speakers at Corinth or to Paul (to say nothing of Luke). Paul refers to the phenomenon as "the tongues of men and of angels" (1 Cor. 13.1), suggesting that while he may be aware that it is not always human language, he does not think of it as nonsubstantive gibberish. Even modern Pentecostals and Charismatics who are aware of the non-linguistic nature of glossolalia sometimes tell stories about foreigners understanding a tongues
documents such as the Didache and Hermas, however, coming from the same
general period (or later), makes it improbable that the author of Acts was ignorant
of contemporary prophecy. Either idealization or conformance may still be present
here, but it is not likely to be creation out of whole cloth. If it is not a strictly
accurate record then it is probably either idealized from, or conformed to,
activities in the author’s experience, and thus, in another sense, also “historical.”

With some exceptions, the picture of prophecy in Acts is not significantly
different from what we saw in 1 Corinthians. While not very much simple
congregational prophecy is described, this is because there is little congregational
activity described at all. It is nevertheless constantly assumed. After their
baptism, Paul lays hands on the believers in Ephesus and

...The Holy Spirit came upon them, and they were speaking in tongues and
prophesying (Acts 19.6).\(^{191}\)

During a stopover in Tyre on his return to Jerusalem in what appears to be local
prophecy:

speaker. It would seem that familiarity with the phenomenon does not keep people from thinking
that it is language, or that under the right circumstances it might be understood.
Anecdotally in this regard, Anderson (Anderson, 1979) cites the case of an early Pentecostal who
claimed to be able to decipher transcriptions of glossolalia. He said that he used “the standard
works on languages and found out what it meant.”
\(^{191}\) ἥλθε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον ἐπ' αὐτούς, ἔλαλουν τε γλώσσαις καὶ ἐπορεύεσθε (eds. Aland,
et al.).
They told Paul, through the Spirit, not to set foot in Jerusalem (21.4).\textsuperscript{192}

And this was apparently not an isolated incident because, in his farewell speech to the Ephesian leaders, Paul says,

And now, constrained in the spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me, only that the holy Spirit in every city tells me that chains and tribulation await me (20.22f).\textsuperscript{193}

Presumably these messages came in ways analogous to what we saw in Corinth during meetings of the believers that Paul attended on his journeys. But we are not privileged to any specific content until Paul comes to Caesarea and the prophet Agabus comes down from Judea. Binding his own hands and feet with Paul’s clothing Agabus prophesies,

Thus says the Holy Spirit, “The Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and remand him to the custody of the Gentiles” (21.11).\textsuperscript{194}

\textsuperscript{192} ὅτινες τῷ Παύλῳ ἐλεγον διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος μὴ ἔπαιραίειν εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ (eds. Aland, et al.).

\textsuperscript{193} καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ δειδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι πορεύομαι εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ, τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ συναντήσοντά μοι μὴ εἰδὼς. 23 πλὴν ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον κατὰ πόλιν διαμαρτύρεται μοι λέγων ὅτι δεσιμά καὶ θλίψις με μένουσιν (eds. Aland, et al.).

There is a question whether δειδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι refers to Paul’s inner self or to the Spirit of God. The latter gets credit in the next verse, but most translators see this phrase in the same category with Jesus being driven by the Spirit into the desert (Mark 1.12: τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτῶν ἐξῆλθεν εἰς τὴν ἡράμον). The “inner self” reading gains some support from Acts 17.16. I lean towards this interpretation, and have consequently left “spirit” in lower case (see also n. 175).

\textsuperscript{194} καὶ ἐλάθων πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀρας τὴν ζώνην τοῦ Παύλου δῆσας ἑαυτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας ἑτεῖν, Τάδε λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, Τὸν ἄνδρα οὗ ἔστιν ἡ ζώνη αὐτὴ ὡς δήσουσιν εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ παραδώσουσιν εἰς χεῖρας ἑθνῶν (eds. Aland, et al.).
All this happened in the house of Philip who had “four unmarried daughters, prophesiers” (παρθένοι προφητεύουσαι). It may not be accidental that the author of Acts uses προφήτης (prophet) for Agabus, but προφητεύουσαι (prophesiers) of Philip’s daughters. Luke may intend us to find a quantitative distinction between the frequent enthusiast and the recognized official prophet.

To a great extent, Acts is a book of heroes. This extends not only to the two primary characters, Peter and Paul, but includes also the secondary ones — James, Philip, Barnabas, etc. Because of this, it is not so surprising that the primary contribution the book makes to our understanding of the social world of early Christian prophecy is the existence of a translocal office of ‘prophet.’ Agabus, then, gets the limelight in this passage because he falls into this category, and perhaps because he is already known to the reader from ch. 11.195 There are three

195 The close juxtaposition of Philip’s daughters with Agabus might suggest one of two things. We could take the prophesying virgins as in agreement with Agabus and therefore undergirding his prophecy (a tribunal of intermediaries to ensure his accuracy). It is also possible that they are being contrasted. Read this way they are being lumped with the earlier local prophets who in vs. 4 did not so much predict Paul’s imprisonment, as demand that he not go. The message would in that case be quite different, and one that in Luke’s intention we should understand as contrary to the will of God. The daughters, then, would be here as representatives of that group being supplanted and corrected. Agabus, whom the reader has already met, and whose predictions he has already found to be accurate (ch. 11), appears on the scene as the seasoned and anointed professional to clarify God’s message which has been somewhat inaccurately transmitted (muddled?) by those who merely prophesy, but are not prophets.
people to whom Acts applies the formal designation ‘prophet’: Agabus, Silas, and Judas. Agabus appears twice. His first appearance is in 11.27-30 when he comes to Antioch from Jerusalem with a group of prophets where, presumably during a meeting of believers, he

...stood up and predicted, through the spirit, that a great famine was going to come upon the whole world (v. 28).

John Bowker (private communication) has made the interesting suggestion that the key to the passage is not Agabus’ authority but his use of sympathetic magic. Up to that point it was all talk, but when he binds himself with Paul’s clothes, he seals the event in the future and thereby ends all further argument. I suspect, however that sympathetic magic as used here, and even among the classical prophets, was not seen so much as creating the events but as mirroring the predetermined heavenly reality on the earthly plane. Agabus’ ability to do this derives from the charisma of his calling (e.g. prophet. If Luke does not intend this, he has done an excellent job of misleading us).

I am still inclined to see them as part of the prophetic chorus, standing together, even if they are not full blown prophets. It would explain why we are told they are virgins — it increases their sacred mana, and with it their prophetic authority.

There is another group; we just do not know exactly who they are. In 13.1 we are told:

At the church in Antioch there were some prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simon (called Niger), Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (a companion of Herod the tetrarch), and Saul. [Ἡσαυρίων δὲ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ κατὰ τὴν οὖσαν ἐκκλησίαν προφήτης καὶ διδάσκαλος ὁ τε Βαρνάβας καὶ Συμεὼν ὁ καλούμενος Νίγερ, καὶ Λούκιος ὁ Κυρηναῖος, Μαναήν τε Ἡρῴδου τοῦ τετράρχου σύντροφος καὶ Σαῦλος (eds. Aland, et al.).]

The text does not tell us which are the prophets, and which the teachers. Interestingly, the Greek would allow us to lump them together as “prophet-teachers,” or even “prophetic teachers.” Barnabas is listed first and Saul last, in a manner that may suggest that among the “prophets and teachers,” Barnabas is one of the prophets, and Saul one of the teachers, but there is no real reason to assume that Luke is imposing any kind of order.

Some (notably Ellis, 1970, Clarke, 1937/1826), see in Barnabas’ name the Aramaic for ‘son of prophecy’ (presumably בָּנוֹ בָּרֶב). Bauer (1957), on the other hand, derives it from בַּנוֹ בָּרֶב (‘son of [or man from] Nabu’). Luke, oddly, gives it as “ὑἱὸς παρακλητῶν” (4.36). Clarke believes this may be a reference to the positive nature of Barnabas’s inspired utterances. Paul certainly qualifies as both. About the others, we know virtually nothing.

Ἐν ταύταις δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις κατήλθον ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλήμ προφήται εἰς Ἀντιοχείαν
Prophecy

Luke tells us that it was fulfilled. His second appearance is in the incident at Philip’s house, discussed above.

The office of prophet, has received a reasonable amount of attention since the publication of the Didache. The existence of such an office is clear enough from not only this passage, but also from Eph. 4.11f where we are given a list of ministries given to the Church by God:

He gave, for the preparation of the holy ones in right action, some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers. 198

Unlike the manifestations in 1 Cor. 12, which are, if not completely universal, at least generally available to believers, these gifts are individual leaders within the larger community. Some scholars believe them to be, by definition, itinerant, while others see them as gifted members of local communities who might (sometimes) be sent out as temporarily itinerant arms of the sending community (Nee, 1962). The evidence is mixed. The passage (discussed in n. 196, above (Acts

άναστας δὲ εἰς ἐξ αὐτῶν ὑνόμαι Ἀγαθὸς ἐσήμανεν διά τοῦ πνεύματος λιμὸν μεγάλην μέλλειν ἐσευθαὶ ἐφ’ ὅλην τὴν ὀικουμένην ἢτις ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου. τῶν δὲ μαθητῶν καθὼς εὐπορεῖτο τις ὀρισαν ἔκαστος αὐτῶν εἰς διακονίαν πέμψαι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἀδελφοῖς· ὦ καὶ ἐποίησαν ἄποστελλαντες πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους διὰ χειρὸς Βαρναβᾶ καὶ Σαῦλου (eds. Aland, et al.).

198 καὶ αὐτῶς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀπόστολους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστὰς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἤγκων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας. (eds. Aland, et al.).
imply the latter, but we will see in the Didache that prophets, at least, may be invited to settle into communities they have initially visited as itinerants (while apostles must keep moving). What the Didache does do is inform us that itinerant ministries did exist.\footnote{Although distinctions between them may be sometimes fuzzy. Bad prophets and bad apostles are both considered “false prophets” in the Didache. Some of this fuzziness may also be present in Acts 13.1 where it is hard to tell the prophets from the teachers.}

Alternatively, if they were unattached itinerants, it is easy to imagine the sort of problems that would ensue. The Didache may confirm this. My inclination is to suspect that there were both types: traveling arms of local communities, on the one hand, and enterprising spiritual opportunists on the other.

In this context, it is certainly worth mentioning Simon Magus, whose brief appearance in Acts (8.9-24) foreshadows (or reflects) what was probably a colorful career as a Para-Christian itinerant, and possibly an example of just the sort of opportunists just mentioned. The group that bears his name in the second century is Proto-Gnostic, but the individual himself is so negatively portrayed in deprecatory fiction that is hard to know much about him. It is probably safe to say that he belongs in this study, but it is not at all clear where.


How authoritative where the Christian Prophets?

One of the other major polemical battles in the area of early Christian prophet studies is the question of to what extent their messages were considered authoritative. Reviewing quickly, the basics of the story are:

Various prophets tell Paul, "through the Spirit" not to go to Jerusalem. Paul is determined (or driven?) to go there anyway. Agabus does not tell Paul not to go, but says he will be bound and remanded. Paul goes; he is arrested and remanded; the book ends with him in prison.

Gerhard Friedrich (1974), Hill (1979), and Wayne Grudem (1982, 2000) believe that the early Christian intermediaries were never regarded as authoritative in the same way that prophets in ancient Israel were. Taking the story in Acts 21 as a test case, Grudem argues that Agabus is wrong on the details on two points: Paul is not, in fact, bound by the Jews, but by Roman officer, and since he was not technically arrested by the Jews, but by the Romans, it is incorrect to say that he was handed over (παραδόσαντι). The errors in detail, he says, would not have happened to a Hebrew Bible prophet. It follows that Agabus does not have the prophetic authority that his ancient predecessors did. For them, "accuracy of

\[200\] A case can be made for greater accuracy in Agabus' oracle than Grudem allows, as does Brian Rapske (1994).
detail was traditionally an essential mark of authenticity" (Grudem, 2000, 80).\textsuperscript{201} In contrast, Agabus’ prophecy is “general content” only, and therefore not fully trustworthy (1982, 80).\textsuperscript{202} Paul, who is an apostle and does have such absolute authority, can see through these dark glass oracles to God’s true message.\textsuperscript{203}

Grudem (2000) further points out that in both the 1 Thes. 5.19-21 passage and in 1 Cor. 14.31, the prophetic utterances always need to be evaluated, and occasionally need correction.

The same absence of authority, by definition, attached to the prophesying of Philip’s daughters. We do not know what they said, but being women,\textsuperscript{204} they

\textsuperscript{201} A position not generally taken by modern scholars.

\textsuperscript{202} Reminiscent of Sid Leiman’s (1976) distinction between inspired and uninspired canon, Grudem (1982) contrasts “divine authority of actual words” with “divine authority of general content.” “Actual words” authority is no longer present after the classical prophets (pp. 21ff). This is obviously simply a restatement of the traditional position that prophecy ended when Malachi penned his final “U,” which was demolished by Rudolf Meyer (1974; see also Aune, 1983; Humm, 1985). The distinction between types of prophetic authority is an attempt to shore it up in light of the evidence presented by Meyer (et al.).

\textsuperscript{203} Grudem, in fact, argues that mantle of infallible spokesman for God, which belonged to the prophet in the Jewish Scriptures, has shifted over to the apostle (2000). This, I am afraid, stirs up a hornet’s nest of problems since, unless by the term he means only Peter and Paul, we really know very little about apostles’ rôles or authority in the earliest churches. Frankly, Peter and Paul are not ordinary examples. Did Silas, Barnabas, Andronicus and Junia all have infallible authority? How can infallible Paul get into a disagreement with infallible Barnabas (Acts 15.36-41), or with infallible Peter (Gal. 11-18)? I do not wish to belittle Grudem who is a decent scholar even though I usually disagree with him. He would surely say, as with the Pope speaking \textit{ex cathedra}, that the prophet and the apostle have authority only when actually speaking as prophet or apostle.

\textsuperscript{204} That they later acquired real fame and respect as prophetesses either does not occur to Grudem, or he assumes that toward the end of the century the Proto-orthodox community had
could not speak with any real clout:

If women were not allowed authoritative roles in congregational meetings in the first-century churches, then it seems unlikely that these women would be speaking with the same kind of absolute authority as the apostles...and that these prophecies did not have the authority of words of the Lord (2000, 77). 205

It is possible to read the story in Acts another way: Paul is disobedient and suffers the consequences. This possibly is supported by the last verse in the book in which the Gospel, in contrast to Paul, is unrestrained. Richard Gaffin Jr. (1996, p. 38 n. 32) points out the significance of the contrast between Paul and the Gospel, but does not go so far as to suggest that Paul is being painted as having erred.206 I might not be so timid, particularly in light of Paul’s earlier conflict with the ‘son of prophecy’ (Barnabas). He ignores the prophets in favor of his own inner turmoil. Later in the story he flubs his interview with Felix by appealing to Caesar, and even messes up his retelling of his own conversion account. It is worth asking
degenerated to the point that it was no longer living in the pure light of complementarianism. We must not forget that the kinds of details we are now discussing come from Luke, and more likely represent late first century attitudes. His specific mention of their lack of carnal knowledge may tell us that their spiritual knowledge is greater even than Agabus.’ Some of this depends on how we evaluate the theme of this section. See the following discussion.

205 He does not explain how Huldah had prophetic authority over the righteous king (Josiah) in 2 Kings 22.13-20.

206 He does see in it, though, a solution to the age-old problem of the ending of Acts. Scholars have often wondered where the third volume went. Harnack thought it ended there because that is when it was written. Gaffin argues that the triumph of the Gospel, not Paul, is the point.
whether it is not the prophets' but Paul's faults that are being highlighted. Could it be that, while Luke is clearly positive about the apostles, there is a running subtext designed to counter apostle worship? Note that the gospel is unhindered by the human errors of the not-always-perfect Apostle. This would be the more compelling if the book was written, as some assert, just at the end of the apostolic age. In any case, read this way the prophets retain their accuracy, and possibly their authority (which Gaffin, incidentally, affirms).

Other scholars (notably Bultmann, 1968/1921; Boring, 1982; 1991) assume that the earliest Christian prophets were viewed as speaking with divine authority. For them this is foundational to their thesis that the early church failed to maintain a distinction between the remembered sayings of the historical Jesus, and the messages in which Jesus spoke through a community intermediary. The argument hinges on the proposition that such oracles were viewed as theologically identical to the traditions surrounding the historical Jesus. In time, the distinction was forgotten (if it was ever maintained) resulting in some of these oracles being

---

207 Boring (1991) finds examples of this approach to gospel material going back to 1864, but Bultmann was its modern popularizer, and Boring is among its most vocal contemporary advocates.
included among the gospel sayings of Jesus. However, it is worth noticing that very few of these earliest prophets' utterances or writings have survived. There is the Revelation, of course, particularly the first three chapters. As noted below, Ellis tries to make the case that Jude should be included as an example of early prophetic literature. Acts includes a few such passages, as we have seen. Some may have found their way into gospels, including Thomas, or survived to be included in extracanonical literature. But the general absence would seem to suggest that they were not granted anything like normativity in their own time. Even if snippets do survive in passages in the epistles or even in logia Iesu, this does not dramatically affect the conclusion. Admittedly, use of oracles among the collected sayings of Jesus would certainly raise the bar of authority, but only for the specific communities that

---

208 This thesis allowed them to sift through gospels for logoi which could be understood in this manner. One reason for this exercise is that it solves a problem (which may be minor for some) of sayings which appear not to be authentic without accusing the evangelists (or their sources) of simply composing and falsely attributing. There is, of course, plenty of evidence for such artificial composition in contemporary early Christian, as well as other, literature, but this approach provides an explanation for some of it, at least. Gospel scholars are more likely to want to find "sayings of the risen Lord" than scholars of early Christian prophecy. In both cases it is a matter of caution. Those searching for the "historical Jesus" are anxious to clear the field of potential chaff (which would be how they are likely to view the products of Christian intermediaries). Students of early Christian prophecy recognize that the selection process is less than completely reliable, and do not want to clutter their collection of oracles with data of unknown origin.
failed to keep them separate.

I do find the image compelling of the clay-footed apostle that Gaffin is not quite ready to embrace, but right or wrong, the story illustrates that in earliest Christianity (as portrayed by Luke) not everyone (at least) viewed Christian prophets as inerrant. It is possible that that Luke is writing in a period, somewhat later than the collection of oracles, when contemporary prophecy was no longer regarded as God-breathed, but Paul’s repeated insistence that prophecies need to be evaluated makes me think that his attitude goes to the earliest period in Christian thought, in some communities, at least. So, I find myself agreeing with Grudem and Hill on the subject of the authority that was attached to prophecy in Pauline circles, at least.

But they are still wrong.\textsuperscript{209} What they fail to consider is the difference between prophecy and canon. At the core of this is the erroneous assumption that ancient Israelite prophets, including those whose writings are now preserved in Hebrew Scripture, were ever regarded by their general contemporaries as having any real

\textsuperscript{209} But so, for the most part at least, are Bultmann and the other scholars who find the prophets in the Gospels. Early Christians often respected, but did not necessarily trust, their intermediaries. There may have been exceptions, but from my vantage point ambivalence about prophecy is the rule.
authority. This is not to say that they were not respected, even feared at times, and some of them may have core groups of disciples around them who held their utterances or writings in higher regard. But, only in retrospect is the judgment applied as it was to Samuel that God "did not let any of his words fall to the ground" (1 Sam. 3.19).²¹⁰ In any case, normativity in Christian tradition comes from canonicity, not, as it were, ad hominem. If archaeologists were to miraculously find Paul’s lost second letter to the Corinthians (assuming that our 2 Cor. is actually the third), or the hypothetical third volume in the Luke-Acts saga, it would be a great find, but there would be no great move to print new Bibles to contain it (although I am sure someone would do it).²¹¹

**Psychological state**

Judgments about the psychological state(s) that produced primitive Christian intermediation, while never argued at any depth, lie at the root of many recent studies of Christian prophecy. It has been characteristic of scholarship on prophecy in early Christianity to focus on the role of the prophet or the prophecy

²¹⁰[editions](eds. Kittel, et al.).

²¹¹While authority of office eventually becomes a part of catholic Christianity, and does not survive the grave, canonical authority is only granted posthumously (usually dramatically so), and not necessarily to all known works. Prophetic authority is never fully normative unless, in some future generation, it becomes canonical.
in the communities, rather than the nature of prophecy itself. This is understandable, to some degree. First, focusing on the nature of prophecy borders on practical theology, and so is often viewed as outside the purview of the historian. Second, the tools for social and anthropological research on history are better developed, when working with the past, than those for psychology. Psychology remains, to a great extent, a science of observation, and extrapolating from those observations to the unobservable is, while potentially fruitful, problematic at best.\textsuperscript{212}

In line with claims of groups such as Qumran to possess inspired interpretation of scripture, it can be argued that ‘prophecy’ was simply a term applied by the early church to (certain kinds of) preaching. Scholars for whom this is a compelling argument\textsuperscript{213} tend to emphasize the role of the prophet’s cognition in the message and see little difference between prophecy and teaching (except

\textsuperscript{212} The famous study of Luther from a psychoanalytical viewpoint—Roland Bainton’s \textit{Here I stand} (1950)—is a good example of such an attempt that has met with mixed reviews.

\textsuperscript{213} So, e.g., Ellis, Hill. Harnack and McGiffert (1910), in the \textit{Britannica} 11\textsuperscript{th} ed., try to keep their feet in both camps in their discussion of early Christian prophecy. They say,

In the time of Paul the form of prophecy was reasoned exhortation in a state of inspiration; but very frequently the inspiration took the form of ecstasy - the prophet lost control of himself, so that he did not remember afterwards what he had said.

They do not tell us exactly how this works, or where they get their information.
perhaps in content). Ellis (see, esp., 1978) finds some things that look like oration to which he is able to arguably attach the label “prophecy.” Acts 15.32, for example, provides just such an opportunity.

Judas and Silas, being prophets themselves, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with a long discourse. 214

The passage does not require that the “long discourse” be a prophecy (or a string of them), but it is implied. 215 There is nothing that prevents a prophecy from being long, but it is not the image we get from 1 Cor. 14. 216 Ellis also argues that this Judas is the same as the Jude of the epistle. He finds it natural to conclude from this that the Epistle of Jude must be a prophecy. While there are real weaknesses in his argument, there are strengths in his proposition that such documents might exist. Ellis believes that the Epistle is a composed work. He may be minimalizing what can be done “in the Spirit,” but he may also be following the sort of thinking

214 Ἰούδας τε καὶ Σίλας, καὶ αὐτοὶ προφήται ὄντες, διὰ λόγου πολλοῦ παρεκάλεσαν τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἐπεστήριζαν (ed. Aland, et al.).
215 In the same context, the charge to the gentiles in v. 28 is introduced with the formulaic, “For it seemed right to the Holy Spirit and to us” [ἐδοξεν γὰρ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν (ed. Aland, et al.)]. Aune, not unreasonably, thinks that this means that the charge itself was the product of a prophetic utterance. While this may be the case, it is equally possible that it reflects an inner sense of the Holy Spirit’s confirmation. Not an utterance, in that case, but in terms of our definitions of intermediation, it could still be considered prophetic, in the epipneumatic category. If it was an utterance, however, the context may lead us to suppose that either Judas or Silas was the source.
216 1 Cor. does imply, to be sure, that some of the prophecies tended to run longer than Paul thought necessary.
that lead the Chronicler (and Josephus) to view sacred historiography as an appropriate outlet for prophetic composition to its natural post-resurrection conclusion. The only real difference between prophecy and teaching, following this argument, is that teaching is instructive and prophecy is for 'encouraging and strengthening' (Acts 15.32).

If prophecy differed from teaching only in subject matter, then the whole question of decline becomes moot. Oration fitting Ellis’ criteria has continued unabated in Christian pulpits (or the equivalent) since the beginning until the present, and changes in worship have had no impact on it. If this is prophecy, then only the nomenclature has changed. An experience such as Paul’s journey to the third heaven might be labeled a revelation, to distinguish it from prophecy. These, although less common, have never disappeared from Christian experience either, and have sometimes played significant roles in the progress of theological thinking.

Against this, it is clear that some of the experiences described cannot be

---

217 Or the author of the Wisdom of Solomon to identify wisdom and prophecy.
218 Or his anonymous acquaintance whom I will call, for convenience, “Paul.”
viewed as cognitive,\textsuperscript{219} and certainly they do not all appear to be didactic (Agabus oracle to Paul, at least). In 1 Cor. 12, prophecy is lumped together with tongues, interpretation of tongues, and faith healing — clearly implying, not only its perceived supernatural origin, but (at least in the case of tongues and interpretation) its roots in non-ordinary experience. This type of prophecy can also trace its roots in second temple Judaism, in apocalyptic traditions, and in the perceived nature of biblical prophecy.\textsuperscript{220} Scholars\textsuperscript{221} who see these as the more important models for primitive Christian prophecy tend to speak more of the role of the psychology of revelation in the prophet's message. They will distinguish sharply between prophecy and teaching as modes of discourse, while in contrast, often seeing no distinction in content.

If choice must be made at this point between these two models, I believe that NTE based intermediation must be chosen. It is important to understand that the prophets (or prophesiers) view themselves as directly transmitting a message from God. However, it may do more justice to the historical data, taken as a whole, if

\textsuperscript{219} The two instances in Acts where ἐκποίησις is used (10.10; 11.5; 22.17) and Paul's journey to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12.2) come to mind.
\textsuperscript{220} I do not wish to address the nature of Hebrew Bible prophecy in any depth here. The reader is referred to standard works on the subject, but particularly to Wilson (1980) and Lindblom (1957).
we assume that something between these, or better, inclusive of both of these models was present in primitive Christianity. While there is an enormous gray continuum between the prophet and the preacher/teacher who re-transmits or (re)interprets received truth, it is nevertheless a distinction that is valuable to maintain. Without this differentiation, the continuum disappears into unity, and part of the whole is lost. That it was not always carefully maintained by the primitive Christians will have to be conceded.

It would be useful, though, to distinguish what type of experience(s) about which we are talking in any given instance. Harnack & McGiffert (1910) held out for two forms: purely cognitive and some form of mediumship involving loss of control and amnesia, but it is hard to know on what evidence this is based.\textsuperscript{222} If I was right in arguing in the previous paragraph that it was a continuum then we must not only look at each instance individually, but be prepared to be stumped on some. I prefer not to drag the reader through such a catalogue. I will, however, try to overview the major cases.

The easiest place to start is at Ellis' end — that is orative prophecy. I located

\textsuperscript{222} He might be thinking of Philo or the Montanists.
this category as a type of epipnoia in my summary of psychological types.223

There is an admitted grey area here between NTE and cognition, or inspiration at least. The bottom line is that in the understanding of the congregation (and probably usually the intermediary), their "long discourses" (Acts 15.32, above) were Spirit directed and Spirit controlled.

The Corinthian prophets virtually have to be either cognitive or epipneumatic. This is simply because they are presumably able to respond to Paul's admonition that they chop it short if someone else gets a revelation (1 Cor. 14.30), and his statement that "the spirits of the prophets submit to the prophets" (v. 32).224 Incorporation does not usually work this way; even if the medium had control over herself, she would usually have to be extracted, usually by means of some external stimulus (more often than not, music, or some other audible signal).

Since prophecy is here lumped with glossolalia, which is either trance based or

223 See above (p. 106). I have chosen to use "orative" as the differentiating adjective rather than "teaching" simply because, in contrast with Ellis, I do not think teaching is the normal function of prophecy, although it is not excluded. So, for precision, I should clarify what I perceive as the primary categories of oration within the early Church. Kerygma is oration for proselytization; teaching is for imparting tradition and knowledge; edification is for the purpose of encouragement or correction. When prophecy is orative, it is usually for edification, although Paul specifically associates prophecy and proselytization in 1 Cor. 14.24f. Ellis would replace my "usually" with "always" and use that as the defining criterion to distinguish prophecy from teaching. I am more inclined to use some type of NDE as the defining criterion.

224 Και πνεύματα προφητῶν προφήταις ὑποτάσσεται (eds. Aland, et al.).
epipneumatic, and since trance is problematic, I believe the evidence points to epipnoia for the normal psychological state of the Corinthian prophets.\textsuperscript{225} However, some prophets may have received the "revelations" that lay behind their prophetic messages prior to the worship service, and simply be relaying them, in which case the revelation would be NTE based, but the delivery may well be strictly cognitive.

