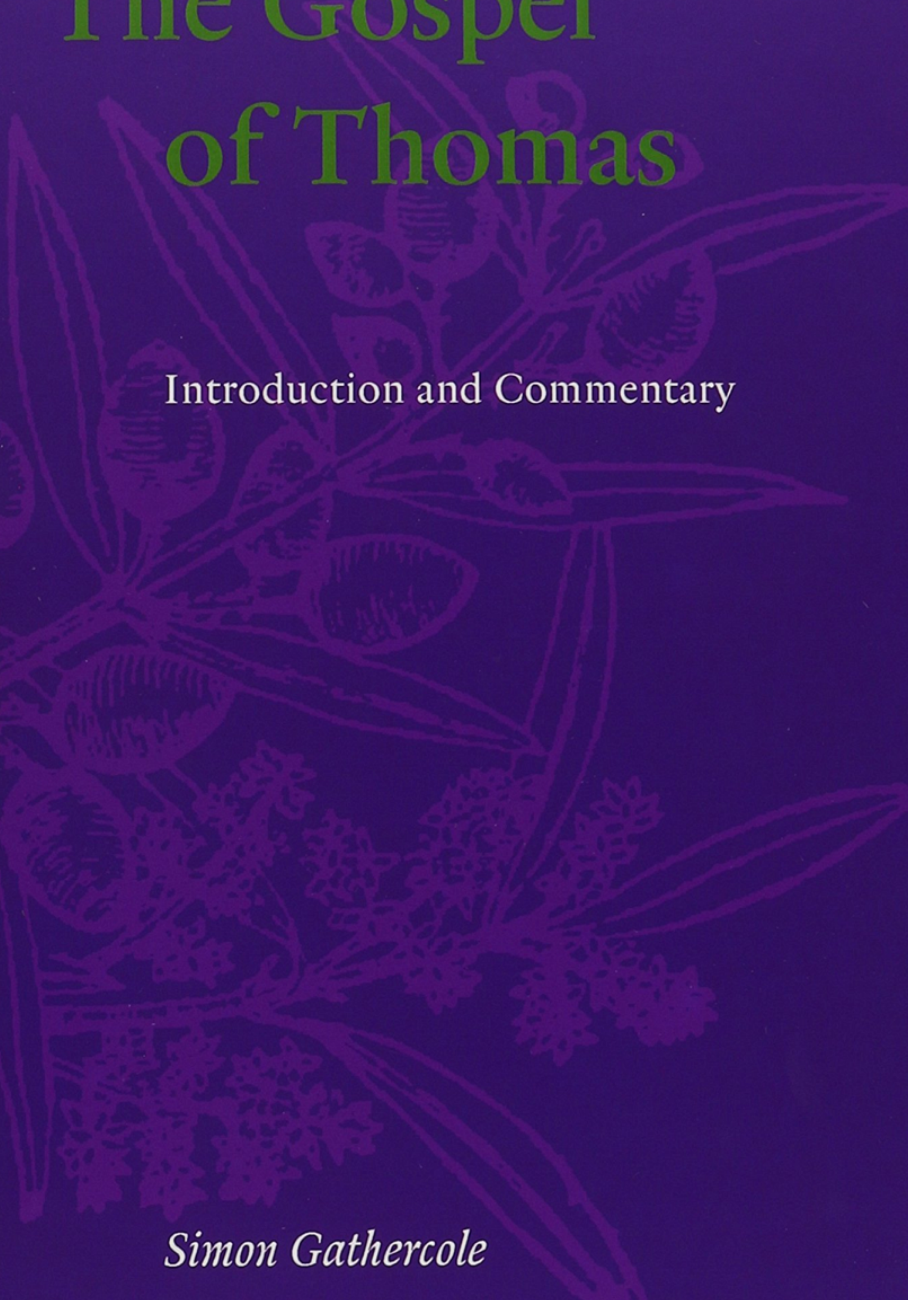


The Gospel of Thomas



Introduction and Commentary

Simon Gathercole

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Introduction and Commentary

By

Simon Gathercole



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I, he has been an excellent teacher to me, as well as an extremely generous friend, reading a great deal of the 'Thomasina' here and tirelessly discussing numerous parts of it. I dedicate this book to him in gratitude. *Ad multos annos!*

Preface

The greatest commentary never written was undoubtedly that of Prof. Morris Zapp of Euphoric State University. In his own words:

I began a commentary on the works of Jane Austen, the aim of which was to be utterly exhaustive, to examine the novels from every conceivable angle—historical, biographical, rhetorical, mythical, structural, Freudian, Jungian, Marxist, existentialist, Christian, allegorical, ethical, phenomenological, archetypal, you name it. So that when each commentary was written, there would be *nothing further to say* about the novel in question.

Of course, I never finished it.¹

Rather than imitating the promethean project started by Prof. Zapp, any commentator must be subject to a strict self-denying ordinance, and focus only on particular aspects of the text. This is no less true with such a short book as the *Gospel of Thomas*. DeConick's commentary, for example, seeks to identify where the various sections of *Thomas* accrued in the compositional history of the work.² Nordsieck aims primarily to identify the extent to which particular sayings go back to the historical Jesus.³ One approach which Valantasis adopts is a kind of post-structuralist reading of the text, emphasizing the playfulness and indeterminacy of *Thomas*.⁴

The intention of the present commentary is different. The aim here is principally to understand the meaning of the sayings of *Thomas* in its second-century historical context. That is, it elucidates the religious outlook of *Thomas* in the

1 D. Lodge, *Small World: An Academic Romance* (London: Penguin, 1985), 24–25. Lodge based the character of Zapp on Stanley Fish.

2 A.D. DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation: With a Commentary and New English Translation of the Complete Gospel* (LNTS 287; London/New York: T&T Clark International, 2006).

3 R. Nordsieck, *Das Thomasevangelium: Einleitung—Zur Frage des historischen Jesus—Kommentierung aller 14 Logien* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2004).

4 See R. Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas* (New Testament Readings; London: Routledge, 1997), e.g. 65, 179. He notes, for example, the need to exercise play in the interpretation of the parable here in the light of the lack of 'interpretative direction provided either by Jesus or by the narrator' (179). C.W. Hedrick, *Unlocking the Secrets of the Gospel according to Thomas* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), similarly emphasises the ambiguity of *Thomas*'s parables.

setting in which it was composed.⁵ This may sound like a standard approach of a commentary, but, as can be seen from the remarks above, commentators have not always focused on the actual meaning of the text. As Gagné has recently put it: ‘What has lacked in Thomasine research is inquiry into the meaning of the collection of sayings as a whole, and this for a plausible historical implied reader.’⁶ This commentary is not concerned with the tradition-history of the work, asking, for example, whether a saying in *Thomas* is more primitive than its parallel in the Synoptics.⁷ (I have addressed a number of the issues about the compositional situation of *Thomas* in a recent monograph.⁸) It treats the final form of the text, an approach which is in part defended in the Introduction, which aims to argue for *Thomas* as a tolerably unified work which can legitimately be interpreted as such. The reasonable degree of similarity between the Greek and Coptic texts is shown (Introduction, § 2), and the reasonably coherent religious outlook of the work is set out (§ 10) in order to defend an approach based upon *Thomas*’s relative consistency. Speculative theories about the pre-history of *Thomas* are also subjected to scrutiny (see Appended Note following § 2).

A few house-keeping matters are in order. The division of the text into 114 sayings has for a long time been well established, and I have also followed the subdivisions of sayings adopted by the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-agnostische Schriften.⁹ In the translation, I have used gender-inclusive language where practicable, though in order to avoid cumbersome renderings, occasional masculine pronouns (‘he’, ‘him’, ‘his’) have been necessary.¹⁰ When in

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- 5 See the similar approach set out in R.M. Grant & D.N. Freedman, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1960), 117. This commentary is, however, very dated.
 - 6 A. Gagné, ‘Structure and Meaning in Gos. Thom. 49–53. An Erotapokritic Teaching on Identity and Eschatology’, in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 23–31 (24). Cf. also idem, ‘Jésus, la lumière et le Père Vivant. Principe de gémellité dans l’Évangile selon Thomas’, *Apocrypha* 23 (2013), 209–221 (211).
 - 7 As is an important concern in U.-K. Plisch, *The Gospel of Thomas: Original Text with Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008).
 - 8 S.J. Gathercole, *The Composition of the Gospel of Thomas: Original Language and Sources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
 - 9 See the text of *Thomas* with these subdivisions in K. Aland, ed. *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996), 519–546.
 - 10 On inclusive language in translations, see R. Smith, tr. *Aristotle: Prior Analytics* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1989), xxx–xxi; also, S.J. Patterson, ‘Introduction’, in J.S. Kloppenborg, M.W. Meyer, S.J. Patterson & M.G. Steinhauser, eds. *Q-Thomas Reader* (Sonoma, CA: Pole-

italics, *Thomas* refers to the work, the *Gospel of Thomas*; when not, Thomas refers to the disciple. References to the or a 'Gospel of Thomas' not italicised allude to patristic or other references in cases where the identity of the work is not clear (e.g. a possible reference to the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*). References to a 'Gospel' (capitalised) are to a written text; a 'gospel' is a preached message. Translations are my own, unless stated otherwise. A great deal of the interaction in the commentary is with my fellow adventurers in Thomasine commentary; for that reason, in the footnotes to the main body of the commentary, commentaries are referred to simply by their authors' names (see Abbreviations). On the structure of the individual sections of the commentary, see Introduction, § 10.

bridge, 1990), 77–123 (78–79, 120–121); C.M. Tuckett, ed. *The Gospel of Mary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 78–79.

Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this study follow those in *The SBL Handbook of Style for Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical and Early Christian Studies* (1999), with the following additions:

- CII/P* H.M. Cotton, L. Di Segni, W. Eck, B. Isaac, A. Kushnir-Stein, H. Misgav, J. Price & A. Yardeni, eds. *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae. I. Jerusalem*, in two parts. 1–1120 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010).
- EDEJ* J.J. Collins & D.C. Harlow, eds. *The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).
- OCD*³ S. Hornblower & A. Spawforth, eds. *The Oxford Classical Dictionary: Third Revised Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- CT* Codex Tchacos

Abbreviations of Nag Hammadi works are those listed in J.M. Robinson, ed. *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (Leiden: Brill, ³1988), xiii–xiv.

The principal commentaries are simply referred to with reference to the authors (e.g. Grosso, 51; Hedrick, 102):

- A.D. DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation: With a Commentary and New English Translation of the Complete Gospel* (London/New York: T&T Clark International, 2006).
- R.M. Grant & D.N. Freedman, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1960).
- M. Grosso, *Vangelo secondo Tommaso: Introduzione, traduzione e commento* (Roma: Carocci, 2011).
- C.W. Hedrick, *Unlocking the Secrets of the Gospel according to Thomas* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010).
- J.-E. Ménard, *L'Évangile selon Thomas: Introduction, traduction, commentaire* (NHS 5; Leiden: Brill, 1975).
- R. Nordsieck, *Das Thomas-Evangelium: Einleitung—Zur Frage des historischen Jesus—Kommentierung aller 114 Logien* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2004).
- U.-K. Plisch, *The Gospel of Thomas: Original Text with Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008).
- P. Pokorný, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Thomas: From Interpretations to the Interpreted* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2009).
- R. Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas* (New Testament Readings; London: Routledge, 1997).

Introduction



Manuscripts¹

On 21 July, 1897, the London *Daily Graphic* published a sketch of an eight-year-old boy, Sabr' Said, with an accompanying legend, 'The boy who found the Logia'.² These 'Logia' were contained in the first of three Greek fragments of *Thomas* to be discovered at Oxyrhynchus.³ Half a century later, a complete Coptic text (albeit with frequent but short lacunae) of the work was discovered near

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- 1 **Select Bibliography:** B.P. Grenfell & A.S. Hunt, eds. *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part I* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1898), 1–21; B.P. Grenfell & A.S. Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1904), 1–22, 22–28; A. Guillaumont, H.-C. Puech, G. Quispel, W. Till & Y. 'Abd al Masīh, *The Gospel according to Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1959); J.A. Fitzmyer, 'The Oxyrhynchus *Logoi* of Jesus and the Coptic Gospel according to Thomas', *TS* 20 (1959), 505–560 (bibliography: 556–560); J.M. Robinson ed. *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices. Introduction* (Leiden: Brill, 1984); B. Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7. Together with XIII, 2**, *Brit. Lib. Or.4926(1)*, and *P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655. Volume One: Gospel according to Thomas, Gospel according to Philip, Hypostasis of the Archons, and Indexes* (NHS 20; The Coptic Gnostic Library; Leiden: Brill, 1989); H.W. Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', in Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 95–128; D. Lührmann, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien in griechischer und lateinischer Sprache* (Marburg: Elwert, 2000), 106–131; L.W. Hurtado, 'The Greek Fragments of the *Gospel of Thomas* as Artefacts: Papyrological Observations on Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 1, Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 654 and Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 655', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 19–32; S. Emmel, 'The Coptic Gnostic Texts as Witnesses to the Propduction and Transmission of Gnostic (and Other) Traditions', in Frey, Schröter & Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium*, 33–49; A. Luijendijk, 'Reading the *Gospel of Thomas* in the Third Century: Three Oxyrhynchus Papyri and Origen's *Homilies*', in C. Clivaz & J. Zumstein, eds. *Reading New Testament Papyri in Context* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole MA: Peeters, 2011), 241–267.
 - 2 P.J. Parsons, *The City of the Sharp-Nosed Fish: Greek Lives in Roman Egypt* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2007), 15.
 - 3 I am grateful to the Bodleian Library (University of Oxford), the British Library, and the Houghton Library (Harvard University) for permission to examine the fragments. P. Oxy. IV 654 was examined on 22 December 2005 (with Dr Peter Williams); Dr Peter Head and I viewed P. Oxy. I 1 on 22 September 2008, and I examined the fragment again on 7 May 2013; I looked at P. Oxy. IV 655 on 25 November 2008, first with Prof. Larry Hurtado, and then with Drs Peter Williams, Peter Head, Dirk Jongkind and Tommy Wasserman. I am grateful to all of the above, without whom I would certainly not have noticed many of the interesting features of these fragments.

Nag Hammadi. This Coptic text is conventionally divided into 114 sayings, with a prologue at the beginning and a title ('the Gospel according to Thomas') at the end. This section will give an account of these four manuscripts *in se*, and also explore whether they yield any information about the earliest reception of *Thomas*.

1.1 P. Oxy. I 1 (Bodleian Library, Oxford: Bodleian MS. Gr. th. e 7 (P))

In 1897, then, very early on in the excavation of the rubbish tip at Oxyrhynchus, the first fragment of *Thomas* was designated P. Oxy. I 1, and also published separately under the title of *Sayings of Our Lord* (ΛΟΓΙΑ ΙΗΣΟΥ).⁴ A photograph of the text was also printed, and images can now be found in a number of places.⁵ The fragment is a leaf from a codex, is numbered (page?) 11 and has writing on both sides.⁶ It is approximately 15×9.5 cm in size,⁷ and is written in very easily legible uncial script.⁸ There are some notable scribal practices. On the verso side, a filler mark is found at the end of line 3 (a dipole, or 'y' shape). Unlike the other fragments, P. Oxy. I 1 contains a good number of 'nomina sacra':⁹ the forms $\overline{\tau\varsigma}$ (ll. 5^v, 11^v; 1^r? [restored], 9^r, 15^r, 20^r), probably

4 B.P. Grenfell & A.S. Hunt, eds. *ΛΟΓΙΑ ΙΗΣΟΥ: Sayings of Our Lord* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1897); idem, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part I*, 1–3.

5 Plates of the recto and verso can be found in the front matter of Grenfell & Hunt, *ΛΟΓΙΑ ΙΗΣΟΥ*. See now A.E. Bernhard, *Other Early Christian Gospels: A Critical Edition of the Surviving Greek Manuscripts* (LNTS 315; London/ New York: Continuum/ T&T Clark, 2006), plates 2–3, and L.W. Hurtado, *The Earliest Christian Artifacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 239 (verso only).

6 Given what we now know about the size of *Thomas*, it is very likely that something else was copied before it in the codex.

7 My measurement agrees with Hurtado, 'The Greek Fragments', 21. Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', 96, gives the size as 14.5×9.5 cm; Grenfell & Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part I*, 1, give 15×9.7 cm.

8 Hurtado, 'Greek Fragments', 22.

9 This is not the place to engage in extended discussion about the purpose of 'nomen sacrum' forms. I am more persuaded by the view expressed in L.W. Hurtado, 'The Origin of the *Nomina Sacra*: A Proposal', *JBL* 117 (1998), 655–673 (659), that the aim of the *nomina sacra* 'is clearly to express religious reverence, to set apart these words visually in the way they are written' (though they also became simply part of the textual tradition). For some criticisms of Hurtado's view, see C.M. Tuckett, "'Nomina Sacra': Yes and No?", in J.-M. Auwers & H.J. de Jonge, eds. *The Biblical Canons* (BETL 158; Leuven: Peeters, 2003), 431–458; idem, 'Nomina Sacra in Codex E', *JTS* 57 (2006), 487–499. Note further, Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 122–131, for criticism of Tuckett.

$\overline{\theta\upsilon}$ (line 8^v),¹⁰ $\overline{\pi\rho\alpha}$ (l. 11^v), $\overline{\alpha\nu\omega\nu}$ (l. 19^v), and $\overline{\pi\rho\iota\delta\iota}$ (l. 11^r) all appear. On five occasions a superlinear stroke replaces a *nu* at the end of a line (ll. 10^v, 16^v; 1^r, 6^r, 14^r). There is one instance of a diaeresis on initial *upsilon* (l. 19^v), and one correction (in l. 1^r) of a non-standard spelling (cf. P. Oxy. IV 655, fragment *d* l. 2). Scholars date the papyrus to somewhere between the late second to the end of the third century (see Table below).¹¹ Hurtado speculates that ‘the smaller-size letters and somewhat greater number of lines per page may signal that P. Oxy. I 1 was copied more for personal reading/usage’ (i.e. than for public reading): furthermore, the scribal devices associated with manuscripts prepared for public reading are also absent.¹² (On this question of the status of the Oxyrhynchus papyri, however, see the discussion in §1.5 below.) The fragment contains GTh 26–33 and the end of 77, but because none of this material is associated with the figure of Thomas, it was not thought initially to belong to what the Fathers had reported as the Gospel of Thomas (see further §3, ‘Named Testimonia’, below).

1.2 P. Oxy. IV 654 (British Library, London: Pap. 1531)

Grenfell and Hunt were so bowled over by the discovery of P. Oxy. I 1 that they commented, in Volume 1 of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* series: ‘It is not very likely that we shall find another poem of Sappho, still less that we shall come across another page of the “Logia”!’¹³ Hence their remark several years later in 1904: ‘By a curious stroke of good fortune our second excavations at Oxyrhynchus were, like the first, signalized by the discovery of a fragment of a collection of Sayings of Jesus.’¹⁴ The 1903 excavations, then, yielded a second fragment and the connection with the *Gospel of Thomas* now received some attention both because of the mention of Thomas in line 3, and because of the parallel with Hippolytus’s reference to the *Gospel of Thomas* (see Introduction, §3.1 and §4.1, below). Grenfell and Hunt, however, still kept the two collections of sayings distinct, and, while they noted the possibility, they refused to enter into conjecture about whether P. Oxy. I 1 and IV 654 were parts of the *Gospel of*

10 See the discussion of the reading in the treatment of the text of GTh 27 in the commentary below.

11 Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 22.

12 Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 23, 24.

13 Grenfell & Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part I*, vi.

14 Grenfell & Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 1.

Thomas. (They still—like almost everyone else at the time—operated with the assumption that the Gospel of Thomas referred to by the church fathers was the Infancy Gospel.)¹⁵ The text of P. Oxy. IV 654 (with a photograph) is published as the first item in the fourth Oxyrhynchus Papyri volume.¹⁶ On the back (or rather the front: the Greek of *Thomas* is on the verso), is a survey-list which Grenfell and Hunt use to date the text, but which has surprisingly never been published.¹⁷ The *Thomas* text is written in uncial script on a papyrus roll (in a hand remarkably similar to that of P22), and the fragment is 24.4 × 7.8 cm in size. The only ‘nomen sacrum’ form is $\overline{\omega\zeta}$ (ll. 2, 27, 36), but GTh 1–2, 2–3, 3–4, 4–5 and 5–6 are each separated by a paragraphus, and—in the cases of GTh 1–2, 2–3, 4–5 and 5–6—by a coronis as well. Diaereses mark off initial *iota* (l. 14) and *upsilon* (ll. 13, 15, 16?, 19, 21), albeit inconsistently. Hurtado judges that P. Oxy. IV 654 is also a private copy for personal use, though this time not on the basis of the size of script, but because it is written on the back of a document,¹⁸ and is also a text of such poor quality: the scribe is inept (or at least careless) both in spelling and in consistent letter formation.¹⁹ Grenfell and Hunt dated the copy to ‘the middle or end of the third century’;²⁰ Attridge agrees that it is later than P. Oxy. I 1, though is more precise and dates it to the middle of the third century.²¹ (See further the Table below.) The fragment contains sayings 1–7, with a great many lacunae.²²

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- 15 H.B. Swete, ‘The New Oxyrhynchus Sayings: A Tentative Interpretation’, *ExpT* 15 (1903–1904), 488–495, commented that he considered P. Oxy. I 1 and IV 654 to belong to ‘the same collection’ (488). By 1909, J.A.H. Michelsen, ‘Uittreksels uit het Evangelie volgens Thomas’, *Teyler’s Theologisch Tijdschrift* 3 (1909), 214–233, had suggested that all three fragments came from a *Gospel of Thomas*.
- 16 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 1–22, and Plate I. Other photographs can be found in Bernhard, *Other Early Christian Gospels*, plate 1, and Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 241.
- 17 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 1, comment that the survey-list is written ‘in a cursive hand of the end of the second or early part of the third century’.
- 18 In technical parlance, the text is an ‘opisthograph’. Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 29: ‘It is almost certain that opisthographs represent economical copies of texts made for private reading and study ...’.
- 19 Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 25, 26. In Hurtado’s judgement, the quality of writing is not as good as is suggested by Grenfell and Hunt (25).
- 20 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 1.
- 21 Attridge, ‘Appendix: The Greek Fragments’, 97.
- 22 Not much of saying 7 has survived here, however. See S.J. Gathercole, ‘A Proposed Rereading of P.Oxy. 654 line 41 (Gos. Thom. 7)’, *HTR* 99 (2006), 355–359.

1.3 P. Oxy. IV 655 (Houghton Library, Harvard: Houghton MS Gr SM4367)

This manuscript actually consists of eight fragments, discovered at Oxyrhynchus in the same season of excavations as was P. Oxy. IV 654 (i.e. 1903), and published immediately after the British Library fragment.²³ The fragments, the largest of which is 12 × 8.3 cm, come from another papyrus roll, with writing on the recto only.²⁴ Two columns are visible, and the writing is an informal book hand. Fragment *d* is noteworthy because, though very small, it contains a correction (by a later hand) in line 2, and a filler mark at the end of line 4 (as in P. Oxy. I 1, a dipole, or ‘}’ shape); there are no ‘nomina sacra’ in any of the fragments. Grenfell and Hunt judged the handwriting to date from the first half of the third century: ‘though we should not assign it to the second century, it is not likely to have been written later than A.D. 250.’²⁵ (Since the dating of the Oxyrhynchus fragments—especially P. Oxy. IV 655, because it is perhaps the earliest—is important for establishing a *terminus ante quem* for Thomas’s composition, some representative opinions are set out in the Table below.) The handwriting is skilfully done, Hurtado comments, and the small size of script leads him to conclude, again, that this was very likely to have been a personal copy.²⁶ The content corresponds to GTh 24 and 36–39; four of the fragments published by Grenfell and Hunt (two of which are now lost) cannot be placed.²⁷

23 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 22–28 (‘Fragment of a lost gospel’). For a detailed history of interpretation up to 1960, and comparison with the Coptic text, see R.A. Kraft, ‘Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 655 Reconsidered’, *HTR* 54 (1961), 253–262; for observations on the material evidence, see Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 26–28.

24 See Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, plate II; also Bernhard, *Other Early Christian Gospels*, plates 4–5, and Hurtado, *Earliest Christian Artifacts*, 241. The best photographs, however, are those available on the Harvard website, at: <http://pds.lib.harvard.edu/pds/view/7456399> (last accessed 2.9.2008).

25 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 23; Attridge, ‘Appendix: The Greek Fragments’, 98, takes the same view.

26 Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 27, 28.

27 For the text, see Attridge, ‘Appendix: The Greek Fragments’, 125.

TABLE 1 *Sample of dates assigned to the Greek fragments*

	P. Oxy. I 1	P. Oxy. IV 654	P. Oxy. IV 655
Grenfell & Hunt	150–300 ²⁸ / II–III ²⁹	mid-late III ³⁰	first half of III ³¹
Votaw ³²	c. mid-III	c. mid-III	c. mid-III
Wessely ³³	150–300	III	II–III
Schneemelcher/ Jeremias ³⁴	shortly after 200	end II/beginning III	II–III
Kraft ³⁵			before mid-III
Turner ³⁶	II–III		
Roberts ³⁷	end II		
Attridge ³⁸	shortly after 200	mid-III	200–250
Lührmann ³⁹	III	III	III
Elliott ⁴⁰	c. 200	III	II–III
Giversen ⁴¹	first half of II	first half of II	

- 28 Grenfell & Hunt, *ΛΟΓΙΑ ΙΗΣΟΥ*, 6: 'The date therefore probably falls within the period 150–300 A.D. More than that cannot be said with any approach to certainty ... But in the meantime we are of opinion that the hand of the Logia fragment is far from belonging to the latest type of uncials used before 300 A.D., and that therefore the papyrus was probably written not much later than the year 200.' DeConick misreads them in stating that 'P. Oxy. 1 is dated by B. Grenfell and A. Hunt to a date *no later than 200 CE*'; A.D. DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas: A History of the Gospel and its Growth* (London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 48.
- 29 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part I*, xi.
- 30 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 1.
- 31 Grenfell & Hunt, *Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 23.
- 32 C.W. Votaw, 'The Oxyrhynchus Sayings of Jesus in Relation to the Gospel-Making Movement of the First and Second Centuries', *JBL* 24 (1905), 79–90 (80).
- 33 C. Wessely, *Les plus anciens monuments du Christianisme écrits sur papyrus* (Paris: Lefebvre, 1906), 151, 158, 177.
- 34 See E. Hennecke & W. Schneemelcher, eds. *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in der Übersetzung: I. Evangelien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1959), 66, 61, 70.
- 35 Kraft, 'Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 655', 257.
- 36 E.G. Turner, *The Typology of the Early Codex* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1977), 143.
- 37 C.H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (London: British Academy, 1979), 12–14.
- 38 Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', 97–98.
- 39 Lührmann, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien*, 23.
- 40 J.K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005), 130–132.
- 41 S. Giversen, in an unpublished 1999 SBL paper, as reported in C.W. Hedrick, 'An Anec-

1.4 The Coptic Text (Nag Hammadi, Codex II; Cairo, Coptic Museum, Inv. 10544)⁴²

The *Gospel of Thomas* was translated from Greek into Coptic ‘no earlier than the mid-to-late third century (when, to the best of our present knowledge, Coptic literature had its beginnings)’.⁴³ The Coptic codex (numbered II, though previously III or X⁴⁴) containing *Thomas* comes probably from the fourth or fifth century.⁴⁵ The story of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi codices, in which the Coptic version of *Thomas* survives, need not be retold here: in fact, the details have been hotly contested, as can be seen in particular in the trenchant first footnote, well over a thousand words long, in James Robinson’s “official” account,⁴⁶ and in two illuminating recent discussions by Goodacre, and Denzey and Blount.⁴⁷

After its discovery, the codex—along with some of the others—was acquired by a Miss Dattari, whereafter in 1949 it was confiscated and kept in a bag in the Egyptian Service of Antiquities: there it lay until it was installed in the Coptic Museum in Cairo in 1952.⁴⁸

dotal Argument for the Independence of the *Gospel of Thomas* from the Synoptic Gospels’, in H.-G. Bethge, S. Emmel, K.L. King & I. Schletterer, eds. *For the Children, Perfect Instruction: Studies in Honor of Hans-Martin Schenke on the Occasion of the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostische Schriften’s Thirtieth Year* (NHMS 54; Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2002), 113–126 (115 n. 17). I have not been able to confirm Hedrick’s report.

42 Regrettably, despite generous funding from the British Academy, I was unable to visit Egypt to inspect the manuscript at the relevant stage of this project, due to the political instability in the country.

43 Emmel, ‘The Coptic Gnostic Texts as Witnesses’, 35.

44 H.W. Montefiore & H.E.W. Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists* (London: SCM, 1962), 11.

45 Some of the papyrus from the binding of Codex VII is dated to 348 CE, making this a *terminus a quo* at least for Codex VII. See Emmel, ‘The Coptic Gnostic Texts as Witnesses’, 38. Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 11 note that the presence of the *ankh* in the codex has also been used as a criterion for dating.

46 Robinson, *Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, 3–14, and 3 n. 1. The dispute here is particularly with the account in J. Doresse, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1960), 116–136. See also J.M. Robinson, ‘The Discovery of the Nag Hammadi Codices’, *Biblical Archaeologist* 42 (1979), 206–224.

47 M. Goodacre, ‘How Reliable is the Story of the Nag Hammadi Discovery?’, *JSNT* 35 (2013), 303–322; N. Denzey Lewis & J. Ariel Blount, ‘Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices’, forthcoming, *JBL*.

48 Doresse, *Secret Books*, 120–121, 123–124.

The text of *Thomas* is copied in Codex II (from page 32, line 10, to page 51, line 29) after the *Apocryphon of John* (the first work in the codex), and is followed by the *Gospel of Philip*, *The Hypostasis of the Archons*, *On the Origin of the World*, *The Expository Treatise on the Soul*, and *The Book of Thomas the Contender*.⁴⁹ A facsimile of the Coptic text was published by J.M. Robinson in 1974.⁵⁰ The official critical edition has a marvellously detailed discussion of the features of the manuscript by Bentley Layton, who dates the copy to the first half of the fourth century.⁵¹ The codex is 28.4×15.8 cm in size,⁵² and the text, in upright capital script, was copied by two scribes, the second of whom only copied page 47, lines 1–8 (parts of GTh 78–79).⁵³ The first scribe (“Scribe A”) apparently left a gap for this section of text to be filled in: Layton surmises that Scribe A’s model was deficient at this point. This may perhaps also explain the two blank pages in the middle of GTh 95.⁵⁴ There are abbreviations for ‘Jesus’ (generally ⲓⲉⲥⲁ, though ⲓⲏⲥ in GTh 13.5; 22.4 and 90) and ‘Spirit’ (ⲛⲏⲁⲗ or ⲛⲏⲁ in GTh 14.3; 29.1–2 *bis*; 44.3; 53.3; 114.2). Diaereses appear very frequently on *iotas*, and the syllable divider ` is often used. The language of this text of *Thomas* is Sahidic Coptic, but with a great number of non-standard features.⁵⁵ Scribe A may also have been the scribe of Nag Hammadi Codex XIII, which was also constructed in a similar manner to Codex II.⁵⁶

49 *Editio princeps*: Guillaumont, Puech, Quispel, Till & ‘Abd al Masīḥ, eds. *Gospel according to Thomas*. The definitive edition now is that of Layton, in Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 52–93 (including facing English translation by T.O. Lambdin).

50 Robinson, *Facsimile Edition*, 42–63; photographs had also been published previously in P. Labib, *Coptic Gnostic Papyri in the Coptic Museum at Old Cairo I* (Cairo: Government Press, 1956), plates 80–99.

51 Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 4.

52 Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 2.

53 For more on scribal character, see Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 4–5.

54 Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 4–5. This may mean that *Thomas* was originally longer, if the scribe left space for extra material which was never supplied.

55 Layton classifies the language of Codex II as ‘Crypto-Subachmimic’ (*Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 7). He lists the divergences from Sahidic in *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 8–14.

56 On this, see B. Layton, ‘Introduction’, in idem, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 1–18 (4), referring also to idem, ‘The Hypostasis of the Archons: Conclusion’, *HTR* 69 (1976), 31–101 (84): ‘Considerations of format and codex construction also support this identification’. See also S. Emmel, ‘The Nag Hammadi Codices Editing Project: Final Report’, *American Research Center in Egypt: Newsletter* 104 (1978), 10–32, where he comments that the scribes are ‘probably to be identified’ (27), and see 28 n. 3 on the history of the identification. J.D. Turner, ‘Introduction to Codex XIII’, in C.W. Hedrick, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codices XI, XII, XIII* (NHS 28; Leiden/ New York/ Köln: Brill, 1990), 359–369 (362–363), allows the

There is an extensive discussion, by Linda Ogden, of the binding of the co-dex.⁵⁷

1.5 The Manuscripts and Their Use

Can anything substantial be said about the origins and usage of *Thomas* on the basis of our knowledge of these manuscripts?

First, on the question of origins, it is of *some* interest that all the material evidence discussed above comes from Egypt. Might this be an indication of Egyptian provenance? Similarly, since we are dealing here with Greek fragments and a Coptic text probably translated from Greek,⁵⁸ does this suggest an original composition in Greek? We must be cautious on both counts: the whole body of Oxyrhynchus Papyri consists of many works from much further afield, but which have only been preserved in Egypt because of the climate. The questions of original language and provenance will be discussed further in Introduction, §§ 5–6, below.

Moving to usage, how are we to assess the number of manuscripts? In one sense, three early Greek fragments is a reasonably large number: Hurtado points out that although this score is much lower than the total number of second- or third-century fragments of Psalms, John and Matthew (16, 15 and 12 respectively), it is higher than, for example, 1 Corinthians (2 fragments) and Mark (only 1).⁵⁹ Does this mean that *Thomas* was popular? This is possible, though speculative: it must be remembered that when we are down to low single figures, we are dealing with a very small statistical sample.⁶⁰

As far as the Greek fragments are concerned, Hurtado draws an interesting correlation between his conclusion that these seem to have been produced for private study, and ‘the emphasis in this text on the individual and on

possibility ‘that the two hands belong to a student and instructor’, while still concluding that ‘Codices II and XIII may be assumed to have been copied in the closest proximity to one another’ (362). Turner’s comments under the heading of “The Scribal Hand” follow on from similar observations on “Physical Description” (359–361). In another link with Codex II, Codex XIII has the first ten lines of *On the Origin of the World*, which take up the rest of the last page on which the *Trimorphic Protennoia* is copied.

57 Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 19–25, and the bibliography on 25.

58 H. Koester, ‘Introduction’, in Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 38–49 (38, 40).

59 Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 29.

60 See the appropriate caution in C.M. Tuckett, *The Gospel of Mary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 9–10.

personal spiritual fulfilment.⁶¹ Conversely, if there are not copies in forms which one would associate with public reading, this would fit with the view that ‘nothing in *GThom* (in the extant Greek or the Coptic) seems to me to promote corporate/ congregational religious life.’⁶² Hurtado is aware of the small sample of manuscripts we are dealing with, and that therefore any such conclusions must remain tentative and provisional. Luijendijk has, moreover, noted that there may be some counter-evidence to Hurtado’s position: P. Oxy. I 1 is a very clearly written text, and even P. Oxy. IV 654 has markings (line-dividers, coroneis, diaereses) to facilitate reading, and so it is possible that they may have featured in worship settings.⁶³

With the Coptic version, although we have only one text, the situation is more promising because the whole codex in which *Thomas* is copied has survived. (As already noted, we have no idea what else was copied in the codex of which P. Oxy. I 1 was a part.) The collocation of *Thomas* with the *Apocryphon of John*, the *Gospel of Philip*, the *Book of Thomas the Contender* and the other works in Nag Hammadi Codex II is of potential significance here.⁶⁴ Some have commented on the relation between *Thomas* and the *Gospel of Philip* which follows it: Schenke points to the common juxtaposition of *Thomas* and *Philip* not only here, but also in the Fathers, as well as in *Pistis Sophia* 42–43 (see Introduction, § 3: ‘Named Testimonia’ below).⁶⁵ Michael Williams has argued that the *Apocryphon of John* and *Thomas* (with the *Gospel of Philip*) can be read together as rewritten Old Testament and Gospel respectively, and further speculates that *Hypostasis of the Archons* then represents a reading of Paul: hence Williams calls the structure of Codex II ‘a “Christian Scripture” arrangement.’⁶⁶

61 Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 31.

62 Hurtado, ‘Greek Fragments’, 31.

63 See esp. the discussion in Luijendijk, ‘Reading the *Gospel of Thomas* in the Third Century’.

64 See the helpful summary of research by J. Leonhardt-Balzer, ‘On the Redactional and Theological Relationship between the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Apocryphon of John*’, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 251–271 (255–259).

65 H.-M. Schenke, ‘Das Evangelium nach Philippus (NHC II, 3)’, in H.-M. Schenke, H.-G. Bethge & U.U. Kaiser, eds. *Nag Hammadi Deutsch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 1183–213 (185–186).

66 M.A. Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism”: An Argument for Dismantling a Dubious Category* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 254–255 (254). He is followed on this point by H.-J. Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels: An Introduction* (London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 170, and A. Logan, *The Gnostics: Identifying an Early Christian Cult* (London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 20. On this view, *On the Origin of the World* and the *Exegesis on the Soul* then represent eschatological discourses; the *Book of Thomas the Contender* is more difficult

Popkes argues, followed tentatively by Leonhardt-Balzer, ‘that the three texts, ApocrJoh, GThom and GPhil were linked even before the compilers of NHC II got their hands on them’, and so are intended to be mutually illuminating in Codex II.⁶⁷ Much of this is rather speculative; what is clearer is that the last work in Codex II, the *Book of Thomas the Contender*, is influenced by *Thomas* (see Introduction, § 4: ‘Early References’ below).

Layton speculated that the codex as a whole lends itself in particular to Valentinian interpretation. The *Gospel of Philip* is the clearest example of this, but all the works—Layton argues—would have been amenable to, or at least familiar to, the Valentinian outlook. This includes *Thomas*: ‘In some passages, the Valentinian *Gospel of Philip* closely parallels the *Gospel according to Thomas*, suggesting the attractiveness of *Thomas*, and the Jude Thomas tradition, to Valentinian Gnosticism.’⁶⁸ This overall picture is supported, Layton notes, by the colophon at the end of the Codex: ‘Remember me also, my brothers, in your prayers. Peace to the saints, and to the spiritual.’⁶⁹ He sees this reference to the ‘spiritual’, or ‘pneumatics’ as strongly suggestive of a Valentinian readership.⁷⁰ Against this, one may question whether the title ‘pneumatics’ was so restricted in usage, as well as how amenable to Valentinian readership was the *Apocryphon of John*.⁷¹ Another popular suggestion has been to see the Nag Hammadi codices as a whole as a collection produced and buried by monks from the nearby Pachomian monastery.⁷² This theory is also vulnerable on a number of fronts.⁷³ As a result, one must probably remain agnostic on the question of whether a particular theological impulse lay behind Codex II.

to fit into such a scheme, however. See further on this discussion also Leonhardt-Balzer, ‘Redactional and Theological Relationship’, 251.

67 Leonhardt-Balzer, ‘Redactional and Theological Relationship’, 262.

68 Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 6.

69 Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7, 204: ἀρι πανευρε εἰς ἡσάνηυ ζ[ῆ]ν νετῆπροσευχῆ ε[1]ρηνη τοῖς ἀγίοις κῆ ἡπνευματικος.

70 Schröter and Bethge follow Layton in understanding the connection in Codex II to mean that *Thomas* was regarded as at least compatible with a Valentinian outlook. H.-G. Bethge & J. Schröter, ‘Das Evangelium nach Thomas (NHC II, 2)’, in Schenke, et al., eds. *Nag Hammadi Deutsch*, I, 151–181 (160).

71 On the theological differences between Valentinians and ‘Gnostics’ *stricto sensu* (the *Apocryphon of John* being a product of the latter), see M.J. Edwards, ‘Gnostics and Valentinians in the Church Fathers’, *JTS* 40 (1989), 26–47 (34–47).

72 See e.g. M. Meyer, *The Gnostic Discoveries* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 29.

73 See the survey of views on either side in Emmel, ‘The Coptic Gnostic Texts as Witnesses’, 36.

A Comparison of the Greek and Coptic Texts¹

A detailed saying-by-saying comparison of the Greek and Coptic texts will be found in the commentary below. Here an overview of the main issues in scholarship and in the texts will suffice. The general tenor of scholarship on *Thomas* in recent times is that the Greek and Coptic are so different that they should be treated as different recensions. Zöckler speaks of ‘die Instabilität der Textüberlieferung’;² while Popkes has remarked, more agnostically: ‘We just do not know what the earliest text versions of the *Gospel of Thomas* looked like.’³ The most lengthy argument for textual diversity comes in the recent monograph of Eisele, strikingly titled *Welcher Thomas?* He talks of ‘unleugbare Unterschiede’ between the Greek and Coptic, arguing ‘dass wir es bei dem Thomasevangelium nicht mit einem einzigen Thomas zu tun haben.’⁴ Marcovich emphasises that one must assign equal weight to the *Thomas* used by Hippolytus, and so speaks of ‘three very different recensions’.⁵

On the other hand, as Turner has commented: ‘The extent of the Coptic redaction must not, however, be exaggerated.’⁶ Fitzmyer, while talking of ‘a difference of recension’, nevertheless conceives of this in a minimal sense, concluding on the same page that ‘in most cases we found an almost word-for-word identity between the Greek and Coptic versions’: even where there are differences, ‘the Coptic recension supplies the tenor of the saying.’⁷ We will examine

1 **Bibliography:** Fitzmyer, ‘The Oxyrhynchus *Logoi*’, 505–560; M. Marcovich, ‘Textual Criticism on the Gospel of Thomas’, *JTS* 20 (1969), 53–74; Attridge, ‘Appendix: The Greek Fragments’, 99–101; W. Eisele, *Welcher Thomas? Studien zur Text- und Überlieferungsgeschichte des Thomasevangeliums* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr, 2010); T. Ricchuiti, ‘Tracking Thomas: A Text-Critical Look at the Transmission of the Gospel of Thomas’, in D.B. Wallace, ed. *Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament: Manuscript, Patristic, and Apocryphal Evidence* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 189–228.

2 T. Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium* (NHMS 47; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 27.

3 E.E. Popkes, ‘About the Differing Approach to a Theological Heritage: Comments on the Relationship Between the Gospel of John, the Gospel of Thomas, and Qumran’, in J.H. Charlesworth, ed. *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, vol. 3: *The Scrolls and Christian Origins* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 281–318 (299).

4 Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 342, 250.

5 Marcovich, ‘Textual Criticism’, 64.

6 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 19.

7 Fitzmyer, ‘The Oxyrhynchus *Logoi*’, 553.

below both the differences and the similarities, in order to form a conclusion about how dramatic the variations between Greek and Coptic are. Part of the purpose of this section is to justify the enterprise of a commentary on *Thomas* as a second-century work which can be presumed to have contained, in substance, what has come down to us in our fourth-century Coptic manuscript. There are certainly differences between the Greek and Coptic versions which exceed the ‘standard deviation’ that one generally sees in the transmission and translation of the New Testament. Nevertheless, a case will be made here and in the course of the commentary that (a) the differences are often exaggerated and that there is a great deal of similarity between the Greek fragments and the Coptic manuscript, and (b) the normal procedures of textual criticism can be employed to determine which reading is more likely to be the earlier; in this respect, *Thomas* is not a special case.

2.1 Differences: A Brief Sketch

In order to assess of the significance of the differences, it is necessary to group these differences into their relevant categories. The following groups are in ascending order of potential significance.

Imaginary Differences

Eisele lists among his ‘Unterschiede im Textinhalt zwischen der griechischen und der koptischen Überlieferung’ the following:⁸ (i) ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ and εἰ πατριμε (GTh 31.1); (ii) πόλις οἰκοδομημένη and οἰπολις εἰκωτ ἡμος (GTh 32); (iii) ὅταν ἐκδύσησθε καὶ μὴ αἰσχυνθῆτε and εἰταν εἰετῆωακεκ τηγῆ ερηγ ἡπετῆωπε (GTh 37). In (i), ἡμε is a standard equivalent of πατρίς. In (ii), there is no difference at all, and the Coptic is perhaps the best possible equivalent (to give one analogy, ἐποικοδομηθέντες and εαγκετ τηγτη in Eph. 2.20). The Coptic in (iii) is a good translation of the Greek.

Differences between Coptic *Thomas* and *restored* Greek in lacunae must also be consigned to this category. For example, the alleged contrast between Jesus appearing to Thomas in P. Oxy. IV 654 and Thomas writing down in the Coptic of the Prologue leads to Eisele’s conclusion that in the Coptic, Thomas is promoted to the role of co-author. This is based, however, on the Greek being restored on the basis of a parallel in John’s Gospel.⁹

⁸ Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 264, and accompanying table.

⁹ On the other hand, the conventional restoration on the basis of the Coptic (with its difficulty

Translation Technique and the Differences between the Greek and Coptic Languages

A further factor which must be taken into account is the differences between the Greek and Coptic languages.

For example, Coptic is more tolerant of asyndeton than Greek is. Layton has commented that asyndeton is ‘one of the most frequent’ ways of linking clauses.¹⁰ In a more specialised study, Perttilä calculated that Greek *καί* is represented by asyndeton 43% of the time in the Coptic of 1 Samuel, commenting: ‘Asyndeton, the lack of any connective, is very common.’¹¹ In *Thomas*, neither of the two instances of *καί* in GTh 28.2 has an equivalent word in Coptic; the same situation applies in GTh 6.1; 26.2?; 27.2; 30.2; 30/77.2 (cf. P. Oxy. I 1’s untranslated *οὐδέ* in 31.2), and apparently 38.2. The failure to observe this aspect of Coptic translation technique mars Ricchuiti’s study: he sees a good deal of the fluidity of the text of *Thomas* as consisting of additions in the Greek fragments, noting: ‘Many of those expansions are due to the tendency of the scribe of P. Oxy. 1 to add the connective *καί*.’¹² (Cf. also the references above to 6.1 in P. Oxy. IV 654 and ?38.2 in P. Oxy. IV 655, however.) Ricchuiti’s overwhelming preference for the shorter text,¹³ in combination with missing this aspect of Coptic syntax means that the fluidity of *Thomas*’s textual transmission is exaggerated.

In GTh 39.2 the Coptic expands an element: what is probably merely ‘those entering’ in the Greek corresponds to ‘those *wishing to enter*’ (*νετογωω εβακ’ ερογν*), for which there is not room in P. Oxy. IV 655.¹⁴ As Baarda has noted, however, this does not necessarily exemplify a free stance of the Coptic version to its Greek *Vorlage*, or that it had a different *Vorlage*; Baarda notes several parallels to the introduction of *ογωω* in Coptic versions of Matthew and Luke, which he explains on grounds of translation technique.¹⁵ One might compare with these instances the French ‘Je vois la mer’ where the English holiday-maker prefers ‘I *can* see the sea’.

of perhaps having to take *Θωμάς* as a nominative) is not without problems either. See further discussion in the textual comment on the Prologue below (in main commentary).

- 10 B. Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 2nd rev. edn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 182 (§ 237).
- 11 E. Perttilä, ‘How to Read the Greek Text behind the Sahidic Coptic’, in A. Voitila & J. Jokiranta, eds. *Scripture in Transition: Essays on Septuagint, Hebrew Bible, and Dead Sea Scrolls in Honour of Raija Sollamo* (Leiden/ New York/ Köln: Brill, 2008), 367–377 (371).
- 12 Ricchuiti, ‘Tracking Thomas’, 227.
- 13 One of the criteria named in Ricchuiti, ‘Tracking Thomas’, 193.
- 14 So, rightly, T. Baarda, ‘The Reading “Who Wished to Enter” in Coptic Tradition: Matt 23.23, Luke 11.52, and Thomas 39’, *NTS* 52 (2006), 583–591 (591).
- 15 Baarda, ‘The Reading “Who Wished to Enter”’, 583–591.

Scribal Errors

Both the Greek and, especially, the Coptic text contain a number of examples of transpositions, additions, deletions, and other kinds of errors which are standard fare in the transmission of any text. In addition to the clearer examples, which are generally both easily recognisable and more trivial, there are also some more hypothetical cases where the meaning is affected. For example, the shift from 'reigning, shall rest' in the Greek to 'reigning over (the) all' in Coptic might be explained by a shift from 'reigning, επαναπαησεται' to 'reigning επανω παντα' or, less likely, 'reigning ανα παντα'.¹⁶ Similarly, in GTh 6.4 the Greek appears to have 'before the truth', whereas the Coptic has 'before the sky/heaven'. This has been explained by some as an inner-Coptic corruption, from τμη ('the truth') to τηε ('heaven').¹⁷

Substantive Differences

I do not mean to deny the fact that there are some significant differences between the Greek fragments and the Coptic version (though I question the quantity of those differences). There are four differences which might be regarded as of potential theological significance: (i) the absence of a reference to 'raising' in the Coptic of GTh 5; (ii) the Coptic's removal of a reference to 'God' in the Greek of GTh 27; (iii) the placement of Greek 30.2–3 after GTh 77.1 in the Coptic, and (iv) the substantial abbreviation in the Coptic of GTh 36.

The first case, the omission of the Greek's 'nothing ... buried which [will not be raised]' (5.3) is difficult to evaluate. It would be rather flat-footed to assert simply that the Greek *Thomas* espoused a doctrine of bodily resurrection which the Coptic translator (or some other intermediary in the course of transmission) wished to expunge. It may well be the case that the statement was removed because it was regarded as suspicious, but it is far from clear that the Greek original propounded a doctrine of resurrection. The parallel in the statement, '[For there i]s nothing hidden which will not [become] pla[in], and buried which [will not be raised]' (5.2–3), might well suggest that the point is the revelation and uncovering of what is previously hidden: a reference to bodily resurrection in 5.3 would make a rather odd parallel to the statement about the unveiling of what has been kept secret in 5.2. So it is not necessary to see, indeed improbable that there is, a theological divergence between Greek and Coptic here.

16 Fitzmyer, 'The Oxyrhynchus *Logoi*', 518.

17 The Berlin edition emends the Coptic text to τηε.

Secondly, if the reading ‘kingdom of *God*’ is indeed correct in GTh 27, there does seem to be an avoidance of such God-language in the Coptic, given the equivocal use of the term ⲛⲟⲩⲣⲉ in the rest of the text. With the straightforwardly positive sense removed in GTh 27, one is left with the baffling usage in GTh 30, and the perhaps surprising placement of ‘God’ in second position between Caesar and Jesus in GTh 100 (‘give to Caesar ... give to God ... give to me’). It remains possible, however, that there is nothing suspicious about God having been left in GTh 100 in this position apparently inferior to Jesus; it may simply be that a reference to Jesus is appended without thought to the consequences.

It should be remembered that the third case, the moving of Greek 30.2–3 to GTh 77 is a difference of order, rather than of content. It is probably not theologically motivated: the most commonly adopted explanation of the move is that GTh 77.2–3 were joined to 77.1 at the Coptic stage by a catchword connection, because GTh 77.1 and GTh 77.2 are linked by the catchword ⲛⲟⲩ , in the double sense of ‘reach’ and ‘split’.¹⁸ On the other hand, it may have some knock-on effects. As we will see in the commentary, the move may encourage a pantheistic or panchristic theology which would not arise so easily without the juxtaposition in the Coptic text.

Fourthly and finally, the Coptic substantially abbreviates of the Greek of GTh 36. (To make a crude comparison of length, the reduction is from 61 reconstructed words to the 19 words in my English translations of each version.) The opening statement is similar in Greek and Coptic: ‘Do not worry from morning to evening and from evening to morning about what you will wear.’ The Greek also adds food as something which should not occasion worry, and thereafter bolsters these points by referring to the lilies of the field not mentioned in the Coptic. Perhaps avoided as suspicious is the Greek’s ‘He will [g]ive you your garments’, but, rather than theological suspicion, the cause may have been avoidance of the awkwardness of a juxtaposition of provision of garments in GTh 36 and *undressing* (in both Greek and Coptic) in GTh 37. Therefore it may be smoothing out an inconsistency rather than theological correction at work, though one cannot be sure.

18 See e.g. E. Haenchen, ‘Literatur zum Thomasevangelium (I)’, *ThR* 27 (1961), 147–178 (161–162); C.M. Tuckett, ‘The Gospel of Thomas: Evidence for Jesus?’, *NTT* 52 (1998), 17–32 (21 n. 17); E.E. Popkes, “‘Ich bin das Licht’—Erwägungen zur Verhältnisbestimmung des Thomasevangeliums und der johanneischen Schriften anhand der Lichtmetaphorik’, in J. Frey, ed. *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2004), 641–674 (655); Popkes, ‘Differing Approach’, 281–317.

Clearly the Coptic is not a straightforwardly literal translation that would enable us to reconstruct the Greek behind it.¹⁹ There are various kinds of differences, including substitutions, as well as additions and subtractions (although we cannot necessarily distinguish between instances of these two).²⁰ It is often difficult, however, even in the four most substantive cases above, to see any sort of consistent redactional programme or theological *Tendenz* in the translation or transmission process.

2.2 Similarities

One of the problems in scholarship is that scholars often focus on these differences—which are after all more interesting. Eisele’s study, for example, notes briefly which sayings exhibit ‘beachtliche Unterschiede’²¹ but then says nothing more about those which apparently do not. The similarities are also worthy of note.

Substantial Common Order in Greek and Coptic Texts

As noted above, the Greek fragments contain (imperfectly): Prologue + GTh 1–7 (P. Oxy. IV 654), GTh 24 (P. Oxy. IV 655 fr. d), GTh 26–33 (P. Oxy. I 1), and GTh 36–39 (P. Oxy. IV 655). The only difference in order from the Coptic lies, as has been noted, in P. Oxy. I 1, where Greek GTh 30 consists of Coptic GTh 30 + GTh 77.2–3. In P. Oxy. I 1 in particular, GTh 30 is the only saying with variation from the Coptic.

Substantial Common Material in Greek and Coptic

Leaving aside the matter of the wording, the substance of the two sets of material is very close. The only saying where there is serious discrepancy is in GTh 37, where, as we have seen, the long Greek saying “against anxiety” is only a single sentence in the Coptic.²²

19 S.J. Gathercole, *The Composition of the Gospel of Thomas: Original Language and Influences* (SNTSMS 51; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 36–37, and 43–104 *passim*.

20 We do not know whether, for example, a scribe (or the translator) has added ‘Jesus’ in 37.2, or if a scribe has omitted it.

21 Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 37.

22 Eisele noted that 5 / 15 had no substantial differences, but the numbering is quite confusing. He lists as the ‘usable’ sayings for comparison Prol. + GTh 1; 2–6; 26–28; 30–32; 36–37; 39, which do add up to 15 (with the Prologue and GTh 1 counting as one). But he then

In particular, there is substantial similarity in meaning between the Greek and the Coptic. As often happens in studies of versions, some scholars rush to see a theological tendency in a translation on the basis of the meañest of evidence: the problem lies often in a lack of a *consistent* pattern. In the case of *Thomas*, even if there were an ‘anti-corporeal’ tendency in the omission of the reference to resurrection in the Coptic of GTh 5, when it comes to GTh 28, the Coptic clearly reproduces the ‘incarnational’ thought of the Greek.

*Common Greek and Graeco-Coptic Vocabulary*²³

One point not sufficiently recognised is how close the match is between items of vocabulary in the Greek and Coptic texts. This is evident on examination of the 27 Greek loan-words in the Coptic text where the Coptic text of *Thomas* and the extant Greek overlap. The following is a list of all the Greek loan-words which occur in sayings in the Coptic text of *Thomas* which are paralleled by the Greek fragments:

P. Oxy. IV 654

GTh 1	θερμηνεια:	cf. Gk [τὴν ἔρμηνείαν]
GTh 2.2	ζοταν:	cf. Gk ὄταν
GTh 3.2	εἰ ἢ θαλασσα:	cf. Gk τῆς θαλά[σσης]
GTh 3.3	αλλα:	cf. Gk καί

Thereafter, in GTh 3.4–5 (ζοταν, τοτε, δε) the Greek is lacunose.

GTh 4.1	εἰτε πτοπος:	cf. Gk περὶ τοῦ τόπου
GTh 5.2	γαρ:	Greek lacunose at this point
GTh 6.1	-ἱρνηστευε:	cf. Gk πῶς νηστεύ[σομεν]
GTh 6.1	ελενοςυνη:	Greek lacunose at this point
GTh 6.1	εναρπαρατηρει:	cf. Gk παρατηρήσ[ομεν]
GTh 7.1	μακαριος:	cf. Gk [μα]κάρι[ος]

notes that 10 out of 15 display notable differences, namely: Prol. + GTh 1; 2–3; 5–6; 30; 36–37. Hence it is only 8 out of 15 sayings with notable differences, with GTh 4; 26–28; 31–32 and 39 (i.e. seven sayings)—on Eisele’s estimation—very similar.

23 The discussion here closely parallels that in Gathercole, *Composition*, 106–108. Since constructing the list of parallel items of vocabulary, I notice that a very similar list appears in P. Piovaneli, ‘Thomas in Edessa? Another Look at the Original Setting of the *Gospel of Thomas*’, in J. Dijkstra, J. Kroesen & Y. Kuiper, eds. *Myths, Martyrs, and Modernity: Studies in the History of Religions in Honour of Jan N. Bremmer* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 443–461.

P. Oxy. IV 655

GTh 24.1 (with $\text{νεφιαθητης, ειπτοπος and ταναγκη}$) is not extant.

GTh 24.3 $\epsilon\pi\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$: cf. Gk [... χ] $\acute{\omicron}\sigma\mu\omega$

P. Oxy. I 1

GTh 26.2 $\zeta\omicron\tau\alpha\text{ν}$: Greek lacunose at this point

GTh 26.2 $\tau\omicron\tau\epsilon$: cf. Gk $\tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$

GTh 27.1 $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\bar{\eta}\rho\eta\eta\sigma\tau\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$: cf. Gk $\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\text{ν } \mu\eta \text{ νηστεύσητ(ε)}$

GTh 27.1 $\epsilon\pi\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$: cf. Gk $\tau\acute{o}\text{ν } \kappa\acute{o}\sigma\mu\omicron\text{ν}$

GTh 27.2 $\epsilon\tau\epsilon\tau\bar{\eta}\tau\bar{\eta}\iota\epsilon\iota\rho\epsilon \dots \bar{\eta}\varsigma\alpha\upsilon\beta\alpha\tau\omicron\text{ν}$: cf. Gk $\acute{\epsilon}\alpha\text{ν } \mu\eta \text{ σαββατίσητε}$

GTh 27.2 $\bar{\eta}\pi\varsigma\alpha\text{ν}\beta\alpha\tau\omicron\text{ν}$: cf. Gk $\tau\acute{o} \text{ σάββατον}$

GTh 28.1 $\bar{\eta}\pi\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma$: cf. Gk $\tau\omicron\upsilon \text{ κόσμου}$

GTh 28.1 $\zeta\bar{\eta} \varsigma\alpha\rho\zeta$: cf. Gk $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \text{ σαρχ[ε]}$

GTh 28.3 $\text{-}\tau\alpha\psi\chi\eta\text{:}$ cf. Gk $\eta \text{ ψυχῆ μου}$

Thereafter, little of GTh 28 survives in Greek, and so what might have been parallel to $\epsilon\pi\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma, \pi\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\varsigma, \pi\lambda\eta\eta, \zeta\omicron\tau\alpha\text{ν}, \tau\omicron\tau\epsilon$ and $\varsigma\epsilon\text{ναρνητανοει}$ is not extant. Only the very end of GTh 29 survives in Greek, and so, similarly, what would have been parallel to $\tau\varsigma\alpha\rho\zeta, \pi\bar{\eta}\alpha, \pi\bar{\eta}\alpha, \pi\varsigma\omega\mu\alpha$ and $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha$ is not extant.

GTh 30.2 η : No Gk parallel

GTh 31.1 $\pi\rho\omicron\phi\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$: cf. Gk $\pi\rho\omicron\phi\acute{\eta}\tau\eta\varsigma$

GTh 31.2 $\rho\bar{\theta}\epsilon\rho\alpha\pi\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$: cf. Gk $\pi\omicron\iota\epsilon\bar{\iota} \text{ θεραπειας}$

GTh 32 $\omicron\gamma\pi\omicron\lambda\iota\varsigma$: cf. Gk $\pi\acute{o}\lambda\iota\varsigma$

GTh 32 $\dots \omicron\gamma\Delta\epsilon \dots$: cf. Gk $\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon \dots \omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon \dots$

GTh 33.2–3 ($\gamma\alpha\rho, \omicron\gamma\Delta\epsilon, \alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha, \tau\lambda\chi\eta\eta\iota\alpha$) is not extant in Greek.

P. Oxy. IV 655

GTh 37.1 νεφιαθητης : cf. Gk $\omicron\iota \text{ μαθηται αυτου}$

GTh 37.2 $\zeta\omicron\tau\alpha\text{ν}$: cf. Gk $\acute{\omicron}\tau\alpha\text{ν}$

From GTh 37.3 to GTh 39.2 ($\tau\omicron\tau\epsilon, \alpha\tau\epsilon\tau\bar{\eta}\rho\epsilon\pi\omicron\theta\upsilon\mu\epsilon\iota, \bar{\eta}\phi\alpha\rho\iota\varsigma\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma, \bar{\eta}\gamma\rho\alpha\eta\eta\alpha\tau\epsilon\upsilon\varsigma, \bar{\eta}\tau\eta\gamma\eta\omega\varsigma\iota\varsigma, \omicron\gamma\tau\epsilon$) the Greek is too lacunose to identify similarities or differences between Greek and Coptic texts.

GTh 39.3 $\Delta\epsilon$: cf. Gk $\delta\acute{\epsilon}$

GTh 39.3 $\bar{\eta}\phi\rho\omicron\text{ν}\iota\omicron\varsigma$: cf. Gk [$\phi\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu\iota$]μοι

GTh 39.3 $\bar{\eta}\alpha\kappa\epsilon\rho\alpha\iota\omicron\varsigma$: cf. Gk [$\acute{\alpha}$]χέραι[οι]

It can be observed that, in almost every case, there is a correspondence between a borrowed Greek word in the Coptic and the Greek where that Greek text is extant. The only exceptions are a case of ἀλλὰ (← καί in GTh 3,3), an unparalleled use of η in GTh 30.2, and GTh 32's preference in Coptic for a single ογΔε over the Greek's οὔτε ... οὔτε In the latter two cases the discrepancy arises from a different syntax in the surrounding context; additionally, the Greek paralleling the η in GTh 30.2 is uncertain. Moreover, as is widely recognised, particles are the elements least predictably rendered in other Greek-to-Coptic translations.²⁴ This is a fairly remarkable statistic, making a Greek *Vorlage* quite similar to our extant Greek fragments almost certain.

2.3 Some Analogies

A more detailed study of the variations in the transmission of *Thomas* in comparison with the transmission of other works, such as NT books and other works, is a desideratum.²⁵ In the absence of such a study, we can briefly sketch some analogous cases. The Greek of the *Sophia of Jesus Christ* is very close to the Coptic version (especially the Berlin manuscript): the similarity is greater than is the case with *Thomas*. A closer analogy is the *Gospel of Mary*, where there are numerous instances of different syntax, and some different vocabulary: Tuckett discusses 21 differences, perhaps more comparable to the quantity of differences between Greek and Coptic texts of *Thomas*.²⁶ There is, however, a very similar overall sense. Too far in the other direction of difference would be the Aramaic Targums of the Hebrew Bible, which—put simply—are more paraphrastic than the Coptic translation of *Thomas*. Or again, the version of

24 Mink comments that the use of Graeco-Coptic particles to translate Greek particles is 'ziemlich wahllos'. G. Mink, 'Die koptischen Versionen des Neuen Testaments: Die sprachlichen Probleme bei ihrer Bewertung für die griechische Textgeschichte', in K. Aland, ed. *Die alten Übersetzungen des Neuen Testaments, die Kirchenväterzitate und Lektionare: Der gegenwärtige Stand ihrer Erforschung und ihre Bedeutung für die griechische Textgeschichte* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972), 160–299 (242). F. Feder, *Jeremias, Lamentationes (Threni), Epistula Jeremiae et Baruch* (Biblia Sahidica; Berlin/ New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 86–87, notes that in the Sahidic version of the Jeremiah corpus, καί can be represented by Coptic words for 'and' (ⲁϣⲱ, ⲙⲏ, ϣⲓ), but also by ἀλλὰ, Δε or η. Perttilä, 'How to Read the Greek', 376, sums up the case of 1 Samuel: 'To read the Greek behind the Coptic text is in the case of conjunctions mostly impossible.'

25 Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas', 228.

26 *Gos. Mary* 18,8–9 has ἐκρήγνυσαζε where the Greek does not have a form of γρμνάζω. For discussion of the various differences, see Tuckett, *Gospel of Mary*, 119–133.

the book of *Tobit* in the Alcalà Bible (*Complutensis* 1) may be considered a different recension, but this is appropriate for a paraphrase which is approximately 25% longer than other Old Latin texts of *Tobit*.²⁷ Although in the case of *Thomas* we are primarily comparing Greek texts with a Coptic translation, one can draw a partial analogy with aspects of the transmission of the Greek NT: for example, Royse's study of the scribal habits in the earliest NT papyri identifies and discusses additions, omissions, leaps, transpositions, substitutions, conflations, harmonisations and theological changes in P45, P46, P47, P66, P72 and P75—the same features which one sees in the textual variation in *Thomas*.²⁸ As Ricchuiti has put it, 'it should be noted that the scribes who copied the Gospel [of *Thomas*] appear to fall victim to many of the exact same traps that corrupted canonical texts.'²⁹ In the light of this, even if the Greek texts are by no means perfect, and the Coptic is a free or 'adapted translation',³⁰ the text-critical process is not a hopeless one.

2.4 Conclusion

In sum, there are noteworthy textual differences between the Greek fragments on the one hand, and the Coptic text on the other. (These differences will be the subject of more extended textual comment in the relevant sections of the commentary.) However, these differences have sometimes been exaggerated. The important conclusion for the purposes of the commentary is that it is unnecessary to exegete the Greek and Coptic texts separately as different works or very different recensions in need of separate treatments. There are occasionally different nuances of meaning between a Greek fragment and its corresponding Coptic text, but these are not sufficient to prevent treating the texts as witnesses to the same work. Rather, the similarities where the Coptic and Greek do overlap are sufficient to imply that the Coptic text *in substance* goes back to a second-century Greek original resembling our Oxyrhynchus fragments. Any interpretation of *Thomas* needs to make clear what the textual basis is.³¹ As a result of the considerations above, this commentary will not follow the model

27 See S. Weeks, S.J. Gathercole & L.T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Tobit* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 23–24.

28 J.R. Royse, *Scribal Habits in Early Greek New Testament Papyri* (Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2008).

29 Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas', 227.

30 Fitzmyer, 'The Oxyrhynchus *Logoi*', 553.

31 J. Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte: Studien zur Rezeption der Logienüberlieferung in Markus, Q und Thomas* (WMANT 76; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1997), 136.

of that of Valantasis, who effectively provides two commentaries, one on the Greek, one on the Coptic. Rather, it will assess competing readings in the textual comment on each saying in an attempt to identify which is the earliest.

Appended Note: *Thomas* as a ‘Rolling Corpus’?

Some scholars have seen the question ‘Welcher *Thomas*?’ as not merely confined to the question of how to assess the relative significance of the Oxyrhynchus fragments, Hippolytus’ citation and the Coptic text. There is also the matter of *Thomas*’s compositional history to consider: surely there were various *Thomas*es at various compositional phases before the completion of the final version? Wilson, for example, likened *Thomas* to a snowball-like ‘rolling corpus’.³² Likewise, DeConick’s work sees a core originating in Aramaic in the mid-first century, with various accretions until the addition of the latest stratum of *Thomas* in 80–120 CE.³³ Fieger similarly reckons that we should assume ‘einen längeren Wachstumsprozess’.³⁴ Others see less of a rolling corpus, and more of a bipartite or tripartite composition. For example, Crossan and Arnal see a process of two stages, whereas Puig reckons on three.³⁵

Although it is impossible to prove the negative that there were no such compositional stages and layers, I consider the case that there were such stages not proven.³⁶ There are a number of weaknesses both (1) in the arguments for

32 R.McL. Wilson, ‘Thomas and the Synoptic Gospels’, *ExpT* 72 (1960), 36–39 (39).

33 See the chart of material in respective strata in A.D. DeConick, *The Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation: With a Commentary and New English Translation of the Complete Gospel* (LNTS 287; London/New York: T&T Clark International, 2006), 10.

34 M. Fieger, ‘Die Frau im Thomasevangelium’, in R. Schulz & M. Görg, eds. *Lingua Restituta Orientalis* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1990), 102–107 (103); cf. F.B. Watson, *Gospel Writing: A Canonical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 221.

35 J.D. Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991), 427, on *Thomas* I, which he considers complete ‘by the fifties’, and 430 on *Thomas* II (60–80 CE). W.E. Arnal, ‘The Rhetoric of Marginality: Apocalypticism, Gnosticism, and Sayings Gospels’, *HTR* 88 (1995), 471–494, gives only a list of what can be ascribed with confidence to the sapiential stratum (478 n. 17), and to the secondary ‘gnostic stratum’ (479 n. 32). He dates *Thomas* as a whole to the latter half of the first century (489 n. 70). See A. Puig, *Un Jesús desconocido: Las claves del evangelio gnóstico de Tomás* (Barcelona: Ariel, 2008), 133–178, for what he assigns to different strata. See pp. 116 and 121 for the dates: 100–110 CE for Tomás¹; c. 150 for Tomás^{2-a}. and 200 for Tomás^{2-b}.

36 There may be some differences from earlier drafts. E.g. S. Giversen, ‘Questions and Answers in the Gospel according to Thomas: The Composition of pl. 81,14–18 and pl. 83, 14–27’;

multiple stages of composition, and (2) in the criteria used to place particular logia in the relevant layers. We will examine these in turn.

1 *Arguments for Multiple Stages of Composition*

The Argument from Thomas's Form

There are two main parts to this: the fact that *Thomas* is a kind of list, and the analogy of the *Sentences of Sextus*. On the first point, Sellw is an example of one who has remarked that the form of *Thomas* affords it little protection against interpolation.³⁷ A problem with this argument, however, is that there is little evidence of interpolation in the period between the time of the Oxyrhynchus fragments and the Coptic version. As Haenchen remarks, whatever snowballing may have taken place before c. 200 CE (the earliest likely date for the Oxyrhynchus fragments), there is obviously not much between Greek and Coptic stages.³⁸ The similarity in order means that, for example, no one between the Greek and Coptic stages wanted to add a saying between GTh 2 and 3, or between 4 and 5, etc. Given that there is no evidence that *Thomas* was regarded as permeable between c. 200–350 CE, why should one suppose that it had previously been?

Additionally, Wilson's influential comment that *Thomas* is a 'rolling corpus' is influenced by the analogy he draws with Chadwick's assessment of the *Sentences of Sextus*.³⁹ However, the situation with the latter is quite different: Chadwick's comment that the two principal texts of *Sextus* 'differ profoundly in their order' could not be said of the manuscripts of *Thomas*.⁴⁰

Acta Orientalia 25 (1960), 332–338, may well be right that sayings 6 and 14 could have been a single dialogue originally.

37 P. Sellw, 'The Gospel of Thomas: Prospects for Future Research', in J.D. Turner & A. McGuire, eds. *The Nag Hammadi Library after Fifty Years: Proceedings of the 1995 Society of Biblical Literature Commemoration* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 327–346 (335).

38 E. Haenchen, 'Literatur zum Thomasevangelium (Fortsetzung)', *ThR* 27 (1961), 306–338 (314).

39 R.McL. Wilson, "'Thomas" and the Growth of the Gospels', *HTR* 53 (1960), 231–250 (231). See A. Gagné, 'Sectarianism, Secrecy and Self Definition: Relational Features between Jesus, the Disciples and the Outsiders', in T. Holmén, ed. *Jesus in Continuum* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 223–242 (230 n. 21), for a survey of those who have taken up this idea. More recently, note P.-H. Poirier, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas (NH II,2; P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655), Témoin de la théologie chrétienne primitive?', in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 95–125 (118).

40 H. Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus: A Contribution to the History of Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1959), 3.

Theological Inconsistency

This is often alleged to originate in multiple stages of composition.⁴¹ On this issue, however, it is worth noting that assessments of doctrinal diversity within *Thomas* do vary greatly from scholar to scholar.⁴² For some, the reference to James' leadership in GTh 12 and the criticism of physical circumcision in GTh 53 display quite incompatible stances toward Jewish Christianity.⁴³ Or again, on the theme of 'light': 'The interpreter who tries to harmonize this particular content of log. 24 with other sayings in the collection will be disappointed ... The collection refers to light no fewer than six times, but all attempts to tie these sayings to a common underlying doctrine seem forced.'⁴⁴ On the other hand, other scholars seem quite capable of discussing particular themes in *Thomas* and giving accounts which hold together reasonably well. One thinks, for example, of Uro's nuanced treatments of authority in *Thomas* (which touches on the James question), and of the topic of asceticism.⁴⁵ In the latter, Uro identifies *tendencies* rather than necessarily hard *positions*.⁴⁶ Popkes' treatment of light symbolism in *Thomas* produces a coherent account of the theme.⁴⁷ The eschatology of *Thomas*, sometimes considered contradictory, is in my judgment not too difficult to fit together.⁴⁸ The sayings cannot be boiled down to a neat system,

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- 41 See e.g. A.D. DeConick, 'The Original "Gospel of Thomas"', *VC* 56 (2002), 167–199 (167, 179–180). DeConick cites the multiplicity of doublets, and the presence of divergent theological perspectives as the two reasons necessitating explanation: 'How can we account for, how can we explain the presence of these contradictory materials and doublets in one text as well as the presence of so many religious traditions?' (167).
- 42 Neller and Davies, for example, have talked of the integrity of *Thomas*, and therefore do not consider theological inconsistency to require such radical views of composition as does DeConick. See K.V. Neller, 'Diversity in the Gospel of Thomas: Clues for a New Direction?', *SecCent* 7 (1989–1990), 1–18; S.L. Davies, 'The Christology and Protology of the Gospel of Thomas', *JBL* 111 (1992), 663–682 (664).
- 43 DeConick, 'The Original Gospel of Thomas', 167.
- 44 T. Zöckler, 'Light within the Human Person: A Comparison of Matthew 6:22–23 and Gospel of Thomas 24', *JBL* 120 (2001), 487–499 (496).
- 45 R. Uro, "'Who Will be Our Leader?' Authority and Autonomy in the Gospel of Thomas', in I. Dunderberg, C.M. Tuckett & K. Syreeni, eds. *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity: Essays in Honour of Heikki Räsänen* (Leiden/ Boston/ Köln: Brill, 2002), 457–485, and idem, 'Asceticism and Anti-Familial Language in the Gospel of Thomas', in H. Moxnes, ed. *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (London: Routledge, 1997), 216–234.
- 46 See Uro, 'Asceticism and Anti-Familial Language', 226.
- 47 Popkes, 'Ich bin das Licht', 641–674.
- 48 See S.J. Gathercole, "'The Heavens and the Earth Will Be Rolled up": The Eschatology of the

but neither are they a chaotic mass of contradictions. On the other hand, Stead offers the heterogeneity of audience as an explanation of *Thomas's* diversity of outlook.⁴⁹

One might observe that a view that the collection, because of its fissures and inconcinnities, could not come from a single author merely moves the problem. Given that *Thomas* is quite a short work, which ought to be manageable to edit, we are left instead with an eccentric and/or unintelligent final editor instead (which is of course perfectly possible). It is important to recognise that an editor putting into a rather haphazard final form a 'snowball' which had accumulated several layers would be just as capable of producing a similar work by the compilation of multiple sources. Such inconsistencies are a problem for any theory, as—if one finds the theological tensions intolerable—such tensions indicate carelessness on the part of the final editor however long the process of accretion has been,⁵⁰ whether over the course of a century (so DeConick), or in the short time it would take an editor to combine, for example, the *Gospel of the Hebrews* and the *Gospel of the Egyptians* (thus early Quispel).⁵¹

The Presence of Doublets

There is not a problem with the presence of doublets *per se*, but their frequency in *Thomas* has raised questions.⁵² Matthew and Luke both have doublets, but just not as many as one finds in *Thomas*. Some, however, have identified particular literary reasons for the doublets: this is the conclusion of the most

Gospel of Thomas, in H.-J. Eckstein, C. Landmesser & H. Lichtenberger, eds. *Eschatologie—Eschatology: The Sixth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium: Eschatology in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Tübingen, September 2009) (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 280–302.

49 G.C. Stead, 'Some Reflections on the Gospel of Thomas', *Studia Evangelica* 3 (1964), 390–402 (399–400).

50 DeConick, 'The Original Gospel of Thomas', 178, remarks that Arnal's model of a kind of two-stage composition faces the same problems as does a unified composition by a single author.

51 See e.g. G. Quispel, 'Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of the Hebrews', *NTS* 12 (1966), 371–382 (373) for Quispel's view of these two as the only sources. In the same article he attributes *Thomas's* doublets to the combining of these two sources (378). Quispel later added a Hermetic source: see discussion of the development of his views in F.T. Fallon & R. Cameron, 'The Gospel of Thomas: A Forschungsbericht and Analysis', *ANRW Principat* 2.25.6 (1988), 4195–4251 (4217–4218).

52 See e.g. DeConick, 'The Original Gospel of Thomas', 167.

substantial study of them;⁵³ another scholar sees the later versions as the result of improvisation upon the earlier forms.⁵⁴ On the other hand, it may well be the case again that the author of *Thomas* is simply not a skilled writer. Arnal probably rightly characterises the author/editor as ‘moderately educated’, but with ‘little literary sophistication’.⁵⁵ Horman notes, not without some understatement: ‘There is not, I think, a drive to literary excellence in *Thomas*.’⁵⁶ As in the case with theological inconsistency above, the doublets are a problem for any theory, as—if one excludes the theory of subtle literary sophistication—they indicate carelessness on the part of the final editor whether one envisages a snowballing over a century or a process merely of combining multiple sources. As Neller points out, scholars have taken doublets as evidence in either direction.⁵⁷ On the other hand, it may be correct that the doublets are deliberate rather than the result of carelessness. At least one of the doublets is introduced in a way that makes it clear that it is known by the author/ editor to be a doublet.⁵⁸ Thus Dewey’s view that the later versions are reworkings of the earlier versions may be right.

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- 53 J.Ma. Asgeirsson, ‘Arguments and Audience(s) in the Gospel of Thomas (Part II); *SBLSP* (1998), 325–342 (329), identifying the doublets as inner-Thomasine growth, rather than from assimilation of external sources. See also the first part in *SBLSP* (1997), 47–85, where the basic data is set out on pp. 49, 50 and 75. Cf. J.-M. Sevrin, ‘Thomas, Q et le Jésus de l’histoire’, in A. Lindemann, ed. *Sayings Source Q and the Historical Jesus* (Louvain: Leuven University/ Peeters, 2001), 461–476 (465), who takes the view that since a number of the doublets appear in the last 20 sayings, they collectively function as a kind of recapitulation. The point is also noted by Stead, who deduces a rather different conclusion from the facts, namely that the original conclusion was perhaps around GTh 100, but that it was rather repetitiously expanded later (‘Some Reflections on the Gospel of Thomas’, 401).
- 54 A.J. Dewey, ‘Keep Speaking until you Find ...: Thomas and the School of Oral Mimesis’, in R. Cameron & M.P. Miller, eds. *Redescribing Christian Origins* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 109–132 (117).
- 55 Arnal, ‘Rhetoric of Marginality’, 489; cf. Sellev, who notes that some scholars regard *Thomas* as ‘a sub-literary product’ (‘The Gospel of Thomas: Prospects for Future Research’, 328).
- 56 J.F. Horman, ‘The Source of the Version of the Parable of the Sower in the Gospel of Thomas’, *NovT* 21 (1979), 326–343 (343). He had just noted aspects of the phraseology of *Thomas* as ‘surprisingly crude’, and reflecting ‘shockingly bad taste’ (342).
- 57 See discussion in Neller, ‘Diversity in the Gospel of Thomas’, 3.
- 58 The statement in GTh 46 about knowing the kingdom by becoming a child is introduced with ‘I have said’, harking back perhaps to the similar thought in GTh 22. According to some interpreters, the comment about the world not being worthy of the one who finds

Finally, none of the putative previous “editions” appears to have survived. This may be regarded as a rather facile argument, akin to arguing against Q on the basis that there is no manuscript of it. It needs to be remembered, however, how shaky is the foundation on which the theory of multiple stages of composition rests, and therefore such layers should certainly not be treated as known entities.

2 *The Problem with the Criteria for Assigning Sayings*

There are serious difficulties with the criteria adopted by scholars for placing particular sayings in particular strata. Two influential examples will be examined here, Crossan and DeConick. Crossan’s account is as follows:

There may be at least two separate layers in it. One was composed by the fifties C.E., possibly in Jerusalem, under the aegis of James’s authority (see *Gos. Thom.* 12). After his martyrdom in 62 C.E., the collection and maybe also its community, migrated to Syrian Edessa. There a second layer was added, possibly as early as the sixties or seventies, under the aegis of the Thomas authority (see *Gos. Thom.* 13). The collection is independent of the intracanonial Gospels [citing authorities]. Those twin layers are identified, but tentatively and experimentally, as follows: the earlier James-layer is now discernible primarily in those units with independent attestation elsewhere and is placed in the first stratum (*Gos. Thom.* I), the Thomas-layer is now discernible primarily in that which is unique to this collection, or at least to the general Thomas tradition, and is placed in the second stratum (*Gos. Thom.* II). That rather crude stratification underlines the need for a better one, but it also emphasizes how much of this collection is very, very early.⁵⁹

It should be noted that Crossan admits that his reconstruction is ‘crude’ and proposed ‘tentatively and experimentally’. It nevertheless has a significant impact on his reconstruction of Jesus.⁶⁰ The ‘tentative’ mood remains, however: the whole paragraph above rests on a ‘may be’, with a further ‘maybe’ and two ‘possibly’s’ as well. Instead of ‘tentatively and experimentally’, one might

himself in GTh 111 is prefaced with ‘Did not Jesus say ...?’, alerting the reader perhaps to the similar statements in GTh 56 and 80. See commentary on this saying below, however.

59 Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 427–428.

60 So rightly C. Quarles, ‘The Use of the Gospel of Thomas in the Research on the Historical Jesus of John Dominic Crossan’, *CBQ* 69 (2007), 517–536 (517–518).

substitute 'speculatively': is there any substantive reason why sayings with attestation elsewhere (especially the Synoptics) should be placed in the earlier stratum whereas those not attested elsewhere should be consigned to the later?

Some of the same problems are found in DeConick's criteria, acknowledged by Quarles to be more detailed than the method of Crossan.⁶¹ To cite the explanation of her first criterion at length:

Secondary embellishments are very obvious when allegories and interpretative clauses were added to sayings, especially clauses that represent ideological positions common to later Christianity (i.e., L. 16c). Sayings also were developed contextually through the creation of dialogues (i.e., L. 52 and 60) and question-answer units (i.e., L. 6a/14a and 51). In these cases, the saying is interpreted by focusing or extending its discussion to a particular topic, a topic which may have had little to do with the kernel saying. The questions, usually introduced by the disciples, most often represent concerns or issues from the later part of the first century (i.e., L. 53). The saying following the question most probably entered the kernel simultaneous with the question since they seem to function as units of explanatory material. It is less likely that a question alone was inserted before a kernel saying, especially in cases where the saying reflects the interests of later Christian discussions. The material that can be removed because it shows signs of secondary literary development includes that which has been shaped into dialogues (L. 13, 60), material which has been introduced into the collection by questions from the disciples (6a/14a, 12, 18, 37, 51, 53, and 113) and material which has been added to a Logion in order to provide an interpretation of that saying (16c, 21c, 23b, 30a, 64b, 68b, 100c, 11b–c).⁶²

This is the first of three 'principles for discerning intra-traditions'. Its flaws should be apparent: it is a fallacious form-critical rule that allegory is secondary, and there is no reason why dialogues should be later accretions. The claim that 'the questions that the disciples pose are invariably the questions that the community has raised and seeks to resolve'⁶³ sees in principle a remarkable

61 Quarles, 'Use of the Gospel of Thomas', 517 n. 3.

62 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 188–189. See further eadem, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 64–77.

63 DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 66.

level of transparency in the text. Such a view is also unworkable in practice: for example, the indirect questions in GTh 24 ('show us the place where you are, since it is necessary for us to seek after it') and GTh 91 ('tell us who you are, so that we might believe in you') cannot simply be read as reflecting community concerns straightforwardly, and they are in any case not answered directly by Jesus in the respective logia.

The second principle is that certain sayings come into the collection as responses to crises.⁶⁴ One difficulty with this criterion comes with understanding the principle and the compositional model underlying it (at least in my understanding). The following statements may be compared:

New sayings did not dribble into the text, one here, one there. On the contrary, they entered the collection *en masse* at particular moments as answers to questions about ideology or responses to crises situations.⁶⁵

Two pages later, one reads:

First, the leadership of James seems to have been threatened. The community responded by promoting the maintenance of that connection (L. 12). Also, the authority of the community's hero, Thomas, seems to have been challenged at some point in their history so they responded by adding the introductory saying and Logion 13.⁶⁶

There is a difficulty here with the fact that this second statement seems precisely to explain the entry of sayings 'one here, one there' as the result of very specific events. (Indeed, the second composition stage is stated explicitly to have only consisted of two sayings, each added for different reasons.⁶⁷) The application of this principle in particular cases is also strained: for example, DeConick sees responses to the delay of the parousia in a number of places where it is extremely unlikely: these include the disciples' question in GTh 20.1 ('tell us what the kingdom of heaven is like'),⁶⁸ GTh 38.2 ('days are coming when

64 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 189–191. See further eadem, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 77–95.

65 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 189.

66 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 191.

67 See DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 98. The sayings are GTh 12, the result of a 'leadership crisis', and GTh 68.2, the result of 'relocation'.

68 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 106–107.

you will seek after me but will not find me'),⁶⁹ the collection of material in GTh 22,⁷⁰ and the parable of the woman with the jar.⁷¹

The third principle is flawed because it determines the outcome in advance. DeConick divides it into two parts, each with an opening explanation:

a. Shifts in writing

As new groups of people joined the community, new types of sayings would have been incorporated into the text, sayings which would have reflected the needs, desires, beliefs, and interpretations of the shifting constituency.⁷²

b. Shifts in reading

Not only would changes in the membership of the community have resulted in new material entering the gospel but it would have resulted in interpretative shifts within the interpretative reading of the gospel.⁷³

Constructing history on the basis of what 'would have been' the case is clearly an unsound procedure.

