

# BEYOND THE PALE

Reading Theology from the Margins

*Edited by*

*Miguel A. De La Torre and Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas*

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## Preface and Acknowledgments

The genesis of this book can be traced to when the editors first met: in a doctoral class being taught by the fearless liberationist ethicist Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon at Temple University during the mid-1990s. Influenced by her wisdom, the experiences of being marginalized throughout our lives, and having the scholarship that our communities conduct dismissed within the academy led us, and many other scholars of color, to read the dominant culture with a healthy dosage of hermeneutical suspicion. Although we are not interested in simply discarding the formative ethical or theological thinkers of the dominant culture, we are propelled to seriously consider how their works consciously or unconsciously contribute to the disenfranchisement and dispossession of marginalized communities of color. Regardless of how progressive their words may sound, their unexamined social location influences their thinking in ways that are life-denying to the communities existing on their underside.

We are keenly aware that subalterns are seldom allowed to speak for themselves, let alone critique the scholarship and wisdom of those accustomed to speaking for the subalterns. To do so runs the risk of being labeled “angry colored folk” so that what is being said can easily be dismissed. Yet it is crucial, for

the sake of academic excellence, not only to find our own voices, but also to use those voices to unmask and uncover how the moral and theological reasoning of the dominant culture perpetuates the continued marginalization of communities of color.

For these reasons, we are deeply grateful for all of our colleagues, our sisters and brothers, who chose to stand in solidarity with us. Their individual voices have created a collective witness concerning how the thinking of the dominant culture has been normalized and legitimized within the academy—to our detriment. We are also grateful to Jon Berquist, former editor at Westminster John Knox Press, who believed in our mission from the start. Special thanks must also be given to Jacob G. Robinson, a doctoral student at Vanderbilt Divinity School, who spent countless hours assisting in editing this manuscript. And finally we thank our soul mates, Juan M. Floyd-Thomas and Deborah De La Torre, who have been faithful in love and unrelenting *en la lucha*.

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# Introduction

All theologies are contextual. For those emanating from the dominant culture, these theologies assist in normalizing and legitimizing the social location of the dominant culture; they are constructed in ivory towers where, more often than not, unexamined biases and prejudices are read into their theological worldviews. To do theology, especially from the center of power and privilege, can easily become an exercise in self-justification, explaining why our present social order blesses the few, while the many, who exist so that the few can enjoy their abundant lives, are cursed. Such theologies become death-dealing when the subjectivity of the privileged few within the dominant culture is redefined as objective for everyone else, when we learn to see and perceive reality through the eyes of the dominant culture, when the mysteries of the Divine are explained to the disenfranchised by those who benefit from their marginalization. Not surprisingly, many within marginalized communities are conditioned from childhood to see and interpret reality through the eyes of the dominant culture.

We who have edited this volume maintain that theology is a construct of a particular type of culture. Those theologians who are born into and/or raised within the Euroamerican culture become products of a society in which White



supremacy and class privilege have historically been woven into the way Americans have been conditioned to normalize and legitimize how they see the world around them. This racist and classist underpinning contributes to the metanarrative of how those within the dominant culture developed their theological understandings and perspectives. This becomes a theological worldview in which complicity with patriarchy and White supremacy is deemed customary and in which those who benefit from Euroamerican theological thought usually accept the present order of things, failing to consider the racialization of their discipline. Few Euroamerican theologians—and few theologians of color who are attempting to assimilate to Euroamerican definitions of academic excellence—recognize how the theological paradigms they advocate are reinforced by a social location that privileges the economic upper class and Whiteness.

We will argue that the theologians examined in this book are all embedded within a social location that informed, shaped, influenced, and constructed their worldview. Regardless of how progressive these theologians may appear to be, they all remain a product of the culture to which they belong, and they reflect the racism and ethnic discrimination of their time. Some of these theologians antedate the present-day supremacy of the Eurocentric experience, but their works nevertheless have been read and co-opted by Euroamericans in order to justify the dominant culture. For the survival of our communities of color, theologians chosen to represent the Eurocentric canon can never be fully accepted, because their subtle, and at times not so subtle, unexamined complicity with the power and privileges of the dominant culture remains detrimental to the margins of society.