Mostly for the same reasons, I would be inclined to lump all prophecies that are described as accompanied by glossolalia, such as those found in Acts 19.6 (former disciples of John receive the Spirit), into this (epipneumatic) category as well.

As I have noted on a couple of occasions, Peter and Paul are both described as entering a trance state (ἐκοτασις) in Acts (10.10; 11.5 and 22.17 respectively). Peter's is clearly a visionary experience, and he does not perceive himself as having left the roof of Simon the tanner. Parasensory is the obvious choice. Paul's experience (in which he sees Jesus, who speaks to him) could easily be read the

\textsuperscript{225} When, that is, they are in session during a community meeting as described by Paul—in other words, congregation prophecy. They may have had very different experiences in different circumstances, for example when praying privately. The same prophets may have been conduits for orative prophecy on other occasions.
same way. In neither case do we get the sense that they have the sense of having traveled to another place, nor that have they lost bodily control (although we are not told that they have retained it either). Nor or they amnesiac.

The opening flourish of the Revelation is similarly parasensory, although once the tour of heaven begins it shifts to full blown ecstatic (obviously, of the apocalyptic tour of heaven variety). Paul’s (generally assumed to be his own) tour of the third heaven (described in 2 Cor. 12.2-5) is clearly enough in the same ecstatic category.

Joseph, like his namesake, is a dreamer in Matthew,\(^{226}\) but it is not completely clear what is going on in Acts 16.6-10.\(^{227}\) The missionaries are repeatedly thwarted in their travel plans by the Holy Spirit. Largely because we are not told otherwise, I am inclined to see this as descriptive of epipnoia.\(^{228}\) But Paul’s nighttime

\(^{226}\) This is mentioned in passing, but in general I am ignoring the NDEs and prophetic activity in the Gospels, simply because they are not portrayed as activities within the early Church.

\(^{227}\) Επίπνεον δὲ τὴν θυμίαν καὶ Γαλατικήν χώραν, καυλυθέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος λαλήσαι τὸν λόγον ἐν τῇ Ασίᾳ. 7 ἑλθόντες δὲ κατὰ τὴν Μυσίαν ἐπείραζον εἰς τὴν βυθυνίαν πορεύθησαι, καὶ οὐκ εἶσαν αὐτοὺς τὸ πνεῦμα Ἰσραήλ. 8 παρελθόντες δὲ τὴν Μυσίαν κατέβησαν εἰς Τροάδα. 9 καὶ ὁ δράμα διὰ τῆς νυκτὸς τῷ Παῦλῳ ἀφθηθηκεν, ἀνὴρ Μακεδών τις ἦν ἐπτύως καὶ παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν καὶ λέγον, Διαβάς εἰς Μακεδονίαν ψήθησον ἡμῖν. 10 ὥς δὲ τὸ ὁδόμα εἶδεν, εὐθέως ἑξητίθησαμεν ἐξελθέων εἰς Μακεδονίαν, συμβιβάζοντες ότι προσκέκληται ἡμᾶς ὁ Θεός εὐαγγελίσσαθαι αὐτοῖς (eds. Aland, et al.).

\(^{228}\) Again, we are looking at the author’s portrayal of events in the apostles’ lives. We cannot know with any certainty the extent to which it is connected with what we consider reality. It is to
"vision" (ὁράμα) could, once again, be parasensory, or it could be a prophetic dream. I am inclined to parasensory simply because Paul is portrayed as having a lot of them in Acts, and no other dreams, but I would not bet any money on it. The same analysis applies to a dream/vision he has in Corinth (18.9f), but in 27.23f (at sea, prior to the shipwreck on Malta) Paul is made to say specifically that an angel stood by him in the night (which would be unambiguously parasensory). It may be that this provides the model for all three.

There is one instance of divination, leading to the selection of Matthias as the twelfth apostle (Acts 1.23f).

The oracle of Agabus in Acts 21.11 cannot be categorized with certainty. The whole feel of the counter is obviously reminiscent of Samuel-Kings with symbolic action (or sympathetic magic), the introductory formula, “Thus says the Holy Spirit,” and even the detail that Agabus apparently “came down from Judea” for the purpose of delivering the message to Paul (v. 10). This last detail suggests that the message is a result of a previously received revelation, which the prophet feels commissioned to deliver, but it does not have to be. He could be speaking

be hoped, but always skeptically, that where he departs from “objective” history, he at least mirrors his own contemporary practice, but he may be reflecting his contemporary view of archaic reality, which might be quite different.
Prophecy

epipneumatically, or for that matter, this could be a portrayal of incorporation.\(^{229}\)

That would make it unique, which, admittedly, it is anyway, but in my opinion, too unique.\(^{230}\)

**New Testament stragglers**

There are a handful of references to prophets in the New Testament whom I have passed over, so for the sake of completeness I will briefly catalogue them. In addition to his Joppa vision, Peter is portrayed prophetically announcing to Ananias and Sapphira their respective demises (*Acts* 5.1-1). Since he is fully interactive this is most easily understood as either epipnoia or simply the result of an (unreported) earlier revelation.

On the other side of Peter's Joppa vision, Cornelius is said to have had an angelic appearance, instructing him to send for Peter (*Acts* 10.3-8). Angelic

---

\(^{229}\) Keep in mind that incorporation is often in the eye of the beholder. I argue below that the Montanists generally were not

\(^{230}\) I simply do not see evidence for incorporation, or any type of mediumship, in the earliest Christian communities. Rouget (1985) argues that no Jewish or Christian tradition could ever support this type of trance because it is theologically incorrect; a fully transcendent monotheistic God cannot be incorporated. He is probably wrong, simply because it is probably at least one of the things we find among the Montanists (although it is admittedly problematic at a theological level, and may have led to theological problems among them).

It may be at the root of Philo's experience, the evidence being that he probably claims amnesia, and compares his experience to the Corybantes. The latter, if Rouget is correct, behaved in ways that would strongly suggest a similarity to modern incorporation.
Prophecy

Visitations are by definition parasensory.\footnote{This would be true even from an orthodox point of view, since we do not normally see angels, and presumably they are all around us. Consequently something must happen that allows us to see them on such occasions as they want to be seen.}

Stephen is depicted as having a parasensory vision of heaven which he shares (Acts 7.55f); he becomes the first Christian martyr.

In Acts 8.26, Philip was sent “toward the south” by an angel (parasensory), then directed by the Spirit to speak to the Ethiopian eunuch in v. 29 (epipnoia).

Aune (1983) argues that the charge to the Gentiles in Acts 16.28 begins as a prophecy, since it is introduced by “It seemed [good] to the Holy Spirit and to us.”\footnote{ἐδοξεν γὰρ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν (eds. Aland, et al.).} If he is right the originating prophet is unnamed, but it illustrates the principle that prophetic utterance requires confirmation (in this case by the Jerusalem apostles and leaders). Of course, we cannot know what type of NTE might lie behind this message.

In Romans 12.6, Paul lists prophecy among the gifts (χαρίσματα) available to the believer.\footnote{ἔχοντες δὲ χαρίσματα κατὰ τὴν χάριν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἡμῶν διάφορα, εἴτε προφητεῖαν κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως... (eds. Aland, et al.).} It is generic, and so not specific to any particular psychological type, but it is interesting that none of the other items on the list are NTE based.
Prophecy (ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leadership, compassion). It could be that he is specifically referring to orative prophecy, which I would regard as the least non-ordinary of the categories we have identified in the early Church.

Revelation, itself a prophetic work, has some prophetic references within it. There are the two eschatological prophets who die and are resurrected in Jerusalem (11.3-12). The term is used in conjunction with “saints” and “apostles” to collectively refer to the holy community (11.18; 16.6; 18.20, 24). Prophets deliver messages to the community regarding the things to come (22.6, 9). And then there is the False Prophet who supports the Beast (16.13; 19.20; 20.10).

Reserved to last, although she comes early in Revelation, is the prophetess whom John/Jesus names “Jezebel.”

But I hold this against you, that you tolerate the woman “Jezebel.” She calls herself a prophet but deceives my servants into promiscuity and eating offerings to idols. 21 I have given her time to repent, but she does not want to turn away from her promiscuity. 22 If she does not turn from her actions I will drop her into a sickbed, and her paramours into great affliction, and I will kill her children (2.20-23a).

---

234 ἄλλα ἔχει κατὰ σου ὅτι ἄφες τὴν γυναῖκα Ἰεζήβη, ἡ λέγουσα ἑαυτὴν προφήτην, καὶ διδάσκει καὶ πλανά τοὺς ἐμοὺς δουλοὺς πορνεύσας καὶ φαγεῖν εἰδωλοθύτα. 21 καὶ ἔδωκα αὐτῇ χρόνον ἵνα μετανοήσῃ, καὶ σὺ θέλει μετανοήσαι ἐκ τῆς πορνείας αὐτῆς. 22 ἰδοὺ βὰλλω αὐτὴν εἰς κλίνην, καὶ τοὺς μοιχεύοντας μετ’ αὐτῆς εἰς θλίψιν μεγάλην, ἐὰν μὴ μετανοήσωσιν ἐκ τῶν ἐργῶν αὐτῆς. 23 καὶ τὰ τέκνα αὐτῆς ἀπόκτενοι ἐν θανάτῳ (eds. Aland, et al.).
Jezebel is obviously not her real name; John (or Jesus) uses the same technique on the teacher he names Balaam in v. 14.\textsuperscript{235} The "sexual immorality" may also be an insulting parody, although we know that some second century groups did use the power of sexual union sacramentally.\textsuperscript{236} On the food issue, Jezebel may stand with Paul. The "deep things of Satan" probably parody her "deep things of Christ" or some such, but it should be remembered that Gnosticism developed some God/Satan inverting theology.\textsuperscript{237} Bauer (1934/1971) points out that John’s attitude regarding Jezebel is doubtless mirrored by her attitude regarding him. He goes on to argue that true and false prophecy is not always directly parallel to true and false doctrine, although in this case it seems likely that Jezebel has earned John’s distain through both heterodoxy and heteropraxy (John’s point of view).\textsuperscript{238}
The post apostolic age
From about 80 to 150 CE

The landscape of intermediary activity, which was beginning to be recognizable in the New Testament, quickly begins to shift and lose focus once we exit the apostolic period. I will be progressing through this material in a generally historical order. From the beginning, however, it is necessary to recognize that a significant number of our primary texts are not easy to pin down historically. Unfortunately, this is most true for our most important texts. There is other information that we would love to know about these documents: Where do they come from and to what stream of formative Christianity do they belong? Sometimes they tell us, or we have other ways of knowing, but frequently we are left guessing on one or both of these questions.

*Didache [late 1st — 3rd century, eastern Mediterranean]*

I will be beginning with the Didache, which may be date-appropriate (e.g. it may be late first century), but may well be completely out of place. It does not have any obvious marks of proto-unorthodoxy, but this does not guarantee
The work is composite, and the section we will be looking at must be dated and provenanced independently of the, probably older, "two ways" section. Scholarly arguments for date range from late first to third century and for place of origin from Egypt through Syria to Asia Minor (Kraft, 1992). The portion that we will be looking at (11-15) appears to be a single layer (that is, either the same redaction, or the same source document). The fact that itinerant prophets and apostles (especially apostles) are present should lead us to one or two conclusions: either this text is fairly early (e.g. around the start of the second century) or that it derives from some other group than the emerging catholics. It could, certainly, be both. The basis for this judgment is that while (I will argue) prophecy and prophets continued into the second century, and beyond, people who identified themselves as apostles did not, in proto-orthodox circles, at least.

---

239 In discussions of parabiblical Jewish Scripture literature, it has been argued that the absence of specific references to Jesus or other obviously Christian markers does not guarantee a Jewish origin. Similarly, the absence of "heretical" markers does not guarantee a catholic origin.

240 11.1-2, with its reference to the "preceding things" implies that this is a level of redaction, although it is also possible that this brief section is an editorial bridge into the following pasted in section.

241 They may not be, of course, making this entire section (of the Didache) anachronistic, but my expectation, at least, would be for anachronistic order to be somewhat more in tune with conservative expectation, although this depends on who is being conservative. In any case, this does not look like what we have come to expect.

242 If "apostle" simply means "missionary," then obviously the function continued, but the name
For the author of the *Didache*, at first glance anyway, prophets are itinerants.

Among the target churches, it apparently had not been uncommon for traveling ministers to wander into the community and to be accorded some moderate amount of respect. The *Didache* classifies these into two categories: ‘apostles’ and ‘prophets.’ The only criterion that specifically applies to apostles is that they have to move on after a few days (11.5), while ‘true’ prophets may be invited to stay on if they wish (13.1), and presumably if the community has need of them.

was so charged with the memory of the first-generation founders, that it was not used for contemporaries after the beginning of the second century, at least.

243 But when the ‘apostle’ fails the test, he is called a ‘false prophet’ (11.5). I suspect that the categories here, and in this period, are becoming quite mushy. The discussion that follows in chs. 11 -13, however, appears to be generally directed at prophecy. E. C. Selwyn (1900), taking 11.3-5 as a launching point, contended that apostles were itinerant prophets. But while this text imposes iterancy on the apostle, it also accepts, on the part of the prophet, only the latter may settle if he wishes. Ellis (1970) rightly rejects Selwyn but goes on to argue that the prophet is basically an apostle without authority. Apostles do everything prophets do, but they also perform miracles, are witnesses to the resurrection, have at least local authority, and can communicate the Holy Spirit. As I have stated earlier (p. 97, n. 203) I do not believe it is wise to use Paul and Peter as our primary sources for the activities of most apostles. Unless the Didache is very early, it is unlikely that its apostles were witnesses of the resurrection, and there is no evidence outside of *Acts* that communicating the Spirit is an apostles-only activity, and even then the case is usually made that apostolic impartation is needed only for special circumstances (first mission to the Gentiles, etc., see Dunn 1970).

244 A number of scholars (e.g. Schmithals, 1969, Aune, 1983) see a parallel and possible dependency in the Greek philosophical concept of the wandering cynical philosopher. This is possible, but it needs to be kept in mind that the primary model for early Christian prophets would be their Hebrew Bible counterparts, who sometimes also wandered.

Kydd (1984) argues that the presence of itinerant ministries suggests that the community addressed represents a “wide geographic area.” Of course, this could be true, but all they really tell us is that the itinerants could be viewed as part of a translocal community, and even then, the
Itinerants were apparently received warmly and given room and board for a brief period of time. Although 11.5 limits this to three days, it is possible that stays were often longer. The itinerants presumably participated in the community gatherings and, in the case of prophets, this is probably where the bulk of their activity took place.

Immediately after warning the readers not to judge a prophet who is speaking in the Spirit, using language reminiscent of the 'unforgivable sin' (see Matt. 12.31), the author proceeds to delineate certain kinds of unacceptable prophetic behaviors. From the author's warnings in 11.7ff, it is apparent that symbolic action, similar in type to that of Agabus in Acts, was commonplace. We find here, for example, that a prophet might call for food (in the Spirit) but should not eat it (to do so would indicate that the prophecy originated from the prophet's own hunger, rather than from the Spirit). He may even do things 'in the Spirit' which

---

245 "You are not to test or evaluate any prophet speaking in the Spirit, since while all sins will be forgiven, this sin will not be forgiven" [Καὶ πάντα προφήτην λαλοῦντα ἐν πνεύματι οὐ πειράσετε οὐδὲ διακρίνετε πᾶσα γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφεθήσεται, ἀληθὲς δὲ ἡ ἁμαρτία οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer)] (v. 7). This passage would have had Paul foaming at the mouth, and not in ecstasy. Even when read in the context of the following caveats, this text suggests a very different view of the authority of prophecy than that which we saw in the Pauline literature.
are forbidden to normal believers (11.11). The prophet may not ask for money. Presumably, some did.

In forbidding certain behaviors, the Didachist touches on an important characteristic of enthusiasm in its social setting. Intermediaries are perceived as speaking or acting for the divinity, and as such, they are not only allowed to, but are often expected to behave differently from ‘normal’ people. But there are limits. As Robert Wilson points out, societies must be able to recognize “certain stereotypical characteristics” of intermediation in order to distinguish ματὴρ from insanity, demon possession, or chicanery (Wilson, 1980, 32f). If the prophet’s behavior strays too far outside these limits, he is likely to be labeled a false prophet and removed. In religious groups where intermediation has survived into a period of (at least emerging) doctrinal stability, this includes a degree of content control as well.

In ch. 13 we find that for the author of the Didache, every Christian community

---

246 Some scholars (e.g. Lake) postulate a reference to “spiritual marriage,” remembering Hosea. Other forbidden practices may be included as well.

247 Prophetic simony was also a problem for Hermas (below, p. 130), as well as for the critics of the New Prophecy (below, p. 173).

248 2 John appears to be, like this portion of the Didache, aimed at controlling bogus itinerants. There, however, the criterion is strictly doctrinal.
ideally has at least one prophet in residence. It is also apparent that not all communities were ideal in this sense, and that one way of remedying the situation was to recruit an itinerant (after determining that he was a true prophet). Prophets were apparently given boarding for their services and received the offering of firstfruits from the congregation in the manner of the Old Testament priests.

In ch. 15 the author appears to be trying to elevate the bishops (overseers) to the same plane, in terms of popular respect.

So you should choose for yourselves overseers and ministers who are worthy of the Lord, men who are agreeable, generous, true, and tested; they will serve for you as prophets and teachers. You should not dishonor them, since they are your esteemed ones (along with the prophets and teachers) (15.1-2).

Von Campenhausen (1969) uses this text to argue that charismatics and office holders could work together without conflict over authority.

Cerinthus [late 1st century, Asia Minor]

Cerinthus was, according to Eusebius, a younger contemporary (and

---

249 Χειροτονήσατε οὖν ἐαυτοῖς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διικόνους ἀξίους τοῦ κυρίου, ἀνδρῶς πραπείς καὶ ἀβιλαργύρους καὶ ἀληθείς καὶ δεδοκιμαζόμενους· ἡμῖν γὰρ λειτουργοῦσί καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν λειτουργίαν τῶν προφητῶν καὶ διδασκάλων. 2 μὴ οὖν ὑπερίδητε αὐτούς· αὐτοὶ γὰρ εἰσὶν οἱ τετμημένοι ὑμῖν μετὰ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ διδασκάλων (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).

250 Kydd (1984) suggests the possibility that the admonition to respect office holders is a backhanded way of putting the brakes on a movement toward exaltation of offices above charismatics.
opponent) of the Apostle John. The earliest surviving record (Irenaeus, *Ag. Heresies* 1.26; 3.3 & 11) has him fail the test of orthodoxy, drawing from, or feeding into, both Jewish Christianity and Gnosticism. He is reported to have had strong chiliastic tendencies. He is of interest in this study because, on the one hand, he claimed to have received revelation from angels (according to Irenaeus\textsuperscript{251}), and because he is identified as a (false) prophet by Dionysius of Alexandria (according to Eusebius (*EH* 3.28; 7.25; 11.1)). This last identification is based on the fact that Dionysus did not have a very high opinion of the *Revelation*, and, as part of his defamation of that work, attributed it pseudepigraphically to Cerinthus.\textsuperscript{252} It may be that his identification of Cerinthus as (pseudo)prophetic is based on his evaluation of the *Apocalypse*, although the case could just as easily be made for the

---

\textsuperscript{251} And Caius (*EH* 28.2), perhaps dependent on Irenaeus.

\textsuperscript{252} Dionysus is one of our sources for Cerinthus’ millennial views. It should be apparent that some of this evidence is circular. There is another, backwards, connection between Cerinthus and the *Revelation*, however. Irenaeus, citing Polycarp, reports that John the Evangelist disliked Cerinthus to the point that he on one occasion left a bathhouse on learning the Cerinthus was inside. He is reported to have said, “Let us flee, lest the bathhouse collapse, since Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is inside” [Φύγωμεν, μή καὶ τὸ βαλανεῖον συμπέσῃ, ἐνδον ὅντος Κηρίνθου τοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας ἔχθρου (ed. Harvey)] (*Ag. Heresies* 3.3.413.5). Given that it was not uncommon to attribute the *Apocalypse* to the evangelist, I am inclined to wonder whether the original protagonist of this story was John the Revelator, simply confusingly identified as “John.” Having made that stretch, I am inclined to stretch a little further and wonder whether John was inclined to call Cerinthus, “Balaam,” simply because in the *Revelation* that is a pseudonym he uses for someone he clearly does not like (2.14), but this is pure speculation. Feeling over-stretched, I will now try to return to normal.
Prophecy

reverse.

Eusebius has this to say:

Caius, whom we have already cited, in the investigation ascribed to him, has this to say concerning this man:
2 But Cerinthus, by means of written revelations as though by a great apostle, recounts wondrous things to us, as though to him by angels. The liar says that after the resurrection, the kingdom of Christ will be on earth, and that a citizen in Jerusalem will be subject to fleshly lusts and desires. Being an enemy of the Scriptures of God, and desiring to deceive, he says there will be a thousand years for a wedding festival (EH 3.28.1-2).

John Gwynn (1888) does not believe this millennialist view to be close enough to the Apocalypse to identify the one with the other. He suggests that Cerinthus may have produced his own embellished version of John’s Apocalypse, which Caius then ascribes to him. But I think we need to remember that Caius does not like the Apocalypse, and if he thinks it was written by Cerinthus might well embellish it this way. Or, if Cerinthus did teach these sorts of things, Caius may present the Revelation in this way to emphasize its distastefulness.

---

253 Γάιος, οὕς φωνᾶς ἢδη πρότερον παρατέθειμαι, ἐν τῇ φερομένῃ αὐτοῦ ἐπιτήσει ταῦτα περὶ αὐτοῦ γράφει.
2 ἀλλὰ καὶ Κήρυνθος ὁ δὲ ἀποκαλύψεων ὡς ὑπὸ ἀποστόλου μεγάλου γεγραμμένων τερατολογίας ἢμίν ὡς δὲ ἀγγέλων αὐτῷ δεδειγμένας ψευδόμενος ἐπεισάγει, λέγουν μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἐπίγειον εἶναι τῷ βασιλείῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ πάλιν ἐπιθυμεῖς καὶ ἠδοναῖς ἐν Ἰερουσαλήμ τὴν σάρκα πολιτευομένην δουλεύειν. καὶ ἐκθρός ὑπάρχων ταῖς γραφαῖς τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀριθμὸν χαλκοσκευεῖς ἐν γάμῳ ἑορτής, θέλων πλανάν, λέγει γίνεσθαι” (ed. Bardy).
254 Although they look pretty close to me.
Heresiarchs (Irenaeus and those dependent on him) also accused him of adoptionism and a generally dualistic doctrinal system. The last accusation is possible, but his much later detractors may be anachronistically imposing a full blown, almost Valentinian, cosmogony on the late first century (Arendzen 1908).255

Unfortunately, even if we accept Cerinthus' prophetism, it does not add much to our knowledge of prophetic activity in this period. I am inclined to include him in our emerging list of possible post-biblical prophets, although I do not do so with overwhelming confidence. His claim to have had angelic visitation is obviously parasensory, although it could also be apocryphal. If it was genuine, we do not know its social context (private or congregational).

**Ignatius [late 1st - early 2nd century, Syria]**

Ignatius was bishop of Antioch on the Orontes in Northwest Syria, and died (in Rome) somewhere between 98 and 117.256 The tradition is fairly strong that he knew some of the (twelve) apostles. Although he never calls himself a prophet,257

---

255 See also Hill (2000).
256 E.g. during the reign of the emperor Trajan, but most scholars think later in the reign (106-117). Harnack (1878) doubts even the tradition that the martyrdom occurred under Trajan (R.T.S., 1911).
257 He does regularly call himself “Θεοφόρος” (God-bearer), which may have an intermediative twinge. Schoedel (1992) suggests, but rejects, the possibility that he saw a connection between his own prophecy and his bishopric.
there are several references in his letters which are best interpreted as intermediative. The most famous is Philadelphians 7.1b-2:

Among you I shouted, loudly, with God’s voice, “Pay attention to your overseer, and to your elders and deacons.” Some suspected that, in saying these things, I must have had prior knowledge of a disagreement among you, but as God is my witness, I was not told by any person of flesh. The Spirit said this: “You should do nothing without the overseer; keep your flesh as a temple of God; love unity; avoid divisions; imitate Christ as he does his father.”

It is hard to read this in any other than as a claim to prophetic utterance. The apparent response of his opponents also suggests that they are trying to discredit his prophecy. This tells us, on the one hand, that they recognize the form of prophecy for what it is (a claim to direct divine communication), but, on the other, that there is an already present skepticism about congregational prophecy in this

258 ἐκφαντάσας μεταξὺ ὑμῶν, ἔλαυνεν μεγάλη φωνῆ, θεοῦ φωνῆ. Τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ προσέχετε καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερῳ καὶ διανόοις. 2 οἱ δ’ ὑποτεύκτονες ὡς πρεσβύτα τῶν μεσισμῶν τινῶν λέγειν ταῦτα μάρτυς ὑμῶν, ἐν ὕπονοι, ὡς ἀπὸ σαρκὸς ἀνθρώπινης ὑπὸ ἐγκόσ. τὸ δ’ πνεῦμα ἐκήρυσσεν λέγον τάδε: Χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε, τὴν σάρκα ὑμῶν ὡς ναὸν θεοῦ τηρείτε, τὴν ἑνωσιν ἀγαπάτε, τοὺς μεσισμοὺς φεύγετε, μιμηταὶ γίνεσθε Ιησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).

259 Kydd (1984) claims that speaking “at the top of your lungs” was recognized by both Christians and non-Christians as indicative of prophecy at that time, but he gives no citations to support this claim. Ignatius’ testimony, that he is speaking with God’s (or later the Spirit’s) voice should be sufficient, in any case.

At the outset, I should alert the reader that I am following Lightfoot in his “middle rescension” of the text. The expanded version is not likely to add anything useful to this investigation, and the Syriac appears to be an epitome which excludes many of the passages at which we are looking. There are two exceptions. Rom. 7.2b is present, but lacks the speaking water, and Poly. 2.2b is more or less the same.
Prophecy

period (they suspect he may be faking it). This skepticism, however, also underlines the authority associated with prophecy. Their desire to discredit it as prophetic speech is based on the acceptance of the proposition that prophetic speech carries divine authority (Kydd, 1984).

F. A. Schilling (1932) also identifies four other passages from Ignatius' surviving letters which look to be either claims or references to divine inspiration:

> My own lust has been crucified, and there is in me no materialistic fire, but water, living and speaking in me, within me it says, “Come to the Father.” (Rom. 7.2b)

...in my second missive, which I am going to write to you... particularly if the Lord reveals to me that each and every one of you, in common... (Eph. 20.2a)

For even though I am in bonds, I am able to know heavenly things, angelic formations, archontic arrays—visible and invisible things. In spite of this, I am not a disciple. For we lack many things, that we may not lack God. (Tral. 5.2)

---

260 ὁ ἐμὸς ἐρως ἐσταύρωται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φιλούλου, ὡδι δὲ ζῶν καὶ λαλοῦν ἐν ἐμοὶ, ἐσωθην μοι λέγων· Δεύω τρός τὸν πατέρα (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer). This is the longer version. The shorter reading cannot be read at all as prophetic:

ζῶν γὰρ ἐσταύρωται, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἐμοὶ πῦρ φιλούλου· Δεύω τρός τὸν πατέρα (ed. Migne).

261 ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ βιβλίῳ, ὁ μέλλω γράφειν ύμῖν... ἡ μάλιστα ἐάν ὁ κύριος μου ἀποκαλύψῃ ὦτι οἱ κατ’ ἄνδρα κοινὴ πάντες... (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).

262 Καὶ γὰρ ἐγώ, οὐ καθότι δέδεμαι καὶ δύναμαι νοεῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια καὶ τὰς τοποθεσίας τὰς ἀγγελικὰς καὶ τὰς συντάσσεις τὰς ἀρχαντικὰς, ὁρᾶτα τε καὶ ἄρατα, παρὰ τούτο ἢδη καὶ μαθητής εἰμι. πολλὰ γὰρ ἡμῖν λείπει, ἵνα θεοὶ μὴ λειτωμέθη (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).
You are carnal and spiritual, so that you can both bear with the things you run into, and seek the unseeable to reveal it. This is so you will not lack, and will abound in all spiritual gifts (Poly. 2.2b).