Finally, one can note the flaw in what DeConick sees as the corroborating evidence for her approach. She sees remarkable convergences between the reconstructed kernel of *Thomas*, on the one hand, and the *Diatessaron* and Q on the other: 'striking agreement between Tatian and the kernel *Thomas*,'⁷⁴ and the fact that no *Thomas* sayings with a Q parallel can be found in the *later strata* (they all appear in the kernel)—'this also cannot be coincidence'.⁷⁵ Indeed, neither of these correlations are coincidental. In the first case, the correlations between the *Diatessaron* and *Thomas* (leaving aside here the speculative nature of any reconstruction of the *Diatessaron*), which are actually not as exact as claimed,⁷⁶ are in fact an inevitable result of the method. The kernel Gospel

69 Thus DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 155; eadem, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 172.

70 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 115, repeats the idea that the delay of the eschaton is a key theme here, though again it is absent.

71 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 271.

72 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 191.

73 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 192.

74 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 197.

75 DeConick, 'Original Gospel of Thomas', 198.

76 DeConick notes two exceptions, GTh 1 and 113 ('Original Gospel of Thomas', 197); in fact, the article of Quispel which she cites has others (GTh 12; 65; 76), and omits GTh 46; 74. See G. Quispel, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas et le Diatessaron', *VC* 13 (1959), 87–117 (89–95).

has been reconstructed on the basis that distinctively Thomasine elements, or other material reflective of later community concerns, etc., can be straightforwardly be identified as subsequent accretions. The implicit basis for identifying what is 'primitive' (as opposed to what reflects later decades) is therefore the Jesus tradition in the Synoptics. Ergo, it is no surprise that when one compares the kernel to the *Diatessaron*, the former (which contains mainly Synoptic material) overlaps almost entirely with the latter, which by its very nature contains all that Synoptic material. The same applies with DeConick's comparison with Q. When one strips *Thomas* down with the result that it contains largely Synoptic material (again, having operated with the implicit assumption that the Synoptic material defines to a large extent what is primitive), it is hardly surprising that half of the remaining kernel overlaps with Q. It is no coincidence at all, but an inevitable consequence.

This can quickly be seen by examining DeConick's treatment of the dialogues.⁷⁷ These should provide a useful test-case, since, as we have seen, DeConick avers that dialogues are some of the material most likely to contain easily identifiable later material. 23 out of the 114 logia in *Thomas* are dialogues (GTh 6, 12, 13, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 37, 43, 51, 52, 53, 60, 61, 72, 79, 91, 99, 100, 104, 113, 114). DeConick sees kernel material in 11 out of these 23.⁷⁸ Noticeably, with one exception, all the material in these 11 logia located in the kernel is Synoptic material, and the one exception might naturally be labeled 'Synoptic-type'—it is the negative form of the golden rule (6.2–3). The rest is all paralleled in the Synoptic Gospels: 20.2–4 (the parable of the mustard seed), 21.10–11 (aphorisms from the Synoptic Gospels), 24.3 (Synoptic saying), 61.1 (Synoptic saying), 72 and 79 (Synoptic dialogues), 91.2 (Synoptic saying), 99, 100.1–3 and 104 (Synoptic dialogues).

Conclusion

DeConick's method is actually in practice remarkably similar to Crossan's. Since the 'Synoptic Jesus' tacitly provides a framework for assessing what is primitive and what is later in *Thomas*, Crossan's '*Gos. Thom. I*' and DeConick's

77 See DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 67–85. The categories 'question and answer units' (67–68) and 'dialogues' (68–69) slightly confusingly do not include all this material, and it is unclear why the latter category does not include the former.

78 The kernel gospel is that delineated in DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 97–98.

kernel both consist almost entirely of material paralleled in the Synoptic Gospels. This occurs through what is largely a circular process. As a result, the cases above arguing that *Thomas* is a rolling corpus cannot be regarded as proven. The present commentary will therefore proceed without reliance on any such speculative archaeology, and will instead examine the form(s) of the text which we have in the extant manuscripts.

Named Testimonia to *Thomas*¹

The number of references to *Thomas* in late antiquity and beyond indicates just how persistent curiosity or concern about works such as *Thomas* was. Testimonia explicitly mentioning *Thomas* are merely listed here; the individual passages have been discussed at greater length elsewhere.² The present list roughly doubles the number noted in the most extensive previous catalogue, that of Attridge.³ This list consists of 3.1–39, which are fairly clear testimonia, and 3.40–48 which are more dubious.

3.1 (?Ps-)Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.7.20–21 (c. 225 CE)⁴

οὐ μόνον (δ') αὐτῶν ἐπιμαρτυρεῖν φασι τῷ λόγῳ τὰ Ἀσσυρίων μυστήρια καὶ Φρυγῶν (ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ Αἰγυπτίων) περὶ τὴν τῶν γεγονότων καὶ γινομένων καὶ ἐσομένων ἔτι μακαρίαν κρυβομένην ὁμοῦ καὶ φανερούμενην φύσιν, ἣν περ φησὶ (τὴν) ἐν τὸς ἀνθρώπου βασιλείαν οὐρανῶν ζητούμενην, περὶ ἧς διαρρήδην ἐν τῷ κατὰ Θωμᾶν ἐπιγραφόμενῳ εὐαγγελίῳ παραδιδόασι λέγοντες οὕτως· Ἐμὲ ὁ ζητῶν εὐρήσει ἐν παιδίοις ἀπὸ ἐτῶν ἑπτὰ· ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἐν τῷ τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτῳ αἰῶνι κρυβόμενος φανεροῦμαι.

τοῦτο δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν Χριστοῦ ἀλλὰ Ἴπποκράτους λέγοντος· Ἐπτὰ ἐτῶν παῖς πατρός ἡμῖς. ὅθεν οὗτοι τὴν ἀρχέγονον φύσιν τῶν ὄλων ἐν ἀρχεγόνῳ τιθέμενοι σπέρματι, τὸ Ἴπποκράτειον ἀκηκοότες ὅτι ἐστὶν ἡμῖς πατὴρ παίδιον ἑπτὰ ἐτῶν, ἐν τοῖς τέσσαρσι (καὶ δέκα) φασὶν ἔτεσι, κατὰ τὸν Θωμᾶν, εἶναι φανερούμενον.

They (i.e. the Naassenes) say not only that the mysteries of the Assyrians and Phrygians support their own doctrine, (but also that the same is the case with

1 **Bibliography:** H.-C. Puech, 'Une collection de paroles de Jésus récemment retrouvée: L'évangile selon Thomas', *Academie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres: Comptes Rendus* (1957), 146–166, esp. 149–152; Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', 103–109; M. Grosso, *Λόγοι Ἀπόκρυφοί: Aspetti della ricezione del Vangelo secondo Tommaso nel cristianesimo antico* (PhD, University of Turin, 2007), 24–38; S.R. Johnson, 'Hippolytus's Refutatio and the Gospel of Thomas', *J ECS* 18 (2010), 305–326; S.J. Gathercole, 'Named Testimonia to the Gospel of Thomas: An Expanded Inventory and Analysis', *HTR* 105 (2012), 53–89.

2 Gathercole, 'Named Testimonia to the Gospel of Thomas'.

3 Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', 103–109.

4 P. Wendland, ed. *Hippolytus Werke. Dritte Band: Refutatio Omnium Haeresium* (GCS 26; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1916), 83.

those of the Egyptians) about the blessed nature—at the same time hidden and appearing—of those that have been, are, and are yet to come. This, they say, is the kingdom of heaven to be sought within man, about which they expressly pass on a statement in the Gospel entitled ‘according to Thomas’, as follows: ‘He who seeks me will find me in children from seven years old. For there, in the fourteenth aeon I am hidden and yet appear.’

But this is not from Christ but from Hippocrates, who said, ‘The child of seven years is half of his father.’ From this they locate the original nature of all things in its original seed, having heard this Hippocratic doctrine that ‘the child of seven years is half of his father.’ So they say that in four(teen) years, according to Thomas, he is revealed.

3.2 Origen, *Hom. in Luc. 1* (c. 233–244 CE)⁵

τὸ μέντοι ἐπιγεγραμμένον κατὰ Αἰγυπτίους εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὸ ἐπιγεγραμμένον τῶν δώδεκα εὐαγγέλιον οἱ συγγράψαντες ἐπεχείρησαν. ἤδη δὲ ἐτόλμησε καὶ Βασιλείδης γράψαι κατὰ Βασιλείδην εὐαγγέλιον. πολλοὶ μὲν οὖν ἐπεχείρησαν. φέρεται γὰρ καὶ τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὸ κατὰ Ματθίαν καὶ ἄλλα πλείονα. ταῦτά ἐστι τῶν ἐπιχειρήσαντων· τὰ δὲ τέσσαρα μόνον προκρίνει ἢ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκλησία.

Those, however, who composed what is entitled the *Gospel according to the Egyptians*, and that entitled the *Gospel of the Twelve*—they ‘set their hands to it’. Basilides had already ventured to write the *Gospel according to Basilides*. Therefore ‘many have set their hands to it’. For also in circulation is the *Gospel according to Thomas*, as well as the *Gospel according to Matthias* and many others. These come from those who ‘set their hands to it’, but the church of God approves four alone.

3.3 Eusebius, *HE 3.25.6* (c. 311–323 CE)⁶

... ἴν’ εἰδέναι ἔχοιμεν αὐτὰς τε ταύτας καὶ τὰς ὀνόματι τῶν ἀποστόλων πρὸς τῶν αἰρετικῶν προφερομένης ἤτοι ὡς Πέτρου καὶ Θωμᾶ καὶ Ματθία ἢ καὶ τινων παρὰ

5 M. Rauer, ed. *Die Homilien zu Lukas in der Übersetzung des Hieronymus und die griechischen Reste der Homilien und des Lukas-Kommentars* (Origenes Werke, 9; GCS 35; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1959), 5, ll. 9–11.

6 E. Schwarz, ed. *Eusebius Werke. Zweiter Band: Die Kirchengeschichte I–V* (GCS 9.1; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1903), 252.

τούτους ἄλλων εὐαγγέλια περιεχοῦσας (sc. γραφάς) ἢ ὡς Ἀνδρέου καὶ Ἰωάννου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀποστόλων πράξεις· ὧν οὐδὲν οὐδαμῶς ἐν συγγράμματι τῶν κατὰ τὰς διαδοχὰς ἐκκλησιαστικῶν τις ἀνήρ εἰς μνήμην ἀγαγεῖν ἠξίωσεν ...

... so that we might be able to know both these, and those put forward in the names of the apostles by the heretics—whether writings consisting of Gospels as if of Peter, or Thomas, or Matthias, or of any others in addition to them; or Acts as if of Andrew or John or other apostles. For of them, no man from among those churchmen of the successions has thought it appropriate to make any reference in a work at all ...

3.4 Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 4.36 (c. 348 CE)⁷

τῆς δὲ καινῆς διαθήκης, τὰ τέσσαρα μόνᾳ εὐαγγέλια· τὰ δὲ λοιπὰ ψευδεπίγραφα καὶ βλαβερὰ τυγχάνει. ἔγραψαν καὶ Μανιχαῖοι κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον, ὅπερ εὐωδίᾳ τῆς εὐαγγελικῆς προσωνυμίας ἐπικεχρωσμένον, διαφθεῖρει τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἀπλουστέρων.

Of the New Testament, there are only four Gospels. The others are falsely attributed and harmful. The Manichees wrote the ‘Gospel according to Thomas’, which is dabbed on the surface with the fragrance of the title ‘Gospel’, but which destroys the souls of simpler folk.

3.5 Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechesis* 6.31 (c. 348 CE)⁸

τούτου μαθηταὶ τρεῖς γεγόνασι, Θωμᾶς καὶ Βαδδᾶς καὶ Ἑρμᾶς. μηδεὶς ἀναγινωσκέτω τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐνὸς τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων, ἀλλ’ ἐνὸς τῶν κακῶν τριῶν τοῦ Μάνη μαθητῶν.

He (Mani) had three disciples, Thomas, Baddas and Hermas. Let no-one read the Gospel according to Thomas. For it is not from one of the twelve apostles, but from one of the three evil disciples of Mani.

⁷ PG 33.500B.

⁸ PG 33.593A.

3.6 Didymus the Blind, *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* 8,3–7 (second half of fourth cent. CE)⁹

διὰ τοῦτο γοῦν καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος λόγος ἀπαγορεύει τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν τῶν ἀποκρύφων, ἐπεὶ πολλὰ ἐ[ψευ]δογραφήθη. καὶ γράψας τις ἐπέγραψεν αὐτὸ εὐαγγέ[λι]ον εἰ τύχοι κατὰ Θωμᾶν ἢ κατὰ Πέ[τρον]. καὶ καλὸν τις ἀρχαῖος ἐπίσκοπος εἶπεν ἐκκλησιασ[τι]κός· Διὰ τοῦτο, φησὶν, κωλύομεν τὴν [ἔντ]ευξιν τῶν ἀποκρύφων διὰ τοὺς μὴ δυναμένους δια[στ]έλλειν τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς καταμιγέντα ὑπ[ὸ αἶρ]εθικῶν.

Therefore also our teaching forbids the reading of the apocrypha, since many have been written under false names. Someone writes and then calls his book a Gospel, whether it might be ‘according to Thomas’ or ‘according to Peter’! But one ancient bishop of the church has put it well: ‘For this reason’, he says, ‘we prevent the study of the apocrypha: because of those who are not able to distinguish what has been combined in them by heretics.’

3.7 Jerome, *Commentarium in Mattheum*, Prologue (late fourth cent. CE)¹⁰

... *Et perseverantia usque ad praesens tempus monumenta declarant, quae a diversis auctoribus edita, diversarum hereseon fuere principia, ut est illud iuxta Aegyptios, et Thoman, et Matthian, et Bartholomeum, duodecim quoque apostolorum, et Basilidis atque Apellis, ac reliquorum quos enumerare longissimum est.*

... And works surviving up to the present time, which were composed by various authors and have been the founts of diverse heresies, make it clear. I am referring to that (Gospel) according to the Egyptians, and Thomas, and Matthias, and Bartholomew, as well as ‘of the Twelve Apostles’, and of Basilides, and of Apelles, and of others whom it would take too long to enumerate.

9 G. Binder & L. Liesenborghs, eds. *Didymos der Blinde. Kommentar zum Ecclesiastes. Teil I.1: Kommentar zu Eccl. Kap. 1,1–2,14* (Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen 25; Bonn: Habelt, 1979), 22.

10 D. Hurst & M. Adriaen, eds. *S. Hieronymi Presbyteri Commentariorum in Mattheum Libri IV* (CC, SL 77; Turnhout: Brepols, 1969), 1; also PL 26.17A.

3.8 Ambrose, *Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucam* 1.2 (c. 389 CE)¹¹

Et aliud quidem fertur euangelium, quod duodecim scripsisse dicuntur. ausus etiam Basilides euangelium scribere, quod dicitur secundum Basilidem. fertur etiam aliud euangelium, quod scribitur secundum Thoman. novi aliud scriptum secundum Matthian. legimus aliqua, ne legantur; legimus, ne ignoremus; legimus, non ut teneamus, sed ut repudiemus et ut sciamus qualia sint in quibus magnifici isti cor exaltant suum.

And indeed there is another Gospel in circulation, which the Twelve are said to have written. Basilides has also ventured to write a Gospel, which is called 'According to Basilides'. There is also in circulation another Gospel, which is entitled 'According to Thomas'. I know of another entitled 'According to Matthias'. We have read some of them so that they may not be read; we have read them so that we may not be ignorant of them; we have read them not in order to hold to them, but to reject them and to know what the nature is of these books in which those prideful men have elevated their hearts.

3.9 Philip of Side, *Church History*, Fragment (after 430 CE)¹²

πλείστοι τῶν ἀρχαίων τὴν Ἰωάννου ἐπιστολὴν οὐ προσίενται ἐτέρου τινὸς Ἰωάννου ταύτην οἰόμενοι. τὸ δὲ καθ' Ἑβραίους εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὸ λεγόμενον Πέτρου καὶ Θωμᾶ τελείως ἀπέβαλλον αἰρετικῶν ταῦτα συγγράμματα λέγοντες.

Most of the ancients did not accept the epistle of John, thinking it to be of a different John. But they completely rejected the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* and those called 'of Peter', and 'of Thomas', saying that they were the compositions of heretics.

11 C. (Karl) Schenkl, ed. *Sancti Ambrosii Opera. Pars Quarta: Expositio Evangelii secundum Lucan* (CSEL 32.4; Leipzig: Freytag, 1902), 10–11.

12 C. de Boor, *Neue Fragmente des Papias, Hegesippus und Pierius in bisher unbekanntem Excerpten aus der Kirchengeschichte des Philippus Sidetes* (TU 5/2; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1888), 169 (no. 4).

3.10 Pseudo-Athanasius, *Synopsis scripturae sacrae* (c. 550 CE?)¹³

Τῆς Νέας πάλιν Διαθήκης ἀντιλεγόμενα ταῦτα.

Περίοδοι Πέτρου, Περίοδοι Ἰωάννου, Περίοδοι Θωμᾶ, Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Θωμᾶ, Διδασχὴ ἀποστόλων, Κλημέντια, ἐξ ὧν μετεφράσθησαν ἐκλεγέντα τὰ ἀληθέστερα καὶ θεόπνευστα. ταῦτα τὰ ἀναγινωσκόμενα.

These are the disputed works of the New Testament:

The *Journeys of Peter*; the *Journeys of John*; the *Journeys of Thomas*; the *Gospel according to Thomas*; the *Teaching of the Apostles*; the Clementines. By these, quite true and divinely inspired matters have been selected and paraphrased. These are read.

3.11 *Decretum Gelasianum* 5.3 (sixth cent. CE)¹⁴

Euangelium nomine Mathiae, apocryphum.

Euangelium nomine Barnabae, apocryphum.

Euangelium nomine Iacobi minoris, apocryphum.

Euangelium nomine Petri apostoli, apocryphum.

Euangelium nomine Thomae quibus Manichaei utuntur, apocryphum.

Euangelia nomine Bartholomaei, apocrypha.

Euangelia nomine Andreae, apocrypha.

Euangelia quae falsavit Lucianus, apocrypha.

Euangelia quae falsavit Hesychius, apocrypha.

The Gospel with the name of Matthias, apocryphal.

The Gospel with the name of Barnabas, apocryphal.

The Gospel with the name of James the Less, apocryphal.

The Gospel with the name of the apostle Peter, apocryphal.

The Gospel with the name of Thomas, which the Manichees use, apocryphal.

Gospels with the name of Bartholomew, apocryphal.

Gospels with the name of Andrew, apocryphal.

Gospels which Lucianus has fabricated, apocryphal.

Gospels which Hesychius has fabricated, apocryphal.

¹³ PG 28.432B.

¹⁴ E. von Dobschütz, *Das Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis* (TU 38/4; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1912), 11.

3.12 Pseudo-Leontius of Byzantium, *De sectis* 3.2 (mid–late sixth cent. CE)¹⁵

οὔτοι καὶ βιβλία τινὰ ἑαυτοῖς καινοτομοῦσι. λέγουσι γὰρ εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Θωμᾶν καὶ Φίλιππον, ἅπερ ἡμεῖς οὐκ ἴσμεν.

These people also invent various books for themselves. For they talk of a *Gospel according to Thomas*, and of that *according to Philip*, books which we do not recognise.

3.13 Timothy of Constantinople, *De receptione haereticorum* (late sixth cent.?)¹⁶

οἱ δ' ἀπ' αὐτοῦ θεοστυγεῖς Μανιχαῖοι καινοτομοῦσιν ἑαυτοῖς δαιμονιώδη βιβλία, ἅπερ εἰσὶ τὰδε·

- α' Τὸ ζῶν Εὐαγγέλιον
- β' Ὁ θησαυρὸς τῆς ζωῆς
- γ' Ἡ τῶν Ἐπιστολῶν ὁμάς
- δ' Ἡ τῶν Μυστηρίων
- ε' Ἡ ἐπτάλογος Ἀλογίου
- ς' Ἡ τῶν Εὐχῶν
- ζ' Ἡ τῶν κεφαλαίων
- η' Ἡ τῶν γιγάντων Πραγματεία
- θ' τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον
- ι' τὸ κατὰ Φίλιππον εὐαγγέλιον
- ια' Αἱ πράξεις Ἀνδρέου τοῦ ἀποστόλου
- ιβ' Ἡ πεντεκαιδεκάτη πρὸς Λαοδικεῖς Ἐπιστολή
- ιγ' Τὰ Παιδικὰ λεγόμενα τοῦ Κυρίου ...

Those accursed Manichees after him (sc. Mani) invent devilish books for themselves, which are as follows:

1. The Living Gospel
2. The Treasure of Life

¹⁵ PG 86-1.1213C.

¹⁶ PG 86-1.21C.

3. The Collection of Letters
4. The Collection of Mysteries
5. The Heptalogus of Alogius
6. The Collection of Prayers
7. The Collection of Kephalaia
8. The Deeds of the Giants
9. The Gospel according to Thomas
10. The Gospel according to Philip
11. The Acts of the Apostle Andrew
12. The Fifteenth Epistle: to the Laodiceans
13. The So-called Childhood Deeds of the Lord ...

3.14 Bede, *In Lucae evangelii expositio* 1, Prologue (late seventh, early eighth cent.)¹⁷

Denique nonnulli Thomae, alii Bartholomaei, quidam Matthiae, aliqui etiam duodecim apostolorum titulo reperiuntur falso sua scripta prae-notasse.

Finally, a few ‘Thomases’, various ‘Bartholomews’, certain ‘Matthiases’, even some ‘twelve apostles’ are found to have named their writings with false titles.

3.15 John of Damascus, *Orationes de imaginibus tres* II 16 (c. 730 CE)¹⁸

Μανιχαῖοι συνέγραψαν τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον· γράψατε καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸ κατὰ Λέοντα εὐαγγέλιον.

The Manichees composed the Gospel according to Thomas. As for you—go and write the Gospel according to Leo!

¹⁷ PL 92.307C

¹⁸ P.B. Kotter, ed. *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 3 (Patristische Texte und Studien 17; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 113.

3.16 *Acts of the Second Council of Nicaea* 6.5 (787 CE)¹⁹

καὶ τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν Μανιχαῖοι παρεισήγαγον εὐαγγέλιον, ὅπερ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία ὡς ἄλλότριον εὐσεβῶς ἀποστρέφεται.

And the Manichees have introduced that “Gospel according to Thomas”, which the Catholic Church piously rejects as foreign.

3.17 (Anon.) *Quaestiones uel Glosae in euangelio nomine: Quaestiones euangelii* 2 (late eighth cent.)²⁰

Sanctus Hieronimus dicit plures fuisse qui euangelia scripserunt, ut Lucas euangelista testatur dicens: quoniam quidem multi conati sunt ordinare narrationem rerum, quae in nobis conpletae sunt, sicut tradiderunt nobis qui ab initio ipsi uiderunt, quia multos hereses <et> eorum doctores inuenimus praesumptiuo spiritu euangelia conscripsisse <et> nomina non sua sed aliorum praenotasse, quos et Iohannis in epistola sua anticristos uocat, qui et in carne minime dominum confitebantur uenisse, et ideo ipsa falsa euangelia, quae scribebant, non sua sed aliorum nomina praenotauerunt, ut facilius in errore inducerent; ut est illud apud Aegyptios, euangelium Thoman, Mathian, Bartholomeum, duodecim quoque apostolorum nomina, Basilidis atque Apellis et reliquorum quos enumerare longissimum est.

Saint Jerome says that there have been many who have written Gospels, as Luke the Evangelist testifies: “Since many have undertaken to make an orderly account of the things which have been fulfilled among us, just as those who themselves saw from the beginning have passed down to us”, since we have found many heresies and their teachers, with prideful spirits, to have composed Gospels and called them not by their own names but by the names of others. These teachers John calls in his Epistle ‘antichrists’, those who do not really confess that the Lord has come in the flesh. And as such, they have not named these same false Gospels, which they have written, with their own names but with those of others, in order more easily to lead people into error. I am

19 Giovanni Domenico [J.D.] Mansi, ed. *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 13 (Florence: Zatta, 1767), 293B.

20 R.E. McNally, ed. *Scriptores Hiberniae Minores. Pars I* (CCSL 108B; Turnhout: Brepols, 1973), 133.

speaking of that *according to the Egyptians*, the *Gospel according to Thomas*, according to Mat(t)hias, Bartholomew, also the names of the twelve apostles, of Basilides, and of Apelles, and of others whom it would take too long to enumerate.

3.18 Paul the Deacon, *Homily 59: In natali Sancti Lucae evangelistae* (end of eighth cent.)²¹

et perseverantia usque ad praesens tempus monumenta declarant, quae diversis auctoribus edita, diversarum haeresum fuerunt principia, ut est illud quod appellatur Evangelium juxta Aegyptios, secundum Thomam et Matthiam, et Bartholomaeum, duodecim quoque apostolos, ac Basilidem atque Apellem, et caeteros quos enumerare longum est ...

... And works surviving up to the present time, which were composed by various authors and have been the founts of diverse heresies, make it clear. I am referring to that which is called the *Gospel according to the Egyptians*, that *according to Thomas*, *according to Matthias*, and *according to Bartholomew*, as well as *according to the Twelve Apostles*, and *according to Basilides*, and *according to Apelles*, and others which it would take too long to enumerate ...

3.19 (Anon.), *Commentariolus Byzantinus*, Scholion § 1 (no later than ninth cent.)²²

κρίσις ποιημάτων μὲν ἢ ἀκριβῆς γνώσις τῶν ποιημάτων λέγεται· ταύτη τῇ ἠκριβωμένη γνώσει χρώμενος ὁ γραμματικὸς δεῖ γινώσκειν τὰ βιβλία τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάντα, τουτέστιν τὴν παλαιὰν καὶ καινὴν διαθήκην, ἵνα ὅταν ἀκούσῃ φωνὴν ξένην καὶ σύγγραμμα ἢ ποίημα ψευδές, μὴ δέξηται αὐτὸ ὡς ἀληθινόν, ἐπειδὴ ἔστιν εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Θωμᾶν λεγόμενον. δεῖ δὲ γινώσκειν τὸν γραμματικὸν τὰ ὀνόματα καὶ τὰς φωνὰς τῶν εὐαγγελιστῶν, ἵνα μὴ ἀλλότριον καὶ ψευδές εὐαγγέλιον δέξηται·

²¹ PL 95.1533B.

²² A. Hilgard, ed. *Scholias in Dionysii Thracis artem grammaticam* (Grammatici Graeci I/3; Leipzig: Teubner, 1901), 565–586 (568), and xxxvii on the date.

Judgment of works is said to be accurate knowledge of those works. In making use of this refined knowledge, the scholar must know all the books of the church, that is, the Old and New Testaments, so that when he hears a foreign phrase and a false book or work, he does not receive it as true—there is, after all, also a *Gospel according to Thomas*! It is necessary for the scholar to know the words and phrases of the Evangelists, so that he does not receive a different and false Gospel.

3.20 Nicephorus, *Chronographia brevis* (c. 850 CE, perhaps earlier)²³

καὶ ὅσα τῆς νέας εἰσὶν ἀπόκρυφα·

α' Περίοδοι Πέτρου στίχων ,βψν'

β' Περίοδος Ἰωάννου στίχων ,βχ'

γ' Περίοδος Θωμᾶ στίχων ,αχ'

δ' Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Θωμᾶν στίχων ,ατ'

ε' Διδαχὴ ἀποστόλων στίχων ,ς' ...

And these are the apocrypha of the New Testament:

1. *The Journeys of Peter*: 2750 lines.
2. *The Journey of John*: 2600 lines.
3. *The Journey of Thomas*: 1600 lines.
4. *The Gospel according to Thomas*: 1300 lines.
5. *The Teaching of the Apostles*: 200 lines ...

3.21 George the Sinner, *Chronicon breve* 3.162 (ninth cent., after 842 CE)²⁴

τούτου δὲ μαθηταὶ γεγόνασι τρεῖς· Θωμᾶς, καὶ Βουδδᾶς, καὶ Ἐρμᾶς, ἐξ ὧν οὗτος ὁ Θωμᾶς βίβλον ἐξέδωκε λεγομένην Εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Θωμᾶν· μηδεὶς τοίνυν ἀναγινωσκέτω τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν Εὐαγγέλιον. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐνὸς τῶν ἰβ', ἀλλ' ἐνὸς τῶν τριῶν κακῶν τοῦ Μάνη μαθητῶν.

23 C. de Boor, ed. *Nicephori Archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani opuscula historica* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1880), 135; also PG 100.1060B.

24 PG 110.556C.

He (Mani) had three disciples: Thomas, Bouddas and Hermas. Of these, this Thomas produced a book called the 'Gospel according to Thomas'. As such, let no-one read the Gospel according to Thomas. For it is not from one of the Twelve, but from one of the three evil disciples of Mani.

3.22 Peter of Sicily, *Historia Manichaeorum seu Paulicianorum* 67–68 (c. 870 CE)²⁵

μαθηται δὲ τούτου τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου Μάνεντος γεγόνασι δώδεκα· Σισίννιος ὁ τούτου διάδοχος, καὶ Θωμάς ὁ τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν μανιχαϊκὸν εὐαγγέλιον συντάξας, Βουδδάς τε καὶ Ἑρμάς, Ἄδαντος καὶ Ἀδήμαντος, ὃν ἀπέστειλεν εἰς διάφορα κλίματα κήρυκα τῆς πλάνης. ἐξηγηταὶ δὲ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑπομνηματισταὶ γεγόνασιν Ἰέραξ καὶ Ἡρακλείδης καὶ Ἀφθόνιος. ὑπῆρχον δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ ἕτεροι μαθηταὶ τρεῖς Ἀγάπιος ὁ τὴν Ἐπτάλογον συντάξας, καὶ Ζαρούας καὶ Γαβριάβιος. μηδεὶς ἀναγινωσκέτω τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον· οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐνὸς τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων, ἀλλ' ἐνὸς τῶν δώδεκα κακῶν τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου Μάνεντος μαθητῶν· μήτε τὴν Ἐπτάλογον Ἀγαπίου, μήτε κτλ.

There were twelve disciples of this antichrist Mani: Sisinnius his successor; Thomas, who composed the Manichaean Gospel named according to him; Bouddas and Hermas; Adantus, and Ademantus whom he (Mani) sent to different regions as a herald of that deception. Hierax, Heracleides and Aphthonius were his interpreters and recorders. He had three other disciples: Agapius (who composed the *Heptalogus*), Zarouas and Gabriabius. Let no-one read the *Gospel of Thomas*. For it is not from one of the twelve disciples, but from one of the twelve evil disciples of the antichrist Mani. Neither should one read the *Heptalogus* of Agapius, nor ... etc.

3.23 *Long Greek Abjuration Formula* 3 (c. 870s)²⁶

ἀναθεματίζω τὸν πατέρα Μάνεντος, Πατέκιον, οὗ ψευστήν καὶ τοῦ ψευδοῦς πατέρα, καὶ τὴν αὐτοῦ μητέρα Κάρουσαν καὶ Ἰέρακα καὶ Ἡρακλείδην καὶ Ἀφθόνιον, τοὺς

25 D. Papachryssanthou, 'Les sources grecques pour l'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure I. Pierre de Sicile. Histoire des Pauliciens', *Travaux et mémoires* 4 (1970), 3–67 (31); also PG 104.1265C.

26 S.N.C. Lieu, ed., G. Fox & J. Sheldon, trs. *Greek and Latin Sources on Manichaean Cosmogony and Ethics* (Corpus fontium Manichaeorum Series subsidia 6; Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 140.

ὑπομνηματιστὰς καὶ ἐξηγητὰς τῶν τούτου συγγραμμάτων, καὶ τοὺς λουποὺς αὐτοῦ μαθητὰς ἅπαντας, Σισίνιον τὸν διάδοχον τῆς τούτου μανίας, Θωμᾶν τὸν συνταξάμενον τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν λεγόμενον Εὐαγγέλιον, Βουδᾶν, Ἑρμᾶν κτλ.

I anathematize the father of Mani, Patecius, as a liar and the father of the lie, and his mother Carossa, and Hierax, Heraclides and Aphthonius, the commentators and interpreters of his writings, and all the rest of his disciples: Sisinnius the successor of his mania, Thomas who composed the Gospel said to be according to him, Boudas, Hermas, etc.

3.24 *Synodicon Orthodoxiae, Anathemata synodica 10 (tenth–eleventh cent.)*²⁷

τῷ ἀποδεχομένῳ ἢ στέργοντι τὸ βιβλίον τὸ καλούμενον Λήμμα, ἢ τὰς συνταγείσας παρ' αὐτῶν πέντε ἐπιστολάς, ἢ τὸ κατὰ στοιχεῖον βιβλίον, ἢ τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον, καὶ μὴ βδελυσομένῳ ταῦτα καὶ διαπτύοντι ὡς ἄξια ὄντα πυρὸς παρανάλωμα γενέσθαι, ἀνάθεμα.

To whomever accepts or has affection for the book called *The Oracle*, or the five Epistles composed by them, or the *Alphabetical Book*, or the *Gospel according to Thomas*, and does not abominate these and spit upon them as being worth only to be burned: Anathema.

3.25 *Pseudo-Photius, On the Recent Reappearance of the Manichaeans 50 (eleventh cent.)*²⁸

μαθηταὶ μέντοι τοῦ δυσωνύμου Μάνεντος γεγονᾶσι δώδεκα· Σισίνιος ὁ καὶ τὸ ἀξίωμα αὐτοῦ τῆς δυσσεβοῦς διδασκαλίας ἀναδεξάμενος, καὶ Θωμᾶς ὁ τὸ κατ' αὐτὸν ὀνομαζόμενον συνταξάμενος Εὐαγγέλιον, Βούδας τε καὶ Ἑρμᾶς καὶ Ἀδάμαντος καὶ Ἀδείμαντος, ὃν καὶ διαφόροις διέπεμψε κλίμασι τῆς πλάνης καὶ τῆς ἀποστασίας αὐτῶν κήρυκα ...

27 J. Gouillard, 'Le Synodikon de l'Orthodoxie', *Travaux et mémoires* 2 (1967), 1–316. For the anathemas, see 'Appendix III. Les anathèmes parasites de *Ma*, fol. 74–75' (= pp. 306–313; also pp. 17–18).

28 W. Wolska-Conus, 'Les sources grecques pour l'histoire des Pauliciens d'Asie Mineure III. Photius: Récit de la réapparition des Manichéens', *Travaux et mémoires* 4 (1970), 99–173 (137); also PG 102.41B.

There were, however, twelve disciples of the disreputable Mani: Sisinius, who also succeeded to his rank in impious teaching, and Thomas who composed the Gospel named according to him, and Boudas and Hermas and Adamantus, and Adimantus whom he also dispatched to various regions as a herald of their deception and apostasy ...

3.26 *Basilica (Scholia) Book 21, Title 1: Chapter 45.3 (eleventh cent.)*²⁹

οἱ Μανέντος τοῦ Πέρσου μαθηταὶ δύο ἀρχὰς εἰσάγοντες καὶ δύο θεοὺς, ἀγαθὸν καὶ πονηρόν, τὴν πᾶσαν θρησκείαν ἀθετοῦσι τῷ πονηρῷ αὐτὴν ἀπονέμοντες καὶ τὴν κενὴν βλασφημοῦσιν. ἔχουσι δὲ τινὰ εὐαγγέλια παρέγγραπτα κατὰ Φίλιππον καὶ Θωμᾶν.

The disciples of the Persian Mani adduce two principles and two Gods, a good and an evil. They reject all piety, assigning it to the evil and blaspheming it as vain. They have some Gospels which they have written additionally, that 'according to Philip' and that 'according to Thomas'.

3.27 *Athos, Iviron, 728 (56) = NT Ms. GA 1006: Gloss on Jn 7.53–8.11 (11th cent.)*³⁰

τὸ κεφάλαιον τοῦτο τοῦ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγελίου ἐστίν.

This chapter is from the *Gospel according to Thomas*.

3.28 *Euthymius of Constantinople, Epistula Invectiva (c. mid–11th cent.)*³¹

γράφει δὲ εἰς τὰ στηλιτευτικὰ τῶν αἰρετικῶν ὁ ἅγιος Κύριλλος Ἱεροσολύμων καὶ τοῦτο, ὅτι· προσέχετε, ἀδελφοί, τοῦ μὴ ἀναγινώσκειν τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον,

29 D. Holwerda & H.J. Scheltema, eds. *Basilicorum libri LX, Series B: Scholia* (Scripta Universitatis Groninganae; Groningen: Wolters, 1959), 4:1268.

30 K. Lake, *Texts from Mount Athos* (Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica, Vol. V, Part II; Oxford: Clarendon, 1903), 173.

31 G. Ficker, *Die Phundagiagiten: Ein Beitrag zur Ketzergeschichte des byzantinischen Mittelalters* (Leipzig: J.A. Barth, 1908), 161.

ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἔστι τοῦ ἀποστόλου Χριστοῦ τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν, ἀλλ' ἑτέρου Θωμᾶ αἰρετικοῦ, τοῦ Μάνεντος μαθητοῦ.

Saint Cyril of Jerusalem also writes against the records of the heretics the following: 'Be careful, brothers, not to read the *Gospel according to Thomas*, since it is not of the apostle of Christ our true God, but of another—heretical—Thomas, the disciple of Mani.'

3.29 Theophylact of Ohrid, *Vita Clementis Ochridensis* 28 (late eleventh–early twelfth cent.)³²

εἰ μὲν οὖν ὡς Μανιχαῖοι τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον, οὕτως ὑμεῖς ἄλλο τι προενεγκεῖν ἔχετε τὴν τοιαύτην περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος διδασκαλίαν εἰσηγησάμενον, δείξατε τοῦτο κεκανονισμένον καὶ σιωπήσομεν, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ ὡς εὐεργέτας τιμήσομεν. εἰ δὲ τέσσαρσι μὲν ἀρχαῖς ὁ τῆς ἐκκλησίας παράδεισος ἐκ μίας πηγῆς χεομέναις ποτίζεται, Ματθαῖον, Μάρκον, Λουκᾶν καὶ Ἰωάννην, οἶμαι, συνήκατε. ὁ δὲ πέμπτον εἰσάγων εὐαγγέλιον τρισκατάρατος.

So if, like the Manichees with the *Gospel according to Thomas*, you likewise have something else to offer which has introduced this teaching about the Spirit, show us that it has been canonised, and we will be silent. More than that—we will even honour you as benefactors. If the paradise of the church is watered by four principles (albeit flowing from a single spring), then understand them, as it were, to be Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. But he who introduces a fifth Gospel is thrice-accursed.

3.30 Sargis Chnohali, *Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*, 'Preface to 2 Peter' (1154)

(Armenian original)

Works produced by lost spirits:

...

The Feast of Mary, and the Gospel which is called 'of Thomas', and the *Book of*

32 A. Milev, *Gruckite zitiija na Kliment Ochridski* (Sofia, 1966), 76–146 (102).

the Infancy of Christ, and others similar which, under a semblance of truth, have aimed to introduce what the church of God has not accepted ...³³

3.31 Gratian, *Decretum* Pars 1, Distinctio 15, Canon 3, § 35 (early–mid twelfth cent.)³⁴

Euangelium nomine Thaddei, apocrifum.

Euangelium nomine Thomae apostoli, quo utuntur Manichei, apocrifum.

Euangelium nomine Barnabae apostoli, apocrifum.

Euangelium nomine Bartolomaei apostoli, apocrifum.

Euangelium nomine Andreae apostoli, apocrifum.

Euangelia quae falsavit Lucianus, apocrifum.

Euangelia quae falsavit Hyrcius, apocrifum.

Gospel with the name of Thaddeus: apocryphal.

Gospel with the name of the Apostle Thomas, which the Manichees use: apocryphal.

Gospel with the name of Barnabas: apocryphal.

Gospel with the name of Bartholomew: apocryphal.

Gospel with the name of Andrew: apocryphal.

Gospels which Lucianus has fabricated: apocryphal.

Gospels which Hyrcius has fabricated: apocryphal.

3.32 Ivo of Chartres, *Decretum* IV, 65 (c. eleventh–twelfth cent.)³⁵

Evangelium nomine Thaddaei, apocryphum.

Evangelium nomine Barnabae, apocryphum.

Evangelium Thomae apostoli quo Manichaei utuntur, apocryphum.

Evangelium nomine Bartholomaei apostoli, apocryphum.

Evangelium nomine Andreae apostoli, apocryphum.

33 On this, see V. Calzolari, 'Les récits apocryphes de l'enfance dans la tradition arménienne', in C. Clivaz, A. Dettwiler, L. Devillers & E. Norelli (with the assistance of B. Bertho), *Infancy Gospels: Stories and Identities* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 560–587 (577).

34 E. Friedberg, ed. *Corpus Iuris Canonici I: Decretum magistri Gratiani* (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1879), 38.

35 PL 161.280C.

Evangelia quae falsavit Lucianus, apocrypha.

Evangelia quae falsavit Ysius, apocrypha.

The Gospel in the name of Thaddaeus: apocryphal.

The Gospel in the name of Barnabas: apocryphal.

The Gospel of the apostle Thomas, which the Manichees use: apocryphal.

The Gospel in the name of the apostle Bartholomew: apocryphal.

The Gospel in the name of Andrew the apostle: apocryphal.

The Gospels which Lucian fabricated: apocryphal.

The Gospels which Ysius fabricated: apocryphal.

3.33 Peter Abelard, *Sic et Non: Ex decretis Gelasii papae de libris apocryphis* (c. 1122–1142)³⁶

Evangelia Taddei nomine, apocrifa.

Evangelia nomine Barnabae apostoli, apocrifa

Evangelia Thomae apostoli, quibus Manichaei utuntur, apocrifa.

Evangelia nomine Bartholomei apostoli, apocrifa.

Evangelia nomine Andreae apostoli, apocrifa.

Evangelia quae falsavit Lucianus, apocrifa.

Evangelia quae falsavit Ycius, apocrifa.

Gospels with the name of Thaddeus: apocryphal.

Gospels with the name of the apostle Barnabas: apocryphal.

Gospels with the name of the apostle Thomas, which the Manichees use:
apocryphal.

Gospels with the name of the apostle Bartholomew: apocryphal.

Gospels with the name of the apostle Andrew: apocryphal.

Gospels which Lucianus has fabricated: apocryphal.

Gospels which Ycius has fabricated: apocryphal.

36 B.B. Boyer & R. McKeon, eds. *Peter Abailard. Sic et Non: A Critical Edition* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1976–1977), 108–109 (109).

3.34 Nicetas Seides, *Conspectus librorum sacrorum* 23 (twelfth cent.)³⁷

τὸ μέντοι ἐπιγεγραμμένον κατὰ Αἰγυπτίους εὐαγγέλιον καὶ τὸ ἐπιγεγραμμένον τῶν δώδεκα εὐαγγελίων οἱ συγγράψαντες ἐπεχείρησαν. φέρεται δὲ καὶ τὸ κατὰ Θωμᾶν εὐαγγέλιον. ἤδη δὲ ἐτόλμησε καὶ Βασιλείδης γράψαι κατὰ Βασιλείδην εὐαγγέλιον. πολλοὶ μὲν οὖν ἐπεχείρησαν καὶ κατὰ Μαθθίαν καὶ ἄλλα πλείονα ...

But those who composed the Gospel entitled ‘according to the Egyptians’ and that entitled ‘Gospels (sic) of the twelve’—they ‘set their hands to it’. There is also a ‘Gospel according to Thomas’ in circulation. Basilides had already ventured to write his ‘Gospel according to Basilides’. Indeed, then, ‘many have set their hands to it’; there is also that according to Mathias, and many others ...

3.35 Thomas Aquinas, *Catena aurea in Matthaeum*, Preface (c. 1264)³⁸

Hieronymus Super Matth. Circa numerum vero Evangelistarum sciendum est plures fuisse qui Evangelia scripserunt, sicut et Lucas Evangelista testatur dicens: Quoniam quidem multi conati sunt ordinare etc., et sicut perseverantia usque ad praesens tempus monumenta declarant, quae a diversis auctoribus edita, diversarum haereseum fuere principia, ut est illud iuxta Aegyptios, et Thomam et Matthiam et Bartholomaeum, duodecim quoque apostolorum, et Basilidis, atque Apellis, et reliquorum, quos enumerare longissimum est.

Jerome, On Matthew: Indeed, concerning the number of Evangelists, it is necessary to know that there are rather many who have who have written Gospels, just as Luke the Evangelist testifies: ‘Since indeed many have attempted to put in order, etc.’. And works surviving up to the present time, which were composed by various authors and have been the founts of diverse heresies, make it clear. I am referring to that (Gospel) according to the Egyptians, and Thomas, and Matthias, and Bartholomew, as well as ‘of the Twelve Apostles’, and of Basilides and Apelles, and others whom it would take too long to enumerate.

37 P.N. Simotas, *Νικόητα Σεΐδου Σύνοψις τῆς Ἁγίας Γραφῆς* (Analecta Vlatadon 42; Thessalonica: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1984), 270.

38 A. Guarienti, *Catena Aurea in Quattuor Evangelia I. Expositio in Matthaeum et Marcum* (Turin/ Rome: Marietti, 1953), 6.

3.36 Thomas Aquinas, *Catena aurea in Lucam* 1.1 (between 1264 and 1274)³⁹

Ambrosius in proem. in Lucam. Nam sicut multi in Iudaeorum populo divino infusi spiritu prophetaverunt, alii autem pseudoprophetae erant potius quam prophetae; sic et nunc in novo testamento multi Evangelia scribere conati sunt, quae boni nummularii non probarunt: et aliud quidem fertur Evangelium quod duodecim scripsisse dicuntur: ausus est etiam Basilides Evangelium scribere: fertur aliud secundum Thomam, et aliud secundum Matthiam.

Ambrose, on the Prologue to Luke. For just as many among the people of the Jews were inspired by the divine Spirit and prophesied while others were false prophets rather than prophets, so also now in the New Testament many have tried to write Gospels which good moneyers have not approved. There is indeed another Gospel in circulation which the Twelve are said to have written. Basilides also ventured to write a Gospel; there is another in circulation according to Thomas, and another according to Matthias.

3.37 Mechitar of Ayrivank, *Chronicle* I, 33 (c. 1285)⁴⁰

(Armenian original.)

Then according to the New [Testament]:

The Book of the Infancy of the Lord

The Gospel of Thomas

The Revelation of Peter

Three Wanderings of Paul

The Catholic Epistles of Barnabas and Judas (and) Thomas.

39 A. Guarenti, *Catena Aurea in Quattuor Evangelia II. Expositio in Lucam et Ioannem* (Turin/Rome: Marietti, 1953), 6.

40 Translation here from M.E. Stone, 'Armenian Canon Lists VI: Hebrew Names and Other Attestations', *HTR* 94 (2001), 477–491 (485). For the original text, see H.S. Anasyan, *Armenian Bibliology, 5–18th Centuries* (Erevan: Academy of Sciences, 1959), I.xl (in Armenian; *non vidi*).

Of St. Clement, "Which books are to be accepted?"
 Acts, and
 Apostolic Canons
 The Revelation of John, which is called Pilalimsis
 The Counsel of the Mother of God to the Apostles
 The Books of Dionysius of Athens
 The Epistle of Timothy
 The Book of Crispos
 The Words of Justos
 The Orthodox Sermon
 The Epistle of Barnabas.

3.38 Nicephorus Callistus, *Historia ecclesiastica* Book II, 46 (late thirteenth–early fourteenth cent.)⁴¹

Πέτρου φέρε εἰπεῖν, Θωμᾶ τε καὶ Ματθαίου, ἴσως δὲ καὶ τινων ἄλλων εὐαγγέλια περιεχούσας καὶ Πράξεις ἀποστόλων ἑτέρων, ὡσπερ ἄς Ἀνθρέου καὶ Ἰωάννου προβάλλονται· ὧν οὐτίς τῶν ἀποστολικῶν διαδόχων καὶ τῶν καθεξῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῶν συγγραφέων μνεῖαν πεποιήται.

Let us take the writings of Peter, and of Thomas and of Matthias, perhaps also those which consist of some other Gospels and Acts of other Apostles, just as they put out those of Andrew and John: of these none of the apostolic successors and generations of ecclesiastical writers have kept any record.

3.39 Samaritan Chronicle II (manuscript dated 1616 CE)⁴²

ועדת הנוקרים היה להם חמשה ושלישים בשורה בלתי ערבעת הבשורות אשר אתקדם זכרונם אמרו עליהם כלם כזובים ואלה שמותם

הראש ספר בשורת מצרים
 השני ספר בשורת מולד הבתולה מרים הטובית
 השלישי ספר בשורת הקדיש יעקב הראש

⁴¹ PG 145.888C.

⁴² See J. Macdonald & A.J.B. Higgins, "The Beginnings of Christianity according to the Samaritans", *NTS* 18 (1971), 54–80: date on 54; text and translation on 66–67.

הרביעי ספר בשורת הטפליה
 החמישי ספר בשורת לוקיס וגם סלוקס
 הששי ספר בשורת הקדיש תומה

The community of the Nazarenes possessed thirty-five Gospels, apart from the four which have already been mentioned. They are held to be all false. Here are their titles:

The first: *The Gospel-book of the Egyptians*
The second: *The Gospel-book of the Birth of Blessed Virgin Mary*
The third: *The Gospel-book of Saint James the Greater*
The fourth: *The Gospel-book of the Infancy*
The fifth: *The Gospel-book of Leucius and Seleucus*
The sixth: *The Gospel-book of Saint Thomas*
Etc.

Possible Additional Instances

3.40 Origen, *Commentary on John*, Fragment 106 (mid-third century)⁴³

περὶ δὲ τοῦ πῶς λέγεται αὐτῷ “Μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός” καὶ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα δὲ τοῦ Θωμᾶ τοιαῦτα ἂν λεχθεῖη, ὅτι τῶν μὲν ἀξιοθησομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ σωτήρος μείζονος θεωρίας περὶ τῆς ἐν τῷ ὄρει μεταμορφώσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ὀφθέντων ἐν δόξῃ Μωσέως καὶ Ἡλίου τὰ ὀνόματα μετεποίησεν, τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν διὰ τοῦτο τὰ ὀνόματα οὐ μετεποίησεν, ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτάρκη καὶ καθ’ ἑαυτὰ ἦν παραστήσαι τὸ ἐκάστου ἦθος. περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν λοιπῶν ἀποστόλων οὐ νῦν πρόκειται λέγειν, περὶ δὲ τοῦ Θωμᾶ, ὃς ἐρμηνεύεται Δίδυμος, διὰ τοῦτο, ἐπεὶ δίδυμός τις τὸν λόγον ἦν ἀπογραφόμενος τὰ θεῖα δισσῶς καὶ μιμητῆς Χριστοῦ τοῖς μὲν ἕξω ἐν παραβολαῖς λαλοῦντος, κατ’ ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς ἰδίοις μαθηταῖς τὰ πάντα ἐπιλύοντος.

Concerning how it is said to him, ‘Do not be unbelieving, but believe!’, such things could be addressed to the name of ‘Thomas’, because he (the author John) altered the names of those to be counted worthy by the Saviour of the greater vision of his transfiguration when Moses and Elijah also appeared in glory, but he did not change the names of the others, by reason of the fact that

43 E. Preuschen, ed. *Origenes Werke*, vol. 4, *Das Johannesevangelium* (GCS; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1903), 561–562.

those (names) were sufficient in and of themselves for presenting the person of each. It is, therefore, not proposed at present to speak about the other apostles, but about Thomas, which means ‘Twin’, by reason of the fact that he was a twin with respect to the word, recording the divine things twice, and an imitator of the Christ who spoke to those outside in parables, but explained everything privately to his particular disciples.

3.41 *Pistis Sophia* I, 42–43 (c. third cent.)⁴⁴

ασφωπε σε ἵτερε ἰς σωτην̄ εφιλιππος πεχαφ ναφ δε σωτην̄ φιλιππε πμακαριος
 ἡταφωδε ἡμμακ δε ἡτοκ ἡν̄ ὁωμας ἡν̄ μαθθαιος πενταγταας ἡητην̄ ἡμ̄ πωροπ̄
 ἡμ̄γστηριον εσερ φωδε ἡμ̄ εἴναχοογ ἡν̄ νεἴναααγ αγω ἡν̄ ρωβ ἡμ̄ ετετηνααγ
 εροογ ...

τενογ σε ἡτωτην̄ ἡπφωμ̄τ̄ νετηнасзаї ἡφωδε ἡμ̄ εἴναχοογ ἡν̄ νεἴναααγ ἡν̄
 νεἴναααγ εροογ αγω ἡταρ̄ἡη̄ν̄τρε ἡρωβ ἡμ̄ ἡτε τη̄η̄η̄τερο ἡἡπ̄η̄γε ναї σε ἡτερεφ-
 χοογ ἡσι ἰς πεχαφ ἡνεφμαοη̄η̄η̄ς δε πετε ογ̄η̄ μααδε ἡμοφ εσωτην̄ μαρεφσωτην̄ ...

ετβε φωδε ἡτακχοοφ εφιλιππος δε ἡτοκ ἡν̄ ὁωμας ἡν̄ μαθθαιος νε ἡταγ-
 таас

ἡητην̄ ἡπφωμ̄τ̄ ρῑτην̄ πωροπ̄ ἡμ̄γστηριον εсзаї ἡφωδε ἡμ̄ ἡτε τη̄η̄η̄τερο ἡπογ-
 οἴη̄ αγω ἡτετη̄η̄η̄η̄τρε ραροογ σωτηн̄ се тагаге пвол ἡπειφωδε παї пе ἡта тек-
 сом̄ ἡογοειη̄

профн̄теге ἡμοφ ἡππογοειω ρῑτηн̄ моγсн̄с δε ρӣτηн̄ ἡη̄тρε снаγ αγω φωμ̄т̄ ере
 ρωβ ἡμ̄ наагера̄т̄φ πωροп̄т̄ ἡη̄η̄тρε пе φιλιππος ἡн̄ ὁωμας ἡн̄ μαθθαιος.

It happened that when Jesus heard Philip, he said to him: ‘Hear, Philip, you blessed one, with whom I spoke; for you and Thomas and Matthew are those to whom was granted, through the first mystery, to write all the words I will say, and the things I will do, and everything you will see ... At this time now, it is you three who will write every word I will say, and the things I will do, and the things I will see. And I will bear witness to all things of the kingdom of Heaven.’ When Jesus had said these things, he said to his disciples: ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear’ ...

(Mary said:) ‘Concerning the word which you said to Philip: ‘You and Thomas and Matthew are the three to whom it has been given through the First Mystery to write every word of the kingdom of Light, and to bear witness to

44 C. Schmidt & V. MacDermot, *Pistis Sophia* (NHS 9; Leiden: Brill, 1978), 71–72 (= alt. 142, 144).

them”, hear now that I give the interpretation of these words. It is this which your light power once prophesied through Moses: “Through two and three witnesses everything will be established.” The three witnesses are Philip and Thomas and Matthew.’

3.42 P. Kell. Copt. 19, ll. 13–18 (mid–late fourth century)⁴⁵

μελετε νη[εκ]ψαλμος ειτε νογιανιν ειτε νημηκνιμε ροογ (νιμ) ερε τςραε[...].π
 μπρκε τεκεπαγγελια εβαλ εις τκρικις ηπετρος ρατηκ ε[ρι παπ]οστολος η νμαν
 αμαρτε νηνας νωληλ μη νηψα[λ]μος η[ογιαν]ιν εις νρημα αν ρατηκ αρι η[ε]λετε
 νμαγ εις νκλικις ρε ρνηκ[ογι ρ]η ρνησαπ σαπ νρογο νρο[γο]

Study [your] Psalms, whether Greek or Coptic, (every) day (?) ... Do not abandon your vow. Here, the *Judgment of Peter* is with you. [Do the] *Apostolos*; or else master the *Great Prayers* and the *Greek Psalms*. Here too, the *Sayings* are with you: study them! Here are the *Prostrations*. Write a little from time to time, more and more ...

3.43 Faustus (late fourth century), *apud* Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 30.4 (397–398 CE)⁴⁶

mitto enim ceteros eiusdem domini nostri apostolos, Petrum et Andream, Thomam et illum inexpertum Ueneris inter ceteros beatum Iohannem, qui per diversa possessionem boni istius inter uirgines ac pueros diuino praeconio cecinerunt formam nobis atque adeo uobis ipsis faciundarum uirginum relinquentes. sed hos quidem, ut dixi, praetereo, quia eos vos exclusistis ex canone facileque mente sacrilega uestra daemoniorum his potestis inportare doctrinas.

I pass over the other apostles of our Lord—Peter, Andrew, Thomas, and that one unacquainted with Venus and blessed among the others, John. These in various ways gave to young men and maidens by divine proclamation the

45 I. Gardner, A. Alcock & W.-P. Funk, *Coptic Documentary Texts from Kellis. Volume 1* (Oxford: Oxbow, 1999), 157, 160.

46 J. Zycha, ed. *Sancti Aureli Augustini De utilitate credendi: De duabus animabus. Contra Fortunatum. Contra Adimantum. Contra epistulam fundamenti. Contra Faustum* (CSEL XXV/1; Vienna: Tempsky 1891), 751–752.

possession of that good, leaving to us, and to you too, the pattern for making virgins. But I pass over them, as I say, because you (*pl.*) have excluded them from the canon, and with your sacrilegious minds you are easily able to attribute to them doctrines of demons.

3.44 Etheria, *'Peregrinatio'* 19 (c. 400 CE)⁴⁷

Unde denuo proficiscens, peruenimus in nomine Christi dei nostri Edessam. Ubi cum peruenissemus, statim perreximus ad ecclesiam et ad martyrium sancti Thomae. Itaque ergo iuxta consuetudinem factis orationibus et cetera, quae consuetudo erat fieri in locis sanctis, nec non etiam et aliquanta ipsius sancti Thomae ibi legimus.

From there I set off again, and we arrived in the name of our God Jesus Christ at Edessa. When we had arrived, we immediately went to the church and the martyr of St Thomas. So then, after saying prayers according to custom, and doing everything else customary in holy places, we also read there a certain number of works of St Thomas himself.

3.45 Innocent I, *Epistula* 6.7 (405 CE)⁴⁸

Caetera autem, quae vel sub nomine Matthiae sive Jacobi minoris, vel sub nomine Petri et Joannis, quae a quodam Leucio scripta sunt [vel sub nomine Andreae, quae a Nexocharide et Leonida philosophis], vel sub nomine Thomae, et si quae sunt alia, non solum repudianda, verum etiam noveris esse damnanda.

Others, however, which appear either under the name of Matthias or James the Less, or under the name of Peter and John, which were written by a certain Leucius [or under the name of Andrew, written by the philosophers Nexocharis and Leonidas], or under the name of Thomas, and whatever others there may be: these are not merely to be rejected, but are actually (as you know) to be condemned.

47 H. Pétré, ed. *Éthérie: Journal de voyage* (SC 21; Paris: Cerf, 1971), 162.

48 PL 20.502A.

3.46 Attr. to John of Caesarea, *Capita VII contra Manichaeos* (late 5th–early 6th cent.?)⁴⁹

ἀναθεματίζω πάσας τὰς μανιχαϊκὰς βίβλους, τὸν λεγόμενον παρ' αὐτοῖς Θησαυρὸν καὶ τὸ νεκρὸν καὶ θανατηφόρον αὐτῶν Εὐαγγέλιον, ὃ ἐκείνοι πλανώμενοι Ζῶν Εὐαγγέλιον ἀποκαλοῦσι, νεκρωθέντες ἐντεῦθεν ἤδη ἀπὸ θεοῦ, καὶ τὴν παρ' αὐτοῖς ὀνομαζομένην βίβλον τῶν Ἀποκρύφων.⁵⁰

I anathematize all the Manichaean books, that which is called *Treasure* by them, and their dead and deadly Gospel which they in their deception call the *Living Gospel*, such that they are already thereby mortified from God, and what is called by them the *Book of Secrets*.

3.47 Severus, Fragment (Cairo 8010a), *Verso*, Col. 1 (early sixth cent.)⁵¹

... ΜΗΚΥΗΗΓΙΟΝ ΜΗΝΗΡΙΠΙΚΟΣ ΕΔΦΚΩ ΝΣΩΦ ΝΗΧΩΩΜΕ ΝΤΕΓΡΑΦΗ ΝΗΙ[Β]Ε ΝΤΕ ΠΠΟΥ-
ΤΕ ΑΦΩΩ ΖΗΝΕΝΤΑΝΡΕΦΧΕ ΦΩΩ ΧΟΟΥ ΕΤΕΝΑΤΕΦΖΑΙΡΕΣΙ ΕΤΣΟΟΦΝΕ ΕΙΩΔΧΕ ΕΜΑΗΗ
ΜΝΘΩΜΑΣ ΠΕΦΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ ΜΗΝΕΝΤΑΥΧΧΟΟΥ Ν61 ΝΖΑΙΡΕΤΙΚΟΣ ΤΗΡΟΥ

... the circus games and the horse-races, when he foresook the books of divinely-inspired Scripture, and read from the things which the myth-makers—who are those of his abominable heresy—have spoken. I am speaking of Mani and Thomas his disciple and all that the heretics have said.

3.48 *Second Council of Lyons: Synopsis of the Canons against the Latins* 10 (1273–1277)⁵²

τῇ δὲ ἀληθείᾳ τοῦτο τὸ δόγμα, τὸ πιστεύειν ὅτι καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα ἐκπορεύεται, Θωμᾶ τινός ἐστιν αἱρετικοῦ, μαθητοῦ τοῦ Μάνεντος, ὡς ὁ ἅγιος καὶ μέγας μαρτυρεῖ Κύριλλος μετὰ καὶ ἄλλων ἁγίων.

49 Lieu, *Greek and Latin Sources on Manichaean Cosmogony*, 118.

50 It is intended here to raise the possibility that the βίβλιον τῶν Ἀποκρύφων might be the *Gospel of Thomas*, given the Manichaean usage of *Thomas*, and the opening words of the Gospel.

51 W.E. Crum, 'Coptic Anecdota (II. Severus and the Heretics)', *JTS* 44 (1943), 179–182.

52 J. Darrouzès & V. Laurent, *Dossier grec de l'Union de Lyon (1273–1277)* (Archives de l'orient chrétien 16; Paris: Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, 1976), 564–573 (566).

In truth, this dogma, this belief that the Spirit proceeds from the Son, comes from a certain heretic Thomas, a disciple of Mani, as Saint Cyril the Great along with other saints testifies.

Conclusions

It cannot be decisively ruled out that we may not always be dealing with references to the same *Gospel of Thomas* in these references. It is possible that some other work may be indicated, such as the *Book of Thomas the Contender*, the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, or the *Acts or Revelation of Thomas*: as noted, an Armenian list even mentions an *Epistle of Thomas* (3.37). Various factors make these possibilities very improbable, however. The first and last of these are unlikely candidates, since they do not appear to have been well-known in antiquity. The *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* is an unlikely candidate because the attribution of that work to Thomas is late: the name does not appear, for example, in the early versions (the Syriac and the Old Latin).⁵³ Additionally, some of our authors above explicitly refer to a Gospel of Thomas, an Infancy Gospel and a Revelation under separate names (n.b. two or all of these in 3.13, 37, and in a later part of the Gelasian Decree not cited above).⁵⁴ It is more probable that the testimonia in 3.1–39 refer to the same work, perhaps in different forms.

It remains to ask the question of whether these testimonia may contribute to the interpretation of *Thomas*. There are three possible lines of approach to the work which are suggested by the Fathers. First there is Hippolytus's suggestion of a Naassene-Gnostic origin for *Thomas*; the view that *Thomas* is in any conventional sense 'Gnostic', however, has now rightly been criticised (see discussion in Appended Note after Introduction, § 10 below). Secondly, there is the claim of the anonymous glossarist (3.17) of *Thomas*'s dubious christology. There is a potential link here with GTh 28 and the statement of Jesus, 'I appeared to them in flesh', but this is in fact not dissimilar from many conventional statements about Jesus (see commentary on GTh 28). Furthermore, the glossarist merely mentions *Thomas* in a list of other Gospels and is clearly intending to tar them all with the same brush indiscriminately. Thirdly, although Theophylact (3.29 above) adopts the anachronistic view of Manichaean origin, it is interest-

53 See A. Chartrand Burke, *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas: The Text, its Origins, and its Transmission* (PhD, University of Toronto, 2001) 118, 249, 270 *et passim*.

54 See also Chartrand Burke, *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, 15, 16.

ing that he appears to identify the centre of gravity of the *Gospel of Thomas* as pneumatological.⁵⁵ This is a questionable attribution as well, however.

One way in which these testimonia may contribute to our understanding of *Thomas*, however, is in their possible relevance to the investigation of *Thomas*'s date, original language and provenance. The testimonium in § 3.1 provides a helpful *terminus ante quem*, which helps to rule out Manichaean authorship (see § 7.5 below). The earliest instances here (up to the middle of the fourth century: 3.1–6) are all Greek, which may be further support for a Greek original, given that—to my knowledge—there is no balancing evidence in Syriac.⁵⁶ On the other hand, the earliest evidence is very widely scattered geographically (and so perhaps not so useful for the discussion of provenance): first, in the third century, in Rome (?Ps.-Hippolytus: 3.1) and Caesarea (Origen: 3.2), then Jerusalem (Cyril: 3.4–5) and Alexandria (Didymus: 3.6) in the fourth century, and so on. By the seventh and eighth centuries, *Thomas* is referred to as far west as the British Isles (3.14, 17), and by the twelfth and thirteenth as far east as Armenia (3.30, 37).

55 E. Hammerschmidt, 'Das Thomasevangelium und die Manichäer', *OrChr* 46 (1962), 120–123, argues that the appeal of *Thomas* to the Manichees lay in connection between the 'twin theology' and the conversion of Mani.

56 On the other hand, some Syriac literature (e.g. the *Acts of Thomas*) does betray knowledge of the *contents* of *Thomas*, so this point cannot be pressed too far.

Early References to the Contents of *Thomas*¹

We move to surveying references to the contents of *Thomas* in later writers, where there is no explicit reference to the title, but where dependence upon *Thomas* may be likely, with a focus here on the strongest and most clear cases. Discussion of such influence has been much more abundant than has treatment of references to *Thomas* by name. Some of the more ambitious proposals have been attempts to see the influence of *Thomas* on the canonical Gospels, but these have generally been weighed in the balance and found wanting. Mark's,² Luke's³ and John's Gospels⁴ have all been the focus of attention in this regard. Helmut Koester and Elaine Pagels have also argued in some detail for the influence of *Thomas* upon the *Dialogue of the Saviour*, although this is by no means unproblematic either.⁵

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- 1 **Bibliography:** Many instances were noted early on by G. Garitte, 'Le Premier Volume de l'édition photographique des manuscrits gnostiques coptes et l'Évangile de Thomas,' *Muséon* 70 (1957), 59–73 (66–67), and Puech, 'Une collection de paroles de Jésus récemment retrouvée,' 149–152 and 165–166; See now Grosso, *Λόγοι Ἀπόκρυφοί*. For bibliography on *Thomas* and Origen, and *Thomas* and Manichaean literature, see the notes accompanying the relevant sections below.
 - 2 S.L. Davies, 'The Use of the Gospel of Thomas in the Gospel of Mark,' *Neot* 30 (1996), 307–334; and (with K. Johnson), 'Mark's Use of the Gospel of Thomas: Part 2,' *Neot* 31 (1997), 233–261.
 - 3 See esp. G.J. Riley, 'The Influence of Thomas Christianity on Luke 12:14 and 5:39,' *HTR* 88 (1995), 229–234.
 - 4 G.J. Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered: Thomas and John in Controversy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995); A.D. DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics: Early Christian Discourse in the Gospels of John and Thomas and Other Ancient Christian Literature* (JSNTSuppS; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); E.H. Pagels, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas* (New York: Random House, 2003). See the critical remarks to this school of thought in I. Dunderberg, *The Beloved Disciple in Conflict? Revisiting the Gospels of John and Thomas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), and C.W. Skinner, *John and Thomas—Gospels in Conflict? Johannine Characterization and the Thomas Question* (PTMS 115; Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009). See further N. Perrin & C.W. Skinner, 'Recent Trends in *Gospel of Thomas* Research (1989–2011). Part II: Genre, Theology and Relationship to the Gospel of John,' *Currents in Biblical Research* 11 (2012), 65–86 (77–81), and most recently, I. Dunderberg, 'Johannine Traditions and Apocryphal Gospels,' in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/Paris/Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 67–93 (70–82).
 - 5 Koester and Pagels describe one section of *Dialogue of the Saviour* as 'a commentary on *Gos. Thom. 2*': see H. Koester & E. Pagels, 'Introduction,' in S. Emmel, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex III, 5*:

The principal area of difficulty lies in assessing the relationship between *Thomas* and other roughly contemporaneous literature. It is not clear, for example, whether GTh 22 has influenced the ‘two-one, outside-inside, male-female’ saying roughly paralleled in various places such as 2 *Clem.* 12.2 and the *Gospel of the Egyptians*: we face similar difficulties dating these two works as we do in the case of *Thomas*.⁶ The same must be said for the *Gospel of the Hebrews* cited by Clement of Alexandria, and so one must remain similarly agnostic about the relationship between the ‘seeking-finding-marvelling-ruling-resting’ saying there, and the almost identical GTh 2.⁷ The very similar openings of *Thomas* and the *Gospel of Judas* also suggest some relationship, but the nature of that relationship remains obscure.⁸ Again, despite the confident assertions of many, it is very difficult to draw meaningful comparisons between the almost completely lost text of the *Diatessaron* (which needs to be reconstructed) and *Thomas*, most of which only survives in Coptic.⁹ The question of the direction of influence in the case of *Thomas*’s relationship to some of the textual traditions of the NT is also a knotty problem for the same reason.¹⁰

The Dialogue of the Savior (NHS XXVI; Leiden: Brill, 1984), 1–17 (7). Later, they comment that *Dial. Sav.* knows GTh 49, but not the Synoptic Gospels (‘Introduction’, 10). In Koester’s own statement, ‘*The Dialogue of the Savior* (CG III,5) makes use of the *GTh* or a source closely related to it; but the date of this Nag Hammadi text cannot be established with certainty’: see H. Koester, ‘Introduction’, in B. Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7. Together with XIII, 2**, *Brit. Lib. Or. 4926(1)*, and *P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655. Volume One: Gospel according to Thomas, Gospel according to Philip, Hypostasis of the Archons, and Indexes* (NHS XX; Leiden: Brill, 1989), 38–49 (39). The problem with the idea that *Thomas* influences *Dial. Sav.*, however, is that, while there are themes and language in common, there is nothing very exact. Additionally, it is very hard to know which came first.

- 6 See e.g. W. Pratscher, *Der zweite Clemensbrief* (KAV 3; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007), 62–64, on the problems of dating 2 *Clement*.
- 7 *G. Heb.*/ Clement, *Strom.* 2.9.45.5 and 5.14.96.3; cf. also Eusebius, *HE* 2.13.7. For one construal of the relationship between *Thomas* and *G. Heb.*, see the tangled web woven in Quispel, ‘Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of the Hebrews’, 371–382.
- 8 Cf. (1) terminology for speech; (2) ‘which is hidden’ (εὐρη / εἰρηρη); (3) relative clause: ‘which (the living) Jesus spoke’ (εἵτα ἰῶ ... ἔειπεν / ἵτα ἰησὺς εἶπεν); (4) reference to the eponymous recipient of the revelation (Thomas/ Judas). On the similarities, see C. Gianotto, ‘Il Vangelo secondo Tommaso e il problema storico di Gesù’, in E. Prinzivalli, ed. *Lenigma Gesù. Fonti e metodi della ricerca storica* (Rome: Carocci, 2008), 68–93 (71 n. 7).
- 9 Cf. the conclusions, from different viewpoints, of e.g. G. Quispel, *Tatian and the Gospel of Thomas: Studies in the History of the Western Diatessaron* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), and N. Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian: The Relationship between the Gospel of Thomas and the Diatessaron* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002).
- 10 See e.g. G. Quispel, ‘L’Évangile selon Thomas et le “Texte Occidentale” du Nouveau

Even in the case of certain church fathers, such as Irenaeus and Clement, who are likely to post-date *Thomas*, there remains the muddy question of whether the author knows *Thomas* or both share a common source. Irenaeus, for example, alludes to something like GTh 38.1 ('Many times you have desired to hear these words which I speak to you, and you have no other one from whom to hear them') in quoting a saying of Jesus from the works of the Marcosians, which he takes as authentic: 'Often have I desired to hear one of those words, but I have had no-one who might say it to me' (*AH* 1.20.2).¹¹ Later, in the *Demonstratio*, a parallel to GTh 19.1 ('Blessed is he who has come into being before he has come into being') is quoted, but attributed to Jeremiah: 'Blessed is he who was, before he became man' (*Dem.* 44; tr. Robinson).¹² In Clement, there is some similarity between GTh 27.1 (ἐὰν μὴ νηστεύσητε τὸν κόσμον) and Clement's reference to the necessity 'to fast from worldly things' (*Ecl.* 14.1: τῶν κοσμικῶν νηστεύειν), and to blessing on those who fast from the world (*Strom.* 3.15.99.4: μακάριοι οὗτοί εἰσιν οἱ τοῦ κόσμου νηστεύοντες).¹³ GTh 38.2 ('Days are coming when you will seek after me but will not find me') finds a close parallel in some manuscripts of Cyprian's *Testimonia* (attributed to *Baruch* or *Barach*): 'For the time will come when both you and those who will have come after you seek me ... but you will not find it/ me'.¹⁴ In this as in the other cases, however, there remains doubt about whether there is even indirect influence from *Thomas*.

On the other hand, there is a good deal that can be said, and which has already been said, especially in the early days by H.-C. Puech and now by M. Grosso.¹⁵ The aim here is merely to offer a brief summary of instances of the influence of *Thomas*, whether that influence is direct or indirect. The texts are generally presented here in English translation to facilitate comparison, and because in some cases I claim no knowledge of the language (e.g. Armenian, Sogdian).

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- Testament', *VC* 14 (1960), 204–215. On the other hand, Jongkind thinks that Scribe A of Codex Sinaiticus might know some *Thomas* readings: D. Jongkind, "The Lilies of the Field" Reconsidered: *Codex Sinaiticus* and the Gospel of Thomas', *NovT* 48 (2006), 209–216 (215).
- 11 *Saepius concupivi audire unum ex sermonibus istis, et non habui qui diceret mihi*; cf. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 34.18.13.
- 12 Something like this is cited also by Lactantius (*Div. Inst.* 4.8.1), who applies it to Jesus alone: 'Blessed is he who was, before he was born' (*beatus qui erat antequam nasceretur*). A looser parallel exists in *Gos. Truth* 27,30–28,4.
- 13 On Clement and *Thomas* more broadly, see Grosso, *Λόγοι Απόκρυφοι*, 141–187.
- 14 *Testim.* 3.29: *veniet enim tempus, et quaeritis me et vos et qui post vos venerint, audire verbum sapientiae et intellectus, et non invenientis.*
- 15 In addition to the literature already noted, see the helpful synopsis in Grosso, *Λόγοι Απόκρυφοι*, 46–59.

4.1 Reception among the Fathers

Hippolytus (c. 225 CE)

We have already noted the reference to the actual title of *Thomas* along with the accompanying quotation (very roughly) of GTh 4.1 (Greek: ‘a man old in days will not hesitate to ask a child seven days old about the place of life, and he will live’) in Hippolytus, *Refutatio* 5.7.20: ‘He who seeks me will find me in children from seven years old ...’ Following shortly after this statement is another possible allusion to *Thomas*, which Hippolytus also attributes to the Naassenes:

Logion 11.3

Hippolytus, *Refutatio* 5.8.32

In the days when you ate what is dead,
you made it live.

If you ate what was dead
and made it live,

When you come into the light,
what will you do?!

what will you do when you eat what is
alive?!

Logan also takes the *Preaching* quoted by Hippolytus as containing ‘clear allusions to the ascetic Nag Hammadi Gospel of Thomas’,¹⁶ and Grosso discusses a number of other cases.¹⁷

Origen (mid-third cent.)¹⁸

GTh 23.1 (‘Jesus said, “I will choose you, one out of a thousand, and two out of ten thousand”’) may be alluded to by Origen: ‘As it says, I suppose, “one out of a thousand and two out of ten thousand”, who are (also) the blessed apostles’.¹⁹

16 Logan, *The Gnostics*, 78.

17 See Grosso, *Λόγοι Απόκρυφοί*, 65–138.

18 On Origen and *Thomas*, see M. Grosso, ‘Osservazioni sui *testimonia* origeniani del Vangelo secondo Tommaso (in *Luc. hom.* I,1; *contra Celsum* VIII,15; in *Jer. hom. lat.* I,3; in *Jesu Naue hom.* IV,3); *Adamantius* 15 (2009) 177–194; S.C. Carlson, ‘Origen’s Use of the *Gospel of Thomas*’ (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, New Orleans, November 24, 2009) forthcoming in print.

19 *Peri tou Pascha* 2.6.3; see B. Witte, ed. *Die Schrift des Origenes “Über das Passa”*: *Textausgabe und Kommentar* (Altenberger: Oros Verlag, 1993), 126: ὡς λέγει, εἷς που [ἐκ] χιλίων καὶ δύο ἐκ μυρίων, [ὄν] καὶ οἱ μ[α]καριοὶ ἀπόστολοι [ὑπ]ήρχον.

Origen's introductory formula ('As it says ...') suggests he is quoting a written text here, and he shows clear signs elsewhere of knowing *Thomas* both by name and by its contents (see also the parallels to this statement in §§ 4.4–5 below).

A version of GTh 69.2 ('Blessed are those who hunger so that they may fill belly of the one who desires') is also found in Origen, *Hom. in Lev.* 10.2: 'For we have found it stated by the apostles in a certain book: "Blessed is he who, so that he may help the poor man, even fasts for him."²⁰

The fire saying in GTh 82 is quoted twice in Origen.²¹ Here we have an interesting difference between the two passages in which Origen cites this saying:²²

GTh 82	<i>Hom. Jer. L. I (III), 3</i>	<i>Hom. Josh. 4.3.</i>
Jesus said,	I have read somewhere the Saviour as saying—in fact, I am not sure (either someone has imagined it of the Saviour or has really remembered it) whether it is true that it was said. In any case, the Saviour said there:	But remember what is written:
'He who is near me is near the fire;	'He who is near me is near the fire;	'those who come near to me, come near to the fire.'
and he who is far from me is far from the kingdom.'	he who is far from me is far from the kingdom.'	

20 *inuenimus enim in quodam libello ab apostolis dictum: beatus est qui etiam ieiunat pro eo ut alat pauperem.* On this, see S. Witetschek, 'Going Hungry for a Purpose', *JSNT* 32 (2010), 379–393, as well as the commentary below.

21 See on the saying J. Jeremias, *The Unknown Sayings of Jesus* (London: SPCK, 21964), 66–73.

22 For texts, see A. Jaubert, ed. *Origène. Homélie sur Josué* (SC 71; Paris: Cerf, 1960), 154: *sed memento quod scriptum est: qui approximant mihi approximant igni*; P. Nautin & P. Husson, eds. *Origène. Homélie sur Jérémie II: XII–XX et Homélie latines* (SC 238; Paris: Cerf, 1977), 324: *legi alicubi quasi Salvatore dicente—et quaero sive quis personam figuravit Salvatoris sive in memoriam adduxit, an verum sit hoc quod dictum est—ait autem ibi Salvator: qui iuxta me est, iuxta igne est; qui longe est a me, longe est a regno.*

The Jeremiah Homilies probably predate those on Joshua (both c. 240–250),²³ so Origen's initial doubts about the saying may have been forgotten by the time of writing the later abbreviated version; his memory of the content also fades. The saying is quite probably derived from *Thomas*: both references are introduced by a comment about Origen's knowledge of a *written* source. The comments of Hedrick and Mirecki here are extremely odd: they remark that the reference here in Origen (as well as in other places) is 'due to independent acquisition from the oral tradition', and 'represents an independent performance of a saying acquired from the oral tradition.'²⁴ This is strange considering that, despite the differences in Origen's two statements, he says first (in *Hom. Jer.*) that this is something he has *read*, and second that this 'is written' (in *Hom. Josh.*). On the other hand, it is unlikely that Origen would consciously have associated the saying with *Thomas*, given his comments on it in his Luke commentary (see 'Named Testimonia': § 3.2 above).²⁵

A looser parallel, to GTh 62 ('I speak my mysteries to those who [are worthy of my] mysteries'), might be present in Origen's *Commentary on Matthew*. The fact that *Thomas*'s text is restored (and perhaps even restored on the basis of a passage such as that of Origen) means that there is a degree of speculation here, however.²⁶

23 Jaubert, following Harnack, gives a date of c. 249–250 for the Joshua Homilies (*Homélie sur Josué*, 9); Nautin & Husson, *Origène. Homélie sur Jérémie I: I–XI* (SC 232; Paris: Cerf, 1976), 20, suggest a probable date of 240–246 for those on Jeremiah.

24 C.W. Hedrick & P.A. Mirecki, *Gospel of the Savior: A New Ancient Gospel* (Santa Rosa: Polebridge Press, 1999), 23. Similarly, Hedrick's thought that Origen knew this saying from somewhere other than *Thomas* is unnecessary ('Thomas and the Synoptics: Aiming at a Consensus', *SecCent* 7 (1990), 39–56 (45)).

25 One does not need to suppose that Origen has suppressed a reference to *Thomas* here, contra R.M. Grant & D.N. Freedman, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1960), 90.

26 E. Klostermann, ed. *Origenes Matthäuserklärung*, vol. I (Origen X; GCS 40; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1935), 315, ll. 22–27: καθό ὃ μὲν τις παρέδωκε τοῖς ὑποχειρίοις μυστήρια καὶ τελετὰς οὐκ ἐπαινετῶς, ὃ δὲ τις μυστήρια θεοῦ τοῖς ἀξίοις, καὶ ἀνάλογον τοῖς τοιοῦτοις μυστηρίοις τελετὰς. For discussion, see M. Grosso, "I misteri ai degni". Un possibile testimonium del *Vangelo secondo Tommaso* in Origen, in *Matth. Comm. XIV,14*, *Adamantius* 16 (2010), 389–398; idem, 'A New Link between Origen and the *Gospel of Thomas: Commentary on Matthew 14,14*', *VC* 65 (2011), 249–256.

Didymus the Blind (*mid-fourth cent.*)

The first part of GTh 7.2 ('and cursed is the man whom the lion eats ...') survives in Greek in Didymus, *In Psalmos* (on Ps. 43.12): οὐαὶ (γὰρ) τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ὃν φάγεται λέων.²⁷

Secondly, we have another parallel to GTh 82, which may resemble the original Greek of GTh 82:²⁸

GTh 82	Didymus, <i>In Psalmos</i> 88.8
Jesus said,	Therefore the Saviour said:
'He who is near me is near the fire;	'He who is near me is near the fire;
and he who is far from me is far from the kingdom.'	he who is far from me is far from the kingdom.'

Here the wording is identical, and may well—again—reflect direct influence from *Thomas*: in addition to the striking parallel with GTh 7, we saw above ('Named Testimonia', § 3.6) that Didymus knew the *Gospel of Thomas* by name. Furthermore, he was also acquainted with Manichees and claims to have conversed with them.²⁹ On the other hand, it is possible that he may know GTh 82 (though probably not GTh 7) from his Alexandrian forebear, Origen.

27 M. Gronewald, *Didymus der Blinde: Psalmenkommentar*, vol. V (Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen 12; Bonn: Habelt, 1970), 138–140; D. Lühhmann, 'Die Geschichte von einer Sünderin und andere apokryphe Jesusüberlieferungen bei Didymos von Alexandrien', *NovT* 32 (1990), 289–316 (312–316: 'Anhang: Logion 7 des Thomasevangeliums bei Didymos von Alexandrien').

28 PG 39.1488: διὸ φησιν ὁ Σωτήρ· ἐγγύς μου ἐγγύς τοῦ πυρός· ὁ δὲ μακρὰν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ μακρὰν ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλείας.

29 I. Gardner & S.N.C. Lieu, trs. *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 119–120.

Ephrem (*mid-fourth cent.?*)

We encounter another close parallel to the fire saying in GTh 82 in a work attributed to—and perhaps written by—Ephrem.³⁰ The Syriac original is lost, and the work only survives in Armenian.³¹

GTh 82	<i>Exposition of the Gospel</i> 83
Jesus said,	This is what our Saviour-redeemer said: he says,
'He who is near me is near the fire;	'He who joins with me joins with fire;
and he who is far from me is far from the kingdom.'	and he who is far from me is far from life.'

Here, interestingly, we have a close parallel to the saying in the form in which it is found in *Gos. Sav.* 71 (see §4.2 below). Since the form of the saying with 'life' instead of 'kingdom' gained a life of its own, it is even harder to discern the character of the influence.

Part of Ephrem's *Commentary on the Diatessaron* (also surviving in Armenian), shows perhaps the influence of GTh 30.1/2. *Thomas* has, in Greek *καὶ ὅπου εἷς ἐστὶν μόνος, λέγω· ἐγὼ εἶμι μετ' αὐτοῦ* (cf. Coptic GTh 30.2: 'Where there are two or one, I am with them'). To this one can compare Ephrem: 'Where there is one, there am I also ... and where there are two, there am I also.'³²

30 On the problem of authenticity, see G.A. Egan, ed. *Saint Ephrem: An Exposition of the Gospel* (CSCO; Scriptorum Armeniaci 5–6; Louvain: Secrétariat du CorpusSCO, 1968), I:ix–xviii.

31 For the text and translation, see Egan, *Exposition of the Gospel*, 1:67 (text) and 2:62 (ET) = J. Schäfers, ed. *Eine altsyrische antimarcionitische Erklärung von Parabeln des Herrn* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1917), 79.

32 Ephrem, *Comm. Diat.* 14.24; see L. Leloir, ed. *Saint Éphraem: Commentaire de l'évangile concordant* (CSCO 137, 145; S.Arm. 1–2; Louvain: Durbecq, 1954), 1:200 (text), 2:144 (Latin translation).

The Pseudo-Macarian Corpus (*late fourth cent.*)³³

In the early days of *Thomas* scholarship, Quispel and Baker independently produced a list of parallels between *Thomas* and the Macarian corpus, with both articles being published in the same issue of the *Vigiliae Christianae*.³⁴ As Quispel put it, 'Macarius most probably knew the Gospel of Thomas and alluded to it in his writings.'³⁵ Although there is a good number of potential parallels to be considered, for reasons of space we will merely present some of the better examples.³⁶

GTh 113

Ps.-Macarius, *Homilies* 35.1.5

(Jesus said)

'Rather, the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it.'

As the Lord has said,

'The kingdom of God is spread out on the earth, and people do not look into it.'³⁷

This instance is rightly regarded by Quispel and the editors of the *Homilies* as the most compelling parallel, though there are others,³⁸ including a possible allusion to the doublet GTh 87/ 112:

33 For the date, see M. Plested, *The Macarian Legacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 16. On parallels with *Thomas*, see Grosso, *Λόγοι Ἀπόκρυφοί*, 189–276.

34 A. Baker, 'Pseudo-Macarius and the Gospel of Thomas', *VC* 18 (1964), 215–225; G. Quispel, 'Syrian Thomas and the Syrian Macarius', *VC* 18 (1964), 226–235.