Since the privileged few define reality, academic excellences become coded language for how well one masters the theological worldviews of those with the social power and privilege to make their subjective perspectives objective for all. The dominant academic culture among theologians assumes that to speak from any Eurocentric theological perspective is to speak about and for all of humanity, including communities of color. Those disenfranchised by this discourse are forced to exhibit academic rigor through the use and application of theological models that not only contribute to their own continued marginalization, but also their impotence for liberating oppressed communities. Those relegated to the margins of the theological discourse are always welcomed to “color” the conversation, as long as the supremacy of Eurocentric theological thought is not radically challenged. Scholars from marginalized communities who engage in questioning or debunking Eurocentric theological perspectives are usually ignored, their scholarship dismissed as lacking “academic rigor.” We, as editors and contributors to this book, recognize that our boldness in critically assessing the works of formative Euroamerican theologians leaves us open to having our critiques dismissed. Either we will be accused of conducting a “thin” reading of the primary texts, or we will be caricatured as hostile or angry.

Nevertheless, we who have edited this volume maintain that it is on the margins of the Eurocentric theological discourse that cutting-edge scholarship

is occurring. To read from the margins provides a “double-consciousness” that can reveal what those blinded by their privileged status have missed. Anyone can regurgitate what has become normative; the real challenge is to explore how Eurocentric theologians, through their lack of a hermeneutical suspicion, have reinforced prevailing political, social, and economic structures that have historically been devastating to communities of color. Our task is to unmask the so-called objectivity of the Eurocentric theological community and to examine how its presuppositions are damning to communities of color because these presuppositions remain complicit with the prevailing social power structures.

We accomplish this task by offering a liberative critique to what has come to be considered the normative theological discourse. Even before the postmodern dialogue made it fashionable to deconstruct normative thinking, communities of color had recognized that no theological perspective is value free. Theologians of color have historically been reading the theology of the dominant culture from *beyond the pale*, recognizing that what the dominant culture considered normative contributed to the marginalization of those on the underside of their theological constructions.

The task of moving beyond traditionalist modes of normative Christian theology is accomplished by reading the canon of Eurocentric theological thought from the social location of marginalized communities. We hope thereby to raise the consciousness of the reader who has been conditioned to accept theological perspectives that keep marginalized communities from living the abundant life promised in the gospel message. To that end, we attempt in these pages to read formative theologians from the margins, that is to say, from the social location of disenfranchised communities, for the purpose of interrogating the Eurocentric theological canon. The editors of this volume invited some of the leading theologians who are on the cutting edge of liberative thought to critique classical theologians at the center of the discourse, with the goal of unmasking their complicity with oppression. About thirty scholars wrestled with White patriarchal normativity by providing in each essay:

- a historical backdrop for the development of a normative theologian who has shaped the philosophical or social tradition of Christian theology;
- a description of his or her role in a given theological camp;
- reference to marginalized sources for engaging the thinker’s form of theology;
- theoretical and methodological considerations at work; and
- ongoing issues of concern within that theological tradition.

The reader may ask, why is a volume on theology being edited by two ethicists? The answer is simple: we unapologetically repudiate the normative Eurocentric ethical methodology that understands ethics as flowing *from* theology. This is a deductive methodology that begins with “truth,” and then, based on

this truth, engages in the second step of praxis. Under the Eurocentric model, theology (what we believe to be true about the Divine) leads to ethics (how we ought to act based on what we believe to be true). Theology shapes ethics, as orthopraxis is deduced from orthodoxy.

Those doing ethical and theological analysis from the margins of Eurocentric scholarship literally stand this methodology upon its head. Those of us who subscribe to a liberative approach to ethics and/or theology recognize that theology, not ethics, is the second step. Our praxis, due to the preferential option made for those on the margins, raises consciousness, so that reality can be examined uninhibited by the “truths” of theology formed in the security of academic (class)rooms.