I do not find Schilling’s first text compelling, and read it instead as Ignatius’ poetic description of his spiritual self triumphing over his baser self (but see below on the Odes of Solomon (p. 143)). The Ephesians text works well enough. If Lightfoot (1901) was right, though, the ὅτι should be excised (with a half stop after ἀποκάλυψη) and we get a reading something like “particularly if the Lord reveals something to me. Each and every…” Both readings, though, claim for Ignatius the ability to receive revelations.

Trallians is interesting. A century later, the editor of Perpetua views her imprisonment and impending martyrdom as putting her in a position to receive special revelation from God. Ignatius seems to say he can know mysteries in spite of it. In any case, his special knowledge does not have to be by revelation, although it could be.

In his Letter to Polycarp, though, he does seem to be suggesting that Polycarp

---

263 οὐ τότε σαρκικὸς εἰ καὶ πνευματικὸς, ἢν τὰ φαινόμενα σου εἰς πρόσωπον κολακεύσαι τὰ δὲ ἄνωτα αἴτει ἢν σοι φανερωθῇ, ἢν μηδενὸς λείπῃ καὶ παντὸς χαρίσματος περιστεύσῃ (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).
seek supernatural revelation. He also calls such things ‘charismata.’

It is worth noting, before moving on that Ignatius stands firmly in the camp of structured ecclesiastical authority in the church. The fact that he does not perceive this as presenting a conflict with pneumatic authority is worth noting (Kydd, 1984) (even though, in this case, the pneumatic authority is his own).

His NTE state in Philadelphians is almost certainly epipneumatic. Nothing else really fits. I do not believe Romans applies, and the others cannot be categorized. Only Philadelphians provides us with a social context, which is congregational, but in the middle of a sermon (or so it appears). This is not quite the same as orative prophecy, since it is only a brief oracular moment in an otherwise normal cognitive discourse.

**The Shepherd of Hermas [early 2nd century, Rome]**

Although a person named Hermas is greeted by Paul in Romans (16.14) and there is a reference (2nd Vision. 4[8].3) to Clement (presumably of Rome — late first century); the Muratorian canon, among others, tells us that this Hermas was the brother of Pius I (Bishop of Rome 140-155). Most scholars follow the latter date,

\[264\] The connections to 1 Cor. are clearer in Greek, where we find σαρκικὸς and πνευματικὸς, reminiscent of 1 Cor. 3, and χαρίσματος, suggesting 12.1.
making it early to mid second century (Livingstone, 1977).265 The Clement and/or Pius connection puts the book in Rome, but it was popular in the East, where it was sometimes regarded as scripture.266

Hermas does not call himself a prophet, but this is not particularly meaningful; his work is driven by visions. In one, he asks how to distinguish true from false prophets, and is told

By [her] way of life you test the person who [claims to] have the divine Spirit.

and

265 It is possible for someone to have been young during Clement's time and still be around fifty years later (see also Joly, 1958, cited from Snyder, 1992). Being the same as Paul's Hermas would be more of a problem. The work itself, even taken at face value, represents many years of writing, and we are not compelled to read it so simplistically; it could well be layered by multiple authors. Such layering, even if by the same author, could be reflected in the widely different contents of early witnesses (see Snyder, 1992). The only real significance to this study is that Mandate 11 may well be closer to mid-second century, which could even put it in the Montanist period (although it should be noted that Montanist Tertullian (Modesty 10) did not like it, thinking it soft on sin). It does, however, have to be early enough for Clement of Alexandria to know and approve of it (see next note).

266 He is cited (quoting Mandate 11(43).3) on the subject of prophecy, with approval, by Clement of Alexandria:

Along with the lies, the false also mixes some truth; the servants of the apostate even made predictions from ecstasy. As also says the Shepherd, the angel of repentance, to Hermas concerning the false prophet, "He speaks true words since the devil fills him with his own spirit, hoping to be able to break someone's hold on what is right"

[ἐν δὲ τοῖς θεύδοι καὶ ἀληθῆ τινα ἐλεγον οἱ θεύδοπροφήται, καὶ τῷ ὄντι ὦτοι ἐν κατάστασι προφήτευον ὡς ἀν ἀποστάτου διάκονοι. λέγει δὲ καὶ ὁ πομην, ὁ ἀγγελος τῆς μετανοίας τῷ Ἑσιμα περὶ τοῦ θεύδοπροφήτου, "τινὰ γὰρ ὁματα ἀληθῆ λαλεῖ ὁ γὰρ διάβολος αὐτὸν πληροὶ τῷ ἔστιν πνεύματι, εἶ τινα δυνήσεται ζήξαι τῶν δικαίων" (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer) (Misc. 1.17.85).
There you have both kinds of prophets’ lives. So, judge each person who claims to have the Spirit by means of their life and works (Hermas, Mand. 11(43).7 & 16).

Like the Didachist, Hermas was also concerned about the presence of bogus prophets in the Churches, but his criteria were generally different. The false prophet may indeed be in it for the money (11.10f), but if so, he openly charges for his services rather than using the subterfuge of asking for donations ‘in the Spirit.’

He

...revels in all sorts of pleasure, is a regular cheater, and insists on receiving reimbursement for his prophecies. If he does not get paid, he does not prophesy (Mand. 11(43).12).

The real acid test of the false prophet is his willingness to respond to inquiries.

And the spirit which responds to questions [does so] according to human desires. It is earthly and frivolous; having no power, it speaks only if you speak to it (Mand. 11(43).6).

Hermas’ objection probably arises from a desire to distance Christian intermediation from the pagan oracular world where inquiry was common. From our point of view it is more important that this type of activity was present. As in
1 Cor., prophecy in Hermas is primarily congregational and centered around the community gatherings. Mandate 11 begins with a somewhat difficult passage that has elicited some discussion.

He showed me people sitting on benches and another person sitting in a chair, and said to me, “Do you see those on the benches?” “I see them, Lord” I said. “They,” he said, “are the faithful. But the one sitting on the chair is a false prophet, who destroys the minds of those seeking to serve God. The double-minded are destroyed, not the faithful.”

The picture that this elicits on first reading is of a congregational gathering with the prophet sitting at the head of the assembly in the seat of honor. If this is the intention, then it links up nicely with the role of the local prophet in the Didache. He appears to be the leading figure in the church and presumably carries a great deal of authority.

I suspect, however, that rather than giving us a picture of an early Christian gathering, the author intends to contrast the faithful with false prophet. This should be clear from vs. 2 where we are informed that the “earthly spirit” “does

269 Εδειξέ μοι ἐπὶ συμφελλίου καθημένου ἰνθρώπους καὶ ἔτετεν ἰνθρώπων καθημένον ἐπὶ καθέδραν, καὶ λέγει μοι: Βλέπεις τοὺς ἐπὶ τοῦ συμφελλίου καθημένου; Ἐβλέπα, φημί, κύριε. Οὕτω, φησί, πιστοὶ εἰσί, καὶ ὁ καθημένος ἐπὶ τὴν καθέδραν ψευδοπροφητῆς ἐστίν, δὲ ἀπόλλυτι τὴν διάνοιαν τῶν δούλων τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν διψάχων δὲ ἀπόλλυσιν, οὐ τῶν πιστῶν (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).

270 Attempts to connect the false prophet’s καθέδραν with a bishop’s chair are not terribly convincing, resulting from a common anachronistic imposition of more recent liturgical experience on the ancient data.
not come into the assembly of the just, but rather avoids it (13).” The prophet’s ‘chair’ is distinguished from the benches as a metaphor for his avoidance of the assembly, or at least his ‘arm’s-length’ distance from it.

Hermas provides us, then, with two different models for the social setting of Christian prophecy in the early second century. According to one model, the prophets were primarily congregational, and the social location is always the assembly. This is the model of which Hermas approves. The other is the ‘prophet at large.’ This intermediary may function in an assembly, in spite of Hermas’ assertion, but his primary social location is private — one on one. The itinerant prophet that we encountered in Acts and the Didache is also to a great extent a ‘prophet at large,’ but as portrayed in those books, most of his activity is in the assembly.

---

271 εἷς ὅλως εἰς συναγωγὴν ἀνδρῶν δικαίων οὐκ ἔγγίζει, ἀλλ' ἀποφεύγει αὐτοὺς (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer):
272 The privately employed intermediary is apparently absent from the rest of our literature (although some — such as Philumene, who does respond to queries — could be, we are just not told how they operate). This type is, nevertheless, and certainly was in the second century, fairly common. They are often marginalized in society, or members of marginal groups. It should be remembered that Christians were such a group, but Hermas’ complaint is probably too slim a basis to suggest that this was a common Christian profession. It may suggest, however, that as congregational prophecy began to decline towards the end of the second century (at least), other options for intermediaries may have existed.
273 It could be argued that while Agabus is at church in Acts 11, he may be more like Hermas’
It may be that the same people performed both functions, as was the case with Pentecostal prophets in the early days of the movement. It is, in fact, interesting that Pentecostals expressed concern over some of the same problems as increasing numbers sought out intermediaries in order to “inquire of the Lord.”

This new way of “inquiring of the Lord” promotes secret meetings, cliques and conspiracies and tends to division and strife.... No one’s Christian character is safe from attack when parties of two, three, or half a dozen are off together getting messages (so-called) about everything and everybody... you may be sure... there will be no secret assassination of character when the holy spirit does the work.\textsuperscript{274}

Hermas’ emphasis on the social aspects of false prophecy should not, however, blind us to the fact that, just like the Didachist, he uses the intermediary’s way of life as the first means of testing (43.8). This is consistent with the method advocated by Jesus in Matt. 7.15-17.

With Kydd (1984) we can conclude that there was no shortage of prophets in this period. That congregational prophets are still active is a useful piece of
information, but really no less so than that there was a class of (presumably Christian) self-employed intermediaries for whom we have no other evidence.

Angels, the Spirit and prophecy

A side note on Hermas is his viewpoint on the source of divine utterance. Whereas in Acts, it is usually the Holy Spirit that is behind any kind of intermediation, here it is somewhat more complicated.

Whenever the person having the divine spirit comes into an assembly of just men who have divine faith of the Spirit, and that assembly of men pray to God, then the person is filled up by the appointed angel of prophetic Spirit, and being filled with the spirit of the Holy Spirit speaks to the group, as the Lord wills (Mand. 11(43).9).

Apparently, the prophet has the divine spirit and at the moment of prophecy the angel of prophecy fills him with the Holy Spirit. This is, as it turns out, not hugely different from the view taken by Plutarch and Iamblichus regarding pagan intermediation (Reiling, 1973). Hermas’ view, though, is also not entirely unlike what we see in Revelation.

---

275 It must be admitted that Hermas’ idealization of congregational intermediaries does not establish that they exist. He does describe them in action, but, admittedly, this is the content of a vision.

276 ὡςον οὖν ἐλθῇ ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἔχων τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ θεῖον εἰς συναγωγὴν ἄνδρῶν δικαιῶν τῶν ἑαυτῶν πιστῶν θείου πνεύματος καὶ ἐνευκρείας γένηται πρὸς τὸ θεόν τῆς συναγωγῆς τῶν ἄνδρῶν ἐκείνων, τότε ὁ ἀγγέλος τοῦ προφητικοῦ πνεύματος ὁ κείμενος πρὸς αὐτὸν πλήροι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ πληρωθείς ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῷ πνεύματι τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἐγώ λαλεῖ εἰς τὸ πλῆθος, καθὼς ὁ κύριος βουλεῖται (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).
[The angel] said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true, and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants what must happen soon" (22.6).  

That there are spirits (πνεύματα) associated with prophecy has other parallels in the New Testament (1 Cor. 14.12, 32; 1 Jn. 4.1-3). Similarly, evil spirits are connected with false prophecy (1 Jn. 4.1-3, perhaps 1 Cor. 12.10; possibly Jub. 15.31; 1 Tim. 4.1). Angels are often called 'spirits'—Heb. 1.7-14 (Ps. 104.4; Job 2.2); Enoch 37.4 (Ellis, 1978).

*Justin Martyr [mid 2nd century]*

Born around 100 in Samaria-Palestine and converted to Christianity in the

---

277 Καὶ εἶπέν μοι, Ὀστροὶ οἱ λόγοι πιστοὶ καὶ ἀληθινοὶ, καὶ ὁ κύριος, ὁ θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν προφητῶν, ἀπέστειλεν τὸν ἁγιόν αὐτοῦ δεῖξαι τοῖς δουλοῖς αὐτοῦ ἵνα γενέσθαι ἐν τάχει (eds. Aland, et al.).

278 The πνεύμαta in 1 Cor. could, of course, simply refer to the prophets' own inner selves.

279 In 1 Tim. 4.1, the singular Spirit is for the Holy Spirit, which is a prophetic formula.

280 Ellis (1978) also sees a connection between angels and tongues, based on 1 Cor. 13.1: (tongues of angels). I read this passage as a description of the tongues, though, not the source. It is likely that even in the first century, people would have noticed that glossolalia is not necessarily, or even usually, xenoglossia (real knowable languages). Attributing it to angels was (and is) a way of solving that problem.

Somewhat more interestingly, Ellis suggests that there could be a connection between the angel of prophecy and Paul's insistence on the veiling of women. Certainly, it is true that Paul's immediate motivation appears to center around prophecy (and [public?] prayer). It is not clear, however, how this connection might work, or how it might be related to other approaches to elucidating this difficult passage (e.g. the Watchers, loose hair among pagan mantic prophets, Corybantes, mantle dancers, or [sacred] prostitution?). It would be particularly interesting if there were a tie to Corybantes or mantle dancers, since it would introduce the possibility of sacred dance in connection with prophecy into early church liturgy. The evidence, however, is a long way from that.
neighborhood of 130, he was active in Asia Minor and Rome, where he was
martyred in 165. In his *Dialog with Trypho*, he makes several references to ongoing
prophetic activity in the Christian community.

They receive gifts as they merit them, being illuminated through the name
of this Christ. One may receive a spirit of understanding, another of
counsel, another of strength, another of healing, another of foreknowledge,
another of teaching, and another of divine awe (Justin, *Trypho* 39). 281

The prophetic gifts remain with us even now, from which you should glean
this, that the things that were formerly with your people have been
transferred to us (Justin, *Trypho* 82). 282

[After quoting Joel 2.28f] And among us one can see both women and men
possessing gifts from God’s Spirit (Justin, *Trypho* 88.1). 283

The list in 39 is reminiscent of Paul’s list in 1 Cor. 12, but it is significant that it
is not dependent in any except external form. Of the gifts listed, only healing is
directly parallel, while understanding, counsel, and foreknowledge could
correspond to Paul’s “words” of knowledge and wisdom, and, of course,
prophecy. The reference to “prophetic gifts” (προφητικὰ χαρίσματα) in 82

281 οἱ καὶ λαμβάνοντες δόματα ἐκαστὸς ὡς ἄξιοι εἰσί, φωτιζόμενοι διὰ τοῦ ὄνοματος τοῦ
Χριστοῦ τούτου ὁ μὲν γὰρ λαμβάνει συνέσεως πνεύμα, ὁ δὲ βουλής, ὁ δὲ ἱσχύς, ὁ δὲ ἰάσεως, ὁ
dὲ προγνώσεως, ὁ δὲ διδασκαλίας, ὁ δὲ φόβου θεοῦ (ed. Goodspeed).

282 Παρὰ γὰρ ἡμῖν καὶ μέχρι νῦν προφητικὰ χαρίσματα ἐστίν, ἐξ ὧν καὶ αὐτοὶ συνείναι
οφείλετε, ὅτι τὰ πάλαι ἐν τῷ γενέσθαι χάριτον ἡμῶν ὑπʼ ἐκάστου ἡμῶν μετετέθη (ed. Goodspeed).

283 Καὶ παρὰ ἡμῖν ἐστιν ἰδεῖν καὶ θηλείας καὶ ἀρσενικών, χαρίσματα ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ
θεοῦ ἔχοντας (ed. Goodspeed).
Prophecy

removes doubt as to whether he is including prophecy, and he doubtless intends to include it in the χαρίσματα mentioned in 88 as well.

The fact that there is a polemical aspect must be considered. Part of his argument is that the supernatural gifts, and prophecy in particular, which had previously belonged to the Jews have now been transferred to the Christians. This transfer is, in part, to make the Jews jealous (87f). Justin, though, is in the present tense when he speaks of these pneumatica (Kydd, 1984), and I do not think he has his fingers crossed behind his back. It is, to be sure, possible that the phenomena to which he refers are less common than he lets on. George Purves (1890) argued that he had a wider than usual perspective on mid second century (catholic) communities, since he had travelled widely. Purves concluded from this that prophecy was widespread. It is, though, just as easy to argue from Justin's travels in the other direction; it may not be common but he has run into it once or twice. Polemically it is just a useful to him even if he has only seen it in one place — at least it exists. Nor does Justin seem to be suggesting that it is necessarily commonplace or widespread.

What we can conclude is that mid century there are still proto-orthodox communities who are active in this area. Of course Asia Minor was within his area of action, which is the area where pneumatic activity seems to have the
Prophecy

deepest roots (also having a long pre-Christian history). It may also be worth noting that this is written on the eve of the emergence of Montanism from the same region. What little he does say about it has the feel of congregational prophecy, but it is not enough to arrive at any hard conclusions. It is not possible to decide anything at all about psychological states except to say, as noted above, that if we are going to find mediumship anywhere in early Christian catholicism, it will probably be in Asia Minor, from which hail the Corybantes and similar groups, and, of course, the New Prophecy.

Quadratus and Ammia [first half of the 2nd century, Asia Minor]

Quadratus and Ammia (of Philadelphia) we will encounter later (Eusebius, EH 5.17.3-4) as the claimed predecessors of the Montanists (Miltiades was anxious to deny them the connection). Eusebius also mentions Quadratus earlier in his History (3.37.1)

Quadratus was prominent among the illuminated, who, along with the daughters of Philip, had a prophetic gift.284

Associating him with the daughters of Philip would make him early indeed, but

284 Τὸν δὲ κατὰ τούτους διαλαμψάντων καὶ Κοδράτος ἦν, δὲν ἂμα ταῖς Φιλίππου θυγατράσιν προφητικό χαρισματί λόγος ἔχει διαπεύσαι (ed. Bardy).
the Montanist references to him suggest early second century.²⁸⁵ There was an apologist by the same name (EH 4.3), who was alive in about the right time period, although there is no compelling reason to think they are the same person (nor, for that matter, that they are not). Ammia was active in Philadelphia. That she is lumped together with Quadratus may suggest that he was from Asia Minor as well, although not with huge amounts of confidence. Both of these prophets were well enough respected in their time that Montanists and catholics equally wanted to claim them, but beyond that we know nothing.

Odes of Solomon [1st — 3rd centuries]

The Odes of Solomon is a collection of early Christian hymns probably of Syrian origin (Aune, 1972). Scholars range in dating them between the late first century and the early third (Charlesworth, 1992). The majority position (if that means anything) has them around mid second century, which is why I have located them here. There is scholarly discussion regarding the orthodoxy of the source community. Some scholars argue that the community was Gnostic, while most

²⁸⁵ Assuming that there is not a temporal hiccup in Acts, Philip's daughters could easily have been in their early teens in the 50s, and have therefore overlapped with a second or even third generation Quadratus without problems. Assuming, however, that there are no temporal hiccups in Acts is a big assumption. They could even be granddaughters whose fame prompts Luke to anachronistically put them back into Paul's day.
hold that they were essentially catholic with some interesting quirks. Since I have not limited myself to catholic intermediaries, this argument is not hugely consequential to this study.

A significant number of these odes contain passages in which Christ speaks in the first person. The following example comes from *Ode* 28.13-14, 17:

They encircled me like mad dogs
who do not know their masters.
Their spirit is corrupted
and their sense is distorted.

... 
They wanted to kill me, but could not find me.
Since I was older than their memory,
they cast lots over me in vain.

---

286 One of those quirks is that the Father has breasts (*Ode* 19, see also 14), from which the Spirit drinks, but is still masculine. The Holy Spirit, however, is clearly feminine. She takes the milk from the Father's breasts into her bosom and uses it to impregnate the Virgin. Descriptions of the birth of the Son are reminiscent of the *Infancy Gospel of James*. Docetism (as in *G. James*) may also lay behind the odd passion in *Ode* 28, and may in turn eventually surface in the Muslim concept that the Jews mistakenly thought they had crucified Jesus (*Qur'an* 4.157).

287 Charlesworth marks a number of passages, including this one with "(Christ Speaks)." If anything, he errs in identifying too few. I would argue that there are many more passages than he identifies in which Christ speaks in the first person, including *Ode* 28 in its entirety. In addition, not everything that should be considered prophetic needs to be written in the first person of the divinity. However, without some identifying formula like "The Spirit says" attempts to identify such utterances tend to become uncontrolled.

288
Passages such as this one probably had congregational worship as their context of normal use. It is also possible that this was the context of their origin. There is an observable correlation between music, particularly corporate music, and enthusiasm in groups where such activity is encouraged. In modern Pentecostal and Charismatic groups it usually accompanies or immediately follows a period of group singing. It is possible, then that hymns, perhaps like those of the *Odes of Solomon*, were often composed 'in the Spirit' during such gatherings. Those that were particularly noteworthy may have been remembered, likely refined and

(ed. Lattke)

289 This becomes even more likely when we compare others of the *Odes* like the following from 23.1-3:

Joy belongs to the holy ones;
and who shall wear it except they alone.

Grace belongs to the chosen ones;
and who will receive it except those who trust in it from the beginning?

Love belongs to the chosen ones;
And who will wear it except those who had it from the beginning?

(ed. Lattke).
written down afterwards.290 Other songs of this variety may survive as semipoetic passages in New Testament literature.291

There may be a connection made between the composition of sacred songs and prophecy in 7.17-18:

To announce the coming of the Lord to those having Psalms,
that they would go out to meet with joyful singing
and with the many-toned playing of Kithara
The seers will go before him,
and will be seen by him.292

290 Of course, not all hymns had their origin in the worship service, not even all those that the community regarded as prophetic. But I would argue strongly against the assumption, sometimes found in studies of the Hebrew prophets, that poetic form is ipso facto evidence of non-ecstatic origin. This is the position of, most notably, Hermann Gunkel, T. H. Robinson and H.H. Rowley. See the review of this topic in Wilson 1980, 5ff.

By the first centuries (BCE and CE), whatever the original psychological facts of the matter, the Psalms were regarded as prophetic by most segments of the Jewish community, including Qumran. Given the Qumran community’s general receptiveness to the possibility of at least didactic intermediation from its leaders, it is possible that some of the Hodayot were produced in this fashion. Unfortunately, we know very little of their patterns of community worship, so it is not possible to know whether some of them might have been composed in that context.

291 These passages have been the subject of much scholarly discussion in this century. Numerous scholars (e.g. Meeks, 1983, Brown, 1966) have seen them as quotations of hymns — the prologue to John and Philp. 2.6-11 are probably the best examples from this perspective. Others (e.g. Käsemann, 1969, Aune, 1983) find evidence of the inclusion of early Christian prophecies, perhaps to bolster an argument — 1 Cor. 15.51f and Rom 11.25f are prime examples. If psalmody can be a form of prophecy and prophecy can be in poetic form (as it is in the Hebrew Bible and in Greek prophecy) then it is less likely that they can be distinguished from each other.

292 (ed. Lattke).
Finally, reminiscent of Ignatius Rom. 7.2b, discussed above (p. 126), there is a recurring theme of speaking water:

The speaking water approached my lips whose source is the generous Lord.
I drank and became drunk from the living water, which does not die.293

Kydd (1984) sees a connection between ‘speaking waters’ and the Castalia fountain, which “was an essential part of the oracle of Apollo at Daphne in Syria.” Castalia gave off a ‘breath,’ which ostensibly stimulated prophetic speech. Perhaps, he suggests, this blended with the symbolic value of water representing the Holy Spirit in John. It is also a possibility, although I would be inclined to shy away from it, that the writer of the Odes used a similar entheogen.

From about 150 to 200 CE
The Proto-unorthodox

Peregrinus [died? 165]

In his On the death of Peregrinus, Lucian of Samosata294 describes a, possibly

293 Kydd (1984) sees a connection between ‘speaking waters’ and the Castalia fountain, which “was an essential part of the oracle of Apollo at Daphne in Syria.” Castalia gave off a ‘breath,’ which ostensibly stimulated prophetic speech. Perhaps, he suggests, this blended with the symbolic value of water representing the Holy Spirit in John. It is also a possibility, although I would be inclined to shy away from it, that the writer of the Odes used a similar entheogen.

294 Lucian, one of a handful of non-Christian sources for this period in the early Church, was a
fictional, Christian who is unknown from other sources, at least by that name. He is interesting to us, even if he never existed, simply because parodies often reflect reality. There is, however, the possibility that he is a parody of a real person.

Peregrinus, according to Lucian, had a long and varied career. Hailing from northern Asia Minor, he gets in trouble early in life when he is caught in the act of adultery. Later he strangles his own father and flees his home town. He subsequently converts to Christianity in Palestine, and becomes a Christian leader of some significance. He is imprisoned as a Christian and, after a while, released. Returning to his hometown, dressed as a traveling cynic, he gives all of his remaining property to the community, which exonerates him in their eyes. He continues to serve as an itinerant Christian leader until he has a falling out with them, according to Lucian, when he is caught eating forbidden food.²⁹⁵ Forsaking the Christian life, he becomes a committed cynic, attempts (unsuccessfully) to

²⁹⁵ Lucian admits he is not sure about the cause, and food is an educated guess. Harmon (Lucian, 1936) thinks this might be food offered to idols.
Prophecy

reacquire his donated property, studies asceticism in Egypt, and at some point begins to call himself Proteus. Ultimately, he immolates himself in view of all at the conclusion of the Olympic Games in 165, CE.

The reason he comes into this study is that Lucian tells us that during his Christian period, he was considered a prophet.

At this point, he found out about the wonderful wisdom of the Christians from associating with their priests and scribes in Palestine. And, what do you know, shortly he made them look like children — *he was prophet, cult-leader,* and head of synagogue all rolled into one. He elucidated and explained some of their books, and even composed quite a few (11; italics mine).

Lucian, for all his animosity toward them, cannot be faulted with an ignorance of supernaturalist claims. Nevertheless, there remains a question of whether, by using the term ‘prophet,’ he intends us to understand that Peregrinus was an intermediary in the Christian community, or simply that he was a well respected leader. That he intends the latter is obvious; that he includes the former is not. It is also possible, in light of his parsimonious worldview, that he wants us to read

---

296 θιασάρχης is usually used of leaders or groups like the Bacchae. Christians did not use the term of themselves. Presumably, if this has some basis in reality he means something like “elder,” “deacon,” “overseer,” or even “apostle.”

297 “Ότε νεοι καὶ τὴν θαυμασίαν σοφίαν τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἔξεμαθεν, περὶ τὴν Παλαιστίνην τοῖς ἱερεύσιν καὶ γραμματεύσιν αὐτῶν ξυγγενόμενος, καὶ τί γάρ; ἐν βραχεί παῖδας αὐτοῦς ἀπέφηνε, προφήτης καὶ θιασάρχης καὶ ἐναγωγεὺς καὶ πάντα μόνος αὐτὸς ὁν, καὶ τῶν βιβλίων τὰς μὲν ἔξηγεν καὶ διεσάφει, πολλὰς δὲ αὐτὸς καὶ συνέγραφεν (ed. Harmon).
'prophecy' as a synonym for 'charlatan.' If this is the case, he probably does mean something like 'intermediary,' although we are obligated to view him as a hostile historical witness.\(^{298}\)

Not all scholars have taken Lucian seriously at all. Baur, Bauer, and Zahn all found reason to believe that the entire story was a fiction (Detering, 2004). Daniel Völter argued that Peregrinus was, in fact, Ignatius of Antioch (1887). Ignatius is, of course, on my list of prophets, so this identification would, on the one hand, not expand my list, but on the other, it might add some support.\(^{299}\) Perhaps more exciting is Hermann Detering's proposal that the whole work is a biography of Marcion. Both of these proposals are supported by the probability that Peregrinus is not his real name. The name (meaning 'wanderer/stranger') could easily become an epithet for either an itinerant Christian preacher or a wandering cynic. It is instructive that in Marcionite circles it functions as a descriptive name for the True God, and for some, for Marcion himself (Harnack, 1908).\(^{300}\) The fact that he

\(^{298}\) I will have to do the same when "querying" catholic writers about any "heretical" prophet.
\(^{299}\) The date of Peregrinus' death in 165 is better than half a century off from Ignatius' during the reign of Trajan (98-117, CE), although this may be fiction, after all (but see n. 302). We should also recall Harnack's (1878) doubts regarding the dating of Ignatius' martyrdom (above, p. 124, n. 256).
\(^{300}\) Marcion's approximate date of death (c. 160 – Frend, 1984) does not present the same problem as Völter's proposal.
changes his name to Proteus, following his post-Christian reimaging,

encourages us to believe that for Peregrinus, name follows function.