35 Quispel, 'Syrian Thomas and the Syrian Macarius', 227.

36 Grosso, *Λόγοι Ἀπόκρυφοί*, 189–276.

37 ὡς φησιν ὁ κύριος· ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ χαμαὶ ἤπλωται καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὐκ ἐμβλέπουσιν αὐτήν. Text in H. Berthold, ed. *Makarios/Symeon. Reden und Briefe* (GCS; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1973), II.43. See further P. Nagel, 'Apokryphe Jesusworte in der koptischen Überlieferung', in J. Frey & J. Schröter, eds. *Jesus in apokryphen Evangelienüberlieferungen* (WUNT 254; Tübingen: Mohr, 2010), 495–526 (513–514).

38 Berthold, *Makarios/Symeon. Reden und Briefe*, I.lxix n. 1.

GTh 87	GTh 112	<i>Homilies 9.3.7</i> ³⁹	<i>Spiritual Homilies 1</i> ⁴⁰
‘Wretched is the body which depends on a body,	‘Woe to the flesh which depends on the soul.	‘Woe to the body, when it stands on its own nature, because it is destroyed and dies.	‘Woe to the body, when it stands on its own nature, because it is destroyed and dies.
and wretched is the soul which depends on these two.’	Woe to the soul which depends on the flesh.’	And woe also to the soul, if it stands on its own nature alone ...’	And woe to the soul, if it stands on its own nature alone ...’

The thought in *Thomas* and Macarius is rather different, though the language and structure are similar. Perhaps dependent upon Pseudo-Macarius here is a passage in Gregory Palamas, although his language moves further away from *Thomas*, and he introduces his citation with the words, ‘I have also heard a Father say ...’.⁴¹

Another parallel to *Thomas* can be noted from *Homilies 9*, which is not picked up by Quispel or Baker:⁴²

39 Berthold, *Makarios/Symeon. Reden und Briefe*, I.132–133: οὐαὶ τῷ σώματι ὁπότεν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν ἔστηκεν, ὅτι διαφθείρεται καὶ ἀποθνήσκει· καὶ οὐαὶ δὲ καὶ τῇ ψυχῇ, ὁπότεν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς φύσιν μόνον ἔστηκε

40 H. Dörries, E. Klostermann & M. Kroeger, eds. *Die 50 geistlichen Homilien des Makarios* (Patristische Texte und Studien 4; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1964), 12: οὐαὶ σώματι, ὁπότεν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ φύσιν ἔστηκεν, ὅτι διαφθείρεται καὶ ἀποθνήσκει· καὶ οὐαὶ ψυχῇ, εἰ εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς φύσιν μόνον ἔστηκε καὶ εἰς τὰ ἑαυτῆς ἔργα μόνον πέποιθε, μὴ ἔχουσα θείου πνεύματος κοινωνίαν, ὅτι ἀποθνήσκει ζωῆς αἰωνίου θεότητος μὴ καταξιωθείσα.

41 *In Defence of the Hesychasts*, I 1.19: ‘Εγὼ δὲ καὶ τοῦ λέγοντος ἀκούω πατρός· Οὐαὶ σώματι, ὅταν μὴ τὴν ἕξωθεν προσενέγκηται τροφήν, καὶ οὐαὶ ψυχῇ, ὅταν μὴ τὴν ἄνωθεν ἐπιδέξηται χάριν.

42 For text, see Berthold, *Makarios/Symeon. Reden und Briefe*, I.127.

GTh 24.2–3

Homilies 9.2.1

He said to them: 'Whoever has ears, let him hear.

Therefore the Lord said, exhorting them:

There is light within a person of light, and he gives light to the whole world.

'If you stand and do not turn, and are a light to the body, behold, the whole body of the world is lit.

If he does not give light,

But if you, who are light, become dark as you turn away from the good,

he is darkness.'

how great that darkness which is the world.'

In both *Thomas* and Macarius, the object of illumination is the world (unlike in the Synoptic parallels). The resemblance of language here is perhaps confirmed by the fact that it is only shortly afterward that the preacher refers to the 'woe' from GTh 87/ 112.

Quispel adds two more examples which are reasonably good, and a number of more speculative ventures which nevertheless are possible signs of influence given what is clearer elsewhere in the corpus.⁴³

Baker's article adds six further parallels, though none is quite as close as the initial example by Quispel. One which may be important is *Thomas's* supplement to Matt. 8.20/Lk. 9.58, in GTh 86: 'Jesus said, "Foxes have holes and birds have their nests, but the Son of Man has does not have a place to lay his head *and rest himself*". This Thomasine *plus* 'and rest' is picked up in Pseudo-Macarius (*New Homilies* 6.4: καὶ ἀναπαύῃ).⁴⁴

Baker also notes that both *Thomas* and Macarius turn the statement about the least in the kingdom being greater than John the Baptist into a statement

43 Quispel, 'Syrian Thomas and the Syrian Macarius', 228, 232.

44 E. Klostermann & H. Berthold, eds. *Neue Homilien des Makarios/ Symeon I. Aus Typus III* (TU 72= V/17; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1961), 26, ll. 27–29; Baker, 'Pseudo-Macarius and the Gospel of Thomas', 219–220. Some have labelled this a Tatianic reading. See e.g. the Diatessaron readings in Quispel, *Tatian and the Gospel of Thomas*, 187.

about the 'little one'.⁴⁵ The others are less convincing.⁴⁶ Grosso's excellent treatment includes discussion of those places already discussed by Quispel and Baker, and adds others: in all, he discusses 24 possible allusions to *Thomas*. He concludes, however, that Quispel's reference to the saying about the kingdom being spread over the earth (GTh 113) and Baker's Son of Man saying are the two most compelling instances.⁴⁷ There is also an intriguing connection between the Macarian parable of the man carrying a bag of sand, and GTh 97 (see commentary on this saying below), although the precise literary relationship between the two is elusive.

The *Liber Graduum* (c. late fourth cent.)⁴⁸

Baker has noted a number of parallels with the Syriac *Liber Graduum*, generally of the nature of short phrases.⁴⁹ One of the more striking is the occurrence in both works of 'fasting to the world' (GTh 27, and 5× in *LG*).⁵⁰ Or again, the opponents of Jesus in *LG* 660, 10 'call him the son of adultery', a statement parallel to GTh 105: 'Whoever knows the Father and the Mother will be called "son of an prostitute"'.⁵¹ There are various other parallels which also suggest influence from the Gospel, even if that influence on the *Liber Graduum* is rather slender and perhaps indirect.

45 GTh 46/ *Spiritual Homilies* 28.6: see Baker, 'Pseudo-Macarius and the Gospel of Thomas', 217–218.

46 E.g. the saying of Jesus about washing the outside and inside of the cup has some very small shared variants in *Thomas* and Pseudo-Macarius: they have 'you wash' instead of 'you cleanse': see Baker, 'Pseudo-Macarius and the Gospel of Thomas', 217. This is clearly very minor, however, and again perhaps a Tatianic reading: see Quispel, *Tatian and the Gospel of Thomas*, 187.

47 Grosso, *Λόγοι Απόκρυφοί*, 273–274.

48 R.A. Kitchen & M.F.G. Parmentier, *The Book of Steps: The Syriac Liber Graduum* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian, 2004), viii, gives date of mid-late fourth century. I. Hausherr, 'Quanam aetate prodierit Liber Graduum', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1 (1935), 495–502, gives a date at the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century.

49 A. Baker, 'The "Gospel of Thomas" and the Syriac "Liber Graduum"', *NTS* 12 (1965–1966), 49–55.

50 Baker, 'Gospel of Thomas and Syriac Liber Graduum', 50, as well as his 'Fasting to the World', *JBL* 84 (1965), 291–294; cf. also A. Guillaumont, 'NHETEYEIN TON KOΣMON (P. Oxy. 1, verso, l. 5–6)', *BIFAO* 61 (1962), 15–23.

51 Baker, 'Gospel of Thomas and Syriac Liber Graduum', 51.

Augustine (*late fourth/ early fifth cent.*)

Augustine had access to Mani's *Fundamental Epistle* and may have become acquainted with *Thomas* when a Manichee (see § 4.4 below). Augustine adopts Thomasine phraseology (probably unwittingly) for his own purposes in *Sermon on the Mount* (c. 393 CE):⁵²

GTh 3 (Co)

Serm. Dom. Mont. II, 5, 17

'If those who lead you say to you,
"Behold, the kingdom is in heaven",
then the birds of heaven would precede
you.'

But if the place of God is believed to
be in the heavens—as it were, in the
superior parts of the world,
then the birds are of greater
value because their life is nearer to
God.

Shenoute (*fourth–fifth cent.*)

Richardson and Young have seen reference to the 'making Mary male' saying (GTh 114) in Shenoute:⁵³ 'Does she (i.e. the wife) not need to pray, to hear the sermon and to become godly in all things? Is the kingdom of heaven prepared for males alone? Is it not prepared for women that they may enter it?'⁵⁴ Young also mounts an argument for a possible usage of GTh 21 by Shenoute.⁵⁵

52 For text, see A. Mutzenbecher, ed. *Sancti Aurelii Augustini de Sermone Domini in Monte* (CCSL XXXV; Turnhout: Brepols, 1967), 107: *sed si in caelis tamquam in superioribus mundi partibus locum dei esse creditur, melioris meriti sunt aves, quarum vita est deo vicinior*. For discussion, see G. Quispel, 'Saint Augustin et l'Évangile selon Thomas', in (no editor), *Mélanges d'Histoire des Religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974), 375–378.

53 C.C. Richardson, 'The Gospel of Thomas: Gnostic or Encratite?', in D. Neiman & M.A. Schatkin, eds. *The Heritage of the Early Church: Essays in Honor of Georges Vasilievich Florovsky* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1973), 65–76 (65 n. 1); D.W. Young, 'Milieu of Nag Hammadi: Some Historical Considerations', *VC* 24 (1970), 127–137 (135; cf. 130).

54 J. Leipoldt, *Sinuthii Archimandritae Vita et Opera Omnia*, vol. IV (Paris: Gabalda, 1913), 38 ll. 21–24 (tr. Young).

55 Young, 'Milieu of Nag Hammadi', 132–134.

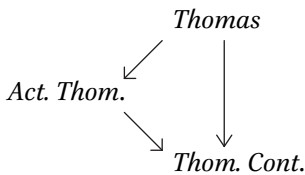
Didascalia (*third/fourth cent.*)

A final example (perhaps not strictly ‘patristic’) is a striking parallel between GTh 48 (‘If two make peace with one another in this one house, they will say to the mountain, “Move away”, and it will move’) and the Latin version of the *Didascalia*: ‘since it is written in the Gospel: “If two agree as one, and said to this mountain, ‘Get up and throw yourself in the sea’, it will happen”’ (*Didasc.* 15).⁵⁶

4.2 Reception in Nag Hammadi and Related Literature

Book of Thomas the Contender (*late second cent.*)

A number of scholars have drawn attention to the very probable influence of *Thomas* upon other literature bearing the name of Thomas, such as the *Book of Thomas the Contender* and the *Acts of Thomas*. Layton even talks of a ‘School of St. Thomas’.⁵⁷ Poirier helpfully depicts the influence of *Thomas* on these other two books as follows:⁵⁸



The particular instances are these:

56 *Quoniam scriptum est in evangelio: Duo si convenerunt in unum et dixerint monti huic: Tolle et mitte te in mari, fiet.* Text from R.H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum: The Syriac Version Translated and Accompanied by the Verona Latin Fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1929), 135 (cf. the Syriac in translation on 134); also cf. M.D. Gibson, tr. *The Didascalia apostolorum in English* (London: Clay, 1903), 73; H. Achelis & J. Flemming, *Die syrische Didaskalia* (TU 25.2; NF 10.2; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904), 345.

57 See e.g. B. Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures* (London: SCM, 1987), 357–409. For criticism of this idea, see P.-H. Poirier, ‘Évangile de Thomas, Actes de Thomas, Livre de Thomas’, *Apocrypha* 7 (1996), 9–26 (24).

58 Poirier, ‘Évangile de Thomas, Actes de Thomas, Livre de Thomas’, 25.

GTh Prologue (Coptic)***Thom. Cont.* 138,1–4 (= Prologue)**

These are the secret sayings
which the living Jesus spoke and
Didymus Judas Thomas wrote them
down.

The secret words
which the saviour spoke to Judas
Thomas
which I, Mathaias, wrote down,
as I was walking, listening to them
speaking with one another.

GTh 2 (Greek [restored])***Thom. Cont.* 140,42–141,2**

Jesus says, 'He who seeks should not stop
seeking until he finds. And when he
finds, he will be astonished, and when he
is astonished he will reign, and having
reigned he will rest.'

And th[e saviour] answered, saying,
'[Bles]sed is the wise man who has
sou[ght the truth, and who,] when he
has found it, has rested upon it forever
and has not feared those who wanted to
disturb him.'

In the latter case, because this saying is fairly widely distributed (see commentary below), it is possible that *Thom. Cont.* is dependent upon a different source; if *Thomas* is the influence here, however, it is very probably the Greek version, which is likely to have the element of 'rest' at the end, even though it is reconstructed.

The Gospel of Philip (*second–third cent.*)

On the fairly well-founded assumption that the *Gospel of Philip* postdates *Thomas*, there is a probable reference to GTh 19.1 (Jesus said, 'Blessed is he who has come into being before he has come into being') in *Gos. Phil.* 64,9–12: 'The Lord said, "Blessed is he who is before he came into being"'.⁵⁹ One might compare the parallels in Irenaeus and Lactantius noted above.

59 See discussion in see Nagel, 'Apokryphe Jesusworte in der koptischen Überlieferung', 519–520; E.E. Popkes, 'Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie: Transformationen apokalyptischer Motive im Thomasevangelium', in M. Becker & M. Öhler, eds. *Apokalyptik als Herausforderung neutestamentlicher Theologie* (WUNT II/214; Tübingen: Mohr, 2006), 211–233 (230–231).

Also in *Philip* is a parallel to GTh 22.4 ('When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside, and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below ...'). There is just enough extant in the text of *Philip* to see the influence here: 'He said, "I have come to make [the things] be[low] like the things [above, and the things] outside like those [inside]"' (*Gos. Phil.* 67,30–34). The other versions of the saying (*G. Egy.* / *Cassian/ Clem. Strom.* 3,13,92; 2 *Clem.* 12; *Mart. Petr.* 9; *Act. Phil.* 140) do not have reference to both 'below/ above' and 'inside/ outside', and these are adjacent in both *Thomas* and *Philip* (albeit not in the same order). As such, a literary relationship is probable.

The Gospel of the Saviour (second–sixth cent.)

A fairly recently discovered example comes in the *Gospel of the Saviour* (or *Unknown Berlin Gospel*):

GTh 82	<i>Gos. Sav.</i> 71 ⁶⁰
Jesus said,	
'He who is near me is near the fire;	'[He who is near me] is near [the f]ire;
and he who is far from me is far from the kingdom.'	he who is far from me is far from life.'

The statement of Hedrick and Mirecki that the latest possible date is the second half of the second century has been criticized by Plisch as optimistic and by Emmel as speculative.⁶¹ As such, the insistence of Hedrick and Mirecki that

60 This number of 71 follows the versification in S. Emmel, 'The Recently Published *Gospel of the Savior* ("Unbekanntes Berliner Evangelium")': Righting the Order of Pages and Events', *HTR* 95 (2002), 45–72. A translation can be found there (p. 57 for the relevant saying). For the text, see Hedrick & Mirecki, *Gospel of the Savior*, 40.

61 See. U.-K. Plisch, *Was nicht in der Bibel steht: Apokryphe Schriften des frühen Christentums* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006), 28; Emmel, 'The Recently Published *Gospel of the Savior*', 46, and further, J.L. Hagen, 'Ein anderer Kontext für die Berliner und Strasburger "Evangelienfragmente": Das "Evangelium des Erlösers" und andere "Apostele-vangelien" in der koptischen Literatur', in J. Frey & J. Schröter, eds. *Jesus in apokryphen*

Gos. Sav.'s version of this saying must go back to oral sources (as in their interpretation of the situation in Origen) is questionable. As Emmel has shown, *Gos. Sav.* knows Matthew and John (and perhaps also Revelation) in their final, written forms.⁶² Nevertheless, it is more probable that *Gos. Sav.* is not referring to *Thomas* directly here, given that the modification of the saying with 'life' is sufficiently well established to enter Ephrem's *Exposition* as well.

2 *Jeu* (*third cent.*?)

Among various slight allusions in the works in the Bruce Codex, perhaps the most substantive parallel to *Thomas* is the reference to the 'five trees of the Treasury of the Light, which are the unmoved trees' (2*Jeu* 50): cf. GTh 19.3: 'five trees in paradise, which do not move.'

4.3 Reception in Apocryphal Acts

Acts of Thomas (*early third cent.*)⁶³

This is the work which is probably most deeply influenced by *Thomas*. The first relevant reference comes in the marvellous scene in which the donkey addresses Thomas in the *Acts*. After addressing Thomas as the 'twin of Christ', the donkey—like *Thom. Cont.*—alludes to the Prologue of *Thomas*:

GTh Prologue (Coptic)

These are the secret sayings which the living Jesus spoke and Didymus Judas Thomas wrote them down.

Ac. Thom. 39

... the twin (δίδυμος) of Christ, the apostle of the Most High, the *summustēs* of the hidden word of Christ, the one who received his hidden sayings ...

Evangelienüberlieferungen: Beiträge zu ausserkanonischen Jesusüberlieferungen aus verschiedenen Sprach- und Kulturtraditionen (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 339–371.

62 Emmel, 'The Recently Published *Gospel of the Savior*', 46, 51, 53, 55, 59.

63 See further Fallon & Cameron, 'The Gospel of Thomas: A Forschungsbericht and Analysis', 4204; G.J. Riley, 'Thomas Tradition and the *Acts of Thomas*', *SBLSP* (1991), 533–542. P.-H. Poirier, 'The Writings Ascribed to Thomas and the Thomas Tradition', in J.D. Turner & A. McGuire eds. *The Nag Hammadi Library after Fifty Years: Proceedings of the 1995 Society of Biblical Literature Commemoration* (NHMS 44; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 295–307 (302), notes that *Ac. Thom.*'s 'precise knowledge' of *Thomas* is 'a well-known fact'.

The similar language of hidden sayings (in Greek: οἱ λόγοι οἱ [ἀπόκρυφοι]/ τὰ ἀπόκρυφα λόγια) in connection with Thomas probably indicates influence here. Again, there is influence in a later section of the *Acts of Thomas*, in which Thomas is the speaker:

GTh 13.6, 8

Ac. Thom. 47

And he (Jesus) took him (Thomas), and withdrew, and spoke three words to him ...
 Thomas said to them, 'If I told you one of the words which he spoke to me, you would pick up stones and throw them at me. But fire would come out of the stones and burn you.'

... you who separated me privately from all my companions, and spoke to me three words by which I am inflamed, and which I am unable to speak to others.

Another probable mark of influence, albeit a fleeting one, appears in *Ac. Thom.* 136 with its reference—reversing the order in the *Gospel of Thomas*—to 'those who rest, and, having rested, reign' (cf. GTh 2.4–5 Greek: 'he will reign, and having reigned, he will rest').

Martyrdom of Peter

Mart. Petr. 9 has some features in common with *Thomas's* version of the 'making the two one' saying (cf. 2 *Clem.* 12; *Clem. Strom.* 3.13.92). GTh 22 has as the condition for salvation 'if you make ...' (cf. ἐάν μὴ ποιήσητε ... in *Mart. Petr.* 9), and they share a reference to 'the above like the below' not present in other versions.⁶⁴

There may be other allusions in other *Acts*, but these are rather more distant.⁶⁵

64 'The above like the below' does appear in *Ac. Phil.* 140, but this seems to be dependent upon *Mart. Petr.* For the texts and discussion, see Pratscher, *Der zweite Clemensbrief*, 162.

65 In *Ac. Jn* 39, John says to the men of Ephesus: 'And yet you are blinded in your hearts and cannot recover your sight.' This may refer to GTh 28.3 (τυφλοί εἰσιν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν καὶ οὐ βλέπουσιν ...). The language is fairly close, but the collocation of hearts and seeing is a common one.

4.4 Reception in Manichaean Literature⁶⁶

We noted above (Introduction, §3: ‘Named Testimonia’) the abundance of Patristic references to a connection between the Manichees and *Thomas*, even though the work is not mentioned by name in any extant Manichaean text. Despite this absence, there are numerous points at which Manichaean works allude to *Thomas*, in one case in the form of an actual citation. Hammerschmidt ascribes the importance of *Thomas* in Manichaeism to the parallel between Mani’s “conversion” and the identity of Thomas as the twin of Jesus, and even identified *Thomas* with the *Gospel of the Manichaeans*.⁶⁷ Funk has a slightly different explanation of the function of *Thomas* in this context, arguing that Mani or his followers were interested in *Thomas* because it helped to articulate their ecclesiology and doctrine of election.⁶⁸ Coyle is much more cautious

66 On *Thomas* and Manichaean literature in general, see Hammerschmidt, ‘Thomasevangelium und die Manichäer’, 120–123; J. Helderma, ‘Manichäische Züge im Thomasevangelium’, in S. Emmel, et al., eds. *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit: Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses, Münster, 20.–26. Juli* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999), II.483–494; H.-J. Klimkeit, ‘Apocryphal Gospels in Central and East Asia’, in idem & M. Heuser, eds. *Studies in Manichean Literature and Art* (NHMS XLVI; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 189–211; W.-P. Funk, “‘Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend’: Zitate aus dem Thomasevangelium in den koptischen Manichaica’, in H.-G. Bethge, S. Emmel, K.L. King & I. Schletterer, eds. *For the Children, Perfect Instruction: Studies in Honor of Hans-Martin Schenke* (NHMS 54; Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2002), 67–94; J.K. Coyle, ‘The Gospel of Thomas in Manichaeism?’, in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: “L’Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi”*: Québec, 29–31 mai 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 75–91; P. Nagel, ‘Synoptische Evangelientraditionen im Thomasevangelium und im Manichäismus’, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 272–293; Grosso, *Λόγοι Απόκρυφοί*, 277–304, and n.b. Grosso’s list on p. 303, which expands considerably the number of possible influences of *Thomas* upon Manichaean literature (cf. the list in Helderma, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 484–486). Studies of specific sayings include P.A. Mirecki, ‘Coptic Manichaean Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37’, in A. van Tongerlo & S. Giversen, eds. *Manichaica Selecta: Studies Presented to Professor Julien Ries on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (Manichaean Studies, 1; Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies and the Centre of the History of Religions, 1991), 243–262, and J. Helderma, ‘Log 97 vom manichäischen Gesichtspunkt angesehen’, in W. Beltz, ed. *Der Gottesspruch in der koptischen Literatur: Hans-Martin Schenke zum 65. Geburtstag* (Halle: Druckerei der Martin-Luther-Universität, 1994), 149–161.

67 Hammerschmidt, ‘Thomasevangelium und die Manichäer’, 123.

68 Funk, ‘Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend’, 91–92.

(indeed, over-cautious) in his conclusion that Manichaeans do not necessarily know *Thomas* at all.⁶⁹

Mani, Epistula Fundamenti (mid-third cent.)

The first allusion, to *Thomas's* Prologue + GTh 1, comes in Mani's own *Epistula Fundamenti*, preserved by Augustine: 'These are the saving words, from the eternal and living source. Whoever hears them and first believes in them and thereafter keeps what they point to, will never be liable to death ...' (*Epistula Fundamenti* fr. 2).⁷⁰ Compare *Thomas*: 'These are the secret sayings which the living Jesus spoke and Didymus Judas Thomas wrote them down. And he said, "Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."'

Kephalaia of the Teacher (1 Keph.) (late third cent.)

We have what looks like a quotation of GTh 5.1 ('know the one who is before your face, and what is hidden from you will be revealed to you') in 1 *Keph.* 163:28–29: 'Indeed, concerning the mystery that is hidden from the sects, the saviour cast an allusion [to] his disciples: "Understand that which is before your faces and that which is hidden from you will be revealed to you."⁷¹ A reference to GTh 23.1 ('I will choose you, one from a thousand, and two from ten thousand ...') is also apparent in 1 *Keph.* 285:24–25: 'I have [ch]o[sen] yo[u], one [from a thousand], two from ten thousand' (cf. also §§ 4.1, 5).⁷²

Kephalaia of the Wisdom of My Lord Mani (2 Keph.) (late third cent.)⁷³

It is unclear whether the *Kephalaia of the Wisdom of my Lord Mani* from the Chester Beatty collection (2 *Keph.*) is simply a continuation of the *Kephalaia of*

69 Coyle, 'The Gospel of Thomas in Manichaeism?', 90–91.

70 *Epistula Fundamenti*, fr. 2 = Augustine, *Contra epistulam fundamenti* 11. See Zycha, ed. *Sancti Aureli Augustini De utilitate credendi*, 206, and *Contra Felicem* 1.1 (J. Zycha, ed. *Sancti Aureli Augustini Contra Felicem de natura boni ...* [CSEL XXV/2; Vienna: Tempsky, 1892], 801).

71 I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher: The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary* (NHMS; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 173; Funk, 'Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend', 74–75; Nagel, 'Synoptische Evangelientraditionen', 288–289.

72 For a rougher parallel to the 'one out of a thousand ...' saying, see *Psalm-Book* 4.18–21 (*Bema-Psalm* 220): see Nagel, 'Apokryphe Jesusworte', 506.

73 See Funk, 'Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend', 79–85; Nagel, 'Synoptische Evangelientraditionen', 282–284.

the Teacher (the Berlin *Kephalaia*, or *1 Keph.*), or a distinct work.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, it too has an important parallel with *Thomas*.

Matt. 12.31–32	GTh 44	<i>2 Keph.</i> 416:12–16/417:25–29
Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but blasphemy of the Spirit will not be forgiven.	Jesus said,	(Mani the speaker, in 417:25–29).
	Whoever blasphemes the Father, he will be forgiven.	The one who blasphemes the Father, he will be forgiven;
And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him.	And whoever blasphemes the Son, he will be forgiven.	the one who blasphemes the Son, he will be forgiven;
But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the one to come.	But whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit, he will not be forgiven, either on earth or in heaven.	the one who blasphemes the Holy Spirit, he will not be forgiven, either on earth or in heaven.
(But he is guilty of an everlasting sin [Mk 3:29]).		But he will be condemned under [...] forever.

Thomas, then, can be seen to have introduced (a) a trinitarian structure to what was originally only a bipartite contrast between the Son of Man and the Holy Spirit, and (b) the gloss ‘neither on earth nor in heaven’ (instead of the ‘this age’/ ‘the age to come’ pairing).⁷⁵ The *Kephalaia* adopts both of *Thomas*’s

74 Gardner, *Kephalaia*, xix, notes the uncertainty, but comments that ‘the two codices may well belong together.’

75 On *Thomas*’s adaptation of the saying, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 179–183. The trinitar-

modifications here, while reintroducing an element of the canonical tradition as well (Mk 3.29).

Manichean Psalm-Book (*end of third cent.*)

The *Psalm-Book* provides three further instances. In the first, we find a close parallel to GTh 3.3 ('but the kingdom is inside you and outside of you') in *Psalm-Book* 160,20–21: 'The kingdom of heaven, behold it is inside us and, behold, it is outside [us].'⁷⁶

Shortly after this there appears to be a reference to *Thomas* in '[...] trees in paradise [... ...] summer and winter' (*Psalm-Book* 161,17–29); cf. GTh 19.3: 'For you have five trees in paradise, which do not move in summer or winter ...'. Although the number in the *Psalm-Book* is missing, the context is a list of fives, and so it is clear that we are dealing with five trees.

A little later is another:

Matt. 6.24/ Luke 16.13	GTh 47	<i>Psalm-Book</i> I 179:24–27
No-one (Lk: No servant) can serve two masters:	And it is impossible for a servant to serve two masters;	It is impossible for a servant ever to serve two masters.
either he will hate one and love the other,		
or he will cling to one	otherwise he will honour one	He will please one
and despise the other.	and insult the other.	and despise the other.

ian structure of the blasphemy formula survives into medieval Catharism: see T. Baarda, "Vader—Zoon—Heilige Geest": Logion 44 van "Thomas", *NedThT* 51 (1997), 13–30 (21–22). One of the passages cited by Baarda is translated into English, with its wider context in F.P. Badham & F.C. Coneybeare, 'Fragments of an Ancient (?Egyptian) Gospel used by the Cathars of Albi', *Hibbert Journal* 11 (1913), 805–818 (814); see also the Tuscan gospel harmony: V. Todesco, A. Vaccari & M. Vattasso, *Il Diatessarion in volgare Italiano: Testi inediti dei secoli XIII–XIV* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1938), 244. 'Son', rather than Son of Man, is also found outside of the triadic structure (i.e. merely in contrast to the Holy Spirit) in *Synodicon Orthodoxiae* 9.

76 See Nagel, 'Apokryphe Jesusworte', 514.

Nagel notes two similarities between GTh 47 and the *Psalm-Book*, over against the Synoptic version: first, the similarity of the introduction ('It is impossible for a servant ...'), and second, the reproduction in the *Psalm-Book* of the Thomasine "minus".⁷⁷

Later in the *Psalm-Book* there is a more difficult case:⁷⁸

GTh 37.2	<i>Psalm-Book</i> II 278,26–30
Jesus said,	The word of Jesus ...
'When you undress and are not ashamed, and take your clothes	'The vain garment of this flesh I put off (saved and sanctified!);
and leave them under your feet like little children and tread upon them,	I caused the clean feet of my soul to trample confidently upon it;
then [you will s]ee the Son of the Living One and you will not be afraid.'	the gods who are clothed with Christ, with them I stood in line.'

The metaphorical use of undressing and trampling on the clothes, attributed to Jesus in both *Thomas* and the *Psalm* perhaps indicates influence.⁷⁹ A potential difficulty here is that a similar statement can also be found in Clement of Alexandria's *Gospel of the Egyptians*. The *Psalm-Book's* version is closer to *Thomas* in this case, however.⁸⁰

77 On the other hand, in its use of 'despise' (*καταφρόνησει/ ἡκαταφρονῆ*), the form in the *Psalm-Book* is closer to that of Matthew/ Luke than *Thomas*. For text and discussion, see Nagel, 'Synoptische Evangelientraditionen', 284–288, and further, P. Nagel, 'Der Spruch vom Doppeldienst im Thomasevangelium (Logion 47) und im manichäischen Psalmenbuch (Part I pl. 179, 27–29)', in W. Beltz, ed. *Der Gottesspruch in der koptischen Literatur: Hans-Martin Schenke zum 65. Geburtstag* (Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientalwissenschaft 15; Halle: Institut für Orientalistik, 1994), 75–83, which has a very helpful synopsis of the various versions of this saying (81–83).

78 Text and translation in Mirecki, 'Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37', 253.

79 Cf. *Psalm-Book* 254,23–24: 'You [Jesus] have been released from the grievous bonds of the flesh ... You have thrown upon the earth the garment of sickness. You have trampled upon overweening pride.' (Mirecki, 'Coptic Manichaean Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37', 256).

80 Clement, *Strom.* 3.13.92.2, merely makes reference (in citing Julian Cassian and *G. Egy.*) to

Parthian and Sogdian Texts (*seventh–tenth century?*)

The ‘one out of a thousand, two out of ten thousand’ saying is again (cf. *1 Keph.* above) paralleled in a Parthian fragment of uncertain date, and is concerned, like GTh 23.1, with election: ‘(Mani says:) Chosen and select are you out of many, one from a thousand, and two from ten thousand’ (M 763, r II, 24–28).⁸¹ The ‘one out of a thousand, two out of ten thousand’ formula is known beyond the *Gospel of Thomas* and the Manichaean tradition (see § 4.1 above), but it is in these places—and in one Mandaean usage (see § 4.5 below)—that it is closely associated with election.⁸² There are also looser parallels in other Manichaean texts.⁸³

The saying about ‘what eye has not seen, what ear has not heard etc.’ in GTh 17 is distinctive in that it attributes the saying to Jesus, makes Jesus the giver of the secret gift and adds the additional restriction ‘what hand has not touched.’⁸⁴ These peculiarities of *Thomas* survive in M 789 = M 551,⁸⁵ and the reference to the hand (but not Jesus as giver) survives in So 18220,⁸⁶ a Sogdian fragment from an account of the mission of Mar Adda and Patek the teacher,

‘trampling on the garment of shame’, so there is no talk of ‘undressing’ or the mention of ‘feet’, both of which occur in GTh and the *Psalm-Book*.

- 81 Text in M. Boyce, *Reader in Manichaean Middle Persian, and Parthian: Texts with Notes* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 176; for discussion, see Funk, ‘Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend’, 85–92; Nagel, ‘Synoptische Evangelientraditionen’, 278–279.
- 82 Recall Funk’s point on election, already cited above (‘Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend’, 91–92).
- 83 See *1 Keph.* 187:32–188:1: ‘I have chosen some from among many.’ For text and German translation, see Funk, ‘Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend’, 87; ET: Gardner, *Kephalaia*, 196; and *Homilies* 59:13–14: for ET, see Gardner & Lieu, *Manichaean Texts*, 88: ‘Where are (they), the thousands whom you chose and the tens of thousands who (believed in) you?’
- 84 The less prominent element of Jesus as the giver appears in *Act. (Mart.) Petr.* 39; on this, and other attributions to Jesus see Nagel, ‘Apokryphe Jesusworte’, 504.
- 85 For texts and German translations of M 551 and M 789, see F.W.K. Müller, ‘Handschriften-Reste in Estrangelo-Schrift aus Turfan, Chinesisch-Turkistan. II. Teil’, *Abhandlungen der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (1904), 67–68, where he comments that they are two copies of the same work.
- 86 For So 18220, see text and German translation in W. Sundermann, *Mitteliranische manichäische Texte kirchengeschichtlichen Inhalts* (Berliner Turfantexte 11; Berlin: Akademie, 1981), 38. ET in Gardner & Lieu, *Manichaean Texts*, 112. Bibliography: Funk, ‘Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend’, 68–69; Nagel, ‘Synoptische Evangelientraditionen’, 280–281. On the date, see W. Sundermann, ‘Iranische Lebensbeschreibungen Manis’, *AO* (Copenhagen) 36 (1974), 125–149 (145).

produced in Central Asia, but probably going back to an account produced in Syriac or Parthian.⁸⁷

Unnamed Apocryphon

Another case may be from a Manichaean source, but is not clearly so. In c. 421, Augustine in his *Contra adversarium Legis et Prophetarum* (against both Manichees and Marcionites: 1.1.1) cites ‘from some apocryphal scripture or other’ (*de scripturis nescio quibus apocryphis*, 2.4.14). He quotes it with considerable disapproval.⁸⁸

GTh 52

Augustine, *C. adv. Leg. Prophet.* 2.4.14

His disciples said to him,
‘Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel
and did all of them speak about you?’

But when the apostles asked
what should be thought about the
prophets of the Jews,
who were thought to have sung
something in the past about his coming,

He said to them,
‘You have neglected the living one
in front of you,
and spoken of the dead.’

he was disturbed that they should still
think such things, and replied:
‘You have abandoned the living one who
is before you,
and are talking about the dead.’

Despite these numerous instances (including or excluding the last case), it needs to be remembered that *Thomas* does not really have a deep influence on Manichaean literature.⁸⁹

87 In addition to Sundermann’s observations about dating, see also Gardner & Lieu, *Manichaean Texts*, 111 n. 2.

88 *PL* 42.647: *Sed Apostolis*, inquit, *Dominus noster interrogantibus de Iudaeorum Prophetis quid sentiri deberet, qui de adventu eius aliquid cecinisse in praeteritum putabantur, commotus talia eos etiam nunc sentire, respondit: Dimisistis vivum qui ante vos est, de mortuis fabulamini*. See e.g. J.B. Bauer, ‘De agraphis genuinis evangelii secundum Thomam coptici’, *Verbum Domini* 37 (1959), 129–146 (142); T. Baarda, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament’, *PIBA* 26 (2003), 1–28 (4–6) on the meaning of the Latin of this apocryphal saying.

89 See, for example, the conclusion of Nagel’s essay: ‘Der konkrete Textvergleich zeitigt indessen nur marginalen Gebrauch des *Thomasevangeliums* bei den Manichäern’ (Nagel, ‘Synoptische Evangelientraditionen’, 293).

4.5 Mandaean Literature

This is an area which merits further exploration. One instance with possible influence from *Thomas* is *Mandaean Prayers* 90: ‘He chose one of out of a thousand, and from two thousand he chose two’ (cf. references to GTh 23.1 already cited in §§ 4.1 and 4.4 above).⁹⁰ Similar in the use of the 1:1000, 2:10000 language, but without reference to election is the *Ginza*.⁹¹

4.6 The Oxyrhynchus Shroud (fifth–sixth cent.)⁹²

One of the most interesting cases is the quotation from GTh 5 on a shroud discovered in Oxyrhynchus:

GTh 5 (Greek)	GTh 5 (Coptic)	Oxyrhynchus Shroud
Jesus says, ‘K[now the one who is befo]re your face,	Jesus says, ‘Know the one who is before your face,	Jesus says,
and [what is hidden] from you will be reveal[ed to you.]	and what is hidden from you will be revealed to you.	
[For there i]s nothing hidden which will not [become pl]ain,	For nothing which is hidden will not be revealed.’	‘There is nothing
and buried which [will not be raised].’		buried which will not be raised.’

90 W.D. Stroker, *Extracanoncal Sayings of Jesus* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1989), 187.

91 *Right Ginza* 305, 307.

92 First notice and text in H.-C. Puech, ‘Un logion de Jésus sur bandelette funéraire’, *Rev. Hist. Rel.* 147 (1955), 126–129: λέγει Ἰησοῦς: οὐκ ἔστιν τεθαμμέ|νον ὃ οὐκ ἐγεροθήσεται. He dates the item to the fifth or sixth century on palaeographical grounds (127). For a photograph, see the frontispiece of H.-C. Puech, *En Quête de la Gnose II: Sur l’Évangile selon Thomas. Esquisse d’une interprétation systématique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), in which volume the article with the text is reprinted (59–62). See now especially A. Luijendijk, ‘“Jesus says: “There Is Nothing Buried That Will Not Be Raised.” A Late-Antique Shroud with Gospel of Thomas Logion 5 in Context’, *ZAC* 15 (2011), 389–410.

The overlap here is clearly with the Greek version, and not the Coptic. Unfortunately, however, although the text has been published, the location of the artefact itself is unknown to me. Puech reports that it was bought in 1953 by Roger Rémondon, and that he, Puech, then acquired it, but no-one to my knowledge claims to have seen the object thereafter.⁹³

4.7 Medieval Literature

There is a curious, and perhaps coincidental parallel to P. Oxy. I 1's ἔγειρον τὸν λίθον (GTh 30.1) in the Suda (c. 1000 CE), which is followed by the *Etymologicum Gudianum* (c. 1100).⁹⁴

From the same Greek saying, something similar to GTh 30.2's version of the Matthean *minyān καὶ ὅπου εἰς ἑστὶν μόνος, λέγω· ἐγὼ εἶμι μετ' αὐτοῦ* appears much later in words attributed to God in an Albigensian Gospel: 'Where there was one who was his little one, he would himself be with him, and where there were two likewise, and where there were three in the same manner.'⁹⁵ The same work shares the trinitarian structure of Jesus' blasphemy saying with GTh 44 and 2 *Keph.* 416:12–16/417:25–29 discussed in 4.4 above.⁹⁶

In material related to the source of the Albigensian saying, there are various parallels to the content of GTh 114, with Peter's claim about the exclusion of women from life (114.1), and Jesus' promise to make them male (114.2), so that thus transformed they have access to the kingdom (114.3). In various confessions, similar points are made:

Confessio et depositio Arnaldi Cicredi: '[the female spirits] go out from the body of the woman and are changed into men ... because no woman can enter his kingdom.'⁹⁷

93 Lujendijk, 'Late-Antique Shroud', 390.

94 For the Suda reference, see G. Bernhardt, ed. *Suidae lexicon Graece et Latine* (Halle/ Braunschweig: Schwetschki, 1853), 78, line 17. On the *Etymologicum Gudianum*, see R. Reitzenstein, 'Ein Zitat aus den Λόγια Ἰησοῦ', *ZNW* 6 (1905), 203. For the text, see E.L. de Stefani, ed. *Etymologicum Gudianum*, I.2 (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1965 [1920]), 393 line 22.

95 I. von Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters*, vol. 2 (Munich: Beck, 1890), 210; Badham & Coneybeare, 'Fragments of an Ancient (? Egyptian) Gospel', 809.

96 See Badham & Coneybeare, 'Fragments of an Ancient (? Egyptian) Gospel', 814–815.

97 Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters*, 151–152: *egressi de corpore mulieris convertentur in viros ... quod nulla mulier ... ingrederetur regnum suum*. I owe this and the subsequent references to Puech, 'Collection de paroles', 166.

William Belibasta: 'Women never enter, when they die, into the glory of paradise, but, when they die, their souls enter into the bodies of males ... they are changed into males, and God sends 18 angels to them and they bring them in to the glory of paradise.'⁹⁸

Confessio Johannis Maurini: 'No woman has entered paradise, but when women—heretical or believing—die, they are changed into men so that thus they are able to enter paradise.'⁹⁹

Confessio Petri Maurini: 'No women may enter paradise, and therefore women ... when they die are turned into men in order to be saved.'¹⁰⁰

The verbal similarities here are such as perhaps to suggest actual dependence in some indirect way.

4.8 Conclusion

It is evident here that the contemporary scholarly confusion about *Thomas* is to some extent reflected in the Protean character of *Thomas* in antiquity. The diversity of its content and its literary form clearly meant that it was especially amenable to very different groups. We have seen influence upon Manichaean literature, with *Thomas* also influencing ascetic Syrian Christianity as well as literature usually characterised as Sethian.

Might these allusions to *Thomas* also be suggestive for the illumination of its origins? As far as the question of *Thomas*'s original language is concerned, the evidence is too diverse to be of much help: we have influence even quite early on of Thomasine phraseology in works originally composed in Latin, Greek, Syriac, Coptic, as well as in Coptic, Armenian, Parthian and Sogdian translations. As far as questions of *Thomas*'s provenance are concerned, the

98 Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters*, 176–177: *mulieres nunquam intrant, quando moriuntur, in gloriam paradisi, sed, quando moriuntur, animae earum subintrant corpora masculorum ... convertuntur in homines masculos, et deus mittit eis xviii angelos, et introducuntur ad gloriam paradisi.*

99 Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters*, 191: *nulla mulier paradysum intravit, sed quando mulieres haereticas vel credentes moriuntur, convertuntur in viros, ut sic intrare possint paradysum.*

100 Döllinger, *Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters*, 219: *nulla mulier intraret paradysum, et propter hoc mulieres ... quando moriuntur convertuntur in viros, ut salventur.*

same is probably true: *Thomas* seems to have enjoyed a wide distribution rather quickly. The spread of Manichaeism meant that *Thomas* has been found in works from the Latin West to Central Asia. There is some concentration of early influence in Syria, but also evidence from Egypt as well.

Finally, we will see in the course of the commentary on individual sayings that these references also offer some assistance with the exegesis of *Thomas*. Some of the evidence here is particularly useful because the reception is often not of the Coptic, but reflects pre-Coptic Greek forms of the sayings, as in Hippolytus' probable reference to GTh 11, which makes a good deal more sense in Hippolytus' Greek than it does in our Coptic version. Similarly, we have a Greek form of part of GTh 113 in Pseudo-Macarius. Caution is needed here, as we should not suppose that these authors preserve *tout simple* the original form of *Thomas*, but the evidence should at least be borne in mind. To give some examples, we will see in the commentary that the allusion to GTh 52 in Augustine may clear up some of the difficulties in that saying, Pseudo-Macarius may help with the puzzling parable in GTh 97, and Didymus with GTh 7.

The Original Language of *Thomas*

The original language of *Thomas* began to be debated as soon as the Coptic text was discovered.¹ One of the earliest effects of this discovery was that Coptic became a candidate for the language of *Thomas*'s composition: this was proposed by Garitte, but soon refuted.² Scholars have occasionally talked about Hebrew underlying particular words or phrases, but none to my knowledge have argued for a Hebrew composition *in toto*.³ The three serious options, which have been argued for from the beginning and which are still maintained by scholars, are Western Aramaic, Syriac and Greek.

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- 1 **Bibliography:** A. Guillaumont, 'Semitismes dans les logia de Jésus retrouvés à Nag Hamâdi', *Journal Asiatique* 246 (1958), 113–123; G. Garitte, 'Les "Logoi" d'Oxyrhynque et l'apocryphe copte dit "Évangile selon Thomas"', *Muséon* 73 (1960), 151–172; A. Guillaumont, 'Les logia d'Oxyrhynchos sont-ils traduits du copte?', *Muséon* 73 (1960), 325–333; G. Garitte, 'Les "Logoi" d'Oxyrhynque sont traduits du copte', *Muséon* 73 (1960), 335–349; K. Kuhn, 'Some Observations on the Coptic Gospel according to Thomas', *Muséon* 73 (1960), 317–323; P. Nagel, 'Erwägungen zum Thomas-Evangelium', in F. Altheim & R. Stiehl, eds. *Die Araber in der alten Welt*, vol. V, part 2 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1969), 368–392; J.E. Ménard, 'Les Problèmes de l'Évangile selon Thomas', in M. Krause, ed. *Essays on the Nag Hammadi Texts in Honour of Alexander Böhlig* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 59–73; J.E. Ménard, 'La tradition synoptique et l'Évangile selon Thomas', in F. Paschke, J. Dummer, J. Irmscher & K. Treu, eds., *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), 411–426 (415–417); A. Guillaumont, 'Les semitismes dans l'Évangile selon Thomas: essai de classement', in R. van den Broek & M.J. Vermaseren, eds. *Studies in Gnosticism and Hellenistic Religions Presented to Gilles Quispel on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Leiden: Brill, 1981), 190–204; A. Böhlig, 'Das Problem aramäischer Elemente in den Texten von Nag Hammadi', in F. Junge, ed. *Studien zu Sprache und Religion Ägyptens. Band 2: Religion* (FS W. Westendorf) (Göttingen: F. Junge, 1984), 983–1011; reprinted in A. Böhlig, *Gnosis und Synkretismus: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur spätantiken Religionsgeschichte. 2. Teil* (WUNT 48; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989), 414–453; Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian*; N. Perrin, 'NHC II,2 and the Oxyrhynchus Fragments (P.Oxy 1, 654, 655): Overlooked Evidence for a Syriac Gospel of Thomas', *VC* 58 (2004), 138–151; DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 14–15 and *passim*; N. Perrin, 'The Aramaic Origins of the Gospel of Thomas—Revisited', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 50–59; Gathercole, *Composition*, 19–125.
- 2 The criticisms of Haenchen, 'Literatur zum Thomasevangelium (I)', 157–160, are particularly effective.
- 3 Marcovich, 'Textual Criticism on the Gospel of Thomas', 53–74 (59 on GTh 3).

I will not repeat here how the discussion has unfolded, and this section as a whole is an abbreviation of a longer treatment elsewhere.⁴ I will confine the discussion here to a survey of the problems attending Semitic theories of *Thomas's* composition on the one hand, and the positive evidence for a Greek original on the other.

5.1 Problems with Semitic Theories of *Thomas's* Composition

The problems with Semitic theories can be seen at both the general and the particular level. Arguments in favour of Western Aramaic or Syriac are usually based on what is deemed to be a critical mass of Semitisms: so, for example, DeConick prints a double-page table in the Introduction to her commentary, listing 47 sayings out of 114 attesting possible Semitisms;⁵ Perrin concludes that a retroversion into Syriac reveals 502 catchwords.⁶ If correct, these would be almost incontrovertible evidence.

At the general level, however, there are considerable methodological problems with identifying Semitisms underneath our Greek and Coptic texts of *Thomas*. Many Semitisms of course are insignificant as elements in an argument for a composition in a Semitic language, as they are elements of biblical idiom, or 'Septuagintalisms', or Jewish idiom which exists in various different languages.⁷ One needs to be sure that the phrase in question is not merely Greek or Coptic idiom, and conversely that the phrase can be Aramaic or Syriac from the period of purported composition: this is especially difficult with Syriac, where we have only a few inscriptions from the first two centuries CE.⁸ The most compelling instances of Semitisms are those where we can identify mistranslation (or simply overly wooden translation), or *divergent* translations: i.e. a Semitic original having been translated one way in the Synoptic Gospels and a different way in *Thomas*. Even in these cases, however, detecting such phenomena is extremely difficult.⁹ Torrey remarked a century ago that identification of mistranslation is 'immensely valuable in the rare cases where it is convincing: there is no other internal proof of translation which is so immediately cogent', but immediately added: 'But the need of caution is

4 Gathercole, *Composition*, 19–125.

5 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 14–15.

6 Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian*.

7 Gathercole, *Composition*, 29–32.

8 Gathercole, *Composition*, 25–29, 38–39.

9 Gathercole, *Composition*, 32–38.

greater here than anywhere else. The more experience one has in this field, the more plainly he sees the constant danger of blundering ... Hence it happens in nine cases out of ten that renewed study of the “mistranslations” which we have discovered shows us that there was no translation at all, or else that it was quite correct.¹⁰ The problem here—as also with supposed catchwords—is that there is an awful lot of room for scholarly guesswork without controls. The difficulty can be illustrated especially from GTh 61, as we will see, with the explanations given for the statement that Jesus comes ‘as from one’ (ϰωϰ εβολ ϰ̅̅̅ ογ̅̅̅).

Moving to the particular level, we can explore GTh 61 among a small sample of others.¹¹

GTh 8.3. In this parable Matthew’s fisherman *collected* the good fish (συν-έλεξαν τὰ καλά in Matt. 13.48), while that of *Thomas chose* the large fish (αϰ-ωτπ ἡππνοϰ ἡτβ̅̅̅). Some argue that ‘choosing’ and ‘collecting’ derive from Aramaic/Syriac *gb*, which can mean both.¹² The difference in the verbs, however, is demanded by the two quite different stories: Matthew’s parable concerns God’s vindication of the *plural* righteous (hence *gathering*), whereas *Thomas* has a parable about choosing a single fish (in which a verb to ‘gather’ would be nonsensical).

GTh 13.8. Here a mistranslation is alleged, in a reference to fire (masculine in Coptic) burning with a feminine singular prefix on the verb (ογκωϰτ ... ἡρωϰ), on the grounds that fire in Aramaic (ʿšt, or *nwr*) is feminine, unlike Coptic κωϰτ (masc.) and Greek πῦρ (neut.).¹³ However, if it is true that the feminine subject of the Coptic verb is the result of interference from the source language, one could equally explain this on the basis of Greek, perhaps by πυρηνή (‘fire’), or by the common biblical word φλόξ (‘flame’, which would work well in the context).

10 C.C. Torrey, ‘The Translations Made from the Original Aramaic Gospels’, in D.G. Lyon & G.F. Moore, eds. *Studies in the History of Religions, Presented to Crawford Howell Toy* (New York: Macmillan, 1912), 269–317 (283, 284).

11 These are excerpted from the treatment in Gathercole, *Composition*, 43–104.

12 For Quispel’s arguments and (negative) evaluation of them, see T. Baarda, ‘Chose or Collected’, *HTR* 84 (1991), 373–397 (384). Guillaumont, ‘Les semitismes dans l’Évangile selon Thomas’, 197–198, offers the Syriac on the basis of the verb *gb* being used in the Syriac versions of Matt. 13.48; see also Baarda, ‘Chose or Collected’, 386, although he is very tentative about *Thomas* reflecting an Aramaic/Syriac substratum here; cf. Perrin, ‘The Aramaic Origins of the *Gospel of Thomas*—Revisited’, 56.

13 Guillaumont, ‘Les semitismes dans l’Évangile selon Thomas’, 196; DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 15, 84.

GTh 21.5. One case which seems strikingly plausible is the curious phrase ‘his house of his kingdom’ (πεφνηι ῑντε τεφμη̄ντερο), with the double-possessive apparently a compelling instance of a Semitism.¹⁴ However, among other difficulties with the theory, this might simply be a Copticism (cf. the examples in *Exegesis on the Soul* 132,1; 133,13–14; and Prov. 2.1 bo).

GTh 39.1. This woe condemns those who ‘receive’ or ‘take’ (ⲁⲓ) the key of knowledge, whereas the Lukan parallel has them ‘taking away’ (αἴρειν) the key. Guillaumont, Quispel, DeConick and Perrin see this as evidence for a divergent translation of an Aramaic original.¹⁵ However, it must be questioned whether the difference between Luke’s Greek and *Thomas’s* Coptic is sufficient to warrant appeal to a hypothetical *tertium*. The verbs ⲁⲓ (a standard equivalent for Greek αἴρω) and ⲁⲓ frequently appear as variants for each other.¹⁶ This is hardly surprising, given that the two Coptic verbs have overlapping semantic fields. The divergence is not a considerable one.

GTh 61.2. As mentioned above, Jesus is said here to come (literally) ‘as from one’ (ⲗⲱϥ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉ̄ⲛ ⲟⲩⲁ). Some see this as textually corrupt, but there are also two equally ingenious proposals for both Greek and Aramaic *Vorlagen*: either ὡς ξένος → ὡς ἕξ ἑνός → ⲗⲱϥ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉ̄ⲛ ⲟⲩⲁ because Jesus is a guest (ξένος) of Salome, or *mn ḥd’, mḥd’* (‘suddenly’) → ⲉⲃⲟⲗ ⲉ̄ⲛ ⲟⲩⲁ, hence Salome’s question of surprise.¹⁷ On the other hand, the Coptic might make sense as it stands, given that according to *Excerpta Theodoti* 36.1, Theodotus’s Valentinians say that our angels were put forth in unity and ὡς ἀπὸ ἑνὸς προελθόντες.¹⁸

GTh 100.1. Scholars have suggested that ‘tribute penny’ in the Synoptics became *Thomas’s* ‘gold coin’ because both go back to Aramaic/ Syriac *dynr*.¹⁹ There are difficulties with this, however. The earliest evidence cited by Guey for this is a *bilingual* Aramaic-Greek inscription from 193 CE. Additionally, in

14 H. Quecke, “‘Sein Haus seines Königsreiches.’ Zum Thomasevangelium 85. 9f, *Muséon* 76 (1963), 47–53; Guillaumont, ‘Les semitismes dans l’Évangile selon Thomas’, 195.

15 Quispel, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the New Testament’, 202; Guillaumont, ‘Les semitismes dans l’Évangile selon Thomas’, 199; DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 157, appears to allow either of Guillaumont’s or Quispel’s proposals; Perrin, ‘Aramaic Origins of the *Gospel of Thomas*’, 56–57.

16 For examples, see Crum 620a–b, 748a.

17 See commentary below for a fuller discussion of the scholarship.

18 I. Dunderberg, ‘*Thomas’s* I-sayings and the Gospel of John’, in R. Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 33–64 (51–53).

19 J. Guey, ‘Comment le “denier de César” de l’Évangile a-t-il pu devenir une pièce d’or?’, *Bulletin de la Société française de Numismatique* 15 (1960), 478–479, followed by DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 274.

this particular case, the inscription does not take it for granted that the denarii are gold, but rather needs to specify this by referring to ‘three hundred old *gold denarii*’ (χρυσᾶ παλαιὰ δηνάρια τριακόσια/ *dnryn dy dhb* ‘*tyqyn tltm’h*).²⁰ As such, the argument that a gold dinar/ denarius can only go back to a Semitic language is left somewhat exposed.²¹ There is a problem of anachronism here in the idea that an Aramaic *dynr* would naturally be translated into Greek in *Thomas* as ‘gold coin’. There is also considerable variability in how currency is translated in versions of the Bible.

These six examples illustrate different aspects of the problem: (1) in GTh 8.3, the parable is actually very different from Matthew’s version, and so it is impossible to see the two parables as both literal, but divergent, translations of a shared Semitic source; (2) in GTh 13, a Greek explanation for the oddity in the Coptic is just as readily available as an Aramaic/ Syriac one; (3) the oddity (for English readers) in GTh 21.5 is explicable as a Copticism; (4) GTh 39.1 is an instance of an alleged divergent translation where the divergence in reality is so small as to be insignificant; (5) in GTh 61.2, the two apparently compelling explanations of mistranslations cannot possibly both be correct, and may well indeed both be redundant since the Coptic could make sense as it stands; (6) in GTh 100 the explanation relies on an anachronistic vocabulary of the Aramaic/ Syriac language.

5.2 Positive Evidence for an Original Greek Thomas

Even if the evidence for a Semitic composition is not strong, is there any positive evidence that the original was Greek? Six points can be made briefly here.²²

Firstly, we can apply here the evidence, adduced for a different purpose earlier (§ 2: ‘A Comparison of the Greek and Coptic Texts’), of the correspondences between the Greek vocabulary of the Oxyrhynchus fragments and the

20 *CIS* II/3/1 3948 (pp. 121–122). It is not always the case that this is specified, however: see the discussions of the *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*, in which it is probably the case that the 500,000 denarii are gold (because we are dealing with the ransom price of a whole army): see J. Guey, ‘Autour des *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*: 1. Deniers (d’ or) et deniers d’ or (de compte) anciens’, *Syria* 38 (1961), 261–274; T. Pekáry, ‘Autour des *Res Gestae Divi Saporis*: 2. Le “tribut” aux perses et les finances de Philippe l’arabe’, *Syria* 38 (1961), 275–283.

21 For further, more detailed criticism, see S. Witetschek, ‘Ein Goldstück für Caesar? Anmerkungen zu EvThom 100’, *Apocrypha* 19 (2008), 103–122.

22 For a more substantial discussion, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 105–125.

Graeco-Coptic words employed in the Nag Hammadi text. We see there that of the 27 Greek loan-words in the sections of the Coptic paralleled in the Greek fragments, 24 are the same in Greek (e.g. in GTh 2.2 ροταν and ὄταν, in GTh 3.2 ρη̄ θαλασσα and τῆς θαλά[σσης], etc.); the only exceptions are three cases of the translation of particles. This striking level of correspondence means at the very least that a Greek *Vorlage* to our Coptic text is a near certainty (although this is different from proving a Greek *original composition*).

Secondly, we find in the Coptic manuscript a considerable density of Greek loan-words in the whole of the text. This sort of density can also be found in Coptic compositions, but there are also aspects of the Graeco-Coptic vocabulary which merit comment as indicative of, again, a Greek *Vorlage*. These include elements which are unusual in Coptic compositions, such as ΜΕΝ ... ΔΕ ... (GTh 73) and ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ (GTh 21). The latter is particularly noteworthy, because pronouns are sometimes said to be elements of Greek which are not found in Coptic.²³ Also unusual are the inflected Greek forms in 14.3 (κακον), 45.2 (αγαθον), 45.3–4 *tris* (πονηρον), and especially, in 87.1, ταλαπωρον. The implication of these second and third points is that to suppose a direct translation from a Semitic language into Coptic (as required e.g. by the Semitic explanation of GTh 13.8 discussed above) is extremely difficult.

In addition to these two points, which are strongly suggestive of a Greek *Vorlage* to our Coptic manuscript, the remaining observations go further and point in the direction of an *original composition* in Greek.

Thirdly, then, we can consider the testimonia to *Thomas*, and the material evidence of the manuscripts. The fact that we have three Greek fragments and a Coptic manuscript (with Greek being the language of origin of many early works preserved in Coptic manuscripts) means that there is a *prima facie* case for Greek as the original language of *Thomas*. Moreover, as noted in the conclusion to Introduction, §3, above, the fact that the first six testimonia (up to the middle of the fourth century) are in Greek is also suggestive.

Fourthly, we have the fact that the overwhelming majority of ‘Gospels’ from the period were composed in Greek. (Later, Gospels began to be written in Latin and Coptic, but these are not really relevant to the time-frame of *Thomas*.²⁴)

23 W.A. Girgis, ‘Greek Loan Words in Coptic (I)’, *Bulletin de la Société d’Archéologie Copte* 17 (1964), 63–73 (63); cf. the comment on *Thomas* by H.P. Houghton, ‘The Coptic Gospel of Thomas’, *Aegyptus* 43 (1963), 107–140 (136): ‘Pronouns appear to be the form most rarely borrowed.’ In fact, the ΤΟΥΤΟ in this ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ is the only case.

24 E.g. the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*, composed in Latin.

As far as Mark, Luke and John are concerned, the consensus now is for Greek originals; the only debate has been over a possible Hebrew Matthew. The other works to which *Thomas* is most closely related are also unanimously held to be Greek: the *Gospel of Judas*,²⁵ the *Gospel of Peter*,²⁶ and the *Gospel of Mary*;²⁷ the *Gospel of Philip* is almost always taken to have been written in Greek, despite its interest in Syrian themes and provenance.²⁸ The same may well be true of P. Oxy. V 840, for which Kruger assumes a Greek original but suggests a Syrian provenance.²⁹ Even the corpus of so-called “Jewish-Christian” Gospels is by no means a Semitic-language collection. As far as the Ebionite Gospel is concerned, Epiphanius notes that the work twists the true diet of John the Baptist from ἀκροίδεες (‘locusts’) to a honeyed ἔγχερις (a cake), a misprision that makes best sense in Greek (*Pan.* 30.13.4–5).³⁰ The *Gospel of the Hebrews* is known in the second and third centuries in Greek, and only later in a Semitic language. The earliest authors to refer to it are Greek authors based in Alexandria: Clement, Origen, and Didymus seem to know it in Greek.³¹ About a Gospel of the Nazoraeans (if such a work distinct from the other two Gospels existed) hardly anything can be said with any certainty.³² Of the Infancy Gospels, the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* was sometimes regarded as a Syriac composition,

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- 25 See e.g. R. Kasser, M. Meyer & G. Wurst, eds. *The Gospel of Judas* (Washington DC: National Geographic, 2006), 11.
- 26 See e.g. H.B. Swete, *The Gospel of St. Peter: The Text in Greek and English with Introduction, Notes and Indices* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005 [1893]), xliiii.
- 27 Tuckett, *Gospel of Mary*, 10–11; K. King, *The Gospel of Mary Magdala* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2003), 8; A. Pasquier, *L'Évangile selon Marie (BG 1)* (BCNH 10; Québec: Laval, 1983), 2.
- 28 J.E. Ménard, *L'Évangile selon Philippe: Introduction, texte, traduction, commentaire* (Strasbourg: Faculté de Théologie Catholique, 1967), 33–35, suggests that the *Vorlage* of the Coptic text at least is Greek, and comments that the work originated in a ‘milieu syriaque’ (34) and an ‘ambiance syriaque’ (35), but makes no mention of a Syriac-language original. W. Isenberg, ‘Tractate 3: The Gospel according to Philip: Introduction’, in Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7 (Volume 1)*, 131–139 (134). He is followed by P. Foster, ‘The Gospel of Philip’, in idem, ed. *The Non-Canonical Gospels* (New York/ London: T&T Clark, 2008), 68–83 (70 n. 24).
- 29 T.J. Kraus, M.J. Kruger & T. Nicklas, *Gospel Fragments* (OECTG; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 167 (in reference to Syria), and 168 (in reference to the ‘Greek original’).
- 30 Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 51.
- 31 It is only in the fourth century, with Jerome, that we have reference to the work as written in Hebrew: Jerome apparently had to translate it himself into Greek and Latin (*Vir. Ill.* 2).
- 32 Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 37.

but is not any longer.³³ The *Protevangelium of James* is equally clearly a Greek composition.³⁴ The *Armenian Gospel of the Infancy* has been suggested as a Syriac work, but has not yet been the subject of a study.³⁵ A possible analogy to an Aramaic *Thomas* might be Q, although—even leaving aside the question of its existence—its original character is much debated. Additionally there is τὸ Συριακόν associated with Hegesippus (*HE* 4.22.8), though this epithet could be geographical or ethnic rather than linguistic. Overall, where we are dealing with known extant texts for which we have enough information on which to draw reasonably secure conclusions, the evidence points almost without exception to Greek originals. The Gospel genre is overwhelmingly a Greek-language genre.

Fifthly, a similar kind of argument can be made for the fact that the *Gospel of Thomas* is extant in Nag Hammadi Codex II, which is essentially a (translation of a) Greek collection (as is probably the whole Nag Hammadi corpus). The fact that *Thomas* appears as part of an originally Greek Nag Hammadi corpus is circumstantial evidence for a Greek original. Some scholars have thought that there may be exceptions,³⁶ but by and large the majority accepts a pan-Greek corpus. Indeed, one frequently encounters such comments as: ‘There is no reason to believe that any of the Nag Hammadi tractates were originally written in Coptic or that any were translated from a language other than Greek.’³⁷

Finally, the closeness of our Greek *Thomas* to its parallels in the Synoptic Gospels and the *Gospel of the Hebrews* suggests that, like them, *Thomas* was composed of tradition formulated in Greek. The evidence is as follows:

33 A. Chartrand-Burke, ‘The *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*’, in Foster, ed. *Non-Canonical Gospels*, 126–138 (132 and n. 23). Assumed in R.F. Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge, 1995), 99, in his reference to texts ‘both Greek and versional’.

34 Assumed in Hock, *Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas*, 10, and esp. 12.

35 A. Terian, ed. *The Armenian Gospel of the Infancy. With Three Early Versions of the Protevangelium of James* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), xi, xxii–xxvi.

36 See the discussion of the views of Fecht (in favour of a Coptic original) and Nagel (a Syriac original) on the *Gospel of Truth* in J.E. Ménard, *L’Évangile de vérité* (NHS 2; Leiden: Brill, 1972), 9–17 (12, on the point about the word-plays); W. Beltz, ‘Die Apokalypse des Adam (NHC V.5)’, *Nag Hammadi Deutsch*, 2.433–441 (434), argues for an Aramaic original of *Ap. Adam*.

37 F. Wisse, ‘Introduction to Codex VII’, in B.A. Pearson, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex VII* (NHS 30; Leiden/ New York/ Köln, 1996), 11 n. 37.

<i>G. Heb. (Strom. 2.9.45.5)</i>	<i>G. Heb. (Strom. 5.14.96.3)</i>	Greek GTh 2
	οὐ παύσεται ὁ ζητῶν,	μὴ παυσάσθω ὁ ζη[τῶν τοῦ ζητεῖν
	ἕως ἂν εὕρη·	ἕως ἂν] εὕρη
	εὐρών δὲ	καὶ ὅταν εὕρ[η]
	θαμβηθήσεται,	θαμβηθήσεται,]
ὁ θαυμάσας βασιλεύσει,	θαμβηθεὶς δὲ βασιλεύσει,	[καὶ θαμ]βηθεὶς βασιλεύσ(ει)
καὶ ὁ βασιλεύσας ἀναπαύσεται.	βασιλεύσας δὲ ἐπαναπαύσεται.	κα[ὶ] βασιλεύσας ἀναπα[ύ]σεται.

Moving to the Synoptic tradition, we first encounter a parallel in GTh 4:

Mk 10.31	Matt. 19.30	Greek GTh 4
		ὅτι
πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται	πολλοὶ δὲ ἔσονται	πολλοὶ ἔσονται
πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι	πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι	π[ρῶτοι ἔσχατοι]
καὶ [οἱ] ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι.	καὶ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι.	[καὶ] οἱ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι.

Here we find a sequence of eight words identical with Matthew and Mark with the exception in *Thomas* of the omission of δέ, which is a consequence of the introduction of ὅτι. By contrast in the next case, in saying 5, the extant text which survives corresponds more closely (indeed, exactly, as far as it survives) to Luke:

Mk 4.22	Lk. 8.17	Greek GTh 5
οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν κρυπτὸν	οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν κρυπτὸν	[οὐ γὰρ ἔσ]τιν κρυπτὸν
ἐὰν μὴ ἴνα φανερωθῇ.	ὁ οὐ φανερόν γενήσεται.	ὁ οὐ φανε[ρόν γενήσεται].

In the first visible text in P. Oxy. I 1, there are thirteen words in sequence identical to the text of Luke in Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus and some other versions:

Lk. 6.42 (P ⁷⁵ +W = NA ^{27,28})	Lk. 6.42 (ⲬAC go etc.)	Greek GTh 26
καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις τὸ κάρφος	καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις ἐκβαλεῖν τὸ κάρφος	καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις ἐκβαλεῖν τὸ κάρφος
τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου ἐκβαλεῖν.	τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.	τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.

In addition to the sequence of words is the fact that διαβλέπειν and κάρφος are quite rare, the *TLG* indicating only 7 and 15 instances respectively of them before the first century CE.³⁸ We then have two sayings with parallels to the Synoptic tradition without so great a level of correspondence:

Mk 6.4	Matt. 13.57	Lk. 4.24	Jn 4.44	Greek GTh 31
οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ.	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι ...	οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ.	προφήτης ἐν τῇ ἰδίᾳ πατρίδι τιμὴν οὐκ ἔχει.	οὐκ ἔστιν δεκτός προφήτης ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτ[ο]ῦ.

38 Noticing κάρφος was apparently significant for Grenfell and Hunt identifying P. Oxy. I 1 as related to the NT gospels. See M. Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels: The Case for Thomas's Familiarity with the Synoptics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 28.

There is no exact overlap here but there are some distinctive items of vocabulary shared in common: *πατρίς* appears in all four versions, and *δεκτός* in *Thomas* and Luke. In GTh 32, there is again loose correspondence between *Thomas* and its Synoptic parallel, but with the presence in both of some of the same Greek forms (*δύναται, πόλις, κρυβήναι, ὄρους*):

Matt. 5.14	Greek GTh 32
οὐ δύναται πόλις κρυβήναι ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη.	πόλις οἰκοδομημένη ἐπ' ἄκρον [ὄ]ρους ὑψηλοῦ{ς} καὶ ἐστηριγμένη οὔτε πε[σ]εῖν δύναται οὔτε κρυ[β]ήναι.

One might also note saying 39, although it is very fragmentary:

Matt. 10.16b	Greek GTh 39.3	Coptic GTh 39.3
γίνεσθε οὖν φρόνιμοι	[ὑμεῖς] δὲ γει[νεσθε] [φρόνι]μοι	ⲛⲧⲱⲧⲛ̅ ⲁⲉ ⲱⲱⲡⲉ ⲛ̅ⲫⲣⲟⲛⲓⲙⲟⲥ
ὡς οἱ ὄφεις	ὡ[ς ὄφεις]	ⲛ̅Ⲭⲉ ⲛ̅ⲛⲏⲣⲟⲩ
καὶ ἀκέραιοι	[καὶ ἀ]κέραι[οι]	ⲁⲮⲱ ⲛ̅ⲁⲕⲉⲣⲁⲓⲟⲥ
ὡς αἱ περιστέραί	[ὡς περιστε]ρα[ί]	ⲛ̅Ⲭⲉ ⲛ̅ⲛ̅Ⲭⲣⲟⲙⲡⲉ

In places in this saying where there is parallel material, it is strikingly close. In spite of the lacunae in Greek *Thomas*, the adjectives are almost certainly the same across all versions, and the variations very minor.

It is evident, then, that especially in the cases of GTh 2, 4, 5 and 26 we have striking correspondences not only in the vocabulary used but also in the inflections. In some cases this extends to a number of words in sequence. It should be stressed that the point here is not to argue for the secondary character of *Thomas* over against the *Gospel of the Hebrews* or the Synoptic Gospels. The point is rather that the shared material suggests that *Thomas* incorporated traditionally known Greek forms of these sayings. It is of course

not impossible that this happened at a second stage, viz. that of a translation from a Semitic *Vorlage*, but in that case one must suppose a very high degree of assimilation to pre-existing versions.

In sum, these six factors mean first that a Greek *Vorlage* to the Coptic version of *Thomas* is a virtual certainty, with proposals for a translation into Coptic from another language being highly speculative. It is more difficult to prove that the Greek is the original and that no Semitic text lies behind it: this would require proving a negative. We have noted, however, that (1) the existence of Greek witnesses and the absence of Semitic manuscripts at least lays the burden of proof strongly on proposals for Aramaic/ Syriac originals, and that both (4) *Thomas's* genre, and (5) the company which it keeps are strongly suggestive of a Greek original. Moreover, (6) the close parallels in phraseology between the Greek texts of *Thomas* and other Gospels are perhaps the strongest evidence for the incorporation of Greek tradition at the stage of *Thomas's* composition. Overall, then, both on negative grounds (in the criticisms of the Semitic hypotheses) and on positive grounds, there are strong reasons to hold to a Greek original of *Thomas*.

The Provenance of *Thomas*

We move now to *Thomas*'s provenance.¹ The majority of scholars place *Thomas* in Syria, a minority propose Egypt.² We shall examine these views in turn.

6.1 Syria

The great majority of scholars state either that Edessa, or Syria more generally, should be regarded as *Thomas*'s provenance.³ This was first suggested by H.-C. Puech quite tentatively ('Peut-être ... soupçonner ... pourrait être ...').⁴ It was taken up much more strongly, and with a clearer specification of the city of Edessa, in a number of publications by Quispel,⁵ who considered it 'certain that

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- 1 **Bibliography:** L.W. Barnard, 'The Origins and Emergence of the Church in Edessa during the First Two Centuries A.D.', *VC* 22 (1968), 161–175; B. Ehlers (Aland), 'Kann das Thomasevangelium aus Edessa stammen? Ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte des Christentums in Edessa', *NovT* 12 (1970), 284–317; A.F.J. Klijn, 'Christianity in Edessa and the Gospel of Thomas: On Barbara Ehlers, "Kann das Thomasevangelium aus Edessa stammen?"', *NovT* 14 (1972), 70–77; B. Dehandschutter, 'Le lieu d'origine de l'Évangile selon Thomas', *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica* 6–7 (1975–1976), 125–131; J.-M. Sevrin, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas: paroles de Jésus et révélation gnostique', *Revue théologique de Louvain* 8 (1977), 265–292 (273–276); M.R. Desjardins, 'Where was the Gospel of Thomas Written?', *Toronto Journal of Theology* 8 (1992), 121–133; Piovanelli, 'Thomas in Edessa? Another Look at the Original Setting of the *Gospel of Thomas*', 443–461; S.J. Patterson, 'The View from across the Euphrates', *HTR* 104 (2011), 411–431.
 - 2 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas*, 8, argues that the core of *Thomas* was composed in Jerusalem, but this has not won many supporters.
 - 3 D.E. Aune, 'Assessing the Historical Value of the Apocryphal Jesus Traditions: A Critique of Conflicting Methodologies', in J. Schröter & R. Brucker, eds. *Der historische Jesus: Tendenzen und Perspektiven der gegenwärtigen Forschung* (BZNW 114; Berlin/ New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2002), 243–272 (256); Barnard, 'Origins and Emergence', 165–166; R. Uro, *Thomas: Seeking the Historical Context of the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2003), 26–30, 137.
 - 4 H.-C. Puech, 'Une collection des paroles récemment découverte en Égypte', *RHR* 153 (1958), 129–133 (130).
 - 5 G. Quispel, 'The Latin Tatian or the Gospel of Thomas in Limburg', *JBL* 88 (1969), 321–330 (327); idem, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of the Hebrews', 378; idem, 'Syrian Thomas and the Syrian Macarius', 234: Edessa.

this apocryphal Gospel originated in Edessa!⁶ As an established Syriacist, Drijvers added considerable weight to the Edessa hypothesis by his support for it.⁷ More recently, one can mention Klauck ('Syria'), Plisch ('Osrhoene/ E. Syria'),⁸ Marjanen ('Syria, perhaps Edessa'),⁹ or again with more specificity, Pearson and Puig, as advocates of Edessa.¹⁰ Patterson has used the Edessene hypothesis as an explanation for the contrasts between *Thomas* and the canonical Gospels.¹¹

The principal arguments for a Syrian provenance are fourfold: (1) the Syrian character of the name 'Judas Thomas'; (2) the earliest Syrian reception of *Thomas*; (3) *Thomas*'s affinities with Syriac text-forms; (4) the affinity of *Thomas* with Syriac literature such as the *Odes of Solomon* and the *Acts of Thomas*. (Some would add to these the composition of *Thomas* in Syriac.) These can briefly be explained.

The Name Judas Thomas

The Coptic version of *Thomas* records the name 'Didymus Judas Thomas' in the Prologue, and although P. Oxy. IV 654 is fragmentary at this point, the corresponding Greek is usually taken to refer to Judas Thomas.¹² Klijn and Drijvers are typical in arguing that this particular form of the name in *Thomas* points in the direction of a Syrian provenance.¹³ This double name 'Judas

6 G. Quispel, 'Gospel of Thomas Revisited', in J. van Oort, ed. *Gnostica, Judaica, Catholica: Collected Essays of Gilles Quispel* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 175–225 (192); Perrin, *Thomas: The Other Gospel*, 80; Edessa is 'virtually indisputable'.

7 H.J.W. Drijvers, 'Edessa und das jüdische Christentum', *VC* 24 (1970), 4–33 (17).

8 Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 108; U.-K. Plisch, *The Gospel of Thomas: Original Text with Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 19–22.

9 A. Marjanen, *The Gospel of Thomas: Original Text with Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 37.

10 B.A. Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism: Traditions and Literature* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 267; Puig, *Un Jesús desconocido*, 128.

11 Patterson, 'The View from across the Euphrates'.

12 On the names, see A.F.J. Klijn, 'John XIV 22 and the Name Judas Thomas', in (no editor), *Studies in John. Presented to Professor J.N. Sevenster on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 88–96; J.J. Gunther, 'The Meaning and Origin of the Name Judas Thomas', *Muséon* 93 (1980), 113–148; M. Janssen, "'Evangelium des Zwillinges?'" Das Thomasevangelium als Thomas-Schrift', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 222–248 (esp. 196–204), as well as the discussion of the *incipit* in the main body of the commentary below.

13 Klijn, 'Christianity in Edessa', 76–77; H.J.W. Drijvers, 'Facts and Problems in Early Syriac-

Thomas' appears throughout *Acts of Thomas*, as well as in the *Book of Thomas the Contender* (NH II 138,2), in the Curetonian Syriac of John 14.22, and the Abgar correspondence as preserved in Eusebius (*HE* 1.13.11):

Jn 14.22 P75 etc.	Ἰούδας οὐχ ὁ Ἰσκαριώτης
Jn 14.22 D	Ἰούδας οὐχ ὁ ἀπὸ Καρυωτου
Jn 14.22 syr ^s	<i>thwm'</i> (Lewis, Klijn) / <i>t'wm'</i> (Kiraz, Williams)
Jn 14.22 syr ^c	<i>yhwd' t'wm'</i>
<i>Ac. Thom.</i>	Ἰούδας ὁ καὶ Θωμάς ¹⁴
Abgar corr.	Ἰούδας ὁ καὶ Θωμάς
P. Oxy. IV 654	[Ἰούδας ὁ] καὶ Θωμά(ς)
Coptic Thomas	ΔΙΔΥΜΟΣ ἸΟΥΔΑΣ ΘΩΜΑΣ
<i>Thom. Cont.</i>	ἸΟΥΔΑΣ ΘΩΜΑΣ

In contrast to the Abgar correspondence, and the *Gospel* and *Acts of Thomas*, Papias, Irenaeus, Clement, Hippolytus and Origen use the simple form 'Thomas'.¹⁵ Despite the questionable attribution of the *Book of Thomas the Contender* to Syria, there is a pattern here. One might, however, set against this the fact that names might very easily travel, but it does not appear that this name has travelled far. One notable point is that when Eusebius is quoting from the Abgar correspondence, he cites the name Ἰούδας ὁ καὶ Θωμάς, but elsewhere only uses Θωμάς or Θωμάς (ὁ) Δίδυμος.

The Earliest Reception of Thomas

The arguments on the basis of the earliest reception of *Thomas* most often draw attention to the use of *Thomas* in the *Acts of Thomas*, *Acts of John* and the *Gospel of Philip*.¹⁶ This argument is not secure, however. Although the case

speaking Christianity', *SecCent* 2 (1982), 157–175 (158), noting that the name Didymus Judas Thomas is 'characteristic of and restricted to' Syrian literature; cf. also Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren in Thomasevangelium*, 19.

14 Some of this evidence is disputed by Klijn, who argues that the earliest form of the *Acts of Thomas* has the name Judas, rather than Thomas (John XIV 22 and the Name Judas Thomas', 92).

15 This is a much better comparison than that of Koester: 'For control we can refer to the non-Edessene *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, in which the writer is called "Thomas, the Israelite (Philosopher)". As noted above in § 3, however, this attribution of *IGT* to Thomas is very late. See Chartrand-Burke, *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, 118, 249, 270.

16 E.H. Pagels, 'Response to Stephen Patterson', Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature 2008.

for the influence of *Thomas* on the *Acts* is strong, the early reception of *Thomas* is far wider. As we have seen in §1 ('Manuscripts'), §3 ('Named Testimonia') and §4 ('Early References') above, at the same time as *Thomas*'s influence upon the *Acts*, there is also early evidence for *Thomas* in (a) Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy. I 1; IV 654; IV 655); (b) Rome (Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.7.20–21); (c) the unknown location of Hippolytus's Naassenes, (d) Caesarea (Origen), as well as in the places of origin of the *Gospel of Philip* and the *Acts of Thomas*, and of some of the earliest Manichaean literature. As a result, the earliest reception of *Thomas* is too diffuse to enable us to draw conclusions about provenance.

Affinities of Thomas and Syrian Text-Forms

Various scholars have noted parallels peculiar to *Thomas* and the Syriac versions of the Gospels. Quispel, Guillaumont and DeConick refer, for example, to GTh 45 sharing the phrase 'which is in his heart' with Matt. 12.35 syr^s and syr^c (ⲉⲧⲉⲛ ⲛⲉⲓⲁⲛⲧ, *dblbn*).¹⁷ Snodgrass notes that GTh 65 shares with Mk 12.1–5 (syr^s) and Lk. 20.12 (syr^c) only two servants.¹⁸ A number of similar examples could be adduced (DeConick has provided extensive lists of parallels in her commentary), and they may suggest some sort of common milieu, although this needs to be balanced with possible links between *Thomas* and other text-forms.¹⁹

Affinities with Other Syrian Literature

Perhaps the principal argument used for *Thomas*'s connection to Syria is its theological similarities to other works associated with the area, particular in those works with an ascetical or mystical bent. These include earlier literature such as the *Odes of Solomon*,²⁰ Tatian's *Oratio*,²¹ the *Acts of Thomas*,²² as well

17 G. Quispel, 'Some Remarks on the Gospel of Thomas', *NTS* 5 (1958–1959), 276–290 (286); similarly, Guillaumont, 'Les sémitismes dans l'Évangile selon Thomas: essai de classement', 197; DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 169.

18 K. Snodgrass, 'The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: Is the Gospel of Thomas Version the Original?', *NTS* 21 (1975), 142–144 (143).

19 See e.g. Quispel, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas et le "Texte Occidental"', 204–215. As Turner puts it: 'we should think rather of a more widely diffused textual tradition dating from the middle of the second century or slightly earlier' (Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 26).

20 A.F.J. Klijn, 'Das Thomasevangelium und das altsyrische Christentum', *VC* 15 (1961), 146–159 (153–154); Klijn, 'Christianity in Edessa and the Gospel of Thomas', 77; Desjardins, 'Where was the Gospel of Thomas Written?', 124–125; Uro, *Thomas*, 29. Gunther, 'Judas Thomas', 137–138 even sees influence from *Odes upon Thomas*.

21 Patterson, 'View from across the Euphrates', 420.

22 Klijn, 'Thomasevangelium und das altsyrische Christentum', 154–159; idem, 'Christianity

later writings such as Aphrahat's *Demonstrations*,²³ the *Liber Graduum*²⁴ and the Macarian corpus.²⁵ There are important links between *Thomas* and some of these writings: in the case of the *Acts*, however, this can be explained as the influence of *Thomas* rather than by emergence from a common milieu. In the cases of the *Liber Graduum* and the Macarian corpus there arises the chronological problem, to which we will return: these works appear 200 years later than *Thomas*, in a fourth-century milieu about which we know much more than is the case for the second century.

There is a striking parallel in the Latin version of the *Didascalía: quoniam scriptum est in evangelio: Duo si convenerunt in unum et dixerint monti huic: Tolle et mitte te in mari, fiet* (*Didasc.* 15).²⁶ (The Syriac version parallels Matthew much more closely.) For some this has reinforced the theory of a Syrian provenance.²⁷

A Syriac Composition as Evidence for Edessene Origin

If Syriac were the original language of *Thomas*, then an Edessene provenance would be an almost inevitable conclusion. As has been argued above (Introduction, § 5: 'Original Language') and more extensively elsewhere, however, a Syriac original is highly unlikely.²⁸ On the other hand, to dispute Syriac as the language of composition is not to dispute an Edessene origin, given the Graeco-Aramaic bilingualism dominant in the city, at least in the second century.²⁹

in Edessa and the Gospel of Thomas', 77; Desjardins, 'Where was the Gospel of Thomas Written?', 124–125.

- 23 P.-H. Poirier, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas (log. 16 et 23) et Aphraate (*Dém.* XVIII, 10–11)', in (no editor), *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont: Contributions à l'étude des christianismes orientaux. Avec une bibliographie du dédicataire* (Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 1988), 15–18 (17).
- 24 Baker, 'Gospel of Thomas and the Syriac Liber Graduum', 49–55; J.-E. Ménard, 'Beziehungen des Philippus- und des Thomas-Evangeliums zur syrischen Welt', in K.W. Tröger, ed. *Altes Testament, Frühjudentum, Gnosis* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus/ Mohn, 1980), 317–326; Desjardins, 'Where was the Gospel of Thomas Written?', 124–125.
- 25 Baker, 'Pseudo-Macarius and the Gospel of Thomas', 215–225; Quispel, 'Syrian Thomas and the Syrian Macarius', 226–235.
- 26 For the Latin text, see Connolly, *Didascalía Apostolorum*, 135 (cf. the Syriac in translation on 134).
- 27 Plisch, *Gospel of Thomas*, 127.
- 28 See further Gathercole, *Composition*, 19–125.
- 29 Klijn, 'Christianity in Edessa and the Gospel of Thomas', 72–73; H.J.W. Drijvers & J.F. Healey, *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene: Texts, Translations, and Commentary*

Antioch?

A fairly recent variant on the Syria-Edessa theory has been to propose Antioch as a nearby alternative. Desjardins considers a Greek original language for *Thomas* to be damaging to an origin in Edessa, but still maintains a Syrian provenance, placing *Thomas* in Antioch.³⁰ Desjardins is followed here by Piovanelli: 'we will be better advised to gaze at Antioch on the Orontes as the most plausible point of departure.'³¹ Piovanelli's reason for this is different from that of Desjardins, namely that for a work as widely distributed as *Thomas* one might more reasonably expect the more significant city of Antioch.³²

Assessment

Overall, it is difficult to decide how strong these factors are. Some of the criticisms which have been levelled at the Syria/Edessa hypothesis have not proven successful. Ehlers' argument that a Greek original makes composition in Edessa unlikely on the grounds of the dominance of Syriac was already doubted when it was first made, and is now even more shaky.³³ Nevertheless, there are still considerable difficulties with locating *Thomas* in Syria because such attempts presuppose that we have enough knowledge of Syrian religiosity in the early-mid second century to be able to see that (reconstructed) milieu as the seed-bed for *Thomas*. The great problem here is that in fact we know virtually nothing. (There is no mention of Christianity or Judaism in the earliest inscriptions.³⁴) Ehlers' other criticism of the Edessa hypothesis thus carries much more weight, viz. that 'die Frühgeschichte der Kirche Edessas liegt bisher weitgehend im Dunkel.'³⁵ (Even Walter Bauer, many of whose conclusions come

(HO 42; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 38; pace S.K. Ross, *Roman Edessa: Politics and Culture on the Eastern Fringes of the Roman Empire, 114–242 CE* (London/ New York: Routledge, 2001), 12.