This feet-on-the-ground approach to theology, à la Clodovis Boff, not only moves the discourse from the margins to the center, but also provides the disenfranchised and dispossessed with theological perspectives that reveal a God who accompanies the marginalized in their everyday struggles. Theology as a reflection of praxis answers the crucial “So what?” asked by those attempting to cope with the institutional violence experienced by communities of color. Those dealing with the death-causing consequences of racism, ethnic discrimination, sexism, homophobia, and classism are less concerned with trying to figure out the theological mysteries of the Divine than they are with understanding God’s solidarity in the midst of oppression. For these reasons, we who have edited this book about theologians, along with the previous volume about ethicists, invite you to join us in moving the discourse *Beyond the Pale*. How? By *Reading Theology from the Margins!*

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# Irenaeus of Lyons

LINDA E. THOMAS

Christian theologian Irenaeus (ca. 115–ca. 202 CE) articulated a robust doctrine of creation as Christianity was finding its footing in the early Christian period.<sup>1</sup> While the world Christian movement continues to be indebted to his theology of creation, aspects of his theology have also been harmful to Christianity’s development. Despite the fact that Irenaeus powerfully affirmed bodily existence and the earthly environment, he also helped usher in an “othering effect” in his critique of the gnostics, a logic that continued to harmfully affect Christian practice through the othering of the Muslim and the Black. Contemporary marginalized populations continue to be negatively influenced by the legacy of the Christian “othering effect.” In this chapter, I describe Irenaeus’s theology of creation, arguing that his critique of the gnostics begins the logic of “othering,” which deepens throughout the history of the world Christian movement and culminates in a culture of intolerance of difference that continues to be a problem today.

## THEOLOGIZING IN CRISIS

Irenaeus became bishop of Lyons in Gaul, which is currently France. During his time as bishop, Lyons was in cultural and theological crisis. The cultural

crisis included moral laxity in the people of God. Representatives of the Roman Empire and others accused the Christians of “Thyestean banquets and Oedipodean intercourse.”<sup>2</sup> The first accusation surfaced because Communion, also known as the Lord’s Supper, was called a banquet, where Christians “ate the body and drank the blood of Jesus.” The second accusation was leveled because Christians met in secret and only those who had been baptized attended. In short, some believed that Christians were baby-eating cannibals having wild sex in secret.

Christians were not only criticized for their cultural mores, but were also physically attacked and often killed by the soldiers of the Roman Empire. Confessing Christians at Lyons, Vienne, and throughout Gaul were persecuted as criminals. Historian Roland Bainton notes that the Roman government murdered Christian children, women, and men.<sup>3</sup> In response to the early church’s persecution by the Roman government and internal dissent among its members, Irenaeus emphasized the need for unity in beliefs, concord about ritual practices, and concurrence with the emerging doctrine of the church. For this reason Irenaeus is called the church’s first theologian. His writings are considered rational reflections about God and humanity, from a time of conflict within the church and massacre from outside, rather than solely a philosophical approach about the meaning of God.

## THEOLOGICAL CRISIS: GNOSTICISM AS HERESY

While early Christianity faced an external enemy in the Roman soldiers, it also faced internal theological dissent in the growing group of gnostics.<sup>4</sup> The world Christian movement began as a Jewish sect and took many different cultural and theological forms. One of the most important forms it took during its earliest days was Gnosticism. The gnostics were Christians who emphasized the mysteries of faith being shared through a special wisdom (*gnōsis*) that could be gained through initiation into the collective contemplative practices of communities of like-minded believers. Gnostic teachers like Valentinus were gathering large followings, and more traditional Christians were becoming concerned.

As bishop of Lyons, Irenaeus felt compelled to challenge the gnostics. For Irenaeus, the sacredness of the materiality of the fabric of the entire universe was at stake. The physicality of the body and the earth was of secondary importance in the gnostic cosmology. Synthesizing ancient Near Eastern wisdom traditions with Greek philosophy, the gnostics emphasized the importance of the noetic apprehension of disembodied knowledge. Irenaeus saw this as an affront to the Christian affirmation of the goodness of creation and sacredness of each creature.