Although we cannot identify either social context or psychological type, it is interesting that Peregrinus’ break with the church, as Lucian portrays it, recalls the prophet-problems discussed in the Didache. Like the Didache prophets, he is itinerant, and like them he gets in trouble over issues related to food. Whoever (or

---

N omine Peregrinum, cui postea cognomentum Proteus factum est, virum gravem atque constantem vidimus, cum Athenis essemus, deversantem in quodam tugurio extra urbem, cumque ad eum frequenter veniremus, multa hercle dicere eum utiliter et honeste audiremus, in quibus id fuit, quod praecipuum auditum meminimus. Virum quidem sapientem non peccatum esse dicebat, etiamsi peccasse eum dixi atque homines ignoraturi forent. Non enim poenae aut infamiae metu non esse peccandum censebat, sed iusti honestique studio et officio. Si qui tamen non essent tali vel ingenio vel disciplina praediti, uti se vi sua ac sua sponte facile a peccando tenerent, eos omnis tune peccare proclivius existimabat, cum latere posse id peccatum putarent, impunitatemque ex ea latebra sperarent. »At si sciant«, inquit »homines, nihil omnium rerum diutius posse celari, repressius pudentiusque peccabitur.« Propterea versus istos Sophocli, prudentissimi poetarum, in ore esse habendos dicebat» (11.1-6; ed. Migne).

Peregrinus is functioning as a cynic, not a Christian preacher. Detering acknowledges this but argues that the philosophy is not that distant from the Marcion we know (contrast the Marcionism of his followers). Following this line of thought, Peregrinus and Proteus are not Lucianisms but pseudonyms that the real Marcion took on, and Lucian’s parody slides very much closer to reality.

Lucian’s Marcion would also be in conflict with Tertullian’s (Pres. Ag. Her. 30), who has Marcion repenting and returning to catholic orthodoxy, but dying before reincorporating his followers into mother Church. Tertullian’s version does have the ring of folklore about it, but it hardly seems likely that the church fathers would let slide the opportunity to revel in the public suicide of catholic enemy number one. Of course, if no one knew Peregrinus’ secret identity....
if ever) Peregrinus was, it seems likely that he could have been an excellent case-point for the Didachist. 303

**Philumene [2nd century, Alexandria]**

Marcion’s most famous student, Apelles, probably an ascetic, went to Alexandria after leaving Marcion in Rome. 304 There he met the virgin Philumene, 305 whose revelations he viewed as inspired. His book Manifestations consists of her collected oracles.

Tertullian tells us that that Philumene received her messages from an angel (Body of Christ 6.24). She may have made this claim, now lost, or he may be making the sort of jump Hermas makes (see above, pp. 134), assuming an ‘angel of prophecy.’ 306 Other authors only tell us that she has revelations. If she claimed to receive messages from an angel, it does not tell us how they arrived. They may

---

303 Not that Peregrinus stands alone as a candidate for the Didachist’s contempt. So, indeed would the unnamed false prophet of Hermas or Montanus and his co-laborers (at least on the issue of money).

304 Marcion’s Roman activities are generally dated around 142-143.

305 According to Tertullian (Body of Christ 6), he met Philumene only after an affair with an unidentified woman. He launches a similar ad hominem attack against Philumene herself (Prescription against heretics 30), in which he accuses her of having become a prostitute. McGiffert (1890) thinks, reasonably, that both of these are baseless slander, particularly as they are not mentioned by parallel sources (Rhodo and Hippolytus). Virginity is definitely a plus card in this period, which is why Tertullian wants to take it away and, assuming he is not being original, why these defaming stories may have begun to circulate in the first place.

306 Tertullian may pick on an angel simply because it fits nicely with the quote from Gal. 1.8 which he is using as a refutation text.
have been parasensory, or she may have been a medium of one variety or another. I incline toward the latter, but with minimal confirming evidence.\textsuperscript{307} Her experiences are probably not congregational.

Apelles’ worldview is a little more complicated than what we know of his teacher’s (Marcion). If Hippolytus (7.26, 10.16) is to be believed he had no fewer than three subdivinities in addition to one overarching God. The one responsible for \textit{Hebrew Bible} prophecy is a lying spirit. Jesus was the son of God, and had flesh, but was not actually born; he harvests his material self from the universe around him at birth.

How much of Apelles’ doctrinal system derives from Philumene is hard to know. There are obvious connections both to Marcion and to other Gnostic systems, already becoming ubiquitous in Egypt (Bauer, 1934/1971). The heresiarchs, however, are unanimous in saying that he leans heavily upon her revelations.

---

\textsuperscript{307} Rhodo, quoted by Eusebius (\textit{EH} 5.13.2) says of Apelles’ point of view, “the prophesies [of the Jewish Scriptures] are from an opposing spirit, he says, arriving at this conclusion from the sayings of a virgin with a demon, named Philumene” [\textit{Ἀπελλῆς μὲν... τὰς δὲ προφητείας ἐκ ἀντικειμένου λέγει πνεύματος, πειθόμενος ἀποφθέγμασι παρθένου δαμωνώσης, ὄνομα Φιλουμένης} (ed. Bardy)]. The two clues are “responses,” suggesting that she is in a trance, and “possessed.” Rhodo will be lead by content to the conclusion that a demon is behind her responses. In any case, Rhodo is not a trained ethnographer, and also probably not an eye-witness.
Valentinus [mid 2\textsuperscript{nd} century, Rome (and Cyprus)]

Valentinus was the most prominent of the Gnostics, and his system is usually the basis against which other Gnostic systems are measured. According to Hippolytus (Ref. 6.37|6.42.2)

Valentinus claimed that he saw a newborn, and, curious about whom it was, he asked and it answered that it was the Logos. Then it recounted a sort of tragic myth from which, since it has come into his possession, he (Valentinus) wishes to build up his heresy.\textsuperscript{308}

Bauer (1934/1971) assumes, not unreasonably, that the Valentinian system "derives from this vision" (167). The vision is either parasensory or ecstatic (more likely the latter), and we are told nothing about its context.

Perhaps more importantly to Valentinians religious life was what appears to be an active system of intermediation in their community. One of them (Theodotus) was singled out for attack by Clement of Alexandria (Excerpts from Theodotus) and at one point Clement tells us:

According to the Valentinians, each one of the prophets had the heavenly Spirit for ministry; those of the Church each have this and as a result the signs of the Spirit, healings and prophecy, are accomplished through the

\textsuperscript{308} καὶ γάρ Οὐαλεντίνος φήσκει ἑαυτὸν ἐγενέσθαι παῖδα νήπιον ἀρτιγέννητον· οὐ τυπάμενος ἐπείδη τις ἂν εἰπή, ὡς ἀπεκρίνατο λέγων ἑαυτὸν εἶναι τὸν Λόγον· ἔπειτα προσθείς τραγικόν τινα μέθον, ἐκ τούτου συνιστάν βουλεῖται τὴν ἐπικεχειρημένην αὐτῶ αἴρεσιν (ed. Marcovich).
This seems to be saying that the Valentinians exercised pneumatic gifts, just as Justin says the catholics did. The context (receiving it from the prophets — if those of Jewish Scripture fame are intended) is, in fact quite reminiscent of Justin’s claim. If the older prophets are not those of the “Old Testament,” then the connection to Justin is lost, but not the sense that Valentinian prophecy is in a continuity with a recognized tradition (Jewish or Christian). This insight into the Roman Gnostic prophecy sets the stage for a whole group of underreported (and/or villainized) Gnostic intermediaries.

Of course, we can know nothing about social setting or psychological type.

**Marcus [mid 2nd century, Asia Minor]**

Marcus, a former Valentinian, was an older contemporary of Irenaeus. A purveyor of his own version of the Gnostic system, which he claims to have received in an ecstatic or parasensory vision, he is by far one of the most interesting characters we will be looking at. Irenaeus describes Marcus’ initial revelatory experience, which might be compared to a prophetic call and in any

---

309 Λέγουσιν οἱ Ὑπαληθευταινοὶ ὅτι ὃ κατὰ εἰς τῶν Προφητῶν ἔχειν Πνεῦμα ἔξαψετον εἰς διακονίαν, τούτο ἐπὶ πάντας τοὺς τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἔχευσθη διὸ καὶ τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ Πνεύματος, ἰάσεις καὶ προφητείας, διὰ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας ἐπιτελοῦνται (ed. Sagnard).
case recalls Valentinus' opening vision:

The highest Tetrad from the invisible and nameless places appeared to him in female form, since, so she said, the world was not able to bear her male form. She revealed to him who she was and the origins of everything, which had not yet been revealed to gods or humans; to him alone came this narrative (Ag. Heresies. 1.14.1).

There follows a summary of a Gnostic cosmogony and a theology of letters.

Irenaeus tells us that Marcus could prophesy, although, of course, he attributes that ability to a demon (1.13.3f). We are not told enough to be completely confident of the nature of his prophetic gift, but it is likely that his experience is similar to that which he teaches his disciples. Irenaeus had apparently interviewed some ex-disciples and, based on that, constructs the following initiatory conversation:

Marcus:

Let Xάρις fill up your inner self, sowing the mustard seed on good ground, and be filled with her knowledge...I am anxious to have you share my Xάρις, since the all-Father continually sees your angel in his presence.... Adorn yourself as a bride awaiting her bridegroom, so that


311 Charis, in this context, draw from the natural meaning of the word (gift), and its Christian implications (grace and supernatural empowerment). But it also refers to a feminine sub-divinity in Marcus' system that goes by that name.
you may be as I am, and I as you are. Enthrone the seed of light in your bridal chamber. Receive a spouse from me, and make room for him, and be contained in him. See, Χάρις has come upon you; open your mouth and prophesy.

The woman:
I have never prophesied, and I do not know how to prophesy.

Marcus: (making, once again, some invocations, in an effort to bewilder his dupe)
Open your mouth, say whatever comes to you, and you will be prophesying.

She312 is falsely confident and captivated by his encouragement, and tipsy with the expectation that it is she who will prophesy; her heartbeat rises, and she boldly speaks all manner of foolish and random things, [both] empty and daring, consistent with the empty spirit who intoxicates313 her.... Now she considers herself a prophetess, and demonstrates her gratitude to Marcus for having shared with her from his own gift... [She shares more than her money] (Ag. Heresies 1.13.2-3|1.7.2).314

312 Irenaeus claims that most of Marcus' disciples are women, generally of high social standing.
313 The same root I translated 'tipsy' earlier. Literally, 'warmed,' but regularly used for the affects of alcohol (διαθεμαμενη, тεθεμαμενη).
314 Χάρις πληρώσα τον ἐξω δυνησθαι, και πληρώναι εν σοι την γνώσιν αὐτής, ἐγκαταστείφοντα τὸν κόσκον τοῦ σινάττου εἰς τὴν ἀγαθήν γην...Μεταδόοναι σοι θέλω τῆς ἐμῆς χάριτος, ἐπειδὴ ὁ Πατήρ τῶν ὅλων τὸν ἀγγελόν σου διασταντός βλέπει πρὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ· ὁ δὲ τόπος τοῦ μεγέθους εν ἑμίν ἐστι δὲ ἡμᾶς ἐγκαταστήσαι [I. δε ἡμᾶς ἐν καταστήσαι.] Λάβασαι πρῶτον ἀπ' ἐμοῦ, καὶ δε' ἐμοῦ τὴν χάριν. Εὐφρεύοντο σεαυτὴν, ὡς νυμφὴ ἐκδεχομένη τὸν νυμφίον ἑαυτῆς, ἵνα ἐσῃ ὁ ἐγώ, καὶ ἐγώ ὁ σύ. Καθεύδουσαι εν τῷ νυμφώνι σου τὸ σπέρμα τοῦ φωτός. Λάβε παρ' ἐμοῦ τὸν νυμφίον, καὶ χώρησον αὐτόν, καὶ χωρήσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ. Ἰδοὺ ἡ χώρας κατῆλθεν ἐπί σε· ἀνοίξον τὸ στόμα σου, καὶ προφήτευσον. Τῆς δὲ γυναικὸς ἀποκρινομένης, οὐ προφητεύσαι πάσητε, καὶ οὐκ οἶδα προφητεύειν· ἐπικλήσεις τινὰς ποιούμενος ἐκ δευτέρου εἰς κατάπληξιν τῆς ἀπατημένης, φησιν αὐτῇ· Ἀνοίξον τὸ στόμα σου, λάλησον δι' ὅτι δήποτε, καὶ προφήτευσες.

Ἡ δὲ χαυνωθείσα, καὶ κεφηθείσα ὑπὸ τῶν προσειριμένων, διαθεμαμένη τὴν ψυχήν ὑπὸ τῆς προσδοκίας τοῦ μέλλειν αὐτὴν προφητεύειν, τῆς καρδίας πλέον προσδοκίας τοῦ μέλλειν αὐτήν προφητεύειν, τῆς καρδίας πλέον τοῦ δέοντος παλλούσῃς, ἀποτολμά λαλεῖν [I. καὶ λαλεῖ] λῃστή καὶ τα τυχόντα πάντα κενώς καὶ τολμηρός, ἀτε ὑπὸ κενοῦ τεθεμαμενὴ πνευμάτος· (καθὼς ὁ κρείσσων ἡμῶν ἐφ' ἐφ' τῶν τοιούτων, ὅτι τολμηρὸν καὶ
After this, according to Irenaeus, Marcus has free access both to her checkbook and her body.

Reading through Irenaeus’ contempt it is possible to see the following pattern. Marcus emphasizes, first, that it is a gift, which he has, but which is available to her. Second, there is some sort of ritual which is not entirely clear in this passage. Does he actually ask her to dress like a bride? In any case the ritual partly functions to put her into a state of religious expectation. He then tells her to open her mouth and say whatever comes to her. She does so, growing out of her stimulated emotional state.

This approach in Marcus’ group is reinforced, when, in the next section,

\[\text{Prophecy} \quad 154\]

\[\text{After this, according to Irenaeus, Marcus has free access both to her checkbook and her body.}\]

\[\text{Reading through Irenaeus’ contempt it is possible to see the following pattern. Marcus emphasizes, first, that it is a gift, which he has, but which is available to her. Second, there is some sort of ritual which is not entirely clear in this passage. Does he actually ask her to dress like a bride? In any case the ritual partly functions to put her into a state of religious expectation. He then tells her to open her mouth and say whatever comes to her. She does so, growing out of her stimulated emotional state.}\]

\[\text{This approach in Marcus’ group is reinforced, when, in the next section,}\]

\[\text{\begin{verbatim}
\textit{\text{άναδες ψυχή κενώ ἀέρι θερμαίνομενή, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦτον λοιπὸν προφήταδα ἔαυτὴν μεταλαμβάνει, καὶ εὐχαριστεῖ Μάρκω τῷ ἐπιδίδοντι τῆς ἱδίας χάριν αὐτῆς καὶ ἀμείβεσθαι αὐτὸν πειράται, οὗ μόνον κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὑπαρχόντων δόσιν, (ὁδὲν καὶ χρημάτων πληθος πολὺ συνενήσιχεν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ σώματος κοινωνίαν, κατὰ πάντα ἐνοοῦσθαι αὐτῷ προσθυμομενη, ἵνα σὺν αὐτῷ κατέλθῃ εἰς τὸ ἑν. (ed. Harvey).\end{verbatim}}\]

\[\text{315 This is sometimes a feature of induction ceremonies when modern women decide to take vows and enter a convent. In these cases, they are symbolically marrying the Lord. Is that what is going on with Marcus? There is simply not enough information to arrive at a conclusion.}\]

\[\text{316 Ehrman (1993) interprets this as tongues rather than prophecy. She is, after all, just uttering the first thing that comes to her mind, and Irenaeus says it is nonsense. This is, as it turns out, exactly how Joseph Smith tried to teach his followers to speak in tongues (May, 1956/1986). There is a connection between tongues and prophecy, and Irenaeus does, in Ag. Heresies 3.12.15 give “prophecy” when quoting Acts 10.46 where the source text reads “tongues.” Such methods have sometimes been used in Pentecostal groups as well, usually with limited success. But it does not necessarily follow that the first thing that comes into the potential prophet’s mind is gibberish. Irenaeus does not appear to have glossolalia in mind when he tells us that Marcus can prophecy, and I suspect that he does not when he has Marcus training others to prophesy.}\]
Irenaeus tells us:

They are accustomed at their dinners to entertain themselves by casting lots, and ordering each other accordingly to prophesy, and they each divine\textsuperscript{317} according to their own desires. So the one who orders is even more authoritative than the prophetic spirit, while yet a human, which is impossible (Ag. Heresies 1.13.4|1.7.3).\textsuperscript{318}

Irenaeus (and later, Hippolytus) see Marcus' training method as entirely spurious. Of course, “open your mouth, say whatever comes to you” does sound suspect, but it is not completely out of the playing field. If the worshiper is in a state of spiritual exultation, e.g. enthusiasm, such speech may well be regarded as “in the Spirit.” This may not be exactly what a modern Pentecostal would say, but it is not necessarily fakery either. Irenaeus’ argument is largely \textit{ad hominem}, and given Irenaeus’ mindset on such things, it is not a bad argument. From our point of view, however, distancing ourselves from both doctrine and from Latin mores, this can be read as an entirely reasonable account of training to prophesy (in the epipneumatic manner).\textsuperscript{319}

\textsuperscript{317} ‘Divine’ used here in the traditional sense of ‘to prophesy from an inappropriate source,’ which is Irenaeus’ intention, rather than as a verbal form of ‘divination’ as defined above (p. 44).

\textsuperscript{318} ὡς εἴδωθαίν ἐπὶ τοῖς δείπνοις τοῦ κλήρου οὕτοι πάντοτε παιζεῖν, καὶ ἄλλοις ἐγκελεύεσθαι τὸ προφητεύειν, καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἵδις ἐπιθυμίας ἑαυτοῖς μαντεύεσθαι, ἔσται ὁ κελεύων μείζων τε καὶ κυριώτερος τοῦ προφητικοῦ πνεύματος, ἀνθρώπος ἄν, ὅπερ ἀδύνατον (ed. Harvey).

\textsuperscript{319} Of course, entirely inappropriate both from the point of view of Irenaeus’ Proto-Orthodoxy,
The issue of control is important. Does Irenaeus imagine that *true* prophets are seized and without control, as in incorporation, or is he simply saying that the "prophetic spirit" has the right of initiation? In Corinth, Paul tells us that "the spirits of the prophets submit(s) to the prophets" (see above p. 108), suggesting control, but he is addressing the individual authority to shut it down, not necessarily initiate it.\(^{320}\) Obviously Marcus sees it going both ways.

I have seen similar situations in Charismatic groups where members are trained in the art of prophecy. There is prayer, and perhaps a short worship time, all designed to build up the emotional connection to God, and then participants are asked to step out and let God speak through them: whatever comes to mind, whatever image seems to present itself, etc. In the next step, they will be trained to exercise some sort of judgment, but the goal is always to be as open a conduit as possible so that God’s message will emerge unmodified.\(^{321}\)

Marcus is also accused of practicing sorcery. In a Communion celebration he

---

\(^{320}\) Paul’s argument in 1 Cor. 14.28ff could be read such that if a message comes to a second prophet, it is an indication that the first should back off, simply because, since God is a god of harmony (v. 33), s/he would not speak through more than one at a time.

\(^{321}\) From Marcus’ point of view, this is the “seed of light” bearing fruit (“the mustard seed on good ground”). When Charis is implanted in the prophetess she possesses divine knowledge. Prophecy, presumably, releases that knowledge. This would be a very different model from the catholic (and Greek) idea of messages originating from the outside.
Prophecy

turns the wine's color, and makes it overflow its cup. Hippolytus (6.35) takes Irenaeus' account and expands it slightly to try and demonstrate that it is merely trickery. He is probably right (by modern standards, they are easy chemistry tricks), which simply means that Marcus stands in a long honored tradition of religious performance (see above, p. 9, n. 31).

Irenaeus also tells us that Marcus is in the habit of seducing his female disciples. It is certainly true that history is packed with sexual misconduct under the guise of religion. There is no compelling reason to exonerate Marcus in this regard. But, what Irenaeus sees as proof of ill-intent, may well be an integral part of the training process. Stripped of the heresiarch's vituperations, his relations with his female disciples may look a lot like hieros gamos, and may have been carefully designed to induce ecstasy. This may explain the wedding garment in the preparatory ritual, above.

Marcus' prophets are obviously congregational and epipneumatic, although his original vision probably was neither.

Mixed Gnostics [2nd century, various places]

There is a handful of the Proto-Unorthodox about whom we know next to nothing, except that they claimed, or others claimed about them, that they had revelations and/or prophecies. Epiphanius (Medicine Box 40.7.6) mentions a pair,
Prophecy

Martiades and Martianos, honored by the Archontici. They were said to have been taken up to heaven and learned its mysteries for three days. It is well within the realm of possibility that this Martianos is the same as the Marsanes whose name titles one of the texts found at Nag Hammadi, and who in any case should be included in our list. The Bruce Codex also mentions him, along with another, Nikotheos, as “perfect men” (Pearson in Robinson, 1978).

Basilides claimed to have received revelations from the prophets Barkabbas and Barkoph (Agrippa in Eusebius, EH 4.7.7). His son Isidorus also claimed to interpret the prophecies of Parchor and Cham (Clement of Alexandria, Misc. 6.6.53.2). Parchor could be Barkoph (Harnack & McGiffert, 1910), and by the same stretch, Cham could be Barkabbas; Barkabbas could be Bar-abba (Barabass); and speculations could continue for some time.

In the same time period the Carpocratians “boasted... of certain demons who

---

322 οὗτοι δὲ καὶ ἄλλοις προφήταις φασίν εἶναι, Μαρτιάδην τινὰ καὶ Μαρσιανὸν, ἀρσαγέντας εἰς τοὺς οὐρανούς καὶ διὰ ἡμερῶν τριῶν καταβεβηκότας (ed. Holl).

323 It should be noted that if Marsanes is not Martianos, then we no longer have even this weak anchor connecting him to a time base.

324 Agrippa and Eusebius agree that Barkabbas and Barkoph are both fictional. Basilides was in Alexandria, according to Eusebius. The “others,” he says, were given “barbarous names so as to amaze those who are awed by things like that” [πολλοὶ τοὺς τὰς τοιαύτα τεθησίον ἐπιφημίσας προσηγγορίας (ed. Bardy)]. Of course giving special names to people with special revelation, or even to the exceptionally devout, is not that unusual.
gave them dreams and support” (Eusebius, EH 4.7.9, based on Irenaeus Ag. Heresies 1.25|1.20.1).\textsuperscript{325} Once again, we should probably assume that they boasted of “angels” or “spirits,” and Irenaeus heard “demons.”

**Proto-Orthodox**

**Polycarp [-155, Asia Minor]**

Polycarp’s overall ministry would take us back somewhat in our chronological journey. However, he appears here in our history simply because the only report we have of his prophetic nature comes from the end of his life. He is said to have had a prophetic vision (parasensory) by which he predicted the manner of his death. The following are extracts from the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*.

So, about three days before he was captured, he had a vision while he was praying in which he saw his pillow being consumed with fire. Then he turned and said to those who were with him, “I must be burned alive” (5.2).\textsuperscript{326}

Brought to the arena, he cannot be fed to the wild beasts, so

Then [the crowd] decided to cry out, all together, that Polycarp should be burned alive. This was necessary in order that what was revealed to him in his pillow vision may be fulfilled—when he saw it burning while he was

\textsuperscript{325} ὁνειροποιοῖς τε καὶ παρέδοσις τις δαίμοσιν (ed. Bardy).

\textsuperscript{326} καὶ προσευχόμενος ἐν ὀπτασίᾳ γέγονεν πρὸ τριῶν ἡμερῶν τοῦ συλληφθῆναι αὐτὸν, καὶ εἶδεν τὸ προσκεφάλαιον αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ πυρὸς κατακαίμομενον καὶ στραφεῖς εἶπεν πρὸς τοὺς σὺν αὐτῷ: Δέι μὲ ζώντα καθῆναι (Lightfoot).
praying, he turned to those faithful who were with him and said prophetically, “I must be burnt alive” (12.3).³²⁷

Later the author eulogizes him:

This admirable Polycarp certainly was one of [the elect], being, in our time, an apostolic and prophetic teacher, an overseer of the holy Church in Smyrna. For every word that went out from his mouth was, or will be, fulfilled (16.2).³²⁸

Several things are worth noting. The first is that while it is a vision, it is in a communal context—others are with him, presumably also praying. Even though the “message” seems to be targeted at Polycarp himself, the fact that he immediately shares it tells us that its significance is also for the congregation (presumably so that when it is fulfilled they will know that it was in God’s hands). This, then, is a congregational prophecy, at least from my point of view.

The eulogy contains a few interesting phrases. He is called an “apostolic and prophetic teacher.” Since Polycarp died around 155, he is well past the “apostolic age,” although Irenaeus (Ag. Heresies 3.3) tells us that he was a disciple of John.

³²⁷ τότε ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἑπιθυμίαν, ὡς τὸν Πολύκαρπον ζώντα κατακαύσαι. ἔδει γὰρ τὸ τῆς φανερωθείσης ἐπὶ τοῦ προσκεφαλαίου ὀπτασίας πληρωθῆναι, ὅτε ἰδὼν αὐτὸ καϊόμενον προσευχόμενον εἶπεν ἑπιστραφεῖς τοῖς σὺν αὐτῷ πιστοῖς προφητικῶς: Δεῖ με ζώντα κατάναι (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).

³²⁸ ...τῶν ἑκλεκτῶν ᾧν εἰς καὶ οὗτος γεγόνει ὁ θαυμασιώτατος [Πολύκαρπος], ἐν τοῖς καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς χρόνοις διδάσκαλος ἀποστολικός καὶ προφητικός γενόμενος, ἐπισκόπος τῆς ἐν Σμύρνῃ ἁγίας ἑκκλησίας. πάν γὰρ ζῆσε, ὃ ἀφόρκεν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐτελεύθη καὶ τελεωθήσεται (eds. Lightfoot & Harmer).
(presumably the apostle), although he must have been very young. This may be why he was called neither apostle nor prophet, but those words are used to modify his proper title, teacher. Nevertheless, the phrase, “in our time,” may be telling us that the author views it as appropriate to assign him these titles, even if the proper age is past. However, the phrase, “every word that went out from his mouth,” a clear reference to 1 Sam. 3.19, should remove all doubt that not only does the author consider him a prophet, but one of the highest order.

There is, to be sure, the problem of whether any of this is to be believed at all. It is true that the martyrdom scene tends to wax fabular, which does not engender confidence. From the outset it must be said that it is believable because the author thinks it is. That is to say that it is more important to this study to ask what sort of things would have been acceptable in, in this case, late second century communities than to ask whether this particular account is actually historical. Having said that, and without a hard commitment, I do not see a reason to reject this part of the story, per se. People have visions; this story is consistent with other verifiable stories; sometimes (perhaps randomly) they turn out to be true.
Celsius (~170, Palestine/Lebanon)

Celsius\textsuperscript{329} probably wrote his *True report* (Ἀληθινὸς λόγος) between 170 and 180 (Frend, 1984). It has not survived, except in (extensive) quotations within Origen’s refutation (*Against Celsius*). *True report* was an attempt to refute Christianity, as Celsius observed it in the later second Century. Its strengths and weaknesses, from the point of view of modern scholarship, lie in the fact that, although Celsius did his homework on Christianity, but he did not consistently distinguish between sects.

At one point he gives a composite picture of (presumably) Christian prophecy. It is representative, he says of Phoenician and Palestinian prophets he has heard.