30 Desjardins, 'Where was the Gospel of Thomas Written?', 123. Desjardins underestimates Klijn's arguments for the bilingualism of Edessa: as noted this has been reinforced more recently by Drijvers and Healey: see the previous note.

31 Piovanelli, 'Thomas in Edessa?', 461.

32 Piovanelli, 'Thomas in Edessa?', 460–461.

33 Klijn, 'Christianity in Edessa and the Gospel of Thomas', 72–73; see more recently Drijvers & Healey, *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene*, 38.

34 See Drijvers & Healey, *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene*, 39–41: 'Religion in the Inscriptions'.

35 Ehlers, 'Kann das Thomasevangelium aus Edessa stammen?', 284; Klijn, 'Thomasevangelium und das altsyrische Christentum', 146–149 sets out our scant knowledge of second-century Christianity in Syria.

across as extremely confidently stated, admitted towards the end of his chapter on Edessa: 'I have already had to assume much more than I would like, but unfortunately, in this area, there is very little that one can know for sure.'³⁶) We do have some more solid evidence for Edessa around the turn of the second and third centuries CE: the activity of Tatian on his return to Edessa, the evidence for the church building at the time of the flood in 201 CE,³⁷ and the activity of Bardaisan and Palut (and, possibly, Quq and the Quqites) around the same time.³⁸ The *Odes of Solomon* are the only potentially Edessene writings which can reasonably be regarded as contemporaneous with *Thomas*, but as has been observed, while there are interesting points of contact with *Thomas*, there are also significant differences:³⁹ one might point, for example, to much greater traditionalism of the *Odes* in its God-language ('Lord', 'my God', 'most high', etc.) and theological motifs more broadly ('mercy', 'grace', 'salvation', 'righteousness', etc.).

6.2 Egypt

The near-consensus about Syria has been questioned only by a small minority, including Garitte,⁴⁰ McArthur,⁴¹ Grobel,⁴² Davies (possibly),⁴³ and Dehandschutter. Some reasons for an Egyptian origin are not compelling, such as Garitte's theory of composition in Coptic, and Dehandschutter seeing the Osiris myth in GTh 114.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, Dehandschutter's sentiment is still understandable: 'Nous n' avons pas compris pourquoi on n' a que fort rarement envis-

36 W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971 [1934]), 42.

37 J.B. Segal, *Edessa: The Blessed City* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), 24, 62; Drijvers & Healey, *The Old Syriac Inscriptions of Edessa and Osrhoene*, 37.

38 Segal, *Edessa*, 81.

39 Klijn, 'Thomasevangelium und das altsyrische Christentum', 153–154.

40 G. Garitte, 'Les Paraboles du royaume dans l' "Évangile de Thomas"', in L. Cerfaux (with G. Garitte), *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux: études d'exégèse et d'histoire religieuse de Monseigneur Cerfaux* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1962), III.61–80 (73).

41 H.K. McArthur, 'Dependence of the Gospel of Thomas on the Synoptics', *ExpT* 71 (1960), 286–287 (287).

42 K. Grobel, 'How Gnostic is the Gospel of Thomas?', *NTS* 8 (1962), 367–373 (373).

43 S.L. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 2nd edn (Oregon House, CA: Bardic Press, 2005), 18–19.

44 Dehandschutter, 'Lieu d'origine', 130–131.

agé l'Égypte pour lieu d'origine de l'ET.⁴⁵ His reasons, expressed elsewhere, include (negatively) our ignorance of the religious currents of Edessa in the second century,⁴⁶ and (positively) the 'presence of Hermetic matter', *Thomas's* 'sapiential character', 'acquaintance with Encratite tradition' and 'gnostic reception of the gospel tradition': these elements lead him to conclude that Alexandria is the most likely place.⁴⁷ In addition to these features one has the obvious point of the material evidence: the three Oxyrhynchus fragments and the Coptic manuscript were found in Egypt. On closer inspection, however, the themes noted by Dehandschutter are not very distinctive to Egypt and were much more diffuse, and the survival of our manuscripts of *Thomas* may be a function of Egyptian weather rather than its metaphorical religious climate.

6.3 Evaluation

Is it possible to decide between Syria and Egypt?⁴⁸ Is it necessary? The best account of *Thomas's* provenance is probably that of Davies, namely that we do not really know.⁴⁹ Arnal has noted that in its outlook, the *Gospel of Thomas* is in some respects a 'religion of "anywhere"',⁵⁰ and even in cases where Gospels have many more geographical and cultural references than *Thomas* does, uncertainty remains: as Morna Hooker has written of Mark, 'the gospel was composed somewhere in the Roman empire!'⁵¹ In the end, then, it is probably

45 B. Dehandschutter, 'Les Parables de l'Évangile selon Thomas: la parabole du Trésor caché (log 109)', *ETL* 47 (1971), 199–219 (207).

46 Dehandschutter, 'Lieu d'origine', 125–126.

47 B. Dehandschutter, 'Recent Research on the Gospel of Thomas', in F. van Segbroeck & C.M. Tuckett, eds. *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*, vol. III (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 2257–2262 (2258 n. 8).

48 In a parallel case, we can note Pratscher's attempt to identify the provenance of *2 Clement*, which concludes that it is very difficult to choose between Syria and Egypt (Pratscher, *Der zweite Clemensbrief*, 61).

49 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 18–19, grants the possibility of Egypt, though he ultimately says it is impossible to know. Ehlers is more definite that Edessa is an extremely unlikely candidate, without proposing an alternative.

50 W. Arnal, 'Blessed are the Solitary: The Paradox of a Thomas "Community"' (SBL Paper, 2011), using the language of J.Z. Smith, 'Here, There, and Anywhere', in idem, *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion* (Chicago/ London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 323–339 (see esp. 329–334).

51 M.D. Hooker, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Mark* (Black's New Testament Commentary; London: A. & C. Black, 1991), 8.

best to admit our ignorance about *Thomas's* provenance, while acknowledging that Syria and Egypt are reasonable possibilities.⁵²

52 Some have approached the 'provenance' question from a different angle, that of the *environment* of *Thomas*. So, for example, W.H.C. Frend, 'Gospel of Thomas: Is Rehabilitation Possible?', *JTS* 18 (1967), 13–26, considered *Thomas* 'rural or semi-rural' (25). Arnal, 'Rhetoric of Marginality', 489, has argued for a rural milieu on the grounds that in GTh 78, 'the city is singled out for trenchant criticism', and that in GTh 63–65 the villains are urbanised. The villain in GTh 63 is not clearly urban, however. It is also unclear, whatever one makes of the vineyard owner in GTh 65, that the tenants are the heroes. Others, such as those who locate *Thomas* in a city such as Edessa or Antioch are by implication taking a different view. J.-M. Sevrin, 'Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses dans l'Évangile selon Thomas (63, 64, 65)', in J. Delorme, ed. *Paraboles évangéliques: perspectives nouveaux* (Paris: Cerf, 1989), 425–439 (432), further maintains that in GTh 64 the buyers and sellers in *Thomas* function in his anti-commercial interests, and suggest not a Galilean village, but an urban milieu where one makes investments. In GTh 14.4, the Thomasine disciples are envisaged as going into the regions and districts (καρ and χωρα), which are vague and therefore difficult to translate, but probably imply rural areas (cf. the πολίς in Lk. 10.8). It is notable, however, that these are the *destinations*, and not necessarily the base of the Thomasine disciples (if there is such a base). Evidence for a rural setting might be found in the location of Jesus in the countryside in GTh 78.1; on the other hand, the city is a positive image in GTh 32. See the rather sceptical remarks about the social world behind *Thomas* in R. Uro, 'The Social World of the Gospel of Thomas', in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 19–38 (e.g. 21). In sum, internal factors probably do not allow us to define the environment from which *Thomas* emerges, and such assumptions should not be allowed to affect the interpretation of individual sayings or of the overall work.

The Date of *Thomas* (with Authorship)¹

The question of date has been one of the most controverted issues in *Thomas* research. Scholars currently propose dates from ‘prior to 50 CE’ (at least for its core) on the one hand,² to the end of the second century on the other (see Table below).³ This range is to be attributed not merely to scholarly prejudice, but also to the sheer difficulty of the question.

There are problems with dating a number of works from antiquity, and Gospels are no exception: one difficulty which is a consequence of the genre is that the authors are usually aiming deliberately to evoke a past generation and not their own. An added problem with dating *Thomas* is that a number of scholars claim a high degree of variability across time in the contents of *Thomas*, from an early core which was built upon either by various additional redactional layers, or by the additions of individual sayings at various times, or both. Some scholars even propose abandoning the project of dating the whole, and argue that it is better instead to attempt to date the individual traditions or sayings.⁴ As has been argued above, however (see ‘Appended Note: *Thomas* as a “Rolling Corpus”’, following § 2), a number of the reasons for seeing this compositional process of *Thomas* are flawed, and—despite indications of occasional later additions, at the Coptic stage, for example—there are good reasons for seeing the main body of *Thomas* as a compositional unity. As a result, the aim of this section is to date *Thomas* as a whole.

There are various criteria which have been employed to date *Thomas*, and these will be divided into three parts: (1) the evidence for a *terminus ante*

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- 1 **Bibliography:** Surveys of the question include: Fallon & Cameron, ‘The Gospel of Thomas: A Forschungsbericht and Analysis’, 4224–4227; Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 122–140; S.J. Patterson, ‘Understanding the Gospel of Thomas Today’, in idem, J.M. Robinson & the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostische Schriften, *The Fifth Gospel: The Gospel of Thomas Comes of Age* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 33–75 (40–45); T. Baarda, ‘The Gospel of Thomas’, *PIBA* 26 (2003), 46–65 (53–58); C.W. Skinner, *What Are They Saying about the Gospel of Thomas?* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2012), 9–28; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 157–174.
 - 2 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 8.
 - 3 B. Dehnickschutter, ‘L’Évangile de Thomas comme collection de paroles de Jésus’, in J. Delobel, ed. *Logia: Les paroles de Jésus/ The Sayings of Jesus* (BETL 59; Leuven University Press/ Peeters, 1982), 507–515 (510).
 - 4 See e.g. Plisch, *Gospel of Thomas*, 16.

quem, (2) the evidence for a *terminus a quo*, and (3) additional indications. One challenge in dating *Thomas* lies in whether it is possible to avoid the Scylla of over-precision—evident in Klijn's dating of *Thomas* c. 150 CE 'mit Sicherheit'⁵—and the Charybdis of agnosticism, evident in Attridge's remark that: 'To fix any date before 200 is pure conjecture.'⁶

7.1 Evidence for a *terminus ante quem*

The Papyrological Data

As we saw in the survey of the manuscript evidence above (Introduction, §1), the papyri (P. Oxy. I 1; IV 654; IV 655) tend to be assigned dates in the third century, especially the early or middle parts of that century. This provides, roughly speaking, a *terminus ante quem* of around 200 CE.⁷ As noted above in §1, however, a fresh examination of the palaeography of the Oxyrhynchus papyri in the light of recent discoveries and methods is a desideratum. There has been a tendency recently among papyrologists to date papyri rather later than was the case in the twentieth century, or, to put the point more precisely, to assign broader time frames rather than more exact dates.⁸

Testimonia

The testimonia to *Thomas* provide much the same answer. The earliest testimony is that in (Ps.-?)Hippolytus, where 'the Gospel according to Thomas' is named, and a rather garbled quotation supplied, in *Ref.* 5.7.20–21 (see Introduction, §3.1, above).⁹ The *Refutatio* is often dated to c. 222–235 CE, though Brent has renewed the case for a slightly earlier date, during the life-time and episco-

5 Klijn, 'Das Thomasevangelium und das altsyrische Christentum', 146.

6 H.W. Attridge, in discussion after H. Koester, 'Gnostic Writings as Witnesses for the Development of the Sayings Tradition', in B. Layton, ed. *Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, vol. I (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 238–256 + 'Discussion', 256–261 (260).

7 P. Pokorný, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Thomas: From Interpretations to the Interpreted* (London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 4, puts the *terminus* at 180 CE without justification.

8 See e.g. R. Bagnall, *Early Christian Books in Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); B. Nongbri, 'The Use and Abuse of P52: Papyrological Pitfalls in the Dating of the Fourth Gospel', *HTR* 98 (2005), 23–48; D. Barker, 'The Dating of New Testament Papyri', *NTS* 57 (2011) 571–582.

9 As noted above, other allusions to *Thomas* also come in this section, which discusses the Naassenes.

pace of Callistus (c. 217–222).¹⁰ As a consequence, a *terminus ante quem* of the first quarter of the third century also emerges here.

Thomas's Influence on Other Writings

This has been an important factor for some scholars in the quest to date *Thomas* very early. Nagel has seen Paul as bearing the marks of *Thomas's* influence, which would give a *terminus ante quem* of c. 50–60 CE;¹¹ Davies has seen the influence of *Thomas* upon Mark's Gospel, meaning that *Thomas* would have been written before c. 70 CE.¹² Among others, Riley sees *Thomas* as influencing Luke.¹³ There is now also a body of opinion seeing *Thomas* as an impulse (negatively) in the composition of John's Gospel.¹⁴ As has been argued elsewhere, however, none of these scenarios of influence can be regarded as realistic.¹⁵

Even arguments for *Thomas's* influence upon second century works are hard to sustain. The chief difficulty, as we noted in § 4 above ('Early References to the Contents of *Thomas's*'), lies in establishing the dates of the other works which might have some sort of relationship to *Thomas*, such as 2 *Clement*, the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, or the *Celestial Dialogue*. The most secure cases are those of the *Book of Thomas the Contender* and the *Acts of Thomas*, from around 200/ early third century. Again, therefore, a *terminus ante quem* of around 200 CE emerges here too.

Thomas's Depiction of James

Some other minor considerations have come into play in the establishment of a *terminus ante quem*. A few scholars have argued, for example, that GTh 12 presumes that James is still alive making *Thomas*—or at least this saying—predate 62 CE.¹⁶ This is a rather speculative proposal, however (see the commentary on this saying).

10 A. Brent, *Hippolytus & the Roman Church in the Third Century: Communities in Tension before the Emergence of a Monarch-Bishop* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 289; 'El. was completed before the death of Callistus in 222' (and *passim*).

11 Nagel, 'Erwägungen zum Thomas-Evangelium', 368–392.

12 Davies, 'The Use of the Gospel of Thomas in the Gospel of Mark'; idem and Johnson, 'Mark's Use of the Gospel of Thomas: Part Two'.

13 Riley, 'The Influence of Thomas Christianity on Luke 12:14 and 5:39', 229–235.

14 See esp. Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*; A.D. DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics: Early Christian Discourse in the Gospels of John and Thomas and Other Ancient Christian Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); Pagels, *Beyond Belief*.

15 Gathercole, *Composition*, 145–249. See also (on the Synoptics), Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*. On *Thomas* and John, see Dunderberg, *The Beloved Disciple in Conflict*.

16 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 94–95: 'Because this saying assumes

Thomas and the Composition and Circulation of the Gospels

Stead commented that *Thomas* should be dated ‘probably not later than 140 A.D., since (among other reasons) the writer is influenced by Matthew and Luke and possibly by Mark but knows nothing of John.’¹⁷ Judging the date of a work by what it is ignorant of is difficult, however, as is identifying that ignorance.¹⁸ The absence of John may have a reason, and Goodacre suggests ‘Johannophobia’;¹⁹ alternatively, it may simply be that the author or editor of *Thomas* moved in circles in which the Synoptics were much more well known.²⁰ Whatever the explanation, one can point to analogies of works which show familiarity with the Synoptics but not the Johannine account of Jesus—the *Gospel of Judas* is an obvious case, and a significant one given that it may well post-date *Thomas*.²¹

Thomas’s Lack of Gnostic Theological Development

In a related vein, Uro has located *Thomas* in the early second century (‘c. 100–140’) because (in addition to other factors) there are ‘no signs of the demiurgical systems which gained popularity in early Christianity from the middle of the second century onwards.’²² This argument is in danger of a kind of

that James is still alive and the leader of the Jerusalem Church, the Thomasine Church must have been established in Syria sometime before James’ death in 62 CE.’ Cf. S.J. Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1993), 117, though conceding it is far from certain (‘One might perhaps speculate ...’).

- 17 Stead, ‘Some Reflections on the Gospel of Thomas’, 402. As a result of this, Perrin’s complaint (*Thomas and Tatian*, 5–6) about the arbitrariness of the date of 140 CE so commonly attributed to *Thomas* is unjustified. As Koester remarked, anticipating Perrin’s comment: ‘140 was not an accidental choice’ (Koester, ‘Gnostic Writings as Witnesses’, 259).
- 18 A.F. Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period before Irenaeus: Looking for Luke in the Second Century* (WUNT II/169; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 353: ‘it is virtually impossible to demonstrate non-use, never mind non-knowledge of a text.’
- 19 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 183: ‘At a time when John is still battling for acceptance in some Christian circles, *Thomas*’s cause would not have been furthered by borrowing sayings that do not have the Synoptic ring. *Thomas* wants his Jesus to sound like the Jesus familiar to his audience, and the sayings from John are not going to help with that.’
- 20 Some evidence for this might lie in the mention of ‘Matthew’ in GTh 13 (see commentary ad loc. below).
- 21 See S.J. Gathercole, ‘Matthean or Lukan Priority? The Use of the NT Gospels in the *Gospel of Judas*’, in G. Wurst & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Judasevangelium und Codex Tchacos: Studien zur religionsgeschichtlichen Verortung einer gnostischen Schriftensammlung* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2012), 291–302. Cf. P. Foster, *The Gospel of Peter: Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary* (TENTS; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 147, who sees it as a near certainty that *Gos. Pet.* is influenced by Matthew and Luke, but sees the case for John as much less clear-cut.
- 22 Uro, *Thomas*, 135.

evolutionary or teleological fallacy, according to which *Thomas* would have availed itself of Gnostic ideas if it had been written later. The development of theological systems in the second century was by no means linear.²³ As we will observe later, and especially in the course of the commentary, *Thomas* is influenced by certain ideas related to Gnostic, Valentinian and similar concepts, even if it is not itself Gnostic.

Interim Conclusion

In sum, the combined evidence of the papyrological data and the evidence from the earliest testimonium in the *Refutatio* attributed to Hippolytus are the only clear anchors for a *terminus ante quem*, namely one of around 200 CE. The other arguments mounted are either simply false or at best inconclusive. These factors also rule out the opinion, frequently expressed by the church fathers, that *Thomas* is a Manichaean composition.²⁴

7.2 Evidence for a *terminus a quo*

The question then becomes whether we can also provide an earliest possible date. In addition to the banal point that the ‘dramatic date’ of the Gospel necessitates a date post c. 30 CE, other factors have been deployed.

Tatian’s Influence upon Thomas?

‘If the *Diatessaron* provides a *terminus a quo*, the sayings collection must have been composed sometime after 175 C.E.’²⁵ Drijvers has also drawn a similar conclusion to that of Perrin here.²⁶ This ‘if’, however, is a considerable one.

23 As Edwards argues, for example, the Valentinian system was influenced by Gnosticism, but was less radically dualistic. See Edwards, ‘Gnostics and Valentinians in the Church Fathers’, 26–47.

24 For the testimonia attributing *Thomas* to Thomas the disciple of Mani, see above (Introduction, § 3: ‘Named Testimonia’). Mani’s ministry did not commence until c. 240 CE.

25 Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian*, 193. See further idem, ‘NHC II,2 and the Oxyrhynchus Fragments’, and ‘Thomas: The Fifth Gospel?’, *JETS* 49 (2006), 67–80.

26 Drijvers, ‘Facts and Problems’, 173. Perrin also cites Ménard’s commentary on *Thomas* in support of a post-Diatessaronic date, but Ménard five years later gave a date of 140 CE: see, respectively, *L’Évangile selon Thomas: Introduction, traduction, commentaire* (NHS 5; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 3, and ‘Beziehungen des Philippus- und des Thomas-Evangeliums zur syrischen Welt’, 325. Those who have cited Perrin approvingly include N.T. Wright, *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus* (London: SPCK, 2006), 36. C.L. Blomberg, *Jesus and the Gospels: An Introduction and Survey* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2009), 39,

In addition to the problems with supposing a Syriac *Thomas* noted above (see Introduction, §5: ‘Original Language’), identifiable and significant links with Tatian’s *Diatessaron* are hard to come by.²⁷

Thomas and the Temple

A number of scholars have seen evidence for a *terminus a quo* in the allusions to historical events in GTh 68 and 71:

GTh 68: Jesus said, ‘Blessed are you when they hate you and persecute you. But they will not find a place where they have persecuted you.’

GTh 71: Jesus said, ‘I will dest[roy thi]s house, and no-one will be able to build it [...]’

GTh 68 is rather unclear, but GTh 71 is more promising as evidence. The ‘house’ in GTh 71 is almost certainly the Jerusalem temple in this saying (see comment below *ad loc.*), and therefore the reference to its destruction has led scholars to draw various conclusions about what date is presupposed in such a statement. We can distinguish between ‘early’, ‘middle’ and ‘late’ dates assigned.

DeConick has ascribed this saying to her ‘kernel’ of *Thomas*, from 30–50 CE. The reasons for this lie in the authenticity of the saying, and ‘the Jewish expectations about the Temple in the New World, one of which was that it would not be rebuilt (cf. *Test. Moses* 5–10; Rev. 21.22).’²⁸ These points are all questionable, however. The authenticity of this version of the saying has not been widely accepted, and nor has such an early kernel. On Jewish expectation, Revelation 21.22 is clearly a developed Christian view, and I have not been able to find reference to the non-rebuilding of the temple in the *Testament of Moses*. On the other hand, expectation of a future temple was widespread (see commentary on GTh 71 below).

Second, a ‘middle’ date is proposed by Dunderberg. He has argued that, given a reference to the destruction of the temple, a date 70–100 CE is most

presents Perrin’s theory as an option, as do R. Buth & B. Kvasnica, ‘Temple Authorities and Tithes Evasion: The Linguistic Background and Impact of the Parable of the Vineyard, the Tenants and the Son’, in R.S. Notley, M. Turnage & B. Becker eds. *Jesus’ Last Week: Jerusalem Studies in the Synoptic Gospels. Volume One* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 53–80 (61).

27 See e.g. Gathercole, *Composition*, 41, and the bibliography mentioned there on the alleged connections between Tatian and GTh 44–45, and *Composition*, 91–93 on GTh 86.

28 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 227.

likely.²⁹ The idea that ‘the rebuilding of the temple no longer seemed possible’³⁰ between 70–100, however, is difficult to defend. It was by no means universally assumed immediately after 70 CE that the temple would remain the ruin which we see today in the twenty-first century. Although Jesus’ saying about not one stone being left upon another was later viewed as a guarantee of the perpetual desolation of the temple, there is no clear statement to this effect in the NT.³¹ Nor is this assumption held more widely. Barclay comments that Josephus ‘had no reason to imagine that the recent demolition of the temple would be permanent’,³² citing Josephus’ remark that Moses foretold numerous destructions, ‘but the God who made you will give back to your citizens both cities and the temple, and the loss of these things will not happen just once, but many times’ (*AJ* 4.314).³³ Carleton Paget observes in connection with a similar passage in the *Jewish War*: ‘It is clear elsewhere that he saw the destruction of the temple in the context of other destructions of the same building (*BJ* 6.435–437), and so imagined its rebuilding as inevitable regardless of what any Roman emperor may have decided.’³⁴ As a result, one cannot assume a date of *shortly after 70 CE* for this saying.

Thirdly, the saying might fit the period after the Bar Kochba revolt (i.e. post 135 CE), as Hans-Martin Schenke and others have suggested.³⁵ This is much more likely, as after 135 CE it became clear very quickly that the rebuilding of the temple was a near impossibility. In this period, because of the removal of Jews from Jerusalem, it really does appear extremely improbable that the temple would ever be rebuilt. Furthermore, the destruction of the temple did not really become a basis for anti-Jewish polemic until the mid-second

29 Dunderberg, ‘I-Sayings’, in Uro, *Thomas at the Crossroads*, 58; Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict?*, 114.

30 Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict?*, 114.

31 Matt. 24.1–2 is taken by Eusebius (*Theoph.* 4.18) and John Chrysostom (*Gent. et Jud.* 16.4) to be proof that the temple cannot be rebuilt. According to Philostorgius (*Church History* 7.9a), Julian set out by his rebuilding project to prove these words of Christ to be false.

32 J. Barclay, *Against Apion. Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 279.

33 ὁ μέντοι θεὸς ὁ κτίσας ἡμᾶς πόλεις τε πολίταις ὑμετέροις ἀποδώσει καὶ τὸν ναόν· ἔσσεσθαι δὲ τὴν τούτων ἀποβολὴν οὐχ ἄπαξ, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις.

34 J. Carleton Paget, ‘After 70 and All That: A Response to Martin Goodman’s *Rome & Jerusalem*’, *JSNT* 31 (2009), 339–365 n. 16.

35 H.-M. Schenke, ‘On the Compositional History of the Gospel of Thomas’, *Forum* 10 (1994), 9–30 (28); Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 166–170; cf. Plisch, *Gospel of Thomas*, 16, on the date of this saying rather than the work as a whole.

century CE. This follows directly from the earlier point, since there would have been a need for a reasonable degree of confidence about non-rebuilding for a polemic about it to have any bite. This goes some way to explaining the otherwise surprisingly late emergence of such polemic. As Carleton Paget has commented:³⁶

it is interesting to note that in so far as the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple became a part of Christian self-understanding and polemic, it was precisely in the wake of the Bar Cochba revolt, when the city of Jerusalem became the new pagan Aelia Capitolina and Jews were banned from its environs, that Christian authors began truly to exploit its destruction.³⁷

Shortly after the Bar Kochba revolt, then, Justin concludes that the destruction of the temple is the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy (Isa. 64.10–12, in *1 Apol.* 47). He remarks that capital punishment awaited any Jew who entered Aelia Capitolina, and that the imperial decree was also (albeit unconsciously) predicated upon the fulfilment of a prophecy (Jer. 50 [LXX 27]. 3) which foretold that Jerusalem would be denuded of Jewish inhabitants (*1 Apol.* 47.5–6). Comment on the depopulation of Jews from Jerusalem becomes frequent in Christian writers from the second century on (e.g. Justin, *Dial.* 16.2; Aristo of Pella *apud* Eusebius, *HE* 4.6.4). For Tertullian, it is confirmation of Jesus' messiahship that the Jews can only see the land 'from far off' (*Jud.* 12). Indeed, Origen shares the view of *Thomas*, that the Jews 'will not be restored' (οὐδ' ἀποκατασταθήσονται), and Jerusalem had to 'perish utterly' (ἄρδην ἀπολωλέναι). (*C. Cels.* 4.22), although he is perhaps not entirely consistent on this point throughout his writings.³⁸ Eusebius provides very clear evidence for the view that the destruction of the temple is final, and that no-one should suppose it will be rebuilt: he writes of the

36 Cf. also G.W.H. Lampe, 'A.D. 70 in Christian Reflection', in E. Bammel & C.F.D. Moule, eds. *Jesus and the Politics of his Day* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 153–171 (155).

37 Carleton Paget ('After 70 and All That', 357 n. 29) refers to Justin, *Dial.* 16; 17.1–4; 22, *1 Apol.* 47 and Aristo of Pella (Eusebius, *HE* 4.6.4). M. Simon, *Recherches d'Histoire Judéo-Chrétienne* (Paris: Mouton, 1962), 19, may well be right to include the *Epistle of Barnabas* as well, though this is disputed: 'L'auteur s'efforce ensuite de démontrer que tous les espoirs de reconstruction du Temple de Jérusalem sont vains ...'.

38 G. Sgherri, *Chiesa e Sinagoga nelle opere di Origene* (Milano: Vita e pensiero, 1982), 108–109.

final destruction of the place (παντελοῦς ἐρημίας τοῦ τόπου) ... Now let no one imagine that, after the besieging of the place and the desolation that would be in it, another renewal (ἀνανέωσιν) of it shall take place, as there was in the times of Cyrus, ... and Antiochus Epiphanes ... and Pompey.³⁹

Finally, for John Chrysostom the destruction (and the prevention of its reconstruction) provides evidence of the power and divinity of Christ in the context of the threat of rebuilding by Julian: ‘Christ built the Church and no one is able to destroy it; *he destroyed the temple and no one is able to rebuild it*’ (κατέλυσε τὸν ναὸν καὶ οὐδεὶς αὐτὸν ἀναστήσαι δύναται).⁴⁰ The similarity with GTh 71 here is remarkable. The confidence reflected in GTh 71 about the perpetuity of the destruction, therefore, and the rhetoric of using this for polemical purposes, means that the best fit is a post-Bar Kochba situation.

Thomas’s Literary Influences

One of the most significant indications of *Thomas’s* date arises from knowing what has influenced it. I have argued elsewhere that *Thomas* is very probably influenced by the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. (For a sketch of some of the evidence, see § 11.1 below.) Indeed, *Thomas* in GTh 13 reflects an understanding of Matthew as authoritative, and expands upon certain redactional elements of Luke.⁴¹ Furthermore, *Thomas* is influenced by some of the language of Paul’s letter to the Romans, and perhaps also by 1 Corinthians,⁴² as well as Hebrews and a Two-Ways text which also influenced the *Didache* and *Barnabas*.⁴³ Of these, the works generally dated latest are Matthew and Luke (usually thought to be c. 80 CE). As a result of these considerations, we have to reckon not only with a *terminus a quo* of c. 80 CE, but with a later *terminus* because (a) Matthew is thought by *Thomas* to have been recognised as an authoritative

39 Eusebius, *Theoph.* 4.20. See P.W.L. Walker, *Holy City, Holy Places? Christian Attitudes to Jerusalem and the Holy Land in the Fourth Century* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 390–391.

40 John Chrysostom, *Jud. et Gent.* 16.8 (PG 48.835); cf. 17.13. See R.L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late Fourth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 131.

41 Gathercole, ‘Luke in the Gospel of Thomas’, *NTS* 57 (2011), 114–144; *Composition*, 129–224.

42 Gathercole, ‘The Influence of Paul on the Gospel of Thomas (§§ 53. 3 and 17)’, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 72–94; *Composition*, 227–249.

43 Gathercole, *Composition*, 250–262, and 263–266 respectively.

Gospel, and (b) these works—Matthew and Luke along with the others—must all have circulated widely enough to influence *Thomas*. As a result, a date before c. 100 CE is barely conceivable for such a distribution of literature and recognition of the status of Matthew: Papias (*floruit* c. 100 CE) is the earliest example.

Interim Conclusion

Having seen a *terminus ante quem* of c. 200 CE, we now have strong grounds on the basis of *Thomas*'s allusion to the temple, and 'literary influences', for a *terminus a quo* of 135 CE.

7.3 Further Indications of a Date in the Second Century

Thomas's Use of the Term 'the Jews' (GTh 43)

Hedrick remarks: 'the contrast between disciples and Jews situates the saying at the end of the first century at the earliest (cf. the situation in the Gospel of John ...)'.⁴⁴ In fact, *Thomas*'s position is here even more stark than that of John, since (1) GTh 43 has no counterbalancing statements such as John's statement of salvation coming from the Jews (Jn 4.22) or of Jesus' own Jewish identity (e.g. 4.9, 20), and (2) for *Thomas* the obstinacy of 'the Jews' is an *assumption* which is sufficiently well-established to form the basis for a criticism of the Jews, rather than something which needs to be argued. *Thomas* thus assumes that this can be taken by readers as a negative statement, and that 'Judeophobia' is normal. The important point is—as in Hedrick's comment—that 'the Jews' are distinguished from the disciples, as is found elsewhere only in John 13.33.

Thomas on Circumcision (GTh 53)

Bauer and Ménard have argued that the stance on circumcision in GTh 53 in relation to certain historical parallels 'helps us to place the Logion in its proper chronological setting'.⁴⁵ Jipp and Thate have also pointed to a range of material from the second century, beginning with Ignatius, in which a sceptical or

44 C.W. Hedrick, *Unlocking the Secrets of the Gospel according to Thomas* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 89.

45 J.B. Bauer, 'The Synoptic Tradition in the Gospel of Thomas', in F.L. Cross, ed. *Studia Evangelica* III (TU 88; Berlin: Akademie, 1964), 314–317 (317); J.-E. Ménard, 'Datation', *Histoire et archéologie* 70 (1983), 12–13 (12); J.M. Robinson, 'On Bridging the Gulf from Q to the Gospel of Thomas (or vice versa)', in C.W. Hedrick & R. Hodgson, eds. *Nag Hammadi*,

negative position is taken by Christian authors towards circumcision.⁴⁶ There are two particularly interesting parallels to *Thomas* going back to, or attributed to, figures from the second century:

If it (circumcision) were an advantage, fathers would beget (children) by their mothers already circumcised.

(GTh 53.2)

If God is so pleased with circumcision, why does the child not come out of the womb circumcised?⁴⁷

For if circumcision were necessary, as you think, God would not have made Adam uncircumcised.⁴⁸

In the first parallel, the objection is attributed to Q. Tineius Rufus, consular governor of Judaea at the outbreak of the Bar Kochba revolt.⁴⁹ Rufus was here in dialogue with Akiba (d. 135).⁵⁰ The second parallel is from Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, the most securely dateable instance (c. 160 CE).⁵¹ What is striking in all three of these cases is not just the similarity of the objection's content but its form as well. Each is framed as an unreal conditional clause: 'If X were true of circumcision, then surely Y would have followed!' (Implication: Y is not the case, ergo circumcision is ridiculous.) It seems very likely, then, that these instances go back to a common milieu around the middle of the second century. Certainly DeConick's use of these parallels is dubious in that she cites

Gnosticism, and Early Christianity (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1986), 127–175 (152), allows that Ménard might be correct.

46 J.W. Jipp & M.J. Thate, 'Dating *Thomas*: Logion 53 as a Test Case for Dating the *Gospel of Thomas* within an Early Christian Trajectory', *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20 (2010), 221–240.

47 Tanhuma B 7 (18a) (Townsend numbering: 4.7 Leviticus 12.1 ff., Part VII). See J.T. Townsend, *Midrash Tanhuma: Translated into English with Introduction, Indices, and Brief Notes* (S. Buber Recension). Volume II (*Exodus and Leviticus*) (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav, 1997), 242.

48 Justin, *Dial.* 19.3: εἰ γὰρ ἦν ἀναγκαῖα, ὡς δοκεῖτε, οὐκ ἂν ἀκρόβυστον ὁ θεὸς ἐπλασε τὸν Ἀδάμ. . . .

49 See W. Eck, 'Q.T. Rufus', *Brill's New Pauly* 14:717.

50 Bauer, 'Synoptic Tradition in the Gospel of Thomas', 317.

51 Justin's *Dialogue* post-dates the *First Apology* (c. 153 CE) and Justin probably died during the prefecture of Q. Iunius Rufus (163–168 CE). See D. Minns & P. Parvis, eds. *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies* (OECT; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 32–33.

the Tanhuma and Justin parallels, but concludes on the basis of them that this accretion 'belongs more to late first-century Christianity than earlier.'⁵² GTh 53 fits better in the early- to mid-second century.

Other Factors

Other factors which scholars have invoked include *Thomas*'s "secrecy" motif,⁵³ and the presentation of Thomas as author.⁵⁴ A minor possibility perhaps worth noting is that the allusion to the dog in the manger fable in GTh 102 may reflect a popularity of that image in the second century: the earliest other references (cited in the commentary on GTh 102 below) are in Strato of Sardis (fl. 117–135 CE) and Lucian (c. 120–190). Perhaps more controversially in a scholarly context where there is great suspicion in labelling *Thomas* as in any way Gnostic, one can see *Thomas* as influenced by certain ideas which are closely related to Gnostic, Valentinian and related ideas, even though it is not itself Gnostic. The dialogue envisaged in GTh 50 between the souls of the elect and the powers is closely related to similar dialogues attributed to the Marcosians by Irenaeus, and which are found in Codex Tchacos and the Nag Hammadi literature. In Jesus' dialogue with Salome in GTh 61 he states: 'I am he who is *from the equal*.' As is explored in the commentary, this self-predication of 'equality' finds its closest parallels in the *Paraphrase of Shem* and especially the Valentinian *Tripartite Tractate* (*Tri. Tract.* 67,36–37). Again, even if the image theology in GTh 83–84 is not necessarily fully Gnostic, the motif of 'invisibility caused by an overflow of divine light' and the language of pre-existent images and their revelation are taken by a number of scholars to be influenced by Gnostic, Valentinian or similar ideas.⁵⁵

52 DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 91.

53 J. Frey, 'Die Lilien und das Gewand: *EvThom* 36 und 37 als Paradigma für das Verhältnis des *Thomasevangeliums* zur synoptischen Überlieferung', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 122–180 (178). For Frey, this (and the distance from Jewish piety and the move in the direction of an ascetic and world-denying ethic) means that *Thomas* cannot be first-century.

54 Goodacre identifies a movement from the anonymity of Mark and Matthew to the increased authorial self-presentation in Luke, then more so in John, and finally even more so in *Thomas*, in a way which is reflected in other second- and third-century works. See Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 178–180. This may reflect a slightly over-evolutionary understanding, however.

55 Plisch, *Gospel of Thomas*, 192, where the quotation is also found.

7.4 Conclusion

We have seen that the best fit for *Thomas* is some time after 135 and some time before 200 CE. A *terminus a quo* is established by the various literary influences upon *Thomas* and the confidence about the non-rebuilding of the temple in GTh 71. At the other end, the papyri and the mention of *Thomas* in Hippolytus give a fairly secure *terminus ante quem* of c. 200 CE/ early third century. The affinities of certain elements of *Thomas* with other works from the second century CE is apparent, as we will see further in the course of the commentary. Although the scholarly *horror vacui* might recoil at assigning a time frame as broad as ‘around the Antonine era’,⁵⁶ the temptation to pick a decade should probably be resisted.

7.5 Addendum on Authorship

It is conventional in introductions to commentaries to remark upon the authorship of the work under discussion. This was a matter of serious discussion in antiquity, as has been seen in the treatment of the named testimonia to *Thomas* (§3). As we saw there, Cyril of Jerusalem felt the need to emphasise that the *Gospel of Thomas* was not written by the apostle but by ‘one of the three evil disciples of Mani’ (see §3.5 above); others such as Eusebius simply cast doubt on the apostolic authorship of the work by calling the Gospel not ‘of’ or ‘according to’ Thomas *tout simple*, but *ὡς ... Θωμᾶ* (§3.3). The consideration of the date argued for above rules out both apostolic and Manichaean authorship alike: *Thomas* is too late for the former but too early for the latter. Alas, the identity of the author remains unknown.

⁵⁶ The Antonines, viz. Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Verus and Commodus, reigned 138–192 CE.

TABLE 2 *A sample of proposed dates for Thomas*

Scholar	Date
DeConick	core 'prior to 50 CE' ⁵⁷
Davies	between 50 and 70 CE; ⁵⁸ '50–57' ⁵⁹
Patterson	core = pre-62 CE? ⁶⁰ / 'in the vicinity of 70–80 CE.' ⁶¹
Koester	perhaps first cent.
Dunderberg	70–100 ⁶²
Robbins	'toward the end of the first century' ⁶³
Gianotto	end of first/ beginning of second century ⁶⁴
Valantasis	'probably around 100–110 CE or earlier' ⁶⁵
Meyer	second century, or late first ⁶⁶
Ehrman	'probably ... sometime in the early second century' ⁶⁷
Uro	'early second century': 'c. 100–140' ⁶⁸
Bartsch	second century ⁶⁹

- 57 DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 8
- 58 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 3.
- 59 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 147.
- 60 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 117.
- 61 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 120; 'Wisdom in Q and Thomas', 19; *Fifth Gospel*, 45: 'not everything in the *Gospel of Thomas* comes from the first century'.
- 62 Dunderberg, 'Thomas' I-Sayings and the Gospel of John', 64, commenting that John and *Thomas* both emerge in 'a common setting in early Christianity from 70 CE to the turn of the first century'.
- 63 V.K. Robbins, 'Rhetorical Composition and Sources in the Gospel of Thomas', *SBLSP* 36 (1997), 86–114 (87).
- 64 C. Gianotto, 'Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive dans l'Évangile selon Thomas', in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi": Québec, 29–31 mai 2003* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 157–173 (173).
- 65 R. Valantasis, 'Is the Gospel of Thomas Ascetical? Revisiting an Old Problem with a New Theory', *J ECS* 7 (1999), 55–81 (60); cf. 77: 'at the turn from the first to the second century, if not earlier in the first century C.E.'.
- 66 M.W. Meyer, *The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2004), 10.
- 67 B.D. Ehrman, *Jesus, Apocalyptic Prophet of a New Millennium* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 88.
- 68 Uro, 'Social World of the *Gospel of Thomas*', 34; Uro, *Thomas*, 135.
- 69 H.W. Bartsch, 'Das Thomas-Evangelium und die synoptischen Evangelien: Zu G. Quispels Bemerkungen zum Thomas-Evangelium', *NTS* 6 (1960), 249–261 (258).

TABLE 2 *A sample of proposed dates for Thomas (cont.)*

Scholar	Date
Schenke	after 135 CE (final form) ⁷⁰
Barnard	c. 140 CE ⁷¹
Quispel	140 CE ⁷²
Pearson	c. 140 CE ⁷³
Ménard	c. 140 CE ⁷⁴
Stead	'probably not later than 140 A.D.' ⁷⁵
Goodacre	140s ⁷⁶
Turner	c. 150 CE ⁷⁷
Klijn	certainly c. 150 CE ⁷⁸
Kaestli	mid-second century/ c. 150 CE ⁷⁹
Chilton	mid-second century ⁸⁰
McArthur	mid-second century ⁸¹
Hofius	mid-second century ⁸²
Sevrin	second half of second century ⁸³

70 Schenke, 'On the Compositional History of the Gospel of Thomas', 28.

71 Barnard, 'The Origins and Emergence of the Church in Edessa', 165–166.

72 Quispel, 'Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of the Hebrews', 378; 'Syrian Thomas and the Syrian Macarius', 234.

73 Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 267.

74 Ménard, 'Beziehungen des Philippus- und des Thomas-Evangeliums zur syrischen Welt', 325.

75 Stead, 'Some Reflections', 402.

76 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 171.

77 J.D. Turner, 'The Book of Thomas: Introduction', in B. Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7, together with XIII, 2**, *Brit. Lib. Or. 4926(1), and P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655*, vol. II (NHS 21; Leiden: Brill, 1989), 173–178 (177).

78 Klijn, 'Das Thomasevangelium und das altsyrische Christentum', 146.

79 J.-D. Kaestli, 'L'Évangile de Thomas: son importance pour l'étude des paroles de Jésus et du Gnosticisme chrétien', *Études théologiques et religieuses* 54 (1979), 375–396 (377).

80 B.D. Chilton, 'Recovering Jesus' *Mamzerut*', in J.H. Charlesworth, ed. *Jesus and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 84–110 (96).

81 McArthur, 'Dependence of the Gospel of Thomas on the Synoptics', 287.

82 O. Hofius, 'Das koptische Thomasevangelium und die Oxyrhynchus Papyri nr 1,654 und 655' (1), *EvTh* 20 (1960), 21–42 (39).

83 Sevrin, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas: paroles de Jésus et révélation gnostique', 276.

Scholar	Date
Baarda	150–200 ⁸⁴
Perrin	last quarter of second century ⁸⁵
Fitzmyer	perhaps towards end of second century ⁸⁶
Dehandschutter	end of second century ⁸⁷
Drijvers	'about A.D. 200' ⁸⁸ (previously: first half of second century) ⁸⁹

84 Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas', 53–58, 64.

85 Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian*, 193.

86 J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I–IX: Introduction, Translation and Notes* (Anchor; New York: Doubleday, 1981), 85.

87 Dehandschutter, 'L'Évangile de Thomas comme collection de paroles de Jesus', 510.

88 Drijvers, 'Facts and Problems', 173.

89 For the earlier view, see Drijvers, 'Edessa und das jüdische Christentum', 17.

The Structure of *Thomas*¹

The general view that *Thomas* is not a particularly carefully ordered collection or list is correct. Attempts to argue otherwise have included the following.²

- Janssens contends that there are five blocks: GTh 1–9, 12–17, 18–38, 39–53 and the rest. One might ask, first: what about GTh 10–11? Moreover, her conclusion that GTh 54–114 were added ‘pêle-mêle’, with the author not having intended to include them at the beginning, is something of a counsel of despair.³
- Tripp makes the case that there are ten sections in *Thomas*, beginning at GTh 1, 6, 12, 18, 20, 24, 37, 42, 43, 51, 99, 113 respectively.⁴ No one has been convinced of this, however: one problem is that some of Tripp’s sections are extremely short (18–19 and 113–114), while another comprises almost half the book (51–98).

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- 1 **Bibliography:** R. Kasser, *L'Évangile selon Thomas: présentation et commentaire théologique* (Neuchâtel: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1961), 155–157; D.H. Tripp, ‘The Aim of the Gospel of Thomas’, *ExpT* 92 (1980), 41–44; M. Lelyveld, *Les Logia de la vie dans l'Évangile selon Thomas: À la recherche d'une tradition et d'une rédaction* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 13–22; Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 99–102; B.J. Diebner, ‘Bemerkungen zur “Mitte” des Thomas-Evangeliums’, in C. Fluck, L. Langener & S. Richter, eds. *Divitiae Aegypti: Koptologische und verwandte Studien zu Ehren von Martin Krause* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1995), 77–84; A.D. Callahan, ‘“No Rhyme or Reason”: The Hidden Logia of the Gospel of Thomas’, *HTR* 90 (1997), 411–426; Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian*; Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 171–177 (Appendix I); A. Pasquier & F. Vouga, ‘Le genre littéraire et la structure argumentative de l'Évangile selon Thomas et leurs implications christologiques’, in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: “L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi”: Québec, 29–31 mai 2003* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 335–362; R. Nordsieck, ‘Zur Kompositionsgeschichte des Thomas-Evangeliums’, *BZ* 52 (2008), 174–200, and see Nordsieck’s commentary on the individual sayings: *Das Thomas-Evangelium: Einleitung zur Frage des historischen Jesus, Kommentierung aller 114 Logien* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2004); P.J. Williams, ‘Alleged Syriac Catchwords in the Gospel of Thomas’, *VC* 63 (2009), 71–82.
- 2 See further Fallon & Cameron. ‘The Gospel of Thomas: A Forschungsbericht and Analysis’, 4206–4208, for criticisms of attempts to construct thematic sections for *Thomas*.
- 3 Y. Janssens, ‘L'Évangile selon Thomas et son caractère gnostique’, *Muséon* 75 (1961), 301–325 (301–302).
- 4 Tripp, ‘The Aim of the Gospel of Thomas’, 42.

- Davies argues that *Thomas* consists of four chapters, each beginning with a “seek-and-you-shall-find” saying (GTh 2, 38, 59, 92) and then various themes in sequence. As is evident from Davies’ synopsis, however, it is rare that all the suggested themes appear,⁵ and the sequence is not consistent.⁶
- Nordsieck identifies seven blocks: GTh 2–17; 19.2–35; 38–48; 51–61.1; 62–76; 77–82, and finally 85–113 (the intervening sayings are redactional transitions).⁷ The problem here again is that some of the material fits the title of the block whereas some does not;⁸ or again that some sayings would belong better in another block.⁹ Since some of his instances of Stichwort-Verbindung seem rather strained, his claims about the significance of an absence of a link lose their force.¹⁰

In addition to these quests for blocks or chapters in *Thomas* are two claims to be able to identify a ‘middle’. Diebner takes the view that GTh 49–50 are the Gnostic ‘centre’ (in a theological and literary sense).¹¹ With our enumeration of *Thomas*’s sayings this almost works (but not quite), but it is hard to see how an ancient reader/ listener could have detected this. Puig has also proposed a quite different centre, in GTh 62–67, although the reasons for this ‘arquitectura’ are left quite vague.¹² Other modest claims to structuring devices include

5 Only two of the eleven elements (seeking-finding, and renouncing the world) are found in all four chapters; e.g. in the “Synoptic parables” section of each chapter, A has two, B has none, and C and D each have three.

6 N.b. GTh 80 and 81 appearing in reverse order.

7 See the helpful summary in Nordsieck, ‘Kompositionsgeschichte’, 199–200.

8 To take the first block (‘Vom Suchen und Finden des Reiches Gottes’) as an example, despite the fact that this is a theme of so much of *Thomas*, it is still difficult to see how e.g. GTh 6, 9, 10 and 14 clearly fit under this heading. Nordsieck, ‘Kompositionsgeschichte’, 176–180, shows that they are linked by catchwords, but this does not strengthen the case that they belong in a thematic block.

9 To take the first discourse as an example again, despite its title (‘Vom Suchen und Finden des Reiches Gottes’), the majority of the sayings which thematize seeking and finding (e.g. GTh 76, 92, 94, 107) are elsewhere.

10 E.g. in GTh 15–16, Nordsieck, *Thomas-Evangelium*, 82, notes a connection in ‘throwing’ but this only works in his German translation, not in the Coptic; compare e.g. his comments on the significance of there being no linkage between GTh 17–18 (*Thomas-Evangelium*, 89); the link between GTh 31–32 consists in the the ‘assoziative Nähe’ between ‘city’ and ‘home town’.

11 Diebner, ‘Bemerkungen zur “Mitte”’, 82.

12 Puig, *Un Jesús desconocido*, 122 and n. 122.

seeing GTh 3 and 113 as forming an *inclusio*,¹³ and identifying GTh 114 as a conclusion (see the commentary *ad loc.* below). Others have suggested that doublets are placed towards the end of *Thomas* for the purpose of recapitulation, whereas others see them as repetitious relics.¹⁴ There are nevertheless three structuring devices which have been generally recognised, (1) the general introduction to each saying with ‘Jesus said’, (2) an opening section, albeit of unclear length, and (3) the clusterings of sayings by genre, catchword or thematic link.¹⁵

8.1 “Jesus Said ...”

The first structuring device is obvious and can be summarised briefly: the repeated refrain which begins most of the sayings: ‘Jesus said’ (normally $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon\ \bar{\iota}(\mu\sigma\upsilon)\bar{\varsigma}$, λέγει Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς). Jesus is the unique source of revelation (GTh 17), and this point is stressed in the structuring. It is found at the beginning of the following sayings: GTh 2–5, 7–11 (8: ‘and he said’), 13–17, 19, 23, 25–36 (27: no intro.), 38–42, 44–50, 54–59, 61–71 (65: ‘he said’), 73–78, (74: ‘he said’), 80–90, 92–98 (93: no intro.), 101–103 (101: no intro), 105–112 and 114.¹⁶

8.2 An Opening Section

In addition to the prologue and GTh 1, which stand outside of the ‘Jesus said’ sequence, it is often thought that there is an introductory section defining the *raison d’être* of the book. Janssens, for example, saw an opening section, GTh 1–9, whose aim was to define *gnosis*.¹⁷ King argues that GTh 1–6 are

13 Pasquier & Vouga, ‘Le genre littéraire et la structure argumentative’, 337 n. 3.

14 Sevrin, ‘Thomas, Q et le Jésus de l’histoire’, 465, on the recapitulation; Stead, ‘Some Reflections on the Gospel of Thomas’, 401, thinks that the original conclusion was perhaps around GTh 100, but that it was rather repetitiously expanded later.

15 Cf. Weeks’ observation that in Proverbs in the OT, a proverb might share with a neighbour ‘an initial letter, a catchword, or a form’. See S.D.E. Weeks, *Early Israelite Wisdom* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 33.

16 Since the modern numeration of *Thomas*’s sayings is not infallible, some of the sayings with no introduction or with a resumptive ‘and he said ...’ may have originally been thought to belong with the previous logion.

17 Janssens, ‘L’Évangile selon Thomas’, 301.

introductory, and 'set out the main themes of the Gospel of Thomas'.¹⁸ There is no consensus on the extent of the opening section, but it seems very likely that GTh 2 belongs with the prologue and GTh 1, and this may well also be true of at least GTh 3.

8.3 Links between Pairs/Clusters of Sayings

Scholars have also noticed the abundance of connections between individual sayings whether by catchwords or common themes. These connections, especially in the form of catchwords, have been the subject of a fair degree of study.¹⁹ Patterson displays 60 linkages between sayings by catchwords.²⁰ Nordsieck sees catchword links or thematic connections between almost every saying and its neighbours.²¹ These can be exaggerated, however. Callahan's catchwords sometimes require emendation of the text,²² and Perrin's principal interest is in the catchwords in a hypothetical Syriac *Vorlage*.²³ Some of Dehandschutter's proposed links consist merely of repetition of a common word such as 'man' (GTh 57–58; 106–107),²⁴ or 'disciple' (18–22),²⁵ or 'place' (67–68).²⁶ Here, a more cautious approach will be taken, not including every possible link, but only the most probable. It must be borne in mind at the outset that there is inevitably a degree of uncertainty in the process, given that we are for most of *Thomas* dealing with a translation. The present discussion will focus on linkages of three different kinds, marked with a letter in the list below:²⁷

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- 18 K.L. King, 'Kingdom in the Gospel of Thomas,' *Forum* 3 (1987), 48–97 (59).
 19 In addition to the scholars cited below, see also Kasser, *L'Évangile selon Thomas*, 155–157.
 20 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 100–102.
 21 See the opening remarks on each saying in Nordsieck's commentary, *Thomas-Evangelium*.
 22 Callahan, 'No Rhyme or Reason'.
 23 Perrin, *Thomas and Tatian*; see in response, Williams, 'Alleged Syriac Catchwords', and Gathercole, *Composition of the Gospel of Thomas*, 24–104 (esp. 40–42).
 24 Dehandschutter, 'Les Paraboles de l'Évangile selon Thomas', 211–212. Cf. A. Lindemann, 'Zur Gleichnisinterpretation im Thomas-Evangelium', *ZNW* 71 (1980), 214–243 (216), on GTh 7–8.
 25 Dehandschutter, 'Paraboles de l'Évangile selon Thomas', 211.
 26 B. Dehandschutter, 'La Parabole de la perle (Mt 13:45–46) et l'Évangile selon Thomas', *ETL* 55 (1979), 243–265 (246 n. 10).
 27 Cf. Callahan, 'No Rhyme or Reason', 412: 'matching catchphrases, lexical and conceptual linking of sayings and sequences of sayings, the eclectic inclusion of earlier sayings collections, and the intercalation of sayings as a way of offering implicit intratextual commentary'.

C: a 'catchword' link, i.e. a purely or principally linguistic connection

T: a thematic connection

F: a form in common (parable, *impossibile*)

0-1	C	'these sayings/words'.
1-2	C/T	'find' (catchword εὐρίσκω in Greek <i>Vorlage</i> ?).
2-3	T	reigning/ kingdom.
3-4	C	'live', and 'son'/ 'child'.
5-6	C/T	'hidden'/ 'revealed'; variations on the hidden-revealed aphorism.
6-7	C/T?	'eating'/ diet.
8-9	C/F	'full'/ 'fill'; two parables. ²⁸
8-9-10	C	'cast'. ²⁹
9-10	C	'behold'.
10-11	T?	destruction of the cosmos?
11-12	T	'heaven'.
12-13	C/T	'righteous'/ 'just'; theme of apostles' status. ³⁰
13-14	C	'mouth'.
15-16	C?	'father'. ³¹
18-19	C/T	'know', 'will not taste death'; beginning/end, protology/eschatology.
20-22	C	'... are like ...'. ³²
20-21	F	parables.
21-22	C/T	'disciples' like 'children'.
22-23	C/T	'one', 'single one'; oneness.
25-26	C/T	'brother' and 'eye'; relation to brother. ³³

28 M. Carrez, 'Quelques aspects christologiques de l'Évangile de Thomas', in F. van Segbroeck, et al., eds. *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (BETL 100; Leuven: Leuven University Press/ Peeters, 1992), 2263-2276 (2274-2275), talks about six 'ensembles' of parables: A: 8-9; B: 20-21; C: 56-58 (more tenuously); D: 62-65; F: 96-98; H: 107-110.

29 R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La cristología del Evangelio de Tomás', in idem, *Estudios sobre el Evangelio de Tomás* (Fuentes Patrísticas, Estudios 2; Madrid: Editorial Ciudad Nueva, 1997), 207-269 (245).

30 See commentary below, on the controverted relationship between GTh 12-13 ('Appended Note', between the comments on the respective sayings).

31 The word is common in *Thomas*, however, and so may not be significant. The referent is also different in each case.

32 A different Coptic word is used in GTh 21, however.

33 B.E. Gärtner, *The Theology of the Gospel of Thomas* (London: Collins/New York: Harper,

26–27	C/T	‘see’.
27–28	C	‘world’.
28–29	C	‘flesh’. ³⁴
31–36	F	aphorisms/ impossibilia. ³⁵
32–33	C	‘hidden’.
36–37	C/T	‘dressing’/ ‘undressing’; clothing.
38–39	T?	seeking/ finding/ hidden.
39–40	T?	Jews/ Judaism?
47–48	C	‘two’/ ‘one’.
48–49	T	‘one’/ ‘solitary’. ³⁶
49–50	C/T	‘elect’, pre-existent kingdom/light. ³⁷
50–51	C	‘rest’.
51–53	F	disciples talk of traditional theme; Jesus’ radical reply.
51–52	C	‘dead’.
52–53	T?	Jewish(-Christian) themes.
55–56	C?/T	worthiness (common ἄξιος in Greek <i>Vorlage?</i>).
58–61	C/T	‘live’ (59–61: death and life; 59–60 ‘while alive’).
60–61	C?/F/T	eating/ ‘rest’ (catchword ἀνάπαυσις in Greek <i>Vorlage?</i>); vignettes.
63–65	F/T	‘A man ...’; ³⁸ parables about commerce. ³⁹
64–65	C	‘servant’, ‘master’.
65–66	T?	rejection?
68–69	C/F/T	‘blessed’, ‘persecuted’—beatitudes about persecution. ⁴⁰

1961), 28–29, a ‘correspondence, in the theme of the relationship to one’s brother’. Montefiore & Turner add GTh 24 to 25–26 seeing a common themes of ‘darkness, the eye and beam in the eye’ (*Thomas and the Evangelists*, 80).

- 34 Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 28. Possibly also link in theme: Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 129.
- 35 GTh 36 in Greek includes the *impossibile*, ‘Who can add to your stature?’ On *impossibilia*, see H.D. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49)* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 161, 629.
- 36 Dehandschutter, ‘Parabole de la perle’, 246.
- 37 Cf. Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 29: the common theme of ‘the Gnostic’s place of origin’.
- 38 Dehandschutter, ‘Paraboles de l’Évangile selon Thomas’, 212.
- 39 Sevrin, ‘Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses’, 425–439; Carrez, ‘Quelques aspects christologiques’, 2274–2275.
- 40 P.J. Hartin, ‘The Search for the True Self in the Gospel of Thomas, the Book of Thomas and the Hymn of the Pearl’, *HTS* 55 (1999), 1001–1021 (1001–1003) probably stretches the text to say 67–70 = common theme of ‘persecution and a knowledge of oneself’.

73–75	T	many/ large vs few/ small contrast.
73–74	C	‘lord’.
74–75	C	‘many’.
75–76	T?	‘solitary’, ‘one’? ⁴¹
76–77	C?	‘finding’ (Coptic order only?). ⁴²
77–78	C?	‘come out’.
78–79	C	‘truth’.
81–82	T	reigning/ kingdom.
83–84	C/T	‘image’, ‘revelation’; image theology; link to Adam in 85?
91–92	T	criticism of disciples’ ignorance.
92–95	F	aphorisms/ proverbs.
96–98	C/F/T	parables of the kingdom of the Father. ⁴³
96–97	C	‘woman’.
98–99	C	‘kingdom of my/ the father’.
100–101	C	‘give’, ‘to me’.
103–104	C?	‘come’.
105–106	C	‘son’.
108–109	T	hiddenness/ revelation. ⁴⁴
109–111	C	‘finding’.
110–111	C/T	‘world’ (+earth?). ⁴⁵
113–114	C	‘kingdom’.

It is difficult to know how many of these were intended by the author or editor. It is sometimes thought that catchwords are intended to facilitate memorisation and recall,⁴⁶ but it is hard to see how, for example, ‘dead’ at the beginning of GTh 51 would help the recall of GTh 52, where ‘dead’ appears at the end, especially considering that death is such a common theme in *Thomas*. On the other hand, in GTh 50–51, ‘rest’ (ἀναπαύσις) links the end of the former saying to the beginning of the next: this would thus be a useful catchword.⁴⁷ Another

41 Dehandschutter, ‘Parabole de la perle’, 246.

42 Dehandschutter, ‘Parabole de la perle’, 246.

43 R. Doran, ‘A Complex of Parables: GTh 96–98’, *NovT* 29 (1987), 347–352; Dehandschutter, ‘Paraboles de l’Évangile selon Thomas’, 211–212; the three parables constitute ‘eine Einheit’, according to Helderman, ‘Manichäische Züge im Thomasevangelium’, 486.

44 Dehandschutter, ‘Paraboles de l’Évangile selon Thomas’, 212.

45 Dehandschutter, ‘Parabole de la perle’, 246 n. 10.

46 Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 13; Pasquier & Vouga, ‘Le genre littéraire et la structure argumentative’, 336.

47 Cf. also GTh 60–61 where repose/ rest (not the same in Coptic, but probably again ἀνά-

form of linkage which would not be so evident to readers/ hearers consists of the few examples of common order between *Thomas* and the Synoptics: GTh 32–33 (par. Matt. 5.14–15);⁴⁸ GTh 44–45 (par. Matt. 12.31–35);⁴⁹ GTh 65–66 (cf. also GTh 64 in Matt. 22.1–10), and GTh 92–94 (par. Matt. 7.7, 6, 7–8); next to 92–94 is more Sermon on the Mount material, in GTh 95 (cf. Lk. 6.30–35).⁵⁰ Kasser notes a certain amount of material as related to particular sections of the Synoptic Gospels.⁵¹

8.4 Conclusion and Implications for Interpretation

Even though many of these catchwords may be accidental, there is clearly a much greater proportion of links than one would conventionally find in a piece of literature: even compared with the similar *Gospel of Philip*, the catchwords are much more extensive in *Thomas*.⁵² This may indicate that context is significant, though not necessarily determinative, for the interpretation. Two opposite extremes may be contrasted here. Lindemann, for example, considers that the pearl in the parable in GTh 76 might be identified as Jesus as he is characterised in GTh 77, a view that most interpreters would regard as over-contextualising.⁵³ On the other hand, on GTh 36–37, Robinson insists that GTh 36 be understood purely on its own terms because *Thomas* is a ‘Sayings Gospel’, a genre which—he argues—demands that sayings be treated separately.⁵⁴ The

παυσις in Greek) links the end of GTh 60 with the beginning of GTh 61. Another, less compelling instance is the link between the end of GTh 7 and the beginning of GTh 8, where the catchword ‘man’ is not a very striking item of vocabulary, and one which also is very common in *Thomas*.

- 48 Wilson, ‘Thomas and the Growth of the Gospels’, 245; McArthur, ‘Gospel according to Thomas’, 63.
- 49 Wilson, ‘Thomas and the Growth of the Gospels’, 243.
- 50 McArthur, ‘Gospel according to Thomas’, 65, is right to comment that there are ‘a few minor groupings which parallel the Synoptics’.
- 51 Kasser, *L’Évangile selon Thomas*, 155 (see ‘Section A’).
- 52 Isenberg, ‘Tractate 3: The Gospel according to Philip. Introduction’, 132, for example, remarks that they are confined to particular parts.
- 53 Lindemann, ‘Gleichnisinterpretation’, 220.
- 54 J.M. Robinson, ‘A Pre-Canonical Greek Reading in Saying 36’, in idem, *The Sayings Gospel Q: Collected Essays* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 845–883 (esp. 856–865), and 858: ‘P.Oxy. 655 is part of a sayings gospel, the *Gospel of Thomas*, where each saying stands on its own feet’. Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 504, similarly states that the running ‘Jesus said ...’ indicates that each saying should be taken on its own.

present commentary will aim to avoid these extremes, both eschewing dogmatic assertion about what a 'Sayings Gospel' may or may not entail, while also attempting to steer clear of a kind of contextual parallelomania.

The Genre of *Thomas*¹

The topic of *Thomas*'s genre is rarely discussed, although scholars often make passing remarks on the subject. The various suggestions proposed are not all mutually exclusive, indeed some of them may overlap or even be synonymous, depending on individual scholars' definitions. Suggestions include: 'list',² anthology,³ *florilegium*,⁴ gnomologion/ chreia-collec-

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- 1 **Bibliography:** Lelyveld, *Logia*, 3–10; J.-M. Sevrin, 'Remarques sur le genre littéraire de l'Évangile selon Thomas (II,2)', in L. Painchaud & A. Pasquier, eds. *Les textes de Nag Hammadi et le problème de leur classification. Actes du colloque tenu à Québec du 15 au 19 septembre 1993* (Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi; Louvain: Peeters, 1995), 263–278; M.W. Meyer, 'The Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas', in idem, *Secret Gospels: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas and the Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003), 39–53 (49–51); Pasquier & Vouga, 'Le genre littéraire et la structure argumentative', 335–362; E.E. Popkes, *Das Menschenbild des Thomasevangeliums* (WUNT 206; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 7–11; Perrin & Skinner, 'Recent Trends in Gospel of Thomas Research', 66–70; Poirier, *L'Évangile selon Thomas* (NH II,2; P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655), 103–117.
 - 2 E.g. Patterson, 'View from Across the Euphrates', 414. See discussion of this in W.H. Kelber, 'The Verbal Art in Q and Thomas: A Question of Epistemology', in R.A. Horsley, ed. *Oral Performance, Popular Tradition, and Hidden Transcript in Q* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 25–42 (38–39); Kelber considers *Thomas* a 'list', though noting that this is not the work's own definition of itself, which is as a 'sayings gospel' (combining the Prologue and *subscriptio*): see W.H. Kelber, 'In the Beginning were the Words: The Apotheosis and Narrative Displacement of the Logos', *JAAR* 58 (1990), 69–98 (78–80), and see bibliography for discussion of genre of 'list'; cf. also J.D. Crossan, 'Lists in Early Christianity', *Semeia* 55 (1991) 235–243. Patterson accepts Crossan's classification of *Thomas* as a list: see S.J. Patterson, 'The Gospel of (Judas) Thomas and the Synoptic Problem', in P. Foster, A. Gregory, J.S. Kloppenborg & J. Verheyden, eds. *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem: Oxford Conference, April 2008: Essays in Honour of Christopher M. Tuckett* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole, MA: Peeters, 2011), 783–808.
 - 3 G.C. Stead, 'New Gospel Discoveries', *Theology* 62 (1959), 321–327 (325); K.M. Woschitz, 'Das Theologoumenon "den Anfang entdecken" (σωλην γαρ εβολ ηταρχη) im koptischen "Evangelium nach Thomas" (Logion 18: NHC II 84,9–17)', in N. Brox & A. Felber, eds. *Anfänge der Theologie. FS J.B. Bauer* (Graz: Styria, 1987), 139–153 (139).
 - 4 Votaw, 'The Oxyrhynchus Sayings of Jesus', 84; Sevrin, 'Remarques sur le genre littéraire', 278: 'un florilège d'enseignements de Jésus', in fact, 'un florilège inorganisé', also emphasising that the form has the intention of provoking the reader to investigate further. See also idem, 'L'évangile selon Thomas: Paroles de Jésus et révélation gnostique', 284–286, and idem,

tion,⁵ ‘testimony book’,⁶ ‘wisdom gospel’,⁷ sayings-collection,⁸ sayings Gospel,⁹ *logoi Sophon*,¹⁰ sentence-collection¹¹ and Gospel.¹² None of these is especially problematic, but some designations go further and account for more of *Thomas*’s features than others do.

‘List’ is accurate to some extent, but suffers from a lack of close analogies in near contexts. The only other work which Crossan mentions in his discussion of ‘Sayings lists’ is Q, which is clearly not a list, containing as it does a considerable number of narrative sections. Other lists noted by Crossan, such as the miracle list in *Epistula Apostolorum* 4–5, the parable list in *Apocryphon of James* 8,1–10 are not comparable as they are extremely short, and embedded in other works. The same is true of the sayings list in *Dialogue of the Saviour* 139,8–13, which notes only three sayings in note form rather than in full. The classification of *Thomas* as a ‘wisdom gospel’ also runs into difficulties; such a designation implies that there were other ‘wisdom gospels’ around, such that *Thomas* could be identified as belonging with them. If Q existed, it is far from clear that it would have been classed as a Gospel.

James Robinson has been the great advocate of the ‘Gattung’ of *Logoi sophon*, or ‘Words of the Wise’, again for Q and *Thomas*, on the basis of other collections of sayings such as Proverbs, Mark 4 and Mishnah *Abot*.¹³ He makes the jump, however, from saying that ‘the term *logoi* seems related to collections of sayings’ to the conclusion that this seems ‘thus to point toward *logoi* as a designation for the Gattung of such collections’.¹⁴ There seems to be no positive reason to make

‘Thomas, Q et le Jésus de l’histoire’, 469. Baarda, ‘The Gospel of Thomas’, 57, refers to *Thomas* as a florilegium on analogy with the *Sentences of the Syriac Menander*, the *Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, and the *Sentences of Sextus*.

5 J.S. Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 289–306, on gnomologia in general, and 291, 301, 305–306 on *Thomas*.

6 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 86.

7 Patterson, ‘View from Across the Euphrates’, 416.

8 Pasquier & Vouga, ‘Genre littéraire’, 336; Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 219.

9 Kelber, ‘In the Beginning’, 79.

10 J.M. Robinson, ‘LOGOI SOPHON: On the Gattung of Q’, in J.M. Robinson & H. Koester, *Trajectories through Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 71–113 (103). Cf. Meyer, ‘Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas’, 43: *Thomas* ‘finds its generic place among the early Christian traditions, oral or written, frequently described as *logoi* ... or *logia* ...’.

11 M. Mees, ‘Einige Überlegungen zum Thomasevangelium’, *Vetera Christianorum* 2 (1965), 151–163 (152–153).

12 As in the colophon and patristic testimonia.

13 Cf. also Lelyveld, *Logia*, 3–10.

14 Robinson, ‘LOGOI SOPHON’, 87.

this jump, however. Robinson's conclusion that 'Logoi' eventually functions as a 'title' seems largely conjectural.¹⁵

Perhaps more promising are 'anthology' or 'florilegium' (the latter is merely the Latin calque of the former), gnomologion, or 'testimony book' (e.g. 4Q174 and 4Q175),¹⁶ and there are numerous anthologies in Greek literature as well: some are excerpts of *bons mots*, or of particular authors (Euripides features prominently), and one can find anthologies on particular subjects, such as money, and the advantages and disadvantages of wives!¹⁷ It is not clear that these are appropriate analogies, however, since this nomenclature strongly implies an explicit reference to a *selection* of material. And while the *Gospel of Thomas* might appear that way to us, it is not clear that that is how the author or editor viewed the work. Unlike the fourth Gospel's claim that there were many other events which could have been included in it (Jn 21.25), *Thomas* presents his Gospel as a much more definitive and complete document in the *Prologue*: 'These are the secret sayings which the living Jesus spoke ...'.¹⁸ Although it may seem like a fine distinction, a generic designation which uses the language of *collection*, rather than *selection* is probably more appropriate. (It should be remembered that the second element in anthology/ florilegium/ gnomologion has nothing to do with 'sayings', but comes from Gk λέγω/ Lat. *lego*, 'choose', 'cull'.)

Probably the best answer to the problem of *Thomas*'s genre lies in elements from the remaining options. These can be boiled down to two main genres, (1) *Gospel*, and (2) chreia-, sentence-, or sayings-collection.¹⁹

15 Robinson, *LOGOISOPHON*, 95.

16 J.A. Fitzmyer, "'4QTestimonia" and the New Testament', in idem, *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (London: G. Chapman, 1971), 59–89. On the terminology of florilegium, as applied to the Dead Sea Scrolls, see G.J. Brooke, 'From Florilegium or Midrash to Commentary: The Problem of Re-Naming an Adopted Manuscript', in idem & J. Hogenhaven, eds. *The Mermaid and the Partridge: Essays from the Copenhagen Conference on Revising Texts from Cave Four* (STDJ 96; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 129–150. I am grateful to George Brooke for his advice on this matter.

17 H. Chadwick, 'Florilegium', *RAC* 7.1131–1159 is still a very helpful survey. See 1132–1133 for the instances noted above.

18 It is possible that a distinction is implied between the secret sayings included in *Thomas* and the public sayings known elsewhere, but 'secret' in the Prologue here probably does not primarily (or only) mean 'private' but rather secret in *meaning*.

19 Poirier's suggestion (*L'Évangile selon Thomas* (NH II,2; P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655), *Témoin de la théologie chrétienne primitive?*, 116–117) that *Thomas* belongs to a genre of sayings with hidden meaning is possible, though perhaps too specific as a genre.

Gospel

There is a strong *prima facie* case for the designation of *Thomas* as a Gospel. First, much of the teaching of Jesus in *Thomas* overlaps with material in the Synoptic Gospels (rather than with epistles or apocalypses). There are of course considerable differences from the Synoptics, not least in *Thomas*'s lack of narrative framework, but there are also important similarities. *Thomas* fits in well with the helpfully flexible definition of Gregory and Tuckett: 'As an overarching criterion, we have tended to accept the distinction that many might instinctively make, separating "Gospels" from other early Christian works (e.g. letters of apostles, or accounts of the history of the early Church) on the basis that "Gospels" make at least some claim to give direct reports of the life and/or teaching of Jesus, but taking "life and teaching" broadly enough to include accounts purporting to give teaching given by Jesus after his resurrection.'²⁰ Secondly, the Coptic text has the title in its *subscriptio*, and there is a considerable amount of patristic evidence for the use of this title, beginning with (?Ps.-)Hippolytus early in the third century (see above § 3, 'Named Testimonia'). On the assumption that it post-dates Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and perhaps also the *Gospel of Mary*, there are already various Gospels in existence when *Thomas* was written; it is easy to see how *Thomas* would be recognised as having formal similarities with its predecessors. Thirdly, *Thomas* shares with other Gospels a 'gospel' in the sense of a saving message: just as John's Gospel is 'written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name' (Jn 20.31), so also *Thomas* is written not merely to offer guidance for wise living, but to give a means of transcending death (GTh 1).

These observations render invalid three of the common criticisms leveled at identifying *Thomas* as a Gospel. (i) *Thomas* does not comport with the *content* of the Gospel genre because it is 'advice' rather than 'news'.²¹ As we have seen, however, *Thomas* does claim to give knowledge of *saving* revelation; moreover it does claim to be 'news' in that its revelation purports to have been secret—eye has not seen it, nor has ear heard it, etc. (GTh 17). (ii) *Thomas* does not comport with the narrative form of the NT Gospels. As Robinson has put it: 'it is clear that *The Gospel of Thomas* was hardly designated by its original author or compiler as a *Gospel*. Rather he or she would have called it a collection of

20 A.F. Gregory & C.M. Tuckett, 'New Editions of Non-Canonical Gospels', *Theology* 111 (2008), 178–184 (180).

21 Wright, *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus*, 29.

sayings.²² Elsewhere, however, Robinson can call *Thomas* a ‘sayings gospel’,²³ and the earlier statement implies a stability to the Gospel genre which is not evident in the second century. (iii) Relatedly, and as is implied by Robinson, ‘Gospel’ is not part of the original designation of the work. We do not know this, however, and the manuscript evidence and patristic testimonia may suggest the contrary.

Sentence Collection/ Chreia Collection

Thomas might also be seen as a ‘chreia collection’ or ‘sentence collection’. On the one hand, some collections such as the *Sentences of Sextus* (although probably roughly contemporaneous with *Thomas*) have the disadvantage that they are merely γνῶμαι, i.e. single sentences expressing a complete thought.²⁴ On the other hand, there are some clear similarities. Sentence collections such as those of *Sextus* can easily tolerate the juxtaposition of unrelated maxims alongside connections made by theme or catchword.²⁵ Some of the closest analogies to *Thomas* are the sentence collections of Epicurus, the *Kuriai doxai* and the *Vaticanae sententiae*.²⁶ Pasquier & Vouga note as parallels the *Manual of Epictetus*, the *Maxims and Sentences of Epicurus*, of Marcus Aurelius, of Porphyry, and the *Sentences of Sextus*.²⁷ We can take the *Kuriai doxai* of Epicurus as an example of a sentence collection similar to *Thomas*:

- (i) Comparable length in total. *Thomas* consists of about 3000 words in Coptic, to the approx. 1500 in the *Kuriai doxai* and 2500 in the Vatican sentence collection.²⁸

22 J.M. Robinson, *The Secrets of Judas: The Story of the Misunderstood Disciple & His Lost Gospel* (New York: Harper Collins, 2006), 75–76; similarly, Wright, *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus*, 29: the ‘Gnostic’ writings such as *Thomas* ‘manifestly belong to a different genre’.

23 J.M. Robinson, ‘Foreword’, in J.S. Kloppenborg, M.W. Meyer, S.J. Patterson & M.G. Steinhauser, eds. *Q-Thomas Reader* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1990), vii–x (ix).

24 For this definition of γνῶμαι, see T. Morgan, *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 86. I am grateful to Teresa Morgan for her help in grappling with some of the issues in the discussion of *Thomas*’s genre.

25 M.L. Turner, *The Gospel According to Philip: The Sources and Coherence of an Early Christian Collection* (NHMS 38; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 114, characterises *Sextus* this way.

26 Noted by Kloppenborg, *Formation of Q*, 293.

27 Pasquier & Vouga, ‘Genre littéraire’, 337

28 The Vatican sayings are the *Kuriai doxai* (1440 words) with an additional 1174 words.

- (ii) Comparable length of individual sections. The *Kuriai doxai* average c. 37 words in length and the *Vatican sentences* c. 32; *Thomas* averages c. 26.
- (iii) Similar kind of introduction. Just as *Thomas* has an opening two or three sayings setting out its stall, the *Kuriai doxai* begin with four opening sentences which contain the principal statements about Epicurean pleasure:

KD 1: That which is blessed and incorruptible has no trouble himself and brings no trouble to another; hence he is exempt from movements of anger and partiality, for every such movement implies weakness.

KD 2: Death is nothing to us; for the body, when it has been resolved into its elements, has no feeling, and that which has no feeling is nothing to us.

KD 3: The magnitude of pleasure reaches its limit in the removal of all pain. When pleasure is present, so long as it is uninterrupted, there is no pain either of body or of mind or of both together.

KD 4: Continuous pain does not last long in the flesh; on the contrary, pain, if extreme, is present a very short time, and even that degree of pain which barely outweighs pleasure in the flesh does not last for many days together. Illnesses of long duration even permit of an excess of pleasure over pain in the flesh.

The various characterisations of the *Kuriai doxai*, such as Lucretius' *patria praecepta* (*DRN* 3.9–13), Cicero's *ratae sententiae* (*Fin.* 2.7.20) could equally apply to *Thomas*.

Conclusion

It is suggested here, then, that *Thomas* is of mixed genre. It belongs in the category of 'Gospel', but the form of Jesus' teaching is quite different from that found in the canonical Gospel *narratives*, such that there is a focus on Jesus' *sententiae*. As a result, Kelber's view of *Thomas's* self-presentation as a 'sayings Gospel' is a helpful one.²⁹ In this respect, it is notable that the *Gospel of Thomas* comports with a tendency in the second century to see Jesus as a teacher: this is true both among non-Christians such as Galen, Lucian and Mara bar Sarapion,³⁰ but also among some second-century Christian writers

29 Kelber, 'In the Beginning were the Words', 79.

30 Galen writes of the 'school of Moses and Christ' (*On the Differences between Pulses* 2.4);

who inasmuch as they preserve Gospel material primarily preserve sayings (e.g. 2 *Clement*, Justin, 1 *Apol.* 15–17).³¹

There is perhaps more research which might be undertaken into *Thomas's* genre, as there are complexities involved which have only been touched upon in this brief treatment here. For example, Kelber has suggested that there may be a difference between *Thomas's* assessment of itself, and how it might best be classified by modern scholars.³² A further challenge concerns when 'form' or 'genre' ends, and 'content' begins: one might wonder whether it is legitimate to include topics like 'wisdom' or even 'Gospel' in the sense of 'good news' in a description of genre.

Lucian calls Jesus a law-giver and a sophist (*Peregrinus* 13); Mara bar Sarapion refers to the 'new laws' which Jesus, 'the wise king', instituted.

31 I am grateful to my colleague, James Carleton Paget, for pointing this out to me.

32 Kelber, 'In the Beginning were the Words', 78–80.

The Religious Outlook of *Thomas*¹

A central problem for scholarship on *Thomas* has been to identify its theology or religious outlook. This question has elicited a number of answers, in part because of *Thomas*'s enigmatic content, its form and its brevity. As Schröter has remarked, *Thomas* has been taken variously to be a document of Gnosticism, or of Jewish-Christian encratism, or of wisdom theology, or as an expression of social radicalism.² Others have summarised *Thomas* as focused upon 'unitive mysticism',³ or as a Valentinian product,⁴ or as 'an "orthodox" text from early Syrian Christianity'.⁵ Scholars have often attempted to align *Thomas* with a particular school of thought, and have aimed to fill in the gaps with the help of literature from that school. The difficulty, however, is that *Thomas* does not fit neatly (or even approximately) into any previously known *haireisis*. It is therefore important, at least in the first instance, to look at *Thomas* as far as possible on its own terms, even if there are limits to this, as Uro rightly notes.⁶ The aim here is to identify, if not a tidy theology, then at least *Thomas*'s central

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- 1 **Bibliography:** General treatments include Gärtner, *Theology*; Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 79–116; Haenchen, 'Literatur', 316–337; Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 101–135; Uro, *Thomas*; Popkes, *Menschenbild*; J. Schröter, 'Die Herausforderung einer theologischen Interpretation des Thomasevangeliums', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 435–460; J.W. Jipp, 'Death and the Human Predicament, Salvation as Transformation, and Bodily Practices in 1 Corinthians and the Gospel of Thomas', in M.F. Bird & J. Willitts, eds. *Paul and the Gospels: Christologies, Conflicts and Convergences* (London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 242–266; Perrin & Skinner, 'Recent Trends in Gospel of Thomas Research', 70–77; M. Grosso, 'A Matter of Life and Death: Theological Refractions of a Literary Motive in the Gospel of Thomas', in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (BETHL; Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 549–562.
 - 2 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 124: 'Man hat es als gnostisch, als judenchristlich-enkratisch, als weisheitlich oder als Ausdruck eines Sozialradikalismus gedeutet.'
 - 3 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 105.
 - 4 L. Cerfaux, 'Les Parables du Royaume dans l'Évangile de Thomas', in idem, *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux: études d'exégèse et d'histoire religieuse de Monseigneur Cerfaux* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1962), III.61–80 (76–80), is one of only a few scholars who take *Thomas* to be Valentinian.
 - 5 E.g. DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 7.
 - 6 Uro, *Thomas*, 4.

concerns as well as its more ambiguously articulated themes. The rough sketch here is of course dependent upon various points of interpretation argued for in the commentary below.

10.1 Theological Framework

Thomas's theology is fundamentally a soteriology: 'Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death' (GTh 1). It is not primarily about common wisdom, as alleged both by some members of the Jesus Seminar, as well as by one of their staunchest critics.⁷ For *Thomas*, the souls of the elect had their origins in the realm of light, the kingdom of the Father (GTh 49–50). *Thomas* provides instruction in how to return to that kingdom of the Father.

The Father

The Father is in one respect a prominent figure in *Thomas*, being mentioned 21 times.⁸ On the other hand, it is striking that he is hardly a *character* at all; he is not identified as an agent in any significant way, in contrast to Jesus. The most that can probably be said is that he is characterised by 'motion and rest' like the elect (GTh 50), as well as having an 'image of light' in GTh 83. He evidently has a 'will' (99), and of course a Son (GTh 61; 64; 99), but especially a kingdom (GTh 57; 76; 96–99; 113).

The Kingdom

Although the Synoptics talk of the kingdom as 'prepared' (Mk 10.40; Matt. 25.34; cf. Mk 10.40; Matt. 20.23), *Thomas* goes further, envisaging the kingdom as a pre-existent, paradisaic realm of light.⁹ It is certainly not a geographical location

7 See e.g. H. Taussig, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Case for Jesus the Teacher of Common Wisdom', *Forum* 10 (1994), 31–46, and on the other hand Wright, *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus*, 29: 'the main difference is that, whereas the canonical gospels are *news*, "Thomas" and the others are *advice*' (although Wright is correct that *Thomas* is not principally concerned with events).

8 Including GTh 101, but excluding 105.

9 On the kingdom, see E. Peretto, 'Loghia del Signore e Vangelo di Tommaso', *Rivista biblica* 24 (1976), 13–56 (34–38), B.F. Miller, 'A Study of the Theme of "Kingdom". The Gospel according to Thomas: Logion 18', *NovT* 9 (1967), 52–60, and especially King, 'Kingdom', 48–97, and H. Kvalbein, 'The Kingdom of the Father in the Gospel of Thomas', in J. Fotopoulos, ed. *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune* (NovTSupps 122; Leiden/ New York/ Köln: Brill, 2006), 203–230.

in the cosmos. It is closely associated with 'light' (49–50).¹⁰ The kingdom is inside the elect, and outside of them (3); they came from it and will return there (49). It can also be found (27.1; 49), known (46), and most of all, entered (22 *tris*; 99; 114; cf. 39; 64; 75); or one can be 'far from' it (82). When the disciples talk of the kingdom 'coming' (GTh 113), Jesus retorts that it is spread out everywhere (113): other traditional, futuristic language is avoided.¹¹ There is some sort of future expectation ('days are coming' in GTh 79), but this is not related specifically to the kingdom, and even the rolling up of the heavens and the earth do not have any effect upon the elect (GTh 11; 111).¹² The categories of 'now' and 'not yet' do not apply in *Thomas*, because the kingdom is an ever-present, primordial paradise (18–19).¹³ The kingdom does not belong to the rich and powerful, but to the poor (54) and child-like (22; 46).¹⁴ It is a place of primeval unity (22), and ought to be visible, though it is obscured by people's blindness (113).