For Irenaeus, the very heart of the Christian faith was at issue—the idea that God became fully human in Jesus Christ in order to fully redeem and restore the entire cosmos in both its physical and metaphysical dimensions. As a result of this

theological polemic, Irenaeus argued that Gnosticism was a heresy in his second-century book *Exposé and Overthrow of What Is Falsely Called "Knowledge"* (known as *Against the Heresies*). Some adherents of this inclusive and wide-ranging group<sup>5</sup> claimed that their direct and yet undisclosed association to practices had been passed down from the apostles. Arguing against them, Irenaeus called all gnostics heretics and claimed that only the church possessed the authentic apostolic tradition, which was fully disclosed and offered to all people by way of the church's Scriptures and the office of the bishop.<sup>6</sup> He argued that the apostolic tradition was presented transparently to all who desired Christ through the church, its leadership, and its established doctrines.<sup>7</sup> For Irenaeus, God's revelation in Christ in the entirety of creation was the decisive starting place of Christian orthodoxy and, as such, the means by which God was revealed. He wrote, "Through none other than those by whom the gospel reached us have we learned the plan of our salvation."<sup>8</sup> Irenaeus took the christological mediation of salvation and applied it to the entire cosmos.

## IRENÆUS AND DIVINE ECONOMY

Irenaeus's theological vision emphasized the importance of God as creator and sustainer of the universe and conceptualized salvation as the restoration of the entire universe. His theology of the triune Creator provides a basis for more theological synergy between theological traditions of the East and West. God the creator Irenaeus asserted, was Father and Lord of the entire universe.

Irenaeus presented a cosmic Christology that drew on John's Gospel and Paul's epistles. He equated the Logos with the Son but did not comment on the way the Logos came into existence. Irenaeus linked the Logos to the Son even before God's creation. His method was to articulate God's existence first (i.e., when only God existed), and then determine God's revelation to humanity. Donald McKim refers to Irenaeus's doctrine of creation as his method of "divine economy," outlining "God's ordered process of self-disclosure in history."<sup>9</sup> Irenaeus posited that God was present and active through the entire depth and breadth of the universe.

Irenaeus's theology of divine economy maintained that the Son is permanently with God; thus, the Son's presence is sustained subsequent to creation. God is a single force at hand in perpetuity with both God's Logos (word) and Sophia (wisdom). For Irenaeus, the Logos and the Spirit are intertwined in a divine affinity to the extent that he calls them "God's hands." According to Irenaeus the Creator is God and the Son is God, for that which comes from God is God. The Logos expresses God's exact reflection, and through the Spirit, all can come to know God. Thus, for Irenaeus the Logos and the Spirit are wholly deified. The Son and the Spirit find their unity is a triune communion of love. The task of Christian theology is to proclaim and embody this communion as best the feeble body of believers in the church is able.

## IRENÆUS'S THEOLOGY OF RECAPITULATION

Irenæus's notion of recapitulation summed up his theology. Shalom was shattered in the Garden of Eden, and since that time God has been gradually wooing the whole of creation to Godself through the Son and the Spirit. While humans bear the brokenness of the lost shalom, they have the capacity to continue to move toward perfection. Although God could have made them without flaw, God desired humans to have the freedom to make wise decisions. However, the first man and woman created in God's image disobeyed God and so lost the image and similarity to God with which they were gifted. All humans coming after Adam and Eve distance themselves from God by disloyalty to their exclusive covenant with God.<sup>10</sup>

Turning to the theology of Paul, Irenæus's theology of recapitulation speaks of a faultless and strengthened humanity in Christ. He claims that God's unlimited love for humanity gave rise to God's becoming what humans are in order to empower humans to become what God is. Irenæus's theological method is, in the words of J. N. D. Kelly, "the oft-repeated assertion that what we lost in Adam we recovered in Christ; its premise is the idea that, if we fell through our solidarity with the first man [*sic*], we can be restored through our solidarity with Christ."<sup>11</sup>

In addition, Irenæus's theology of recapitulation makes use of Paul's explanation that God's purpose is to "sum up all things in Christ." For Irenæus, Paul declares that God through Christ wraps God's arms completely around all that exists in the Christ, humanity included. Seeing Adam and Christ as parallel, Irenæus asserts that Christ is the "second Adam." In other words, Christ recapitulated or served as a replica of the first humans. Just as Adam and Eve were created from untouched soil, so Christ came forth from an untouched woman. As *hadam* embraced all humans, so Christ encircled and held within Christ's self all humanity throughout history. Consequently, just as *hadam* separated *hadam*'s self from God and was sanctioned to death, so Christ is credited with bringing forth a regenerated, hearty, and flawless humanity. Jesus Christ becomes the archetype for a new humanity, presenting the possibility of a new heaven and earth. Thus, there is an eschatological horizon with Irenæus's theology of the recapitulation of creation.