> There are many..., although nameless, from acquaintance with prayers both in and outside a temple, collecting in different cities or camps, gesticulating wildly as if prophesying. And each waving hands

\textsuperscript{329} Celsius is another of our useful non-Christian sources for second century Christian activity. What has survived of Celsius’ magnum opus does so because of Origen’s attempt to refute it (*Against Celsius*), in which he quotes or summarizes most of it, as far as can be told. Much of his distaste for Christianity centers around its assertions of exclusivity: a complaint frequently heard in our own time as well (Livingstone, 1977). He claims, during his travels, to have observed Christians prophesying, which he mocks. Origen, of course, takes his mockery, although not his claims, to task.

\textsuperscript{330} Not all concede this. Schneemelcher (in Hennecke, 1964/1965) believes them to have been pagan oracles and, although he does not explain this conclusion, the facts that these prophets are “in and outside of temples” could give that impression.
characteristically says “I am God, or a son of God, or a divine Spirit. I have returned because the world is dying, and you O humans, are undone as a result of unrighteousness. I want to rectify it. And you will see me again with manifest heavenly power. Happy is the one who worships me now, on all others I will cast eternal fire — both cities and rural areas. And people who do not perceive their guilt, will repent in vain and groan, but I will protect those who are faithful to me forever.” To these threats they offer, in addition, unknown, mysterious, and entirely unintelligible ravings, the meaning of which no sane person could grasp. So indistinct as to be meaningless, they give a foothold to any fool or scoundrel for anything; he can make it say whatever he wants (Ag. Celsus 7.9).331

Celsus notes that there are different kinds of Christian prophecy, a point which Origen flatly rejects, but which is, of course, quite true. Unfortunately, so Origen tells us, he does not elaborate the differences.

Celsus’ text can be read in a couple of different ways, leading to very different evaluations. This is where it becomes a problem that he does not distinguish, or perhaps cannot tell the difference, between different Christian sects. At first blush

331 Πολλοὶ..., καὶ ἀνώνυμοι θάστα ἐκ τῆς προσταθείσης αἰτίας καὶ ἐν ἱεροῖς καὶ ἔξω ἱερῶν, οἱ δὲ καὶ ἄγειροι καὶ ἐπιφανεῖς πόλεισιν ή στρατηπέδοις, κυνοῦνται δήθεν ἐς θεοπαθοῦντες. Πρόχειρον δ’ ἕκαστῳ καὶ σύνηθες εἰσεῖν: ἔγις ὁ θεὸς εἰμί ἢ θεὸν παῖς ἢ πνεῦμα θείον. Ἡκὼ δὲ ἢ ἡγῇ γὰρ ὁ κόσμος ἀπόλυται, καὶ ὁμοί, ὁ ἄνθρωπος, διὰ τᾶς ἁδείας οἴχεσθε. ἔγις δὲ σώσαι θέλω καὶ δίσεσθε με αὐθίς μετ’ οὐρανίου δυνάμεως ἐπανίσταντα. Μακάριος ὁ νῦν με θηρικεύσας, τοῖς δ’ ἄλλοις ἀπαίσι πόροι αἰώνιοι ἐπιβαλῶ καὶ πόλει καὶ χώρας. Καὶ ἄνθρωποι, οἱ μὴ τὰς ἐαυτῶν ποινὰς ἔσασι, μετανιώσονται μάτην καὶ στενάζουσι τοὺς δὲ μοι πεισθέντας αἰώνίους φυλάξω.... Ταῦτ’ ἐπανατεινάμενοι προστιθέασιν ἑφεξῆς ἀγνώστα καὶ πάροικα καὶ πάντη ἁθῆλα, ἀν τὸ μὲν γνώμα οὐδεὶς ἢ ἔχων νῦν εὑρέθη δυνατὸν ἀσάθη γὰρ καὶ τὸ μηδὲν, ἀνοίγῃ δὲ ἢ γοητὶ παντὶ περὶ παντὸς ἀφομὴν ἐνδίδοσιν, ὡτι βούλεται, τὸ λεχθὲν σφετεριζέσθαι (ed. Borret).

The ellipcized passages are Origen's stylistic interjections.
the message reads like religious hubris. But if we remember that the prophet speaks as a mouthpiece for God, it may well be relatively orthodox prophecy. Viewed that way, the only unusual feature is that it is being used, apparently, for proselytism. We have not seen prophetic evangelism in any of the materials we have seen thus far and, to hear Celsus tell it, it was fairly commonplace.

In the last segment he tells us that the prophets added “unknown, mysterious, and entirely unintelligible ravings.” Kydd (1984) believes this is glossolalia, which is a possibility, but it could also be that the prophet has shifted into highly esoteric speech of which only the initiated can make sense (if anyone). Origen, in any case, clearly takes it this way. In the next section he says, interpreting these “ravings,” that prophets sometimes spoke plainly, particularly regarding proper behavior, but sometimes they were hard to understand.

In regards to mysteries and esoterica and oracular subjects, which are too deep for common hearing, these are spoken of through enigmas and allegories, and so called dark sayings, and things designated parables, or simple proverbs.

This is not congregational, strictly speaking, since it is presumably targeted at

---

332 ἀγνώστα καὶ πάροιστα καὶ πάντι ἄδηλα (ed. Borret).
the unconverted, no matter how many of the converted may be sharing in the proselytizing experience. The psychological state is not clear. It could certainly be epipneumatic, but it must be kept in mind that the time frame is consistent with the early spread of Montanism in which both contemporary critics and modern scholars generally conclude that intermediation was often some type of mediumship. \(^3\) It should also be kept in mind that the prophecy is a composite; it does not necessarily all come from the same sect and does not have to all represent the same psychological state.

Irenaeus [2\(\text{nd} \) half of the 2\(\text{nd} \) century, Asia Minor, Rome, Lyons]

Irenaeus was born sometime in the early second century and died in the late second or early third. He was still active in the early 190s when he appealed to Pope Victor on behalf of Quartodecimans in Asia Minor. He was a prolific writer, although much of his creative legacy has not survived.

To our knowledge, he never identified himself as a prophet, so his usefulness to this study is as a witness to active intermediaries in communities with which he was familiar. We have already looked at his disdain for Marcus, but he does

\(^3\) Labriolle (1913) did not believe this to be Montanist although there is no real reason to exclude any group.
make one more useful comment in that section:

Some of his former female devotees... understand... that only those to whom God sends his gift from above receive the God-given gift of prophecy, and they speak only where and when God wills, and not when Marcus commands (Ag. Heresies 1.13.4|1.7.3).\(^{335}\)

That the prophets speak “where and when God wills” may suggest a type of possession, but it may simply mean that they speak only when spoken to. In any case, he implies that it is a contemporary phenomenon.

In \textit{Ag. Heresies} 2.32.4 (quoted in Eusebius, \textit{EH} 5.7.4) Irenaeus tells us

Some drive out demons, really and truly, so that many who have been cleansed from evil spirits also believe and join the assembly. Others have foreknowledge, and visions, and prophetic messages. Yet others have gifts of healing through laying on of hands, and they are made whole. In fact, as I said, the dead have been raised and continued to be with us for some time...\(^{336}\)

Warfield (1918/1983) objects to the raising of the dead. This, he says, confirms that Irenaeus is simply recounting the glories of the first century, and so, the same

---

\(^{335}\) Ἡ δὲ τῶν προτέρων τινές γυναικῶν...ἀκριβῶς εἰδούια... ἀλλ’ οίς ἃν ὁ Θεὸς ἀνωθεν ἐπιτέμησι τὴν χάριν αὐτοῦ, οὕτω θεόδωτον ἔχουσι τὴν προφητείαν, καὶ τότε λαλοῦσιν ἑνῆ καὶ ὁπότε Θεὸς βούλεται, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ὧν ἐπεὶ Μάρκος κελεύει (ed. Harvey).

\(^{336}\) οἱ μὲν γὰρ δαίμονας ἐλαύνουσιν βεβαίως καὶ ἀληθῶς, ὡστε πολλάκις καὶ πιστεύειν ἑκείνους αὐτούς τοὺς καθαρισθέντας ἀπὸ τῶν πονηρῶν πνευμάτων καὶ εἶναι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, οἱ δὲ καὶ πρόγνωσιν ἔχουσιν τῶν μελλόντων καὶ ὑπατείας καὶ ὑψίστης προφητείας, ἄλλοι δὲ τοὺς κάμνοντας διὰ τῆς τῶν χεριῶν ἐπιθέσεως ἰῶνται καὶ υγείας ἀποκαθιστάσιν, ὡδὶ δὲ, καθὼς ἐφαίμεν, καὶ νεκροί ηγέρθησαν καὶ παρέμειναν σὺν ἡμῖν ἔτεσιν ἰκανοίς... (ed. Harvey).
Prophecy

It is not clear, though, how this helps Irenaeus against his opponents (Simon and Carpocrates). In any case Ag. Heresies 2.31.2|2.48 2 specifies both:

...as [did] the apostles through prayer, and among the brothers often as a result of necessity (also EH 5.7.2).338

A similar passage can be found in Ag. Heresies 5.6.1 (partially quoted in EH 5.7.6)

Consequently, the apostle says, "We speak wisdom among the perfect," calling 'perfect' those who take hold of the Spirit of God and speak in all tongues through the Spirit of God, just as did He. Just as we have heard many of the brethren in the Church, having prophetic charismata, speaking many tongues through the Spirit, uncovering people’s secrets for the collective good, and explaining the mysteries of God. The Apostle calls this sort of person 'spiritual.'339

There are other passages,340 but these should suffice to show that for Irenaeus,

337 McGiffert (1890), too, struggles with this, but points to Irenaeus’ honesty elsewhere, and to such reports as late as the time of Augustine. Pentecostals and Charismatics still occasionally make such claims, usually about someone far away and unverifiable, but all the claim needs is a credulous audience. In any case it is not that unusual for the near-dead to recover, sometimes dramatically, and, if this is after prayer, well then, they are raised from the dead.

338 καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι διὰ προσευχῆς καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀδελφότητι πολλάκις διὰ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον (ed. Harvey).

339 Propter quod et Apostolus ait: Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις; perfectos dicens eos qui perceperunt Spiritum Dei, et omnibus linguis loquuntur per Spiritum Dei, quemadmodum et ipse loquebatur. καθὼς καὶ πολλῶν ἀκούσαν ἀδελφόν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ προφητικά χαρίσματα ἐχόντων καὶ παντοδαπὰς λαλοῦντες διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος γλώσσας καὶ τὰ κρύφια τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰς φανερόν ἀγόντων ἐπὶ τοῦ συμφέροντι καὶ τὰ μυστήρια τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκδηγουμένων. quos et spirituales Apostolus vocat (ed. Harvey).

340 4.33.814.53.2 lists three active gifts: love, knowledge, and prophecy, and 4.33.314.52.3 addressed to contemporary false prophecy.
prophecy was probably a contemporary phenomenon, although he does not give enough information to help us know much about its social or psychological features.

**Attalus [2nd half of the 2nd century, Lyons]**

Eusebius describes, from a document primarily dedicated to the persecution at Lyon (under Marcus Aurelius, reigned 161-180), an ascetic named Alcibiades who was arrested and attempted to maintain his abstemious lifestyle in prison. He did not fare well in the arena. Attalus, possibly a physician originally from Pergamum, who was himself later to be martyred in the same persecution, received a revelation that “Alcibiades was not doing well in refusing the creatures of God, and was offending the others” (EH 5.3.2). Bauer (1934/1971) comments that the nature of the revelation is not revealed to us, although visions were not uncommon. However, particularly in light of Attalus’ probable profession, I am inclined to read here nothing more than natural wisdom, accompanied, perhaps,

---

341 There is also an Attalus mentioned in Pergamum.
342 Απεκαλύφθη δι’ ἕμη καλὸς ποιοὶ ὁ Ἀλκιβιάδης μὴ χρώμενος τοῖς κτύμασι τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἄλλοις τῶν σκανδάλου ύπολειπόμενος (ed. Harvey).

McGiffert (1890), notes, “Imprisoned confessors were never permitted to suffer for want of food and the other comforts of life so long as their brethren were allowed access to them. Compare e.g. Lucian’s Peregrinus Proteus.”
by an epipneumatically based sense of the Spirit’s approval. Regardless of the psychological source, however, Alcibiades was obedient to the revelation. We do not know the social origin of this message.

**The New Prophecy**

Somewhere in the second half of the second century, beginning in Phrygia, a new movement appeared. They were called by various different names, most commonly and least creatively, the Phrygians. We do not know how soon they had a name for themselves, but Tertullian calls them the “New Prophecy” (Ag. Praxias 3; Ag. Marcion 3.24; Res. 6.3; see Bauer, 1971/1934). Most now know them as the Montanists.

While still a recent convert, Montanus began to receive prophecies (Apolinarius in Eusebius EH, 5.16.7). This, in itself, was not unusual, as we have seen, but the manner of his prophesying was, at least from the point of view of

---

343 Bauer jokes (1934/1971, 176 n. 59), “Whether an ancient dungeon was really the best place to change one’s diet from bread and water to elegant cuisine is, of course, open to question.”

344 Or Cataphrygians, meaning “among the Phrygians.”

345 The Montanists would later claim as precedent two well respected prophets from that, or a slightly earlier, time period: Ammia (from Philadelphia) and Quadratus. None of the detractors of Montanism ever defame either of these two, or deny that they had the prophetic gift. Eusebius actually makes this point

...for many other wonders coming from gifts of God were still current in the Churches,
some members of the community. It was apparently highly enthusiastic, in the proper sense of the term. Others, however, were drawn to him and he was quickly surrounded by a group of Christians. Some of them also prophesied.

Several names have come down to us, but the most famous were two women:

Maximilla and Priscilla (Prisca).\(^{346}\)

Their penchant for enthusiasm, and perhaps mediumship, may have lead to their initial marginalization, but once marginalized they began to develop some theological idiosyncrasies, any one of which may have caused catholic eyebrows to raise, but taken together, along with the enthusiasm, resulted in the New Prophecy getting the thumbs down from the bishop of Rome,\(^{347}\) and subsequently

which allowed their prophesying easily to be credited by many [πλείονται γὰρ οὖν καὶ ἀλλαὶ παραδεσποτεῖαι τοῦ θείου χαρίσματος εἰς ἐπὶ τότε κατὰ διαφόρους ἐκκλησίας ἐκτελοῦμεναι πίστιν παρὰ πολλοῖς τοῦ κακείνους προφητεύειν παρείχον (ed. Bardy)] (EH 5.3.4).

\(^{346}\) A third woman, Quintilla, is known to us perhaps only by name. Epiphanius (Medicine Box 49.2) lists her with Priscilla as if they, and not Montanus, were the founders (Kraemer, 1992). Trevett (1996) thinks she may be a later prophetess of the New Prophecy. Others hold that Quintilla and Priscilla are the same person (Chapman, 1913). Epiphanius cannot remember whether the famous Jerusalem prophecy (see below, p. 171) was hers or Priscilla’s (Medicine Box 49.1); Augustine has it as both (Heresies 1:17). Tertullian mentions a Quintilla (On Baptism 1) of whom he does not approve, who is apparently a member of the Cainites; it it unlikely that they are the same person.

\(^{347}\) Tertullian complains that the bishop (Victor) had originally acknowledged the New Prophecy, and had “brought peace to the Churches in Asia and Phrygia.” Then an opponent of the Montanists (Praxias), who Tertullian also knew to be a Monophysite, persuaded the bishop to reverse his decision.
being considered a heresy.

Their doctrinal problems began with a strong ascetic tendency in regards to sexual matters. Maximilla and Priscilla both left their husbands to devote themselves to the New Prophecy.\textsuperscript{348} The community apparently considered second marriages to be the same as fornication (Tertullian, \textit{Modesty} 1.10.20).

Somewhere in the region of Pepuza and Tymion (in Phrygia) Priscilla\textsuperscript{349} had a dream-vision in which

\begin{quote}
Christ appeared to me [in sleep], [she said,] in the form of a woman\textsuperscript{350} in
\end{quote}

So, Praxias accomplished two diabolic missions in Rome: he expelled prophecy and introduced heresy; he put the Paraclete to flight and crucified the Father.

\begin{quote}
[nam idem tunc episcopum romanum, agnoscentem iam prophetias Montani, Priscae, Maximillae, et ex ea agnitione pacem ecclesiis Asiae et Phrygiae inferentem, falsa de ipsis prophetis et ecclesiis eorum adseverando et praecessorum eius auctoritates defendendo coegit et litteras pacis revocare iam emissas et a proposito recipiendorum charismatum concessare. ita duo negotia diabolic Praxeas Romae procuravit, prophetiam expulit et haeresim intulit, paracletum fugavit et patrem crucifixit (ed. Evans).] (Ag. Praxias 1.5)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{348} We do not know any more details. Was this entirely motivated by a desire for celibacy? Were their husbands strongly anti-enthusiastic and had they demanded that their wives cease and desist? Were the women on their second marriages?

Apollonius (Eusebius, \textit{EH} 5.18.2) tells us that they encouraged the dissolution of marriages. This may have been the case early on (it is not mentioned by Tertullian), but this may simply be Apollonius’ inference from the leading women’s behavior. In any case the community granted Pricilla, at least, the status of a virgin, which attracts Apollonius’ ridicule (\textit{EH} 5.18.3).

\textsuperscript{349} Or Quintilla. Epiphanius is not sure who the prophetess was (Bauer, 1934/1971).

\textsuperscript{350} Kraemer sees in Christ appearing as a woman (among other things) a connection to the cult of Cybele. Cross fertilization of religious ideas does not go without saying, but it is entirely likely, and when apparent similarities appear, the burden of proof is on those who deny it. But it needs to be
shining robes and gave me wisdom and revealed to me that this place is holy and that it is here that Jerusalem will descend from heaven (Epiphanius, Medicine Box 49.1)\textsuperscript{351}

The community took this seriously and set up shop there. Needless to say this attracted some derision.\textsuperscript{352} Maximilla at one point had a similarly problematic prophecy:

\begin{quote}
After me, there will no longer be a prophet, rather, the fulfillment.
\end{quote}

(\textit{Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.2.4})\textsuperscript{353}

The point of this is probably not cessationist, but is to emphasize the immanence of the Parousia. But when the end did not come after her death it became a

kept in mind that communities are usually aware of what makes their system unique, and are not generally inclined to violate those aspects. Gender bending of divinity we also saw in Marcus’ vision and his subsequent use of Charis (presumably dependent on the divine feminine among Valentinians). \textit{Perpetua} and \textit{Thomas} both gender bent the individual believer (see below). The Church appears personified as a woman in both \textit{Revelation} and \textit{Hermas}, at least.\textsuperscript{351}

\begin{quote}
\textit{ἐν ἑδέα, ζητοῦσι γυναικός, ἐσχηματισμένος ἐν στολή λαμπρᾷ ἔλθε πρὸς με Χριστὸς καὶ ἐνέβαλεν ἐν ἐμοὶ τὴν σοφίαν καὶ ἄπεκαλυψεν μοι τοὺν τόπον ἐίναι ἄγιον καὶ ὅτι τὴν Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατιέναι (ed. Holl).}
\end{quote}

Some doubt has been cast on the authenticity of this oracle (see Heine, 1989).\textsuperscript{352} The reader will likely recall that Joseph Smith had a similar revelation, only in his version Jerusalem turned out to be in Indiana. Poirier (1999) points out that where most modern scholars read Priscilla/Quintilla’s prophecy as chiliastic, that is not demanded by the oracle itself, nor even by Epiphanius’ reading (\textit{Medicine Box} 49.1-3). Reading it in light of \textit{Sirach} 24, Poirier sees “Jerusalem” as symbolically the place where the wise are found. Read this way, it would not be unlike an Anglican saying that Canterbury was the new Rome.

Oddly, one of the most striking features of the vision, that Christ appears as a woman, is completely passed over by the prophetess’ detractors. Besides noting that this is a full reversal of the gynophobic tendencies of the catholic leadership, it even puts to shame the backhanded inclusiveness of the \textit{Gospel of Thomas} 114 (see below p. 192, n. 402), where Jesus plans to make Magdalene into a male so that “she may also become a living spirit.”\textsuperscript{353}
problem for the community. Not that it died out. Some form of Montanism may have lasted as late as the ninth century, but if Epiphanius is to be believed, it lacked its most definitive characteristic — prophecy.

Montanus apparently tried to normalize the flow of money into and out of the community, collecting offerings and paying prophetic leaders. They are accused of prophesying for profit (Apollonius in Eusebius, *EH* 5.18.4-7). The same author says they wear fancy clothes; some dye their hair and use eye shadow (*EH* 5.18.5 & 11). These last points may be baseless slander, particularly considering the otherwise ascetic nature of the group, but they are hauntingly reminiscent of

---

354 Miltiades (Eusebius, *EH* 5.17.4), writing fourteen years after her demise, asks where the successors are, if they, as they claim, were simply holding their place in the line of prophets. It may be that the core community in Phrygia took Maximilla’s prophecy so seriously that *they* shut off the faucet of intermediation after she died. It was still flowing in Tertullian’s part of the world, but 200 years later when Epiphanius is writing his *Medicine Box*, he can ask pointedly, “…why do they have no more prophets after Montanus, Priscilla, and Maximilla? (48.2.1)” It is possible that Epiphanius is simply mimicking Miltiades, but more likely, I suspect, he is targeting this question at the contemporary sect, which was still active.

355 Although on this point, note Firmilian’s problem, below, in which an apparently Montanist prophetess is active around 234. If Maximilla were still alive, she would have to be very old at that point.

356 Obviously, both the Didachist and Hermas would likely agree with this criticism.

357 Equally baseless is the accusation made in later centuries that they pricked babies and mixed their blood with the host of the Eucharist. Similar accusations (baby killing) are often made of any group when running out of accusations with real substance, and the early Christians were no exception. Before them it had been the Bacchantes, and later (as well, perhaps, as earlier) it would be the Cathari, the witches, and the Jews. The unknown author generally referred to as Praedestinatus (26) suggests that this slander was known to Tertullian, who refuted it in one of his
Hermas' complaints.

Less likely to be baseless, they are accused of “setting forth new Scriptures” (Caius in Eusebius, EH 6.20.3). It is certainly true that Tertullian occasionally quotes prophecies as if they have authority similar to Scripture (e.g. The soul 9; Chastity 10). What was and was not (New Testament) scripture was still in flux, but it is likely that the community collected oracles and perhaps had some of their own, highly regarded, writings. Themiso, for example, is accused of having written a “certain catholic epistle,” which Apollonius regards as insolent (EH 5.18.5).

Most damning of all, perhaps, they were egalitarian, at least when it came to the prophetic gifts. Frend believes that this feature of Montanism was as defenses of Montanism (lost to us). It may well not be that old, however, and only shows up in surviving documents in the fourth century—Cyril of Jerusalem, Catech. 16.8 (Tabernee, 2007).

358 Hippolytus says, for example,

They assert that they have learned more from these than from the Law, the Prophets and the Gospels. Further, they magnify all the charismata of these women more than the apostles. [πλείον τι δι’ αὐτῶν φάσκοντες ἡ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου καὶ προφητῶν καὶ τῶν εὐαγγελίων. Ὑπὲρ δὲ ἀποστόλους καὶ πάν χάρισμα ταῦτα τὰ γένοις δοξάζοντι (ed. Marcovich).] (Ref. 8.1218.19.1-2).

Tertullian, defending the Montanist position on second marriage, says

If Christ abolished Moses' precept because “from the beginning it was not so”..., why should the paraclete not abolish what Paul allowed? [Si enim Christus abstitit, quod Moyses praecepit,quia 'ab initio non fuit sic'...cur non et Paracletus abstulerit, quod Paulus indulsit (ed. Bulhart).] (Monogamy 14).

359 καθολικήν τινα συνταξάμενος ἑπιστολήν (ed. Bardy).
important as any in its rejection by the catholic leadership (See also Trevett, 1996). He sees parallels to the reform movement under Nehemiah where "the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets" (Neh. 6.14) are included among the leader's opponents.

Now, after six centuries, the new Israel was confronted with the same problem, either an organized urban and hierarchal church with set forms of worship and discipline and a set relationship with the outside world, or a church of the Spirit in which men and women participated equally as the vehicles of the Spirit. Once again, as in the old Israel, organization triumphed (Frend, 1984, 255f).

All this brings us to the question, "What do we know about this Montanist enthusiasm?" One thing we know is that it was not always enthusiasm. Apolinarus tells us (Eusebius, EH 5.16.14), that Montanus made claims "that he had ascended, at some point, and been received into heaven." This has the appearance of an apocalyptic vision, which usually leaves the subject appearing asleep or catatonic. Priscilla's famous Jerusalem vision, it will be recalled, came

---

360 Tertullian's often negative attitude about women as a class of humanity needs to be seen through this tempering filter. His view of women functioning as conduits for the Spirit is consistently positive.

361 ος αιρόμενον ποτε και ἀναλαμβανόμενον εἰς οὐρανοῦ (ed. Bardy).

362 Apolinarus informs us that Theodotus was also sometimes incorporated, which led to a fatal accident, but this is in the same context in which he recounts Montanus' and Maximilla's suicides. These, even Eusebius is reluctant to credit. Bauer (1934/1971) doesn't think that Eusebius gives any of these dishonorable deaths credence (Eusebius says perhaps so, perhaps not — 5.16.15), but he
to her in a dream. But apocalyptic trances and dream-visions did not bring on the execration of the catholic conservatives.

Describing Montanus’ first prophecy, Apolinarius (quoted in Eusebius) tells us

And he was suddenly mounted by a spirit (πνευματοφορηθηναι), possessed (κατοχη) by something, in a trance (παρεκκοπασει) and inspired (ενθυσιαν) to rant and make alien sounds (ξενοφωνειν), prophesying in a fashion contrary to the tradition and instruction of the Church, passed down from the beginning. (5.16.7)

In spite of resistance, it caught on

But [some others] being excited by the Holy Spirit and prophetic gifts, and more than a little light headed, forgot the Lord’s distinction [between true and false prophecy]. (5.16.8)

Maximilla and Priscilla became involved

....so that they [began] to speak enthusiastically (ἐκφρόνως) and inappropriately, in a way similar to the previously mentioned person.

---

363 This is probably best seen as a type of incubation, except that the holy place is not known until after the fact. It is highly reminiscent of Jacob’s dream at Bethel, which also gave rise to a holy place (or at least it is an etiology).

364 πνευματοφορηθηναι τε και αἰφνιδίως ἐν κατοχῇ τινι καὶ παρεκκοπασει γενόμενον ἐνθυσιαν ἀρξασθαι τε λαλεῖν καὶ ξενοφωνεῖν, παρὰ τὸ κατὰ παράδοσιν καὶ κατὰ διάδοχην ἀνωθεν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἔθος δήθεν προφητεύοντα (ed. Bardy).

365 οἱ δὲ ὡς ἄγιοι πνεύματι καὶ προφητικῷ χαρίσματι ἐπαιρόμενοι καὶ οὐχ ἢ κατα τὴς διαστολῆς τοῦ κυρίου ἐπιλανθανόμενοι (ed. Bardy).
The description of Montanus’ initial prophecy has obvious points of connection to incorporation sects. The initial word (πνευματοφορέω) is unusual, but means, literally, “spirit-bearing” reminiscent of the Yoruba-related groups’ use of “horse” to describe the rôle of the possessee in incorporation. Κατοχή is the normal word for possession in the Corybantic style groups, and παρεκτάσις, from ἐκτάσις, probably simply mean “trance” or, possibly, “some sort of trance.” One has the impression that the author is merely stringing as many questionable prophetic words as he can find into a single description. It is supposed to sound off-the-charts crazy. This does not mean that there is nothing of value here, though, only that we have to be careful about reading too much into this passage. The language does tend to lead the reader to think of the possession experiences associated with the Corybantes, Bacchantes, and similar groups — what Plato would call telestic μανία.