Creation and the Fall

Understanding the creation of the world in *Thomas* presents certain difficulties. We should not expect a systematic account, and indeed we only have short and elusive fragments. On some occasions, the creator figure is referred to in feminine terms: Adam came from a 'great power and great wealth' (GTh 85), and it is some sort of 'true mother' who gave Jesus life (101). These (along with 'the Mother' in GTh 105) might be suggestive of the Spirit (cf. 44) as involved in creation, in two instances where it is clearly positive. It is tantalising, however,

10 Popkes, 'Ich bin das Licht', 660, sees them probably correctly as equivalents.

11 There is no reference to it 'coming' in the future (cf. Matt. 6.10/ Lk. 11.2/ *Did.* 8.2; 2 *Clem.* 5.5), or that one might 'inherit' it (cf. Matt. 25.34; 1 Cor. 6.9–10; 1 Cor. 15.50; Gal. 5.21; Eph. 5.5; Col. 1.12; Jas 2.5; Ignatius, *Eph.* 16.1; *Philad.* 2.3, and Polycarp, *Phil.* 5.3, citing 1 Cor. 6.9–10). As King remarks: 'the use of kingdom in the Gospel of Thomas is consistently non-eschatological, nonapocalyptic' (King, 'Kingdom', 52). Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 179, rightly comments that *Thomas* is not an exponent of realised eschatology. See further, Gathercole, 'The Heavens and the Earth Will Be Rolled up', 280–302.

12 Gathercole, 'The Heavens and the Earth Will Be Rolled up', 280–302.

13 Cf. A. Marjanen, 'Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?', in R. Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 107–139 (126): 'a new reality, the kingdom'.

14 Hence Patterson is correct to characterise the kingdom as countercultural: see S.J. Patterson, 'Wisdom in Q and Thomas', in L.G. Perdue, B.B. Scott & W.J. Wiseman, eds. *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1993), 187–221 (205, 220–221).

that GTh 101 has a lacuna at a key point. In addition to GTh 77 (on which see below), the only other place where one might see a creator is in GTh 89, but that saying is also enigmatic.

Whatever the truth about creation, the tragic reality of the present is the result of a fall. This is expressed in two main ways, which can be summarised as a 'falling apart' and a 'falling downward'. With respect to the former, Jesus states that, 'When you were one, you became two' (11), and this theme of division is picked up in a number of places. Jesus on the other hand 'comes from the undivided' (GTh 61.3), and is emphatically not 'a divider' (72). A conception of the fall as a separation appears in, among other places, the Valentinian myth, according to which the enthymesis of Sophia was removed from the pleroma and became Achamoth, an inferior form of Sophia (Irenaeus, *AH* 1.4.1), or as in another version, in which the Word is divided in two (*Tri. Trac.* 77,11–36). We will see that in *Thomas* the recovery of primordial unity is a key task in the discipleship of the elect.

As far as the 'downward' fall is concerned, the spirit descends into physical human bodies, as Jesus states: 'I am amazed at how this great wealth [sc. spirit] has made its home in this poverty [i.e. the body, the flesh]' (29). This is clearly related in some unspecified way to the fall of Adam, and his *death* (85).¹⁵ So there is a conception of a heavenly fall with mundane implications for human beings. None of this is connected explicitly with sin, however, a topic which plays a very small role in the *Gospel of Thomas*. The cause of this fall is unclear.

A number of options existed in *Thomas's* intellectual environment for why souls descended into bodies, many of which arise out of interpretations of the *Timaeus* and the *Phaedrus*.¹⁶ Alcinous lists four options: 'either following their turn in a numbered sequence, or by the will of the gods, or through intemperance, or through love of the body; body and soul, after all, have a certain affinity for one another, like fire and asphalt'.¹⁷ Iamblichus's *De Anima* 23 discusses various accounts of 'the activities which induce the soul to descend',

15 This is almost certainly a human Adam here, hence his death, and the reference to him (peculiarly) as associated with 'those born of woman' (GTh 46).

16 In addition to the discussions below, see J.M. Dillon, 'The Descent of the Soul in Middle Platonic and Gnostic Theory', in B. Layton, ed. *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism: 1. The School of Valentinus* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980), 357–364; idem, *The Middle Platonists: A Study of Platonism, 80 B.C. to A.D. 220* (London: Duckworth, 1977), 245–246, 293–294, 359–360, 375, and, especially on the impulses from Plato, B. Fleet, *Plotinus Ennead IV.8: On the Descent of the Soul into Bodies* (Las Vegas/ Zurich/ Athens: Parmenides, 2012), 145–149.

17 Alcinous, *Didaskalikos* 25.6; translation in J.M. Dillon, *Alcinous: The Handbook of Platonism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 34, and see 155–158 for commentary on the passage.

listing the following: a kind of desire for independence (Plotinus¹⁸); ‘flight from God’ (Empedocles), and ‘the rest which consists in change’ (Heraclitus), ‘derangement and deviation’ (the Gnostics), and ‘the erring judgment of a free will’ (Albinus).¹⁹ Iamblichus returns later to a very similar theme, where some Platonists are described as taking the view that there are multiple modes of descent (*De Anima* 26); in *De Anima* 27 Heraclitus’s view is repeated (souls must be in motion because it is an effort for them to stay still), and two opinions of Taurus or his followers are described, the completion of the number of souls in the universe, and the demonstration of the divine life (cf. Alcinous’s first two options?).²⁰ Other explanations include the soul’s intention to administer the material realm (Plutarch’s stranger;²¹ Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.8.4–5). Philo’s enigmatic explanation is that the soul was ‘not able to overcome a satiety with divine blessings.’²² The other distinction made is that between willing and unwilling descent (Iamblichus, *De Anima* 27).²³

Some of these are incompatible with *Thomas*. It is hard to imagine that for *Thomas*, the soul-spirit, being ‘great wealth’, could have had evil propensities or incompetence before its descent (the view attributed to Albinus or the Gnostics). Additionally, Alcinous’s last option, where there is an attraction between soul and body because of their mutual affinity (the view which he probably holds himself), probably does not do justice to the way in which *Thomas* portrays their rather more hostile relationship (see commentary on GTh 87 and 112 below). The problem of characterising *Thomas*’s own view is complicated further by imagery which defies systematisation: in GTh 57, the evil is sown among the good, whereas in 21.2–3 and 29, the good has taken up residence in what is alien. Two points which have not yet been brought into the discussion perhaps deserve mention. Firstly, the ‘all coming forth’ from Jesus in GTh 77 perhaps is suggestive of a fall of the light or pneumatic element, and not necessarily a positive act of creation. Secondly, the view attributed by Iamblichus to Heraclitus that ‘souls travel both the road up and the road down and that for them to remain in place is toil but to change is rest’ may

18 ‘Primal otherness’. Plotinus (*Enn.* 5.1.1) relates this primal otherness to a desire for independence and ‘audacity’ (*tolma*).

19 Tr. J.F. Finamore & J.M. Dillon, eds. *Iamblichus: De Anima. Text, Translation and Commentary* (Leiden/ Boston/ Köln: Brill, 2002), 49; see 48 for text, and 135–136 for commentary.

20 See Finamore & Dillon, *Iamblichus: De Anima*, 54–55 for text and translation; 151–153 for commentary.

21 Dillon, ‘The Descent of the Soul’, 358–359.

22 *Her.* 240; see Dillon, ‘Descent of the Soul’, 362–363.

23 Fleet, *Plotinus Ennead IV.8*, 150–151.

have something in common with *Thomas*:²⁴ ‘motion and rest’ are the ‘sign of the Father’ in the elect in GTh 50, and, as we have seen, GTh 77 talks of the all both ‘coming forth’ from Jesus (cf. the ‘road down’) and ‘extending to’ him (cf. the ‘road up’). Such connections must remain speculative, however.

The World

Uncertainty about the character of the fall is one reason for a degree of ambiguity in *Thomas* about the world, for which the Coptic uses the Greek loan word *κοσμος*.²⁵ On the one hand, *Thomas* seems very negative about the world: it is described as a corpse (GTh 56), its implied ‘death’ putting it at the very negative extreme of *Thomas*’s moral spectrum.²⁶ Some have seen this negativity as arising from a demiurge who is responsible for creation, for example in the reference to God/ god in the ‘Render unto Caesar’ pericope (GTh 100). On the other hand, Zöckler draws attention to the fact that according to GTh 24 the world can be enlightened,²⁷ and for Marjanen the world is the arena where salvation is possible for people, with the same creator making both the inside and the outside of the metaphorical cup (GTh 89).²⁸

As one proceeds through *Thomas*, it is the negative elements which come to the fore. One sees the ridiculousness of the kingdom being part of this world—in the air or the sea (GTh 3). Jesus has cast fire on the world in GTh 10, and GTh 16 repeats this idea, adding ‘sword and war’. GTh 21 may imply that the world belongs to other powers. The world is probably the implied object of ‘passing by’ in GTh 42. As noted, it is a corpse (56), and should be renounced (110). There is an overridingly negative impression here. If the world is to be

24 Iamblichus, *De Anima* 27: ὁδὸν τε ἄνω καὶ κάτω διαπορεύεσθαι τὰς ψυχὰς ὑπέλιγψε καὶ τὸ μὲν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἐπιμένειν κάματον εἶναι, τὸ δὲ μεταβάλλειν φέρειν ἀνάπαυσιν.

25 For a good discussion of the ambiguities, see Marjanen, ‘Is *Thomas* a Gnostic Gospel?’, noting that the world is the arena where salvation is possible for people (124), is a dangerous threat (126), the world *may* have once been good when created but now bad, ‘although this is nowhere explicitly stated’ (131).

26 Patterson, ‘View from Across the Euphrates’, 418, is a little too weak in talking of the world as ‘simply something dead ... and as such a distraction ... which one should rightly view as inferior and unworthy of devotion’. Better is Sellew’s stronger statement, that the world is the ‘locus of death’, and ‘both a mortal and a morbid entity’. See P. Sellew, ‘Death, Body, and the World in the Gospel of Thomas’, in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica* 31 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 530–534 (530). See further the discussion in the commentary below (*ad* GTh 1, ‘Notes’).

27 Zöckler, ‘Light within the Human Person’, 495–496; cf. ‘a person’s light is not only interrelated with the world but sustains it’ (499).

28 Marjanen, ‘Is *Thomas* a Gnostic Gospel?’, 124.

illuminated, it is only because it is dark in the first place. It may be that the positive illumination is confined to the world *qua* people: when Jesus stands in the midst of the world in GTh 28, there *κοσμος* is glossed in anthropological terms—as ‘them’—namely, the blind, empty and drunk who nevertheless have the capacity to repent.

It is interesting that, in contrast to the world, ‘the all’ came forth from Jesus and is identified with Jesus, and ‘the earth’ is the realm over which the kingdom is spread out (GTh 113). This may point to different realms, as has already been suggested (see further the commentary below). One can compare here the contrast between the world and ‘the all’ (as well as the Pleroma) in the *Treatise on the Resurrection* (46,34–39).²⁹

There is also a degree of ambiguity in the treatments of particular ‘worldly’ themes. Some are sharply rejected: the accumulation of wealth is frowned upon and commerce shunned (see e.g. GTh 63–65), as are the finely clothed but ignorant rulers of GTh 78. On the other hand, other items are treated merely as matters of indifference, such as clothes (36: ‘do not be concerned ...’) and diet (14: ‘eat whatever is set before you’): this almost certainly means there is no prohibition of eating meat.³⁰ The same is true of money *per se* in GTh 95.2, where giving to those who cannot give it back signals at the same time altruism and indifference to one’s own possession of money; similarly, one can without hesitation give Caesar back what belongs to him (100) because it holds no appeal to the true disciple.

The Body

Mirroring *Thomas’s* view of the world is the perspective on the body. There is certainly a stark contrast between the soul or spirit on the one side and the body or flesh on the other. (The terms spirit and soul do not seem clearly distinguished, nor do body and flesh.) As we saw in the discussion of the fall, Jesus expresses his amazement that such great wealth, viz. the spirit, has come to occupy a position of poverty, i.e. in the flesh (GTh 29.3). *Thomas* suggests that this cohabitation is an ill, however, as there is a woe pronounced upon the mutual dependence upon the flesh and soul in GTh 112. Less antithetically, there is a contrast between the external, physical image on the one hand, and

29 ‘Strong is the system of the Pleroma, but small is that which went forth (from it) and became the cosmos. But the All is that which is encompassed.’

30 Pace F.F. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins outside the New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), 110–156 (117): ‘eating of flesh was probably discouraged’; cf. S.L. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained* (Woodstock: Skylight, 2002), 12.

the pre-existent, spiritual image on the other (84), but not an opposition. It is just possible that the body is neutral in *Thomas's* mind. On the other hand, two factors might point in the direction of a more negative perspective. For one, the existence of the spirit in the body seems to correlate with the sense of alienation which is explained as being “two”—divided, rather than a whole unity. Another factor is that for some readers, the view of the *world* would have rubbed off on their view of the physical body: it is difficult to keep these too far apart. It is an outstanding question in the Platonism of the period whether the body is the negative ‘fetter’ that it is in the *Phaedo*,³¹ or in fact something less detrimental to the soul. Valentinians maintained that in the body and other created institutions, ‘the likeness of the divine is rather eclipsed than wholly obscured’, as Edwards has put it, in contrast to the sharper negativity of the Gnostics.³² *Thomas* does not seem to have taken a clear stance on this question, while tending in a negative direction.

The History of Israel

Moving to the more mundane sphere of history, there are only brief allusions in *Thomas* to Israel, which is perhaps seen as one of history’s unfortunate parentheses. As we have seen above, circumcision and ‘the Jews’ are characterised as straightforwardly negative (GTh 43 and 53; see above § 7.3, and commentary *ad locc.* below); the Pharisees (and Scribes) aim to prevent people from discovering the truth in GTh 39 and 102; Israel may well be the illegitimate vine which will be uprooted (GTh 40); the temple will be irrevocably destroyed (GTh 71). More positive is John the Baptist, but as in Matthew 11 and Luke 7 he is primarily the pinnacle of the old age, and inferior to anyone participating in Jesus’ kingdom (GTh 46).

Jesus and Revelation

It is probable that *Thomas* portrays Jesus as incarnate: he is fundamentally ‘light’ (GTh 77), but also entered the world as ‘flesh’ (GTh 28).³³ Although there is a sense in which the true disciple can be identified with Jesus (GTh 108) and the disciple *Thomas* should not even call Jesus ‘master’ (GTh 13), nevertheless in various ways Jesus retains a transcendence.³⁴ He is, for example, the agent

31 In Plato, *Phaed.* 67D, Socrates talks of the soul ἐκλυομένην ὡσπερ ἐκ δεσμῶν ἐκ τοῦ σώματος.

32 Edwards, ‘Gnostics and Valentinians’, 41.

33 This has sometimes been disputed, on the grounds that GTh 28’s language of Jesus being ‘manifest in the flesh’ could have docetic overtones. This is not really an easily defensible position, however: see commentary below on GTh 28.

34 Pace A. Marjanen, ‘The Portrait of Jesus in the *Gospel of Thomas*’, in J. Ma. Asgeirsson,

of election (GTh 23) and judgment (GTh 10; 16); the elect are *his* disciples (55), and are under his 'lordship' (90); all are to give him his due (GTh 100), and supremely, he is the light above all and the all in GTh 77. His relation to the supreme divine being is as son (99), and he also appears to receive life in some sense from another, feminine, spiritual being (105).³⁵

Central to the christology of *Thomas*, however, is his identity as revealer. In GTh 17 this is highlighted: 'I will give you what eye has not seen, and what ear has not heard, and what hand has not touched, nor has it ascended to the heart of man.' The theme is picked up in GTh 38, highlighting Jesus (and by implication the *Gospel of Thomas*) as the unique source of revelation. The format of the whole Gospel ('Jesus says ...', 'Jesus says ...', 'Jesus says ...') draws attention to just this point. The opening lines of the Gospel set out the significance of this revelation entrusted to *Thomas*, this revelation which must be rightly understood and which is the means to escaping death (Prologue + GTh 1).

(Self-)Knowledge

After a saying which expands upon the eschatological reward of escaping death (2), we have another statement which probably glosses the comprehension of Jesus' revelation: GTh 3, with its reference to *knowing* oneself. Knowledge is a central theme in the work. There are twenty-five instances of the word $\kappa\omicron\omicron\gamma\eta$ in *Thomas*, twenty of which are of theological significance, with five more casual instances.³⁶ There is also the Greek loan-word $\gamma\eta\omicron\varsigma$ in GTh 39.1, and six instances of Coptic $\epsilon\mu\epsilon$ (probably five theological in intent).³⁷ This is an extraordinary density of 'knowing' vocabulary, given that *Thomas* is such a short work. There is also a strong focus on the words of Jesus as the source of this knowledge (Prologue; GTh 38 etc.). The references specifically to 'self-knowledge' should not be understood as concerned with a kind of psychological introspection, 'self-knowledge' in the sense of knowing one's own

A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 209–219.

35 I am not persuaded that Jesus is in some sense the twin of the Father, as argued by A. Gagné, 'Jésus, la lumière et le Père Vivant. Principe de gémellité dans l'*Évangile selon Thomas*', *Apocrypha* 23 (2013), 209–221 (220–221), and earlier by R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La cristología del Evangelio de Tomás', in idem, *Estudios sobre el Evangelio de Tomás*, 207–269.

36 GTh 3.4 (*bis*); 3.5; 5.1; 16.2; 18.3; 19.4; 46.2; 51.2; 56.1; 67; 69.1; 78.3; 80.1; 91.2 (*bis*); 103; 105; 109.1; 109.2. Casual: 12.1; 31.2; 65.4; 65.7; 97.3?

37 GTh 3.4; 21.5; 43.2; (62.2); 97.3; 98.2.

personality, knowing one's abilities and identity in relation to and comparison with others. Rather, it is about knowing what you are in the grand theological scheme of things—knowing *about* yourself. It is probably something close to what is summarised in the words of the Valentinian Theodotus, who defines knowledge (γνῶσις) by way of the following questions:

Who were we and what have we become? Where were we and where are we now cast? To where are we hastening and from what have we been delivered? What is birth? What is rebirth?³⁸

(For further parallels and discussion, see the commentary below on GTh 3.4.) The answers to all these questions are thematised in *Thomas*: 'Who were we and what have we become?' We were spirits pure and simple but are now divided between spirit and body. 'Where were we and where are we now cast?' We were in the primordial light, but have now been thrown into a corpse-like world. 'To where are we hastening and from what have we been delivered?' We have been delivered already from ignorance, and are now heading for—or better, returning to—the perfected salvation which is already substantially possessed.

Salvation

This knowledge about oneself that Jesus reveals according to the *Gospel of Thomas*, then, is the necessary condition for salvation. This state of salvation is depicted in various ways as, for example, vision of the Father, ascendancy over the cosmos, being in a united state (on which more below) and perhaps predominantly, 'rest'. DeConick rightly emphasises the motif of visionary experience in places such as GTh 59,³⁹ and there is a good deal of visual language elsewhere in *Thomas* (e.g. GTh 5; 15; 27.2; 37; 38; 84), even if it is not *the* central idea in *Thomas*. There is still a strong emphasis on text and textual interpretation as precondition for salvation, and other soteriological motifs are also prominent. Ascendancy over the cosmos is a key goal for true disciples, expressed in terms of their reigning (GTh 2), and conversely of the obedience or service which elements of the world will render (19.2; 48; 106): additionally, 'the world is not worthy' of such disciples (56; 80; 111). 'Rest' is also another important result (51; 60; 90), signalling freedom from the temptations of the world and—ultimately—freedom from the labour of discipleship. It may be dangerous to

38 Clement, *Exc.* 78. 2.

39 A.D. DeConick, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 123–125.

assign primacy to any particular image, but there is certainly widespread reference in *Thomas* to the cultivation or creation of a unitary personhood or nature in the enacted discipleship of the elect, and this theme merits more extended treatment.

10.2 The Practice of Discipleship in *Thomas*

We have above characterised the fall as a kind of disintegration, which is more precisely a splitting of reality into binary opposites. There are various instances of this. The audience itself is 'two' (11), but GTh 22 especially focuses on the inside/ outside, above/ below, male/ female divisions. Existentially, loyalties are divided (47) and the disciples 'like the Jews' operate with inconsistent distinctions (43, 89). The 'house' can be divided (48; cf. 106). The distinction between the internal 'image' and the external 'likeness' (84) recalls the inside/ outside dichotomy, as does the false distinction between the inside and the outside of the cup (89). The need for Mary and women in general to be assimilated to maleness (114) reflects (though not exactly) the male/ female division in 22. There are three aspects to the resolution of these divisions, which might be called 'self-union', 'gender union' and 'christological union', and all these require actualisation by the disciple. As Frend has noted, salvation is not conceived as instantaneous, but rather results from 'advance towards spiritual perfection through the practice of ascetic virtues and repentance'.⁴⁰ Although one might quibble with some of Frend's terminology, the thought is a valid one. There are quite distinctive images which express this side of *Thomas's* theology. We will examine these individually before exploring their potential coherence.

Self-Union

GTh 70 is the one place in *Thomas* where the standard verb 'to save' (τοϋϛο) is employed. The saving element in this saying is described in the language of that which 'you bring forth from yourselves'. This probably refers to the true image, or spirit, hidden within. It is this real image which needs to come to the fore, and to take precedence over the external visible image presented in the body.⁴¹ A similar idea is perhaps found in the *Gospel of Judas*: 'Let whoever is [strong] among you men bring forth the perfect man and stand in the presence of my

40 Frend, 'Gospel of Thomas', 16.

41 For an extensive discussion of *Thomas's* image theology, see Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 215–347.

face' (*Gos. Jud.* 35,2–6); compare also *Gos. Mary* 18,15–17. Relatedly, the *Treatise on the Resurrection* comments that it is not our dead, external limbs which will be resurrected, but the true living members (*Treat. Res.* 47,38–48,3). 'Light' is another image used in *Thomas* to describe the saving, internal element (GTh 24).

GTh 22 similarly talks of 'when you fashion eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and an image in place of an image' as preconditions for entering the kingdom. Here, the construction of a new person is in some sense envisaged, although one might more properly label this a reunification and return to a primordial state. The conclusion—'an image in place of an image'—may well be a summary. The new, or true, person within needs to supersede the external physical person. The two 'images' correspond to those in GTh 84, the external 'likeness' as opposed to 'your images which came into being before you, and which neither die nor become manifest'. The latter needs to swallow up the former. If GTh 70 spoke of bringing forth and externalising the true image within, GTh 22 speaks slightly differently of *replacing* the external with the internal. The emphasis here is on the new/primordial identity, and the 'intentional reformation of the self' and creating an 'alternative symbolic universe'.⁴²

Somewhat different is the metaphor of 'becoming a child' (GTh 46; cf. 4, 21, 22, 37, 50), although this too connotes a primordial identity. In addition to the connotations of asexuality and innocence, there is the element of childlike nakedness without shame (37) evoking the Garden of Eden. This connection is also made by Philo:

"And the two were naked, both Adam and his wife, and they were not ashamed; but the serpent was the most subtle of all the beasts which were on the earth, which the Lord God had made" (*Gen.* 2.25; 3.1). The mind, which is clothed neither with vice nor with virtue, but really stripped of both, is naked, like the soul of an infant child ...

(*Leg.* 2.53)

Thomas probably similarly sees the child-like state as that possessed by the elect disciple who has reverted to primordial innocence. This is often, probably correctly, seen as a reversion to a primordial state construed as an *Adamic* identity; a specifically *Adamic* state is not always strongly emphasised in *Thomas*, however.

42 Valantasis, 'Is the Gospel of Thomas Ascetical?', 61, 64.

The 'child' imagery is linked to, and perhaps explicated by, two related motifs, those of the unifying of the divided self, and of stripping naked.

Jesus in GTh 22 commends suckling babies as models of discipleship, and then immediately talks in terms of 'when you make the two one', especially the inside/ outside, above/ below, and male/ female. Hence Jesus exhorts the disciples to participate in the resolution of the 'inside/ outside' dichotomy (cf. also 48 and 106).⁴³ There is some tension between unification and replacement (for example of 'outside' and 'inside'), but they have a similar field of reference.

The motif of 'stripping off one's clothes', noted in the parable in GTh 21, comes to prominence in GTh 37 as necessary for vision of Jesus. Whether this is achievable in the present or is eschatological is unclear. The precise contours of this expression are not especially relevant here: what is clear is that we have a removal of the external, which connects with (indeed, constitutes the negative element of) the replacement of the external with the internal in GTh 22.

We have here, then, various construals of the internal and external: (i) bringing forth what is internal, (ii) replacing the external with the internal, (iii) unifying external and internal, and (iv) removal of the external. It would be rather churlish to decry any inconsistencies that may be present here. For *Thomas*, (i) and (ii) are derived from the Gospel's image theology, and (iii) and (iv) are closely related to the 'child' motif. Across those two themes of the image and the child, we have noted that (iv) can be seen as a component of (ii), and—in particular—GTh 22 fuses both themes, with the child as the symbol of the unified image. Additionally, they are all related to the primordial state in which the eternal image within recovers its superiority over outward physical likeness (although (iii) is surprising here). It is interesting that Philo (in a passage already alluded to) can also combine these in the same primeval setting of Genesis 1–2:

Observe that it is not the woman who cleaves to the man, but on the contrary, the man to the woman, that is, the mind to sensation. For when the better, namely, the mind, is united to the worse, namely, sensation, it is then dissolved into the worse, that is the nature of the flesh, and

43 See J. Helderman, 'Die Herrenworte über das Brautgemach im Thomasevangelium und im Dialog des Erlösers', in W.L. Petersen, H.J. de Jonge & J.S. Vos, eds., *Sayings of Jesus: Canonical and Non-Canonical. Essays in Honour of Tjitze Baarda* (Leiden, Brill, 1997), 69–88 (78), on the theme of the experience of the pneumatics of rest and unification with the Father in the bridal chamber. According to Helderman, GTh 75 concerns the unification with the saviour and with the heavenly self that is exclusively for the fully ascetical and world-renouncing.

into sensation, the cause of the passions. But when the worse, namely sensation, follows the better, the mind, then it will no longer be flesh, but both will be mind

(*Leg.* 2.50)

Here, the mind is fused with the flesh (cf. iii), but then when the mind becomes the prominent element (cf. i) and the flesh follows the mind, then the flesh will also become mind (cf. ii and iv). There is a degree of coherence in *Thomas's* account here without it being systematic.

Gender Union

This leads us in to the theme of 'gender union': just as male/ female division is an aspect of the plight in *Thomas*, so the construction of an androgynous state is part of the solution. As Klijn puts it, humanity was originally one but became two by becoming male and female; the person needs to return to that unitary, single state.⁴⁴ Klijn draws attention to Philo as again illuminating this theme.⁴⁵ (There are also Syrian and Talmudic parallels, but these come from a later time.⁴⁶) Philo saw God as monad in contrast to the dyadic human (*Deus* 82–84), and in contrast to divisible matter (*Spec.* 3.180). In fact, however, humanity was originally not dyadic when existing as the uncontaminated image of God (*Opif.* 134).⁴⁷ This is associated by Philo with man/ woman, where man is 'mind' and woman 'sensation', as in the passage just quoted above (*Leg.* 2.50). A post-mortem existence in which the duality is resolved into its original unity awaits humanity.⁴⁸ *Thomas* is also similar in this respect to the *Gospel of Philip*, where the separation of 'Adam' and 'Eve' is imagined as a fall in need of reversal:⁴⁹

44 A.F.J. Klijn, 'The "Single One" in the Gospel of Thomas', *JBL* 81 (1962), 271–278 (272–273).

45 Klijn, 'Single One', 276.

46 Klijn, 'Single One', 275–276.

47 'And by this [viz. Gen. 2.7] he shows very clearly that there is a vast difference between man as he is formed now, and the man who formerly came into being according to the image of God. For one is now formed as perceptible, partaking of qualities, consisting of body and soul, man or woman, by nature mortal. But the other made according to the image was an idea, or a kind, or a seal, intelligible, incorporeal, neither male nor female, incorruptible by nature.'

48 *Vit. Mos.* 2.288: 'Some time later, when he (Moses) was to make his pilgrimage from earth to heaven, and abandon mortal life to be made immortal, he was summoned by the Father, who resolved him, being two—soul and body, into a unit, transforming completely his whole being into mind, pure as sunlight.'

49 Also close to *Thomas*, as an instance of the unity of the person is (*mutatis mutandis*) Ignatius's desire for the Magnesians' 'unity of flesh and spirit' (*Magn.* 1.2).

If the female had not separated from the male, the female and the male would not have died. The separation of male and female was the beginning of death. Christ came to heal the separation that was from the beginning and reunite the two, in order to give life to those who died through separation and unite them.

(*Gos. Phil.* 70,9–17)

A passage following shortly after this elaborates, and although it becomes fragmentary, it may suggest that the unification of Adam's soul and spirit are analogous to the salvation of the addressees of *Philip* (70,23–28). The *Gospel of the Egyptians* also makes the unification of male and female a condition of salvation much as does the *Gospel of Philip*.

The unity in *Thomas* may not be best construed as entirely genderless, but might be best described as 'male androgyny' (see commentary below on GTh 114). The way in which the male/ female distinction is treated in *Thomas*, however, does not necessarily enable us to identify the gender dynamics in the *Thomas* movement.⁵⁰

Christological Union

Finally, the resolution of cosmic division results in incorporation (perhaps even absorption) of the person into Jesus himself (hence, 'christological union'). As GTh 108 has it: 'Whoever drinks from my mouth will become like me. I myself will become him ...' (108.1–2). The degree of assimilation here is strong, reflecting more than a Pauline imagery of being *in* Christ, and closer to the kind of 'unitive mysticism'⁵¹ or ὁμοίωσις θεῶν in the strong sense in the *Gospel of Eve* or the *Gospel of Philip* (see commentary on GTh 108 below). The precise nature of this union in *Thomas* eludes us, however.

Concrete Requirements

More concretely, what is required is radical self-denial. This is expressed in the traditional terms of taking up the cross (55), but also through the language of 'fasting to the world' and observing 'sabbath' (27), and renouncing power (81) and the world (110). Obligations to parents (101) and to anything else must be subordinated to the requirement of Jesus.

50 Cf. K. Corley, 'Salome and Jesus at Table in the *Gospel of Thomas*,' *Semeia* 86 (1999), 85–97 (85, 89), according to which GTh 61 and 114 betrays controversy in *Thomas* movement about the status of women.

51 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 105.

More positively, there are a number of motifs which highlight the devotion to the matters advocated in *Thomas*, summarised in GTh 99 as doing the will of the Father, and elsewhere as seeking rest (60) or seeking the imperishable treasure (76). The importance of seeking is reinforced by the fact that throughout *Thomas* finding is a soteriological good (GTh 1; 2; 8; 27; 38; 49; 56; 58; 77?; 80; 90; 92; 94; 97?; 107; 109.3; 110; 111). In addition to this language, salvation can also be said to depend on particular *attributes* which are to be developed. *Singlemindedness*, especially about true knowledge over against its alternatives, is prominent in the parables (GTh 8; 76; 107), as well as in the aphorisms (e.g. GTh 32–34). Also notable is the demand of exacting *labour* (GTh 2; 58; 107.3, 109.3)—related to the seeking motif. Discipleship is also characterised by *readiness*, a theme employed most consistently in contexts of conflict imagery: being armed in anticipation of robbery (GTh 21.4?; 103) and being able to effect a killing (98). Where this theme of readiness comes particularly into prominence, however, is in the preparation of acquiring knowledge necessary for heavenly ascent (GTh 50).

The knowledge of one's place in relation to the kingdom and the cosmos is highly relevant to this postmortem scenario envisaged in GTh 50. In the personal eschatology set out in *Thomas*, the soul is asked a series of questions about her identity, origin and characteristics. Hence, mastery of what *Thomas* says about these themes is essential labour for the true disciple. As noted above in §10.1, *Thomas's* theology is fundamentally soteriological.

The Problem of "Asceticism" in Thomas

Some scholars have emphasised very strongly that for *Thomas* the goal of discipleship is *apatheia* and that permanent celibacy is a *sine qua non* for the elect. Frend wrote of 'complete sexual abnegation',⁵² and Turner of *Thomas's* 'fastidious abhorrence of sex'.⁵³ Richardson remarked that *Thomas* is 'crystal clear' on the point;⁵⁴ Lincoln stated not only that a requirement of chastity was 'certain', but added: 'it is not unthinkable that even so extreme a measure as self-castration may have been practiced by the senior members of the *Thomas*-community'.⁵⁵ More recently, for DeConick, abstinence is the necessary preparation for openness to visionary experience, which she argues is also

52 Frend, 'Gospel of Thomas', 17.

53 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 96.

54 Richardson, 'The Gospel of Thomas: Gnostic or Encratite?', 69.

55 B. Lincoln, 'Thomas-Gospel and Thomas-Community: A New Approach to a Familiar Text', *NovT* 19 (1977), 65–76 (75).

crucial to *Thomas*.⁵⁶ Certainly there are places which might well be amenable to such an interpretation, as for example in the references to ‘single ones’, and perhaps a veiled condemnation of marriage in GTh 87.⁵⁷

At the other extreme, Davies has stated that there is no such thing: ‘Thomas never mentions either marriage or sexual continence.’⁵⁸ Indeed, with its indifference to these themes, *Thomas* ‘contradicts encratism’.⁵⁹ There is also something to be said for this understanding, given that early Christians and others in *Thomas*’s cultural environment were perfectly capable of talking clearly about celibacy if they wanted to: Paul’s commendation (though not requirement) of celibacy is clear (1 Cor. 7.7), but the same is not true of *Thomas*. On the other hand, is *Thomas* ever ‘crystal clear’, and given the nature of the work, should we expect such clarity?

More moderately, Uro notes that the talk of blessing on those who no longer give birth is relegated to the *future*: ‘Days are coming when you will say, “Blessed are the womb which has not conceived and the breasts which have not given milk”’ (79.3). Uro also warns against the danger of interpreting the ‘single ones’ as celibates against the background of rather later, fourth-century Syrian parallels. Nevertheless, the factors favouring singleness should not be dismissed lightly either, even if there seems to be no clear prohibition of marriage.

If Uro is on the right track in rejecting a clear requirement for celibacy in *Thomas*, it is probably also true to say that for those disciples who have ears to hear, celibacy is the (strongly) *commended* life. A brief survey of *Thomas* is illuminating in this respect. GTh 7 may include, among other things, a condemnation of lust. The supreme being is ‘not born of woman’ (GTh 15). The addition of ‘and they will stand as solitary’ to the saying about division in the family (16) implies separation from the family. Child imagery, with its potential connotations of asexual innocence, is very concentrated (4, 21, 22, 37, 46), with the relativisation of the male-female distinction in one of those sayings (22), and some degree of contrast with ‘those born of woman’ in another (46). Certainly there is a redefinition of family in the Synoptic Gospels, but it is notable that *Thomas* has taken over much of this material in, again, a concentrated way (GTh 16 = Matt. 10.34–35/ Lk. 12.51–53; GTh 55 = Lk. 14.26; GTh 79 = Lk. 11.27 + 23.29; GTh 99 = Mk 3.31–35&parr.; GTh 101 = GTh 55 = Lk. 14.26): material spread across Matthew, Mark and Luke is included in the very much shorter *Thomas*. (*Thomas* is less than one-quarter the length of

56 Thus DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 79.

57 Plisch, *Gospel of Thomas*, 198.

58 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 21.

59 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 22.

Matthew and Luke, slightly over one-quarter the length of John, and slightly over one-third the length of Mark.⁶⁰) Salome, perhaps known from the *Gospel of the Egyptians* as a celibate,⁶¹ is highlighted as a disciple in GTh 61. A marriage is an excuse for avoiding (allegorically) discipleship in the parable about the 'places of my Father' in GTh 64. Only the solitary, ironically, will enter the true bridal chamber (GTh 75). In contrast to the fertile, it is the barren who are blessed in GTh 79. Perhaps the most negative statement about sex is that in which a body dependent on another body is denounced as 'wretched' (87): at risk of hair-splitting, however, 'wretched', or 'pitiable', might not be so negative as e.g. the 'cursed' state in GTh 7.2. In contrast to the biological family of Jesus, the obedient are his true family (99), and the physical parents of disciples are to be 'hated' (101). *Thomas* disciples are instead characterised as those who know their *true* Father and Mother. In the treasure parable, the biological son is ignorant, but the one who works achieves success (109). Women must become male in order to enter the kingdom (114).

'Asceticism' and 'enocratism' have probably become words too ill-defined to be useful in *Thomas* scholarship at present. What should probably be said, however, is that in contrast to the extreme positions of both Richardson and Davies, *commendation* (but not *requirement*) of celibacy is present in a concentrated way. Accompanying this is a stance of indifference to and disregard for biological relations, as the statements above have already implied. As Uro rightly notes, there is a 'disregard for family ties'.⁶²

10.3 Social Ethos and Practices

Less important in *Thomas*, but not irrelevant, are the various social attitudes and practices enjoined. These are not extensive: Patterson rightly talks not so much of a 'community' as a 'loosely structured movement', which is 'not very highly organized'.⁶³ Hence there is not a large set of community regulations. There are no references to baptisms or eucharists, or observance of a literal

60 See the calculations in Gathercole, 'Named Testimonia', 68.

61 Clement, *Strom.* 3.9.66.1–2.

62 Uro, 'Asceticism and Anti-Familial Language', 217; Cf. also, rather more strongly, DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics*, 100; A.D. Jacobson, 'Jesus Against the Family: The Dissolution of Family Ties in the Gospel Tradition', in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, K. De Troyer & M.W. Meyer, eds. *From Quest to Q: Festschrift James M. Robinson* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 189–218 (210–217).

63 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 151.

sabbath, though some have seen these.⁶⁴ There is, however, an emphasis on speaking the truth and doing as you would be done by, but even these are expressed in negative terms (GTh 6). More positive statements come in the commands to love and guard a brother (25), to give generously (95), and in the reference to social fasting (69.2).

Some have strongly emphasised the missionary outlook of the *Thomas* movement as reflected in the document, most notably Patterson, who sees in the work an itinerant radicalism—in Theissen's term, 'Wanderradikalismus'.⁶⁵ (This is not to imply that *Thomas* is itself an evangelistic tract.) At the other end, Popkes objects that some characteristics of 'Wanderradikalismus', such as its Jewish-Christian character, are absent from *Thomas*, and that there are only marginal hints of mission.⁶⁶ This seems like an over-reaction. Others such as Schröter, have struck a successful balance between over-emphasising and undervaluing mission in *Thomas*.⁶⁷ There does appear to be a kind of missionary programme presupposed in the incorporation of the traditional synoptic sayings about eating whatever is set before you when you go into different places (GTh 14), and asking for labourers to be sent out into the great harvest (GTh 73). *Thomas* combines an exclusivity of loyalties with an openness to accepting new converts on its own terms (cf. GTh 4). In the end, however, it is difficult to be certain from *Thomas* the extent to which the movement was a wandering mobile movement and the extent to which it was more static.

Another difficult element to assess is prayer. In one place prayer is—remarkably—expressly condemned, alongside fasting and almsgiving (GTh 14). On the other hand, *Thomas* can also rather mysteriously say: 'But when the bridegroom leaves the bridal chamber, then let them fast and pray' (104). This might only be a problem, however, if GTh 104 refers—as does its Synoptic parallel—to Jesus' death or ascension. In fact, the departure of the bridegroom from the bridal chamber probably has a rather different meaning, since it would be very odd for the bridal chamber—a soteriological image in *Thomas* (75)—to refer to the world. A suitable parallel to this critical stance toward prayer appears in the *Gospel of Philip* (a work which particularly thematises the bridal chamber), which has a close association with *Thomas* in the fathers

64 Pace e.g. Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 119–121 (and 117–137 as a whole), who follows J.Z. Smith that GTh 37 is about baptism, and thinks baptism is prominent in *Thomas*.

65 Patterson, 'Understanding the Gospel of Thomas Today', 46–48; see further Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 121–214.

66 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 75, 79.

67 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 227–236.

and in Nag Hammadi Codex II:⁶⁸ ‘The winter is the world, the summer the other aeon. Let us sow in the world so that we may reap in the summer. Therefore it is right for us not to pray in the winter’ (*Gos. Phil.* 52,26–29). A further similarity between *Thomas* and *Philip*, then, is that they both connect the prohibition of prayer with a particular epoch of time. Even if *Thomas* forbids prayer, however, or reinterprets it dramatically, there is still a residual prayer in 73: ‘Ask the Lord, therefore, to send out labourers to the harvest.’

10.4 *Thomas’s Views of Its Rivals*

Thomas’s theological positions are expressed not only in positive but also in negative terms, i.e. over against other groups, references to which are always oppositional. One might compare here the position of Justin who states that there are some Christ-believers who wish to observe the law who despite their weak-mindedness will be saved (*Dial.* 47), or the various systems which posit an ‘in-between’ group, such as the psychics between the hylics and the pneumatics.⁶⁹ On the other hand, closer to *Thomas* in this respect is the similarly uncompromising stance of the *Gospel of Judas*, although the opposition in *Thomas* is not given a cosmological and demonic explanation (though n.b. GTh 40).

The two main targets of criticism are non-Christian Judaism, and the wider Christian movement which does not follow *Thomas*. There is a possible criticism in GTh 67 of Gnostic and/or related groups who lay claim to knowledge (for *Thomas*, falsely so-called): ‘Whoever knows all, but is deficient in one thing, is deficient completely.’ The statement is too vague to allow certainty on the point. Similarly, there may be criticism of Roman persecution in the reference to ‘those who drag’ (οἱ ἔλκοντες) in GTh 3, but again there is not sufficient clarity to be sure.

Non-Christian Judaism

Some have argued that *Thomas* is fundamentally ‘Jewish Christian’, usually (at least in part) on the basis of the reference to James in GTh 12.⁷⁰ This is a

68 On the association, see Gathercole, ‘Named Testimonia’, 63.

69 See e.g. the discussion in E. Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed—The Church of the ‘Valentinians’* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 51 (on *Tri. Trac.* 118,14–122,12) and 60 (on Irenaeus, *AH* 1.6.2), of the tripartition of hylic-psychic-pneumatic in the Valentinian system.

70 See e.g. G. Quispel, ‘The Discussion of Judaic Christianity’, *VC* 22 (1968), 81–93 (85).

mistake, however: the reference to James does not necessitate seeing *Thomas* in Jewish-Christian terms.⁷¹ (The category 'Jewish-Christian' is in any case a highly problematic one.⁷²) As we have seen, *Thomas* is unreservedly critical of Jews (GTh 43), the Pharisees (GTh 39; 102) and central aspects of Jewish theology and practice (GTh 14; 52–53; 71, though in some cases as Christian elements). Jesus and the disciples are not depicted as Jews or as belonging to Judaism. As Löhr has put it: “Jesus der Jude” ist im *EvThom* nicht mehr erkennbar.⁷³ *Thomas* is in GTh 14 totally negative towards prayer, alms and fasting, which are not just useless but harmful; this attitude is neither explained nor justified, but is simply in conflict with *Thomas*'s own ethical outlook.⁷⁴ The same is true of the attitudes to circumcision, sabbath and temple, where *Thomas*'s views bear comparison with Justin, *Barnabas* and the *Epistle of Ptolemy to Flora* (and indeed with the views of pagans). The position according to which *Thomas* is sharply critical of Jewish practices now attracts very wide support.⁷⁵ The references to Jewish themes *may* indicate 'contact' and 'encounter' with Judaism or Jewish Christianity, but certainly do not align *Thomas* with Jewish Christianity.⁷⁶ In fact, however, the comment about the 'twenty-four prophets' in GTh 52 betrays a confused ignorance of the Jewish subdivisions of Scripture: there are twenty-four *books* but not twenty-four prophetic authors (Moses, for example, was assumed to have written five, whereas the twelve minor prophets only counted as one).

71 R.M. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La incomprensión de los discipulos en el Evangelio de Tomás', in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica XVII.1* (Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1982), 243–250 (247); Popkes, 'About the Differing Approach to a Theological Heritage', 310, both noting the use of James in Gnostic and related literature.

72 See discussion in J. Carleton Paget, 'Jewish Christianity', in W. Horbury, W.D. Davies & J. Sturdy, eds. *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 731–775.

73 H. Löhr, 'Jesus und die Tora als ethische Norm nach dem *Thomas-Evangelium*', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 363–379 (379); cf. Hedrick, *Gospel according to Thomas*, 89, on the distinction between the disciples and the Jews.

74 Gianotto, 'Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive', 161–163.

75 See e.g. A. Marjanen, 'Thomas and Jewish Religious Practices', in R. Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 163–183; Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 236; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 55–65.

76 W.R.G. Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law: A Study in the Gospels* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997), 502; cf. also P. Sellev, 'Pious Practice and Social Formation in the Gospel of Thomas', *Forum* 10 (1994), 47–56 (54).

The Wider Christian Movement

Thomas is equally critical of non-Thomasine Christianity, which may of course include not only the '*magna ecclesia*' of the likes of Ignatius and Polycarp, but also Valentinian and other movements. This critical stance is evident from the negative valuation of Matthew and Peter in GTh 13, and via the criticisms of disciples both in general (e.g. GTh 18) and as representatives of particular theological views of biblical authority and resurrection (GTh 51–52).

The negativity here causes difficulties for the view taken by Stead and Pagels that *Thomas* was intended as supplementary teaching for elite members who also sat happily within communities such as the wider apostolic church, and who also enjoyed one or more of the canonical Gospels.⁷⁷ It is a difficulty for this view that the work presents itself as a document the acceptance of which is necessary for salvation (as in GTh 1)—thereby excluding non-Thomasine Christians.⁷⁸ Similarly, several of the distinctive elements in *Thomas* are presented not as recommended ideal practices for reaching a higher spiritual status, but as soteriological conditions. For example, in GTh 22.4–6, the conditions of making the two one, the outside like the inside and the above like the below, etc., are identified in 22.7 as necessary for entry into the kingdom. Similarly, in GTh 27, fasting to the world and 'sabbatising' are conditions for finding the kingdom and seeing the Father. GTh 13 also implies a separatist stance.⁷⁹ Finally, *Thomas*'s prohibitions of fasting, prayer and almsgiving (GTh 6; 14), as well as its views on resurrection and scripture (GTh 51–52) and other matters, strongly suggest divergence from other movements which countenanced such practices rather than affiliation with such movements.

Cautionary Remarks

There is a need here for careful mirror-reading.⁸⁰ Some exegeses of sayings in *Thomas* have adopted too simplistic an approach, such as supposing that

77 See Pagels, *Beyond Belief*, 39–40; Stead, 'Some Reflections on the Gospel of Thomas', 402: 'envisaging a spiritual élite, but not consciously opposing this to conservative churchmanship.'

78 See Gagné, 'Sectarianism, Secrecy and Self Definition', 241, on the point that secret teaching in early Christianity is very often a matter of salvation, and not just an added bonus.

79 So, rightly, Perrin, *Thomas, the Other Gospel*, 119.

80 The cautions expressed by Barclay may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the case of *Thomas*. J.M.G. Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test-Case', *JSNT* 31 (1987), 73–93.

‘the questions that the disciples pose are invariably the questions that the community has raised and seeks to resolve’,⁸¹ and that in GTh 24.1 ‘the disciples’ question represents the voice of the community’.⁸² Similarly, Trevijano Etcheverría gives voice to what is often assumed in *Thomas* scholarship, namely that the motif of the incomprehension of the disciples represents the ignorance of non-Gnostic Christianity and Judaism.⁸³ But some questions of the disciples (including 24.1) are rather more abstract (cf. also 91). There is, then, a serious danger involved in mirror reading: as Uro has warned, the facts on the ground cannot simply be read off the surface of *Thomas*.⁸⁴

10.5 Conclusion

A number of clear points emerge here. *Thomas* takes an uncompromising stance towards its rivals. One could add to (a) non-Christian Judaism and (b) the wider Christian movement, (c) the additional target of figures of authority in the wider empire—‘your kings and your nobles’ (GTh 78; cf. 81), though these are not assigned any particular religious views. Many of *Thomas*’s central theological themes, especially elements of the Gospel’s soteriology are sufficiently evident.

On the other hand, some aspects of *Thomas*’s theological ethical and stance are more ambiguous, and there are certain points on which *Thomas* is simply silent. Perhaps such ambiguities in *Thomas* were originally illusory and there was a clear corpus of other works read alongside *Thomas* shaping its interpretation, with mystagogues who guaranteed the authoritative understanding, and a set of practices lived out in the *Thomas* movement and simply assumed in the Gospel. Or it could be that *Thomas* was intended all along to serve as an impulse for all kinds of different interpretative results, though this is unlikely. We also may have to reckon with the fact that some of the tensions left by the author or editor may be the result of *Thomas* not having been written or edited by a towering theological intellect and literary craftsman.⁸⁵ Overall, however, there is a good deal of consistency, and so perhaps E.P. Sanders’ verdict on Paul is not so far off the truth for *Thomas*—that it may not be completely

81 DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 66.

82 DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 174.

83 Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La incomprensión de los discipulos’, 246.

84 Uro, ‘The Social World of the *Gospel of Thomas*’, 20.

85 Arnal, ‘Rhetoric of Marginality’, 489.

systematic, but it is reasonably coherent.⁸⁶ That is, the thought reflected in *Thomas* is not necessarily animated by a philosophical impulse towards logical doctrinal tidiness, but one can nevertheless make sense of *Thomas*'s religious outlook. As Marjanen has concluded: 'it is nevertheless an exaggeration to claim that the choice and interpretation of the material employed in the Gospel is guided by no consistent theological and ideological line of thought. On the contrary, in its chief theological emphases the *Gospel of Thomas* provides a fairly coherent picture.'⁸⁷ Because of this, one can attempt an exegesis in the commentary below which does not need to see in *Thomas* a haphazard series of sayings which may go off in all sorts of different directions.

The survey above has also aimed to highlight those works with which *Thomas* can helpfully be compared (and more detailed evidence for this will be found in the commentary below). Two important criteria are closeness in time and partial overlap of theological approach. The difficulty with a number of Syrian parallels is that they are not really contemporaneous with *Thomas*, but generally come from around two centuries later. Conversely, Gnostic literature begins at roughly the same time as the composition of *Thomas*, but as Turner quipped, 'aeons and syzygies are conspicuous by their absence' from *Thomas*.⁸⁸ As already noted, *Thomas* cannot be assigned to any particular group. There are some early Christian works which are both contemporaneous with *Thomas*, and in which quite similar moves are made (although their differences also need to be borne in mind). The *Gospel of Philip* shares a number of themes in common, and probably quotes *Thomas*. The *Dialogue of the Saviour* is also close in many respects. The *Epistle of Ptolemy to Flora* and Justin Martyr also share some similar interpretative strategies, as does the *Treatise on the Resurrection*. On some key themes, Philo offers important parallels. The *Epistle of Barnabas* is usually dated either to the end of the first century or to the second quarter of the second century, and its treatments of Jewish institutions such as sabbath, circumcision and temple bear comparison with *Thomas*. These works will be seen to be especially useful, alongside others, in the course of the commentary below.

86 'I view Paul as a *coherent* thinker, despite the unsystematic nature of his thought and the variations in formulation' (*Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 433).

87 Marjanen, 'Is *Thomas* a Gnostic Gospel?' 133; cf. Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 3: 'although *Thomas* is by no means a systematic document, it does have a comprehensible set of ideas.'

88 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 83.

Appended Note: Is *Thomas* “Gnostic”?

Any scholar writing on *Thomas* must give at least some answer to the question of whether *Thomas* is to be considered as ‘Gnostic’. The previous section has gone a long way towards indicating the answer offered in this book, but a more direct response can also be given. The debate on this matter is an old one, dating back even to the earliest analyses of the Oxyrhynchus fragments.⁸⁹ After the discovery of the Coptic text, a great many scholars used this classification.⁹⁰ Some stated the point in fairly unambiguous terms; others, then as now, identified a more primitive form of *Thomas* which was later overlaid with Gnostic redaction;⁹¹ others have posited a non-Gnostic Greek version which later became Gnostic in the hands of the Coptic translator.⁹² There have always been dissenting voices, however. Quispel remarked early on that ‘the mind of Pseudo-Thomas was not gnostic, but encratitic’,⁹³ and DeConick also strongly resists a Gnostic characterization.⁹⁴ Marjanen’s substantial discussion also answers our question in the negative.⁹⁵

The question of whether *Thomas* is Gnostic of course depends upon one’s definition of Gnosticism.⁹⁶ One way of dealing with the question at a stroke, however, is to say that there is no such thing as the Gnosticism of which *Thomas* is sometimes alleged to be a part. In 1995, Michael Williams launched a devastating attack on the modern construct of ‘Gnosticism’, arguing that it is unhelpful for the purposes of scholarly classification of ancient texts.⁹⁷ In particular, Williams sought to show that the conventional cluster of motifs associated with Gnosticism (protest exegesis, rejection of the world, hatred of the body, etc.) cannot be found together as easily as has often been supposed. Karen King’s *What is Gnosticism?* goes further both in its refusal to group texts

89 In Grenfell & Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV*, 12, the ‘Gnostic’ character of both P. Oxy. I 1 and IV 654 is discussed.

90 For a long list, see Marjanen, ‘Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?’, 107.

91 See Puig, *Un Jesús desconocido*, for the most recent example of this approach.

92 Pearson, *Ancient Gnosticism*, 267.

93 Quispel, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of the Hebrews’, 371–372. Grobel, ‘How Gnostic is the Gospel of Thomas?’, 367–373, was already similarly sceptical. Richardson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas: Gnostic or Encratite?’, 65–76, prefers ‘Encratite’, though does not exclude some Gnostic leanings.

94 See e.g. DeConick, *Original Gospel of Thomas in Translation*, 4.

95 Marjanen, ‘Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?’.

96 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 125–126.

97 Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism”*.

together along traditional lines, and also in its emphasis on how Christian theological concerns have meant that Gnosticism is not only inaccurate as a category but also ideologically loaded and pernicious.⁹⁸

Can anything be salvaged from this wreckage? In fact, despite these protests, there has been a somewhat neglected or unjustly criticized line of scholarship which has argued that, irrespective of whether ‘Gnosticism’ has any validity as a modern typological construct, it is clear that (1) ‘Gnostics’ is a designation reserved in the earliest sources (both Christian and pagan) for an identifiable group or cluster of groups; (2) these Gnostics are exclusive of a number of other groups seen as heretical by the Fathers (Valentinians, and others whom one might expect to be included, are in fact not), and (3) this is not merely an ironic label given by the heresiologists, but a self-identification.⁹⁹

First, the Gnostics are a specifically identifiable group generally known by this name. The Gnostics constitute—to use the language of Irenaeus, Porphyry and Eusebius—a particular *hairesis*.¹⁰⁰ Irenaeus talks of ‘the so-called “Gnostic” *hairesis*’.¹⁰¹ Edwards comments that, since it is ‘so-called’, the name ‘Gnostic’ is obviously a conventional one.¹⁰² Hippolytus’s language shows that he has formed the same judgment independently, referring to the Gnostics as constituting a ‘school’ (σχολή), just as did the followers of Cerinthus, and the Ebionites.¹⁰³

98 K.L. King, *What is Gnosticism?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard/ Belknap Press, 2003). Williams, *Rethinking “Gnosticism”*, 51–52, develops the category of ‘biblical demiurgical traditions’ which he argues avoids many of the pitfalls associated with the category of ‘Gnosticism’, but which in fact ‘would include a large percentage of the sources that today are usually called “Gnostic”’ (52). King argues that Williams thus effectively lets in all the old problems through the back door (*What is Gnosticism*, 214–216).

99 For this line, see especially Edwards, ‘Gnostics and Valentinians in the Church Fathers’; *idem*, ‘Neglected Texts in the Study of Gnosticism’, *JTS* 41 (1990), 26–50; *idem*, ‘Gnostic Eros and Orphic Themes’, *ZPE* 88 (1991), 25–40; B. Layton, ‘Prolegomena to the Study of Gnosticism’, in L.M. White & O.L. Yarbrough, eds. *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne Meeks* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 334–350. Similarly, more recently, D. Brakke, *The Gnostics: Myth, Ritual, and Diversity in Early Christianity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012). I am particularly indebted in the discussion here to Mark Edwards’ pair of *JTS* articles.

100 Layton, ‘Prolegomena’, 338, in reference to Irenaeus, *AH* 1.11.1, and the Gnostics as ἀίρετικοί in *Life of Plotinus* 16. Cf. also Eusebius, *HE* 4.7.9, though Eusebius is, by his own admission, dependent upon Irenaeus.

101 Irenaeus, *AH* 1.11.1: ἡ λεγομένη Γνωστικὴ αἵρεσις.

102 Edwards, ‘Gnostics and Valentinians’, 27.

103 *Ref.* 7.35.1: Theodotus derived his views ἐκ τῆς τῶν Γνωστικῶν καὶ Κερίνθου καὶ Ἐβίωνος σχολῆς.

Secondly, this *haeresis* is (perhaps surprisingly) narrowly defined. Irenaeus's first references clearly distinguish between Valentinians and Gnostics. Valentinus derived his own doctrine by adapting that of the so-called 'Gnostic' heresy:¹⁰⁴ Valentinus theorizes similarly to those falsely named Gnostics who will be discussed separately by Irenaeus later on in *Against Heresies*.¹⁰⁵ The Valentinians attempted to be 'more Gnostic than the Gnostics', and as such are clearly distinct from them.¹⁰⁶

On the other hand, Irenaeus's Carpocratians *are* Gnostics (*AH* 1.25.6). Also properly deserving of the name are those Barbelo-Gnostics whose principal doctrines are contained in the famous myth (1.29), and those called Ophites, Sethians and Cainites by the later *rubricator* (*AH* 1.30–31). As such, the Γνωστικοί do not include Valentinians, Simon Magus, or the followers of Marcus Magus.¹⁰⁷ Edwards' conclusion about Irenaeus is surely correct: the term Gnostic refers to 'a cluster of heresies, loosely bound together by common images and opinions, but none receiving definitive form in the works of any named heresiarch'.¹⁰⁸ The picture is the same in the rest of *Against Heresies*, where the Gnostics are distinguished from the Marcionites and the Valentinians.¹⁰⁹ Hippolytus also distinguishes the Gnostics from Theodotus, Cerinthus, 'Ebion' and Elchasai.¹¹⁰ Harnack had already noted Hippolytus's distinction of the Gnostics, Marcion and Valentinus.¹¹¹ Edwards demonstrates further that the term in Tertullian, Clement and Origen also has a particular rather than general

104 Irenaeus *AH* 1.11.1: *ab ea quae dicitur gnostica haeresis antiquas in suum characterem doctrinas transferens* / από τῆς λεγομένης Γνωστικῆς αἱρέσεως τὰς ἀρχαὶς εἰς ἴδιον χαρακτῆρα διδασκαλείου μεταρμόσας.

105 Irenaeus *AH* 1.11.1: *similiter his qui dicentur a nobis falsi nominis Gnostici* / ἔδογματίσεν ὁμοίως τοῖς ῥηθησομένοις ὑφ' ἡμῶν ψευδονύμοις Γνωστικοῖς.

106 1.11.5: *gnosticorum magis gnostici* / γνωστικῶν γνωστικώτεροι. R.P. Casey, 'The Study of Gnosticism', *JTS* 36 (1935), 45–60 (49), is correct on this point.

107 Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 30

108 Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 30.

109 Casey, 'The Study of Gnosticism', 50, citing *AH* 1.5.1, 3; 3.2.7; 4.51.3; he does not consider Irenaeus to be entirely consistent, however; cf. A. Rousseau & L. Doutreleau, 'Note sur l'emploi du terme γνωστικός dans le Livre I, in *Irénee de Lyon: Contre les hérésies I/1* (Paris: Cerf, 1965), 299–300.

110 Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 32: Hippolytus imitates Irenaeus' 'attention to the language of his antagonists and his meticulously restricted application of their own terms.'

111 A. Harnack, 'Zur Quellenkritik der Geschichte des Gnosticismus', *Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie* 44/ NF 38 (1874), 143–226 (222).

reference.¹¹² In sum, far from being a general designation for the heretical *massa perditionis*, the Γνωστικοί constitute a specific group.

Thirdly, these Gnostics were not only 'so-called' by others; they also identified themselves as such. This is stated not only by the church fathers but also by Celsus, and is indirectly confirmed by Porphyry. Origen comments: 'Let it be admitted that [his usual formula for conceding to Celsus a point of fact] *there are some too who profess to be Gnostics*.'¹¹³ Logan is therefore right that Celsus is aware of a specific group who called themselves Gnostics.¹¹⁴ Porphyry also identified Plotinus's treatise in *Ennead* 2.9 as 'Against the Gnostics' (*Life of Plotinus* 5; 16). It is unlikely that Porphyry got the title from orthodox Christian critics of the Gnostics; he would more probably have heard it from the members of the *hairesis* themselves. In this, again, the Platonists agree with the fathers. According to Irenaeus, the Carpocratians call themselves Gnostics.¹¹⁵ Hippolytus notes three times that the Naassenes identify themselves this way.¹¹⁶ Similarly Clement, who also names the disciples of a specific individual (Prodicus) as those who took this name.¹¹⁷

What is the theological profile of these Gnostics? Here one sees a clear convergence in how Irenaeus's Barbelo-Gnostics, Hippolytus's Naassenes and Plotinus's Gnostics answer questions of the nature of the creator god and his creation. In the myth of *Against Heresies* 1.29, the being who created the world contains Ignorance and Presumption. He created Evil, Jealousy, Envy, Discord and Desire. After this, his mother Sophia retires, saddened, to the upper realms. Thus the demiurge, finding himself alone, can declare in the language of the Old Testament that he alone is god and there is no other beside him. A passage from the *Naassene Sermon* in Hippolytus illustrates a very similar stance: 'They (the souls) were borne down into this murky fabrication (πλάσμα) in order that they might be enslaved to Esaldaeus, the Demiurge of this creation (κτίσεως), a fiery god, the fourth in number.'¹¹⁸ Again, we have creation left alone in the

112 Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 33, 33–34, 34 respectively.

113 *Contra Celsum* 5.61 (τινες και ἐπαγγελλόμενοι εἶναι Γνωστικοί), tr. Chadwick. Both Chadwick and the editions of the *Contra Celsum* by Koetschau (GCS) and Borret (Sources Chrétiennes) identify the words here as from Celsus.

114 Logan, *The Gnostics*, 11, 45.

115 *AH* 1.25.6: *Gnosticos se autem vocant*. On this point, see Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 28.

116 *Ref.* 5.2; 5.6.4; 5.11; cf. 5.23.3, where the disciples of Justin call themselves Gnostics. See Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 31.

117 Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 33.

118 *Ref.* 5.7.30. Translation from Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 36, and note also Edwards's comment on the passage there.

hands of an unsavoury deity. For Porphyry, Plotinus's Gnostics can be glossed as 'those who say that the Demiurge of the world is evil and that the world is evil'.¹¹⁹ This reflects the account of Plotinus, who is horrified that 'they reproach this universe ... and blame the one who governs this universe'.¹²⁰ Plotinus is very concerned to note how the Gnostics part company with Plato on this matter. There is also, however, a marked difference between the Gnostics and the monistic conception of the Valentinians, especially in the Valentinian hymn, whose idea that spirit, ether, air, soul and flesh constitute a continuum 'would have perplexed and disgusted a Naassene'.¹²¹

In summary, then, there is an identifiable cluster of groups called 'the Gnostics' both by members of such groups themselves, as well as conventionally by others. The Gnostics are marked off from other schools such as the Ebionites and Valentinians, and this not through heresiological *fiat* but because of a distinctive theological profile.

Two criticisms of this approach (specifically addressed to Layton, though more widely applicable) should be noted. King has criticised Layton on the grounds that, having given a definition of what constitutes a Gnostic text, he does not explain how he would categorize other works—an unfair criticism.¹²² She also remarks that with Layton's approach, 'we could end up back where we started', that is, with the bugbear of essentialism. We could in theory, but we need not, and with Layton's and Edwards' approach we actually do not.¹²³ Secondly, Williams has responded that a difficulty lies in the lack of any first-hand evidence for 'Gnostic' as a self-designation, and this despite the mass of texts now available from Nag Hammadi. As Layton and Tuckett note, however, many of the writings in question deal with mythologized history, and so do not tend to discuss contemporaneous groups.¹²⁴ Additionally, Williams himself appears to concede two crucial points. First, he refrains from concluding

119 Cf. the title of *Ennead* 2.9, 'Against the Gnostics', given in *Life of Plotinus* 5 and 16, with the longer title given in *Life* 24. On the evidence of Plotinus, see Edwards, 'Neglected Texts'.

120 *Enn.* 2.9.6: μεμφομένοι τῶδε τῷ παντί καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα κοινωνίαν τῆ ψυχῆ αἰτιώμενοι καὶ τὸν διοικούντα τότε τὸ πᾶν ψέγοντες

121 Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 41. The reference is *Ref.* 6.36.7.

122 King, *What is Gnosticism*, 168.

123 King, *What is Gnosticism*, 15: this follows on from the criticism that Layton's approach is 'compatible with the essentializing approaches of origins and typology'. Even if it is 'compatible' with it, does it necessitate it?

124 Layton, 'Prolegomena', 344; cf. Tuckett, *The Gospel of Mary*, 47. The *Testimony of Truth* is an exception, with its various references to sects.

whether Rousseau & Doutreleau or Brox is correct about the patristic use of 'Gnostic', because he is concerned with the modern category of 'Gnosticism': 'If Irenaeus does essentially limit the designation "gnostics" to a specific sect, as Rousseau and Doutreleau contend, then his testimony at least offers no support for the modern inclusion of other groups such as the Valentinians under the rubric "gnosticism" on the basis of self-designation.'¹²⁵ Second, Clement of Alexandria's use of the designation 'gnostic', he says, is suggestive: 'In spite of the irony, the example of Clement's use of the term does enhance the credibility of reports that it was used by certain others.'¹²⁶ Neither Williams nor King, then, lands a real blow against the idea that 'Gnostic' was a self-designation and label for a 'congeries' of 'related sects'.¹²⁷

Against this background, it is hard to make a case for *Thomas* as Gnostic, principally because it does not have a clearly demiurgic account of creation.¹²⁸ GTh 85 recounts that 'Adam came into being from a great power and a great wealth': the designation 'a great power and a great wealth' is undoubtedly a positive characterisation of the creative power(s) or originating principle(s) behind Adam, and it is likely that we are dealing with an earthly Adam here given his unworthiness and fall to death in the rest of GTh 85.¹²⁹ Marjanen may also be right that GTh 89, with its reference to the one who made both the inside and the outside of the cup, is a positive statement about God as creator, though the saying is more opaque. In any case, the account of Adam having originated from a clearly positive force is good evidence against *Thomas* being a Gnostic production. As we have seen, however, this is not the end of the story: as Logan comments, *Thomas* 'does not appear to be originally Gnostic, although it can easily be, and in its present form undoubtedly was, appropriated and reinterpreted by Gnostics'.¹³⁰ The Naassenes are

125 Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism"*, 37. N. Brox, 'Γνωστικοί als Häresiologischer Terminus', *ZNW* 5 (1966), 105–114, considers Irenaeus rather more liberal in his application of the term.

126 Williams, *Rethinking "Gnosticism"*, 271 n. 6.

127 Edwards, 'Gnostics and Valentinians', 34.

128 Cf. A.D. DeConick's criticisms of the Gnostic hypothesis along similar lines: see Chapter 1 ('The Problem: Is Thomas Gnostic?') in *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (VCSupps 33; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 3–27.

129 It is less likely that GTh 77 refers to Jesus as the creator in a traditional biblical sense: see commentary on the logion below. GTh 12 has a reference to creation (James is one 'for whom heaven and earth came into being'), but the reference here is highly formulaic. Marjanen, 'Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?', 117–118, principally makes use of this saying, and GTh 89.

130 Logan, *The Gnostics*, 69.

a very early, indeed perhaps the first, example of the Gnostic use of *Thomas*. Moreover, *Thomas* has probably been influenced by some Gnostic or related ideas.

What of a milder designation for *Thomas*, such as ‘proto-gnostic’¹³¹ or ‘reflecting an incipient gnosticism’?¹³² In fact, these labels are highly questionable. In another context, Quentin Skinner has trenchantly attacked the ‘historical absurdity’ which results from the anachronistic tendency to see earlier writers as ‘anticipating’ later positions: ‘As the historian duly sets out in quest of the idea he has characterized, he is very readily led to speak as if the fully developed form of the doctrine was always in some sense immanent in history, even if various thinkers failed to “hit upon” it ...’¹³³ The same problem can arise if we conclude that *Thomas* is not Gnostic, but then ask how far advanced *Thomas* is on the way to Gnosticism.¹³⁴ It is legitimate to draw comparisons between *Thomas* and Gnosticism, but not to see the former as a staging post along the way to the latter, especially if the view of *Thomas*’s date set out in §7 above is correct: in this case, *Thomas* in its final form may post-date the emergence of Gnosticism.

In fact, it is very difficult to align *Thomas* very closely with any particular movement. As has been noted above, since *Thomas* was included in Nag Hammadi Codex II, it might have been amenable to Valentinian usage. It does not, however, correspond to Valentinian theology so closely that it can actually be categorised as a Valentinian product.¹³⁵ Again, it is difficult to classify *Thomas* easily as Encratite. On one standard definition, Encratism involves ‘certain ascetic practices such as abstinence from sexual intercourse, meat and wine’.¹³⁶ *Thomas* may have a negative valuation of the first of these, but on the other hand is very tolerant on matters of diet (GTh 14). Or again, if one uses as

131 B.L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (San Francisco: Harper, 1993), 183.

132 R.W. Funk, *The Five Gospels: What did Jesus Really Say? The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1996), 501.

133 Q. Skinner, ‘Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas’, *History and Theory* 8 (1969), 3–53 (10, and 7–11 in general).

134 Marjanen answers the question of whether *Thomas* is Gnostic in the negative, but remarks that *Thomas*’s views ‘have moved a long way from the view of Jewish wisdom tradition toward a Gnostic conception’ (*Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?*, 139). Cf. Skinner, ‘Meaning and Understanding’, 12.

135 Marjanen notes L. Cerfaux and B. Gärtner as proponents of this view, and rightly comments that they have not been found persuasive (Marjanen, *Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?*, 109 n. 9).

136 Richardson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas: Gnostic or Encratite?’, 66.

a criterion the account of the Encratites in Irenaeus (*AH* 1.28.1), there are commonalities, such as a pessimistic view of Adam (cf. *GTh* 85); on the other hand, Irenaeus also attributes to Tatian and his followers 'a system of certain invisible aeons' which is by no means clearly evident in *Thomas*.¹³⁷ Part of the fascination of *Thomas* is that it was apparently acceptable to such a wide variety of different groups (Gnostics, Manichees, etc.), and yet is so difficult to pin down in terms of its origins and of any genuinely close alignment with other known works and movements.

137 The negative view of Adam which Irenaeus sees as distinctive to Tatian is not actually so unique: cf. *Hyp. Arch.* 91,3–7: 'They turned to their Adam and took him and expelled him from the garden along with his wife; for they have no blessing, since they too are beneath the curse.' The *Second Treatise of the Great Seth* also includes Adam in its list of laughable OT figures: 'For Adam was a laughingstock, since he was made a counterfeit type of man by the Hebdomad, as if he had become stronger than I and my brothers. We are innocent with respect to him, since we have not sinned' (62,27–34).

Thomas, the New Testament and the Historical Jesus¹

The reason why *Thomas* has attracted so much attention (more attention than, for example, the *Gospel of Philip* or the *Gospel of Mary*) is because it is sometimes considered to be a source about Jesus additional to the New Testament. It might even be considered an *alternative* to the NT Gospels. This is not the place for a full treatment of the question; the aim here is to sketch the main issues. *Thomas* has attracted wildly divergent opinions about its importance for the study of the historical Jesus. On the one hand, Beare commented early on that ‘it would be sheer delusion to imagine that any substantial increase in our scanty knowledge of the Jesus of history will ever be gained from Thomas or from any of the new Gnostic documents.’² By

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- 1 **Bibliography:** This covers only a fraction of the massive bibliography on this subject: Jeremias, *The Unknown Sayings of Jesus*; B.D. Chilton, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas as a Source of Jesus’ Teaching’, in D. Wenham, ed. *Jesus Tradition outside the Gospels* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1984), 155–175; W.D. Stroker, ‘Extracanonical Parables and the Historical Jesus’, *Semeia* 44 (1988), 95–120; S.J. Patterson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Historical Jesus: Retrospectus and Prospectus’, *SBLSP* (1990), 614–636; Crossan, *The Historical Jesus*; Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*; Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*; Tuckett, ‘The Gospel of Thomas: Evidence for Jesus?’; Sevrin, ‘Thomas, Q et le Jésus de l’histoire’; Aune, ‘Assessing the Historical Value of the Apocryphal Jesus Traditions’; S.J. Patterson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and Historical Jesus Research’, in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica. Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk* (BCNH 7; Louvain: Peeters, 2006), 663–684; C.L. Quarles, ‘The Use of the Gospel of Thomas in the Research on the Historical Jesus of John Dominic Crossan’, *CBQ* 69 (2007), 517–607; N. Perrin, ‘Recent Trends in Gospel of Thomas Research (1991–2006): Part I, The Historical Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels’, *Currents in Biblical Research* 5 (2007), 183–206; Gianotto, ‘Il Vangelo secondo Tommaso e il problema storico di Gesù’, 68–93 (esp. 86–93); E.K. Broadhead, ‘The Thomas-Jesus Connection’, in S.E. Porter & T. Holmén, eds. *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), III.2059–2080; S.J. Patterson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Historical Jesus’, in A.F. Gregory & C.M. Tuckett, eds. *The Oxford Handbook to the Early Christian Apocrypha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); S.J. Gathercole, ‘Early Christian Apocrypha and the Historical Jesus: Other Gospels’, in A.F. Gregory & C.M. Tuckett, eds. *The Oxford Handbook to the Early Christian Apocrypha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Nordsieck, *Das Thomas-Evangelium*, is the most sustained attempt to argue consistently for the historicity of *Thomas*’s sayings in a commentary.
- 2 F.W. Beare, ‘Gospel according to Thomas: A Gnostic Manual’, *CJT* 6 (1960), 102–112 (112).

contrast, Sellew has remarked that ‘the discovery of *Thomas* in its Coptic form revolutionised our approach to the historical Jesus question.’³ The situation is more complex than these stark alternatives, however.⁴

For example, Quispel and Jeremias took the view—in their scholarly context of Bultmannian scepticism—that *Thomas* served as a kind of external corroboration of the canonical Gospels: ‘the Gospel of Thomas confirms the trustworthiness of the Bible’.⁵ (Revisionists such as Crossan, however, have also used extra-canonical literature to multiply the attestation of a particular saying also found in the Synoptics.) Some have taken the more relativistic position that all the Gospels, *Thomas* and the canonical Gospels together, are equally interpretations of Jesus. Franzmann gives voice to this approach in describing her study of Jesus in the Nag Hammadi codices as ‘a valid investigation of the historical Jesus since the texts belong to one strand of the many interpretive traditions about him’.⁶ A view of a different kind is adopted by Robinson. Despite his great enthusiasm for the Nag Hammadi literature, he considers understanding of it essential for the study of Jesus not because its contents supply new information about Jesus, but because in it we learn how traditions about Jesus developed.⁷

How might one assess the usefulness of *Thomas* as a historical source for Jesus? Theissen and Merz refer to the criteria of (a) independence (§ 11.1), and (b) historical proximity, when referring to the usefulness of sources.⁸ Such criteria are widely accepted in historical study, and will serve as a good starting point. We will break down (b) historical proximity into two parts below, treating separately (§ 11.2) *chronological* proximity and (§ 11.3) *cultural* proximity. After this, we will address two further issues: whether *Thomas* provides a historically plausible picture of Jesus overall (§ 11.4), and finally—at the micro- rather

For similarly negative remarks, see e.g. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins outside the New Testament*, 155; Grant & Freedman, *Secret Sayings*, 20; J.P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, vol. 1. *Rethinking the Historical Jesus: The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 140–141.

3 Sellew, ‘The Gospel of Thomas: Prospects for Future Research’, 332.

4 See further Gathercole, ‘Early Christian Apocrypha and the Historical Jesus’.

5 G. Quispel, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the New Testament’, *VC* 11 (1957), 189–207 (207).

6 M. Franzmann, *Jesus in the Nag Hammadi Writings* (London/ New York: Continuum, 2004), 21; cf. 207. Patterson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and Historical Jesus Research’, concludes that all the gospels contain a kerygma which is based in some sense on Jesus as a theological criterion. From a very different standpoint, a similar argument is made in Watson, *Gospel Writing*.

7 J.M. Robinson, ‘The Study of the Historical Jesus after Nag Hammadi’, *Semeia* 44 (1988), 45–55 (45).

8 G. Theissen & A. Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide* (London: SCM, 1998), 17–18.

than macro-level—whether we might be able to find in *Thomas* (§ 11.5) more primitive versions of sayings already known from the Synoptics, or even (§ 11.6) new sayings.

11.1 Independence

Is *Thomas* independent of the Synoptic Gospels? If so, then it has the potential to supplement them, or even—if it can be identified as a superior source—undercut them. Even if not, *Thomas* could still do so, but its use would be considerably diminished, in proportion to the degree of its dependence.

Most agree that there is some degree of influence from the Synoptic Gospels upon the Coptic text, but some explain this influence as very marginal, and perhaps simply the result of interference at a late stage in the transmission or translation of *Thomas*.⁹ The following factors, however, suggest that influence from the Synoptic Gospels is more extensive. (For more detail, see the commentary on the relevant sayings.)

1. Knowledge of Matthew's Gospel and its status. The most likely explanation of the reference to Matthew in GTh 13 is that he is known to have a Gospel attributed to him, and a Gospel which has some standing in early Christianity at the time of *Thomas*.¹⁰
2. Influence of the contents of Matthew. Unfortunately we know nothing about the particular circumstances of how *Thomas* came to know the contents of its sources and influences. Nevertheless, the evidence of Matthean redaction of Mark in *Thomas* is highly probable, e.g. in GTh 13; 14 and 44.¹¹ In these cases, *Thomas* has been influenced by the particular 'overlay' which Matthew has added to Markan pericopae. Even more striking is the notable inclusion in *Thomas* of the Matthean language of 'the kingdom of heaven', which as Goodacre notes is a very peculiarly Matthean formulation, appearing nowhere in Judaism pre-dating Matthew, or elsewhere in the New Testament.¹² Other more minor pieces

9 Davies, 'The Use of the Gospel of Thomas in the Gospel of Mark', 308; Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 93; Robinson, 'On Bridging the Gulf from Q to the Gospel of Thomas', 151. For responses, see esp. Tuckett, 'Evidence for Jesus?', 26; Gathercole, *Composition*, 142–143.

10 Gathercole, *Composition*, 169–174.

11 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 168–184; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 66–81.

12 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 68–69.

of evidence may be mentioned, such as the word used for weed (ΖΙΖΑΝΙΟΝ) in GTh 57.¹³

3. Influence of the contents of Luke. Here again, there is evidence for *Thomas's* inclusion of redactional features, this time where Luke has edited Mark. Perhaps surprisingly, given the popularity of Matthew in early Christianity, influence of such features from Luke is more apparent than that from Matthew. The examples here go back even to the influence of Luke upon the Greek text, in the cases of GTh 5.2 and 31.1, but influence is also apparent further afield in the Coptic.¹⁴ In GTh 33.2–3; 65–66; and 104, this is particularly noticeable, because *Thomas* absorbs a Lukan redactional feature and expands upon it:

Mk 4.21:	lamp on the lampstand (also in Matthew)
Lk. 8.16/11.33:	lamp on the lampstand <i>so those who go in may see</i>
GTh 33.3:	lamp on the lampstand <i>so those who go in <u>and come out</u> may see</i>

Mk 12.1–9:	no instances of 'perhaps' (also in Matthew)
Lk. 20.9–17:	one instance of 'perhaps'
GTh 65:	two instances of 'perhaps'

Mk 2.18–20:	no reference to prayer (also in Matthew)
Lk. 5.33–35:	one reference to prayer
GTh 104:	two references to prayer

In these instances in particular, then, we can trace the evolution of sayings from Mark via Luke to *Thomas*. Further evidence of Lukan redaction is visible in GTh 47 and 99. Additional Lukan peculiarities can also be found in *Thomas*.¹⁵

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- 13 J.P. Meier, 'The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds (Matthew 13:24–30): Is *Thomas's* Version (Logion 57) Independent?' *JBL* 131 (2012), 715–732 (726–727): 'This Greek noun (probably of Semitic origin) does not occur in the LXX, in other Greek versions of the OT, in secular Greek before the Christian era, or in the Apostolic Fathers. In the NT, it occurs only in this parable of Matthew and its interpretation.'
- 14 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 185–208. See also Gathercole, 'Luke in the *Gospel of Thomas*', and Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 82–96.
- 15 See e.g. J.P. Meier, 'Is Luke's Version of the Parable of the Rich Fool Reflected in the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*?', *CBQ* 74 (2012), 528–547 (544–546), and Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 89–90, on interior monologue in Luke and GTh 63.

4. The influence of Paul.¹⁶ This is especially apparent in GTh 53, where *Thomas* not only includes words and ideas stemming from Rom. 2.25–3.2, but also reflects the rhetorical arrangement as a dialogue. Influence is also apparent probably in GTh 3 and 17.
5. Negatively, the arguments for independence are negligible. Appeals to lack of agreement in order are irrelevant to the case, and arguments that there is a lack of verbal correspondence underestimate the extent of that correspondence; on the difficulty of invoking form-critical rules to conclude that this or that version of a Synoptic/*Thomas* saying is more primitive, see § 11.5 below, and the scholarly literature referred to there.

We can return to the question of the extent of dependence. In a previous study, I examined the twenty sayings where we have parallels between Mark and *Thomas* with, alongside those two, either Matthew or Luke. These are the sayings where it would in principle be possible to detect the influence of Matthean or Lukan redaction. The result was that in 11 out of 20 cases, Matthean or Lukan redactional features are evident, leading to the conclusion that there is *significant* influence from the Synoptics.¹⁷ (With Goodacre's observations about the 'kingdom of heaven', this number should now include GTh 20, and is therefore 12 out of 20.) As a result, a view of the independence of *Thomas* from the Synoptics is difficult to entertain.

11.2 Historical Proximity (1): Chronological

Some of the factors just mentioned, most notably the influence of Matthew and Luke, are also of significance for identifying the chronological position of *Thomas* in early Christianity. As we have seen in the discussion of dating (Introduction, § 7: 'Date of *Thomas*') above, other factors also suggest a date in the Antonine era, with c. 135 CE as a probable *terminus a quo*. A late date is not a decisive factor against historical value,¹⁸ but on the other hand it is no advantage either. There is clearly a difference between a historical time-frame of within a generation or two of Jesus' ministry, during which eyewitnesses

16 See further Gathercole, *Composition*, 227–249, and also idem, 'The Influence of Paul on the Gospel of Thomas', 72–94.

17 Gathercole, *Composition*, 209–214.

18 Rightly, R.J. Bauckham, 'The Study of Gospel Traditions Outside the Canonical Gospels: Problems and Prospects', in D. Wenham, ed. *Gospel Perspectives*, vol. 5. *The Jesus Tradition Outside the Gospels* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 369–403 (370).

were living and active, and—by contrast—a time 100 years or more after Jesus' ministry, by which time all eyewitnesses were dead. Coupled with the lack of evidence for independence, the distance of *Thomas* from Jesus does not inspire confidence.

11.3 Historical Proximity (2): Cultural

A further problem is that *Thomas* appears to betray ignorance of the realia of first-century Palestine. This can be seen from a combination of factors.

First, there are in *Thomas* few of the social and cultural phenomena which add verisimilitude to the canonical Gospels. Absent, for example, are detailed geographical references to villages, rivers and mountains, as perhaps befits a Gospel more 'timeless' in orientation: the only places referred to by *Thomas* are 'the world' and 'Judaea' ('Israel' is also perhaps a place in GTh 52, though it may be the people). Similarly, there are no festivals. These absences certainly show a lack of interest in such things, but can also lead one to wonder whether the author knew of them at all.

Second, in addition to the absences is the fact that those social and cultural features which are included are also found in the NT Gospels, and this may further imply dependence. For example, the cast of characters in *Thomas* and their names are all paralleled in the NT Gospels:

- Jesus (Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς, Ἰη(σοῦ)ς, ι(ησοῦ)ς, ιη(σοῦ)ς, *passim*)
- (Didymus) (Judas) Thomas ([Ἰούδας], Θωμάς, ΔΙΔΥΜΟΣ ἸΟΥΔΑΣ ΘΩΜΑΣ, prologue; ΘΩΜΑΣ (13.4, 7, 8 and *subscriptio*))
- James (Ἰάκωβος, 12.2)
- Simon Peter (σίμων πέτρος, 13.2; 114.1)
- Matthew (μαθθαῖος, 13.3)
- Mary (μαριὰμ, 21.1; 114.1)
- *Pharisee (φarisαῖος, 39.1; 102)
- Jew (Ἰουδαῖος, 43.3)
- John (the Baptist) (ἰωζαβηβης πβαπτιστης, 46.1 *bis*; ἰωζαβηβης, 46.2)
- Adam (ἀδάμ, 46.1; 85.1)
- Israel (ισραηλ, 52.1)
- Samaritan (σαμαρειτης, 60.1)
- Salome (σαλωμη, 61.2).
- *Caesar (καίσαρ, 100.1–2 *tris*)

[*not unambiguously names]

These names (in the case of the disciple Thomas's names, their constituent elements) are all found in the canonical Gospels, and none suggests a particularly primitive Semitic origin to *Thomas*, though the form of Thomas's name may reflect a Syrian milieu. Some specific or characteristic Jewish institutions are mentioned, such as circumcision (GTh 53) and the temple (GTh 71), but these were well known as Jewish distinctives not only from the NT, but across the Roman empire.¹⁹

Finally, in addition to the absences and perhaps dependent cultural features, there are some surprising elements. To return to the names, *Thomas*'s references to 'Mary' *tout simple* (GTh 21; 114) are odd: the author senses no need—as do the canonical Gospels and the *Gospel of Philip*—to specify which Mary. *Thomas* also seems to confuse the enumeration of 24 biblical books with the number of prophetic authors (GTh 52). In the Render unto Caesar pericope in GTh 100, it is clearly an exaggeration to suppose that a bystander in the temple would produce an *aureus*, a gold coin worth 25 times the Synoptics' *denarius*. These perhaps most clearly give an impression of cultural distance.

In conclusion, then, (a) the absence of reassuring cultural features, (b) the widely paralleled examples of those which do appear, and (c) the inconcinnities in some cases, do little to lend credence to the idea that the *Gospel of Thomas* may be of value as a source for the historical Jesus. As Bruce put it some time ago, 'we feel that we are no longer in touch, even remotely, with the evidence of eyewitnesses.'²⁰ Or, as he comments elsewhere, 'the historical and geographical setting—Palestine under the Romans and the Herods around A.D. 30—has been almost entirely forgotten.'²¹

11.4 *Thomas's Overall Picture of Jesus*

In addition to investigating individual sayings, one might also enquire into the plausibility of the overall portrait of Jesus in the *Gospel of Thomas*. The results here are at best mixed. On the one hand, for some readers, the absence of miracles might lend credence to *Thomas* as reliable, non-supernatural testimony. (This rough characterisation of *Thomas* as non-miraculous is a half-

19 See the survey of material in P. Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1997), 93–105 on circumcision, and *passim* on the temple.