### IRENÆUS'S HARMFUL IMPACT: THE LEGACY OF THE "OTHERING EFFECT"

Irenæus provides the church with a deep theology of creation that affirms the sacredness of the earth and dignity of all individuals. However, in his "othering" of the gnostics, he, with other early Christian thinkers, set in motion an intolerant theological logic. This intolerance was based in part on an objectification of the Other, a process I refer to as the "othering effect." The othering effect has

had a harmful influence on Christian thought and practice from the patristic period to the present.

It is necessary to deepen our theological analysis of the ways in which the othering effect plays itself out in the experiences of those who have been victims of oppression. First, *ascribed* attributes are those parts of our embodiment and positive presentation of the self over which we have little or no control. We had no control over the process that gave rise to our birth, the color of our skin, our race/ethnicity, our gender, our sexual orientation, and our earliest economic situation. This cluster of physical, sexual, and pecuniary circumstances, while designated at birth, are indeed fluid and therefore changeable.

*Achieved* attributes are conditions that are obtained through multiple means. They can be earned by hard work; they may be inherited, they may come from cultural entitlement. Some ascribed attributes are assigned a negative or subordinate stature by a historically dominant group—meaning those who assign who and what has meaning, value, and worth; those who control the global economy; those who run institutions (e.g., education, legal system, government, business, and religion); and those who gain from the social and economic imbalance of power. This group's construction of reality systematically ascribes deficiency to Others, for example, because of black or brown skin, coarse hair texture, the female gender, sexual orientation, entrapment by systems that create a web of perpetual poverty, or their religion. These Others regularly experience prejudice if not outright discrimination.

Irenaeus's othering of the gnostics helped to set in motion this process of objectifying the Other. *Against the Heresies* created a space for the new religious movement known as Christianity to mark Gnosticism as a "heretical other," while granting normative identity to the various constructions of orthodox Christianity.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Irenaeus, for the sake of unifying a conflicted and contested religion, put in place a method that negatively labeled those whose ideas and religious practices differed from the newly institutionalized church. This prejudice or bias on the part of the first theologian of the church normalized Gnosticism as not only Other, but heretical as well. By constructing a negative and sinister meaning to Gnosticism, Irenaeus planted the seeds for the deep and intricate roots of systematic oppression of those whose belief system was outside the emerging orthodoxy of the early church. This intolerance created a climate where those claiming a meaningful religion outside the orthodox Christianity of the day were considered enemies of the early church.

One wonders whether, if Irenaeus had had the power to persecute the gnostics, he would have done so, thus expressing the same intolerance that the Roman Empire had toward Christianity. Irenaeus's method, while systematic, espoused a theology sanctioning the ongoing debasement of Gnosticism. Instead of valuing the free expression of an individual's or a group's spiritual/religious beliefs and practices, Irenaeus laid the foundation for religious intolerance. Thus, through his writings on Gnosticism he reinforced religious intolerance—very similar to what the Roman Empire did to Christian adherents through ruthless physical



violence.<sup>13</sup> This episode illustrates Christianity's ongoing struggle, from its earliest inception, to overcome the spiral of violence in the West.

Irenaeus's naming of the gnostic as a heretical Other took on a new expression in the early Islamic period, as Christians began to practice the othering effect on the Muslim and Moor, considered a new threatening expression of the heretical religious Other. This time the othering effect moved from an internal Other (the gnostic within world Christianity) to an external Other (the Muslim as an adherent of a non-Christian religion). Thus, the othering effect expanded, in dealing with even greater religious and cultural plurality, perpetuating the violent undertow of Christianity in the West. This trajectory of theological violence against Muslims would play itself out chiefly in the Crusades, in which Christians embodied the logic of colonial violence in killing Muslims and attempting to destroy Islamic culture. Through its critique of Islam, Christianity in the West took on a peculiar shape, where the project of purporting "*Western civilization*" trumped an authentic attempt at Christian evangelization according to biblical models of discipleship that were respectful and tolerant of the gifts of the Other.

The shadow side of the West took on a new form in the early modern period through the dramatic performance of European colonial expansionism. In this early modern colonial moment, we see how the legacy of theologies like that of Irenaeus became particularly acute for populations of people globally who were marginalized by race, as White colonists racialized indigenous populations and enslaved Africans as "Black." This problem intensified in late modernity with a growing awareness of new markers of identity and difference, including gender, class, sexuality, and religions that were different from those of the dominant group of people, in this instance White men of European descent.