Ξενοφωνέω gives the immediate impression of speaking in tongues (with the author choosing not to dignify it with the New Testament term). This is a

---

366 ὡς καὶ λαλεῖν ἐκφόνως καὶ ἀκαίρως καὶ ἀλλοτριοτρόπως, ὁμοίως τῷ προειρημένῳ (ed. Bardy).
possibility, and is probably why Latourette says that Montanus "'spoke with tongues' at his baptism" (1965).\textsuperscript{367} It is also possible that this just describes "strange sounds."	extsuperscript{368} The possibility of glossolalia is also raised by a phrase a couple paragraphs further on where we are told that the Montanists reviled the catholics

...because we did not receive their ἀμετροφόνους prophets (5.16.12)\textsuperscript{369}

McGiffert (1890) translates ἀμετροφόνους as "loquacious;" Lake gives "chattering;" Oulton prefers "of unbridled tongues" (Kydd, 1984). Kydd wants to read it as "speak in an indefinite number of what sounds like languages" and concludes that it is tongues (35). Latourette (1953) and Lombard (1915) agree (Kydd 1984). It is possible, but ἀμετροφόνους etymologically suggests ‘unmeasured-sounding.’ If prophecy was expected to be metered/poetic, perhaps

\textsuperscript{367} He may have assumed too much, including that the setting of this incident is Montanus' baptism.

\textsuperscript{368} This might also be considered a subset of glossolalia in modern research. Émile Lombard, for example identified 4 types: phonations frustes, pseudo-language, verbal fabrication, and xenoglossia (Lombard, 1910, cited in May, 1965/1986). To this might be added spirit language, animal language, and sacerdotal language (May, 1965/1986). These range all the way from grunts and moans (phonations frustes) to full blown (consciously) unlearned language (xenoglossia). Sacerdotal is learned, archaic language, often unknown to any but the specialists.

What we normally term "tongues" usually falls into the categories between pseudo-language and xenoglossia (this being fairly rare). Montanus could have been practicing any of the others as well, although phonations frustes seems particularly likely.

\textsuperscript{369} ὅτι μὴ τούς ἀμετροφόνους αὐτῶν προφήτας ἔδεξάμεθα (ed. Bardy).
Apolinarius is offended when it (at least sometimes) is not (e.g. some sort of proof of lack of inspiration). This suggestion, however, may be crippled by the surviving oracles, on either side of the aisle. What few oracles we have seen in the course of this investigation do not appear to be any more metered than the surviving Montanist *logia*.^^370^ Maximilla and Priscilla, we are told, spoke ἐκφρόνως (out of mind). This, too, is a characteristically old Greek term, used both for prophetic and poetic enthusiasm.

What we have called incorporation is a form of trance, practiced among the Yoruba which, it has been argued (by, e.g. Rouget, 1985), is in so many points similar to the practices of the Corybantes, that in all probability, it is essentially the same. I would be inclined to quibble because the former do not intermediate, and I believe the latter did. But, the Ubanda are Yoruba derivatives, and they do offer "consultations," which are intermediation. If the language used here is, perhaps even deliberately, intended to lead us to think of these groups, then it is possible

```
^370^ There are prophetic forms, which Aune identifies and analyses at length (1983), but the New Prophecy's contribution to the list, when they are preserved in greater length than a single line, are consistent with the other material. Of course, the *Odes* cannot be admitted as evidence because their genre is different.
```
that Montanus and his two most famous prophetesses experienced prophecy in much the same way. This is the position usually taken by modern scholarship when approaching these texts. It is reinforced by catholic criticisms which suggest that the prophets lacked control of their own bodies.

Eusebius quotes Apolinarius who quotes Miltiades who quotes Alcibiades:

But the false prophet, having fallen into a trance, lacks shame and fear. Starting from voluntary unknowing, he self-destructs to the point of involuntary psychic μανία (EH 5.17.2).

My translation may shove the intention too far in the direction of mysticism, but it is clear that the author means us to understand that this false prophet has lost control, and probably that he is amnesiac. He goes on to argue that none of the real prophets, new or old, was ever incorporated (πνευματοφορηθέντα).

371 Who is actually being quoted by a Montanist respondent, from whom Miltiades extracts the text of Alcibiades!

372 The normal word for unlearned would be ἄμαθης, sometimes applied to heretics (e.g. 2 Pet. 3.16). This word (ἀμαθία) appears in Xenophon for being involuntarily unaware (Liddell & Scott, 1889). It is not that the ecstatic in this passage is uneducated, but that he chooses to suppress knowledge. Perhaps it is as simple as “he empties his mind,” but, while that might be useful in making oneself open to epipnoia, it would hardly lead to the condition described in the next clause.

373 “Voluntary” and “involuntary” are similarly connected in the original (ἰκουσίου & ἄκουσιον). The prophet’s volition projects him into a state of involution.

374 Or perhaps “psychotic”; in any case it is “μανία of the soul.”

375 ἀλλὰ δὲ γε ψευδοποιηθής ἐν παρεκκλησίᾳ, ὃ ἐπεται ἀδεσία καὶ ἀφοβία, ἀρχομένου μὲν εἶ ἐκ ἐκουσίου ἀμαθίας, καταστρέφοντος δὲ εἰς ἀκούσιον μανιαν ψυχής (ed. Bardy).

376 By which he could mean New or Old Testament, although there is nothing to make us think that Alcibiades is a cessationist, so by “new” he may intend to include contemporary.
Tertullian [Montanist activity early 3rd century, Carthage]

Tertullian, who became a Montanist probably around 207,\textsuperscript{379} tells us, from a positive side, that prophecy always requires an altered state in the dissociative category:

> When a person is connected to the Spirit, particularly when seeing the glory of God, or when God speaks through him, it is inevitable that he loses consciousness — obviously — having been overshadowed by the power of God. This is a point of dispute between us and the intellectuals\textsuperscript{379} (Ag. Marcion 4.22.5).\textsuperscript{380}

[In] this power we call trance, consciousness withdraws and [the prophet] appears to be unhinged (The soul 45.3).\textsuperscript{381}

In Tertullian’s community it appears that trance was the normal mental state associated with prophecy. The type of trance is not completely clear, though, and may depend on what he means by amentia (unhinged), which could be anything

\textsuperscript{377} τούτον δὲ τὸν τρόπον οὗτε τινὰ τῶν κατὰ τὴν παλαιὰν οὗτε τῶν κατὰ τὴν καινὴν πνευματοφορήθεντά προφητίζειν δεῖξαι δυνήσονται (5.17.3) (ed. Bardy).

\textsuperscript{378} From 207 on we find increasing references to Montanism and use of Montanist vocabulary (Kydd, 1984).

\textsuperscript{379} psychicos is a technical term used by Tertullian for the catholics. He is likely to be drawing on 1 Cor. 2.14ff, where the ψυχικός is contrasted unfavorably with the πνευματικός. It is not the same as “carnal,” as it is sometimes translated, however. Tertullian would reserve “carnal” for someone who was either not a Christian, or a Christian unable to control their baser instincts. I have chosen “intellectuals” because, I think, that is as close as we are going to get to the general sense of someone who’s spirituality stops short of the full available blessing.

\textsuperscript{380} In spiritu enim homo constitutus, præsertim cum gloriæ dei conspicit, vel cum per ipsum deus loquitur, necesse est excitand sensu, obumbratus scilicet virtute divina, de quo inter nos et psychicos quaestio est (ed. Evans).

\textsuperscript{381} Hanc uim ecstasion dicimus, excessum sensus et amentiae instar (ed. Waszink).
from catatonic to convulsive or raving. We get some hint in his description of a

There is a sister currently with us whose portion is revelatory charismata. In church, in the middle of the Lord’s Day service, she will experience a trance in the Spirit: communication with angels, sometimes even with the Lord. She sees and hears sacred mysteries, sometimes discerns hearts, and provides needed remedies. During the scripture reading, singing of psalms, sermon delivery, or offering of prayers — in any of this — she may receive a vision. I had been holding forth about the soul (I cannot be sure exact what I said), while our sister was in the spirit. After the dismissal at the end of the service, she usually tells us what she may have seen (since it is meticulously evaluated before being given approval). “Among other things,” she said [on this occasion], “a soul has been shown to me having a body, and the spirit was appearing, not with empty and insubstantial properties, but rather suggesting tangibility, delicate, bright, misty in color, and completely human in form.” This was the vision and God was witness, and reliably does the Apostle predict that there will be charismata in the Church (The soul 9.4).

382 What Tertullian calls “portion,” modern Charismatics might call, “gifting.” Paul seems to use the term χάρισμα in this fashion for any God-given skills used in the community, supernatural or not (e.g. Rom. 12), but for Tertullian charisma is a technical term for pneumatic manifestations.

383 Diagnosing medical problems and suggesting treatments was one of the specialties of Edgar Cayce.

384 “This was the vision” may have been part of the woman’s narrative, or it may have been Tertullian’s own concluding statement.

385 Est hodie soror apud nos revelatio charismata sortita, quas in ecclesia inter dominica sollemnia per ecstasin in spiritu patitur; conversatur cum angelis, aliquando etiam cum domino, et uidet et audit sacramenta et quorundam corda dinoscit et medicinas desiderantibus sumit. Iamuero prout scripturae leguntur aut psalmi canuntur aut allocutiones proferuntur aut petitiones delegantur, ita inde materiae usionibus subministrantur. Forte nescio quid de anima disserueramus, cum ea soror in spiritu esset. Post transacta sollemnia dimissa plebe, quo usu solet nobis renuntiari quae uidedit (nam et diligentissime digeruntur, ut etiam probentur), ’inter cetera,’ inquit, ’ostensa est mihi anima corporaliter, et spiritus uidebatur, sed non inanis et uacuae
There are several interesting features of this account. The woman falls into a trance of some variety. Presumably, from what we have seen, this is an essential feature of prophetism in Tertullian’s community. This takes place in the middle of the Sunday service. The image of the possessed that we find in Eusebius’ sources is completely closed out here. It is difficult to imagine Tertullian approving of the sort of Corybantic frenzy which Apolinarius and Alcibiades describe as characteristically Montanist in this context, largely because it would be extremely disruptive. Any yet, she “communicates” (conversatur) with angels and the Lord (and apparently claims to see souls). The image which emerges is one of what I called ecstasy (p. 1; The fact that this is also what Tertullian calls it is, more or less, coincidental). She would appear to be basically catatonic, or, at least, to be having a petit mal seizure, which can look like staring. Her inner experience would be that she was in some other place, probably, although she could still be experiencing the “real” world, but invisibly interacting with another. This is likely the context in which she “sees and hears sacred mysteries.”

For Paul, “discerning hearts” is one of the rôles of congregational prophets (I qualitatis, immo quae etiam teneri repromitteret, tenera et lucida et aerii coloris, et forma per omnia humana.’ Hoc uisio et deus testis et apostolus charismatum in ecclesia futurorum idoneus sponsor (ed. Waszink).
Prophecy

Cor. 14.25), but his prophets are, of necessity, conscious and in control (see above p. 108). During her trances, this woman probably is neither. Her in-service functions are consequently limited (which, for Hermas, would be at the core of congregational, and therefore true, prophecy). My suspicion is that the Carthagian services were strictly ordered, and there would simply have been no place for one of Hermas’ (or Paul’s) congregational prophets.

Her trances could also be where she “discerns hearts, and provides needed remedies,” but it is also possible that these intermediary activities take place outside the context of the service, and could even derive from different pneumatic senses. In either case, the messages are delivered at a later time, and perhaps, if Tertullian’s example is a general rule, after submitting her visions to the community leaders.

386 What Paul means by orderliness is somewhat in the eye of the beholder. A reader raised in a structured liturgical setting will likely hear him calling for structured liturgy; someone used to a less structured setting may only hear Paul exhorting the prophets not to talk all at once. What the Corinthian church was actually like at any given service may depend on the extent to which its practice was informed by synagogue form. For Tertullian, I suspect, order would have looked more like structured liturgy, but we should not too quickly sell short his flexibility.

387 Fellow congregants are probably just glad that she does not snore, unlike some other members.

388 From Tertullian’s point of view, as well as Paul’s (1 Thess. 5.21), this submission has verification against received tradition as its primary goal. Secondarily it is so the keepers of those traditions might also have regular access to divine communication. In this regard, we do not know
She enters trance during the service, and although it may be at different times, it may be that her introit is stimulated by aspects of the sacred ritual. There are plenty of parallels for this, particularly in the Western mystical traditions — and it must be noted that her trances have much more in common with those traditions than they do with the enthusiastic intermediaries. The environment of her experience is neither solitary nor silent, however, as Rouget insists rapture must be (1985), but I am not, in any case, convinced he is right.

It is possible to read Tertullian here such that his sermon on the soul stimulates the content of her vision. He does say she was in the Spirit during the sermon and it is possible to read this such that he is subconsciously seeding her vision, as is possible with dreams. I think it is safe to say that Tertullian would be very uncomfortable with this suggestion. From his perspective the Sprit gives her this vision specifically to confirm in his own mind his understanding regarding our inner nature. It is also possible that she is describing previous visions — the perfect and imperfect are used, suggesting previous continuing action — perhaps the extent to which either one of them were swayed in their opinions by intermediated messages, although it is a strong possibility, in both cases.

Of course, that messages are sometimes submitted to leaders by no means indicates that they always were.
even several visions in which this “soul” has appeared to her. She may be recounting it precisely because it reinforces his message, not because it was that day’s vision.  

He similarly uses a woman congregant’s revelation to support his position on the appropriate length of women’s veils. He says that the whole back of the head needs to be covered, which, apparently, not all conformed to. He appeals to intermediation:

The Lord has assigned the size of the veil by revelation. For one of our sisters, in sleep, was clapped on the neck by an angel, as if applauding. “An elegant neck,” he said, “deserving to be bare! It would be nice if you would show all, from pubic area to head. Your liberated neck may not be enough to get what you want.” And certainly, what you have said to one, you have said to all (Veiling virgins 17.6).

Distinctive features of Tertullian’s view of the soul included a) that individual souls did not exist prior to conception, b) they did not return in any kind of transmigrational fashion, and c) that they each had some sort of metaphysical body. This last point is the one confirmed (or perhaps suggested) in the vision just described.

Tertullian wants to treat the vision as if it were a proof-text, although he realizes that not all will accept such proof. Usually, when he cites messages from intermediaries, he will preface them with a type of reverse disclaimer in which he tries to challenge those who do not believe such things. Of course, he also tries to support the position with textual and logical arguments. He does not tell us, although there certainly must have been cases, of local messages from “the Paraclete” of which he did not approve.

If we end the vision-message, as I have, after “want” (prosit), then the last comment probably is added to tell us that the message to the visionary is appropriate for all women (or at least, virgins). Alternately, if it is still part of the message, the angel is presumably adding that the message sent from the neck is the same as that sent from other body parts.

Once again, as with his position on souls, there is the possibility the Tertullian’s own view is
Use of abrasive sarcasm by an angel is certainly unusual. We also get the impression that the prophetess was not wearing the appropriate head gear in her dream, and it may well be that she was among those of whose manner of dress Tertullian disapproved (since this is clearly a rebuke). That it is a dream revelation recalls Priscilla’s (or Quintilla’s) Jerusalem vision, as well as those of Perpetua and Saturus. This could, of course, be the same woman as in the previously discussed instance, but there is no reason to assume this. He also culls prophetic support for his position on veiling in 1.11, where he implies that there were other messages from the pneumatics on this topic as well.

Finally, it is important to note that in stark contrast to Phrygian Montanism, at least as it comes down to us through the eyes of its detractors, these revelations reported by Tertullian are “meticulously evaluated.” It will be recalled that one

being shaped by the vision (or that his report of the vision is being shaped by his own views). Certainly his position on second marriage was so shaped.


392 We can imagine that this would make her dream-vision doubly pleasing to Tertullian, since not only does it reinforce his own position, but it brings someone over from the opposition. However, since Tertullian is clearly influenced by these Spirit messages, we need to avoid jumping too quickly to the conclusion that the position presented is the one he already had. It is also possible that the woman’s revelation compelled him into a more conservative stance than that which he held beforehand.
major source of criticisms directed at Maximilla and Priscilla is that they make
problematic predictions (relocated Jerusalem and Maximilla as last prophetess)
and the community swallows them without caveat.\textsuperscript{393}

This last point brings out a feature of North African Montanism which needs
to be stressed. As Rex Butler (2004) notes, it was not necessarily identical with
Asian Montanism. Phrygian Montanists are sometimes accused of
monophysitism, which may have sometimes been accurate; Tertullian never is.
Also, Carthagian New Prophets were, under Tertullian's leadership probably
more ascetic (in areas other than merely second marriage).

The oracles referenced in Tertullian's works are often assumed to contain
Asian oracles, unless otherwise noted (as above), but it may well be the other way
around. In addition to those oracles which we have looked at, some are attributed
to Montanus by later writers and modern scholars — sometimes without apparent
justification (although antique writers may have had collections of oracles
containing attributions which have not survived). It is highly unlikely that the
women described in The soul and Veiling virgins are the only intermediaries in his

\textsuperscript{393} It is not that Tertullian does not take prophecies seriously, as we have seen, but he does insist
on evaluation.
community. If no one else, we have the visionaries of Perpetua. He also quoted several unidentified intermediaries, attributing them to the Paraclete, the Spirit, or the Lord (Butler, 2004).

Perpetua and Saturus [early 3rd century; Carthage]

The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas clearly comes from the same theological world. Rader (1981) is not alone in thinking that it was edited by Tertullian. Certainly the editor makes the same kind of pro-prophecy polemic in the first chapter as we find in the famous theologian’s Montanist works. But for the purposes of this study it is hardly important. The useful parts of the book for this study are the four visions (taking the two regarding Dinocrates together as one). All claim to be written by visionaries themselves.

---

394 Attributed by tradition, rather than Tertullian, to Montanus: Flight 9 (two sayings on martyrdom); Ag. Praxias 8.5 contains an oracle on the relationship between the Father and the Son (root and tree); Modesty 21.7 on remission of sins; Explicitly attributed by Tertullian to Priscilla: Ex. to chastity 10.5 advances the cause of (sexual) purity, and On the resurrection 11.2 on hating the flesh. Other oracles either quoted or referred to, which do not appear in standard lists of Montanist oracles, include the following. The soul 55.5: a pro-martyrdom message with strong parallels to the one generally attributed to Montanus in Flight 9. The soul 58.8 (the soul suffers in Hades) does not actually quote the oracle, but refers to one for homiletic support. The Spirit apparently occasionally called for community fasts, which he mentions but does not quote in Fasts 13.5. In Veiling virgins 1.11 he refers to, apparently multiple, Spirit utterances in favor of veiling virgins. Chastity 1.7, 17.3. (Butler, 2004) See Appendix 2.

395 Mursurillo (1972) and Kydd (1984) agree, on stylistic grounds. Detering, however, argues that both Perpetua and To the martyrs are written by the same person, just not Tertullian.

396 Quoting Joel 2 in ch. 1 as does the Acts of the Apostles (2.17-21).
From the outset it must be noted that the community viewed martyrs as in a special relationship with God. It should also be made clear that they became martyrs (i.e. witnesses) at the time of their standing firm at trial. Sometimes martyrs were released, and as long as they had not denied their faith, they were regarded as martyrs (or sometimes confessors). It is perhaps for this reason that Perpetua can reasonably expect that if she asks for a vision, as she does at the beginning of chapter 4, she will receive one. For the same reason, the martyr's visions are given credulity both by the editor, and the readers. In chapter 7 Perpetua realizes that her situation allows her to have a particularly effective prayer life, so she prays for her departed brother (Dinocrates) resulting in a couple of connected visions in which she seems to see her prayers answered.

Each of the dreams/visions presents its own set of problems. Dinocrates was Perpetua's natural brother, and since her family was pagan, it is natural to assume that he was too. He is presumably in hell, but Perpetua's prayers are sufficient to

---

397 Apollonius accuses Themiso of purchasing his release and still insisting on being considered a martyr (Eusebius, EH 5.18.5). Presumably, from Apollonius' point of view, in order to retain the title release would have to come from some other source — the magistrate's mercy, or even the community's intercession, but not from the arrestee himself. Although it is possible that for Apollonius a martyr would have to not be a Montanist.

398 She has a leadership position among those imprisoned (Kraemer, 1992).
Prophecy

at least lighten his sufferings, but more likely admit him to heaven (8). Augustine stated that he must have been baptized (On the Soul and its origin 2.14[X]) contra Vincentius Victor (Steinhauser, 1997). Post mortem salvation was still under discussion in his day, so presumably in Perpetua's it was not a problem. A later rewriting of the same story, the Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas, perhaps for this reason, leaves it out. In any case, Vincentius cites Perpetua's vision as an authority, and Augustine does not reject that authority, only its interpretation.

In the first vision (4), she sees a narrow ladder to heaven with a serpent at its feet that is afraid at the mention of Jesus' name, and Perpetua uses its head as a first step in climbing the ladder. The divine figure at the top welcomes her and offers her a curd from the sheep he is milking. This last image has a somewhat curious feel to it, and Powell (1975; cited in Kraemer) wonders if it is from this vision that the Montanist practice of using cheese in the Eucharist derives (mentioned first in Epiphanius, Medicine Box 49.2.6, in the late fourth century).

In her last vision (10) she finds herself in the arena facing an Egyptian

---

399 Or is he admitted to heaven? It is not entirely clear from the text.
400 Halporn (1991) does not think the Acts should be so easily dismissed, but that is hardly an issue for this discussion.
401 In an obvious allusion to Gen. 3.15, repeated with the Egyptian in her final vision (10), in case the reader missed it.
gladiator. She is turned into a man, and defeats the Egyptian, who she says expressly represents the Devil. The fact that she is transformed into a man does not represent surrender of her womanhood, but God giving her strength to prevail. In real life, of course, that victory consists in accepting death in that same arena.

Saturus also has a ‘trip to heaven’ vision, also left out of the Acts. It contains a specific injunction to church leaders Optatus and Aspasius that they should be reconciled, but we do not know whether they were.

It is not entirely clear in any of the descriptions of the visions whether they are sleep visions or trances. Perpetua consistently says that she “awoke” afterwards, as does Saturus, but this tells us nothing. My inclination is to read these in the category of apocalyptic. Two of them are, after all, tours of heaven, and the Dinocrates pair could be seen as a tour of hell. It is also not possible to know whether any of them were later additions, or composed by the editor. Saturus’ is

402 In contrast to Thomas 114 where Jesus says he will transform Mary into a man, tacitly accepting Peter’s statement that “women do not deserve life.”

403 The editor refers to death in martyrdom as the second baptism (18).
the most likely, largely because it lacks unusual features and has a possible motive (Optatus’ and Aspasius’ reconciliation).

Were Montanists possessed?

Much later, Epiphanius, responding to Montanism, will tell us

When prophets were necessary, those saints prophesied all in a true spirit and a clear head and a lucid mind.... (*Medicine Box* 48.3.1).\(^{404}\)

The prophet spoke everything with reasonable temperament and lucidity, and proclaimed from the Holy Spirit, everything was spoken clearly.... (48.3.4)\(^{405}\)

When they [the Montanists] undertake to prophesy, they have neither the semblance of stability, nor lucid speech; their language is ambiguous and uneven; they have nothing right. (4) For example, Montanus says,

Look! A person is like a lyre
and I fly over as a plectrum;
the person falls asleep but I am vigilant.\(^{406}\)

Look! It is the Lord who removes\(^{407}\) people’s hearts\(^{408}\)

---

\(^{404}\) ὅτε γὰρ ἦν χρεία προφητείας, ἐν ἀληθινῷ πνεύματι καὶ ἐφωμένη διανοίᾳ καὶ παρακολουθοῦντι νῦν οἱ αὐτοὶ ἁγιοί τὰ πάντα ἐπροφήτευον... (ed. Holl).

\(^{405}\) ὁ προφήτης πάντα μετὰ καταστάσεως λογισμῶν καὶ παρακολουθήσεως ἔλαλε καὶ ἐφθάνετο ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου, τὰ πάντα ἐφωμένως λέγον... (ed. Holl).

\(^{406}\) Or, “the person sleeps and I am awake.” Heine (1989) translates this, “man sleeps, and I awaken him.”

\(^{407}\) ἔξιστημι is the verbal form of ἐκπτάσις, which I have been translating, “trance.” Consequently, an alternative way to render this would be

Look! it is the Lord who [both] entrances the will and provides a will (see below, p. 198).

This would have highlighted the possible “trance” connection, but I have followed Labriolle (1913) on these two lines, because I think it makes most sense in context, although the “new” is entirely contextual, and does not appear in the literal reading. Williams renders these two lines

Lo, it is the Lord that distracts the hearts of men
I will return to the poem soon, but I have included it here because it illustrates the argument. The fact that he adds this most famous example from Montanus' collected *logia* makes much of what Epiphanius is saying becomes clearer. The poem is an example of what, for Epiphanius, prophecy is not — ambiguous and difficult. When he talks about prophets having a “clear head and a lucid mind,” he is not really talking about their psychological state, but the intellectual accessibility of the message. There may be little more than wishful thinking in the proposition that all Biblical prophecies are plain and easily understood, but that

and that gives the heart to man.

Epiphanius' complaint may be based on, especially, the difficulty of these two lines.

408 καρδία in both this line and the next is usually translated, “heart.” This would be perfect if the author were talking about the physical part of the body. But other aspect of “heart,” the inner aspect, is entirely different in Greek than “heart” as it is used in modern English. We use it to mean, “emotions” or sometimes, “the deep inner self.” Bauer says it is the “center and source of the whole inner life, with its thinking, feeling, and volition” (1957, 404). There is no direct English equivalent. I have reluctantly translated it “heart,” although I considered rendering it as “will” — see the previous note. My decision was based on scriptural allusions to transformed “hearts” that would be lost otherwise. If I am right in following Labriolle, those allusions are important.

409 ἀ δὲ οὖντι ἐπαγγέλλοντα προφητεύειν, οὐδὲ εὐσπαθοῦντες φανοῦνται οὕτω παρακολουθίαν λόγου ἔχοντες. Λοξά γὰρ τὰ παρ’ αὐτῶν όρίσματα καὶ σκαληνά καὶ οὐδεμίας ὀρθότητος ἔχομεν.

4 Εὐθύς γὰρ ὁ Μοντανός φησιν:

ιδοὺ, ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὠφει λύρα
καγὼ ἐφίππαμαι ὠφει πλήκτρον
ὁ ἄνθρωπος κοιμάται καγὼ γρηγορῶ.

ιδοὺ, κόρως ἀνείν ὁ ἔξωπόνιν καρδίας ἄνθρωπων καὶ διδοὺς καρδίαν ἄνθρωπος (ed. Holl).
appears to be the assumption underlying his criticism.

This is not to say that he approves of incorporation

[The dreaming soul] is not like senselessness of an incorporant in trance who, physically and mentally awake, handles nasty things\textsuperscript{410} and ominously portends for himself and his neighbors. He does not know what he is saying or doing, since his trance has made him senseless (48.5.6).\textsuperscript{411}

This obviously describes incorporation, but he has already told us that prophetism is no longer practiced by the Montanists after Maximilla (48.2.1f; see above, n. 161). Based on his own criticism, we are compelled to ask on what he is basing this observation. Either the Montanists in his day no longer prophesy, in which case this is based on second century Montanism, and draws from critics contemporary with them, or Montanists in his day do behave this way, in which case his earlier criticism is invalid. It is possible to posit a combination of the two, in which he infers incorporation from second century descriptions and draws this description from other groups he has seen behaving in what he assumes is a similar matter. The last scenario would be interesting, if he came clean with us,

\textsuperscript{410} \textit{deinà metaxēwrižōmenon} is highly problematic. What is he handling?

\textsuperscript{411} οὐ μὴν κατὰ τὸν ἀφφαίνοντα καὶ ἐν ἑκτάσει γινόμενον ἑκτατικῶν ἄνθρωπον, τὸν τῷ οὐματὶ καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ ἐγχύσαντο τὰ δεινὰ μεταχειριζόμενον καὶ πολλάκις ἐαυτῶν δεινῶς χρώμενον καὶ τοῖς πέλας ἤγγειλε γὰρ ἀ φθέγγεται καὶ πράττει, ἐπειδήπερ ἐν ἑκτάσει γέγονεν ἀφθονίης ὁ τοιοῦτος (ed. Holl).
but as it is, this testimony must be excluded as invalid. At any rate, we already have enough data to guess that one of the intermediary states among the, especially Asian, Montanists was some form of incorporation.