20 F.F. Bruce, 'The Gospel of Thomas', *Faith and Thought* 92 (1961), 3–23 (21).

21 Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins outside the New Testament*, 155.

truth, however: Jesus does claim some kind of divine incarnation in GTh 28, cf. also 6i; a presence that transcends space in Greek GTh 30, and that he will destroy the temple in GTh 71. He makes other predictions requiring varying degrees of supernatural knowledge.) On the other hand, there are considerable difficulties. The overall portrait of a Jesus who dismisses Old Testament prophecy as 'dead', and condemns circumcision (GTh 52–53), and who speaks in quasi-Platonist terms of the Father's light image and eternal human images (GTh 83–84) does seem historically very implausible. The arguments that *Thomas* reflects a historical Jesus who was more likely to have been a Cynic-type sage than an eschatological prophet have not been found convincing.²²

11.5 *Thomas* as a Source of Primitive Versions of Synoptic Sayings?

Other scholars have insisted on the need to comb the individual logia on a case-by-case basis for more original versions of known sayings. Many of the arguments for these run aground on their faulty assumptions about form-critical laws: to invoke form-critical principles in order to conclude that this or that version of a Synoptic/ *Thomas* saying is more primitive is fruitless, because such form-critical laws simply do not exist.²³ To take one example, *Thomas*'s parable of the Wicked Tenants (GTh 65) is thought by some to be simpler and more elegant than its canonical parallels, and yet it is very likely to be influenced by them.²⁴

11.6 *Thomas* as a Source of New Sayings?

Some have also seen an opportunity to find new non-Synoptic sayings of Jesus in *Thomas*. GTh 82 ('he who is near me is near fire; he who is far from me is far from the kingdom') has been a prime candidate. Some have seen as authentic

22 On the former, see e.g. Crossan, *Historical Jesus*; cf. Taussig, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Case for Jesus the Teacher of Common Wisdom'. Against the anti-eschatological view, see esp. Tuckett, 'The Gospel of Thomas: Evidence for Jesus?', and more extensively, D.C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, History* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 31–220.

23 On these arguments, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 129–144; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 8–25.

24 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 188–194, and further bibliography in the commentary below.

Thomas's parable of the Assassin, in which a man drives his sword into a wall as practice for killing someone, both because of its content but also because it comes in a block of material (GTh 96–98) containing known traditional material. (See further commentary below on GTh 82 and 98.) It is certainly plausible to assume that *Thomas* might in principle have had access to material, oral and/ or written, which preserved authentic *agrapha*.²⁵ The written Gospels did not replace oral tradition at a stroke, and one must also—as per Luke 1.1—reckon with the continuing existence of non-canonical written sources. The difficulty in assessing such sayings in *Thomas*, however, lies not only with the material itself but also in our scholarly tools, and in our ability to identify authentic dominical words and deeds on an individual, case-by-case basis. The ‘crisis of criteriology’ which afflicts the study of the canonical Gospels is just as great in the study of the Apocrypha.²⁶

Conclusion

Overall, the prospects for the use of *Thomas* in historical Jesus research are slim. As scholarship currently stands, and with the primary sources that are available to us at present, the *Gospel of Thomas* can hardly be regarded as useful in the reconstruction of a historical picture of Jesus.

25 Hedrick, for example, sees *Thomas*, the *Apocryphon of James*, the *Dialogue of the Saviour*, and the *Egerton' Gospel*, as deriving independently from the same pool of oral tradition used by the Synoptic Gospels. C.W. Hedrick, ‘The Tyranny of the Synoptic Gospels’, *Semeia* 44 (1988), 1–8 (5).

26 M.D. Hooker, ‘Christology and Methodology’, *NTS* 17 (1971), 480–487; D.C. Allison, ‘How to Marginalize the Traditional Criteria of Authenticity’, in T. Holmén & S.E. Porter, eds. *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, vol. 1: *How to Study the Historical Jesus* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 3–30.

The Plan of the Commentary

Although it may not have much value for the study of the historical Jesus, *Thomas* is, however, a fascinating artefact from the second century, and it is this artefact which we will explore in more detail in the commentary to follow.

The commentary proceeds as follows. For each saying, a bibliography is supplied which aims to provide the reader with the main secondary literature (leaving aside brief 1–2 page treatments); this does not include extracts from commentaries. The text (Coptic, and Greek where extant) is provided, in some cases with a restoration *exempli gratia* of the Greek, i.e. a speculative text. This is accompanied by translation(s). The commentary proper comes in three parts.

- (1) *Textual Comment*. After the texts are presented, any substantial or controversial reconstructions of the text are justified, and the Coptic text is compared with the Oxyrhynchus fragments where the Greek text survives. This comparison has the overall aim of putting flesh on the bones of the arguments made above in § 2 ('A Comparison of the Greek and Coptic Texts') about the transmission of *Thomas*. That is, while there are some significant differences, we are not left with the rather hopeless situation of merely being able to talk of multiple recensions of *Thomas* and having to remain agnostic about the main contours of the earliest version of *Thomas*. (There may be no textual comment on a saying where only the Coptic survives and there has been no controversy over it.) It is usually possible to make a good case for the Greek or Coptic (usually the Greek) representing in substance the earlier reading.
- (2) *Interpretation*. This earliest recoverable form of the text is the object of the interpretation. As noted in the Preface, the main aim of this commentary is to elucidate the meaning of the statements in *Thomas* in its second-century context. This stands in contrast to some other commentaries, whose aims are rather to explore the pre-history of the text, or investigate the relative independence and primitivity of sayings in *Thomas* vis-à-vis their Synoptic and other parallels. Again, in contrast to some other commentators, such as Valantasis and Hedrick, the meaning of *Thomas* can usually be understood without recourse to what are perhaps anachronistically Derridean appeals to the text's invitation to play. While the mean-

ing of the text may be hidden in some sense, and in some places beyond recovery, the present commentary is reasonably optimistic about the possibility in most cases of identifying stable and coherent sense in the logia. The intention here is not to do this by tying *Thomas* down to the Procrustean bed of an existing known school of thought, but it does nevertheless identify *Thomas* as a part of certain tendencies in the second century, and sharing ideas in common with other early Christian and other texts.

- (3) *Notes*. Here some of the technical linguistic issues, catchword links across sayings, and close parallels in other literature, are discussed, especially where these support the discussion of the Interpretation.

Commentary



Diacritical System in Greek and Coptic Texts

- () for the resolution of an abbreviation¹
- . for the restoration of text (e.g. γ) where ink survives but visual ambiguity exists²
- [] for the restoration of missing text (e.g. [v]) where no ink survives
- [...] indicates missing or illegible text in the manuscript
- < > for the editorial correction of a mistake or omission
- { } for superfluous text written in error by the scribe, which should be ignored
- ⌈ ⌋ indicates text deleted by the scribe or a corrector
- ‘ ’ indicates text inserted subsequently above the line by the scribe or a corrector

Abbreviations and Conventions in the Comments

- translated text is underlined in the commentary in places where the Greek text and Coptic version diverge
- Co + a later addition in the Coptic text
- om. Co text omitted in the Coptic

Footnote Abbreviations

As noted in the Preface, references in the footnotes simply to the names of particular scholars are references to their commentaries. The commentators are: DeConick, Grant & Freedman, Grosso, Hedrick, Ménard, Nordsieck, Plisch, Pokorný and Valantasis.

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- 1 The so-called *nomina sacra* are left in their abbreviated forms, as they are probably not merely abbreviations (see Introduction, § 1.1, above). This and other definitions in the list are indebted to the crisp explanations in *CII/P* I.xxv, as well as the description of the ‘Leiden’ system referred to in E.G. Turner, *Greek Papyri: An Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 70.
 - 2 Therefore even where a letter only partially survives, but only one possibility exists for restoring the letter, there will be no underdotting. The rationale for this is drawn from J.M. Robinson, ‘Interim Collations in Codex II and the Gospel of Thomas’, in A. Bateau, ed. *Mélanges d’histoire des religions offerts à Henri-Charles Puech* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974) 379–392 (387).

Prologue¹

{οι} τοῖοι οἱ λόγοι οἱ [ἀπόκρυφοι οὖς ἐλά]λησεν ἰη̅ς ὁ ζῶν κ[αταγράφοντας
Ἰούδα τοῦ] καὶ Θωμά. (Restoration *exempli gratia*).

*These are the [secret] sayings [which] the living Jesus [spo]ke, [as Judas]
Thomas w[rote them down].*

ΝΑΕΙ ΝΕ ΝΩΔΑΧΕ ΕΘΗΠ` ΕΝΤΑ ΙC ΕΤΟΝΖ ΧΟΟΥ ΑΥΩ ΔΑΡΖΑΙCΟΥ ΝΒΙ ΔΙΔΥΜΟC
ΙΟΥΔΑC ΘΩΜΑC

*These are the secret sayings which the living Jesus spoke, and Didymus Judas
Thomas wrote them down.*

1 **Bibliography for Prologue:** A.F.J. Klijn, 'John XIV 22 and the Name Judas Thomas', in (no editor), *Studies in John. Presented to Professor J.N. Sevenster on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 88–96; M. Lelyveld, *Les Logia de la vie dans l'Évangile selon Thomas: À la recherche d'une tradition et d'une rédaction* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 132–137; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo (Evangélio de Tomás, Log. 12 y 13)', *Salmanticensis* 40 (1993), 97–119 (112–116); R. Uro, *Thomas: Seeking the Historical Context of the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2003), 10–15; M.W. Meyer, 'The Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas', in idem, *Secret Gospels: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas and the Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003), 39–53 (41–45); A. Pasquier & F. Vouga, 'Le genre littéraire et la structure argumentative de l'Évangile selon Thomas et leurs implications christologiques', in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi"*. Québec, 29–31 mai 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 335–362 (341–346); M. Janssen, "'Évangélio des Zwillings?' Das Thomasevangelium als Thomas-Schrift", in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 222–250; P. Nagel, 'Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 654, 1–5 und der Prolog des Thomasevangeliums', *ZNW* 101 (2010), 267–293; W. Eisele, *Welcher Thomas? Studien zur Text- und Überlieferungsgeschichte des Thomasevangeliums* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr, 2010), 47–69.

Textual Comment

It seems likely that the first \omicron in P. Oxy. IV 654 is a mistake (so Grenfell and Hunt);² also possible are $\omicron\tau\omicron\iota\ \omicron\iota\ \{\omicron\iota\}\ \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\iota$ ³ and $\omicron(\delta\bar{\iota})\tau\omicron\iota\ \omicron\iota\ \{\omicron\iota\}\ \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\iota$.⁴ This last has the advantage of being the most natural Greek, but on the other hand it requires *two* distinct emendations. It is possible that there is another mistake in the spelling $\Theta\omega\mu\alpha$, which could be a scribal error, a spelling influenced by the Syriac *thwm'* / *t'wm'* (as in the Jn 14.22 OS), or a simple orthographic variant given the frequency of omitted *sigmas* in the papyri;⁵ the alternative is to take 'Thomas' as an indirect object in the dative,⁶ or as part of a genitive absolute clause (suggested above, though merely speculatively); another possibility is that $\Theta\omega\mu\alpha$ is the nominative form.⁷ There is no clearly preferable option.

The Coptic is unproblematic, and corresponds roughly to what survives of the Greek. There is one clear divergence, in Thomas's name: there is not room in the Greek for 'Didymus Judas Thomas' as in the Coptic. The form in the Greek, probably '[Judas] Thomas' is widely attested, especially in Syrian literature (see

2 B.P. Grenfell & A.S. Hunt, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri: Part IV* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1904). 3. Although it might seem unlikely to have a mistake so early in the copying process, see the parallel instances noted in T. Wasserman, 'The "Son of God" was in the Beginning', *JTS* 62 (2011), 20–50 (45–47).

3 H.W. Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', in B. Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7. Together with XIII, 2**, *Brit. Lib. Or.4926(1)*, and *P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655. Volume One: Gospel according to Thomas, Gospel according to Philip, Hypostasis of the Archons, and Indexes* (NHS 20; The Coptic Gnostic Library; Leiden: Brill, 1989), 95–128 (113).

4 So H.G. Evelyn White, *The Sayings of Jesus from Oxyrhynchus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), 1.

5 See E. Maysen, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemäerzeit. Band 1: Laut- und Wortlehre* (Berlin/Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1923), 205–207.

6 Hofius and Eisele have sought to avoid presuming an error and—in part on the basis of the scene in Jn 20.26–29—suppose a dative, and give $\chi[\alpha\iota\ \delta\phi\theta\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \text{I}\acute{o}\upsilon\delta\alpha\ \tau\acute{\omega}] \ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \Theta\omega\mu\acute{\alpha}$. See O. Hofius, 'Das koptische Thomasevangelium und die Oxyrhynchus Papyri nr 1,654 und 655', *EvTh* 20 (1960), 21–42, 182–192 (24); Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 57. In addition to the difficulty of reconstructing on the basis of a Johannine event, Nagel, 'Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 654', 279–280, notes that this reconstruction yields a rather short line. He supplies another option, again on the basis of a number of parallels: $\chi[\alpha\iota\ \xi\delta\omega\kappa\epsilon\nu\ \text{I}\acute{o}\upsilon\delta\alpha\ \tau\acute{\omega}] \ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \Theta\omega\mu\acute{\alpha}$. See Nagel, 'Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 654', 290 (for parallels to 'giving words') and 293 for his reconstruction.

7 See e.g. Introduction, 3.10 above: $\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\alpha}\ \Theta\omega\mu\acute{\alpha}$ (at least in the Migne edition), where, if the edition is correct, the form $\Theta\omega\mu\acute{\alpha}$ is apparently indeclinable.

Introduction, § 6.1 above), hence the restoration here;⁸ it is probably the earlier form of the name in the text of the Prologue.⁹ Eisele exaggerates the difference between the Greek and Coptic in his view that the Coptic turns Thomas into a co-author:¹⁰ it assumes that we know what the Greek says (and that it says something markedly different from the Coptic), and secondly, it confuses the roles of scribe and author.

Given the fragmentary nature of the Greek, the Coptic must be the primary basis for the interpretation, except where Thomas's name is concerned.

Interpretation

These opening words are more a prologue than an incipit, the latter suggesting a superscript title in the manuscript ('here begins the *Gospel of Thomas*').¹¹ This prologue is part of a larger set of introductory statements (including GTh 1–2) which lay out the character of the book, the salvation that comes from understanding it, and what will happen to the ideal reader of this Gospel. It reflects the second-century emphases on Jesus as both a teacher of sayings (see Introduction, § 9: 'The Genre of Thomas'), and a revealer of *secret* truth (cf. the *Gospel of Mary* and the *Gospel of Judas*).

The principal interpretative questions here are (a) the fictional setting of the Gospel, (b) the implications of the sayings being 'hidden', and (c) what this Prologue says about the genre of *Thomas*.

First, the question of whether the setting of the Gospel is pre- or post-resurrection has divided scholars: some have seen in the epithet 'living' an implication of a post-Easter setting,¹² but this is not a necessary consequence, and the content of the Gospel suggests otherwise.¹³ Presumably, we are to

8 Eisele's 'Didymus Thomas' (*Welcher Thomas*, 265) is less well attested.

9 Rightly, T. Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas: A Text-Critical Look at the Transmission of the Gospel of Thomas', in D.B. Wallace, ed. *Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament: Manuscript, Patristic, and Apocryphal Evidence* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2011), 189–228 (199).

10 Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 65.

11 Rightly W.H.C. Frend, 'The Gospel of Thomas: Is Rehabilitation Possible?', *JTS* 18 (1967), 13–26 (13 n. 5): 'preamble'. Pace Meyer, 'Beginning of the Gospel', 43. Still less do the Prologue and GTh 1 together form a 'title' (so Plisch, 40).

12 Grant & Freedman, 118 ('undoubtedly the risen Lord'); more cautiously, Hedrick, 19.

13 Plisch, 39, opts for a pre-easter setting. Despite the usage in the NT, the designation 'living' in *Thomas* is perhaps not best understood as 'risen from the dead': see notes below.

imagine Thomas as present throughout (cf. GTh 13) and recording the ministry either at the time or later. This has parallels in both the *Book of Thomas the Contender* as well as the much later *Gospel of Barnabas*.¹⁴

Second, there is the nature of the secrecy, of which there are two main views. (1) Are the sayings themselves secret, i.e. not for a general audience, but only for initiates?¹⁵ Or (2), is it the *meaning* of the sayings which is secret?¹⁶ (3) It may be possible that both are in view.¹⁷ The solution is difficult. (1) is perhaps the more natural interpretation of the wording: the similar opening of the *Gospel of Judas* clearly has this sense (cf. also *Gos. Mary* 10,4–6; *Gos. Eg.* III 68,1–9); *Thomas's* pearls-before-swine saying may support it (GTh 93), as might other statements (GTh 13; 38; 92). In favour of (2), on the other hand, is the fact that many of these sayings are not secret: some are known in the Synoptic Gospels,¹⁸ and some non-Synoptic material is 'public', indeed in one place a crowd is mentioned (GTh 79).¹⁹ Also in favour of (2) is the fact that in GTh 1 (and 2) the stress is on finding the interpretation of the sayings. These two points make interpretation (2) the more attractive option. The sayings in *Thomas* thus often have a hidden sense, which needs to be uncovered.

Thirdly, the question of genre has already been discussed more fully in the Introduction (§ 9: 'The Genre of *Thomas*') above. What is evident specifically

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- 14 *Thom. Cont.* 138,1–4: "The secret words which the Saviour spoke to Judas Thomas which I, even I, Mathaias, wrote down, while I was walking, listening to them speak with one another." Cf. *Gos. Barn.* 19.1: "And having said this Jesus sighed, saying: "O Lord, what thing is this? For I have chosen twelve, and one of them is a devil." The disciples were sore grieved at this word; whereupon he who writes secretly questioned Jesus with tears, saying: "O master, will Satan deceive me, and shall I then become reprobate?" Tr. in L. Ragg & L. Ragg, *The Gospel of Barnabas* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1907), 37, 39.
- 15 S.J. Patterson, *The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1993), 123; DeConick, 46; Plisch, 37.
- 16 E. Haenchen, *Die Botschaft des Thomas-Evangeliums* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1961), 36; S.L. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained* (Woodstock: Skylight, 2002), 2. A variant on this view is that of Nordsieck, 31, for whom the content, namely the kingdom of God, is a mystery.
- 17 Valantasis, 31, 52–53; cf. the ambiguity in Hedrick, 19.
- 18 T. Baarda, "If you do not sabbatize the Sabbath ...": The Sabbath as God or World in Gnostic Understanding (Ev. Thom., Log. 27), in R. van den Broeck, T. Baarda & J. Mansfeld, eds. *Knowledge of God in the Graeco-Roman World* (EPRO 112; Leiden: Brill, 1988), 178–201 (179).
- 19 Cf. also the dialogues with the disciples, which can hardly be called secret, in GTh 6; 12; 13, etc. (and the sayings where the disciples are not marked, but the addressees are 'you plural', e.g. GTh 19; 23, etc.).

from this saying is that *Thomas* is both like and unlike the canonical Gospels. It consists of the words of Jesus which, as GTh 1 will make clear, give life, but the narrative form of the canonical Gospels is obviously absent; the Prologue states that *Thomas* is more like a sayings Gospel.²⁰

Notes

These are the secret sayings. See above on the meaning of 'secret'. Lelyveld sees a contrast here with Deut. 1.1 ('These are the sayings/words which Moses spoke ...'), i.e. between the living Jesus with his life-giving words, and the Torah.²¹ Although this comes out in GTh 52, it is probably not intended at the outset. There is a catchword connection between 'these sayings' here and GTh 1.

Which the living Jesus spoke. The epithet 'living' is notable here, given the scarcity of titles applied to Jesus in *Thomas*.²² The epithet 'the living one' can be applied to Jesus in Gnostic and related literature,²³ but it is also used in the sense of 'alive (from the dead)' in Rev. 1.17–18; cf. Lk. 24.5. The title is probably applied to Jesus in GTh 52; 99, 111 and perhaps 59 (cf. 37). It denotes Jesus as himself characterised by true divine life and as the source of saving life.²⁴ Compare also the 'living Father' in GTh 3.4. The implication is probably also that he speaks *permanently* through his words here in *Thomas*. Pasquier & Vouga remark that there is nothing in the Prologue about Jesus' authority, and that the authority of the words lies not in the sayings' origin but in their effects.²⁵ This is unlikely, because the Gospel must presuppose some knowledge of Jesus, and the designation of Jesus as 'living' is a very elevated one.

And (Co + Didymus) Judas Thomas wrote them down. The Thomas here is clearly the disciple also seen in the canonical Gospels.²⁶ The double-name

²⁰ DeConick, 45.

²¹ Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 136. Cf. also the similar phrasing in Jer. 37.4 LXX; Bar. 1.1.

²² Plisch, 37.

²³ *Gos. Eg.* III,2 64,1; cf. *Apoc. Peter* 81,17–18. See B.E. Gärtner, *The Theology of the Gospel of Thomas* (London: Collins/New York: Harper, 1961), 98–100.

²⁴ There is perhaps also a hint that Jesus is elevated over space and time: E. Rau, 'Jenseits von Raum, Zeit und Gemeinschaft: "Christ-sein" nach dem Thomasevangelium', *NovT* 45 (2003), 138–159 (138).

²⁵ Pasquier & Vouga, 'Genre littéraire', 343, 350, 360.

²⁶ Mk 3.18/ Matt. 10.3/ Lk. 6.15; Acts 1.13, and especially in John: 11.16; 14.5; 20.24–29. For bibliography on *Thomas* in early Christianity, see G.W. Most, *Doubting Thomas* (London/

‘[Judas] Thomas’ in the Greek²⁷ may well be evidence of a Syrian provenance (see Introduction, § 6: ‘Provenance’).²⁸

The choice of Thomas probably reflects the fact that some other disciples’ names (especially Matthew) had already been ‘used’ as authors of Gospels (see comment on GTh 13); it is not clear at this stage whether the *Gospel of Thomas* aims to undercut other Gospels already in existence, though the secrecy motif perhaps suggests *Thomas’s* claim to greater importance. The fact that *Thomas* will appear later to be at such variance with Gospels such as Matthew (e.g. on fasting, alms and prayer in GTh 14), suggests that *Thomas’s* claim is more competitive than complementary. (See discussion in Introduction, § 10.5, above.) *Thomas’s* special place in John’s resurrection narrative may also have been an impulse in his selection, but this is not certain.

The function of Thomas here is to guarantee the authenticity of these ‘words’:²⁹ his modest role as a mere scribe does not detract from this. To define him as a scribe³⁰ (rather than, e.g. a ἐρμηνευτής like Mark in Papias) is to guarantee a pure and uncontaminated voice of Jesus. The effect of this, together with the form of the rest of *Thomas*, is to create an immediate relationship between Jesus and the reader.³¹

Although the name ‘Thomas’ is related to the Aramaic/ Syriac for ‘twin’ (*tʾm*(ʾ)), there is probably no sense here that Thomas is Jesus’ twin.³² See comment on GTh 108 below.

Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2005); M. Choat, ‘Thomas the “Wanderer” in a Coptic List of the Apostles’, *Orientalia* 74 (2005), 83–85.

27 See G.H.R. Horsley, ‘Names, Double’, *ABD* 4.1011–1017.

28 DeConick, 44. On the name, see the discussion in Klijn, ‘John XIV 22 and the Name Judas Thomas’; J.J. Gunther, ‘The Meaning and Origin of the Name Judas Thomas’, *Muséon* 93 (1980), 113–148 (123–127).

29 Grosso, 110.

30 Valantasis, 51, calls him a mere ‘repository’.

31 Valantasis, 52, emphasises the relationship between the reader and the narrator, but this quickly disappears.

32 DeConick, 45; Meyer, ‘Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas’, 45; E.H. Pagels, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas* (New York: Random House, 2003), 57; N. Perrin, *Thomas, the Other Gospel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 124. There is a shift from the *Gospel* to the *Acts of Thomas* in this respect. Cf. P.-H. Poirier, ‘Évangile de Thomas, Actes de Thomas, Livre de Thomas’, *Apocrypha* 7 (1996), 9–26 (22), who sees the *Acts* as a development of what is already present in the *Gospel*, however.

Logion 1¹

καὶ εἶπεν· [ὅς ἂν τὴν ἐρμηνείαν τῶν λόγων τούτων εὕρη, θανάτου] οὐ μὴ γεύσεται.

And he said, '[Whoever finds the interpreta]tion of thes[e] sayings will not taste [death].'

ⲁⲮⲱ ⲡⲉⲭⲁⲫ Ⲅⲉ ⲡⲉⲧⲁⲪⲉ ⲉⲟⲉⲣⲙⲏⲛⲉⲓⲁ ⲛⲏⲛⲉⲓⲱⲁⲄⲉ ⲕⲏⲁⲭⲓ ⲓⲧⲡⲉ ⲁⲛ ⲛⲓⲡⲓⲙⲟⲄ

And he said, 'Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death.'

Textual Comment

Where both texts are extant, the Greek and Coptic texts are essentially alike, although the Greek is very lacunose.

Interpretation

The theme of this logion is still 'these sayings' mentioned in the Prologue. GTh 1 sets out what is to be done with them: the labour of interpretation (see GTh 2) is what is crucial, and that is the reader's task.² The soteriological import of the words and their interpretation is evident. It is not the case that *Thomas* is, for example, 'une thérapie des urgences quotidiennes et plus généralement aident à vivre'.³ Rather, *Thomas* is salvific in theme:⁴ reading *Thomas* is necessary to avoid tasting death, and in this sense *Thomas* can be called a

1 **Bibliography for GTh 1:** R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Gnosticismo y hermenéutica (Evangelio de Tomás, logion 1)', in idem, *Estudios sobre el Evangelio de Tomás* (Fuentes Patristicas, Estudios 2; Madrid: Editorial Ciudad Nueva, 1997), 151–178; Meyer, 'The Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas', 39–53.

2 Plisch, 39.

3 Pasquier & Vouga, 'Le genre littéraire et la structure argumentative', 360.

4 Grosso, 111.

‘Gospel’. One can compare the similar language in John 8.51–52,⁵ where it is obedience to Jesus’ word which rescues from tasting death (cf. believing in Jn 20.31), and Ignatius’s description of the bread of the eucharist—‘the antidote against death’ (ἀντίδοτος τοῦ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν, *Eph.* 20.2). Plisch notes that the words, as opposed to the deeds and fate, of Jesus are identified here as central in *Thomas*.⁶ The true disciple will transcend death and return to paradise.

Notes

And he said. Although strictly speaking ambiguous (both Jesus and Thomas are possible subjects),⁷ the speaker here is almost certainly Jesus: ‘the incipit presupposes Jesus to be the speaker of sayings and Thomas the recorder of sayings’.⁸

Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings. The phrase ‘these sayings’ links the Prologue and GTh 1. ‘Finding’ the meaning is necessary because the sayings are ‘secret’ (see discussion of Prologue above). The clear message here is that the *real* sense of these sayings cannot merely be read off the page. Rather, the ultimate meaning needs to be discovered. The process which can lead to this discovery is explained in GTh 2. It seems unlikely that from the author’s perspective the effort in interpretation is merely different in degree, rather than in kind, by comparison with normal interpretative work.⁹ This perhaps downplays the spiritual or mystical element in the interpretation.

Will not taste death. Cf. also GTh 18; 19; 85 (and ‘seeing death’ in GTh 111). Although a pre-Christian Jewish idiom, the reference to ‘tasting death’ is not evidence for a Semitic original of the saying.¹⁰ The point here is presum-

5 Some have claimed that GTh 1 betrays the influence of the Johannine parallel, but this seems impossible to prove or disprove.

6 Plisch, 39.

7 Valantasis, 32, 54.

8 Meyer, ‘Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas’, 46.

9 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 123.

10 S.J. Gathercole, *The Composition of the Gospel of Thomas: Original Language and Influences* (SNTSMS 51; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 44. Its pre-Christian origin is suggested by its use in the Jesus tradition together with the reference in *4 Ezra* 6.26. It comes in the NT in Heb. 2.9, in Mk 9.1 *et parr.* as well as in John 8.52. B.D. Chilton, “Not to Taste Death”: A Jewish, Christian and Gnostic Usage, in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia*

ably not that the disciples will avoid physical death, but rather that they will transcend it, escaping its bitter effects (cf. the idiom in Hebrews 2.9).¹¹ The soul will instead continue eternally in the primordial paradise (cf. GTh 18–19).

Death is one of the ultimate ills in *Thomas*. On one side of the divide is ‘the living Jesus’ (Prologue), the ‘place of life’ (GTh 4), the living father/ living one and his sons (3; cf. 37; 50; 59), living from the living one (111), and living spirits (114). On the other side, the world is a corpse (GTh 56). Readers are also in danger of becoming corpses and being eaten as a result; this is the opposite of ‘rest’ (60). Blessing consists in finding life (GTh 58), whereas damnation consists in tasting death (1; 18; 19), which is the result of being unworthy (85); being killed is the opposite of salvation (70). The prophets are dismissed as lifeless, in contrast to Jesus ‘the living one’ (GTh 52).¹²

Biblica 2: Papers on the Gospels (JSNTSuppS; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980), 29–36, constructs a theory, based on several passages from the midrashim, in which ‘not tasting death’ is an idiom, ‘a quasi angelic trait’, associated with figures such as Enoch (30). He remarks that here ‘in *Thomas* the claim is made in full knowledge of its Jewish background’ (31). There is an interesting parallel between GTh 85 and *Genesis Rabbah*, but there are problems with the late dates generally of the texts adduced, and even then of whether the use of the idiom is really ‘systematic’ (30).

- 11 To this extent, the view here in *Thomas* may overlap with the Epicurean idea that death is by definition not strictly speaking *experienced* (Epicurus, *Letter to Menoecus* 124–127).
- 12 Although the connection between secret mysteries (as in the Prologue) and the renewal of life (as here in GTh 1) is not uncommon in ancient mystery cults, it is possible there is an Egyptian tradition exerting an influence here. Van Dijk has noted that there is some evidence of late redactions of the *Book of the Dead* incorporating additional references to the secrecy of the spells providing immortality. See J. van Dijk, ‘Early Christian Apocrypha and the Secret Books of Ancient Egypt’, in A. Hilhorst & G. van Kooten, eds. *The Wisdom of Egypt: Jewish, Early Christian and Gnostic Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuisen* (AJEC 59; Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2005), 419–428, esp. 425–426.

Logion 2¹

2.1 [λέγει ιη̅ς] μὴ παυσάσθω ὁ ζη[τῶν τοῦ ζητεῖν ἕως ἀν] εὔρη, 2.2–3 καὶ ὅταν εὔρη 2.3 θαμβηθήσεται, καὶ θαμ]βηθεῖς 2.4 βασιλεύσ(ει), 2.5 κα[ὶ βασιλεύσας ἐπαναπα]ήσεται.

2.1 [Jesus said,] 'He who se[eks] should not stop [seeking until] he finds. 2.2 And when [he] finds, 2.3 [he will be astonished, and when he is aston]ished, 2.4 he will reign, 2.5 an[d having reigned], he will [rest].'

2.1 πεξε ι̅c̅ η̅n̅τρει̅λο̅ n̅σι̅ πετ̅'ω̅ινε̅ εφ̅'ω̅ινε̅ ω̅αντεφ̅'σι̅νε̅ 2.2 αγω̅ ροτα̅n̅ εφω̅ανσι̅νε̅ φ̅na̅'ω̅τρ̅τρ̅ 2.3 αγω̅ εφω̅an̅'ω̅τορ̅τρ̅ φ̅na̅r̅ ω̅πι̅ρη̅ 2.4 αγω̅ φ̅na̅r̅ ρ̅ρο̅ ε̅x̅n̅ π̅τηρ̅φ̅

2.1 Jesus said, 'He who seeks should not stop seeking until he finds. 2.2 And when he finds, he will be troubled, 2.3 and when he is troubled, he will be astonished, 2.4 and he will reign over the all.'

Textual Comment

The reconstruction of the Greek text is generally uncontroversial.² The Greek and Coptic texts have two clear differences. First, while the Greek has the sequence 'find → be astonished' in the middle of the saying, the Coptic has in its place 'find → be troubled → be astonished'. The Coptic perhaps emphasises the

1 **Bibliography for GTh 2:** E. Bammel, 'Rest and Rule', *VC* 23 (1969), 88–90; A.F.J. Klijn, *Jewish-Christian Gospel Tradition* (VCSupps 17; Leiden/ New York/ Cologne: Brill, 1992), 47–51; T. Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium* (NHMS 47; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 180–186; Meyer, 'The Beginning of the Gospel of Thomas', 39–53; P. Nagel, 'πεξε ι̅c̅—Zur Einleitung der Jesuslogien im Thomasevangelium', *Göttinger Miszellen* 195 (2003), 73–79; P. Luomanen, "Let Him Who Seeks, Continue Seeking": The Relationship between the Jewish-Christian Gospels and the *Gospel of Thomas*, in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 119–153, esp. 128–130; U.-K. Plisch, *The Gospel of Thomas: Original Text with Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 24–25; 'Excursus: The introductory formula "Jesus says" (πεξε ι̅c̅ xε)', Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 69–99.

2 The only point usually discussed is whether the final word is better taken to be [ἐπαναπα]ήσεται or [ἀναπα]ήσεται. The former is taken to be too long by DeConick, 98, and Grosso, 115, but this is incorrect: with it, line 8 would be no longer than line 7.

unsettling nature of the process of discovery. On the one hand, however, while $\alpha\tau\omicron\tau\bar{\rho}$ is more consistently negative than $\theta\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$,³ the Coptic $\alpha\tau\omicron\tau\bar{\rho}$ could easily be a translation of it;⁴ on a rough count of the 24 instances in the Sahidic translation of the Synoptics, four are translations of $\theta\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ or its cognates. The variation in Clement's citations of the version is also interesting: his first reference to the version of the saying in the *Gospel of the Hebrews* has $\theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$, the second $\theta\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$.⁵ Possibly the Coptic is a harmonising version, attempting to combine the two, with $\theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ rendered very naturally as $\bar{\rho}$ $\alpha\pi\eta\rho\epsilon$,⁶ and $\theta\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ translated as $\alpha\tau\omicron\tau\bar{\rho}$. Given the parallel with Clement's second citation of *G. Heb.*, the text of P. Oxy. IV 654 here has a good claim to be the earliest form.

Secondly, in place of the Greek's conclusion to the *sorites* with (in all likelihood, though there is some guesswork in the restoration) 'he will reign, and having reigned he will rest', the Coptic has 'he will reign over the all'. This has the effect of reducing the emphasis on 'rest', but clarifying the envisaged rule as over the pan-cosmic domain. This may be the result of an error at the Greek stage (either by a scribe, or the translator), where 'reigning, *will rest* ($\acute{\epsilon}\pi\alpha\nu\alpha\pi\alpha\eta\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$)' is misread as 'reigning *over all* ($\acute{\epsilon}\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega\ \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\omega\nu$; cf. Jn 3.31)'. Bammel claims that the Coptic text 'may be a degree less gnosticized', with the absence of 'rest', but there is nothing distinctively Gnostic about rest.⁷ The addition in the Coptic of reigning 'over (the) all' does not dramatically change the sense, as the superiority of the elect disciple over the cosmos is a theme very widespread in *Thomas*. It ought also to be remembered that the reference to 'rest' is entirely a restoration, with only the common ending $-\eta\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ surviving.

3 Rightly, Luomanen, 'Let Him Who Seeks, Continue Seeking', 129 n. 23. See LSJ 783, and in the Greek NT, where the senses of the verb (and its compound with $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ -) as negative 'alarm' (cf. in the LXX, 2 Kgs 7.15; *Wis.* 17.3) and positive 'wonder' are fairly evenly distributed; cf. Crum, 597b–598b. In the Sahidic NT, all references to $\theta\alpha\mu\beta\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ and its cognates either are translated by $\alpha\tau\omicron\tau\bar{\rho}$, or use $\zeta\omicron\tau\epsilon$ in some way.

4 Pace Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas', 201, who maintains that the Coptic 'does not match up well to the Greek' here.

5 See Clement, *Strom.* 2.9.45.5: $\eta\ \kappa\acute{\alpha}\nu\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \kappa\alpha\theta'\ \text{'}\text{Εβραίους εὐαγγελίω, ὁ θαυμάσας βασιλεύσει, γέγραπται, καὶ ὁ βασιλεύσας ἀναπαύσεται, and } \textit{Strom.} \text{ 5.14.96.3: οὐ παύσεται ὁ ζητῶν, ἕως ἂν εὐρη-εὐρών δὲ θαμβηθῆσεται, θαμβηθεὶς δὲ βασιλεύσει, βασιλεύσας δὲ ἐπαναπαύσεται.}$

6 Again, from a rough sample of the Synoptics, 26/45 instances of $\alpha\pi\eta\rho\epsilon$ in the Sahidic go back to $\theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ and its cognates.

7 Bammel, 'Rest and Rule', 90. The reverse might easily be the case: 'being troubled' (in the Coptic text) is a major theme of Gnostic *Paraphrase of Shem*. See Valantasis, 57, for an alternative explanation.

There are a number of parallels to this saying, the closest of which are the two references in Clement of Alexandria noted above: one is attributed to the *Gospel of the Hebrews*.⁸ These are usually used to assist in the reconstruction of the lacunose Greek text of *Thomas*, though this may have the effect of distorting the texts through over-harmonisation. The parallels in the *Gospel of the Hebrews* suggest that in both the places just discussed, the Greek of *Thomas* represents the earlier form of the text: it conforms very closely to Clement's citations of the same formula.

Interpretation

This saying presents an *ordo salutis*, or 'salvation ladder'.⁹ The object of the 'seeking and finding' harks back to the previous saying, where the theme is precisely 'finding' the interpretation of Jesus' sayings. GTh 2 declares that the discovery of the Gospel's interpretation is not a straightforward matter, as it involves labour and is accompanied by emotional turbulence (amplified in the Coptic).¹⁰ Klauck summarises the point of the Greek text nicely: 'The logion contains an intentional paradox: only the restless activity of seeking leads to the rest for which one yearns'.¹¹ The saying probably marks the conclusion of the introductory section of *Thomas*, which delineates the character of the work and the way it should be read.

8 There is clearly some relationship between *Thomas* here and the *Gospel of the Hebrews* as cited by Clement, but it is hard to define. A more distant parallel is the saying attributed to a λόγιον ἔγγραφον used by Simon Magus and Helen, according to Eusebius (*HE* 2.13.7): whoever witnesses their rituals will first be 'astounded' (ἐκπλαγῆσθαι) and 'dumbfounded' (θαμβωθῆσθαι, from θαμβόμαι rather than θαμβέω). I owe this reference to Stephen Carlson. A still more distant parallel is Valentinus frag. 4, discussed in I. Dunderberg, 'From *Thomas* to Valentinus: Genesis Exegesis in Fragment 4 of Valentinus and Its Relationship to the Gospel of *Thomas*', in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 221–237. Cf. also *Thom. Cont.* 140,41–141,43 (seeking, finding, resting), and *Thom. Cont.* 145,10–16; *Ac. Thom.* 136; and 2 *Apoc. Jas.* 56,2–7 (all with 'rest' and 'reign'); 2 *Clem.* 5.5 has a collocation of 'amazing', 'rest', and 'kingdom'.

9 Bammel, 'Rest and Rule', 89.

10 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 2, remarks that it is achieved not by grace but by effort!

11 H.-J. Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels: An Introduction* (London/New York: T&T Clark, 2003), 39.

Notes

2.1 Jesus said. The Coptic phrase $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon\ \bar{\iota}\bar{\varsigma}$ corresponds (where the Greek is extant) to λέγει Ἰησοῦς, and both are usually translated as ‘Jesus said’.¹² Some, however, especially within and under the influence of the Berliner Arbeitskreis, translate the phrases as ‘Jesus says’:¹³ the linguistic reason is that λέγει is present, and for some—allied to this—is the theological reason that *Thomas* intends to convey the ‘Zeitlosigkeit’ of Jesus’ voice in the sayings.¹⁴ There are a number of elements here to be disentangled. First, the Greek and Coptic are not simply identical. In addition, factors of grammatical form, time, aspect, *Aktionsart* and theology should not be confused. We shall treat the Coptic first because it is simpler, and then move to the Greek.

Coptic $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon\ \bar{\iota}\bar{\varsigma}$. The form $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$ is an irregular form of the verb $\chi\omega$, and does not belong to any particular Coptic conjugation. In function, however, it almost always refers to an action in past time.¹⁵ (1) There is no differentiation in usage in *Thomas* between $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon\ \bar{\iota}\bar{\varsigma}$ and $\pi\epsilon\chi\alpha\lambda\upsilon$. For example, in the body of *Thomas*, the parable of the Wise Fisherman (GTh 8) is introduced by $\alpha\gamma\omega\ \pi\epsilon\chi\alpha\lambda\upsilon\ \chi\epsilon$, whereas in the next saying, the parable of the Sower (GTh 9) is introduced with $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon\ \bar{\iota}\bar{\varsigma}\ \chi\epsilon$. There is no perceptible difference in tense, aspect or *Aktionsart*; $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$ - and $\pi\epsilon\chi\alpha\lambda\upsilon$ are semantically the same.

The fact that no particular timeless profundity can be derived from the form of the verb is evident from the fact that the same form is used to introduce (a) the speech of Jesus at the beginning of a logion; (b) Jesus’ speech in the middle

12 So e.g. B. Layton, ed. & T.O. Lambdin, tr. ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, in Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7, together with XIII, 2**, *Brit. Lib. Or. 4926(1)*, and *P. Oxy.* 1, 654, 655, vol. I (NHS 20; Leiden: Brill, 1989), 52–93.

13 Thus H.-G. Bethge & J. Schröter, ‘Das Evangelium nach Thomas (NHC II, 2)’, in H.-M. Schenke, H.-G. Bethge & U.U. Kaiser, eds. *Nag Hammadi Deutsch* (GCS; Walter de Gruyter, 2001, 2003), I, 151–181; K. Aland, ed. *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1996), 519 nn. 3–4; S.J. Patterson, J.M. Robinson & the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostische Schriften, *The Fifth Gospel: The Gospel of Thomas Comes of Age* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), *passim*; so also in the commentaries of Plisch and Pokorný.

14 Thus D. Lührmann, *Fragmente apokryph gewordener Evangelien in griechischer und lateinischer Sprache* (Marburg: Elwert, 2000), 178; cf. C. Taylor, *The Oxyrhynchus Logia and the Apocryphal Gospels* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1899), 19: the present tense of λέγει gives it ‘a present living force’; Plisch, 25: ‘timeless meaning’. Against this, see Ménard, 80.

15 Nagel has adduced abundant linguistic evidence in favour of interpreting $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon$ with past meaning (Nagel, ‘ $\pi\epsilon\chi\epsilon\ \bar{\iota}\bar{\varsigma}$ —Zur Einleitung der Jesuslogien’, 73–79). Plisch, 24, is right to note that there are exceptions.

of a dialogue; (c) the speech of disciples or other figures, and (d) the speech of characters in parables:

- (a) GTh 2; 3; 4; 5; 7; 9, etc.
- (b) e.g. GTh 13, 'Jesus said (πεξε̅ ι̅) to the disciples, "Compare me and tell me who I am like". Simon Peter said ... Matthew said ... Thomas said ... Jesus said (πεξε̅ ι̅), "I am not your master"', etc. See further GTh 6.2; 12.2; 13.5; 18.2; 22.4; 37.2; 61.3; 104.2; 114.2.
- (c) e.g. GTh 61.2: 'Salome said (πεξε̅)'; GTh 114.1: 'Simon Peter said (πεξε̅)'. See further GTh 12.1; 18.1; 20.1; 21.1; 24.1; 37.1, 72.1, 79.1, and 99.1.
- (d) the master in the parable in GTh 64.11.

Given this variation of context, it seems arbitrary to translate πεξε̅ one way for Jesus and another way for other characters. (Presumably their speech is not marked by 'Zeitlosigkeit'.) As a result of these considerations, Layton's general assessment of πεξε̅-/πεξε̅, that it 'signals direct discourse in past time', appears to apply in the case of *Thomas*.¹⁶

Greek λέγει ιη̅ς/λέγει ι̅ς. Here the situation is more complex, because unlike in the Coptic, there is a difference of tenses between the Prologue + GTh 1 on the one hand, and the main body of the Gospel on the other. The Prologue refers to Jesus speaking all the sayings with an aorist (ἐλάλησεν); in GTh 1, Jesus' programmatic statement about the soteriological value of the words is introduced with the aorist εἶπεν. In what survives of the Greek elsewhere (GTh 2ff.), however, all the individual sayings of Jesus (and speech of the disciples) are introduced with present tenses: Jesus λέγει throughout; GTh 6 has ἐξετάζουσιν αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγουσιν, and GTh 37 begins λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. Clearly, in terms of time, these are past events (as the Prologue has made clear). Nevertheless, the switch from aorist to present forms does correspond to an aspectual distinction, in other words, the author adopts two different viewpoints, varying the way in which the speech events are presented as unfolding.¹⁷ The Prologue and GTh 1 together summarise Jesus' speaking as 'complete and undifferentiated'.¹⁸ In contrast, the ensuing verbs which introduce Jesus' speech in present tense-forms are imperfective in

16 B. Layton, *A Coptic Grammar*, 2nd rev. edn (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 302 (§ 380).

17 S.E. Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 2nd edition (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 20: differences of aspect are differences in 'how the verbal action was perceived to unfold'.

18 Porter, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*, 21, picking up on his definition of perfective aspect.

aspect, and therefore (without reference in this case to the *actual* time of the events) identify the act of speaking summarised in the Prologue as in progress from the constructed viewpoint of the narrator in GTh 2 and following. On this interpretation of the aorist/ present distinction, the narrator has in GTh 2 ff. situated himself within the speech act described in the Prologue. Another possibility should also be considered. It may be that, rather than specifying the acts of speaking as in progress, the present tense-form verbs may in fact be unspecified for tense: they do not need to be, because the discourse has been introduced by an aorist.¹⁹

Theologically, the different tense-form cannot be said to sustain a reference to 'a present living force' or 'timeless meaning'. (This is not to say that such a view of Jesus' words might not be reached on other grounds, such as the Prologue's reference to the speaker as 'the living Jesus'.) As already noted, the Greek fragments also preserve disciples' speech introduced with present tenses. Again, presumably their Greek speech is not marked by 'Zeitlosigkeit' any more than are their Coptic utterances.

2.1 He who seeks should not stop seeking until he finds. If the restoration [εὑρη] in the previous saying is correct (it is a natural equivalent of εε ε- in Coptic), then we have here a catchword connection between GTh 1–2, just as the words 'these sayings' link the Prologue to GTh 1. Even if this restoration is not right, the theme of 'finding' clearly links them. The seeking-finding motif is common both in the OT (Deut. 4.29; Prov. 8.17; 11.27; Jer. 29.13) and in the Jesus tradition in Matthew and Luke (Matt. 7.7–8; Lk. 11.9–10) and *Thomas* (GTh 92; 94; cf. 38; 59?; 76; 91; 107). Compare also *IGT* 5.3; *Gos. Mary* 8,20–21. While *Thomas* elsewhere emphasises Jesus' action as a revealer (e.g. GTh 17), the stress in this saying is very much on the human agency involved in the process of discovery. The seeking here is 'a process of "sapiential research"' which leads to the discovery of the interpretation of the sayings.²⁰

2.2–3 And when he finds, (Co + he will be troubled, and when he is troubled,) he will be astonished. Both versions clearly indicate the wonder accompanying the discovery of the truth hidden in the Gospel. Here *Thomas* reverses the Platonic aphorism (that wonder is the beginning of philosophy, in *Theaetetus* 155D),²¹ by making astonishment consequent upon finding. The Coptic seems to suggest that there is a disturbing element as well. This may well allude

19 I am grateful to Dr Robert Crellin (Greek Bible College, Athens) for discussing this with me, and also for the advice of Dr Christian Askeland.

20 Kloppenborg, *Formation of Q*, 305.

21 Clement explicitly mentions this *Theaetetus* passage in *Strom.* 2.9.45.4 immediately prior to his quotation of the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*.

to the fact that the discovery of new knowledge often also has an uncomfortable effect: this is an ancient commonplace, especially familiar from Plato's cave allegory.²² It probably features also in GTh 84.2: 'When you see your images which came into being before you—which neither die nor are revealed—how much you will have to bear!'²³ (See further the commentary on GTh 84 below.)

2.3–4 And when he is astonished (om. Co), he will reign (Co + over the all). In Greek the penultimate, and in Coptic the last, element is 'rule'. Part of this reference is no doubt 'negative', in that it connotes that one is not under the ultimate control of other people, or of one's own passions.²⁴ Being part of the 'kingless' realm is common in Gnostic literature (see e.g. *Gos. Jud.* 53,24; cf. *Apoc. Adam* 82,10–19; *Orig. World*, 127,7–14), and the control that comes to one who is pure is a well-known theme (see e.g. *Sent. Sext.* 60).

Probably implicit already in the Greek (and made clearer in the Coptic) is the theme of a cosmic authority extending beyond the anthropological and social spheres. 'The all' in the Coptic is a controverted phrase in discussions of Nag Hammadi texts and related literature: it has variously been taken to mean in different places (a) the universe (i.e. heaven and earth), (b) the aeons of the pleroma, (c) the totality of the pneumatic element, as well as being (d) a christological title.²⁵ The christological reference in GTh 77 cannot be in view here, and *Thomas* cannot easily be seen elsewhere to have the mythological trappings associated with some of the more complex senses (b) and (c). As such, the reference in Coptic GTh 2 is almost certainly to (a), 'all things', in the sense of 'the universe'.²⁶ The disciple is no longer slave to the cosmos but supreme over it.²⁷

22 On the general point, see e.g. Euripides, *Hippol.* 247: τὸ γὰρ ὀρθοῦσθαι γνώμην ὀδυνᾷ; on the 'cave', see the references in *Rep.* 515E to ἀλγεῖν, ὀδυνᾶσθαι and ἀγανακτεῖν, all experiences of the one who had lived in the cave, when he encounters the light of the sun.

23 The theme of 'being troubled' is also particularly strong in the *Paraphrase of Shem*.

24 DeConick, 49, highlights the latter.

25 For the different senses and scholarly views, see H. Ludin Jansen, 'Der Begriff ΠΑΝΤΑ "Das All", im *Evangelium Veritatis*', *Acta Orientalia* 31 (1968), 115–118, and A. Logan, 'The Meaning of the Term, "the All", in Gnostic Thought', in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica XIV* (Berlin: Akademie, 1976), 203–208. I. Dunderberg, *The Beloved Disciple in Conflict? Revisiting the Gospels of John and Thomas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 108, offers the options of 'believers' or 'visible world' for 'the all' in GTh 77.1.

26 This also has the advantage of being the simplest sense, also paralleled in the NT, e.g. Sahidic 1Cor 3.22 (*bis*).

27 Hofius, 'Das koptische Thomasevangelium' (I), 28.

This position of the elect disciple over against material reality is probably echoed in the service of the stones in GTh 19.2, the superiority of the elect to the lilies in GTh 36.2 and the obedience of the mountains in GTh 48 and 106, and stones in 13.8. The cosmos is not worthy of the true disciple (GTh 56; 80; 111).

2.5 **And having reigned, he will rest** (om. Co). Although there is no hint of it in the Coptic, a reference to ‘rest’ is thoroughly in keeping with other passages in *Thomas* which show an interest in the theme, with all the other instances making it clear that the Coptic version is still concerned about it.²⁸ The meaning of *Thomas*’s ‘rest’ terminology (ἀναπαύω, ἀνάπαυσις/ ἀναπαυσις, synonymous with the native Coptic ⲛⲧⲟⲛ) is soteriological, with a more specific connotation of relief from the world, and possibly also of divine, immovable perfection (cf. the divine marks of ‘motion and rest’ in GTh 50; and the ‘standing’ motif: see notes on 16.4 below). Valantasis gives the glosses ‘equilibrium, solitude.’²⁹ It is difficult to conclude with Vielhauer that the way ‘rest’ is used in *Thomas* shows clear affinities to Gnostic texts.³⁰ On the other hand, it is equally difficult to conclude with DeConick that this saying is likely to be part of the ‘kernel’ of *Thomas* in part because rest is a theme which appears to belong to the ‘old Jerusalem traditions.’³¹ There may be a loose catchword link between ‘reigning’ here and the ‘kingdom’ in GTh 3.

28 See references to ἀναπαυσις in GTh 50; 51, 60 and 90; ⲛⲧⲟⲛ in GTh 86, and to resting in a non-theological sense in GTh 61.

29 Valantasis, 33.

30 P. Vielhauer, ‘ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ: Zum gnostischen Hintergrund des Thomasevangelium’, in W. Eltester, ed. *Apophoreta: Festschrift Ernst Haenchen* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964), 281–299 (299). ‘Rest’ is a dominant theme—and indeed a divine attribute—in the Nag Hammadi *Allogenes* text, for example.

31 DeConick, 49.

Logion 3¹

3.1 λέγει [ἡς· ἐάν] οἱ ἔλκοντες (ὕ)μάς [εἴπωσιν ὑμῖν ἰδοὺ] ἡ βασιλεία ἐν οὐρα[νό, ὑμάς φθῆσεται] τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρ[ανου· 3.2 ἐάν δ' εἴπωσιν ὅ]τι ὑπὸ τὴν γῆν ἐστ[ιν, εἰσελεύσονται] οἱ ἰχθύες τῆς θαλά[σσης προφθάσαν]τες ὑμάς· 3.3 καὶ ἡ βασι[λεία τῶν οὐρανῶν] ἐντὸς ὑμῶν [ἐ]στι [κάκτος· 3.4 ὃς ἂν ἑαυτὸν] γνῶ, ταύτην εὐρή[σει, καὶ ὅτε ὑμεῖς] ἑαυτοὺς γνώσεσθ(ε), [εἴσεσθε ὅτι υἱοί] ἐστε ὑμεῖς· τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ζ[ῶντος· 3.5 εἰ δὲ μὴ] γνῶσ(εσ)θε ἑαυτοὺς, ἐν [τῇ] πτωχεῖα ἐστὲ] καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἡ πτω[χεῖα.]

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- 1 **Bibliography for GTh 3:** T.F. Glasson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas, Saying 3, and Deuteronomy xxx. 11–14’, *ExpT* 78 (1966–1967), 151–152; P. Nagel, ‘Erwägungen zum Thomas-Evangelium’, in F. Altheim & R. Stiehl, eds. *Die Araber in der alten Welt*, vol. V, part 2 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1969), 368–392; J.-E. Ménard, ‘La Sagesse et le logion 3 de l’*Évangile selon Thomas*’, in F.L. Cross, ed. *Studia Patristica X: Papers presented to the Fifth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford, 1967* (TU 107; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1970), 137–140; D. Mueller, ‘Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God?’, *VC* 27 (1973), 266–276; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La escatología del Evangelio de Tomás’, *Salmanticensis* 28 (1981), 415–441; Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 123–130; J. Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom and Jesus: Parable, Aphorism, and Metaphor in the Sayings Material Common to the Synoptic Tradition and the Gospel of Thomas* (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 486–494; H. Kvalbein, ‘The Kingdom of the Father in the Gospel of Thomas’, in J. Fotopoulos, ed. *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune* (NovTSupps 122; Leiden/ New York/ Köln: Brill, 2006), 203–230; P. Schüngel, ‘Zur Neuübersetzung des Thomasevangeliums in der Alandschen Synopse’, *NovT* 48 (2006), 275–291; S.J. Gathercole, ‘The Influence of Paul on the Gospel of Thomas (§§ 53. 3 and 17)’, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 72–94; W. Eisele, ‘Ziehen, Führen und Verführen: Eine begriffs- und motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung zu *EvThom* 3,1’, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 380–415; C.W. Skinner, ‘The Gospel of Thomas’s Rejection of Paul’s Theological Ideas’, in M.F. Bird & J. Willitts, eds. *Paul and the Gospels: Christologies, Conflicts, and Convergences* (LNTS; London: T&T Clark, 2011), 220–241; S.J. Gathercole, ‘“The Heavens and the Earth Will Be Rolled up”: The Eschatology of the *Gospel of Thomas*’, in H.-J. Eckstein, C. Landmesser & H. Lichtenberger, eds. *Eschatologie—Eschatology: The Sixth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium: Eschatology in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Tübingen, September 2009) (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 280–302; Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 99–131; Gathercole, *Composition*, 44–47, 233–237; G.P. Luttikhuisen, ‘The Hidden Meaning of “The Kingdom Inside You and Outside You” in the *Gospel of Thomas*’, in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 539–547.

3.1 Je[sus] said, ‘[If] those who drag you away [say to you, “Behold,] the kingdom is in heav[en]”, then the birds of hea[ven would precede you! 3.2 If they say th[at it is under the earth, then the fish of the se[a would precede] you and [enter it]! 3.3 But the kin[gdom of heaven] is inside you [and outside of you. 3.4 Whoever] knows [himself] will find it [and when you] know yourselves, [you will know that] you are [sons] of the [living] Father. 3.5 [But if you do not] know yourselves, [you are] in [poverty], and you are pover[ty].’

3.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙC ΔΕ ΕΥΘΑΔΟΟC ΝΗΤῆ ΝῆCΙ ΝΕΤ’CΩΚ ΖΗΤ’ ΤΗΥΤῆ ΔΕ ΕΙCΖΗΗΤΕ ΕΤ’ΜῆΠΕΡΟ Ζῆ ΤΠΕ ΕΙΕ ΝΖΑΛΗΤ’ ΝΑΡ ΨΟΡΠ’ ΕΡΩΤῆ ἸΤΕ ΤΠΕ 3.2 ΕΥΘΑΝΔΟΟC ΝΗΤῆ ΔΕ Cῆ ἸΑΛΑCΑ ΕΙΕ ΝΤΒΤ’ ΝΑΡ ΨΟΡΠ’ ΕΡΩΤῆ 3.3 ΑΛΛΑ ΤΜῆΠΕΡΟ CῆΠΕΤῆΖΟΥΝ’ ΑΥΩ CῆΠΕΤῆΒΑΛ’ 3.4 ΖΟΥΑΝ ΕΤΕΤῆΩΑΝCΟΥΩΝ ΤΗΥΤῆ ΤΟΤΕ CΕΝΑCΟΥΩ(Ν) ΤΗΝΕ ΑΥΩ ΤΕΤΝΑΕΙΜΕ ΔΕ ἸΤΩΤῆ ΠΕ ἸΩΗΡΕ ἸΠΕΙΩΤ’ ΕΤΟΝΖ 3.5 ΕΩΩΠΕ ΔΕ ΤΕΤΝΑCΟΥΩΝ ΤΗΥΤῆ ΔΗ ΕΙΕ ΤΕΤῆΩΟΟΠ’ Ζῆ ΟΥΜῆΤΖΗΚΕ ΑΥΩ ἸΤΩΤῆ ΠΕ ΤΜῆΤΖΗΚΕ

3.1 Jesus said, ‘If those who lead you say to you, “Behold, the kingdom is in heaven”, then the birds of heaven would precede you! 3.2 If they say to you that it is in the sea, then the fish would precede you! 3.3 But the kingdom is inside you and outside of you. 3.4 When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are sons of the living Father. 3.5 But if you do not know yourselves, you are in poverty and you are poverty.’

Textual Comment

There are a number of differences between the Greek and Coptic texts here. Perhaps the greatest difference lies at the beginning, in the discrepancy between the envisaged opponents.² In Greek they are οἱ ἔλκοντες (ὕ)μας, but in Coptic ΝΕΤ’CΩΚ ΖΗΤ’ ΤΗΥΤῆ. While the latter is a fairly straightforward reference to ‘leaders’, the Greek yields a sense of greater force or violence being forecast by Jesus.³ The Greek is more likely to be the earlier form of the text here, and the Coptic a later smoothing out of the sense, or accidental introduction of ΖΗΤῆ. An emendation of the Greek’s ἡμας to ὑμας in 3.1 seems demanded

2 Surprisingly, not noted by Ricchuiti, ‘Tracking Thomas’, 202–203. For discussion of some attempts at explanation, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 44–45. See Eisele, ‘Ziehen, Führen und Verführen’, for the most extensive discussion of the problem.

3 Cf. the uses in context of those taken to court (Jas. 2.6; cf. ἐφέλκοντες in *Mart. Con.* 2.7), or subject to violent attack (Ac. 21.30).

not only by the Coptic, but also by the ὑμᾶς in 3.2. The Coptic's separation of 'birds' from 'of heaven' is not too problematic.⁴

In 3.2, the reference to 'sea' has probably been transposed from the Greek's earlier 'fish of the sea' to one of the false locations of the kingdom in the Coptic: 'the sea' corresponds to the Greek's 'under the earth', but in biblical cosmology this is not a great difference (both are associated with the *tehom*). This three-tier cosmos of heaven-earth-sea is also found in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, according to which God 'fixed heaven, and laid the foundations of the earth upon the waters' (*Herm.* [Vis. 1] 3.4). There is also room in the Greek for the fish to attract two verbs, hence the restoration [εἰσελεύσονται] οἱ ἰχθύες τῆς θαλάσσης προφθάσαν]τες. Some have made much of the difference between the Greek καί (GTh 3.3) and the Coptic ἀλλὰ,⁵ but the Coptic translation of Greek particles is notoriously unpredictable.⁶

On 3.3, there has been debate over the kingdom language. In the Coptic we have 'kingdom' *tout simple*, but in the Greek it looks as though there is a modifier. Mueller has argued that, rather than 'of heaven', this is 'of God', since the Greek might not avoid 'kingdom of God' language as the Coptic does, and the Coptic has left the modifier out (see further discussion on GTh 27).⁷ 'Of heaven', however, fits better with the space available (though, admittedly, is odd in a saying which counters a kingdom within heaven).⁸ Also in 3.3, Eisele's exclusion of κάκτος, which corresponds well to the Coptic, is unwarranted.⁹

4 Some have suggested an emendation (see Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II,2-7: Volume One*, 53) but cf. the syntax in e.g. Manichaean *Psalm-Book* 197, lines 14, 19, 23; 198, 20.

5 See N. Perrin, 'NHC II,2 and the Oxyrhynchus Fragments (P.Oxy 1, 654, 655): Overlooked Evidence for a Syriac Gospel of Thomas', *VC* 58 (2004), 138–151 (149–150).

6 Gathercole, *Composition*, 46–47.

7 Mueller, 'Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God?', 266–276. Greek GTh 27 might have 'kingdom of God' (see discussion on GTh 27 below), which is not found anywhere in the Coptic.

8 DeConick, 52, and Grosso, 118, rightly note that τοῦ θεοῦ is too short (and even more so if it were to appear in contracted form as τοῦ θῦ).

9 Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 115–118. His argument, for example, that it does not make sense to talk of an external kingdom on the grounds that only the Coptic has self-knowledge and knowledge of oneself by another (116) is not compelling: the point might equally be that the externality of the kingdom lies in the dimension of Jesus' transcendence. Similarly, the argument that Hippolytus knew a form of the saying without κάκτος is not convincing (118). (If *Ref.* 5.7.20 does allude to GTh 3, one could argue that the same paradox exists there as in GTh 3, because Hippolytus attests both to the presence of the kingdom within, but also to the presence of Jesus in the fourteenth aeon.)

More significantly, in GTh 3.4, the phrase ‘whoever knows himself will find it’ appears only in the Greek;¹⁰ while this is a more substantial difference in wording, the statement is entirely consonant with the rest of the saying and adds little to the overall sense. On the other hand, the addition, ‘(when you know yourselves), *you will be known*’ in 3.4 is distinctive to the Coptic. If all other things were equal, it would be hard to decide which of the Greek and Coptic is earlier; one can probably assume that the Greek is closer to the original.

Interpretation

The present dialogue between Jesus and the disciples has a number of difficulties, the first of which is the identity of the opponents.¹¹ Most scholars take them to be Christian powers, ‘leading authorities whose message is obviously Christian ... whose claim to lead manifests itself in authority over interpretations of Christian doctrines.’¹² This may be correct, but the particular group targeted is not especially clear: interestingly, Jesus is not criticising the view of the disciples (as elsewhere when he is opposing ‘ecclesiastical’ teaching) but the views of a third party. In any case, the main characteristic of these opponents is that they are οἱ ἔλκοντες ἄμας, a much discussed epithet. The sense is probably of forcing, bullying and cajoling, since the verb can have the general sense of getting someone to do something against their will:¹³ if the targets here are Christian, it is hard to imagine ἔλκω having a physical sense; in a literal sense, the opponents would have to be Roman authorities (see notes below).

Whoever these ἔλκοντες are, *Thomas*’s polemic is against the *localisation* of the kingdom of God in some particular heavenly or earthly sphere.¹⁴ This

10 A scribal omission by parablepsis is not so easy to assume as in DeConick, 54.

11 It is difficult to accept Eisele’s contention that Jesus’ own view is more in continuity with the voices in 3.1 and 3.2, given the ridicule attached to the views in 3.1–2. See Eisele, ‘Ziehen, Führen und Verführen’, 380–415.

12 Plisch, 43. Similarly, as we have seen, Trevijano Etcheverría comments that *Thomas* is opposing ‘fantasías apocalípticas y concepciones religiosas populares demasiado crasas’ (‘La escatología del Evangelio de Tomás’, 440, cf. 418: ‘los guías denunciados no serían otros que los líderes eclesíasticos’).

13 This is the sense of ἔλκω in Plato, *Rep.* 458D (where it is associated with ἀνάγκη) and in 350D: the meaning is not really that of ‘Ziehen mit Worten’ (Eisele, ‘Ziehen, Führen und Verführen’, 389): even in the latter case it is more a matter of Thrasymachus’s reluctance and embarrassment, rather than Socrates’ speaking. In the former, despite the parallel with πείθω, words are not in view at all.

14 We have already noted Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La escatología del Evangelio de Tomás’, 415,

comports with the Thomasine Jesus' criticisms elsewhere (e.g. 113.3). There is no need for a transformation of the present cosmos, or anxious speculation about the heavens and the earth passing away, because the kingdom is not located in any of these realms.

A difficulty with the 'anti-ecclesiastical' view is that while a polemic against a kingdom in heaven might fit,¹⁵ criticism of a kingdom 'under the earth' does not. The accusation could, however, merely be impressionistic: a subterranean kingdom might simply be a rhetorical reflex or counterpoint to one 'above'. This reference is probably in part influenced by the heaven/ abyss contrast found elsewhere,¹⁶ but perhaps also by pagan views of afterlife under the earth.¹⁷ Replacing this localised view of the kingdom is the counter-statement that it is 'inside you and outside you', in other words, anywhere and everywhere. The reference to 'inside you' prompts mention of an interesting divergence from some other Christian teaching of *Thomas's* day, namely a theology of self-knowledge.

418, on this point. Rightly also Eisele, 'Ziehen, Führen und Verführen', 380: 'In *EvThom* 3 spricht Jesus von Personen, die das Reich (Gottes) an bestimmten Orten lokalisieren.'

15 In addition to the NT's association of kingdom and heaven, there is a closer identification of heaven as the location of the kingdom in e.g. *Diogn.* 6.8; cf. 10.2.

16 For the influence of Rom. 10 at this point, see Gathercole, 'The Influence of Paul on the Gospel of Thomas', and idem, *Composition*, 233–237.

17 A subterranean kingdom where the dead go is a common feature of popular pagan mythology (much more common than celestial immortality), rather than Judaeo-Christian tradition. In Jewish tradition, Sheol, the realm under the earth, is—far from being a kingdom—very much a place of, at best, an insubstantial existence which is a mere shadow of the vibrant life above ground. In any case, and more importantly, it is regarded by many Jews and Christians at the time of *Thomas* as a merely temporary abode. The idea of a positive netherworld is especially (though by no means exclusively) prominent in Egypt, where by the Greco-Roman period there is already a long-established tradition of thinking of the realm of the dead as either in the west or under the earth. See e.g. E. Hornung, *The Ancient Egyptian Books of the Afterlife* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). One also finds frequent reference to the underworld as the abode of the dead in the so-called 'Orphic' Gold tablets, which are dispersed quite widely across Italy and Greece. See A. Bernabé & A.I. Jiménez San Cristóbal, eds. *Instructions for the Netherworld: The Orphic Gold Tablets* (Religions in the Greco-Roman World; Leiden: Brill, 2008). Principally, however, this popular view is shaped by the epic tradition, especially as it appears in *Odyssey* 11 and *Aeneid* 6. As the gold tablets illustrate, however, this is not always a gloomy destiny; rather, it is a commonplace that there is a bright region of the underworld where the pious (or, in a different religious context, the initiated) go.

Notes

3.1 If those who drag you away (Co: lead you) say to you. If the envisaged opposition is probably Christians (see below *ad* 3.2), there cannot be any real sense of Thomasine Christians being dragged into court on charges of heresy. Nevertheless, there is a clear projection here of the image of forceful persecution: ἔλαω (in contrast to ⲥⲟⲕ Ϸⲏⲧⲉ) gives the impression of duress. This is then softened in the Coptic version.

3.1–2 “Behold, the kingdom is in heaven”, then the birds of heaven would precede you! If they say (Co + to you) that it is under the earth (Co: in the sea), then the fish of the sea (om. Co) would precede you and enter it (om. Co)! As noted above, the parody is of views locating the kingdom in some sphere within the cosmos.¹⁸ This is the first reference in *Thomas* to the kingdom, a central term in the Gospel. On the kingdom, see Introduction, § 10.1 above. *Thomas*’s opponents are clearly caricatured here: although a subterranean kingdom does not really correspond to any known early Christian views,¹⁹ it is still likely that the opposition is to the *magna ecclesia*. Deuteronomy 30, via Romans 10, provides the heaven/ under-the-earth contrast, rather than identifiable mistaken views of the afterlife.²⁰ On the birds and the fish, compare Deut. 4.18; Job 12.7–8.

3.3 But the kingdom of heaven (om. Co) is inside you and outside of you. The kingdom, then, is simultaneously all around (cf. GTh 113.4) as well as within.²¹ Unlikely are the suggestions for how the kingdom can be both ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ proposed by Hedrick (‘an inner spiritual experience ... shared with others of like mind’) and Valantasis (interior self-knowledge as well as ‘a new understanding of the mundane world’).²² There is a parallel here with *Thomas*’s representation of Jesus, who also is closely identified with the ‘light within a luminous person’ (GTh 24.3) while also transcending this world (GTh 10, 16 and 28): he is at the same time both the light above all, and identified with the all (GTh 77). The point is that the kingdom is both readily accessible but can never be pinned down to a location.²³ The structure ‘neither X—nor Y—but within

18 So, rightly, Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La escatología del Evangelio de Tomás’, 415–441.

19 Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple*, 36, takes the reference to heaven as strong counterevidence to the view of DeConick that *Thomas* advocates heavenly journeys.

20 Gathercole, *Composition*, 233–237; cf. Glasson, ‘Gospel of Thomas, Saying 3’, 151–152.

21 See the helpful and accurate remarks in Luttikhuisen, ‘The Hidden Meaning of “The Kingdom Inside You and Outside You”’, 546.

22 Hedrick, 22; Valantasis, 59.

23 Cf. Plisch, 43: ‘The kingdom of God is, at the same time, in your grasp but unavailable.’ It is not quite that the kingdom is unavailable, but rather that it cannot be tied down to a particular place.

you' derives from Luke 17.21 (cf. GTh 113),²⁴ and *Thomas* has combined Luke 17.21 with Deut. 30.11–14/ Rom. 10, as Tertullian was later to do (*Adv. Marc.* 4.35).²⁵ See also comment on GTh 113 below.

3.4 Whoever knows himself will find it and ... (om. Co). *Thomas* attributes to Jesus the γνώθι σαυτόν, a philosophical maxim also part of the general culture, and significant in theological writings. The phrase was famously inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi (Pausanias, *Descr.* 10.24.1), and much discussed in antiquity. In Plato's *Alcibiades* it becomes particularly associated with knowledge that a person is soul (*Alc.* 130E), and this idea continues into early Christian literature. In various places the reference is not to 'self-awareness' in the modern sense, but rather to knowledge about one's nature:

Testimony of Truth: 'And they have come to know themselves—[who they are] or where they are [now] and what is the [place in] which they will rest from their stupidity, [arriving] at knowledge.'²⁶

Teaching of Silvanus: 'Before everything, know your birth. Know yourself, that is, from what substance you are, or from what race ...'²⁷

Theodotus: 'Now it is not merely the washing which liberates, but also the knowledge: Who were we and what have we become? Where were we and where are we now cast? To where are we hastening and from what have we been delivered? What is birth? What is rebirth?'²⁸

Clement: '(knowing) to what you have come ... and whose image you are, what is your essence, and what your making and what your affinity to the divine, and matters like these.'²⁹

Sextus: 'If you know to what you have come, you will know yourself.'³⁰

24 'Nor shall they say, "Behold, it is here!" or, "It is there!", for behold, the kingdom of God is among you.'

25 *Gos. Mary* 8,15–19, also has reference to Lk. 17.21.

26 *Testim. Truth* 35,25–36,3; cf. 44,30–45,6: 'This, then, is the true testimony: When a man knows himself and the God who is over the truth, he will be saved, and will be crowned with the unfading crown.'

27 *Teach. Silv.* 92,10–14.

28 Clement, *Exc. Theod.* 78.2.

29 Clement, *Strom.* 5.4.23.1. See further *Paed.* 3.1.1, where Clement extols the value of self-knowledge.

30 *Sent. Sext.* 398.

For *Thomas*, knowledge of self is knowledge that the body is a mere corpse (GTh 56; 58), and that the soul is a precious thing trapped in the poverty of this body (GTh 29). In terms of knowledge of origins and destiny, this is expanded upon in GTh 18 and 49–50, in which the soul is from the primordial kingdom and ultimately returns there. This connection between self-knowledge and the kingdom is not so much a sequential discovery of the nature of the self and then of the kingdom; rather, the two overlap.³¹ They are not co-extensive, however (see discussion of GTh 111 below). On ‘knowing’, see further Introduction, § 10.1.

3.4 When you know yourselves ... (Co + ... then you will be known, and ...). The Coptic completes the symmetry by supplementing the apodosis here: the Coptic may be indebted to Paul.³²

3.4 You will know (Co: understand) that you are sons of the living Father. This statement completes the textually complex sentence in GTh 3.4. With ‘sons of the Father’, compare ‘sons of the light’ and ‘elect of the Father’ (GTh 50); GTh 101.2–3 is a possible reference to the disciple’s divine Father, though it is somewhat obscure because of a lacuna in the manuscript. GTh 99 also has the fictive family of disciples. On the epithet ‘living’, see notes on Prologue above. Possible, though perhaps unlikely, is a vague catchword or thematic link between ‘sons’ and living here, and ‘child’ and ‘live’ in GTh 4.

3.5 But if you do not know yourselves, you are in poverty and you are poverty. The alternative to this knowledge is defined as *poverty*. In a Jewish context, poverty is often a positive metaphor when used in a spiritual sense (so also in GTh 54); here—as usually elsewhere in the Nag Hammadi library—it is clearly negative (cf. also GTh 29).³³ The sense is clearly poverty in knowledge and lack of spiritual wealth: cf. GTh 29.3; 81.1 and 85.1 below.³⁴

31 Cf. Ménard’s formulation: ‘le Royaume, c’est la connaissance simultanée de nous-mêmes et de Dieu dans un même acte’ (Ménard, ‘La Sagesse et le logion 3 de l’*Évangile selon Thomas*’, 140).

32 Plisch, 44, specifically Gal. 4.9; cf. 1 Cor. 13.12.

33 E.g. in *Ap. John* II 27,24–27, Jesus answers John’s question about where the souls go of those who turn away: ‘To that place where the angels of poverty go they will be taken, the place where there is no repentance.’ Cf. *Orig. World* II 112,10–13: ‘Now when Adam of light conceived the wish to enter his light, he was unable to do so because of the poverty that had mingled with his light’; *Auth. Teach.* 27,25–27: ‘Our soul indeed is ill because she dwells in a house of poverty’ (cf. GTh 29); *Treat. Seth* 58,20–22, where the world becomes ‘poor’ when ‘the sun of the powers of the archons set’ and darkness took them.

34 Valantasis, 34.

Logion 4¹

4.1 [λέγει ιῆς·] οὐκ ἀποκνήσει ἀνθ[ρωπος παλαιὸς ἡμε]ρῶν ἐπερωτῆσ(αι) πα[ιδίον ἐπτὰ ἡμε]ρῶν περὶ τοῦ τόπου τῆ[ς ζωῆς, καὶ ζή]σεται(αι). 4.2 ‘ὅτι’ πολλοὶ ἔσονται π[ρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ] οἱ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι, 4.3 καὶ [ἔσονται εἰς ἓνω]σιν.

Restoration of esp. 4.3 *exempli gratia*.

4.1 [Jesus said,] ‘A m[an old in da]ys will not hesitate to ask a ch[ild seven da]ys old about the place of [life, and] he will [live]. 4.2 Because many [who are first] will be [last, and] the last will be first. 4.3 And [they will be as one].’

4.1 πἔχε τῆς κηδεσμείας ἀνθρώπου παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν ἐπερωτῆσ(αι) παῖδιον ἑπτὰ ἡμερῶν περὶ τοῦ τόπου τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ ζήσεται(αι). 4.2 ὅτι πολλοὶ ἔσονται πρῶτοι ἔσχατοι καὶ οἱ ἔσχατοι πρῶτοι, 4.3 καὶ ἔσονται εἰς ἓνωσιν.

4.1 Jesus said, ‘The man old in his days will not hesitate to ask a little child seven days old about the place of life, and he will live. 4.2 Because many who are first will be last. 4.3 And they will become one.’

Textual Comment

There are various small differences between the Greek and Coptic versions.² Very minor is the difference between παῖδιον and the more expansive κοῦει νῶμρε ὄμν. The Coptic’s article (*‘the man’*) is not paralleled in the Greek; the veteran is in Greek probably *‘old of days’*, but is *‘old in his days’* in the Cop-

1 **Bibliography for GTh 4:** A.F.J. Klijn, ‘The “Single One” in the Gospel of Thomas’, *JBL* 81 (1962), 271–278; H.C. Kee, ‘“Becoming a Child” in the Gospel of Thomas’, *JBL* 82 (1963), 307–314; Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 27–32; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘El anciano preguntará al niño (Evangelio de Tomás Log. 4)’, *Estudios Bíblicos* 50 (1992), 521–535; E.E. Popkes, *Das Menschenbild des Thomasevangeliums* (WUNT 206; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 169–172.

2 *Pace* Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘El anciano preguntará al niño’, 522–525, there are no close Synoptic parallels; Matt. 11.25–26 and Lk. 2.41–52 are not particularly similar. There may be some relationship between GTh 4 and the Valentinus frag. 7 (Markschies’s numbering) in Hippolytus, *Ref.* 6.42.2: ‘For Valentinus even says that he saw a small baby, recently born. This child he asked and inquired who he was. And he replied saying that he was the Logos.’ Cf. also Manichaean *Psalm-Book* 192.2–3: ‘The grey haired old men—the little children instruct them. They that are six years old instruct them that are sixty years old.’

tic. The only possible significance of this could be the loss in translation of an allusion to the Ancient of Days (παλαιὸς ἡμερῶν in LXX & Θ of Dan. 7.9, 13; cf. 7.22), although since only the -ρῶν of the Greek wording survives, to assume a Danielic reference here would be hazardous in any case; for such a specific reference in the Greek we would probably also expect a definite article. The Coptic also abbreviates the Greek's 'first last, last first' saying by only including the first half (Coptic: 'Many who are first will be last'). The Greek is probably earlier at this point, reflecting better than the Coptic the form of the saying in the canonical parallels (though of course a later harmonisation remains possible).³

An additional layer of complexity, however, results from a reference in (?Pseudo-)Hippolytus:⁴

This, they say, is the kingdom of heaven to be sought within man, about which they pass on an explicit statement in the Gospel entitled 'according to Thomas' (ἐν τῷ κατὰ Θωμᾶν ἐπιγραφομένῳ εὐαγγελίῳ), as follows: 'He who seeks me will find me in children from seven years old. For there, in the fourteenth aeon I am hidden and yet appear.' (ἐμὲ ὁ ζητῶν εὐρήσει ἐν παιδίῳ ἀπὸ ἐτῶν ἑπτὰ. ἐκεῖ γὰρ ἐν τῷ τεσσαρεσκαίδεκάτῳ αἰῶνι κρυβόμενος φανεροῦμαι.)

(*Ref.* 5.7.20)

This comes in Hippolytus' discussion of the Naassenes in the *Refutatio* which dates to around 222–235 CE, and therefore reflects a source in use by Hippolytus which would have been roughly contemporaneous with, or even earlier than, the Oxyrhynchus fragments. Attridge rightly advocates caution about supposing a different recension of *Thomas* here in Hippolytus, however: 'it may well be that the citation in Hippolytus is but a garbled form of saying 4, distorted either by Naassene exegesis or by Hippolytus or perhaps by both'.⁵ Lancellotti further draws attention to the different meanings of the saying in *Thomas* and Hippolytus, commenting that Hippolytus's interest in the interiority of the kingdom is not a concern here in the Greek and Coptic texts of GTh 4.⁶

3 Rightly, Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas', 206.

4 On this passage, see further the discussion above in Introduction, § 3.1: 'Named Testimonia'.

5 H.W. Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', in B. Layton, ed. *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One* (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 113–125 (103), *contra* Trevijano Etcheverría, 'El anciano preguntará al niño', 528 n. 26.

6 M.G. Lancellotti, *The Naassenes: A Gnostic Identity among Judaism, Christianity, Classical and Ancient Near Eastern Traditions* (Forschungen zur Anthropologie und Religionsgeschichte, 35; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000), 347.

Callahan makes the intriguing suggestion that ‘he will live’ in 4.1 be emended to ‘he will be revealed’ (ϣⲛⲁⲟϣⲱⲛⲉⲗ for ϣⲛⲁⲱⲛⲉⲗ), partly because it would solidify the catchword connection of ⲟϣⲱⲛⲉⲗ across GTh 4–5–6, but also because of the ‘revealing’ in the Hippolytus parallel.⁷ This should be rejected, however, since the one revealed in Hippolytus is Jesus, whereas the one who ‘lives’ in *Thomas* is the inquiring old man.

The restoration of the Greek in 4.3 is speculative. Some propose the impossible Greek καὶ [εἰς γενήσου]σιν.⁸ Attridge’s καὶ [εἰς ἔν καταντήσου]σιν (cf. Eph. 4.13) is possible.⁹ The suggestion above is offered as an alternative possibility. Since it is impossible to know, the interpretation of 4.3 below will rely upon the Coptic.

Interpretation

First, we should consider the imagery on the surface. The logic of it is: an old man needs to ask a baby because the baby has only come from the place of life very recently, whereas the old man is a long way away from it in time (and much nearer to death). Although the image has a logic to it, it entails the reversal of the social norm according to which children consult their elders (e.g. Deut. 6); hence, the last shall be first, and the first shall be last (Mk 10.31/ Matt. 19.30; cf. Matt. 20.16/ Lk. 13.30). This saying, however, is not ultimately about reversal, but envisages a unification of the opposites (rather than their exchange of status). Having acquired knowledge from the baby, the old man gains life and becomes the baby’s equal.

The two characters therefore symbolise (i) the disciple who is acquainted with the place of life, and (ii) those due to taste death. The point is therefore probably that the truth may be sought by others from these ‘children’.¹⁰ There is almost certainly no hint here of an ascending believer confronted by an archon, and asked to give a password in order to pass through to heaven.¹¹ What is evident is at least something of an openness to outsiders (see further Introduction, §10.3 above).

7 A.D. Callahan, ‘No Rhyme or Reason: The Hidden Logia of the Gospel of Thomas’, *HTR* 90 (1997), 411–426 (413).

8 Hofius, ‘Das koptische Thomasevangelium’ (I), 32; DeConick, 58–59.

9 Attridge, ‘Appendix: The Greek Fragments’, 115 (with apparatus).

10 Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘El anciano preguntará al niño’, 522, 531; DeConick, 57.

11 A possibility noted (but rejected) by Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘El anciano preguntará al niño’, 530–531, associating it with the view that the old man may be the Danielic Ancient of Days, as probably in *Apoc. Paul* 22,23–30.

Notes

4.1 A (Co: The) man old in (Co + his) days will not hesitate to ask. Notably, old age here is valued negatively, in contrast to the biblical and cultural norm. This is a reflex of the use of the baby as a positive symbol. The old man is a symbol of the person estranged from life, because rather than having just been imbued with new life like the baby, he is in decline and heading for death. Leipoldt posits a play on words between $\chi\lambda\alpha\gamma$ and $\chi\lambda\epsilon\tau$ -, but since both words are natural translations of the Greek, this seems irrelevant.¹²

4.1 A (Co + little) child. This is the first use in *Thomas* of child imagery to represent the true disciple: here (with the next phrase) the child is specified as a baby. Later, followers of the living Jesus are like children in a field who strip off their clothes in GTh 21, and suckling infants are like those who enter the kingdom in a saying which loosely parallels children with ‘making the male and the female one and the same’ (GTh 22). Although the idea of children as genderless is not explicit here, there is certainly elsewhere a strong sense of the innocence of children, as especially in GTh 37, where the disciples are like children who take off their clothes. There are various possible connotations to the child imagery: newness of life (cf. *Barn.* 6.11); innocence (Papias, LH fr. 15; *Herm.* [*Mand.* 2] 27.1), especially sexual innocence; or—relatedly—Adamic androgyny.¹³ Thus far, however, we have not encountered any theological depth to the imagery of the child, beyond the fact of the baby’s proximity to the place, or source, of life. Later, other elements will be added, such as the association (albeit loose) of children and asexuality in GTh 22.1–5.

4.1 Seven days old. It is unlikely that the seven-day old child is ‘living in the perfect week’, before the fall.¹⁴ It is possible that the reference to a *seven*-day old baby implies that he is not circumcised (with circumcision taking place on the eighth day: Gen. 17.12; 21.4; Lev. 12.3; Lk. 1.59; 2.21; Phil. 3.5);¹⁵ this qualification would then contribute to the anti-Jewish tenor of *Thomas* (cf. esp. the criticism of physical circumcision in GTh 53). Another suggestion is that, on its seventh day, the child is at rest, and therefore in possession of the rest in GTh 2.¹⁶ More

12 J. Leipoldt, *Das Evangelium nach Thomas: Koptisch und deutsch* (Berlin: Akademie, 1967), 56.

13 Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘El anciano preguntará al niño’, 530.

14 Kee, ‘Becoming a Child’, 311; Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘El anciano preguntará al niño’, 526.