While Irenaeus's theological vision affirmed the goodness of creation, it must be deepened to affirm the goodness of all humans made in the image of God, regardless of whether they ascribe to a certain communion's standard of theological orthodoxy. In my judgment, Irenaeus's theology supported a system of Western Christian thought and practice that viewed difference as being deficient. The prophetic theological task today is to declare the importance of difference as the basis for deeper theological dialogue, human communion, and collective work for peace and justice. This will include a focus on the experiences of those who have suffered oppression on the underside of Western Christian modernity.

## CONCLUSION

According to the Religion Newswriters Association, the most important religion news story of 2010 was the public debate in the United States about whether an Islamic center could be built two blocks from the place known as Ground Zero, where the twin towers of the World Trade Center were attacked on September 11, 2001.<sup>14</sup> This is a perfect example of religious intolerance that has been

normalized by many in the historically dominant group in the United States who are not Islamic. For the sake of unifying the United States, some citizens have constructed the notion that all Muslims are terrorists who desire the fall of the United States. Since the time of Irenaeus, some Christians have viewed religions outside of Christianity as heretical and inferior. Those constructing a reality of Islam as evil have called the Islamic center a mosque rather than a community center, when in fact the building plans include not only a Muslim prayer room, but recreational facilities open to all residents of Lower Manhattan.<sup>15</sup> Those opposed to the Islamic center have not mentioned that adjacent to the corner of where it is to be constructed are a liquor store and a gentlemen's club; and there is no mention that the petition for building the center was filed before 9/11.<sup>16</sup>

Prophetic Christianity today must stand against the othering effect. We must affirm with Irenaeus the goodness of all creation. However, we must go further and affirm the goodness of all God's creatures, even as the fluidity of race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion is complicated by the myriad ways people understand their identity. Only through celebrating the different and distinct ways that each person reflects the image of God, will we see a Christianity that authentically embodies God's love, justice, and shalom.

### Notes

1. I would like to thank Dr. Peter Helzel for reviewing this essay. Criticism from Dr. Helzel was particularly helpful as I revised this chapter.
2. Ronald Bainton, *Early Christianity* (Princeton, NJ: D. Von Nostrand Co., 1960), 26.
3. *Ibid.*
4. For an in-depth scholarly presentation of Gnosticism, see Karen King, *What Is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
5. Irenaeus does not deal with the diversity of Gnosticism. See Jonathan Z. Smith, who advises that Gnosticism is exclusively "a structural possibility within a number of religious traditions" (Jonathan Z. Smith, *Map Is Not Territory* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982], 151 n12).
6. The Christian Bible began its formation during Irenaeus's time (ca.180). The emerging canon of sacred texts includes the "Old Testament" otherwise known as the Septuagint or the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. The New Testament included the four Gospels and some of Paul's letters. Irenaeus refers to Acts, 1 Peter, 1 and 2 John, and Revelation in his writings.
7. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, III.ii.2., in Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, 2nd ed., ed. Henry Bettenson (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 68.
8. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, III.i.i., in J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1978), 36.
9. Donald McKim, *Theological Turning Points: Major Issues in Christian Thought* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988), 10.
10. Irenaeus writes, "Through the disobedience of that one man who was first formed out of the untilled earth, the many were made sinners and lost life" (*Against Heresies*, 4.39.1; 3.18.1; 5.2.1; 3.18.7).
11. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, 172–73.
12. King, *What Is Gnosticism?* 3.

13. Ibid.
14. The press release can be found at <https://rna.site-ym.com/news/54861/2010-Religion-Stories-of-the-Year.htm> (accessed December 16, 2010).
15. Hendrik Hertzberg, "Zero Grounds," *New Yorker*, August 16, 2010, [http://www.newyorker.com/talk/comment/2010/08/16/100816taco\\_talk\\_hertzberg](http://www.newyorker.com/talk/comment/2010/08/16/100816taco_talk_hertzberg). Accessed December 17, 2010.
16. Ralph Blumenthal, "Muslim Prayers and Renewal Near Ground Zero," *New York Times*, December 9, 2009.