Even among the surviving second century critics, only Miltiades seems to harp on the problem of the psychological state. Where he tells us that “a prophet should not speak in a trance,” (Eusebius, *EH* 5.17.1)\(^{412}\) several contemporary writers, prior to the Montanist crisis, had assumed that that is exactly what they did. Pseudo-Justin tells us that the ancient prophets cleanly presented themselves to the working of the Spirit of God, like a kithara or lyre, in order for God from heaven, like a plectrum, by using righteous men might reveal the knowledge of divine and heavenly things. (*Enc. to the Greeks* 718).\(^{413}\)

And a little later, in 176 (Athenagoras to Aurelius and Commodus), and so after the rise and initial spread of Montanism (Sherratt, 1992):

[Prophets] among them spoke in ecstasy, being stirred in themselves by the divine Spirit, they spoke those things which stirred in them, being utilized

---

\(^{412}\) ...ἐν ὧν ἀποδείκνυσιν περὶ τοῦ μὴ δειν προφήτην ἐν ἑκάστασι λαλεῖν (ed. Bardy).

\(^{413}\) ...καθαρός ἑαυτοῦς τῇ τοῦ θείου πνεύματος παραπληγίαν ἐνεργεία, ἵνα αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ κατά τὸν πλήκτρον, ἦσσερ ὀργάνῳ κιθάρας τινὸς ἢ λύρας τοῖς δικαίοις ἀνδράσι ἵναι ἱδρόμενον, τὴν τῶν θείων ἡμῖν καὶ οὐρανίων ἀποκαλύφη γνώσιν (ed. Otto).

The use of the musical instrument metaphor reminds us, not only of Montanus’ *logion*, quoted above, but of Philo’s description of the prophesying wise man in *Heir* 259-260 (above, p. 76), *Ode* 6.1-2, and Paul’s analogy in *1 Cor.* 14.7-9 (in which the musical instruments are used to create an analogy in which tongues are unfavorably compared to prophecy).
by the Spirit as an aulist who blows into an aulos (Athenagoras, *Plea for

The overall shift, in fact, from this viewpoint to Miltiades' may very well have
been a direct reaction to the Montanists. Kydd concludes that prophecy and
tongues were the points of offense which primarily lead to Montanism's being
considered a heresy by the proto-orthodox, but I suspect that if most of the
Montanists had looked like Tertullian's group, there may never have been a
problem. In any case, it was certainly the Phrygians that gave ammunition to the
earliest cessationists. Even if prophecy had faded out of practice by the time
Montanus came on the scene (a claim which I do not believe to be supported by
the evidence), the Christian authors do not seem to have recognized that absence.

After the Montanist crisis they not only recognized, many embraced it. 415

The oracles themselves may tell us something about the mental state of the
New Prophecy intermediaries. Montanus regularly speaks in the first person as
any of various members of the trinity:

414 ἵ κατ' ἐκπαίδευσιν τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς λόγισμῶν, κινήσαντας αὐτούς τοῦ θείου πνεύματος, ἢ ἐνηργοῦντο ἐξεφώνησαν, συγχρησμένον τοῦ πνεύματος, ὡς εἰ καὶ αὐλητής αὐλῶν ἐμπνεύσαται (ed. Schoedel).

415 McGiffert (1890) argues that after the prophets lost credibility, the apostolic age increased in
importance, and any justification for change had somehow to be founded on the founders. This, he
suggests, was the impetus behind the increased number of pseudo-apostolic narratives in the third
and subsequent centuries.
I am the Lord God Omnipotent coming down in a human. (Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.11)\[416]

This is normal when the prophet is possessed, but is not that unusual in any psychological state, since the intermediary is speaking for the divinity. The descriptions of his initial prophecy, however, may incline us to assume that he was incorporated. The fact that some of the detractors harp on this probably tells us that it was the case with at least some of the Montanist messengers. The famous “lyre oracle” (translated above, p. Look193, which see for notes and Greek, but I will put the translation here as well) is usually taken as evidence for Montanus as possessee losing all control:

Look! A person is like a lyre
and I fly over as a plectrum;
the person falls asleep but I am vigilant.
Look! It is the Lord who removes people’s hearts
and gives them [new] hearts (Epiphanius, Medicine Box 3.31-4.1).

The truth is, there is little here to compel us to read it as a description of possession. The strongest evidence for that is that the musical instrument

\[416\] ἔγὼ κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὁ παντοκράτωρ καταγινόμενος ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ (ed. Holl). Of course, it is possible to read καταγινόμενος as “who has come down,” which would make this into a testimony to the incarnation. I am reading it in the present such that it refers to the presence of God speaking through the prophet.
metaphor is used elsewhere for prophecy (see note 413). This could just as easily, and as translated here be read as a poem describing God’s power to choose and direct the elect (compare Eph. 2.10). Of course, I have, admittedly, translated this (I think correctly) in a way that leans away from the traditional interpretation.

Alternatively, we could read it this way:

Look! A person is like a lyre
    and I fly over as a plectrum;
the person sleeps and I am awake
Look! It is the Lord who [both] entrances the will
    and provides a will.

This is much friendlier to the trance description interpretation. The prophet’s sleep is now a trance. The heart/will is no longer the reborn believer, but the consciousness of the possessee.\footnote{Unfortunately, they both work from the Greek.}

Maximilla and Pricilla are different stories. In none of the surviving oracles do we find a shift into the first person of the deity. The “I” is always the prophetess herself. This would be characteristic of the very type of prophecy

\footnote{This is how Epiphanius reads it. He says they, “…are the words of an ecstatic. They are not the words of a person with understanding, entirely different from the mental control characteristic of the Holy Spirit speaking in the prophets’ [εἰκοτατυκοῦ φήματα ύπάρχει ταύτα καὶ οὐχὶ παρακολουθοῦντος, ἀλλὰ ἄλλον χαρακτῆρα ὑποδεικνύντος παρὰ τὸν χαρακτῆρα τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος τοῦ ἐν προφητείας λειτουργότος (ed. Holl)] (Epiphanius, 1994, 10). Of course, we have to remember that he has already arrived at that conclusion from what his sources tell him. It may well be his reading of this passage which has stamped it in the minds of most subsequent scholars.}
which Miltiades and friends insists is the only true prophecy. Maximilla tells us:

Do not listen to me, rather, listen to Christ (Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.12). \(^{418}\)

The likelihood of this being a possession oracle, channeling or incorporation, is very low. She does tell us, on one occasion that she is compelled:

Being forced, whether I want it or not, to learn the knowledge of God (Medicine Box 48.13). \(^{419}\)

But, after all, Jeremiah says more or less the same thing (Jer. 20.9). Priscilla’s oracles are similar, but one gives us even more insight:

...A holy minister must understand how to minister holiness. Purity is in fact unity, [She says,] and they have visions, and bowing their face they even hear real voices, those that save and those that are mysterious. (Chastity 10.5). \(^{420}\)

The prophet, then, sees visions and hears voices. It is hard to find a better description of parasensory experience. \(^{421}\)

---

\(^{418}\) Alternatively, “You don’t hear me, but you hear Christ” [ἐμοὶ μὴ ἀκούστε, ἀλλὰ Χριστοῦ ἀκούσατε (ed. Holl)]. Epiphanius clearly reads as I have, since he comments that her hearers should have listened to this admonition, but it is entirely possible that Epiphanius is working from a list of Montanist oracles without context.

\(^{419}\) ἤμαγκασμένον, θέλοντα καὶ μὴ θέλοντα, γνωθεὶν γνώσιν θεοῦ (ed. Holl).

\(^{420}\) Sanctus minister sanctimoniam nouerit ministrare. Purificantia enim concordat, [ait,] et visiones uident, et ponentes faciem deorsum etiam uoces audiunt manifestas, tam salutares quam et occultas (ed. Moreschini).

\(^{421}\) Although many modern epipneumatics will talk about visions and voices, by which they mean inner impressions of the same.
Firmilian’s problem [-230, Asia Minor]

In Cyprian’s collected correspondence is a letter from Firmilian (a student of
Origen, bishop of Cappadocia ~250s-260s) discussing what, by the time of the
writing was an old event:

I want to tell you about something that happened here which may be
pertinent to this discussion. About twenty years ago [-234]..., [geological
disturbances and local persecution] suddenly brought out in that area a
woman who, being entranced, was set up as a prophet; something like the
Holy Spirit filled and drove her. Thus, her primary demons impelled her
and for some time she agitated and ensnared the brethren, as she
performed astonishing and supernatural things, even promising to cause
an earthquake (Cyprian, Epistles 75.10.1-2).

422 Earthquakes were among the geological disturbances currently plaguing the community.
Firmilian thinks her “demon” foresees and so pretends to cause them.

423 Volo autem uobis et de historia quae apud nos fact est exponere ad hoc ipsum pertinent.
Ante uiginti enim et duos fere annos..., 2 emersit istic subito quaedam mulier quae in extasin
constituta propheten se praeferret et quasi Sancto Spiritu plena sic ageret. Ita autem principalium
demoniorum impetu ferebatur ut per longum tempus sollicitaret et deciperet fraternitatem,
admirabilia quaedam et portentosa perficiens, te facere se terram moueri polliceretur (ed. Bayard).
Prophecy

tells us that there were a number of disastrous earthquakes in the same time period, but does not tell us if they happened before or after this woman’s predictions. Note, however, how closely her behavior resembles incorporation trances we know from elsewhere! Walking barefoot in the snow would be entirely characteristic of the types of things such mounts often do in an effort to demonstrate that when possessed they are above harm. The claim to travel to and from places quickly reminds me of Phillip in Acts, of Mohammed, and of Ezekiel.

Later third century

Cyprian [Mid third century; Carthage]

Cyprian (martyred 258) was bishop of Carthage. Tertullian would have been getting on when he was young, and it is generally thought that he did not convert until middle age (around 245), so while it is possible that they met, it is unlikely that there was a strong connection. Of course, Cyprian would have known about the elder theologian. In spite of this, there is the sense of a strong continuity between the Carthage of Tertullian and that of Cyprian. However, where Tertullian was an aficionado of the prophetic, Cyprian was himself a visionary
(Harnack, 1902). Like Polycarp, he had a vision of his impending martyrdom (Pontius, *Passion of Cyprian*, 77.12-13). Not only does he have visions himself, but he corresponds with others who do (*Epistles* 23.1; 77.2; *Concerning Mortality* 19; see Robeck 1992), and on one occasion one of his own letters is referred to as a prophecy (*Epistles* 78.2). Children are also said to prophesy:

The divine censure does not cease to chastise us night or day. At night there are visions; by day innocent boys are filled with the Holy Spirit, who in ecstasy see and hear and then speak what our Lord deems worthy to instruct us (*Epistles* 9.4).

Another of his letters is worth looking at:

I remember what was clearly set out before me... "Those who do not believe that Christ appoints a priest will logically feel justified in avenging a priest." Though, I suppose, some think dreams are ridiculous and visions stupid, but they are more likely among those who chose to believe against priest than for priests (*Epistles* 69.10).

This is interesting because of the close connection it draws between parasensory revelation and sacramental office. It is interesting particularly in light of the usual

---

424 See *Epistles* 7.3-5;
425 Castigare nos itaque divina censura nec noctibus desinit nec diebus. Praeter nocturnas enim visions, per dies quoque impletur apud nos Spiritu sancto puerorum innocens aetas, quae in ecstasi videt oculis et audit et loquitur ea quibus nos Dominus monere et instruere dignatur (ed. Bayard).
426 Memini enim quid jam mihi sit ostensum... «Itaque qui Christo non credit sacerdotem facienti, et postea credere incipient sacerdotem vindicanti.» Quamquam sciam somnia ridicula et visions ineptas quibusdam videri, sed utque illis qui malunt contra sacerdotes credere quam sacerdotes (ed. Bayard).
Prophecy

attempt made by scholars since Weber to see a tension between prophetic charisma and charisma of office. That no such tension is present for Cyprian is evident. He, in fact, comes close to identifying them. Of course, this passage is useful, as Kydd (1984) points out, because it makes it clear that in the mid third century there existed a (probably growing) rejection of such phenomena.

Stragglers [Third century; various locations]

In the third century, there are a handful of characters identified as intermediaries or prophesying in the literature. From what we can see, however, the age of congregational prophecy seems to be passing. It probably had some life in Carthage and similar communities for a while, but generally without literary reporters. The reports we do get are of isolated and usually self-targeted visions and dreams. Although these, too, diminish in frequency, there has never been a time in the history of Christianity when they completely disappear, in spite of an increasing cessationist viewpoint coming from the dominant theological community. For completeness, I will briefly summarize the third century instances of divine communication, but from the outset it must be admitted that they will not add much to our overall picture.

Natalius was willing to be a heretic if the money was right. He was hired by a group professing adoptionism and Melchisedechianism to serve as their bishop
for a salary of 150 denarii per month. But God, apparently, would not allow it. He was pursued by visions, and finally actually beaten by angels through one whole night. The next morning he presented himself to the Roman bishop, Zephyrinus (pope 198-217), showing those present his wounds, and seeking readmission into the Proto-orthodox fold. He was allowed back in (Eusebius, EH 5.28.10-12). Oddly, the physical manifestations on his body (compare stigmata) are not unknown, although rare, as symptoms of a psychic event (or psychosomatic event, as the case may be). Of course, we have to exercise the usual caution, but the story is within the realms of credibility. This is particularly true if we allow that Natalius was probably pursued by guilt, as well as angels.

Origen (~185-254), like Irenaeus, claimed to have seen prophecy and other pneumatic manifestations at work in contemporary Christian communities.

And yet traces of this Holy Spirit, which appeared as a dove, still remain among Christians. They expel demons, perform many healings, and see some things, according to the will of the Word, which have yet to take place (Ag. Celsus 1.46).

There are no more prophets or wonders, although one finds them, more or less, among Christians and some [works are] even greater. And (if I may be

---

427 Καὶ ἐπὶ ἰχνὴ τοῦ ἁγίου ἐκείνου πνεύματος, ὥθησαν οὐδὲν ἐν εἰδει περισσότερας, παρὰ Χριστιανοῖς φασὶν ἔκτεεν δαιμόνια καὶ πολλὰς ιᾶσις ἐπικαθὼς καὶ ὀρόσι τίνα κατὰ τῷ βούλημα τοῦ λόγου περὶ μελλόντων (ed. Borret).
trusted) I have also seen them (Ag. Celsus 2.8).\textsuperscript{428} It must be noted that Origen was well traveled, and so had opportunity to see activity which may have still been active only locally in various places (Kydd, 1984). It also needs to me mentioned that coming from a Christian family (his father was martyred) he would have been a (young) believer during the height of Montanism. He may well have seen things in his youth which he dredges up when needed for his argument. It is possible, of course, that he is aware of active intermediaries in his mature period, but we have to be careful about projecting the survival of congregational prophecy beyond what we already know based on his testimony.

Benjamin Warfield, in his classic apology for cessationism (1918/1983), while admitting that Origen claims to have witnessed contemporary prophets, points out that he refuses to record the details, not wanting to incur the ridicule of unbelievers.\textsuperscript{429} Warfield sees dishonesty in this refusal, and calls all Origen’s testimony on the subject into question.

\textsuperscript{428} Οὐκ ἐπὶ γὰρ προφήτηιν οὐδὲ τεράστια, ὅν κἂν ἴχνη ἐπὶ ποιον παρὰ Χριστιανῶν εὐδιδοκεῖται, καὶ τινὰ γέ «μείζονα» καὶ εἰ πιστοὶ ἔμενεν λέγοντες, καὶ ημεῖς ἔωράκαμεν (ed. Borreat).

\textsuperscript{429} For other references to contemporary intermediation in Origen, see Ag. Celsus 1.17; 3.18; 3.24; 3.46; 7.4; 7.23; First Principles 1.3.3; 2.7.3; Joshua 8.1; 26.2; Exodus 4.5.
Origen sees a prophetic role of Spirit in aiding the interpreter (student or teacher) in understanding the deeper meaning of a difficult text (Kydd, 1984). This is perhaps the earliest explicit reference to this type of prophecy that we find, although Philo’s description is similar. It is what I classified as “prophetic interpretation” (above, p. 42). In many ways, this is still intermediation, but it is indirect, since it inserts the text as the primary source of revelation, with the Spirit functioning only as periodic illuminator. It is the scholarly version of didactic prophecy.

Novatian (mid third century) became anti-pope when Cornelius was appointed to the see in 251. His only significant contention against Cornelius centered on the issue of readmission of believers who had faltered in times of persecution. He comes into this study because he, not surprisingly, discussed the Holy Spirit in his book The Trinity. He says the following:

He is the one who sets prophets in the Church, instructs leaders, distributes tongues, makes one strong or healthy, works wonders, enables discernment of spirits, selects rulers, convenes councils, puts together and distributes all of the other charismatic gifts and so makes the Lord’s Church perfect in all things, and completes it (29.10).\(^{430}\)

\(^{430}\) Hic est enim qui Prophetas in Ecclesia constituit, Magistros erudit, linguas dirigit, virtutes et sanitates facit, opera mirabilia gerit, discretiones spirituum porrigit, gubernationes contribuit,
The list is clearly based on those in 1 Cor. 12 and Rom. 12. Novatian uses the present tense, which Kydd (1984) thinks indicates that these gifts are present in ~240 when Novatian was writing, but he admits that it could be an instance of the “extended present” (61). It is clear, at least, that Novatian is not a self-conscious cessationist; he does not locate the gifts in the irrevocable past. Nevertheless, this doesn’t read like it comes from experience — for one thing, if it were, we might expect his list to be a little different from Paul’s.

Dionysius was a student of Origen and bishop of Alexandria from about 247 to 264. He claims to have heard from God on two occasions. First, he left Alexandria in a time of persecution because God told him to (Eusebius, EH 6.40.3; Kydd, 1984). Second, God told him he could read heretical literature:

And a message came to me commanding explicitly, “Receive whatever comes into your hand, because you are capable of discriminating and amending it. This was what originally stimulated your faith.” I accepted the vision as an apostolic voice... (EH 7.7.3).

Hippolytus (anti-pope with Callistus’ papacy in 257) wrote in his *Apostolic...*
Tradition:

If there is an instruction in the word, they [the faithful] should prefer to go and hear the word of God for the comfort of their soul. They should go quickly to the church where the Spirit flourishes (35.3).\footnote{Si qua autem per uerbum catecizatio (κατεχίζων) fit, praeponat hoc ut pergat et audiat uerbum dei ad confortationem animae suae. Festinet autem ad ecclesiam, ubi floret spiritus (ed. Botte).}

This is clearly in the category of didactic prophecy. It may be a natural step beyond Origen's prophetic interpretation, a step into the pulpit.\footnote{Although, we do need to recall Ellis' argument that this sort of thing was the primary type of prophecy found in the earliest Church. I do not agree with him that it was the primary type, although concede that it was present, whether or not it was identified as prophetic.} This type of intermediation will emerge as the dominant form. First, it is primarily clerical, which means that there is no conflict of authority between cleric and prophet. Second, given the nature of the clerical population, there is little danger of women functioning as intermediaries. Third, there is no obligation for the intermediary to identify when he is speaking “in the spirit” and when not.

Decline

Opinions on the decline of prophecy are somewhat varied. Most scholars see a Weberian style conflict between the emerging forces of ecclesiastical authority, represented by the bishops (charisma of office), and the older order of prophetic
intermediation. Lewis (1971) summarizes the position well:

If certain exotic religions thus allow ecstasy to rule most aspects of their adherents’ lives, all the evidence indicates that the more strongly-based and entrenched religious authority becomes, the more hostile it is towards haphazard inspiration. New faiths may announce their advent with a flourish of ecstatic revelations, but once they become securely established they have little time or tolerance for enthusiasm. For the religious enthusiast, with his direct claim to divine knowledge is always a threat to established order (p. 176).

It has become standard to see this as what happened in Christianity some time during the late second or early third centuries. Harnack (1908), Ehrhardt (1962), Chadwick (1967), Pelikan (1969), von Campenhausen (1969), Ash (1976), and Aune (1983) all take similar positions. Ruthven summarizes (without approval):

These authors are essentially restating the classic Protestant position in this issue: that miraculous spiritual gifts, including prophecy, where in some sense ‘foundational’ in that they were essential for the initiation and spread of the Christian faith, but, like scaffolding, they were no longer required after the viable structure and doctrines of the church had been established (p. 17).\textsuperscript{435}

\textsuperscript{434} Van Campenhausen blames the heresies for leadership’s muscling the prophets out. Aune is not significantly different.

\textsuperscript{435} Some Pentecostal and Charismatic scholars have tried to demonstrate that no hiatus occurred at all. To do this they are forced not to distinguish congregational prophecy from other forms. There is, admitted no evidence of any kind of permanent disappearance of personal visions at any time in the history of Christianity. Kydd (1984) blames the decline on increased levels of “sophistication.”
Montanism did not help the prophetic contingent.\textsuperscript{436} Although the theology of cessationism was never really influential in the first centuries, the literature of anti-Montanism is probably where it first appears. It will be destined to become the standard entrenched position for the rejection of Pentecostalism in the twentieth century. B. B. Warfield (1918/1983) was its strongest modern advocate. The basic position is that the charismata ceased, after the passing of the apostolic age, simply because God chose for them to cease. They were needed to establish the church, but not to maintain it, so God brought them to an end. The ‘when’ varies slightly, but the most common position is that this took place with the death of the last of the twelve.\textsuperscript{437}

In Judaism, intermediation (rarely called prophecy) was present in the second Temple period but did decline in the early Christian period, particularly after the second Jewish revolt (Hill, 1979; Gowan, 1980; Aune, 1983; Humm, 1985). There may have been a dependency of Christian on Jewish cessationism since the later claimed that prophecy had ceased when the holy Spirit was taken away (due to

\textsuperscript{436} Hill (1979) and Carson (1987) see this behind the decline of prophecy.

\textsuperscript{437} Graves (1983) finds several variations: after the writing of 1 Corinthians, of Hebrews, of the last of the books of the New Testament, the closing of the canon (in Jerome’s time?), the death of the last apostle (the twelve; missionary apostles do not count), the destruction of Jerusalem, or the maturation of the church (which will happen... when?).
sin) in the fourth century, BCE. Christians largely accepted this position, claiming it had briefly been revived for the *New Testament* period. The intervening period was called the “four hundred silent years.”

Meyer (1974) largely debunked this position, and has been followed by most scholars (e.g. Aune, 1983, Humm, 1987). The decline after the second Jewish revolt was in a large degree because that revolt failed, and intermediation, except as noted above (note 438), did not recover. That failure to recover may also have

---

438 The claim that prophecy had ceased in Judaism shortly after the restoration is made in the second century (CE) and later literature (*Tosefta Sota* 13.2; *Seder Olam Rabbah* 30; *Baba Bathra* 12a; *Abot* 1.1). I have argued elsewhere that prophetism, but under different names continued through the Second Temple period and up through the second Jewish War (Humm, 1985). That intermediation in different forms continued after that cannot be denied, though. Specifically, the rôle of intermediaries seems to have been largely taken over by the authoritative interpreters of tradition generally known to us as the ‘rabbis.’ The *Bat Qol* (see above, p. 39, n. 77) also appears in this literature (*Tosefta Sota* 13.2f; *Ta’anit* 69b; also *Jos. Ant.* 13.282f), but has little real authority in matters of halakha (*yBer.* 1.7; 3b.73f). Merkabah literature, and probably its cousin Apocalyptic, also continued to be produced under the cover of pseudepigraphy.

439 One of the fundamental assumptions that underlies most modern assertions that prophecy ceased after the exilic period is that prophecy must be normative (and be viewed as such by its audience) in order to be true prophecy. We have already seen that Jeremiah’s prophecies were not so viewed during his lifetime (even after vindication — his prophecy about the governor is ignored after which he is hauled off to Egypt) and the same can surely be shown for Amos and some of Isaiah, among many. That the prophets may have viewed their own prophecies as authoritative is not relevant, since the false prophets probably also viewed themselves in this manner. That prophecy ceases to be preserved in the late Persian period more likely reflects the prevailing uncertainty regarding it by the (literate) public and may even evidence a personal uncertainty on the part of the prophets themselves, than the complete disappearance of the phenomenon.

Grudem tries to live in both worlds by having Old Testament prophets be authoritative, but early Christian prophets not. This is problematic; see my thoughts on *Acts*. The problem reflects a failure to distinguish active prophecy from canon. However, it is not beyond the pale that this attitude lies behind the slow decline of prophecy in the second century.
been helped by the closing of canon (in main stream Judaism) in the same period (see Greenspahn, 1989; Humm, 1987).

Some of the same things can be said about Christianity. The delayed Parousia may have put pressure on prophets. Maximilla’s prophecy that she was the last must have been embarrassing.\(^{440}\) Although complete acceptance of canon was still some years off, that lack should not blind us to the fact that most of this process was completed (Gospels and Pauline epistles) by the end of the second century.\(^{441}\)

The Weberian analysis should be viewed in light of the fact that coexistence has not been a huge problem in some modern groups, and the observation that leaders such as Cyprian were able to exemplify both types of charismata (spirit

\(^{440}\) Although the community had tolerated similar earlier problem-prophecies, such as the Jesus tradition that "some standing here will not see death until they see the kingdom of God come with power" [εἰς τόν τεν τῶν ἐπιστροφῶν ὑποτελεῖτας ἠγάδρος ἄν ἴδωσιν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐλπιθόταν ἐν δυνάμει] (Mark 9.1), or the tradition mentioned in John that the beloved disciple would not die before the parousia [λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἐάν αὐτὸν θέλω μένειν ἕως ἔρχομαι, τί πρός σέ; σὺ μου ἀκολούθει] (John 21.22).

Apocalyptic and apocalypticism may have gone through a period of decline and outright rejection in some communities, but has always had a place somewhere in the Church (see, for example, Chadwick, 2001). Proto-heretics may have seen themselves in distinction to Rome but after Constantine that distinction became much more serious which could have easily lead to the sense of oppression and marginalization which often feeds Apocalyptic communities. Some of this would fall into the category of what I am calling intermediation.

\(^{441}\) Closing of canon, particularly in response to Montanism, is cited as a cause in various forms by Harnack (1900/1961), Ehrhardt (1962), Chadwick (1967), von Campenhausen (1972), and Pelikan (1969).
and office). But as a principle it still holds.\textsuperscript{442} Even if it is insufficient as a complete explanation, it must have been present as part of the pressure that existed on intermediation in the third century, at least. It should be noted, though, that it is never expressly stated in primary literature.\textsuperscript{443}

Few have noticed (possibly because not all would agree) that it is in the third century that we see a surge in church orders. This movement may have reflected a desire to control content, and it may have been designed to allay Roman criticism. Cumont (1911) comments:

The liturgy reminds one of the ancient civil law on account of the minuteness of its prescriptions. This religion looked suspiciously at the abandonment of the soul to the ecstasies of devotion. It repressed, by force if necessary, the exuberant manifestations of too ardent faith and everything that was not in keeping with the grave dignity befitting the relations of a \textit{civis Romanus} with a god.

This negative Roman attitude could have influenced the church in various ways supporting the second century changes. Discouraging ecstatic behavior fits

\textsuperscript{442} James Ash (1976) sees this compatibility as the key to decline of identifiable congregational prophecy. The authorities eventually so joined the charisma of prophecy to that of episcopal office that the separate ministry of the prophet became superfluous.

\textsuperscript{443} We would not expect to see a sudden disappearance, even if conditions did change. Firth (1967), for example observed the Tikopia of over forty years during which (not of his doing) the culture shifted from and indigenous paganism to Christianity. Early mediums tended to be demonstrative but by the 1950s they were “less public.” By 1966, mediumship was no longer practiced. They did try to accommodate. In one case, a medium enrolled his spirit helper in the local church (Wood, 2003).
nicely into this pattern. This is in a context where many of the upper Christian
crust were trying hard to argue for Christianity as compatible with Roman life in
all things except emperor worship.\textsuperscript{444}

If order was being increased, we have to ask where the congregational
prophecies were going to be taking place. In Tertullian’s community the answer
is, apparently, “Afterwards.”\textsuperscript{445} Tertullian was nothing if not positive about
intermediation. In a community in which the leadership was perhaps more
ambivalent, potential prophets may have been more inclined not to come forward.