15 M. Marcovich, ‘Textual Criticism on the Gospel of Thomas’, *JTS* 20 (1969), 53–74 (62).

16 Implied in Y. Janssens, ‘L’Évangile selon Thomas et son caractère gnostique’, *Muséon* 75 (1961), 301–325 (304).

probably, the child is simply a very young baby in contrast to the old man, albeit with a spiritually perfect age.¹⁷

4.1 About the place of life. As noted, this perhaps offers the clue to the interpretation of this saying, because the baby has recently come from this place of life, and therefore—unlike the old man—has fresh experience of it. The theological reference of the place of life is the pre-existent paradisaical kingdom, from which the elect have come, and to which they shall return (GTh 19; 49).¹⁸

4.1 And he will live. This must refer not to the baby, but to the old man, who, having gained wisdom from the child, will now himself escape tasting death. The assumption here is that the baby has replied, and instructed the old man.¹⁹ In terms of the outlook of *Thomas*, this saying appears to reveal a quite positive attitude towards outsiders (see Interpretation, and Introduction, § 10.3 above). The impression here is that converts are envisaged as coming into the *Thomas* movement. There is not the degree of isolationism as is perhaps implied in a few places (e.g. GTh 93).

4.2 Because many who are first will be last, and the last will be first (om. Co). The scenario of an old man (the ‘first’) asking advice of a baby (‘the last’) is already a reversal of the norm (e.g. Deut. 6.20: *καὶ ἔσται ὅταν ἐρωτήσῃ σε ὁ υἱός σου αὐριον λέγων ...*) to draw attention to the exceptional nature of the child or true disciple and his knowledge. This is reinforced by the inclusion of the familiar Synoptic aphorism, with the form in *Thomas* almost identical to some of the canonical instances (namely, Mk 10.31; Matt. 19.30; 20.16; Lk. 13.30).

4.3 And they will become one. The meaning of the phrase οὐα οὐωτ (‘one’) is debated, especially in *Thomas* in connection with the term μοναχος.²⁰ The point in 4.3 is not that the characters will become ‘single ones’ or ‘solitaries’.²¹ (The sense of οὐα οὐωτ is thus here slightly different from μοναχος: see

17 *Great Pow.* 36,11–12: ‘from the age of seven days up to one hundred and twenty years’.

18 Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 29.

19 Cf. Valentinus, fragment 7, already noted.

20 For discussion, see R. Charron, ‘À propos des οὐα οὐωτ et de la solitude divine dans les textes de Nag Hammadi’, in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica: Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk* (BCNH 7; Louvain/ Paris: Peeters/ Laval: Presses de l’Université Laval, 2006), 109–133; Charron sees slightly more synonymity between οὐα οὐωτ and μοναχος than the present commentary.

21 Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘El anciano preguntará al niño’, 534, refers to the reduction of duality, especially sexual duality. Grosso, 120, also conflates the senses of οὐα οὐωτ and μοναχος.

Appended Note after GTh 16.) The phrase is also found in 22.4 in a context of making two into one.²² In addition to the parallels noted by Crum and Layton,²³ Jesus and the Father are ογα ογωτ in the *Gospel of the Saviour* (98,60–62); in Mark 10.9, no-one should separate the husband and wife whom God has made νογα νογωτ. (The meaning of ‘single ones’ would be especially inappropriate here!) The reference is to the plurality of the collective being resolved into a unity. Just as in GTh 22 the traditional dualities of male and female are made μπογα ογωτ, so here ‘old’ and ‘young’ are ογα ογωτ.

²² In GTh 23, the sense is not quite so clear.

²³ See Crum 494a and examples in Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 123 (§ 158).

Logion 5¹

5.1 λέγει ιη̅ς· γ[νώθι τὸν ἔμπροσ]θεν τῆς ὄψεώς σου, καὶ [τὸ κεκαλυμμένον] ἀπὸ σου ἀποκαλυφ(θ)ήσεται[αὶ σοι· 5.2 οὐ γάρ ἐσ]τιν κρυπτόν ὃ οὐ φαγε[ρόν γενήσεται] καὶ θεθαμμένον ὃ ο[ὐκ ἐγε]ρησέται.]

5.1 *Jesus said, ‘[Know the one who is befo]re your face, and [what is hidden] from you will be reveal[ed to you. 5.2 For there i]s nothing hidden which will not [become] pla[in], 5.3 and buried which [will not be raised].’*

5.1 πε.ε.ε ι̅ς σοϣων πετ̅πι̅μο̅ μ̅πεκρο̅ εβολ̅ ἀϣω̅ πεθη̅π̅ εροκ̅ ϣνα̅σωλι̅π̅ εβολ̅
νακ̅ 5.2 μη̅ λααϣ̅ γαρ̅ εϣρη̅π̅ εϣνα̅οϣων̅ε̅ εβολ̅ αν̅

5.1 *Jesus said, ‘Know the one who is before your face, and what is hidden from you will be revealed to you. 5.2 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed.’*

Textual Comment

The Greek of 5.1 is often restored γνώθι τὸ ἔμπροσθεν τῆς ὄψεώς σου (‘know *what* is before your face’).² A personal reference may be more likely in view of GTh 52.2 (cf. 91).

The Greek and Coptic texts agree up until the last clause, with the Greek’s plus (5.3) of the raising of what is buried. This may have been omitted by the Coptic for a theological reason, namely an opposition to a suspected bodily resurrection. The restoration of this last clause is made more secure by its attes-

1 **Bibliography for GTh 5:** H.-C. Puech, ‘Un logion de Jésus sur bandelette funéraire’, *Revue de l’Histoire des Religions* 147 (1955), 126–129, repr. in H.-C. Puech, *En Quête de la Gnose*, vol. II: *Sur l’évangile selon Thomas: Esquisse d’une interprétation systématique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 59–62; W. Schrage, ‘Evangelienzitate in den Oxyrhynchus-Logien und im koptischen Thomas-evangelium’, in W. Eltester, ed. *Apophoreta: Festschrift Ernst Haenchen* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964), 251–268; S.R. Johnson, ‘The Hidden/ Revealed Saying in the Greek and Coptic Versions of Gos. Thom. 5 & 6’, *NovT* 44 (2002), 176–185; A. Luijendijk, ‘“Jesus says: ‘There Is Nothing Buried That Will Not Be Raised.” A Late-Antique Shroud with Gospel of Thomas Logion 5 in Context’, *ZAC* 15 (2011), 389–410; Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 131–149; A. Luijendijk, ‘An Orthodox Corruption of the Gospel of Thomas’ (forthcoming).

2 See e.g. Attridge, ‘Appendix: The Greek Fragments’, 115.

tation in the Oxyrhynchus shroud (fifth-sixth century): λέγει Ἰησοῦς· οὐκ ἐστὶν τεθαμμένον ὃ οὐκ ἐγεροθήσεται which probably displays knowledge of *Thomas*.³ There may not be any significant theological difference between the Greek and Coptic, however, as the reference to raising what is buried need not imply a belief in bodily resurrection (despite its later usage, presumably to this effect, in the shroud): more probably, it is another image alongside the revelation of the hidden (5.1–2/ 6.5) and the uncovering of the covered (6.6). (See further comments below.) Johnson's view that 5.3 is a secondary addition—included to forge a link with GTh 6—is possible, but speculative.⁴ He rightly draws attention to the curious fact that Greek GTh 5 is one 'strophe' longer than GTh 6 whereas in the Coptic, the situation is reversed.⁵ The plus in Greek GTh 5.3 ('and buried which [will not be raised]') corresponds closely to the plus in Coptic GTh 6.6 ('and nothing covered which will be left without being uncovered'). More probable than 5.3 being a secondary addition is that Greek 5.3 was later moved to GTh 6.6, rewritten to remove any suspicious sign of a possible reference to bodily resurrection.⁶

Interpretation

This saying promises further revelation to the person who knows Jesus. Knowledge here is characterised not as self-knowledge but as knowledge of an external Jesus, who is nevertheless near ('in front of your face'). Valantasis sees a reference here to the accessibility of the sayings of *Thomas* to all which is possible, but unlikely.⁷ An impersonal sense of 'what is before your face' in 5.1 is possible, however: in this case the reference could be to the kingdom (cf. GTh 113), or knowledge. The other main interpretative question is that of whether a literal reference to resurrection was intended in the Greek of 5.3. This is unlikely, given that a reference to bodily resurrection would be strange paired with the aphorism in 5.2, where the point is not the transformation from death to life but from hiddenness to visibility. When the true disciple acquires the requisite knowledge, the invisible kingdom becomes apparent in all its wonder.

3 See Puech's discussion in 'Un logion de Jésus', and *En Quête de la Gnose*; the latter has a plate. A parallel also appears in *1 Keph.* 163:28–29.

4 Johnson, 'The Hidden/ Revealed Saying', 182–184.

5 Johnson, 'The Hidden/Revealed Saying', 182.

6 See e.g. Puech, 'Un logion de Jésus', 128, on the difficulty.

7 Valantasis, 62. This interpretation is odd not least given Valantasis earlier comments about the envisaged audience as 'a select group of people' (31, 52–53).

Notes

5.1 Know the one who is before your face. Understanding Jesus and his revelation is the precondition for the visionary experience promised in the rest of the saying (see further GTh 27 on 'seeing'). A reference to Jesus is more likely than something impersonal (see above), and especially than 'the nature of apparent reality'.⁸

5.1 And what is hidden from you will be revealed to you. This aphorism probably has a particular meaning in *Thomas*. What is hidden at present is not only the kingdom 'outside of you' (as in GTh 3), but also the element within, the invisible image: this will come into view according to GTh 83–84. It may be that the reference is more general.⁹

5.2 For there is nothing hidden which will not become plain (Co: be revealed). Cf. GTh 6.5; Mk 4.22; Matt. 10.26; Lk. 8.17; 12.2, and looser parallels, such as 2 *Clem.* 16.3. The connection with GTh 6 is not so much a catchword link, but a larger thematic connection. The Greek text here is often—probably correctly—taken to be dependent upon Luke.¹⁰

5.3 And buried which will not be raised (om. Co). There are two main options for the meaning here: (1) a strong parallel to 5.2, in which case the focus is again on revelation, or (2) a soteriological sense of a form of resurrection, whether bodily or in some other sense. In the context of GTh 5 as a whole, the most likely sense is the revelation of what is hidden: 5.2–3 are the justification for the promise in 5.1b.

8 Valantasis, 62.

9 Hedrick, 27, who sees a promise of insight into the true nature of everything.

10 See e.g. C.M. Tuckett, 'Thomas and the Synoptics', *NovT* 30 (1988), 132–157 (145–146); Gathercole, *Composition*, 186–187.

Logion 6¹

6.1 [ἐξ]ετάζουσιν αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ λέγ[ου]σιν· πῶς νηστεύ[σομεν, καὶ πῶς προσευξόμ]εθα, καὶ πῶς [ἐλεημοσύνην ποιήσομεν κ]αὶ τί παρατηρήσ[ομεν περὶ τῶν βρωμάτων]; 6.2 λέγει ἰη̅ς· [μὴ ψεύδεσθε 6.3 καὶ ὅ τι μισ-]εῖτ(ε), μὴ ποιεῖτ[ε· 6.4 ὅτι πάντα ἔμπροσθεν τ]ῆς ἀληθ[ε]ίας ἀν[ακαλύπτεται]. 6.5 οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἄ[π]οκεκρ[υμμένον ὃ οὐ φανερόν ἐσται.]

6.1 [*His disciples*] questioned him and [s]aid, 'How [shall we] fast? [*And how shall we*] pray? And how [shall we give alms? A]nd what [diet shall we] observe?' 6.2 Jesus said, '[Do not lie 6.3 and what you hate,] do not do. 6.4 [*Because all things are revealed in the presence of t*]he truth. 6.5 [*For there is nothing*] hid[den which will not be revealed.]'

6.1 ἀχνογϋ ἡ̅σι νεϋ̅ μαθητης πεχαγ̅ ναϋ̅ χε κ̅ ογωω̅ ετρῆ̅ ρ̅η̅η̅στεγε̅ αγω̅ εω̅ τε θε̅ εναω̅ληλ̅ ενατ̅ ελεημοσυνη̅ αγω̅ εναρ̅ παρατηρει̅ εοϋ̅ ἡ̅σιογωμ̅ 6.2 πεχε̅ ι̅ς̅ χε̅ ἡ̅π̅ρχε̅ σολ̅ 6.3 αγω̅ πετετ̅ ἡ̅μοστε̅ ἡ̅μοϋ̅ ἡ̅π̅ρααϋ̅ 6.4 χε̅ σε̅ σολπ̅ τ̅ηροϋ̅ εβολ̅ ἡ̅πεμτο̅ εβολ̅ ἡ̅τ(η)̅ε̅ 6.5 ἡ̅ν̅ λααϋ̅ γαρ̅ ερηη̅π̅ εφ̅ναοϋωη̅ς̅ εβολ̅ 'αν̅' 6.6 αγω̅ ἡ̅ν̅ λααϋ̅ εφ̅ροβ̅ς̅ εφ̅να̅σω̅ ογ̅εω̅η̅̅ σολπϋ̅'

6.1 *His disciples asked him and said to him, 'Do you want us to fast? And how shall we pray? Shall we give alms? And what diet shall we observe?'* 6.2 Jesus said, '*Do not lie, 6.3 and what you hate, do not do, 6.4 because all things are manifest in the presence of the truth. 6.5 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, 6.6 and nothing covered which will be left without being uncovered.*'

1 **Bibliography for GTh 6:** S. Giversen, 'Questions and Answers in the Gospel according to Thomas: The composition of pl. 81,14–18 and pl. 83,14–27', *Acta Orientalia* 25 (1960), 332–338; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Las prácticas de piedad en el Evangelio de Tomás (logion 6, 14, 27 y 104)', *Salmanticensis* 31 (1984), 295–319; P. Sellew, 'Pious Practice and Social Formation in the Gospel of Thomas', *Forum* 10 (1994), 47–56; W.R.G. Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr, 1997), 492–502; Johnson, 'The Hidden/Revealed Saying', 176–185; Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 131–149.

Textual Comment

There are impressive similarities between the Greek and Coptic, including the correspondences between the the Greek vocabulary in 6.1 and the Graeco-Coptic loan-words (μαθητης, ρηιστεγε, ελεημοσυνη, ρπαρτηρει). There are also differences. Initially, the Coptic may slightly soften the Greek verb ἐξετάζω. Thereafter the modifications are perhaps more significant: the Greek questions about *how* to fast, pray and give alms become in the first and last Coptic questions about whether or not to do these things at all. The Greek's questions are probably the earlier versions, both because the text is earlier, but also because the disciples' questions tend not to be so radical in *Thomas*, even if Jesus' answers often are. There is an example in 6.1 of the Coptic language's preference for asyndeton (see Introduction, § 2.1, above): the *καί* before the reference to almsgiving does not have a direct equivalent in the Coptic. The same is again true if the restoration [καί λέ]γουσιν is correct. GTh 6.4 has an interesting divergence (the Coptic reads ἡπεμτο εβολ ἡτπε, i.e. 'in the presence of *heaven*') which can be emended: the Greek's 'truth' perhaps becomes the Coptic's 'heaven' by ἀληθεια → τμε → τπε.² Since the Greek does not have an equivalent of 6.6, the Coptic is either an expansion, or the text has fallen out of the Greek. As noted above on GTh 5, probably more likely is that Greek 5.3 has been moved to GTh 6.6, and revised perhaps to remove possible reference to resurrection. It may well be that there has been a displacement of text here or later which has led to the questions in GTh 6.1 being separated from the more direct answers in GTh 14.³

Interpretation

Here the disciples ask questions about the trio of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, a traditional combination in both early Jewish and Christian piety (cf. e.g. *Tob.* 12.8; *Matt.* 6.1–18; *2 Clem.* 16.4), and about the topic of clean and unclean foods.⁴ Rather than *explicitly* condemning the trio (as happens in GTh 14), here Jesus deflects the questions, probably thereby relativising these

² DeConick, 65; Plisch, 50.

³ Giversen, 'Questions and Answers'.

⁴ *2 Clement* interestingly grades these three traditional elements: 'fasting is better than prayer, almsgiving better than both' (16.4), though this apparent downgrading of prayer is immediately qualified.

practices.⁵ Traditional Jewish and Jewish-Christian piety which consists of fasting, prayer, almsgiving and kosher eating should be rejected in favour of a simple, two-part moral code about words and deeds, involving an approximation to the ninth commandment and the golden rule in its negative form. The motivation to this ethical living is grounded in the omniscience of the divine or in the future revelation of deeds (6.4–6). GTh 6 (in conjunction with 14) thus belongs in a group of sayings critical of the institutions and customs of traditional Judaism, and of the strands of Christianity which inherited those institutions and customs from Judaism (cf. OT Scripture in GTh 52; circumcision in 53, the temple in 71; perhaps ritual washing in 89). As a result, the *Thomas* movement is quite different in character from some other contemporaneous manifestations of Christianity. See further the discussion of GTh 14 below.

Loader raises the interesting question of how much *Thomas* reflects contact between the *Thomas* movement and Judaism. He notes that ‘a comparatively large number of the sayings reflect contact with Judaism and Jewish themes’, but that ‘the encounter with Judaism has taken place in association with Jewish Christianity’.⁶ GTh 6 places the questions not on the lips of non-Christian Jewish opponents, but in the mouths of the disciples, and so it is probably correct to see this as an intra-Christian debate. Loader’s language of ‘contact’ and ‘encounter’ is also wisely left vague.

Notes

6.1 His disciples questioned (Co: asked) him and said (Co: + to him). Cf. other sayings introduced by a question, request or statement from the disciples collectively (GTh 6, 12, 18, 20, 24, 37, 43, 51, 52, 53, 91, 99, 100, 104, 113; cf. 21, 60, 72, 79, 114).

6.1 How shall we (Co: Do you want us to) fast? Here the disciples’ question reflects diversity of opinion about fasting (cf. *Did.* 8.1; see further discussion in GTh 27). In *Hermas*, the procedure for fasting is quite complex (*Herm.* 54 [*Sim.* 5.1].5–8; 56 [*Sim.* 5.3]). As noted above, the Coptic has probably made the disciples’ question more radical.

6.1 And how shall we pray? The disciples’ question here might reflect the question that triggers the Lord’s prayer in Luke 11.1 (‘Lord, teach us to pray ...’), as

5 Valantasis, 37: ‘the saying neither rejects nor advocates these practices, but rather it problematizes ...’; Hedrick, 28: Jesus ‘dismisses ritual acts as of no consequence’; cf. Plisch, 50.

6 Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 502.

well as questions about frequency and contents of prayer e.g. in *Didache* 8.2–3; *Hermas* 9 [Vis. 3.1].6–7. The shocking response given to this question later in GTh 14 is that prayer leads to condemnation.

6.1 And how (om. Co) shall we give alms? In some contexts almsgiving goes hand in hand with fasting (see e.g. on GTh 69.2 below). For one example of the mechanism of almsgiving, see 1Cor. 16.1–2; see further the notes on 27.1 below.

6.1 And what diet shall we observe? This lies outside the traditional trio earlier in 6.1, and in GTh 14.1–3, but it is addressed in 14.4–5. For those who see the *Thomas* movement as vegetarian (see notes below on GTh 7 and 14), or as in contact or controversy with Judaism, this is a live question; the matter is also treated in *Barnabas* 10, however, where there seems to be little controversy among the addressees. It is possible that οὐδὲν ἐν ἑσθίᾳ(ι)οὐδὲν makes a catchword link with GTh 7.

6.2 Do not lie. On this standard prohibition, cf. Exod. 20.16. The ethical coverage in Jesus' reply is wide, including *words* here in 6.2 and *actions* in what follows in 6.3, although both are negative.

6.3 And what you hate, do not do. I.e. 'What you hate *other people doing to you*, do not do.' This second element of Jesus' response is the so-called 'negative form' of the 'golden rule' (in its positive form, 'whatever you wish others would do to you, do to them', as in e.g. Matt. 7.12). DeConick focuses on the Syrian connections of this negative form (it is attested in the *Acts of Thomas*), but Hannah notes that it spans a variety of early Jewish and Christian literature in different languages.⁷

6.4 Because all things are revealed (Co: manifest) in the presence of the truth (Co: heaven). We now move to the motivation for the actions in 6.2–3. There is some ambiguity in the timing of the manifestation: the Greek is lacunose, and the Coptic verb is stative, and thus tenseless.⁸ The plain sight of everything may be in the present, or it may be in a future event (as perhaps suggested by the future tenses in 6.5–6). In the latter case, the future event would presumably relate to the 'judgment scene' in GTh 57.4, and end of the cosmos in GTh 11 and 111. The reference is probably not to an 'opening of the books' in which every deed is revealed, but here to an all-seeing divine realm.

7 DeConick, 63; D.D. Hannah, *Epistula Apostolorum* (OECGT; Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming), and D.A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 83; cf. also R.H. Connolly, 'A Negative Golden Rule in the Syriac Acts of Thomas', *JTS* 36 (1935), 353–356. See e.g. *Tob.* 4.15; *Ac.* 15.20, 29 D; *Did.* 1.2; Aristides, *Apol.* 15 (Gk & Syr.); Theophilus, *Autolyc.* 2.34.

8 On this, see Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 435 (§ 525, and Table 29).

6.5 For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed. Cf. GTh 5.2 (see comment above ad loc.); also Mk 4.22; Matt. 10.26; Lk. 8.17; 12.2. In GTh 6 here, this aphorism is simply the negative flipside of the positive statement in 6.4. Hedrick's observation that this could refer to the enlightened disciple's vision into the human soul is perhaps unnecessarily speculative.⁹

6.6 (Co + And nothing covered which will be left without being uncovered.) This is apparently synonymous with 6.5, still reinforcing negatively the positive image in 6.4.

9 Hedrick, 29.

Logion 7¹

7.1 ... [μα]χάρι[ος] ἔστιν [... ...] καὶ ἔστ[... ...]ν[...]

7.1 ... '[Bl]ess[ed] is [... ...] and ... is [...].'

7.1 πεξε ἰϥ οὐμακαριος πε πμογει παει ετε πρωμε ναογομϩ αγω ἵτε πμογει
ϩωπε ῑρωμε 7.2 αγω ϩβητ^ϥ ἵβει πρωμε παει ετε πμογει ναογομϩ αγω
<πρωμε> ναϩωπε <ἵμογει>

7.1 *Jesus said, 'Blessed is the lion which the man eats, and the lion becomes man. 7.2 And cursed is the man whom the lion eats and the <man> becomes <lion>.'*

Textual Comment

The first half of 7.1 is the only section of the Greek which can provide any useful information, and it is not worthwhile to try to reconstruct what remains.² What survives is compatible with the Coptic, and indeed there is again a match between the one Greek loan word μακαριος and the text of P. Oxy. IV 654 at the same point ([μα]χάρι[ος]). The first part of 7.2 survives in Greek in Didymus the Blind: οὐαί, γάρ, τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ὃν φάγεται λέων.³ In practice, however, we are completely dependent upon the Coptic version of *Thomas* for the interpretation. Some scholars, even without knowledge of the Didymus parallel, proposed an emendation in 7.2b from αγω πμογει ναϩωπε ῑρωμε to

- 1 **Bibliography for GTh 7:** H.M. Jackson, *The Lion Becomes Man: The Gnostic Leontomorphic Creator and the Platonic Tradition* (SBL Dissertation Series 81; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); D. Lührmann, 'Die Geschichte von einer Sünderin und andere apokryphe Jesusüberlieferungen bei Didymos von Alexandrien', *NovT* 32 (1990), 289–316 (312–316: 'Anhang: Logion 7 des Thomasevangeliums bei Didymos von Alexandrien'); S.J. Gathercole, 'A Proposed Rereading of P.Oxy. 654 line 41 (Gos. Thom. 7)', *HTR* 99 (2006), 355–359; A. Crislip, 'Lion and Human in *Gospel of Thomas* Logion 7', *JBL* 126 (2007), 595–613; C. Losekam, 'Der Löwe im Menschen (Löwe-Mensch-Löwe)—EvThom 7', in R. Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2007), 863–867.
- 2 Gathercole, 'Proposed Rereading of P.Oxy. 654'.
- 3 See Lührmann, 'Geschichte von einer Sünderin', 312–316. Edition in M. Gronewald, *Didymus der Blinde: Psalmenkommentar*, vol. V (Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen 12; Bonn: Habelt, 1970), 138–140.

αὐτὸ πρῶτον καὶ ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἵκοιτο (from ‘and the lion becomes man’ to ‘and the man becomes lion’),⁴ which is made a near certainty by Didymus’s introduction to 7.2a with the words: ‘But if ever a rational and rationally inclined man (ἄνθρωπος) is nourished by some savage-hearted wild man or wicked force, he becomes a lion (γίνεται λέων)’.⁵

Interpretation

Bruce clarifies the literal meaning of GTh 7: ‘The point of this seems to be that a lion, if eaten by a man, is ennobled by rising in the scale of being, whereas a man, if eaten by a lion, is degraded to a lower status than was originally his ...’⁶ This, however, only scratches the surface of what is (perhaps along with GTh 42) the most enigmatic of all sayings in *Thomas*. There have been four main approaches to it.⁷

(1) First, Jackson argues for multiple backgrounds in the Bible (especially the Psalms), Platonism and Gnosticism,⁸ with the result that the lion in GTh 7 symbolises ‘the body’s ravenous appetites which threaten to devour the spiritual man and bury him in the material world’, or again, ‘the roaring, ravenous appetites of the flesh, especially those for its generation, that constantly threaten to devour the spiritual man’.⁹ The beatitude in 7.1 refers to the way in which ‘the ferocity of the leontomorphic demiurge can be mollified’ when the passions are brought under control; the curse comes upon man when it is the appetites which take control.¹⁰ Crislip makes two criticisms of this view, namely that Jackson’s position depends on a ‘gnosticising interpretation’ of the saying, which is unnecessary, and also

4 See e.g. A. Guillaumont, H.-C. Puech, G. Quispel, W. Till & Y. ‘Abd al Masih, eds. *The Gospel according to Thomas: Coptic Text Established and Translated* (Leiden: Brill, 1959), 4; Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 57; Nordsieck, 51; DeConick, 66. Plisch, 51, retains the text as it stands.

5 See the full text and translation of the relevant passage below.

6 F.F. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins outside the New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1974), 115.

7 I follow here in part the helpful taxonomy of Crislip.

8 Jackson, *Lion Becomes Man*, esp. 43, 45 (Psalms), 181 (Psalms and Gnosticism), and 184 on the NH text of Plato.

9 Jackson, *Lion Becomes Man*, 176, 183.

10 Jackson, *Lion Becomes Man*, 211.

that Jackson's link with the account of the soul in the Nag Hammadi text of the *Republic* is unconvincing.¹¹

- (2) An element of Jackson's view, namely the connection between the lion and the demiurge, is brought to the fore in Baarda's treatment: the latter identifies the lion as the demiurge, and argues that for *Thomas*, the person who knows himself is higher than that creator god in status.¹²
- (3) One of Valantasis's suggested interpretations differs from that of Jackson principally in taking the reference to 'eating' more literally.¹³ In short, this saying is critical of the sustained practice of eating meat, because in absorbing the flesh of animals, the human being becomes subsumed into 'the lower rungs of the hierarchy of being'.¹⁴ As a result, the saying supports a programme of ascetical fasting. Crislip makes the valid criticism, however, that it would be odd to speak of meat-eating in terms of eating lions, which was hardly regular practice.¹⁵
- (4) Most recently, Crislip has proposed that the saying is about the resurrection, and sets the statement in the context of early Christian discussions of the destiny of the righteous who have been eaten by animals. The language of lion eating man would, Crislip argues, suggest to the reader or hearer the question of what would happen to the man (understood as a Christian).¹⁶ The answer, in keeping with patristic discussions of people who have been eaten, is that the man will nevertheless participate in the resurrection. Indeed, the lion which the man eats is blessed (7.1) because in being absorbed into the human being, the lion also participates in the resurrection! There are problems here as well, however. First, Crislip comments that the lion eaten by man is blessed 'especially given the rarity with which such a dietary circumstance might happen'.¹⁷ But this is a weakness in the argument, rather than a strength. Macarisms do not usually deal with

11 Crislip, 'Lion and Human', 600–603.

12 T. Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas', *PIBA* 26 (2003), 46–65 (49).

13 Valantasis, 65.

14 Valantasis, 65.

15 Crislip, 'Lion and Human', 604.

16 Crislip, 'Lion and Human', 607.

17 Crislip, 'Lion and Human', 608. R.M. Grant, 'Notes on the Gospel of Thomas', *VC* 13 (1959), 170–180 (170), remarks that it is possible that GTh 7 'refers to the medicinal eating of lion meat', but G.C. Stead, 'Some Reflections on the Gospel of Thomas', in F.L. Cross, ed. *Studia Evangelica* III (TU 88; Berlin: Akademie, 1964), 390–402 (394), did not think that there was sufficient parallel evidence for this. According to Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 57, Heracleon talks of lion as food, but Leipoldt gives no particulars.

situations of such extreme rarity. It would seem odd to discuss in this way a circumstance which no reader would have encountered. Secondly, there is the serious problem that the man eaten by the lion is cursed in 7.2, rather than included in the resurrection. Crislip's solution is to appeal to the fact that Jesus in Gal. 3.13 is cursed, and that he was also resurrected.¹⁸ But this seems far-fetched, requiring readers to fill in a lot of logical blanks to get to this sense. The author could hardly expect a reader reasonably to see 'cursed' but think 'destined to be resurrected'. Thirdly, Crislip claims that his interpretation clarifies the use of the 'lion', because it links with patristic use of Daniel 6, in which Daniel is thrown to the lions. But the problem here should be obvious: the whole point of the story is that Daniel is not eaten, whereas the man in GTh 7.2 is.

Overall, the most likely interpretation is a chastened version of the view of Jackson.¹⁹ Crislip is correct that the saying is not necessarily Gnostic (in the sense employed in this commentary: see Introduction, 'Appended Note: Is *Thomas* "Gnostic"?', above), but his criticism of Jackson's appeal to the Platonic background is not decisive: Jackson refers to a great number of other sources in addition to Plato.²⁰ The saying should still be understood as the warning of the threat of passionate appetites: 7.1—it is good when a person controls these appetites, but, 7.2—disastrous when one succumbs to them.²¹ One important piece of evidence for this was unknown to Jackson and not referred to by Crislip. (It was published by Lührmann in 1990.) This is the use of a version of the saying by Didymus the Blind (discussed in the treatment of the text above), who also takes the point of being consumed by the lion as being consumed by savagery or wildness or irrationality:

... having been [fed] by the teacher, and having become his nourishment, he will not be a lion. Therefore blessed is he, and he is blessed not because he is a lion but because he has become a man. But if ever a rational and rationally inclined man is nourished by some savage-hearted wild man or

18 Crislip, 'Lion and Human', 609.

19 As approximately in Losekam, 'Der Löwe im Menschen', 866, for whom the lion represents 'die negativen, gottfernen Dinge', in conflict with the man, viz. 'die Gottesnahe', where the sense is neither narrowly sexual, and certainly not sacramental.

20 See also e.g. the *Teaching of Silvanus*, where the bestial life is associated with the 'fires of fornication' (105,2–10, 26–32). In *Authoritative Teaching*, the 'man-eaters' are demons subjecting people to temptation (29,17–30,25).

21 Similarly, Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 163; Ménard, 88.

wicked force, he becomes a lion, and such a person is wretched, for: “Woe to the man whom the lion eats.”²²

(*Commentary on Psalms* 316,1–4)

Here we have another use of not just similar imagery, but the same saying, in which the lion refers to ‘some savage-hearted wild man or wicked force’. The majority view, according to which the lion in GTh 7 symbolises the bodily passions,²³ is almost certainly correct, though it is possible that the meaning is evil influences in a wider sense.²⁴

Notes

7.1 Blessed is the lion which the man eats, and the lion becomes man. This is the first of eleven beatitudes in *Thomas*: GTh 7; 18; 19; 49; 54; 58; 68; 69.1; 69.2; 79.2; 103.²⁵ GTh 79.1 is excluded from this list as it is not spoken by Jesus; similarly, 79.3 is attributed by Jesus to others. This first half communicates the point that the best situation for the lion,²⁶ i.e. the passions, is to be subdued by the man. It is possible that οἴωμ in both GTh 6–7 forges a catchword link; ρωμε, however, is such a common word in *Thomas* that its appearance in both GTh 7 and 8 is probably not significant.

7.2 And cursed is the man whom the lion eats and the man becomes lion. In contrast to the number of macarisms, this is the only ‘cursed’ formula in *Thomas*; the woes in GTh 102 and 112 have a very similar tone, however (cf. the milder ‘wretched’ formula in GTh 87). This latter half makes the point that doomed is the person who is consumed by his appetites (‘whom the lion eats’) and is taken over by or identified with those passions (‘becomes lion’).

22 For the text, see Gronewald, *Didymos der Blinde. Psalmenkommentar* V, 138–140: [βρωθε]ις ὑπὸ τοῦ διδασκάλου καὶ τροφή αὐτοῦ γεγενημένος οὐκ ἔσται λέων. διὰ τοῦτο μακάριός ἐστιν καὶ μα[χαρί]ζεται οὐχ ὅτι λέων ἐστίν, ἀλλ’ ὅτι ἄνθρωπος γέγονεν. εἰ δέ ποτε ἄνθρωπος λογικὸς καὶ λογικῶς κινού[μενο]ς ὑπὸ ὠμοθύμου τινὸς ἀγρίου ἀνθρώπου ἢ πονηρὰς δυνάμεως βρωθεῖη, γίνεται λέων καὶ τάλας ἐσ[τίν] ὁ το]ιοῦτος. “οὐαὶ” γὰρ “τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ὃν φάγεται λέων”.

23 DeConick, 67.

24 Thus Nordsieck, 52.

25 For a brief discussion of the beatitudes in *Thomas*, see D.W. Kim, ‘What Shall We Do? The Community Rules of Thomas in the “Fifth Gospel”’, *Biblica* 88 (2007), 393–414 (406–410).

26 The argument in Hofius, ‘Das koptische Thomasevangelium’ (I), 35 n. 54, and 41–42 n. 72, that μογα means something like ‘corpse’, from the stem μογ, is very unlikely given (a) the Greek Didymus parallel adduced by Lührmann, and (b) the lack of attestation of a form of μογ with the additional letters.

Logion 8¹

8.1 αγω πεχαϳ δε επρωμε τῆτων αλογωρε ῥρηῆρητῖ παει ἡταρηνογχε
ἡτεφαβω εθαλασσα αϳσωκ ἡμοσ εζραῖ ϳῆ θαλασσα εσμερ ἡτβτῖ ἡκογει 8.2
ἡζραῖ ἡρητοϳ αϳρε αγνοσ ἡτβτῖ ενανοϳϳῖ ἡσι πογωρε ῥρηῆρητῖ 8.3 αϳνογχε
ἡἡκογει τηροϳ ἡτβτῖ εβολ ε[πε]ϳητῖ εθαλασσα αϳσωτπῖ ἡπποσ ἡτβτῖ χωριϳ
ϳε 8.4 πετεογῆ μααχε ἡμοϳ εσωτῆ μαρεϳῖ σωτῆ

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- 1 **Bibliography for GTh 8:** C.-H. Hunzinger, 'Unbekannte Gleichnisse Jesu aus dem Thomas-Evangelium', in W. Eltester, ed. *Judentum, Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für Joachim Jeremias* (BZNW 26; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1960), 209–220 (217–220); W. Schrage, *Das Verhältnis des Thomas-Evangeliums zur synoptischen Tradition und zu den koptischen Evangelienübersetzungen: Zugleich ein Beitrag zur gnostischen Synoptikerdeutung* (BZNW; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964), 37–42; J.B. Bauer, 'The Synoptic Tradition in the Gospel of Thomas', in F.L. Cross, ed. *Studia Evangelica* III (TU 88; Berlin: Akademie, 1964), 314–317; P. Nagel, 'Die Parabel vom klugen Fischer in Thomasevangelium von Nag Hammadi', in R. Stiehl & H.E. Stier, eds. *Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte und deren Nachleben. FS Franz Altheim* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969), 518–524; A. Lindemann, 'Zur Gleichnisinterpretation im Thomas-Evangelium', *ZNW* 71 (1980), 214–243 (216–219); W.G. Morrice, 'The Parable of the Dragnet and the Gospel of Thomas', *ExpT* 85 (1983–1984), 269–273; T. Baarda, "'Chose" or "Collected": Concerning an Aramaism in Logion 8 of the Gospel of Thomas and the Question of Independence', *HTR* 84 (1991), 373–397; T. Baarda, 'The Parable of the Fisherman in the Heliand: The Old Saxon Version of Matthew 13:47–50', *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik* 36 (1992), 39–58; T. Baarda, 'Philoxenus and the Parable of the Fisherman: Concerning the Diatessaron Text of Mt 13,47–50', in F. van Segbroeck, et al., eds. *The Four Gospels 1992: Festschrift Frans Neirynck* (BETL 100; Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 1403–1423; T. Baarda, 'Clement of Alexandria and the Parable of the Fisherman: Matthew 13, 47–48 or Independent Tradition?', in C. Focant, ed. *The Synoptic Gospels: Source Criticism and the New Literary Criticism* (BETL 110; Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 582–598; R. Cameron, 'Myth and History in the Gospel of Thomas', *Apocrypha* 8 (1997), 193–205 (199–202); Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 138–144; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 267–275; J. Liebenberg, 'To Know How to Find, To Find without Knowing: Wisdom in the Gospel of Thomas', *HTS* 59 (2003), 102–109; S.J. Patterson, 'The Parable of the Catch of Fish: A Brief History (On Matthew 13:47–50 and Gospel of Thom 8)', in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi"*. Québec, 29–31 mai 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 363–376; E.E. Popkes, 'Der wählerische Fischer—EvThom 8', in R. Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2007), 868–872; M. Grosso, 'Trasmissione e ricezione della parabola del pescatore (*Vangelo secondo Tommaso* 8,1–3)', in M. Pesce & M. Rescio, eds. *La trasmissione delle parole di Gesù nei primi tre secoli* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2011), 101–118.

8.1 *And he said, 'The man is like a wise fisherman, who cast his net into the sea. He pulled it up from the sea full of small fish. 8.2 Among them the wise fisherman found a good, large fish. 8.3 He cast all the little fish out i[n]to the sea, and he chose the large fish without being troubled. 8.4 He who has ears to hear, let him hear.'*

Textual Comment

Plisch may be correct that the introduction, 'The man is like ...' is a textual corruption of an earlier form, 'The kingdom is like ...'.²

Interpretation

This is the first of 14 parables in *Thomas*, 11 of which are paralleled in the Synoptic Gospels (GTh 8; 9; 20; 57; 63; 64; 65; 76; 107; 109), and three of which are unique (21; 97; 98).³ This parable is found, in a quite different form, in Matthew (Matt. 13.47–48), and there are other parallels in early Christian literature,⁴ and in fable traditions.⁵ There are two main options for the interpretation of the

² Plisch, 53.

³ The literature on the parables in *Thomas* is enormous. See, for example, Lindemann, 'Zur Gleichnisinterpretation'; C.L. Blomberg, 'Tradition and Redaction in the Parables of the Gospel of Thomas', in D. Wenham, ed. *Jesus Tradition outside the Gospels* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1984), 177–205; C.H. Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions: The Creative Voice of Jesus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994); see esp. the helpful synopsis of *Thomas*'s parables and those in the NT Gospels on pp. 252–253; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom and Jesus*; Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 851–931.

⁴ Some parallels have given rise to a view that early Christian authors were aware of a version of the parable like that of *Thomas*; the parallels are not especially close, however. (i) In the case of Clement (*Strom.* 1.1.16.3; 6.11.95.3), there are numerous differences. Bauer, 'Synoptic Tradition', 315–316, nevertheless, considers that *Strom.* 1.1.16.3 is quoting a proverb also drawn upon by *Thomas*. (ii) The parallels between Philoxenus and *Thomas* are negligible. (iii) Similarly, the Heliand is so late that it is not likely to contain significant parallels of relevance to the second century. (iv) The *Epitaph of Abercius* has Christ as the huge fish: ἰχθὺν ἀπὸ πηγῆς πανμεγέθη καθαρὸν (lines 13–14). (v) *Authoritative Teaching* (VI 29.3–30.25) is quite different. Here, the righteous are the fish trapped in nets cast by the adversary. See on the Clement parallels, Baarda, 'Clement of Alexandria and the Parable of the Fisherman', and Grosso, 'Trasmissione e ricezione', 109–115.

⁵ E.g. Babrius, *Fable* 4 (Perry 282), which is entirely different, because it states that being a

parable. (1) It is possible that this is a parable about divine election: the selection of the one great fish and the discarding of the many others could be seen as aligning with the statement about divine election in *GTh* 23 ('I shall choose you, one out of a thousand ...').⁶ This interpretation of the parable is unlikely, however. The parable is quite different from its parallel in Matthew, where God is the fisherman (Matt. 13.47–50), nor do the other extra-biblical parallels shed much light on the meaning in *Thomas*.⁷ (2) There are three reasons in particular for seeing the parable, as most scholars do, rather as about the human choice of the kingdom.

First, this interpretation is in line with the similar parables elsewhere in *Thomas*, namely the parables of the pearl, and of the lost sheep:⁸

	<i>GTh</i> 8	<i>GTh</i> 76	<i>GTh</i> 107
Principal actor:	wise fisherman	shrewd merchant	shepherd
Action:	fishing/ finding	finding/ buying	searching/ finding
Precious possession:	a fish	pearl alone	one sheep
Quality of the one:	large	[unfailing, enduring] ⁹	largest
Alternative:	small fish	rest of merchandise	ninety-nine
Treatment of these:	thrown back	sold	left behind

These three are very similar in structure, then, and the parable of the pearl is clearly explained as a parable of discipleship.

A second reason for taking the parable this way is the introduction: 'The man is like ...'. While this may be the result of a textual corruption of a more original

little fish is advisable, since one can literally 'slip through the net' and thus avoid danger, unlike great people who are constantly in danger. See B.E. Perry, *Fables: Babrius and Phaedrus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), 8–9.

6 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 55, averring that the large fish is the 'true gnostic'. Grant & Freedman, 127, offer both the 'divine' and 'human' interpretations as possibilities; DeConick, 68 (following Quispel), remarks that the interpretation of the fisherman as Jesus probably became more prominent in the later development of *Thomas*.

7 The most widely discussed parallel is that in Clement, *Strom.* 6.11.95.3, where there is a similar focus on 'the man'. The similarity is not especially strong, however, since the distinctive feature of *Thomas*, namely the choice of a single fish, does not appear there.

8 Hunzinger, 'Unbekannte Gleichnisse Jesu', 217–220, and Lindemann, 'Gleichnisinterpretation', 216–219, interpret along the same lines as the parable of the precious pearl.

9 This description features in the explanation of the parable.

‘The kingdom of heaven is like a man ...’, as it stands, the parable refers to the ideal human being. The subject is not any person in general, because the point of comparison is the *wise* fisherman.¹⁰

Thirdly, it may already be possible that there is some christological significance to the ‘large fish’. In the second-century *Epitaph of Abercius*, Christ is likened to a ‘huge fish’ (lines 13–14).¹¹ On the other hand, this final reason may not be so decisive, as there are various possibilities for the meaning of the large fish (see notes on 8.3 below).

In sum, the most likely interpretation of the parable is that the focus is on the human necessity of choosing the kingdom of God, and not only that, but also ridding oneself of any competing allegiances, as in the parallels in GTh 76 and 107.¹²

Notes

8.1 The man is like a wise fisherman, who cast his net into the sea. Some scholars have seen here a theology of the ideal “Man” (in a cosmic, Adamic sense), since the parable is introduced with ‘man’ rather than the kingdom,¹³ but this is not supported by *Thomas* elsewhere. Cameron emphasises the wisdom of the fisherman here,¹⁴ which will be fully apparent later in 8.3. The net here is a dragnet, as in Matthew’s parable and the Aesopic fable (Babrius 4 = Perry 282).¹⁵ The introduction with the word $\rho\omega\mu\epsilon$ is probably not an intentional link with GTh 7, because the word is so common.

8.1–2 He pulled it up from the sea full of small fish. Among them the wise fisherman found a good, large fish. The contrast of ‘small’ vs. ‘good, large’ prepares for the fact that the choice which the disciple makes is a good one. It anticipates the fact that what marks out the lost sheep in GTh 107 is that

¹⁰ Plisch, 53.

¹¹ Cf. Tertullian, *Bapt.* 1. Still valuable as a survey of the evidence is C.R. Morey, ‘The Origin of the Fish Symbol’, *Princeton Theological Review* 8 (1910), 93–106, 231–246, 401–432; 9 (1911), 268–289; 10 (1912), 178–198.

¹² Similarly, Grosso, ‘Trasmissione e ricezione’, 109.

¹³ Grant & Freedman, 126; Hedrick, 31.

¹⁴ Cameron, ‘Myth and History’, 199–202, though perhaps pushing it too far in the direction of Greek ‘cunning’ ($\mu\eta\tau\iota\varsigma$); the focus of the parable seems to lie more in his *discernment* of the one great fish.

¹⁵ Matthew and Aesop both have $\sigma\alpha\rho\eta\gamma\eta$. Crum, 2, notes that $\lambda\beta\omega$ means a dragnet ($\approx \sigma\alpha\rho\eta\gamma\eta$) as opposed to $\omega\mu\epsilon$, a casting net ($\approx \delta\iota\kappa\tau\upsilon\sigma\omicron\nu, \acute{\alpha}\mu\phi\iota\beta\lambda\eta\sigma\tau\rho\omicron\nu$).

it is the largest and most beloved sheep. μεζ in both GTh 8 and 9 may be an intentional catchword connection.

8.3 He cast all the little fish out into the sea. At risk of over-extending the allegory in this parable, the disciple here is depicted as giving up attachments to worldly privileges and desires.

8.3 And he chose the large fish. The reference in the ‘fish’ could be to knowledge,¹⁶ or Jesus himself;¹⁷ other more speculative ideas have been proposed.¹⁸ A more general reference to the kingdom and knowledge is perhaps more likely than a specific reference to Jesus.

8.3 Without being troubled.¹⁹ Here, the fisherman, without pain, without a pang of regret, threw all the small fry back into the sea and kept the one.²⁰ The phrase therefore emphasises the indifference which the disciple has towards the allures of the world which compete with discipleship: true disciples will not feel pain turning their backs on what others cherish. Morrice comments that the message of the parable in *Thomas* is the joy of discovery which must be accompanied by great sacrifice, but the point of the phrase $\alpha\omega\rho\iota\varsigma$ $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\epsilon$ is that it does not feel to the disciple like a great sacrifice.²¹ One might draw a contrast here with the rich man when he heard the demands of discipleship in Mark 10.22: ‘upset at this saying, he went away grieving’. The wise fisherman has the opposite experience. Another possibility is that the sense is ‘without toil’ (cf. Philo, *Imm.* 91–92), in which case the contrast is with those who think that the discovery of the truth only comes with great labour (see Clement, *Strom.* 1.1.16.3). This would not fit well with *Thomas*’s employment of labour elsewhere, however, except perhaps as a parallel to the ‘easy yoke’ in GTh 90.

16 Lindemann, ‘Gleichnisinterpretation’, 218; Popkes, ‘Der wählerische Fischer’, 871–872.

17 Plisch, 54.

18 E.g. Liebenberg (‘Know How to Find’, 109) who sees this parable, like GTh 109, as about finding revelation in the mundane. He underestimates the allegorical dimension. Valantasis, 67, has ‘themselves and the truth’ as the ultimate things to be found by the reader. A bizarre interpretation is found in H. Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1990), 104: ‘Thomas has preserved the intent of the wisdom parable better than Matthew: it is a wisdom parable, told about the discovery of one’s own destiny ...’. Hedrick, 31, also highlights the theme of wisdom. Grosso, 127, is right to note that the parable is more than sapiential, however, and DeConick, 68, notes the crucial point that wisdom is not the object of the search.

19 On $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\epsilon$, see P. Nagel, ‘Das Gleichnis vom zerbrochenen Krug. EvThom Logion 97’, *ZNW* 92 (2001), 229–256 (244–256).

20 Bauer, ‘Synoptic Tradition in the Gospel of Thomas’, 315, has ‘without regret’, though this is a little weak as a *translation*.

21 Morrice, ‘Parable of the Dragnet’, 272.

8.4 He who has ears to hear, let him hear. This is the first instance of this phrase, which is much more concentrated in *Thomas* than elsewhere:²² it appears (not always in exactly the same form) in GTh 8, 21, 24, 63, 65 and 96.²³ In five out of the six cases, it is appended to parabolic material: GTh 24 is unusual in that the formula *introduces* an image. The phrase does not necessarily mean that the accompanying material is more important than the rest, or more mysterious than the rest; it does tend to follow sayings in *Thomas* which are especially amenable to allegorical interpretation, however (GTh 8; 21; 65; 96).

22 In addition to the parallels in the Synoptics (Mk 4.9, 23; Matt. 11.15; 13.9; Lk. 8.8; 14.35) and Revelation (2.7, 11, 17, 29; 3.6, 13, 22; 13.9), see also *Gos. Mary* 8,10–11. For further parallels, see Ménard, 90–91.

23 See discussion in J.N. Birdsall, 'Luke XII. 16 ff. and the Gospel of Thomas', *JTS* 13 (1962), 332–336.

Logion 9¹

9.1 πεχε τ̄ε δε ειςρηητε̄ ᾱφει εβολ̄ ν̄βι πετ̄σιτε ᾱφμερ̄ τοοτ̄ῑ ᾱφνοῡχε 9.2
αρ̄οεινε μεν̄ ρε ε̄χ̄ν̄ τε̄ρη̄ν̄ ᾱφει ν̄βι ν̄ραλατε̄ ᾱγκατ̄φογ̄ 9.3 ρ̄ν̄κοογε̄ ᾱφρε̄ ε̄χ̄ν̄
τ̄πετρᾱ ᾱφω̄ μ̄ποῡχε̄ νογ̄νε̄ επ̄εσ̄ητ̄ ε̄πκαρ̄ ᾱφω̄ μ̄ποῡτε̄γε̄ ρ̄ν̄ε̄ ρ̄ρᾱῑ ε̄τ̄πε 9.4
ᾱφω̄ ρ̄ν̄κοογε̄ ᾱφρε̄ ε̄χ̄ν̄ ν̄ωο(ν)τε̄ ᾱφω̄στ̄ μ̄πεσ̄ροσ̄ ᾱφω̄ ᾱφ̄ν̄τ̄ ο̄γομογ̄ 9.5
ᾱφω̄ ᾱρ̄ν̄κοογε̄ ρε̄ ε̄χ̄ν̄ πκαρ̄ ε̄τ̄η̄ανογ̄φ̄ ᾱφω̄ ᾱφ̄τ̄ καρ̄ποσ̄ ρ̄ρᾱῑ ε̄τ̄πε̄ ε̄η̄ανογ̄φ̄
ᾱφ(φ)ῑ ν̄σε̄ ε̄σοτε̄ ᾱφω̄ φ̄ε̄χογ̄ωτ̄ ε̄σοτε̄

9.1 *Jesus said, 'Behold, the sower went forth and filled his hand and sowed.*
9.2 *Some fell onto the path, and the birds came and gleaned them. 9.3 Others*
fell onto rock and did not take root in the ground and produce ears upwards.
9.4 *And others fell onto thorns. They choked the seed, and worms ate them.*
9.5 *But others fell onto the good soil, and it yielded good fruit upwards. It*
brought sixty per measure and one hundred and twenty per measure.'

Interpretation

This is the second of *Thomas's* parables (on these, see *ad* GTh 8). Versions of the sower parable are also found in Mk 4.3–8/ Matt. 13.3–8/ Lk. 8.5–8, and it is mentioned under the title 'The Seed' in *Ap. Jas.* 8,3, and Hippolytus reports a Naassene interpretation of it (*Ref.* 5.8.28–29).² The other seed parables in GTh 20 and 57 may also be relevant here. Plisch comments that the main point in the story on the surface lies in the 'opposites of (endangered) seed and (abundant) produce'; this translates into a meaning where a 'humble and much endangered beginning contrasts with a surprising result that exceeds all expectations.'³ The element of danger, and the different destinies of the seeds, mark this parable as different from the parable of the Mustard Seed in GTh 20. The 'good soil' is also an important ingredient.⁴ The point is presumably that despite the fact that in many spheres revelation (the seed) does not result in the kingdom

1 **Bibliography for GTh 9:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 42–48; J.F. Horman, 'The Source of the Version of the Parable of the Sower in the Gospel of Thomas', *NovT* 21 (1979), 326–343; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 406–414; Gathercole, *Composition*, 49–51.

2 Cf. also *1 Clem.* 24.5; Justin, *Dial.* 125, and possibly *IGT* 11.1; *P. Egerton* 2 fr. 2v.

3 Plisch, 56.

4 Rightly, K. Dronsch, 'Vom Fruchtbringen (Sämann mit Deutung)—Mk 4,3–9.(10–12.)13–20', in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 297–313 (310).

(the fruit) becoming manifest; it will nevertheless be explosively productive in the future, and indeed already may be so among true disciples. There has also been discussion of the identity of the sower, but the sower figure is not particularly important in the parable: he initiates the story, but thereafter plays no role.⁵

Notes

9.1 Behold, the sower went forth and filled his hand and sowed. The reference to the filling of the hand here is obscure. In the OT, it is a Hebrew idiom, which goes into Greek, meaning ordination to the priesthood (e.g. Exod. 32.29; Lev. 8.33; Jdg. 17.5). Blomberg takes it instead to be a reference to the *pleroma*.⁶ It may, however, simply be an insignificant detail. Possibly μεξ in both GTh 8 and 9 intentionally forges a catchword connection between the sayings (as might εἰς ἡντιε). νογχε ('cast', 'threw'; here 'sowed') links GTh 8, 9 and 10.

9.2 Some fell onto the path, and the birds came and gleaned them. The variations from the Synoptics in the preposition (εἰς, 'onto') and the final verb (ἀγκάτφογ, 'gleaned them') do not need to be explained by recourse to an Aramaic or Syriac original.⁷

9.3 Others fell onto rock and did not take root in the ground and produce ears upwards. On the 'upwards' see below on 9.5.

9.4 And others fell onto thorns. They choked the seed, and worms ate them. The worms are a distinctive feature of *Thomas's* version of the parable, but it is hard to see any special significance in them. It is probably just an added colourful image. There is a slight discrepancy in the Coptic between the 'seed' in the singular, and the plural object of the eating.

9.5 But others fell onto the good soil, and it yielded good fruit upwards. Some have seen a Gnostic ascent implied in the production of 'good fruit upwards'.⁸ The expression probably goes back to idiomatic Greek, however: cf. the 'root' ἄνω φύουσα in Deut 29.17 LXX and Heb. 12.15.

5 The sower is most probably Jesus here, the seed may be his revelation; less likely is the view of Valantasis, 68–69, who, despite his focus on the ambiguity of the parable, ultimately points to the disciples as the sowers. If the sower had been more single-minded, Valantasis comments, he could have just sowed on good soil; so also the disciple should be single-minded.

6 Blomberg, 'Tradition and Redaction in the Parables', 185.

7 Gathercole, *Composition*, 49–51.

8 Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 116, noting the Naassene view; Grant & Freedman, 128; Blomberg, 'Tradition and Redaction in the Parables', 185.

9.5 It brought sixty per measure and one hundred and twenty per measure. Blomberg's statement that the number 120 is a perfect number in some forms of Gnosticism may not be correct.⁹ Although it is the number of years Noah preached before the flood (*Concept* 43,21–22), and the number of years in a grand old age (*Concept* 36,12), this may not be relevant to the number of measures of a crop. The 60 and 120 in *Thomas* may simply be natural variation, especially given the references to 30 and 60 in Mark, and 60 in Matthew (Mk 4.8; Matt. 13.8; cf. just 100 in Lk. 8.8); against this background, *Thomas's* climactic 120 is quite logical.¹⁰

9 Blomberg, 'Tradition and Redaction in the Parables', 186.

10 Grant & Freedman, 128.

Logion 10¹

ΠΕΞΕ ΤΣ ΧΕ ΔΕΙΝΟΥΧΕ ΝΟΥΚΩΞΤ΄ ΕΧΝ ΠΚΟΣΜΟΣ ΔΥΩ ΕΙΣΖΗΗΤΕ †ΑΡΕΖ ΕΡΟΥ΄
ΦΑΝΤΕΦΞΕΡΟ

Jesus said, 'I have cast fire upon the world, and behold I am guarding it until it burns.'

Interpretation

This saying has a close parallel in Luke 12.49. The two main questions here are the meaning of the symbol of fire, and what are guarded and burning in the second half of the saying.

On the former, (1) Plisch takes fire as purification, whereby 'the decision to follow Jesus can have serious, painful consequences for an individual'.² DeConick takes the fire in a similar purificatory way, whose aim is 'to destroy the lusts of the soul'.³ (2) Davies argues that it is Jesus' words.⁴ (3) Pokorný sees it as 'Jesus' potent proclamation of the kingdom and its inner power'.⁵ (4) Valantasis, on the other hand, takes the fire as judgment, and more specifically the *Thomas* community as an instantiation of Jesus' judgment upon the world, but which being very small is in need of 'guarding' by the originator of the fire.⁶

Fire is an ambiguous symbol, so any interpretation must be a hesitant one. The view (1) of Plisch and DeConick does not quite do justice to the fact that the target of the fire is cosmological rather than anthropological. Views (2) and (3) are possibilities. Valantasis's position (4) is probably correct to see judgment in view, but it is more likely to be a destructive phenomenon, rather than the community. A destructive sense perhaps gains support from GTh 11, where some components of the world are said to pass away.

The second half of the saying is ambiguous: because both ΚΩΞΤ ('fire') and ΚΟΣΜΟΣ ('world') are masculine, either could be the antecedent of the two 'its'.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 10:** S.J. Patterson, 'Fire and Dissension: Ipsissima Vox Jesu in Q 12:49, 51–52?', *Forum* 5 (1989), 121–139.

2 Plisch, 58.

3 DeConick, 76.

4 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 10

5 Pokorný, 50.

6 Valantasis, 69–70.

Plisch helpfully sets out the four ways of construing the statement, depending on how the ‘its’ are understood:

- (i) I am guarding *the fire* until *the fire* burns.
- (ii) I am guarding *the fire* until *the world* burns.
- (iii) I am guarding *the world* until *the fire* burns.
- (iv) I am guarding *the world* until *the world* burns.⁷

Commentators rightly tend to reject (ii) and (iii) as envisaging a jarring change of subject. Valantasis, Plisch and Grosso advocate option (i) of the list above, while Grant & Freedman go for (iv).⁸ It is unclear, however, whether (i) really makes sense, because if Jesus has cast fire on the earth already (unlike in Luke 12.49), then it is not quite coherent to talk of a time ‘until it (the fire) burns’. Some translators have given the translation ‘until it blazes’, implying ‘until the fire burns with its full force’ in contrast to the flicker which Jesus has already brought; the Coptic verb $\chi\epsilon\rho$, however, does not necessarily mean anything more than kindle or burn.⁹ In contrast, it makes very good sense that, having cast fire upon the earth, Jesus guards the world until the world burns *up*. Perhaps like the parable of the Weeds in GTh 57, this saying answers the question of why this wicked world is continuing to exist. Its continued existence is only temporary: the corpse of the world (GTh 56) will certainly in the end be cremated.

Notes

I have cast fire upon the world. ‘I have cast’ ($\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu\omicron\chi\alpha\epsilon$) forges a link with the references to casting/throwing ($\nu\omicron\chi\alpha\epsilon$) in the previous two sayings (8.1, 3; 9.1). *Thomas* differs from Luke here in the absence of reference to ‘coming’,¹⁰ and in the reference to ‘world’ instead of Luke’s ‘earth’. The reference to the ‘world’ should perhaps not be seen merely as the sphere of human existence (*pace* Plisch and DeConick above), but rather as the corpse-like system and entity which it is elsewhere in *Thomas* (cf. GTh 21, 27, 56, 80, 110). As has been noted in connection with Luke 12.49, this saying presupposes an exalted

⁷ Plisch, 57; also Grosso, 129.

⁸ Grosso, 129; Grant & Freedman, 128.

⁹ Crum 781b–782a.

¹⁰ Some have proposed an emendation to include ‘coming’, however: $\lambda\epsilon\iota(\epsilon\iota)\nu\omicron\chi\alpha\epsilon$ instead of the text’s $\lambda\epsilon\iota\nu\omicron\chi\alpha\epsilon$ (Plisch, 58 n. 2).

picture of Jesus as one who stands over against the world in judgment, with the authority of a divine judge (in contrast to Elijah, who asks God to send fire).¹¹

And behold I am guarding it until it burns. This half of the saying differs more markedly from 'and how I wish it were already kindled' in Luke 12.49. In *Thomas* the image is thus of Jesus keeping or preserving the world from being burned up until the right time. 'Behold' (εἰδένετε) may link GTh 10 verbally to GTh 9.

11 Gathercole, *Preexistent Son*, 161–163.

Logion 11¹

11.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙϞ ΔΕ ΤΕΕΠΕ ΝΑΡΠΑΡΑΓΕ ΔΥΩ ΤΕΤΗΤΠΕ ΗΜΟΣ ΝΑΡΠΑΡΑΓΕ 11.2 ΔΥΩ
ΝΕΤΜΟΟΥΤ ΣΕΟΝΖ ΔΝ ΔΥΩ ΝΕΤΟΝΖ ΣΕΝΑΜΟΥ ΔΝ 11.3 ΗΡΟΟΥ ΝΕΤΕΤΗΟΥΩΜ'
ΗΠΕΤΜΟΟΥΤ' ΝΕΤΕΤΗΕΙΡΕ ΗΜΟΥ ΗΠΕΤΟΝΖ ΖΟΤΑΝ ΕΤΕΤΗΩΔΑΝΩΩΠΕ ΖΗ ΠΟΥΟΕΙΝ
ΟΥ ΠΕΤΕΤΝΑΔΔ 11.4 ΖΗ ΦΟΥ ΕΤΕΤΗΟ ΗΟΥΑ ΑΤΕΤΗΕΙΡΕ ΗΠCΝΑΥ ΖΟΤΑΝ ΔΕ
ΕΤΕΤΗ'ΩΔΩΩΠΕ ΗCΝΑΥ' ΟΥ ΠΕ ΕΤΕΤΗΝΑΔΔ'

11.1 *Jesus said, 'This heaven will pass away, and the one above it will pass away. 11.2 But the dead will not live, and the living will not die. 11.3 In the days when you ate what is dead you made it live. When you come into the light, what will you do?! 11.4 On the day when you were one, you became two. But when you become two, what will you do?'*

Textual Comment

As it stands, the Coptic of 11.3 is rather obscure, and probably corrupt. There is, however, an illuminating parallel to it in Hippolytus (*Ref.* 5.8.32):

If you ate what is dead and made it live, what then would you produce/
accomplish if you ate what is living? (εἰ νεκρὰ ἐφάγετε καὶ ζῶντα ἐποίησατε,
τί ἂν ζῶντα φάγητε, ποιήσετε;)

1 **Bibliography for GTh 11:** Klijn, 'The "Single One" in the Gospel of Thomas'; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La escatología del Evangelio de Tomás', *Salmanticensis* 28 (1981), 415–441; A. Hogeterp, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Historical Jesus: The Case of Eschatology', in A. Hilhorst & G. van Kooten, eds. *The Wisdom of Egypt: Jewish, Early Christian and Gnostic Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuisen* (AJEC 59; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005), 381–396; E.E. Popkes, 'Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie: Transformationen apokalyptischer Motive im Thomasevangelium', in M. Becker & M. Öhler, eds. *Apokalyptik als Herausforderung neutestamentlicher Theologie* (WUNT II/214; Tübingen: Mohr, 2006), 211–233; E.E. Popkes, 'Von der Überwindung der Entzweiung—EvThom 11', in R. Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 2007), 873–877; Gathercole, 'The Heavens and the Earth Will Be Rolled up', 280–302.

There are significant differences in the content of Hippolytus' Naassene version.² Hippolytus' syntax may illuminate our *Thomas* parallel, however, making clear the relationship between the two halves of 11.3.

GTh 11.3:

Protasis: *(If) when you ate what is dead you made it live,*

Apodosis: *when you come into the light, what will you achieve?!*

This is of course a conjectural reconstruction, but it does make sense of this part of the saying. The protasis would then refer to quotidian human activity in this world, the apodosis to the more exalted state (see further on 11.3 below).

Interpretation

Nordsieck notes perhaps appropriately that GTh 10–11 are linked by the theme of 'Weltuntergang'.³ GTh 11 is itself 'a small collection of sayings', with 11.1–2 and 3–4 each forming a pair.⁴ There is a looser connection between 11.1–2 and 11.3–4, though there is the common theme of death, life, and the end. In terms of GTh 11 as a whole, (1) Valantasis has argued that the elements are basically unrelated, and so the components 'challenge rational reflection' in their juxtapositions.⁵ (2) Pokorný states that GTh 11 is 'a reinterpretation of Jesus' teaching in a way that stresses the ascetic repression of sexuality'. It is far from clear that sexuality is a theme here, however, and—against Valantasis—GTh 11 does divide into two parts, each of which makes sense. (For the interpretations of the components, see notes below.) Whether there is an overarching theme is less obvious: there may be a common theme of eschatology in 11.1–3, with a warning attached to 11.4's harking back to the fall, but this remains in the realms of possibility; nevertheless, the eschatological content of this logion should not be underestimated.⁶

2 The 'living' are understood by the Naassenes to refer to rational faculties.

3 Nordsieck, 61.

4 Pokorný, 51.

5 Valantasis, 70.

6 Popkes, 'Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie', 215, 224, underestimates its significance; eschatology is not to be disregarded simply because there is no final judgment.

Notes

11.1 This heaven will pass away, and the one above it will pass away. The idea of heavens passing away is a familiar one in early Christianity.⁷ The language of passing away, perhaps like that of ‘rolling up’ in GTh 11, might suggest a more placid disintegration and demise than is implied by the language of destruction and *ekpurosis* in other texts.⁸ The unusual phrase ‘this heaven’, refers almost certainly to the visible heaven nearest to earth, in contrast to the higher ‘one above it’. Multi-layered heavens are also a commonplace in early Judaism and Christianity.⁹ It is possible that the lower two stages of heaven are regarded as temporary in contrast to the third layer of heaven which corresponds in some texts to paradise (e.g. 2 Cor. 12.2–4). The specification of two heavens dissolving may relate to the point made in 2 *Clement*, according to which ‘some [i.e. not all] of the heavens will dissolve’ (τακίησονται τινες τῶν οὐρανῶν, 2 *Clem.* 16.3). Valantasis, by contrast, insists that the heavenly realms in their totality pass away in GTh 11.¹⁰ Both this pan-heavenly view, and the assumption that paradise is the third heaven in *Thomas*, are conjectures, however.

11.2 But the dead will not live, and the living will not die. Literally, ‘But the dead do not live ...’, but a future sense is very likely. This statement probably stands in contrast to 11.1, because the point is that the disappearance of the heavens does not make any difference either to the elect (‘the living’) or to others (‘the dead’).¹¹ Both remain in their existing states. It is a feature of *Thomas* that eschatology is not *absent*, but it is insignificant.¹² The world in its present form is temporary, but the end of the world does not bring about a change of state (e.g. a resurrection) for the ‘living’—such a change would be superfluous. Similarly, the ‘dead’ are already in a state of perdition.

11.3 In the days when you ate what is dead you made it live. When you come into the light, what will you do?! There have been various explanations of the contrast here. Plisch considers the background here possibly to be sacramental,

7 Cf. Matt. 5.18; Lk. 16.17; Mark 13.31/ Matt. 24.35/ Luke 21.33; 2 Pet. 3.10; Rev. 21.1.

8 Gathercole, ‘The Heavens and the Earth Will Be Rolled up’, 296–297.

9 See the discussions of various works in P.R. Gooder, *Only the Third Heaven? 2 Corinthians 12.1–10 and Heavenly Ascent* (London/ New York: Continuum/ T&T Clark, 2006).

10 Valantasis, 71.

11 The ‘living’ and the ‘dead’ here are spiritually so; the reference is not to physical life and death. So rightly Grosso, 132.

12 Gathercole, ‘The Heavens and the Earth Will Be Rolled up’, 294–298; cf. Popkes, ‘Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie’, 223.

either in a Christian eucharistic, or a pagan sense, which is then opposed to being in the light.¹³ DeConick, on the other hand, sees two definitions of the means to true life, eating as opposed to baptism into the light.¹⁴ Davies considers it a criticism of meat eating.¹⁵

The contrast in 11.3, however, is perhaps more straightforward (especially when informed by the Hippolytus parallel).¹⁶ *Thomas* in the first half grants the extraordinary power of a natural human process: when a human being consumes *dead* meat or plant matter, these are absorbed and become *living* tissue. How much greater, then, are human possibilities when a person reaches salvation and comes into the light? The question ‘what will you do?’ is thus about achievement (what will you be able to accomplish!), rather than expressing a moral dilemma. If there is a contrast in the saying between life ‘pre- and post-conversion’, then the implication may be that the disciples only ate meat in their past life and are vegetarian in the present, but this is unclear: plant matter is also dead when it is consumed.

11.4 On the day when you were one, you became two. But when you become two, what will you do? This saying forms a contrast to 11.3. The former referred to those achieving great things going on to do even greater things. This saying appears to lament what has happened to the fallen, and to wonder what further catastrophes might happen to them. In the first sentence, the language is a little awkward, but the reference seems to be to a kind of fall in which the primordial unity was fractured into a duality. The ‘becoming two’ is based on Gen. 2.21–22, with a play on Gen. 2.24: instead of the two becoming one, the one has become two.¹⁷ This is the fractured situation in which the fallen currently exist (see further the Introduction, § 10.1, above). But—Jesus imagines—if this lapse was possible in an ideal state, surely now that the situation is worse, ‘you’ could plummet again into a yet more disastrous condition. For the same question in a similar context, cf. *Teach. Silv.* 105,33–34. DeConick is correct that implied in the question is a ‘dire situation’.¹⁸

13 Plisch, 59.

14 DeConick, 79.

15 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 12.

16 There is no substantive connection with GTh 7 and 60, although they also treat consumption: these sayings concern the danger of being consumed, which is not in view in GTh 11.3.

17 The ‘becoming two’ probably refers to the disintegration and division of humanity and individual persons, rather than (so Plisch, 59) to marriage *qua* obstacle to salvation.

18 DeConick, 79.

Logion 12¹

12.1 ΠΕΧΕ ἸΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ ΝΙC ΔΕ ΤῆCΘΟΥΝ ΔΕ ΚΝΑΒΟΚ` ΝΤΟΟΤῆ ΝΙΜ` ΠΕ ΕΤΝΑΡ̄
ΝΟC ΕΡΡΑΪ ΕΧΩΝ 12.2 ΠΕΧΕ IC ΝΑΥ ΔΕ ΠΙΜΑ ἸΤΑΤΕΤῆΙΕΙ ἸΜΑΥ ΕΤΕΤΝΑΒΟΚ` ΩΑ
ἸΔΚΩΒΟC ΠΔΙΚΑΙΟC ΠΑΕΙ ἸΤΑ ΤΠΕ Μῆ ΠΚΑΖ ΩΩΠΕ ΕΤΒΗΤῆ

12.1 *The disciples said to Jesus, 'We know that you will depart from us. Who will be leader over us?' 12.2 Jesus said to them, 'Wherever you have come from, you shall go to James the Just, for the sake of whom heaven and earth came into being.'*

Interpretation

The disciples' question may have some relation to Mark 9.31–34, which like GTh 12 consists of a passion prediction (although a different kind of 'departure' is possible in *Thomas*), followed by the disciples asking which of them is the leader. In *Thomas*, after the death of Jesus, the disciples are envisaged as dispersed, but they are to congregate around 'James'.² There have been two principal debates about this saying: first, whether James is meant here as the historical figure or as a primarily symbolic figure in some other respect, and second whether the commendation of James is serious or ironic.³ On the first question, the main lines of the problem are as follows.

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 12:** A.F. Walls, 'References to the Apostles in the Gospel of Thomas', *NTS* 7 (1960–1961), 266–270; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo', 133–162; J. Painter, *Just James: The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), 160–163; R. Uro, "Who Will Be Our Leader?" Authority and Autonomy in the Gospel of Thomas', in I. Dunderberg, C.M. Tuckett & K. Syreeni, eds. *Fair Play: Diversity and Conflicts in Early Christianity. Essays in Honour of Heikki Räisänen* (NovTSupps 103; Leiden/Boston/ Cologne: Brill, 2002), 457–485; P.J. Hartin, *James of Jerusalem: Heir to Jesus of Nazareth* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2004), 115–140; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 84–90.
 - ² Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo', 99.
 - ³ Related to the two options provided here is the question of whether this saying is "Jewish-Christian" or "Gnostic" (see the views canvassed in Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo', 106–107). Frend sees the reference to James as clearly Jewish-Christian ('Gospel of Thomas', 16). W.R.G. Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr, 1997), 501–502, on the other hand, sees opposition to Jewish Christianity. Trevijano Etcheverría and Popkes point to the wider usage of James in places such as the Nag Hammadi corpus, and therefore conclude that James is not necessarily a Jewish-Christian reference

- (1) 'Going to James' could refer to the historical James. Bauckham and DeConick argue that the saying goes back to James's lifetime, DeConick specifying that 'a significant threat to James' authority must have occurred within the community'.⁴ There are some difficulties with this view. The *Sitz im Leben* of the saying is the ministry of Jesus, so at the literary level, the saying certainly does assume that James is alive—just as *Thomas* assumes that Mary, Peter, Matthew, Salome et al. are also alive. It is a leap to assume, however, via a form of mirror-reading, that James is still alive at the time of writing, especially that the saying reflects conflict over James' authority.⁵ (One might compare *Apoc. Paul* 19,15–18, where the child, the Holy Spirit,

here: see R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La incomprensión de los discípulos en el Evangelio de Tomás', in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica XVII.1* (Elmsford, NY: Pergamon Press, 1982), 243–250 (247); E.E. Popkes, 'About the Differing Approach to a Theological Heritage: Comments on the Relationship Between the Gospel of John, the Gospel of Thomas, and Qumran', in J.H. Charlesworth, ed. *The Bible and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, vol. 3: *The Scrolls and Christian Origins* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006), 281–318 (310). For Grant, the anti-Jewish character of *Thomas* 'means that the James to whom the disciples will go is presumably the hero of the *Anabathmoi Iakōbou*, opposed to the temple, to the sacrifices, and to the fire on the altar': Grant, 'Notes on the Gospel of Thomas', 172; similarly Ménard, 98. It may be that the saying originated in a Jewish-Christian milieu, however: Richard Bauckham has suggested to me the possibility that the explanation for the depiction of James in GTh 12 lies in Prov 10:25b, which can be translated, 'the righteous man is the foundation of the world' (email correspondence, 26.vii.2013).

- 4 R.J. Bauckham, 'James and the Jerusalem Church', in idem, ed. *The Book of Acts in its Palestinian Setting* (Carlisle: Paternoster/Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 415–480 (451); A.D. DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas: A History of the Gospel and its Growth* (LNTS 286; London/New York: T&T Clark International, 2005), 94–95: 'Based on the content of the logion, this addition to the original collection must have occurred before 62 CE when James died but not necessarily during the initial formation of the Thomasine community. In fact, I am convinced that this saying actually accrued in the collection as the result of the community's first crisis—a significant threat to James' authority must have occurred within the community. What that threat was, is difficult to tell from the accretion. What we can say confidently, however, is that at an early point in their history, the Thomasine Christians questioned the legitimacy and authority of the Jerusalem Church. They opted, at this juncture at least, to maintain their connection with Jerusalem and the leadership of James. Because this saying assumes that James is still alive and the leader of the Jerusalem Church, the Thomasine Church must have been established in Syria sometime before James' death in 62 CE.'
- 5 More restrained than DeConick is Bauckham, 'James and the Jerusalem Church', 451: 'The saying very probably dates from James' lifetime ... The saying probably reflects the outlook of the early Jewish Christian mission to east Syria, some of whose traditions were later taken over by the Gospel of Thomas which originates in that area.'

tells Paul to 'go to' the other apostles.) Mirror-reading is difficult enough when one is dealing with an epistle,⁶ but when one is reading a collection of sayings with a fictional *Sitz im Leben* the difficulties are magnified even further: see the Notes below on the centralised authority of James over the other apostles, and the title 'the Just', features which together line up most closely with the portraits of James in the second and third centuries CE.

- (2) Valantasis offers some different options for a symbolic James, suggesting that he represents 'a tradition, or an authoritative method, or some other authoritative agency'.⁷ One possibility, therefore, is that James is a kind of symbol of a traditionally Jewish Christianity in some form. Furthermore, a number thought that James was a channel for an alternative, authoritative *revelatory* tradition. This is evident from particular attachment to James in three Nag Hammadi works, (a) the *Apocryphon of James*, (b) *First Apocalypse of James* (also extant in Codex Tchacos as *James*), where James rebukes the twelve,⁸ and especially (c) *Second Apocalypse of James*.⁹ One may add (d) the *Ascents of James* mentioned by Epiphanius.¹⁰ He perhaps also plays a role in (e) *Gos. Eg.*, where 'James the great' is one of the 'great σπαρατῆγοι' who appear to the incorruptible on the great Seth's journey,¹¹

6 M.D. Hooker, 'Were There False Teachers at Colossae?', in B. Lindars & S.S. Smalley, eds. *Christ and Spirit in the New Testament. Essays in Honour of C.F.D. Moule* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 315–331, esp. 315; J.M.G. Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case', *JSNT* 31 (1987), 73–93 noting, at 84, that some think it impossible!

7 Valantasis, 74.

8 In 1 *Apoc. Jas.* 42, James reveals, and rebukes the twelve.

9 See e.g. 2 *Apoc. Jas.* 55,3–56,7: '... I wish to reveal through you and the [Spirit of Power], in order that he might reveal [to those] who are yours. And those who wish to enter, and who seek to walk in the way that is before the door, open the good door through you. And they follow you; they enter [and you] escort them inside, and give a reward to each one who is ready for it. For you are not the redeemer or helper of strangers. You are an illuminator and a redeemer of those who are mine, and now of those who are yours. You shall reveal (to them); you shall bring good among them all. You [they shall] admire because of every powerful (deed). You are he whom the heavens bless. You he shall envy, he [who has] called himself your [Lord] ... For your sake they will be told these things and will come to rest. For your sake they will reign and become kings. For your sake they will have pity on whomever they have pity.'

10 Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.16.7.

11 These σπαρατῆγοι are heavenly bringers of salvation according to A. Böhlig & F. Wisse, *Nag Hammadi Codices III, 2 and IV, 2. The Gospel of The Egyptians (The Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit)* (CGL; NHS 4; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 194.

as well as in (f) Hippolytus' report about the Naassenes, who apparently traced their revelation back, via Mariamne, to James (Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.7.1); (g) the *Gospel of the Hebrews* (*ad Jerome, Vir. Ill.* 2) gives James a private resurrection appearance. In summary, James is:

- recipient of special revelation—*Ap. Jas.*; 1 *Apoc. Jas.*; Naassenes
- author of a book—*Ap. Jas.* (with Peter); 1 *Apoc. Jas.* (scribe = Addai); 2 *Apoc. Jas.* (scribe = Mareim)
- ascender—*Ap. Jas.* 15,5–16,11
- revealer/ illuminator and deliverer—2 *Apoc. Jas.* 55,15–56,14
- authoritative heavenly figure—*Gos. Eg.* III,2 64,12–13

Before the merits of these two options (historical or symbolic) are evaluated, the second—directly connected—question of whether the praise of James is meant seriously also needs to be raised. On (1) the 'serious' reading, James is commended here as an authority, but there is also the possibility (2) that the reference to James is actually intended to undercut him in one or both of two ways: it is possible that, given what the previous saying has said about the impermanence of heaven, he is damned with faint praise as the one for whom heaven and earth came into being; or, he is perhaps set up as a leader in GTh 12, only to be superseded in GTh 13 by Thomas as a superior model disciple (see further the Appended Note below on the relation between GTh 12 and 13).

As a result, there are four options which are possible in theory: (a) a historical James commended in all seriousness, (b) a 'serious' symbolic figure, (c) an ironically meant historical figure, and (d) an ironic reference to a symbolic figure.

Probably the most likely of these is (b). The difficulty with the ironic readings in (c) and (d) is that it may well attribute a level of sophistication to the author which is not warranted. While it is possible, there does not seem to be any comparable instance elsewhere in *Thomas*. Moreover, the formula about 'heaven and earth' employed here is in any case scarcely, if ever, meant literally elsewhere—it is clear hyperbole. The idea of a replacement of James with Thomas in GTh 13 is also not necessary, given that literature in parallel with the *Gospel of Thomas* can often accommodate more than one authority figure without any sense of competition (again, see the Appended Note below). The difficulty with a view of James (a) as a historical figure is difficult within *Thomas* as it stands, unless one supposes that the work is extremely early. Similarly, for James to function as a symbol of 'Jewish Christianity' is extremely problematic given the criticism in *Thomas* of such traditional Jewish practices as fasting, almsgiving and prayer (GTh 6, 14), as well as Scripture and circumcision (GTh 52–53).

In favour of option (b), then, are the numerous parallels to James as a figure embodying a revelatory—or in some other sense ‘spiritual’—tradition. Perhaps the content of this tradition is best understood negatively: as a brother of the Lord rather than a disciple/ apostle, he can undercut the authority of the twelve (with the possible exception of Thomas), and perhaps the Peter/ Matthew tradition of GTh 13 in particular.¹²

Notes

12.1 The disciples said to Jesus, ‘We know that you will depart from us.’ On sayings introduced by the disciples, see *ad* GTh 6. The reference here may be to Jesus’ passion or a form of ascension. The disciples are very knowledgeable here by comparison with the canonical Gospels, where they are shocked (e.g. Mk 8.31–32) or confused (e.g. Mk 9.31–32) by Jesus’ passion predictions.

12.1 Who will be leader over us? As noted, this question might echo Mark 9.33–34, with its discussion of which disciple was the greatest (compare Coptic Mark’s $\mu\mu\ \pi\epsilon\ \pi\iota\omega\varsigma\ \epsilon\tau\eta\gamma\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon$ with $\mu\mu\ \pi\epsilon\ \epsilon\tau\eta\alpha\tilde{\rho}\ \mu\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\zeta\pi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\ \epsilon\chi\omega\mu\epsilon\iota$ in *Thomas*). The implied answer wished for (as is explicit in Mark) might well also in *Thomas* be one of the disciples themselves.

12.2 Jesus said, ‘Wherever you have come from.’¹³ The wording of the text is peculiar here. Scholars generally (rightly) take the reference here to be to the scattering of the disciples in their missionary activity. On the surface, it looks as if Jesus is talking about their origins (as Judaeans, Galileans, etc.). More probably the verb is to be understood in a future perfect sense: ‘Wherever you *shall* have come from (when you start going to James).’

12 As Walls put it, early on in *Thomas* research: ‘James, brother and intimate of the Lord, is superior to all the other apostles’ (‘References to the Apostles’, 267); cf. Painter’s comment that *Thomas* is a polemic against Peter’s leadership (*Just James*, 162). As Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 193, rightly notes, however, GTh 99 relativizes the family relations of Jesus.

13 The phrase $\mu\mu\ \tilde{\iota}\tau\alpha\tau\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\tau\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\ \tilde{\mu}\mu\alpha\gamma$ has yielded diverse translations: e.g. ‘wherever you come from’ (DeConick, Plisch; cf. Grosso) or ‘wherever you are’ (Lambdin). (Hedrick, 37, ‘when that happens’ is a fudge.) Crum, 196b, notes a parallel in Shenoute, with $\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\tau\alpha\gamma\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\ \mu\mu\alpha\gamma$ meaning ‘whence they came’. Cf. also the different arguments for this sense of 12.2 in U.-K. Plisch, ‘Probleme und Lösungen. Bemerkungen zu einer Neuübersetzung des Thomasevangeliums (NHC 11,2)’, in S. Emmel, et al., eds. *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit: Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongressen in Münster 20.-26. Juli 1996* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999), II.523–528 (526). Plisch, 61, also notes the contrast between $\epsilon\tilde{\iota}$ and $\beta\omega\kappa$ in the saying.

12.2 You shall go to James. At the literal level, within the framework of the dialogue, this saying ‘gives to James the authority at the centre to which, wherever their missionary travels take them, they are to look’.¹⁴ The status accorded to James here corresponds most closely to the *Jakobusbild* of the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions*, according to which James was appointed bishop in Jerusalem by Jesus himself (*Recogn.* 1.43),¹⁵ and the twelve all reported to him (1.44; 1.64);¹⁶ indeed, he is called ‘James the chief of bishops’ and ‘James the archbishop’ (1.68; 1.73). Since such a status is in some sense comparable to that given to Peter in Matt. 16.18–19, GTh 12 may have, as does GTh 13 following, an anti-Petrine note.

12.2 The Just. The only other place in *Thomas* where the epithet ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ appears is in GTh 13, so there may be a deliberate catchword link between the two sayings. Different views have been suggested for when James received the title ‘the Just’. Hegesippus said that it went back to the time of Jesus. DeConick has stated that it passed to James on the death of Jesus, when the former assumed the leadership of the Jerusalem church.¹⁷ Ward and Pokorný suggest that it was given to James after his martyrdom.¹⁸

The earliest references to the title ‘the Just’ appear in the *Gospel of the Hebrews*, Hegesippus and in Clement’s *Hypotyposeis*.¹⁹ As far as earlier sources are concerned, Paul calls James ‘the brother of the Lord’ (Gal. 1.19), and Josephus similarly designated him ‘the brother of Jesus’ (*Ant.* 20.197–203). This was the early way of distinguishing him from other Jameses, i.e. from James the son of Zebedee (‘James the brother of John’, in Acts 12.2), James the son of Alphaeus and James the Less. Hegesippus’s claim that James ‘has been called by everyone “the Just”, from the times of the Lord until now’ is—like much of Hegesippus on James—fanciful.²⁰ The title ‘the Just’ is probably a later—perhaps second-century—development, another of the many later features (such as Nazirate

14 Bauckham, ‘James and the Jerusalem Church’, 451.

15 James is four more times called ‘James the bishop’ (1.66 *bis*, 70, 72).

16 According to *Recogn.* 1.17, Peter received a command from James to send him an account of his activities every year.

17 DeConick, 81.

18 R.B. Ward, ‘James of Jerusalem in the First Two Centuries’, *ANRW* 2.26.1 (1992), 779–812 (801); Pokorný, 52.

19 See *apud* Jerome, *Vir. Ill.* 2, Eusebius, *HE* 2.1.3, and *HE* 2.23.4 respectively.

20 S. Chepey, *Nazirites in Late Second Temple Judaism. A Survey of Ancient Jewish Writings, the New Testament, Archaeological Evidence, and Other Writings from Late Antiquity* (Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity 60; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 175.

and priesthood) read back into James' own lifetime.²¹ Ward may be right in suggesting that the title 'came to be affixed to James as a martyr title after his death':²² the term is associated with the martyred in *Wis.* 2.17–20, those killed unjustly in *Jas.* 5.6, and Jesus specifically in his death in *Lk.* 23.47 and *1Jn.* 2.1–2 (cf. *1 Pet.* 3.18; *Acts* 3.14; 7.52, 22.14). This is probable, but must not be pressed, since in a parallel case, Simon the Just is according to Josephus so-named for 'his piety to God and his benevolence to his countrymen' (*Ant.* 12.43; 12.157); Josephus is not clear about whether he thought this title was granted during Simon's lifetime or not.²³ James' epithet may merely have this general sense, though the connotation of righteous *and therefore unjustly killed* is probably also important.