If I am correct, epipnoia flows better in more flexible liturgies. If Wilson (1980) is
correct, it also needs some level of community support. The Montanist crisis,
failed prophecy, and perhaps a distaste for enthusiasm harmonized to undercut

\textsuperscript{444} Most sources on liturgy (one of the better discussions is Bradshaw, 1992; see also Bornkamm,
1966/1969; Delling, 1962; Hahn, 1973; Martin, 1974; Moule, 1961; Schweizer, 1957; Webber, 1993)
seem to assume that the Orders simply quantify what was so from the beginning. It is an
assumption from silence for the most part. The earliest suggestion of that sort of worship structure
that I know of is in the Didache, but only for the Eucharist. Roman worship was highly structured,
and so was later Synagogue form (how structured was it in the early period?) Obviously, the
mysteries were less so, but magic attracts formal liturgy and the mysteries were at least in part
magical. Of course, I Cor. 12-14 suggests a certain lack of structure. The real question is, “How
much was ordered, in a word-for-word sense?” Even the Orders do not preserve a single unbroken
tradition (Schmemann, 1975), suggesting either that none existed, or that it was not regarded as that
important.

\textsuperscript{445} Or during, if quietly and restrained, as is suggested by the vision described in The Soul (above
pp. 182f).
that support. It was not a plot from those with power, but a slow erosion of popular support that incrementally took the wind out of community intermediation.

Charting the seas

At this point, I want to take a step back and look over the collective data to see what generalizations can be made. First, we should look at the frequency of reports of intermediation as it varies throughout the period.
shows the number of reports per 25 year period. It should be kept in mind that this includes all reports, from all sects, of all psychological types, etc. I have made no effort to filter out reports based on believability. However, prophets with multiple recorded messages (such as Paul) are counted only once. Passages that imply, but do not enumerate, multiple prophets are counted as one instance. If they specifically say there are more than one, but without a specific number, this was counted as two. This method turned up a total of 73 intermediaries. Of these, 44 are post-biblical, amounting to a little over 60%. Three of the prophets mentioned in the New Testament are considered heterodox by the biblical authors (Simon Magus, the unnamed prophetic opponent in 1 John, and Jezebel).

In this particular chart I have distinguished proto-orthodox from proto-heterodox, as well as the New Prophecy intermediaries. The peak in the second quarter of the second century was apparently shared by catholics and non-catholics alike, but the apparent disappearance of the latter after the third quarter

---

446 Although, Barcabbas, Barcoph, Parchor, and Cham have been reduced to two, assuming that some duplication is going on there (see above, p. 158).

447 Obviously, John probably has more than one false prophet in mind, in addition to approved intermediaries, but since they are not enumerated, only one is counted.
more likely reflects lack of reporting on the part of our catholic sources. The proto-orthodox had pockets of more and less prophetism, and so did their opponents, but I see no reason to assume that the later had less activity overall, or at least per capita. I would not be surprised if they had more.

I have not distinguished between Phrygian and Carthaginian Montanists, although the latter represent all of the reported New Prophecy activity in the first quarter of the third century, and nothing else. Obviously, the New Prophecy was active in Asia Minor through this period, so these differences simply represent lack of consistency in the nature of the reports.

---

448 In fact, even the existence of the peak may be, in part, attributable to Irenaeus' compendium of heresies in the second half of that century. Later heresiarchs are so dependent on Irenaeus that they add very little of interest.
Figure 3 illustrates how the activity breaks down by sect. By "Earliest Christian," I mean early Christian prophets not directly associated with the Pauline community, and yet still evaluated as orthodox. The first two columns are biblical, as is the "ProtoGnostic" column. Whether post-biblical prophets are predominantly proto-orthodox depends on our evaluation of the New Prophecy.

By "Social Context" in Figure 4, I mean the original setting of the prophecy.
Figure 1: Reports by social context

Since each prophet counts only once, even if she has multiple prophecies recorded, I have had to choose which type seems to predominate. "Private prophecy" refers to communications directed at the prophet herself. Paul's various trance-visions in Acts are good examples Personal prophecy, Agabus' to Paul comes to mind, is directed to an individual other than the intermediary. Congregational is the largest category, not surprisingly, and is activity occurring within the framework of group meetings. Such meetings may, or may not, be a formal "service." Public intermediation is as the name implies. The best example in our literature is Celsus' description of unnamed prophets in the area of Palestine, but apocalyptic sometimes falls into
this category. Certainly this includes the social category which lies behind the reports of the activities of Jewish scripture prophets such as Elijah or Jeremiah.

I did run a couple of parallel analyses on social context to see if any light could be shed on time periods when one variety was more popular than another but found nothing of significance. I specifically anticipated that the first century might look different from the second and third, but all categories seemed to vary more or less proportionately.
Psychological categories (shown in Figure 5) have been a recurring theme in this study, and once again, the results are not terribly surprising. The high volume of unknown types is disappointing, but to be expected given the nature of most of the reports.

Epipnoia is the big item for identifiable types, and, in my opinion, might be higher if I had not given incorporation more than it was probably due in several too-close-to-call situations.\(^{449}\) Origen's inspired interpretation falls under intuitive. I have counted Perpetua and Saturus' visions as soul-travel, but as we saw in the discussion, they might have been dreams (above, p. 189).

\(^{449}\) Specifically, Montanus, Agabus, the sending of Paul & Barnabas, the Didache, and Celsus. Of course the Didachist could be referring to more than one type, as could Celsus.
The last category has to do with location. It should come as no surprise that Asia Minor tops the charts by a significant margin. Apparently, this is true even if we remove the New Prophecy from the mix. I have done this by inserting the Montanists on top of the Asia Minor bar (in Figure 6) such that it is possible to see the relative counts with and without those prophets included in the mix.
The home of modern Turkey seems to have been a hotbed for intermediary activity since long before Christianity. The Phrygian mode is named after an Asian provence and of course both Bacchics and Corybantes hail therefrom. There is certainly a well established social reward system, and there may even be a genetic predisposition (see Stewart-Sykes, 1997).

In Figure 7, I have separated the data into four historical periods. By carefully examining this chart it is possible to see a general shift from east in the first century (darker bars, on the bottom) to almost exclusively southwest in the third (lighter bars, on top). Rome is relatively balanced. Asia Minor undoubtedly would be as well if we had more surviving reports. Of course the entire shift
Prophecy

could tell us more about reporting than practice. Certainly the presence of both Tertullian and Cyprian in Carthage makes that area appear dominant in the third century, largely due to their literary contribution.

One thing which does present itself, although not immediately visible through the charts, is that most prophecy which is identifiably predictive (usually apocalyptic) originates in Asia Minor. It is probably safe to assume that there were others. Eusebius describes a revelation given to Christians living in Jerusalem that they should escape before its destruction (EH 3.5), but this is the only post-biblical Christian future prediction that is specifically described in the literature at which we have looked.  

---

450 Its authenticity is, of course, hardly beyond question. By “post-biblical” I mean ‘after the events explicitly described in the Bible.’ That some biblical writings were composed after this period is widely held. There are literatures at which we have not looked, largely because I have viewed apocalyptic as for the most part outside the scope of this study. The various apocryphal ‘revelations,’ and the Christian Sibyllines come immediately to mind. Many of these have unknown provenance, and may reflect predictive intermediation outside Asia Minor.
Reflections and Suggestions

The largest category under psychological type (above, Figure 5, p. 220) is in "unknown." This probably will not change as we gather a better understanding of the nature of (at least some types of) prophecy. While much observational work has been done on modern intermediation, as should be clear from the first part of the dissertation (see pp. 9ff), the psychology and neurology of the underlying NTEs is fairly new. Obviously, not all intermediation is based on non-ordinary states of consciousness, but we assume that at least some is. Most prophets make such claims.

In 1972 Richard Shweder did a ground breaking study in which he determined that local healer-shamans were more likely to be confident of their guesses than other locals.\textsuperscript{451} Such studies further our understanding of some

\textsuperscript{451} The Zinacanteco shamans function as healers. They diagnose by divine revelation or by feeling the pulse. Shweder compared the responses of local healer-shamans to other locals on questions about the contents of unrecognizably out of focus pictures. The healer-shamans were much surer of their answers, and no more likely to be right. He concludes that, for this group, there is a predisposing personality for shamans.
intermediaries’ mindsets significantly. Unfortunately, they are rare. Michael
Persinger (1984, 1987, 1993) has found a correlation between religious visions and
temporal lobe stimulation.⁴⁵² Eugene D’Aquili and Andrew Newberg (1996, 1998,
1999, etc. – see bibliography) have performed brain scans on subjects emerging
from states of meditation (Catholic and Buddhist).⁴⁵³ More recently Newberg has
studied glossolalia (2006), discovering that, not surprisingly, singing in tongues
differed from regular singing in that it showed decreased conscious control.
Unfortunately, neither of these studies furthers our understanding of prophetic
speech.

The relationship between music and prophetism has been the subject of some
speculation, arising from the fact that they usually occur together. This may
simply be because congregational prophecy tends to be found in contexts of
corporate worship. There may be more to it than that, though.

One possibility is simply that music stimulates the emotions (Jourdain,

---

⁴⁵² He has been able, by applying electro-magnetic stimulation to the temporal lobes of even non-
religious subjects, to stimulate visions of angels and other religious figures. Some individuals who
reported earlier religious experience also reported “symptoms characteristic of temporal lobe
activation” (1984). His temporal stimulation device has not worked on everybody, though, and it is
not clear what are the discriminating factors.

⁴⁵³ They found significant differences, but failed to notice that they had thereby addressed one of
the long-standing issues in the study of mysticism: whether Eastern and Western ‘mystical
experiences’ are, in fact, the same.
More frequently, however, scholars cite the effects of rhythm. Neher (1962) used visual stimuli to simulate acoustic, and found that they caused "unusual perceptions or hallucinations" (155). Harner (1990) cites the hypnotic effects of the drum, as do Huxley (cited in Needham, 1997), and Newberg (2001), among others. Some, alternatively, invoke the accompanying dance (Zempleni, 1966; Nketia, 1957 [cited from Rouget]; Carter, 1999), especially the swinging of the head that we see in illustrations such as Figure 1 (p. 62), as well as in modern possession dances. Rouget (1985) is critical of each of these, largely because if the effect were physiological, it would have the same affect on all listeners (or dancers), but it does not. In any case, he points out, neither music nor dancing is always present. Rather, he says, it is an ingrained social response. He is right, but it needs to be considered that it is possible to have a physiological affect which only in the proper ingrained social situations can be turned into a stimulus to intermediation.

The issue of music and rhythm has meaning to this study simply because it is

---

454 It also helps Parkinson's sufferers by organizing the brain (Jourdain, 1997). This may also explain the apparent effect of listening to Mozart on spatial reasoning (Rauscher, Shaw, & Ky, 1993).
likely that in the period under investigation there were certain voices in the Proto-
orthodox community that wanted to exclude musical instruments (Clement of
Alexandria, *Instructor* 2.4; *Sibylline Oracles* 8.113-121; Pseudo-Cyprian, *Public shows*
3-2-3). It appears that by the fifth century, they had been largely successful
(Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ag. Julian* 5.25; Basil, *Canon* 74; Pseudo-Justin, *For the*
o*thodox* 107). If the exclusion of musical instruments impacted either the
physiological effect or the ingrained social context mentioned above it could have
been a factor in the decline of prophecy in the same period.

All this awaits further research. It is admittedly difficult (and expensive) to
do the kind of research that Newberg does on intermediaries. He admits that it
was difficult enough to find glossolalists for his 2006 study. Neher’s 1961 study
needs to be returned to with more methodological care and without assuming that
flashes of light are the same as drum beats. It would be interesting to see how
Shewder’s 1972 test would work when applied to other intermediative groups.

Some of this may enable us to speak with more authority about early
Christian experience. Until then, we speak as the scribes (*Mark* 1.22).
Appendix 1: Glossary

Abbreviations:
- AUB = "Absolute unitary being" (see below)
- NDE = "Near death experience"
- NTE = "Nonordinary and transcendent experience" (see below)
- OBE = "Out of body experience"

Absolute unitary being (AUB)
Coined by Newberg and D'Aquili for the state of consciousness sought by the Buddhist monks they studied, this phrase is certainly appropriate for much Eastern mystical meditation. The degree to which it is appropriate for Western mystics is neither resolved nor to be investigated in this study.

Channeling
This is the variety of mediumship characteristic of (although not limited to) modern Spiritualism. It is a form of possession, but distinguished by the fact that it is generally not musicated, non-kinetic, and rarely involves amnesia.

Cognitive
In the context of this study this means deriving from a normal state of mind, a production, primarily, of the conscious intellect.

Congregational prophecy
Prophecy that occurs in, or is directed toward an assembly of cult initiates, even though non-members (non-initiates) may also be present.

Discernment of spirits
One of the nine manifestations of the spirit found in 1 Cor. 12.10. Generally, this is understood to mean the supernatural ability to determine whether something (e.g. another manifestation of the spirit) is of divine origin. Dautzenberg (1975) argues that it is better understood as a divinely inspired interpretation of prophetic revelation.

Dissociation
In psychology, this refers to the dis-integration of aspects of the
psychological self, manifesting in symptoms often associated with schizophrenia: hearing voices, multiple personalities, etc. In this study, it refers to three classes of prophetic states: ecstasy, possession, and parasensory experience. In the first two cases, either the psychological self is separated from the body (e.g. tours of Heaven), or the body appears to have been taken over by a foreign entity (e.g. possession). In the third case, the subject’s senses perceive things not normally perceived (visions, voices, etc.).

**Divination**
In general use, this refers to any sort of forbidden contact with the supernatural (generally) for the purposes of discovering the future. In this study, it is used for methods of discovery that utilize the (cognitive) interpretation of (apparently) random phenomena (e.g. Tarot card or entrail reading). Underlying this is, of course, the belief that such phenomena are not truly random, but are either directed by the gods or reflect deeper natural connections (like reading clouds to predict weather).

**Ecstasy**
The category of revelatory experience in which the subject perceives herself to have left her body and to have traveled, or been taken, to another place. It is characteristic of apocalyptic visions and shamanistic journeys. I have also used this for certain classes of mysticism in which the subject visibly communes with the deity (rapture).

**Epipnoia (epipneumatic)**
I have coined this term (derived from Greek ἑπιπνοια) and its companion adjective — epipneumatic — for experiences in which the prophet has a strong internal sense of the message being delivered, but in which she (a) does not lose control of (any part of) her body, and (b) does not claim to have actually heard (in the aural sense) or seen (visually) a message or messenger.

**Incorporation**
This is the category of possession in which the spirit is embodied in the medium. It is virtually always musicated and involves dance. Among the Yoruba, there is no oral communication between the Orisha (possessing spirits) and congregants. American practitioners (Condomblé, Ubanda, Santeria) generally have an oral component. There is, in my opinion, not enough data to determine whether ancient practitioners prophesied, or just
danced.

**Inspiration**

Literally, this means a condition of being in-spirited. It is the term usually used to translate θεόπνευστος (god-breathed) in 2 Tim. 3.16, where it describes the nature of scripture. I am using it as a generic term for a NTE based prophetic state.

**Intermediary**

In the larger sense, this is one who mediates between parties. In our case, those parties would be humans and the supernatural. As used here it is narrowed down to one who receives messages from the supernatural (the priestly function of delivering messages or sacrifices to the gods, for example, would not be included).

**Intuition**

This is semi-conscious knowledge of the generally unknowable. What we usually call intuition, as well as ESP and mind reading are all parts of this larger category. How it relates to the prophetic states that are the main topic of this study is not clear, although at a psychological level, there may be connections. The theological constructs are, of course, quite different.

**Medium**

In much literature this is a synonym for channeler and will be distinguished from someone who is incorporated (e.g. Firth 1967), but in much scholarly literature it means any possessed person without distinction (see n. 45). I have chosen to use it in the latter fashion, using channeler or mount when a distinction needs to be made.

**Nonordinary and transcendent experiences**

Coined by Braud (2003), they “include, but are not limited to, mystical, spiritual, and paranormal experiences.”

**Normal mental state**

Like ‘cognitive,’ this refers to the normal states of mind — those that are not associated with any sort of intermediary activity, are fully conscious, and generally regarded as sane (which is not to say that intermediary states are necessarily insane).
Oracle
In this study, this is a divinity’s response to an inquiry (or the one who delivers that response). Elsewhere, of course, it is often used as a synonym for prophecy.

Parasensory experience
These are experiences in which one (or several) of the five physical senses are stimulated by things which are not normally sensed. In this context, of course, we are interested in occasions where such experiences are revelatory. The most common are such things as seeing visions and hearing voices, although other senses are sometimes involved.

Partial possession
I use this for instances where the medium loses control of only part of her body. In Spiritualist circles a prime example is automatic writing. In terms of the features that usually distinguish incorporation from channeling, this is more likely to resemble the latter. However, Firth’s comment that mediums do not experience amnesia unless the possession includes their head suggests a modified version of incorporation. There could, of course be instances of both.

Pneumatic
From πνευματικός, this term simply means “related to the spirit.” It is frequently used in the literature, as well as here, to describe non-ordinary manifestations (e.g. tongues, healing, prophecy, etc.) or the people who do such things.

Possession
In this state, the subject is presumably taken over by another entity for a period of time. She is often unaware afterwards of anything that has taken place during the possession. Although complete possession is the most common, one does encounter, especially in spiritualist traditions, reports of people surrendering only part of their body (e.g. the hands in automatic writing).

Possession-trance
This is Bourguignon’s term for what I am calling incorporation. It is also used by her students, but less consistently by other scholars in the social sciences community. I have not seen it outside that community.
Prophecy/prophet
For the purposes of this dissertation, this is synonymous with ‘intermediary.’ Other modern uses are generally derivative, playing on the social roles or messages of historical prophets — especially those in the Bible. So, for example, because Amos’ prophecies are characterized by demands for social reform, a social reformer might be called a ‘prophet’ by an author wanting to capitalize on the positive connotations of the word.

Prophetic interpretation
While it is possible to interpret sacred texts at a strictly cognitive level, the prophetic interpreter is one who can obtain the appropriate interpretation for this community, at this time, directly from the divine source. While to my knowledge this terminology is never used in primary literature, the concept is probably present in Ezra-Nehemiah, and clearly at Qumran and throughout the history of Christianity.

Psychopomp
He or she is one who guides the spirits of the dead to their place in the next world. Hermes has this role in Greek mythology. Anubis does in Egypt. Metatron is given this role in 3 Enoch 48c.12 and on an incantation bowl (Klutz, 2003), while Peter and/or Michael seem to handle it for Christians. It is very frequently the role of the shaman, if she is a soul traveler (rather than just a healer).

Shaman
Shamans actually have a number of intermediary roles, but for this study, the distinguishing one is the shamanistic journey, in which the shaman travels into the supernatural realm for purposes that range from healing to the prophetic.

Trance
This term has a wide range of meanings in the literature. For our purposes, it is the psychological altered state into which the dissociated intermediary enters during possession of ecstasy.
Appendices

Appendix 2: Montanist Prophecies


Attributed to Montanus

I am the Lord God Omnipotent occupied in a human.

(Égō kúrios ò theós ò pantokrátōr katalinómenos én ánθrōpōs).

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.11)

Neither angel nor elder, but I, the Lord God Father, have come.

(óuτē áγγελος óuτē περέσβυς, ἀλλ' égō kúrios ò theós patḗr ἡθον)

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.11)

I am the father, I am the son, and I am the Paraclete.

(Égō eimi ó patḗr kai égō eimi ó νίος kai égō ó paraκλητος).

(Didymus, The Trinity 3.41.1)

Why do you say the better person is “saved”?

For the just will shine, [he says,] a hundred times brighter than the sun; the least among you who are saved will shine a hundred times brighter than the moon.

(τί λέγεις τὸν ὑπὲρ ἀνθρώπων σωζόμενον;
λάμψει γάρ [φησιν] ὁ δίκαιος ὑπὲρ τὸν ἥλιον εκατονταπλασίων, οἱ δὲ μικροὶ ἐν τιμὶ σωζόμενοι λάμψουσιν εκατονταπλασίων ὑπὲρ τὴν σελήνην).

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.10)

Look! A person is like a lyre and I fly over as a plectrum; the person falls asleep but I am vigilant.

Look! It is the Lord who removes people’s hearts and gives them [new] hearts.

(ιδοὺ, ὁ ἀνθρώπος ὡσει λύρα
κάγω ἐφίτταμαι ὡσεὶ πληκτρον
ὁ ἀνθρώπος κοιμᾶται κάγω χορηγος,
ιδοὺ, κύριος ἐστιν ὁ ἐξιστάνων καρδίας ἀνθρώπων
καὶ διδοὺς καρδίαν ἀνθρώπως).

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.4.1)

Attributed to Maximilla

After me, there will no longer be a prophet, rather, the fulfillment.

(μετ’ ἐμὲ προφήτης οὐκέτι ἔσται, ἄλλα συντέλεια.

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.2.4)
Appendices

I am driven as a wolf from sheep; I am not a wolf — I am word, spirit and power.

(Eusebius, EH 5.16.17)

Do not listen to me, rather, listen to Christ.

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.12.4)

The Lord sent me forth to this labor as analyst and interpreter of this contract and of this promised selection, forced, willing or not, to be taught the knowledge of God.

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 48.13.1)

Attributed to Priscilla (Prisca)

...A holy minister must understand how to minister holiness.

Purity is in fact unity, [She says,] and they have visions, and bowing their face they even hear real voices, those that save and those that are mysterious.

(Tertullian, On ex. chastity 10.5)

They are flesh, and hate the flesh.

(Carnes sunt et carnes oderunt.

(Tertullian, On the res. of the body 11.2)

Attributed to Priscilla or Quintilla

Christ appeared to me [in sleep], [she said,] in the form of a woman in shining robes and gave me wisdom and revealed to me that this place is holy and that it is here that Jerusalem will descend from heaven.

(Epiphanius, Medicine Box 49.1)
Unidentified prophets, attributed to the Spirit (or the Paraclete)

In fact God brought forth the word [as teaches the Paraclete] just as a trunk bears fruit, a spring a river, and the sun a ray.

Protulit enim deus sermonem, [quemadmodum etiam paracletus docet,] sicut radix fruticem et fons fluvium et sol radium.

(Tertullian, Ag. Praxias 8.5)

[The Paraclete in the New Prophets] The Church can remit sin, but I will not, in case others also sin.

Potest ecclesia donare delictum, sed non faciam, ne et alia delinquant.

(Tertullian, Modesty 21.7)

[The Spirit says] Exposed? Good. The one who is not publicly exposed to men will be so to the Lord. Do not be disturbed; being just creates visibility. Why does it disturb you to receive praise? There is power in being publicly observed.

Publicaris? bonum tibi est; qui enim non publicatur in hominibus, publicatur in domino. Ne confundaris: iustitia te producit inmedium; quid confunderis laudem ferens? Potestas fit, cumconsipiceris ab hominibus.

(Tertullian, Flight 9.4)

[The Spirit says] Do not hope to die on your couch, by abortion or of crippling fever, but rather in martyrdom, that he might be glorified who suffered for you.

Nolite in lectulis nec in aborsibus et febribus mollibus optare exire, sed in martyriis, uti glorificetur, qui est passus pro vobis.

(Tertullian, Flight 9.4)

[The Paraclete counsels] It is not in crippling fevers or on your couch but in martyrdom, if you take up your cross and follow the Lord, as he himself taught. The whole key to Paradise is your own blood.

non in mollibus febribus et in lectulis, sed in martyriis, si crucem tuam tollas et sequaris dominum, ut ipse praecepit. Tota paradisi clavis tuus sanguis est.

(Tertullian, The soul 58.5)

Tertullian's community

A soul has been shown to me having a body, and the spirit was appearing, not with empty and insubstantial properties, but rather suggesting tangibility, delicate, bright, misty in color, and completely human in form.

Ostensa est mihi anima corporaliter, et spiritus uidebatur, sed non inanis et uacuae qualitatis, immo quae etiam teneri repromitteret, tenera et lucida et aeri coloris, et forma per omnia humana.

(Tertullian, The soul 9.4)
The Lord has assigned the size of the veil by revelation. For one of our sisters, in sleep, was clapped on the neck by an angel, as if applauding. "An elegant neck," he said, "deserving to be bare! It would be nice if you would show all, from head to sex. Your liberated neck may not be enough to get what you want." And certainly, what you have said to one, you have said to all (see above, n. 390).

(Tertullian, *Veiling virgins* 17.6)

References to prophecies in Tertullian without direct quotes

Those who heard up to date, not ancient, prophesying cover virgins. Hunc qui audierunt usque non olim prophetantem, virgines contegunt.

(Tertullian, *Veiling virgins* 1.11. See 17.6, above)

The Paraclete has frequently discussed this [that the soul suffers in Hades, awaiting the resurrection], if one, recognizing the promised gifts, admits any of his messages. Hoc etiam paracletus frequentissime commendavit, si qui sermones eius ex ignitione promissorum charismatum admiserit.

(Tertullian, *The soul* 58.8)

The Holy Spirit, in whatever land he chose, and by whomever he chose to predict, foreseeing either the immanence of temptations to the church or world plagues, speaks as Paraclete (i.e. advocate who persuades the Judge) to mandate approved solutions. For instance, in the present, [he mandates] the maintenance of sobriety and discipline of abstinence. We who receive them necessarily also maintain the behaviors which he ordained in an earlier time.

(Spiritus sanctus, cum in quibus uellet terris et per quos uellet praedicaret, ex prouidentia imminentium siue ecclesiasticarum temptationum siue mundialium plagarum, qua paracletus id est aduocatus ad exorandum iudicem dicitur, huius modi officiorum remedia mandabat, puta, nunc ad exercendam sobrietatis et abstinentiae disciplinam; hunc qui recipimus, necessario etiam quae tunc constituit observamus.)

(Tertullian, *Fasts* 13.5)
Bibliography

Although this dissertation has generally followed the reference format recommended by the American Psychological Association (APA), the reader should be aware that I have departed from that style in several ways. First, I have made no effort whatsoever to follow their guidelines regarding writing style. Second, footnotes appear at the bottom of the page, rather than as endnotes. Finally, there is a notable departure in the Bibliography section. Whereas APA, following the European style, demands that authors should be known only by their last name and first initial of their first name, I have chosen to give full names, where available. This grows out of my own frustration trying to find works by such characters as “Smith, B.” in the course of my research (currently 251 entries in the Perkins Library catalog). Since other reference formats (Chicago, MLA & SBL, among others) use the full name form, I have chosen to follow their stylistic guidelines for name presentation (second and subsequent authors are given first name first). The remainder of each entry follows APA. I have, for ancient sources, used both the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* and *Perseus* textual databases, both of which appear in the bibliography (Berkowitz and Crane, respectively). Since they are, in turn dependent on printed sources, those individual entries appear here as well. It should not be assumed, when an edition of an ancient source is listed, that I have checked the printed version (although, in some cases, I have).
Ancient Literature


Bibliography


Bibliography


Tertullian, Quintus Septimius Florens. (1947). *De anima.* (Quintus Septimius Florens, and Jan Hendrik Waszink, Eds.). Amsterdam: J. M. Meulenhoff.


Tertullian, Quintus Septimius Florens. (1957). *Ad martyras; ad scapulum; de fuga in persecutione; de monogamia; de virginibus velandis; de pallio.* (Vinzenz Bulhart, & Jan Willem Philip Borleffs, Eds.). Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum, vol. 76. Vindobonae: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky.


Bibliography


**Modern Literature**


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Brosch, Joseph. (1951). Charismen und Ämter in der Urkirche [Charisma and office in the early Church]. Bonn: P. Hanstein.


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Cumont, Franz Valery Marie. (1911). *The Oriental religions in Roman paganism*. (Authorized Trans.). Chicago: Open Court. (Originally published 1906)

Bibliography


Dautzenberg, Gerhard. (1971). Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Hintergrund der διακρίσεις πνευματον (1 Kor. 12.10) [On the religion-historical background of διακρίσεις πνευματον (1 Cor. 12.10)]. *Biblische Zeitschrift,* 15, 93-104.


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Bibliography


Molland, Einar. (1955). *La these ‘La prophétie n’est jamais venue de la volonté de l’homme’ (2 Pt 1:21) et les Pseudoclémentines [The dictum 'prophecy never came from the will from human desire' (2 Pt 1:21) and the Pseudoclementines].* *Studia theologica, 9*, 67-85.


Bibliography


Steinhauser, Kenneth B. (1997). Augustine's Reading of the Passio sanctorum Perpetuea et Felicitas. Studia Patristica 33, 244-49.


Bibliography


Wahass, S., Kent, G. (1997). Coping with auditory hallucinations: A cross-cultural comparison between Western (British) and non-Western (Saudi Arabian) patients. Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 185, 664-668.


Bibliography