12.2 For the sake of whom heaven and earth came into being. 'Heaven' may intentionally link GTh 12 to GTh 11, where the word also appears. GTh 12.2 as a whole has various reasonably close parallels in Jewish tradition (and in some early Christian works).²⁴ Perhaps the earliest is *T. Mos.* 1.12–13, where Moses says, 'He (God) created the world on behalf of his people ...'. Around 100 CE, *4 Ezra* deduces from *Isa.* 40.15 (where the nations are 'like a drop in a bucket') that this world was created for Israel (*4 Ezra* 6.55–59; also 7.11). The same idea comes in *2 Baruch*, where there is some ambiguity about the creation of the world for Adam and for Israel (*2 Bar.* 14.18–19). *Baruch* adds a third basis for creation in the next chapter, this time in reference both to this world and the world to come: 'And with regard to the righteous ones, those whom you said the world has come on their account: yes, also that which is coming is on their account' (*2 Bar.* 15.7; cf. 21.24). *Sifre Deuteronomy* has a strong focus on the place of Israel, who appear to be identified with the righteous: the whole world—heaven and earth—was created for their sake (*Sifre Deut.* § 47, ad 11.21 *bis*). With the reference to the righteous, then, we have a close parallel to the statement about James. Hence Bammel's conclusion that the creation of the world for Israel is 'an idea very common in Jewish sources'.²⁵ Finally, in the

21 Ward, 'James of Jerusalem', 801; Chepey, *Nazirites*, 176. On James' Nazirate, see E. Zuckschwerdt, 'Das Naziräat des Herrenbruders Jakobus nach Hegesipp (Euseb, h. e. II 23, 5–6)', *ZNW* 68 (1977), 276–287.

22 Ward, 'James of Jerusalem', 801.

23 Hegesippus' explanation is that James was holy from his mother's womb. 1 *Apoc. Jas* explains the title from James' work as a servant to the angry 'just' god (*Codex Tchacos* 1 *Apoc. Jas.* 18,16–20).

24 For Jewish parallels, see esp. Bammel, 'Rest and Rule', 89 n. 7; for early Christian instances, cf. Frend, 'Gospel of Thomas', 16–17.

25 Bammel, 'Rest and Rule', 89 n. 7.

Talmud, we have the possibility of the world being created for individuals: ‘Rab said: The world was created only on David’s account. Samuel said: On Moses’ account; R. Johanan said: For the sake of the Messiah’ (*b. Sanh.* 98b). On the basis of passages such as these, it is plausible to conclude that GTh 12 is a hyperbolic statement following on from James being especially ‘just’ or ‘righteous’.²⁶

Even against this Jewish background, however, the language in GTh 12 is remarkably strong.²⁷ First, reference to the creation of both ‘*heaven and earth*’ is rare (though both may be implied in references to the ‘world’). *Sifre Deuteronomy* has it, and *2 Baruch* refers to both ages: interestingly, it is these two passages which also refer to ‘the righteous’. Second, it is striking to have the creation spoken about in connection with an *individual*. The only other individual in earlier literature is Adam, although later on (e.g. in the Talmud) individuals are more prevalent. The same is true in Christian sources from roughly the time of *Thomas: Hermas* 1 [*Vis.* 1.1].⁶ has ongoing creation for the sake of the church; Aristides and *Diognetus* have creation for the sake of humanity (Aristides, *Apol.* 1; *Diogn.* 10.2). In *Thomas* we have hyperbole, though it is hyperbole expressing an extremely exalted status not only in ecclesiastical but probably also in cosmic terms.

Appended Note: The Relation between GTh 12 and 13

It can hardly escape the reader’s notice that in GTh 12, James is commended as the authority, whereas in GTh 13 it is apparently Thomas. A note here is appropriate because the discussion cannot be confined either to the discussion of GTh 12 or 13, and it is relevant to both. Several explanations have been offered for the apparently divided loyalties—if that is what they are—of the *Gospel of Thomas*.

Two explanations are the results of ‘fusions’, one literary and one historical. (1) Quispel’s literary-critical explanation is that *Thomas*’s apparently clumsy editor combined GTh 12 from the *Gospel of the Hebrews* with GTh 13 from the *Gospel of the Egyptians*.²⁸ (2) Pokorný analogously argues that with the combination of sayings 12 and 13 a fusion of the James and Thomas groups is

²⁶ Painter, *Just James*, 254–259.

²⁷ Hartin, *James of Jerusalem*, 136, rightly notes that there is a progression ‘from the more sober presentation in the *Gos. Thom.* to the Gnostic Redeemer of *2 Apoc. Jas.*’ It is true that GTh 12 is more sober than *2 Apoc. Jas.*, but it is hardly sober in its own terms.

²⁸ Quispel, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of the Hebrews’, 380–381.

created, both of which had been criticised by the mainstream church.²⁹ Two other kinds of explanation propose a stronger antithesis between GTh 12 and 13: (3) Trevijano Etcheverría sees in GTh 13 a correction of GTh 12: the movement is now specifically a Thomas-community.³⁰ (4) Uro and others have seen a *relativising* of James: in the fact that the heavens (which came into being for James) will pass away according to the previous saying, GTh 11: 'A careful reader of Jesus' sayings in the gospel is thus able to gather that James' leadership, praised in saying 12, belongs ultimately to the sphere of the temporary and the external.'³¹

Quispel's explanation (1) of *Thomas's* sources has not won other supporters, and there are also difficulties with seeing, as does Pokorný, (2) James and Thomas as both transparently representing communities.³² The 'corrective' view (3) invites the question: why then is GTh 12 retained at all?³³ There are also problems, however, with (4) the ironic interpretation, in that (a) it may be overly-sophisticated for the author/ editor of *Thomas*; (b) there are not really parallels to this kind of device in *Thomas*, and (c) the motif of the creation of heaven and earth for the sake of an individual is hyperbolic and not intended to be taken literally.

Walls is probably correct to point out that, given the directness of Jesus' statement in GTh 12, the status attributed to James is real.³⁴ James and Thomas

29 Pokorný, 53.

30 Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo', 109. Cf. perhaps G.P. Luttikhuisen, 'Witnesses and Mediators of Christ's Gnostic Teachings', in A. Hilhorst, ed. *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 104–114 (112), suggesting that GTh 12–13 'might reflect a shift in the tradition'.

31 Uro, 'Who Will be our Leader?', 464; so also Hedrick, 37; Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 193, adding the point that GTh 99 relativises the family relations of Jesus. Uro also notes that James' sphere is also localised (presumably to Jerusalem), as is evident because people have to move from different places to get to him ('Who Will be our Leader?', 465). Marjanen also sees a relativisation of James, though through the link with GTh 13, not GTh 11 ('Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?', 123). H. Koester, 'Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels', *HTR* 73 (1980), 105–130 (118), sees the contrast between the ecclesiastical authority of James over against the secret authority of Thomas.

32 Uro, 'Who Will be our Leader?', 460.

33 Uro, 'Who Will be our Leader?', 457. Richardson wonders whether the answer might be that GTh 12 is just a 'vestigial remnant' ('Gospel of Thomas', 72).

34 See Walls, 'Apostles in the Gospel of Thomas', 266–267, on the straight answer in GTh 12 about the authority of James: 'That Thomas foresakes his native obliqueness for such a forthright declaration suggests that the pre-eminence of James was of very real importance for him, something that his most jejune and least instructed readers ought not to miss'.

need not be alternatives: they are, perhaps not coincidentally, also both viewed as sources of revelation by the Naassenes (Hippol. *Ref.* 5.7.1 and 5.7.20 respectively). Böhlig and Wisse, noting that the Nag Hammadi literature is not exclusivistic in its use of apostles, write of 'the advanced pluralism ... attested in the Nag Hammadi library. For Peter stands along side of James in ApocryJas, and ApocPaul is found in the same codex as I and II ApocJas.'³⁵ One might also note that in *Thomas's* Codex II, one finds John entrusted with an apocalypse (II, 1), Philip as an evangelist after Thomas (II, 3), then an anonymous work which begins by quoting 'the great apostle' Paul (II, 4), then two more anonymous works, followed by secret words spoken to Thomas but written down by Mathaias (II, 7). This arrangement naturally reflects a time later than *Thomas*, but by analogy it shows that *Thomas* need not be understood in a manner exclusivistically tied to its purported author. One might compare *1 Clement's* championing of Peter and Paul (*1 Clem.* 5.1–5).

35 Böhlig & Wisse, eds. *Nag Hammadi Codices III, 2 and IV, 2*, 16.

Logion 13¹

13.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙC̄ Ν̄ΝΕΦΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ ΧΕ Τ̄ΝΤΩΝΤ̄ Ν̄ΤΕΤ̄Ν̄ΧΟΟΣ ΝΑΕΙ ΧΕ ΕΕΙΝΕ Ν̄ΝΙΜ 13.2 ΠΕΧΑQ ΝΑQ̄ Ν̄ΒΙ ΣΙΜΩΝ ΠΕΤΡΟΣ ΧΕ ΕΚΕΙΝΕ Ν̄ΟΥΑΓ̄ΓΕΛΟΣ Ν̄ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ 13.3 ΠΕΧΑQ ΝΑQ̄ Ν̄ΒΙ ΜΑΘ̄ΘΑΙΟΣ ΧΕ ΕΚΕΙΝΕ Ν̄ΟΥΡΩΜΕ Μ̄ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΟΣ Ν̄Ρ̄Μ̄Ν̄ΗΤ̄ 13.4 ΠΕΧΑQ ΝΑQ̄ Ν̄ΒΙ ΘΩΜΑΣ ΧΕ ΠCΑQ̄ Q̄ΛΩC ΤΑΤΑΠΡΟ ΝΑ(Q̄)Q̄ΑΠQ̄ ΔΝ ΕΤΡΑΧΟΟΣ ΧΕ ΕΚΕΙΝΕ Ν̄ΝΙΜ 13.5 ΠΕΧΕ ΙHC̄ ΧΕ ΔΝΟΚ̄ ΠΕΚ̄CΑQ̄ ΔΝ ΕΠΕΙ ΔΚΩ ΔΚ̄Τ̄Q̄ ΕΒΟΛ Q̄Ν ΤΠΗΓΗ ΕΤΒ̄Ρ̄ΒΡΕ ΤΑΕΙ ΔΝΟΚ̄ Ν̄ΤΑΕΙQ̄ΙΤ̄C̄ 13.6 ΔQ̄Ω ΔQ̄ΧΙΤ̄Q̄ ΔQ̄ΑΝΑΧΩΡΕΙ ΔQ̄Ω ΝΑQ̄ Ν̄Q̄ΟΜΤ̄ Ν̄Q̄ΑΧΕ 13.7 Ν̄ΤΑΡΕ ΘΩΜΑΣ ΔΕ ΕΙ Q̄Α ΝΕQ̄Q̄ΒΕΕP̄ ΔΥΧΝΟQ̄Q̄ ΧΕ Ν̄ΤΑ ΙC̄ ΧΟΟΣ ΧΕ ΟΥ ΝΑΚ̄ 13.8 ΠΕΧΑQ̄ ΝΑQ̄ Ν̄ΒΙ ΘΩΜΑΣ ΧΕ ΕΙQ̄ΔΑΝ̄ΧΩ ΝΗΤ̄Ν̄ ΟQ̄Α Q̄Ν Ν̄Q̄ΑΧΕ Ν̄ΤΑQ̄ΧΟΟQ̄ ΝΑΕΙ ΤΕΤΝΑQ̄Ι ΩΝΕ Ν̄ΤΕΤ̄Ν̄ΟQ̄ΧΕ ΕΡΟΕΙ ΔQ̄Ω Ν̄ΤΕ ΟΥΚΩQ̄Τ̄ ΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ Q̄Ν Ν̄ΩΝΕ Ν̄(Q̄)P̄ΩQ̄Κ̄ Μ̄ΜΩΤ̄Ν̄

13.1 *Jesus said to his disciples, 'Compare me and tell me whom I resemble.'*
13.2 *Simon Peter said to him, 'You are like a righteous angel.'* 13.3 *Matthew said to him, 'You are like a wise philosopher.'* 13.4 *Thomas said to him, 'Master, my mouth is completely unable to say whom you are like.'* 13.5 *Jesus said, 'I am not your master. When you drank, you became drunk with the bubbling spring which I have dug.'* 13.6 *And he took him and withdrew, and spoke three words to him.* 13.7 *When Thomas returned to his companions, they asked him, 'What did Jesus say to you?'* 13.8 *Thomas said to them, 'If I told you one of the words which he spoke to me, you would pick up stones and throw them at me. But fire would come forth from the stones, and burn you.'*

1 **Bibliography for GTh 13:** Walls, 'References to the Apostles in the Gospel of Thomas'; E.W. Saunders, 'A Trio of Thomas Logia', *Biblical Research* 8 (1963), 43–59 (44–48); Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 144–149; S. Arai, "Zu "Drei Worte" Jesu im Logion 13 des *EvTh*", *AJBI* 18 (1992), 62–66; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo', 108–112; W. Clarysse, 'Gospel of Thomas Logion 13: "The Bubbling Well Which I Myself Dug"', in A. Schoors & P. van Deun, eds. *Philohistor: Miscellanea in honorem Caroli Laga septuagintarii* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 60; Leuven: Peeters, 1994), 1–9; M. Frenschkowski, 'The Enigma of the Three Words of Jesus in Gospel of Thomas Logion 13', *Journal of Higher Criticism* 1 (1994), 73–84; A.D. DeConick, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 105–115; I. Dunderberg, 'Thomas and the Beloved Disciple', in R. Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 65–88; Uro, 'Who Will Be Our Leader?', 457–485; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 84–90; Perrin, *Thomas, the Other Gospel*, 107–124; S. Witetschek, 'Quellen lebendigen Wassers. Zur Frage nach einem "johanneischen" Motiv in *EvThom* 13', *ZNW* 103 (2012), 254–271.

Interpretation

The discussion in GTh 12 of apostle-figures continues here, with a catchword link (ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ). Both the request from Jesus and the multiple responses recall the canonical Caesarea Philippi episode (Mk 8.27–33/ Matt. 16.13–23/ Lk. 9.18–22), as is evident from their similar structure:²

	Synoptics	<i>Thomas</i>
<i>Jesus' question:</i>	Who do people say I am?	Compare me ...
<i>Wrong answers:</i>	John Elijah (Matt: + or Jeremiah) a prophet	righteous <i>angelos</i> wise philosopher (master)
<i>Right answer:</i>	The Christ [Private conversation]	Ineffable
<i>Partial rebuke of respondent:</i>	the Son of Man is to suffer	I am not 'master' [Private conversation]

In *Thomas*, Peter's view and Matthew's opinion are clearly painted as wrong answers by the author. Scholars generally take the view here that the disciple Thomas's view of Jesus' ineffable nature is the correct one, expressed in the words: 'my mouth is completely unable to say whom you are like.'³ This may well be right, but there is no actual endorsement of Thomas's inability to express who Jesus is. Rather, the important thing in the narrative here seems to be that Jesus reveals the truth to Thomas, and that this is the same mysterious truth which is on offer in Thomas's Gospel.⁴

There is almost certainly a polemic, probably aimed at a wider church group for whom Peter was a foundational figure, and Matthew's Gospel an/ the

2 *Thomas's* version is almost certainly dependent upon Matthew here (Uro, *Thomas*, 88–89; Gathercole, *Composition*, 169–177).

3 See e.g. A. Gagné, 'Sectarianism, Secrecy and Self Definition: Relational Features between Jesus, the Disciples and the Outsiders', in T. Holmén, ed. *Jesus in Continuum* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 223–242 (234).

4 It is unnecessary to see GTh 13 as a response to deaths of eyewitnesses and an attempt 'to secure the testimony of the community's apostolic hero'; thus DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 86.

authoritative portrait of Jesus.⁵ As Glenn Most has put it: ‘By acknowledging his ignorance, Thomas demonstrates that he has attained a higher level of understanding than either Simon Peter or Matthew (and thereby calls implicitly into question both the authority of the church that traces its legitimacy to the former and that of the synoptic Gospel attributed to the latter)’.⁶

This saying is also evidence against the view that *Thomas* is best regarded as advanced, esoteric teaching which builds upon more basic knowledge contained in other Gospels. The stance of *Thomas* here is more separatist.⁷

Notes

13.1 Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Compare me and tell me whom I resemble.’ Perhaps notably, Jesus does not ask his disciples, ‘Who *am* I?’ Jesus’ inquiry into his *likeness* may be significant in the light of his ineffable identity touched upon later in the saying. (On the other hand, contrary to some more apophatic interpretations of *Thomas*, there are positive ‘christological’ assertions in the Gospel, as e.g. in GTh 77.⁸) Also notable here is the fact that, in contrast to the Synoptics where there are two questions (‘who do people say that I am?’, about the crowds, and ‘who do you say I am?’, addressed directly to the disciples), *Thomas* has only one question. The single address to the disciples functions to distinguish between Thomas on the one hand from the misguided remainder of the disciples on the other.

13.2 Simon Peter said to him, ‘You are like a righteous angel.’⁹ Peter, like Matthew after him, is presumably set up here to give an inadequate answer,

5 C. Gianotto, ‘Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive dans l’Évangile selon Thomas’, in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: “L’Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi?” Québec, 29–31 mai 2003* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 157–173 (169); Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo’, 112.

6 Most, *Doubting Thomas*, 93; similarly, Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 230.

7 So, rightly, N. Perrin, *Thomas: The Other Gospel* (London: SPCK, 2007), 119, in contrast to e.g. Pagels, *Beyond Belief*, 39–40.

8 Cf. e.g. Davies: ‘Jesus is not himself an essential element in salvation, and so, in *Thomas*, Christology per se is actively discouraged’. S.L. Davies, ‘The Christology and Protology of the Gospel of Thomas’, *JBL* 111 (1992), 663–683 (664).

9 W.A. Girgis, ‘Greek Loan Words in Coptic (I)’, *Bulletin de la Société d’Archéologie Copte* 17 (1964), 63–73 (68), notes that ἀγγελος does not tend to have the same ambiguity in Coptic that it has in Greek, but rather means ‘angel’ (*contra* Nordsieck, 69; Plisch, 64; Pokorný, 53–54). This would not preclude the sense of ‘messenger’ in the Greek *Vorlage*, however, if Greek ἄγγελος stands behind the Coptic. For ‘messenger’, see H.-G. Bethge, ‘“Werdet

namely that Jesus is a subordinate envoy who belongs to the creaturely realm.¹⁰ Being 'righteous', or 'just', is presumably positive, although this can be taken in a neutral (*Ep. Ptol. Fl.*) or even negative manner (so 1 *Apoc. Jas.* CT 18,16–25). 'Righteous', or 'just' (δικαιος) also appears in GTh 12.2 so the word may provide an intentional catchword connection.

The mention of Peter here could be a cipher for a specific document, either the Gospel of Mark (associated with Peter by Papias) or the *Gospel of Peter*.¹¹ Peter, however, is probably better known at the time of *Thomas's* composition as a leader-figure or representative of the disciples, rather than as the embodiment of a written tradition (cf. also GTh 114).¹² Jesus' statement about Peter's foundational status in Matthew's Gospel appears precisely in the parallel passage to GTh 13. As such, placing a foolish confession in Peter's mouth undercuts the canonical version of the dialogue, as well as his privileged status.¹³

13.3 Matthew said to him, 'You are like a wise philosopher.' Again, presumably Matthew is portrayed as giving a confession far too demeaning. Sell has argued that the three descriptions in 13.2–4 represent 'ascending orders of insight', in which case 'wise philosopher' would be closer to the truth than 'righteous angel', but this is not clear.¹⁴ As with the reference to Peter, some have wondered whether the inclusion of Matthew refers to a written Gospel.¹⁵ In

vorübergehende": zur Neubearbeitung des Thomasevangeliums für die Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum", in B. Aland, ed. *Bericht der Hermann Kunst-Stiftung zur Förderung der neutestamentlichen Textforschung für die Jahre 1995 bis 1998* (Münster: Hermann Kunst-Stiftung, 1998), 42–52 (46). We must in the end confess ignorance as to which translation is preferable.

- 10 This is unlikely to be a polemic against an Antiochene angel christology (*pace* Quispel, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Gospel of the Hebrews', 380).
- 11 For the former, see Perrin, *Thomas: The Other Gospel*, 111, and suggested as a possibility in Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 230 n. 45. On the latter, see Koester, 'Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels', 118–119.
- 12 For further criticism of Koester, on both Peter and Matthew, see Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo', 110.
- 13 Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo', 109.
- 14 J. Sell, 'Johannine Traditions in Logion 61 of the Gospel of Thomas', *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 7 (1980), 24–37 (26).
- 15 The connection with Matthew's Gospel is made tentatively in Pagels, *Beyond Belief*, 47, and more forcefully in R.J. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006), 236–237. Koester argues that there is a reference here to Q, but this must remain at the level of speculation (again, see Koester, 'Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels', 118–119; cf. *idem*, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 166–167).

this instance the case is more likely because Matthew is not known in earliest Christianity as much more than an evangelist.¹⁶ In the NT he is merely one of the disciples with no special role, and his only additional significance in the corpus of the 'Apostolic Fathers' is in Papias's reference to him as an author (*apud* Eusebius, *HE* 3.38). It is possible that Matthew's focus on Jesus as teacher is a trigger for the reference to Jesus as philosopher.¹⁷

13.4 Thomas said to him, 'Master, my mouth is completely unable to say whom you are like.'¹⁸ We will see from Jesus' response (in 13.5) that the title 'master' or 'teacher' is not deemed appropriate, but the ineffability of Jesus' identity seems to be the point on which Thomas is correct. Jesus is apparently not definable by existing roles within the creaturely realm, and he elsewhere gives rather oblique answers to questions of who he is (e.g. GTh 91). We can *probably* assume that Thomas is correct on the point of Jesus' ineffability,¹⁹ but it is worth remembering that this viewpoint is not clearly endorsed.²⁰ The word 'mouth' links GTh 13.4 to GTh 14.

13.5 Jesus said, 'I am not your master.' Jesus' rejection of the title 'teacher' or 'master' (καρ) might be influenced by either John 15.15, according to which the disciples are no longer servants but friends, or by 1John 2.27 ('you no longer need anyone to teach you'), but neither is very obviously referred to here.²¹ There is a sense of parity between Jesus and Thomas (cf. GTh 108), although this should not obscure other more transcendent images of Jesus (see *ad* GTh 23), and the fact that Thomas still needs further enlightenment from Jesus in the 'three words' in 13.6. On the alleged 'twin' theology, see further the comment on GTh 108.

It is not clear why Gianotto sees a reference to the Synoptics more broadly ('Quelques aspects de la polémique', 169).

16 For the case, see further Gathercole, *Composition*, 169–174.

17 So Pagels, *Beyond Belief*, 47. Compare also the reference to Jesus as philosopher in the *Letter of Mara bar Serapion*, and the designation as sophist in Lucian, *Peregrinus* 11.

18 There is an interesting parallel to the language here in the description of Eleuth in the *Hypostasis of the Archons*: 'For my mouth will not be able to receive (it) in order to speak of his power and the appearance of his face (ταταπρο γαρ ναωωοπιε αν ετραχω ητεφουσι μη πενε ηπεερο)' (*Hyp. Arch.* 93.16–17).

19 So Grant & Freedman, 132.

20 Pokorný, 55, is probably correct here that there is a strong suggestion that *Thomas* does not endorse the title 'Christ'.

21 There are plenty of parallels to the device of a teacher disavowing the status of teacher to identify with his pupils: even an Ignatius can say προσλαλώ ὑμῖν ὡς συνδιδασκαλίταις μου (*Eph.* 3.1), and the author of *Barnabas* introduces himself, ἐγὼ δέ, οὐχ ὡς διδάσκαλος ἀλλ' ὡς εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν (*Barn.* 1.8; cf. 4.9).

13.5 When you drank, you became drunk with the bubbling spring which I have dug.²² The question here is whether this is a commendation or a rebuke of Thomas. Most commentators take it to be a reference to the *sobria ebrietas* of mystical understanding,²³ but it is notable that this statement by Jesus follows on from the *correction* of Thomas's view. Thomas has perhaps gone too far. The saying goes on to make it clear that Thomas certainly is not yet as advanced as he could or ought to be, even though he has drunk from the spring.²⁴ The reference to drunkenness suggests ignorance or at least a degree of misguidedness here, as in GTh 28 (cf. *Thom. Cont.* 139,37; *Ap. Jas.* 3,9). There is a parallel in *Zostrianus* which is perhaps appropriate here: 'If he apprehends the glories, he is perfect; but if he apprehends [two] or one, he is drunk' (*Zost.* 73,12–15). This is similar to the situation of Thomas. He has enough knowledge to get over-excited, but is not complete. Hence the need now in 13.6 for further revelation.

13.6 And he took him and withdrew, and spoke three words to him. This recalls the Prologue, with its reference to private revelation to Thomas, which is the basis for Thomas's distinction from the other disciples (cf. Mary in *Gos. Mary*, Judas in *Gos. Jud.*, etc.). What the three words are is unknown, though various suggestions have been made. (a) Grant & Freedman, and Ménard, propose 'Kaulakau, Saulasau, Zesar', the three explosive words according to the Naassenes (Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.8.4; cf. Isa. 28.10, 13);²⁵ (b) Puech proposed 'Father, Son, Spirit' in common with the similar motif in the Coptic fragment

22 Clarysse argues that the verb $\bar{\eta}\tau\alpha\epsilon\upsilon\tau\tau\epsilon$ should be taken as coming from the root $\upsilon\tau\tau\epsilon$ or $\upsilon\tau\kappa\epsilon$ meaning 'to dig', yielding a more natural sense than a reference to a measurement of the spring (so e.g. Lambdin). See Clarysse, 'Gospel of Thomas Logion 13', 3–7; Crum, 555b (*sub* $\upsilon\tau\kappa\epsilon$), gives $\upsilon\tau\tau\epsilon$ as an *A* form; see also Crum, 595a, for examples of $\upsilon\tau\kappa\epsilon$ with cistern/ well as an object. It remains possible, on the other hand, that Jesus is referring to Thomas having drunk beyond what Jesus 'measured out' for him. See also discussion in Witetschek, 'Quellen lebendigen Wassers', 254–259.

23 Valantasis, 76; Pokorný, 55; Hedrick, 39. They cite passages which can present drunkenness positively, such as Eph. 5.18, and *Odes Sol.* 11.7–8 ('And I drank and was intoxicated by the living, immortal, waters. And my intoxication was not without knowledge, but I abandoned vanities'; tr. Emerton), as well the Philonic passages about the *sobria ebrietas* motif.

24 On the spring as a source of life, see *Disc.* 8–9 58,13–14, where the language ($\pi\eta\gamma\eta\ \epsilon\sigma\upsilon\tau\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\ \bar{\eta}\tau\tau\alpha\iota\ \epsilon\bar{\eta}\ \sigma\upsilon\omega\mu\epsilon\bar{\nu}\epsilon$) is very similar to that of *Thomas*. The water imagery does not betray any clear relationship to John's gospel, *pace* E.W. Saunders, 'A Trio of Thomas Logia', 44–48.

25 Grant & Freedman, 134; Menard, 99; cf. Irenaeus, *AH* 1.24, where the Basilideans are said to have thought that Jesus descended and ascended in the name of Kaulakau.

of the *Gospel of Bartholomew*, but the connection is tenuous.²⁶ (c) Cullmann suggested, rather arbitrarily though only as a possibility, ‘Way, Truth, Life’, which in the absence of other strongly Johannine language is improbable.²⁷ (d) Frenschkowski and Nordsieck suggest a three-word phrase expressive of the identity between Jesus and Thomas, such as ἐγὼ σὺ εἶμι.²⁸ Gunther also thinks the three words have to do with Thomas and his special status.²⁹ (e) Arai suggests ἐγὼ ἴσος πατρί or something like it.³⁰ (f) Trevijano Etcheverría suggests that, in common with other Nag Hammadi texts, the words are speculations on the ineffable name of Jesus,³¹ and DeConick insists that the words must be *’hyh ašr ’hyh*;³² (g) Hedrick floats the possibility of the three elements which the ascending soul needs to declare in GTh 50;³³ (h) Nordsieck mentions the option of ‘Yao, Yao, Yao’, as declared by Jesus in *Pistis Sophia* 136.³⁴ (i) Plisch is probably correct, however, that the three words are not identified here in the text, and that their secrecy is deliberate.³⁵ Their function here is to ensure that Thomas is, in contrast to his previous inebriation and to the other disciples, now fully initiated.

13.7–8 When Thomas returned to his companions, they asked him, ‘What did Jesus say to you?’ Thomas said to them, ‘If I tell you one of the words which he spoke to me, you would pick up stones and throw them at me.’ At the literary level here, the other disciples would receive Thomas’s revelation as blasphemy (cf. stoning for blasphemy in Lev. 24.14–16; Jn 10.33; Ac. 6.11 and 7.57–58). The revelation is thus kept secret because the disciples would be self-condemned by their response (and, presumably, because of Thomas’s reluctance to be stoned). A ‘mirror-reading’ of this incident is possible (as long as the usual cautions are borne in mind), according to which *Thomas* is anathema to the ecclesiastical establishment represented by the disciples,

26 Puech, ‘Collection de Paroles de Jésus récemment retrouvée’, 156. See E.A.W. Budge, *Coptic Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (London: British Museum, 1913), 214.

27 O. Cullmann, ‘Das Thomasevangelium und die Frage nach dem Alter der in ihm enthaltenen Tradition’, *TLZ* 85 (1960), 320–334 (327).

28 Frenschkowski, ‘The Enigma of the Three Words’, 82; Nordsieck, 70.

29 Gunther, ‘Judas Thomas’, 114.

30 Arai, ‘Zu “Drei Worte” Jesu’, 64–66.

31 Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘Santiago el Justo y Tomás el Mellizo’, 111. For a survey of older views, see Walls, ‘References to Apostles’, 267–268.

32 DeConick, 85.

33 Hedrick, 40.

34 Nordsieck, 71.

35 Plisch, 65. Nor are they identified in *Ac. Thom.* 47, which mentions this incident.

and so for that reason, it is possible that the *Thomas* community does not actively—or at least indiscriminately—share its knowledge (cf. not giving to dogs what is holy or pearls to swine in GTh 93?).

13.8 But fire would come forth from the stones, and burn³⁶ you. The fire may be related to the same in GTh 10 (cf. also Lk. 9.54).³⁷ A parallel to fire coming from stones appears in Jdg. 6.21. Again here, perhaps, the theme is apparent of the service of the cosmos to the true disciple who rules over it.

36 Curiously, the ms. has for 'burn' $\bar{\eta}\rho\omega\epsilon\kappa$, with a feminine prefix, while the noun for fire ($\kappa\omega\epsilon\tau$) is masculine. Compare, however, the scribal error $\omega\alpha\sigma\pi\epsilon\omega\epsilon$ for $\omega\alpha\lambda\pi\epsilon\omega\epsilon$ in *Gos. Truth* I 25,32. See further Gathercole, *Composition*, 52–53 (and Part I there more widely) for arguments against the view of Guillaumont ('Les semitismes dans l'Évangile selon Thomas', 196) and DeConick, 15, 84, that the mismatch of gender is a hang-over from an Aramaic or Syriac original, in which fire ($\text{št}'$, or *mvr'*) is feminine. Such a view requires the difficulty of assuming a translation direct from Aramaic into Coptic. Additionally, there are Greek words for fire which are feminine (e.g. $\pi\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\nu\eta$, $\phi\lambda\acute{\omicron}\xi$), and the theory is also rendered difficult by the abundance of Greek loan-words (nine in total) in GTh 13 as a whole.

37 So Grant & Freedman, 133.

Logion 14¹

14.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙϚ ΝΑΥ ΧΕ ΕΤΕΤῆΩΑΝῆΡΗΝΗΣΤΕΥΕ ΤΕΤΝΑΧΠΟ ΝΗΤῆ ἸΝΟΟΥΝΟΒΕ 14.2 ΑΥΩ ΕΤΕΤῆΩΑ(Η)ΩΛΗΛ` ΣΕΝΑΡΚΑΤΑΚΡΙΝΕ ἸΜΩΤῆ 14.3 ΑΥΩ ΕΤΕΤῆΩΑΝ† ΕΛΕΗΜΟΣΥΝΗ ΕΤΕΤΝΑΕΙΡΕ ἸΟΥΚΑΚΟΝ ἸΝΕΤῆΠῆΝΑ 14.4 ΑΥΩ ΕΤΕΤῆΩΑΝΒΩΚ` ΕΞΟΥΝ ΕΚΑΖ ΝΙΜ ΑΥΩ ἸΤΕΤῆΜΟΟΨΕ Ζῆ ἸΧΩΡΑ ΕΥΩΑΡῆΠΑΡΑΔΕΧΕ ἸΜΩΤῆ ΠΕΤΟΥΝΑΚΑΑΨ ΖΑΡΩΤῆ ΟΥΟΜῆ ΝΕΤΩΩΝΕ ἸΖΗΤΟΥ ΕΡΙΘΕΡΑΠΕΥΕ ἸΜΟΟΥ 14.5 ΠΕΤΝΑΒΩΚ ΓΑΡ` ΕΞΟΥΝ Ζῆ ΤΕΤῆΤΑΠΡΟ ΦΝΑΧΩΖῆ ΤΗΥΤῆ ΔΗ` ΑΛΛΑ ΠΕΤῆΝΗΥ ΕΒΟΛ` Ζῆ ΤΕΤῆΤΑΠΡΟ ἸΤΟΥ ΠΕΤΝΑΧΑΖῆ ΤΗΥΤῆ

14.1 *Jesus said to them, 'If you fast, you will give birth to sin in yourselves. 14.2 And if you pray, you will be condemned. 14.3 And if you give alms, you will do ill to your spirits. 14.4 And if you go into any region and you travel in the districts—if you are received, eat what is set before you. Those who are sick among them, heal. 14.5 For whatever goes into your mouth will not defile you. Rather, whatever comes out of your mouth—that is what defiles you.'*

Interpretation

This saying harks back to GTh 6, where the questions are posed to which GTh 14 provides the answers.² The unifying theme of this short discourse is

- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 14:** Giversen, 'Questions and Answers in the Gospel according to Thomas'; Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 52–57; E. Segelberg, 'Prayer among the Gnostics? The Evidence of Some Nag Hammadi Documents', in M. Krause, ed. *Gnosis and Gnosticism: Papers Read at the Seventh International Conference on Patristic Studies* (NHS 7; Leiden: Brill, 1977), 65–79; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Las prácticas de piedad en el Evangelio de Tomás', 295–319; Sellew, 'Pious Practice and Social Formation'; G. Iacopino, 'Mt 15,11 e Lc 11,39–40 nel *Vangelo di Tommaso*', *ASE* 13/1 (1996), 85–93; Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 492–502; J. Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte: Studien zur Rezeption der Logienüberlieferung in Markus, Q und Thomas* (WMANT 76; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1997), 232–236; R. Uro, 'Thomas and Oral Gospel Tradition', in idem, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 8–32 (22–32); A. Marjanen, 'Thomas and Jewish Religious Practices', in Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads*, 163–182; Gianotto, 'Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive', 157–173.
- ² This has led Giversen to suppose that there has been some textual transposition leading to the separation of from GTh 6 from 14.1–3, and he may well be correct. See further the various explanations for the separation of questions and answers in Marjanen, 'Thomas and Jewish Religious Practices', 167–170, and DeConick, 87. In the end, we do not know.

negativity towards the disciplines of Jewish piety. 14.1–3 treat the trio of fasting, prayer and almsgiving, a traditional combination (cf. e.g. *Tob.* 12.8; *Matt.* 6.1–18; *2 Clem.* 16.4), following which is a criticism of the dietary laws. Rationales are provided in each case, though the first three justifications do not appear obviously specific to them; the final case is more easily understandable. Some have suggested further over-arching rationales, such as (a) the disjunction of ‘religiously settled pious practices as against the itinerancy envisioned by these seekers’;³ similarly, Gianotto states that this traditional piety is in conflict with *Thomas’s* own different asceticism.⁴ Also possible is (b) a kind of “Protestant” view that rituals or institutions have the potential to damage inward spirituality.⁵ Plisch’s view (c) is similar, except that it attributes the criticism to a specific source, namely Matthew 6.⁶ (Other literary explanations might note the prioritising in *2 Clem.* 16.4, or the Pauline idea that placing oneself under the works of the Law can bring a curse in *Gal.* 3.10.) For Davies, (d) prayer and the repentance implied in fasting are misguided because Thomasine disciples ‘exist in a mythical time before sin came into being’.⁷ Relatedly, (e) the presence of the kingdom may render useless those practices which express a desire for what has already come.⁸ If there is an overarching rationale, this last is perhaps nearest the mark. Fasting, prayer and almsgiving aim in some sense to ‘spread’ or ‘bring in’ the kingdom, and so imply that it is not yet fully in existence: similar implicit denials are also found in *Thomas*, and receive harsh criticism (GTh 51; 113).

This saying is almost without parallel in the intensity of its criticism of traditional Jewish practices.⁹ As Gianotto has put it, *Thomas* is ‘totalement négative’ towards prayer, alms and fasting because they are not merely useless but harmful.¹⁰ (In this respect, GTh 14 is different from GTh 6, where this is

3 Valantasis, 79.

4 Gianotto, ‘Quelques aspects de la polémique’, 163.

5 Hedrick, 41; cf. also Pokorný, 57.

6 Plisch, 67.

7 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 16.

8 Grant & Freedman, 134–135, observe that fasting is pointless because the kingdom is present; similarly, for Loader, ‘immediacy renders prayer unnecessary’ (*Jesus’ Attitude Towards the Law*, 494).

9 *Thomas’s* view is stronger than that in *Didache* 8, where it is traditional ways of praying, or prayer on a particular day, that are condemned. Or again, Ignatius talks of those who have abandoned the Eucharist and prayer (*Smyrn.* 6.2/ 7.1), the latter presumably in the sense of ‘prayer in episcopally sanctioned assemblies’.

10 Gianotto, ‘Quelques aspects de la polémique’, 161–162; cf. Marjanen, ‘*Thomas* and Jewish Religious Practices’, 170.

not stated.) Marjanen provides a helpful spectrum of second-century views of Jewish practices, from observance, to modification of detail, to complete reconceptualisation, to rejection (as well as silence).¹¹ On the spectrum of second-century views of such things, this lies at the extreme negative end, with Prodicus who rejected prayer (*Strom.* 7.7.41), and probably the attitude to prayer in the *Gospel of Philip*.¹² Even next to these, however, *Thomas* goes further in describing such practices as *harmful*.

In GTh 14.4–5, the scene appears to shift to the mission of the *Thomas* movement. Apart from the reference to healing the sick, however, Jesus is still (implicitly) answering the questions of GTh 6: now the last question (Co: ‘What diet shall we observe?’) is addressed.

Notes

14.1 If you fast, you will give birth to sin in yourselves. Fasting is never quite valued positively in *Thomas*, though nowhere else is it so negative. In GTh 6, along with prayer and almsgiving, fasting is relativised. In GTh 104 Jesus rejects the disciples’ suggestion of fasting (and prayer), while perhaps allowing for it in some sense ‘when the bridegroom leaves the bridal chamber’. The sayings about ‘fasting to the world’ (GTh 27) and social fasting (GTh 69) are rather more positive, though the former is probably not a literal kind of fasting but a spiritualised version, and the latter is not called fasting: it is not fasting in the traditional sense, accompanying prayer or mourning, for example. This comports exactly with the way in which fasting is treated in the *Shepherd of Hermas*: in one place, fasting along traditional lines is forbidden (*Herm.* 54 [*Sim.* 5.1]), and *Herm.* 56 (*Sim.* 5.3) explicitly reinterprets fasting in the direction of social fasting. *Thomas*’s consequence of ‘giving birth to sin’ can be compared with the view that pregnant Desire ‘gives birth to sin’, with the ultimate consequence of death, in James 1.15. There is an ironic reversal of the norm: rather than accompanying repentance from sin, in *Thomas* fasting actually leads to sin.

11 Marjanen, ‘*Thomas* and Jewish Religious Practices’, 165.

12 Thus Segelberg sees the claim of Clement about Prodicus supported by *Thomas* and the *Gospel of Philip* (‘Prayer among the Gnostics?’, 68).

14.2 And if you pray, you will be condemned. This is a similarly stark, and remarkable, statement. The mentions of prayer in *Thomas* are more mixed than is the case with fasting, however: in addition to the relativising in GTh 6 and ambiguity of 104, GTh 73 is quite different: ‘Ask the lord to send workers out into the harvest’ (cf. Matt. 9.38/ Lk. 10.2).¹³ It seems likely, however, that GTh 14.2 marks a departure from this traditional stance. Loader notes the possibility that it is only particular forms of prayer which are rejected, but *Thomas* appears to be saying something stronger than this.¹⁴ There are parallels to such a negative view, as in Prodicus and the *Gospel of Philip*; the latter radically redefines prayer, by saying that it is not something appropriate in this world, but belongs instead—presumably in a completely reconceptualised form—to ‘the other aeon.’¹⁵ It may well be that *Thomas* shares a similar view. This will be explored further later under GTh 104 (and see Introduction, §10.3, above), but at the moment it is sufficient to note the uncompromising stand against prayer in anything like its traditional form. The content of the condemnation is unclear, however.

14.3 And if you give alms, you will do ill to your spirits. Almsgiving terminology per se does not appear again after GTh 6 and 14. The idea is present, however, in much more positive terms in GTh 69.2 (‘Blessed are those who hunger so that they may fill the belly of the one who desires’) and GTh 95 (‘If you have money, do not lend it at interest; rather, give it to one from whom you will not receive it back’). The change of vocabulary here might again result from a rejection of almsgiving in a traditional sense of giving to anyone who is needy, and a reconceptualisation of it as serving the needs specifically of those in the *Thomas* movement.

14.4 If you go into any region and you travel in the districts. The scene seems to shift at 14.4 to the mission of the *Thomas* movement. Apart from the reference to healing the sick, however, Jesus is still (implicitly) answering the questions of GTh 6: now the last question (‘What diet shall we observe?’) is addressed.

This saying has proven difficult for interpreters in that, maximally, it may imply a whole conception of missionary itinerancy (cf. GTh 73; perhaps 31 and 33, though not 50 and probably not 42).¹⁶ At the other extreme, Uro has commented that it might mean little more than mobility, and ‘mobility does

13 This saying is also atypical in its use of the title ‘lord’.

14 Loader, *Jesus’ Attitude to the Law*, 501. Loader himself rejects this view (494).

15 *Gos. Phil.* 52,25–35.

16 See e.g. Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas*, 158–170 (and *passim*).

not necessarily mean itinerancy.¹⁷ It is very difficult to be definite about a background of *Wanderradikalismus* here, but there is certainly a missionary outlook of some kind.

Scholars have also discussed the implications of the terms καθ and χωρα, which are vague and therefore difficult to translate: ἄχωρα, however, probably implies rural areas (cf. the πόλις in Lk. 10.8):¹⁸ *1 Clement* 42.4 seems to contrast χώρα and πόλις. But this does not necessarily point to a rural provenance, because the regions and districts are the implied *destinations* of the audience. One might even conclude from this fact that *Thomas* reflects an urban setting, but this would also be to push the evidence too far.

14.4 If you are received, eat what is set before you. This command (cf. Lk. 10.8; 1 Cor. 10.27) already anticipates the stance towards clean/unclean foods about to be mentioned in 14.5. It seems implicitly to contradict a notion of vegetarianism in *Thomas*.

14.4 Those who are sick among them, heal. This does not belong here in the treatment of the questions from GTh 6, but is linked with the missionary material earlier in 14.4: the connection appears also in Matthew 10.8–10 and Luke 10.7–9. Luke and *Thomas* are rather closer to one another than they are to Matthew. As far as the meaning of ‘healing’ is concerned, it is unclear whether for *Thomas* cure of bodies or of souls is envisaged. A both/and is unlikely, at least in this particular saying. Grant & Freedman, and Popkes, think that the healing motif here is exceptional, and an insignificant relic resulting from Lukan influence.¹⁹ Probably more likely is that this statement would be interpreted by readers in spiritual terms.

14.5 For whatever goes into your mouth will not defile you. Rather, whatever comes out of your mouth—that is what defiles you. Cf. Mk 7.15/ Matt. 15.11 (and Mk 7.18, 20/ Matt. 15.17–18);²⁰ the word ‘mouth’ also connects GTh 13–14. Defilement is not mentioned elsewhere in *Thomas*, and the question of the uncleanness of foods does not feature again outside of GTh 6 and 14 (cf. 89). The clear sense here is that any traditional scruples that food might defile are dismissed. In contrast, speech is prioritised. This is the same sequence as one finds in GTh 6, where the question of diet is ignored by Jesus, who exhorts the reader

17 R. Uro, ‘The Social World of the *Gospel of Thomas*’, in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 19–38 (26).

18 Nordsieck, 77, comments on the contrast with Luke.

19 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 41; cf. Grant & Freedman, 135.

20 *Thomas* is probably dependent upon Matthew here. See Gathercole, *Composition*, 178–179.

instead not to lie, and to observe the negative form of the golden rule. A few other places give attention to the character of speech which is enjoined upon the elect disciples. In addition to the instruction to 'preach from the rooftops' (GTh 33), GTh 45.2 probably implies that the good person bringing forth good fruit from his store house is a reference to speech, given that when the evil person does the opposite, he 'speaks evil things' (45.3). The corrupting effect of evil speech is a widely recognised phenomenon (cf. e.g. Jas 3.5-8).

Logion 15¹

ΠΕΔΕ ΤΟ ΧΕ ΡΟΤΑΝ ΕΤΕΤΝΩΔΑΝΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΤΕ ἩΠΟΥΧΠΟϚ ἘΒΟΛ ΖἸ ΤΣΖΙΜΕ ΠΕΖΤ᾽
ΤΗΥΤἸ ΕΔἸ ΠΕΤἸΖΟ ἸΤΕΤἸΟΥΩΥΤ ΝΑϚ ΠΕΤἸΜΑΥ ΠΕ ΠΕΤἸΕΩΤ᾽

Jesus said, 'When you see the one not born of woman, prostrate yourselves on your faces and worship him. That one is your Father.'

Interpretation

This saying is the first clear instance of the theme of visionary experience in *Thomas*.² As DeConick has argued on the basis of GTh 59 ('look at the living one while you are alive, lest you die and you seek to see him, but are not able to see'), this is not confined to postmortem experience. Elsewhere, preparation for the vision involves a metaphorical 'Sabbath' observance, looking at the living one, and stripping, which suggest a rigorous discipline as a prerequisite. (See further below on GTh 27, 37 and 59 *ad locc.*) This saying is concerned, by contrast, with the 'etiquette' prescribed when one *has* seen a vision of the Father.³

Notes

When you see the one not born of woman. The phrase 'one born of woman' is a standard idiom for a human being (Job 14.1; 15.14; 25.4; Matt. 11.11/ Lk. 7.28/ GTh 46), perhaps especially a human *qua* mortal.⁴ Having been born of a woman may, in *Thomas's* view, be a contributory factor to the poverty of humanity if GTh 101.3 assigns a negative quality to human maternity (see *ad loc.* below).

1 **Bibliography for GTh 15:** DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 99–100.

2 Elsewhere, blindness or lack of sight is lamented (GTh 28.3; 113.4).

3 DeConick, 92; cf. eadem, *Voices of the Mystics: Early Christian Discourse in the Gospels of John and Thomas and Other Ancient Christian Literature* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 89; Grosso, 141.

4 See the various passages in Plisch, 68–69. Less likely, since sin is not a prominent theme in *Thomas*, is the human *qua* sinner (Grant & Freedman, 135); Nordsieck, 81 and Hedrick, 44, suggest human frailty.

Hedrick and Grosso relate this saying to the anti-female content of GTh 114.⁵ The 'Father' in this saying, by contrast, is clearly positively valued.

Prostrate yourselves on your faces and worship him. In contrast to requirements before vision, the focus here is on the glories of that experience, which are to be expressed in worship. The language of worship here is strikingly traditional,⁶ but Valantasis notes that the prostration may be metaphorical.⁷ There is no mysticism in the sense of a blurring of the identities of visionary and Father. The 'worship' language reinforces the distinction rather than removing it. Hedrick's statement that this statement excludes the worship of Jesus goes beyond what is written.⁸

That one is your Father. On the Father in *Thomas*, see above on 3.4. The theme of the Father as one unborn is common in the Nag Hammadi literature.⁹ 'The Father' is also the object of vision in GTh 27.2 ('Unless you observe the Sabbath, you will not see the Father') and GTh 59 (looking at, $\sigma\omega\alpha\tau\ \bar{\nu}\alpha$, and seeing, 'the living one'). There is variation, however: in GTh 37, the vision is of Jesus; GTh 84 talks of the elect seeing their pre-existent images. The word 'father' may link GTh 15 to GTh 16.

5 Hedrick, 44; Grosso, 141.

6 Cf. human beings falling on their faces before God or the angel of the Lord in Gen. 17.3; Lev. 9.24; Num. 14.5; 16.4, 22, 45; 22.31; Josh. 5.14; 7.6; 1 Chr. 21.16; 2 Chr. 20.18; Ezek. 1.28; 3.23; 9.8; 11.13; 43.3; 44.4; Matt. 17.6; 26.39; Lk. 5.12. Cf. 2 Sam. 14.4, 22 (before human kings).

7 Valantasis, 82.

8 Hedrick, 44.

9 See e.g. *Tri. Trac.* I 51,27–30, and further references in H.W. Attridge & E. Pagels, *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex): Notes* (NHS 23; Leiden: Brill, 1985), 222.

Logion 16¹

16.1 πεχε τ̄ δε ταχα εγμεεγε ν̄βι ρ̄ρωμε δε ν̄ταειει ενογχε ν̄ογειρηνη
εχ̄ν̄ πκοσμος 16.2 αγω σεσοογν αν δε ν̄ταειει ανογχε ν̄εγ̄ν̄πωρξ̄` εχ̄ν̄ πκαρ
ογκωστ ογσχε` ογπολεμος 16.3 ογ̄ν̄ †ογ γαρ ναωω[πε] ε̄ν̄ ογνει ογ̄ν̄ ωομτ
ναωωπε εχ̄ν̄ σναγ αγω σναγ εχ̄ν̄ ωομτ` πειωτ` εχ̄ν̄ πωηρε αγω πωηρε εχ̄ν̄
πειωτ` 16.4 αγω σεναωρε ερατογ εγο μ̄μοναχοσ

16.1 *Jesus said, 'Perhaps people think that I have come to bring peace upon the world. 16.2 They do not know that I have come to bring divisions on the earth—fire, sword, war. 16.3 For there will b[e] five in a house, and three will be against two, and two against three; father against son, and son against father. 16.4 And they will stand as solitary.'*

Interpretation

The principal interpretative debate over this saying (parr. Matt. 10.34–36; Lk. 12.51–53) concerns the meaning of 'house' in 16.3, and what follows from that. Valantasis takes (1) the more literal approach, seeing the house as the family or household: the point then is that the family is not the 'base community in which the new subjectivity develops'.² On the other hand, Grant & Freedman note the possibility of (2) an anthropological interpretation, according to which the house is the individual human.³ DeConick combines (3) both: the 'fire, sword, and war' in 16.2 represent 'the interior battle with the passions, the demons that thwart the advancement of the soul', whereas the disruption in 16.3 is of the family.⁴ The references to the 'world' and 'earth' as the sphere of Jesus' coming and dividing in 16.1–2 suggest that earthly institutions—in this case, specifically the household—are more likely to be what are disrupted

1 **Bibliography for GTH 16:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 57–61; P.-H. Poirier, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas (log. 16 et 23) et Aphraate (*Dém.* XVIII, 10–11)', in (no editor), *Mélanges Antoine Guillaumont: Contributions à l'étude des christianismes orientaux, avec une bibliographie du dédicataire* (Geneva: Patrick Cramer, 1988), 15–18. See also bibliography for the Appended Note on μοναχοσ.

2 Valantasis, 83.

3 Grant & Freedman, 137.

4 DeConick, 93, 96.

by the fire, sword and war, and the possibility raised (admittedly very tentatively) by Grant & Freedman that the ‘five’ in the house are the senses is very unlikely.

Jesus’ disruption of worldly institutions stands in apparent contrast to his concern for the recovery of primordial unity and for the dissolution of spiritual dualities, but the tension is easily solved: the primordial unity to be effected by Jesus is personal and individual rather than social. The theme of ‘standing’ in 16.4 has the force of an assurance that, despite social ostracism or chaos, in ultimate terms disciples are secure.⁵ Their solitariness (see appended note below, on μοναχος) is precisely a marker of their elect status.

Notes

16.1 Perhaps people think that I have come to bring peace upon the world. It was the expectation of the Messiah that he would bring peace (e.g. Isa. 11.1–10), and such is indeed reflected elsewhere in the Synoptics (Lk. 1.78–79; 2.10–14, etc.). Indeed, Jesus commends peace-makers in GTh 48 (cf. Matt. 5.9), and there is *Thomas*’s great stress on the recovery of primordial unity initiated by Jesus’ revelation. Nevertheless, social conflict—specifically opposition against *Thomas* disciples from outsiders—is also an important result of Jesus’ ministry for *Thomas*.

16.2 They do not know that I have come to bring divisions on the earth. This confirms the implication in 16.1 about the ignorance of humanity (cf. GTh 28, 113). There are also christological implications to this saying: the use of the ‘I have come’ + purpose carries the sense of Jesus’ pre-existence and his standing over against the world.⁶ In this case what he brings upon the world stands in some contrast to the theme of Jesus’ inculcation of cosmic unity found elsewhere in *Thomas* (e.g. GTh 72, where Jesus denies being a ‘divider’).

16.2 Fire, sword, war. Luke has ‘fire’ (12.49), Matthew has ‘sword’ (10.34), ‘war’ is distinctive to *Thomas*. It is probably merely a gloss on ‘sword’, explaining the metaphor, even if it is with another metaphor. The overall effect of all three terms is to make even more vivid the earlier reference to ‘divisions’.

5 See e.g. the parallels adduced in M.A. Williams, *The Immovable Race: A Gnostic Designation and the Theme of Stability in Late Antiquity* (NHS 29; Leiden: Brill, 1985), 88–91.

6 See Gathercole, *Preexistent Son*, *passim*.

16.3 For there will be five in a house and three will be against two, and two against three; father against son, and son against father. Some have seen the reference merely to father and son here, when ‘five’ family members have been noted, as *Thomas* making a mess of the saying;⁷ Quispel by contrast remarked that mention of women was suppressed to leave the father and son unmarried.⁸ (‘Father’ may also function as a catchword connection to GTh 15.) The latter is not probable evidence for *Thomas*’s secondary character vis-à-vis Luke, though arguments for *Thomas*’s primitivity on the basis of its form-critical simplicity are not convincing either.⁹

16.4 And they will stand. DeConick sees the ‘standing’ here as reflecting the worshipful position of angels,¹⁰ but this would be strange after an injunction in GTh 15 to prostrate oneself in worship (even if the prostration is metaphorical), and the etiquette of worship is not in view in this saying. Grosso rightly argues that standing is a symbol of the strength which the elect disciples possess in their position and status acquired.¹¹ The language of ‘standing’ in *Thomas* is sometimes used in an unremarkable way (GTh 75, 99). Here and in GTh 23 (cf. also GTh 28), however, there may be a more theologically loaded sense because of the association with salvation. Williams has shown that ‘standing’ is of importance elsewhere in Nag Hammadi texts, with connotations of ‘transcendent immobility’ in *Three Steles of Seth*, and ‘internal, noetic immobility’ in *Zostrianus*.¹² One might also adduce the Pseudo-Clementine parallel, where Simon Magus has the title of ‘Standing one’ (*Stans*), interpreted there as meaning ‘that he can never be dissolved’, ‘as though he cannot fall by any corruption’ (*Recogn. 2.7.2–3*). As such, the principal sense here is adamantine solidity and everlasting duration, which fits well in the context.

16.4 As solitary. The principal connotation of the controverted ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ here in GTh 16 is that of separation. As Popkes rightly says, the force of ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ is primarily negative, about losing family rather than making a constructive point about *Thomas*’s anthropology.¹³ In the Appended Note below, it is evident that this is perhaps the dominant sense of the word overall in *Thomas* (as well as

7 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 182–184.

8 G. Quispel, *Makarius, das Thomasevangelium und das Lied von der Perle* (NovTSuppS; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 108.

9 See the discussion in Gathercole, *Composition*, 55–56.

10 DeConick, 98–99.

11 Grosso, 143.

12 Williams, *Immovable Race*, 35, 98, and, on ‘standing’, *passim*, esp. 35–57, 71–98, 104–111.

13 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 156.

in *Dial. Sav.*), and this certainly fits with GTh 16, in which the division by Jesus leads to the separation of the disciples from (at least part of) their families, which does not necessarily mean absolute celibacy.¹⁴ Rejection of or by parents, for example, would not entail lifelong singleness.

Appended Note: ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ in the *Gospel of Thomas*¹⁵

The term ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ appears three times in *Thomas*:

16.4 ‘And they will stand as solitary (ἄΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ).’

49.1 Jesus said, ‘Blessed are the solitary (ἡΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ) and elect, for you will find the kingdom.’

75 Jesus said, ‘Many are standing at the door, but only the solitary (ἄΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ) will enter the bridal chamber.’

There are also a number of instances of the phrase οὐα οὐωτ in the sense of ‘one’ (GTh 4.3; 22.5; 23.2). (See comment above on 4.3.) The word ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ has

14 R. Uro, ‘Asceticism and Anti-Familial Language in the Gospel of Thomas’, in H. Moxnes, ed. *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor* (London: Routledge, 1997), 216–234 (225).

15 **Bibliography for Appended Note:** E.A. Judge, ‘The Earliest Use of *monachos* for Monk (P. Coll. Youtie 77) and the Origins of Monasticism’, *JAC* 20 (1977), 72–89; M. Harl, ‘À propos des logia de Jésus: Le sens du mot μοναχός’, *Revue des études grecques* 73 (1960), 464–474; F.-E. Morard, ‘Monachos, Moine: Histoire du terme grec jusqu’au 4^e siècle’, *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 20 (1973), 332–411; F.-E. Morard, ‘Monachos: une importation sémitique en Égypte? Quelques aperçus nouveaux’, in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica XII* (Berlin: Akademie, 1975), 242–246; F.-E. Morard, ‘Encore Réflexions sur Monachos’, *VC* 34 (1980), 395–401; Poirier, ‘L’Évangile selon Thomas (log. 16 et 23)’, 15–18; G. Quispel, ‘L’Évangile selon Thomas et les origines de l’ascèse chrétienne’, in (no editor), *Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme: Colloque de Strasbourg, 23–25 Avril 1964* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965), 37–41; Klijn, ‘The “Single One” in the Gospel of Thomas’, 271–278; DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 185–191; S.H. Griffith, ‘“Singles” in God’s Service: Thoughts on the Ihidaye from the Works of Aphrahat and Ephraem the Syrian’, *The Harp: A Review of Syriac and Oriental Studies* 4 (1991), 145–159; Popkes, *Menschenbild des Thomasevangeliums*, 147–211; D.F. Bumazhnov, ‘Some Further Observations Concerning the Early History of the Term μοναχός’, in J. Baun, A. Cameron, M.J. Edwards & M. Vinzent, eds. *Studia Patristica XLV* (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 21–26.

been a source of some debate in *Thomas* scholarship, and in short, there are four principal options for its interpretation.

- (1) Spiritually unified, rather than divided. Harl argues that the term is explicable on the basis of the Hebrew OT and its subsequent translations, and that it is connected to '[le] concept biblique des *yehidim*'.¹⁶ She also sees an analogous definition in Ps.-Dionysius, where *μοναχός* is not about being solitary but having a life 'indivibilis et singularis', being unified.¹⁷ Similarly, Ménard remarks that the phrase refers to a monk, as someone who has rediscovered his primordial unity.¹⁸ Popkes takes a similar view, highlighting the eradication of the individual characteristics of human existence, especially gender differentiation, an eradication which is achieved by the return to the divine unity.¹⁹
- (2) 'Single' in the sense of renouncing sexuality. This view is especially associated with G. Quispel, who comments that 'le *monachos* est "un" vierge, un célibataire',²⁰ and DeConick, who glosses the term, 'bachelor',²¹ or 'celibate person'.²² One of the principal reasons for this is the Syriac term *ihidaya*, which has had an important impact on the debate.²³ Quispel and DeConick among others both propose that the Greek/ Coptic is a translation of Syriac *ihidaya*.²⁴

16 Harl, 'À propos des logia de Jésus', 474; cf. 464–465.

17 Harl, 'À propos des logia de Jésus', 473.

18 J.E. Ménard, 'La tradition synoptique et l'Évangile selon Thomas', in F. Paschke, J. Dummer, J. Irmscher & K. Treu, eds. *Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen* (Berlin: Akademie, 1981), 411–426 (413).

19 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 209.

20 Quispel, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas et les origines de l'ascèse chrétienne', 38; cf. idem, 'Das Thomasevangelium und das Alte Testament', in (no editor), *Neotestamentica et Patristica: Eine Freundesgabe Herrn Prof. Dr. Oscar Cullmann zu seinem 60. Geburtstag Überreicht* (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 243–248 (244).

21 DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics*, 100.

22 DeConick, 98.

23 For discussion, see the very useful summary in Griffith, 'Singles in God's Service'. He discusses the usage in Aphrahat and Ephrem, and notes that the term does not appear in the *Odes of Solomon* or the *Acts of Thomas*, while raising the possibility of its appearance in the *Vorlage* of *Thomas*. I am grateful to Dr J.F. Coakley for this reference. The most recent discussion, with some up-to-date bibliography, is D.F. Bumazhnov, 'Some Further Observations'.

24 Quispel, 'Das Thomasevangelium und das Alte Testament', 244.

- (3) Separated and solitary. Leipoldt translates the term ‘Einzelgänger’,²⁵ and similarly, Haenchen sees the term referring primarily to someone who has loosened their ties to the world.²⁶
- (4) Some combination of these. Leloir, for example, incorporates (1) and (2) into his definition, with the term not yet referring to one living in solitude.²⁷ For Klijn, incorporating (1) and (2) is not the mere accumulation of two ideas, but rather involves the unification into an androgynous identity.²⁸ Morard sees the term reflecting the characteristics of Jewish-Christian and Syrian asceticism, ‘celles d’un élu, d’un séparé, d’un célibataire.’²⁹ Her later definition also includes the sense of wanting a ‘retour à son unification première.’³⁰ Poirier has pointed out that Aphrahat combines multiple senses, such that the unmarried are described as one spirit and one intellect.³¹

One of the difficulties lies in the fact that, as Morard has shown, the pre-Christian classical sense of the term is not confined to one of these senses. She gives three senses in Classical usage: ‘un être unique en son genre’ (like the sun or the moon), ‘un être solitaire, isolé par rapport à d’autres’ (like an island called *Monachē* separated from the archipelago to which it belongs; cf. “3” above), and ‘un être simple, unifié’ (cf. “1” above).³² The papyri interestingly attest to the same three senses.³³

How are we to decide from these options?

Probably the least likely of the three options above is (2). Uro has criticised the alleged Syriac background to this concept as anachronistic.³⁴ DeConick has responded to Uro by appealing to ‘this word’s clear linguistic heritage with

25 Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 59; cf. A. Gagné, ‘Jésus, la lumière et le Père Vivant. Principe de gémellité dans l’*Évangile selon Thomas*’, *Apocrypha* 23 (2013), 209–221 (216): ‘solitaire’.

26 Haenchen, *Botschaft*, 69.

27 L. Leloir, ‘Infiltrations dualistes chez les Pères du désert’, in J. Ries, Y. Janssens & J.-M. Sevrin, eds. *Gnosticisme et monde hellénistique* (Louvain: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1982), 326–336 (331).

28 Klijn, ‘Single One’, 271–278.

29 Morard, ‘Monachos, Moine’, 377.

30 Morard, ‘Encores quelques réflexions’, 399.

31 Poirier, ‘L’*Évangile selon Thomas* (log. 16 et 23)’, citing *Dem.* 18.11.

32 Morard, ‘Monachos, Moine’, 340.

33 Morard, ‘Monachos, Moine’, 346.

34 Uro, ‘Asceticism and Anti-Familial Language’, 224–225; cf. Judge, ‘The Earliest Use of *monachos*’, 87.

reference to singlehood and celibacy',³⁵ namely the point that it is the 'Greek translation of the Syriac term *ihidaja*'.³⁶ It is odd, however, to call this a 'heritage', when the Syriac term first appears two centuries *after* the *Gospel of Thomas*. The problem of the lateness of the Syriac (and Greek) parallels cannot be avoided.³⁷

More positively, one analogy which is useful is the occurrence of *μονοχος* (*sic*) in the *Dialogue of the Saviour*, which is often compared with *Thomas*. There it appears in the paired phrase 'the elect and *μμονοχος*' (120,26), and where the Father is addressed as the one who is the 'thought and complete serenity of *μμονοχος*' (121,18): the passage goes on: 'Again, hear us just as you heard your elect' (121,18–20). It is thus another way of referring to the disciples, with a close association with the title 'the elect'.³⁸

This comports very well with the sense in *Thomas*, where all three instances make very good sense as meaning 'separated from the rest (sc. of humanity)', like Isle *Monachē* mentioned above. In GTh 16, Jesus has brought about division, such that the disciple is separated from his other family members. In GTh 49, we have the same connection with election: Jesus' separating act means that as a result of being elect they are solitary, separated. In GTh 75, there is a contrast between 'the many' and the *monachoi*, again suggesting that those belonging to the *Thomas* movement are a minority, separated from others.

This sense may also fit with the usage in the roughly contemporaneous *Barnabas* and *Hermas*, which attack those who isolate themselves from the community, using the verb *μονάζειν* in a negative way. The former warns against separating oneself from the community (*μὴ καθ' ἑαυτοὺς ἐνδύνοντες μονάζετε*) as if one had no need for further edification (*Barn.* 4.10); *Hermas* talks of those who have separated themselves from the community and live apart (*μονάζοντες*), denying Jesus and destroying themselves (*Herm.* 103 [*Sim.* 9.26].3). The point here is a linguistic one, rather than an identification of the *Thomas* movement as those who separated from *Hermas*'s community.³⁹

35 DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 191 n. 25.

36 DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 190.

37 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 150.

38 On this association, see the helpful discussion in Gagné, 'Jésus, la lumière et le Père Vivant', 216–218.

39 One might also note the *μονούμενοι* who philosophise in *μοναστήρια* in Philo, *Contempl.* 25, 30.

This meaning, that of (3) above, is suggested as the primary sense of $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma$ in *Thomas* which term then may have been seen as especially appropriate given its other potential connotations. The probability of other nuances having attached themselves in *Thomas* seems especially likely given the irony in GTh 75, with the ‘solitaries’ (or, ‘single ones’) going into the bridal chamber.

Finally we should address the question of whether it is likely that the term $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma$ goes back to the second-century Greek version of *Thomas*. The first use of $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma$ as a noun in the sense of ‘monk’ does not appear until the fourth century,⁴⁰ and Popkes is right to observe that the word $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma$ does not survive in any of the *Greek* fragments.⁴¹ This can in part be explained by happenstance, as the Greek does not survive for any of the sayings which in Coptic have the word. The problem is resolved, however, when it is recognised that $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma$ may well in *Thomas* be functioning as an adjective, not as a noun. Quispel remarked, “The Gospel of Thomas is the first writing in the history of the universe to use the noun “monachos”.”⁴² It is often difficult to tell whether a Coptic word is a noun or an adjective, however. Indeed, the phrase ‘blessed are the *monachoi* and elect’ ($\zeta\epsilon\nu\mu\alpha\kappa\alpha\rho\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \eta\epsilon\ \eta\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma\ \lambda\gamma\omega\ \epsilon\tau\sigma\omicron\tau\tau\iota$) in GTh 49 suggests that it might well *not* be functioning as a noun. If one encountered the phrase ‘elect *monachoi*’ (something like $\bar{\eta}\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma\ \epsilon\tau\sigma\omicron\tau\tau\iota$) then one might assume that $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma$ was a noun. In fact, however, we see the two words joined with an “and”: ‘blessed are the *solitary* and elect’. (Indeed, the beatitudes in Matthew and Luke most commonly employ adjectives and participles.) The point should not be pressed, but if it is right, it removes any difficulty with a Greek *Vorlage* at a stroke, because Greek $\mu\omicron\nu\alpha\chi\acute{o}\varsigma$ is attested as an adjective from the time of Aristotle and Epicurus.⁴³ This also means that appeal to a Syriac *Vorlage* for the term here is unnecessary, in addition to its other problems.⁴⁴

40 See Judge, ‘The Earliest Use of *monachos*’.

41 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 152.

42 G. Quispel, ‘The Gospel of Thomas Revisited’, in B. Barc, ed. *Colloque International sur les textes de Nag Hammadi* (Quebec: Université Laval, 1981), 218–266 (237).

43 See the evidence in Morard, ‘Monachos, Moine’, 338–340. Judge, ‘The Earliest Use of *monachos*’, 86, notes that the adjective is common, ‘notably in Plotinus’. The *TLG* shows that it appears there 7 times.

44 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 56–57.

Logion 17¹

ΠΕΧΕ ΤΣ ΧΕ ΤΝΑΤ ΝΗΤΝ ΜΠΕΤΕ ΜΠΕ ΒΑΛ ΝΑΥ ΕΡΟΥ ΔΥΩ ΠΕΤΕ ΜΠΕ ΜΑΔΧΕ
СОТМЕЧ ДУΩ ΠΕΤΕ ΜΠΕ ΒΙΧ Δ ΜΒΩΜΩ ΔΥΩ ΜΠΕΥΕΙ ΕΞΡΑΙ ΖΙ ΦΗΤ ΡΡΩΜΕ

Jesus said, 'I will give you what eye has not seen, and what ear has not heard, and what hand has not touched, nor has it ascended to the heart of man.'

Interpretation

This is a saying with a great number of parallels.² Much about the relationships among the extant sources remains obscure. Some points are accessible, however. Prior to *Thomas*, there probably existed a free-floating idiomatic Jewish saying about 'what eye had not seen', etc. This was constructed from raw materials in Isa. 64.3 + 65.16. This Jewish saying surfaces independently in Pseudo-Philo (*LAB* 26.13) and Paul (1 Cor. 2.9). It is modified by Paul in a soteriological direction, and this exerts an influence upon—among

1 **Bibliography for GTh 17:** Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 147–149; Nagel, 'Erwägungen zum Thomas-Evangelium', 368–376; M.E. Stone & J. Strugnell, *The Books of Elijah: Parts 1–2* (Missoula: Society of Biblical Literature, 1979), 42–73; I. Dunderberg, 'John and Thomas in Conflict', in J.D. Turner, & A. McGuire, *The Nag Hammadi Library after Fifty Years: Proceedings of the 1995 Society of Biblical Literature Commemoration* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 361–380 (365–370); W.D. Stroker, *Extracanonical Sayings of Jesus* (Atlanta: Scholars, 1989), 184–186; Saunders, 'A Trio of Thomas Logia', 49–55; S.J. Patterson, 'Paul and the Jesus Tradition: It is Time for another Look', *HTR* 84 (1991), 23–41; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La valoración de los dichos no canónicos: el caso de 1 Cor. 2.9 y Ev. Tom log. 17', in E. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica XXIV*, 406–414; J.-M. Sevrin, "'Ce que l'œil n'a pas vu ...': 1 Co 2,9 comme parole de Jésus", in J.-M. Auwers & A. Wénin, eds. *Lectures et relectures de la Bible* (Louvain: Leuven University Press/ Peeters, 1999), 307–324; C.M. Tuckett, 'Paul and Jesus Tradition. The Evidence of 1 Corinthians 2:9 and Gospel of Thomas 17', in T.J. Burke, ed. *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict: Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 55–73; T. Onuki, 'Traditionsgeschichte von Thomas 17 und ihre christologische Relevanz', in idem, *Heil und Erlösung: Studien zum Neuen Testament und Gnosis* (WUNT 165; Tübingen: Mohr, 2004), 221–239; Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 76–84; Gathercole, 'The Influence of Paul on the Gospel of Thomas', 72–94; Skinner, 'The Gospel of Thomas's Rejection of Paul's Theological Ideas', 220–241; Gathercole, *Composition*, 227–249.

2 In addition to those cited below, some of the earliest include: 1 *Clem.* 34.8; 2 *Clem.* 11.7; *Mart. Poly.* 2.3.

others—*Thomas*.³ Subsequent to *Thomas*, one can observe the influence of GTh 17 only upon some Manichaean texts (M 789, So 18220).⁴

Irrespective of the place of GTh 17 in the history of the saying's usage, what is the key point that *Thomas* is making here? The two principal options are (a) the intangibility and the immateriality of true reality, impossible for the senses to grasp, and (b) the uniqueness of Jesus' revelation.

The former (a) is often assumed, and *Thomas*'s addition of the reference to the 'hand' touching appears to fit naturally into a framework in which the heavenly world cannot be understood in material terms.⁵ Gärtner sees a typically Gnostic polemic against the five senses.⁶ A polemic against 1John 1.1's affirmation that the apostolic gospel is grounded in 'what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands' is also sometimes thought to be rebutted by *Thomas* here.⁷

The problem with this view is that it does not fit very well with the last of the four negatives in GTh 17—'nor has it ascended to the heart of man', as Dunderberg rightly observes.⁸ Dunderberg therefore concludes that the more probable point of GTh 17 is the uniqueness of Jesus' revelation, noting a close parallel in GTh 38.1: 'Many times you have desired to hear these words of mine which I am speaking to you. And you have no other from whom to hear them.' Because of this, the point of GTh 17 is probably 'that Jesus gives his followers something that nobody has experienced before.'⁹

3 This is a very condensed summary of the argument in Gathercole, 'The Influence of Paul on the Gospel of Thomas', 86–93; idem, *Composition*, 237–245. Something very close to this view is taken also in Plisch, 73.

4 See W.-P. Funk, "Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend": Zitate aus dem Thomasevangelium in den koptischen Manichaica, in H.-G. Bethge, S. Emmel, K.L. King & I. Schletterer, eds. *For the Children, Perfect Instruction: Studies in Honor of Hans-Martin Schenke* (NHMS 54; Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2002), 67–94 (85–86); P. Nagel, 'Synoptische Evangelientraditionen im Thomasevangelium und im Manichäismus', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 272–293 (280–281).

5 See e.g. Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 149.

6 Curiously, however, Gärtner's quotation from the *Gospel of Truth* says almost the opposite of GTh 17.

7 See e.g. Grant & Freedman, *Secret Sayings*, 137; see discussion in Onuki, 'Traditionsgeschichte von Thomas 17', 233–236.

8 Dunderberg, 'John and Thomas in Conflict', 365–370; I. Dunderberg, 'Thomas' I-sayings and the Gospel of John', in R. Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 33–64 (45).

9 Dunderberg, 'Thomas' I-sayings and the Gospel of John', 45.

Notes

I will give you. In contrast to Ps.-Philo and Paul, *Thomas* attributes this saying, and the action of granting the hidden blessings, specifically to Jesus. The wording here is paralleled in one Manichaean text (M 789). As Trevijano Etcheverría has noted, this move by *Thomas* parallels the pattern seen in Hebrews and Justin Martyr of putting scriptural language into the mouth of Jesus.¹⁰

What eye has not seen, and what ear has not heard, and what hand has not touched, nor has it ascended to the heart of man. The point of interest here is the reference to the 'hand', not found in Ps.-Philo or Paul, or other second-century references to the formula. As noted above, some have suspected the contamination of 1Jn 1.1 here.¹¹ Dunderberg points out an intriguing parallel to *Muratorian Fragment* 29–31.¹² The inclusion of the additional sense probably has no special significance, however; the point is the uniqueness of Jesus' revelation in contrast to anything that any human being has received before through sight, hearing, physical touch, or thought.

10 See Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La valoración de los dichos no canónicos', 410; Gathercole, *Composition*, 241–242.

11 Sevrin, 'Ce que l'œil n'a pas vu', 322.

12 Dunderberg, 'John and Thomas in Conflict', 365–370.

Logion 18¹

18.1 πε.εε ἡμαθῆτης ἡκ̅ εε εοος ερον εε τῆραν εσναωπε ἡαω ἡεε 18.2 πε.εε ἡε ατετῆσωλπ' γαρ εβολ ἡταρχη εεκαας ετετναωπε ἡσα θαρη εε εἡ πμα ετε ταρχη ἡμαγ εθαρη ναωωπε ἡμαγ 18.3 οὔμακαριος πετνα[[ε]]ωρε ερατχ' εἡ ταρχη αγω ενασογωη θαρη αγω ενα.ει †πε αν ἡμογ

18.1 *The disciples said to Jesus, 'Tell us how our end will come.'* 18.2 *Jesus said, 'Have you uncovered the beginning, such that you seek the end? For where the beginning is, there the end shall come to be.'* 18.3 *Blessed is he who stands in the beginning: he will know the end and will not taste death.'*

Interpretation

This is one of the clearest statements in *Thomas* that the destiny of the elect is to return to a primordial condition. With that, there may also be the implication of an Adamic child-nature before the entry of death in the world:² this would make good sense of the connection between 18.2–3, and is also paralleled in the *Gospel of Philip*.³ There is no sense in *Thomas* that the eschatological future is an improvement upon protological realities, or in any way different at all. This theme is developed in GTh 19, to which the present saying is closely linked. Some have claimed that there is a cyclical conception of history here.⁴ In fact, however, Valantasis is more accurate in writing that the kingdom is a beginning which ‘exists perpetually’ and ‘continues through time’:⁵ it is not

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 18:** B.F. Miller, ‘A Study of the Theme of “Kingdom”’. The Gospel according to Thomas: Logion 18’, *NovT* 9 (1967), 52–60; K.M. Woschitz, ‘Das Theologoumenon “den Anfang entdecken” (σωλπ γαρ εβολ ἡταρχη) im koptischen “Evangelium nach Thomas” (Logion 18: NHC II 84,9–17)’, in N. Brox & A. Felber, eds. *Anfänge der Theologie. FS J.B. Bauer* (Graz: Styria, 1987), 139–153; Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 33–43; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La reconversión de la escatología en protología’, *Salmanticensis* 40 (1993), 133–162; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 211–214.
 - ² Woschitz, ‘Das Theologoumenon “den Anfang entdecken”’, 148, noting also the further possible implication of a genderless state.
 - ³ *Gos. Phil.* 68,22–24 states that there was no death when Eve was still in Adam.
 - ⁴ Woschitz, ‘Das Theologoumenon “den Anfang entdecken”’, 141; Hedrick, 48–49.
 - ⁵ Valantasis, 86; so also, correctly, Plisch, 75.

that a primordial reality is *reinstated* at the end. GTh 49, which notes that the elect originated in the kingdom and will return to it, is also an important parallel.

Notes

18.1 The disciples said to Jesus, ‘Tell us how our end will come.’ It is not obvious whether the disciples are asking: (a) what kind of eschatological scenario will we experience when the end comes (expecting an answer referring to stars falling from heaven, their own transformation, etc.)?⁶ or (b) what will the historical circumstances of our death be (expecting an answer about persecution and martyrdom)?⁷ Two factors favour the former: the reference to their seeking ‘the end’ in Jesus’ reply, and the lack of evidence in *Thomas* that the disciples as literary characters expect to be martyred.

18.2 Jesus said, ‘Have you uncovered the beginning, such that you seek the end?’ Literally, ‘For have you uncovered ...’: the $\rho\alpha\pi$ is out of place here. This saying may be related to the apocryphal story of Jesus as a boy correcting his teachers about *alpha* and *beta* (*IGT* 6.9; cf. 13.1–2), which in some form is adopted by the Marcosians.⁸ (The parallel is not exact: *alpha* and *omega* would fit better with GTh 18.2.) If there is a relation, the thought is that just as Jesus’ first teacher does not understand *alpha* and therefore cannot possibly deal with *beta* (*IGT* 6.9), so the disciples do not understand the beginning, and so should not be concerning themselves with the end.

18.2 For where the beginning is, there the end shall come to be. As in GTh 49, the end is not a new reality; rather the disciples will return to it. ‘The end’ (for the disciples) will be located in the place of their origin. Knowledge of this origin is essential for the true disciple, not least because it will be part of the interrogation in GTh 50.

18.3 Blessed is he who stands in the beginning. On the beatitudes in *Thomas*, see note on GTh 7.1: GTh 18.3 is the second of eleven. The reference here is to inhabiting paradise. *Standing* connotes security and permanence, which is particularly appropriate in this pair of sayings with the reference to immortality immediately afterward in 18.3 as well as in 19.4, and the nature of the paradisaical trees in 19.3. (On ‘standing’ in *Thomas*, see further on 16.4 above.)

6 DeConick, 102.

7 Plisch, 75.

8 Irenaeus, *AH* 20.1.

18.3 He will know the end and will not taste death. Although only joined to the main part of the beatitude by $\alpha\gamma\omega$ (conventionally 'and', but not translated above), there is an implied 'because': he is blessed because 'he will know ...'. The answer to the disciples' question cannot be answered yet: they will only 'know the end' in the future, when they understand, and stand in, the beginning. On 'tasting death', see notes to GTh 1.

Logion 19¹

19.1 πεχε τ̄ε δε ουμακαριος πε ν̄ταρωπε ρα τερη εμπατερωπε 19.2 ετετηωανωπε ναει ἡμαθητης ἡτετηωτων̄ αναωαχε νεειωνε ναρ̄δια-
κονει νητη̄ 19.3 οῡνητη̄ γαρ̄ ἡμαγ̄ ἡτωγ̄ ἡωην ρ̄μ̄ παρᾱλιος̄ εσεκιμ̄ αν̄
ἡωωμ̄ ἡπρω̄ αγω̄ ναρε νογ̄ωβε ρε̄ εβολ̄ 19.4 πετ̄νασογ̄ωνογ̄ φναχῑ †πε
αν̄ ἡμογ̄

19.1 *Jesus said, 'Blessed is he who has come into being before he has come into being. 19.2 If you become disciples of mine and heed my words, these stones will serve you. 19.3 For you have five trees in paradise, which do not move in summer or winter, and whose leaves do not fall. 19.4 Whoever knows them will not taste death.'*

Interpretation

The beatitude in 19.1 follows directly that of 18.3: 'Blessed is he who stands in the beginning: he will know the end and will not taste death ... Blessed is he who has come into being before he has come into being.' Indeed, GTh 19 as a whole is closely related to the preceding GTh 18, since they both thematise eschatology as protology. Plisch argues that the components of 19.1–3 are unrelated,² as does Valantasis, who states that because stones that serve and unchanging trees have nothing to do with rest, the meaning of the saying lies rather in 'the manner of its communication': the reader's engagement with the disconnected barrage in GTh 19 inculcates 'a meta-structure of a mythology of discipleship'.³ In fact, however, GTh 19 comprises a neat cluster of sayings on the soteriological privileges of the elect: they have a position of supremacy over the cosmos (19.2: 'stones will serve you'), the prospect of a destiny back in Eden (19.3) and a guarantee of immortality (19.4). Their pre-existent souls are perhaps the grounds for this immortality (19.1), but their salvation is also conditional upon their allegiance and obedience to Jesus (19.2: 'If ...'). The characterisation of the elect as

1 **Bibliography for GTh 19:** Puech, *En Quête de la Gnose*, II.99–105; Williams, *Immovable Race*, 18–22; Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 44–49; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La reconversión de la escatología en protología', 133–162. See also the bibliography to the Appended Note below on the 'five trees'.

2 Plisch, 76.

3 Valantasis, 87.

having an existence before their earthly manifestation is certainly an advance upon the idea of mere election or predestination, and is more individualised than the conception of the pre-existent church which was current in some literature contemporaneous with *Thomas* (2 *Clem.* 14.1; *Herm.* 8 [Vis. 2.4].1).

Notes

19.1 Blessed is he who has come into being before he has come into being. On the beatitudes in *Thomas* (of which this is the third of eleven), see the note on GTh 7. The macarism here is almost certainly specific to the elect (the 'blessed'), who are defined as having a quality of pre-existence probably not shared by the doomed mass outside: compare the 'light within a luminous person' (GTh 24), and the specificity of the elect as from the kingdom in GTh 49–50. The nature of that pre-existence is spelled out in more detail in GTh 49–50, where the audience is defined as those who have come from the kingdom, and from the light, the place where the light came into being of itself. For the parallels to this saying in Irenaeus, Lactantius and the *Gospel of Philip*, see the Introduction (§ 4, 'References') above.

19.2 If you become disciples of mine and heed my words, these stones will serve you. The association between stones and disciples is different here from the two instances of the connection in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. 3.9/ Lk. 3.8; Lk. 19.40).⁴ The service from the stones is an indication of the superiority to creation possessed by the true disciples: this authority is expressed elsewhere as 'ruling' (GTh 2) and the obedience of mountains (GTh 48, 106).⁵ (See further the notes on GTh 2.4.) The idea often noted that this is lower reality serving the higher is true,⁶ but needs to be set in the context of *Thomas's* particular theology of the rule of the elect. Here in 19.2, the pre-condition for attaining this cosmic position is christological, rather than the hermeneutical search in GTh 2 or the cultivation of unity in GTh 48 and 106; the difference from GTh 2 is lessened, however, when it is recognised that there is a strong focus in 19.2 on 'my words'—i.e. those contained in *Thomas*.⁷ This saying thus reinforces the authority of the collection.

4 There is not really any connection between the stones as waiters (cf. ῥηδαικωνεῖ!) and the stones' transformation into bread as mentioned in Matt. 4.3/Lk. 4.3; cf. Grant & Freedman, 139.

5 The view of Hedrick, 51, of a magical implication here is unnecessary.

6 E.g. Valantasis, 89.

7 Pokorný, 62.

19.3 For you have five trees in paradise. It is striking that not only do the elect rule over the stones, but that even the trees of paradise are the possession of the true disciples. This reference to trees in paradise (a biblical tradition begun in Gen. 2.9) is one of a great number from the Nag Hammadi codices (e.g. *Gos. Phil.* 71,22: 'there are two trees growing in Paradise'). The survey in the Appended Note below indicates that the pre-Christian evidence for the 'five trees' is uncertain, so that *Thomas's* reference here is probably the earliest extant. It is probably also the source of many of the other references: the *Kephalaia* quote *Thomas* elsewhere, the wording is very similar in the *Psalm-Book*, and *Pistis Sophia* may also be aware of *Thomas*. (See the discussions in Introduction, §§ 3–4, above.)

Although there may be some clues, the subsequent usages do not give a clear steer on the interpretation of *Thomas's* five trees. Four main views have been taken.

First, the noetic interpretation. H.-C. Puech confidently argues that the 'five trees' are best understood along the lines suggested by the Manichaean parallels. The five trees are the five elements of *nous*, that is, they are to be understood as the spiritual person in its original existence.⁸ The *Acts of Thomas*, for example, refers to the 'five members', νοῦς, ἔννοιαι, φρόνησις, ἐνθύμησις, λογισμός (*Ac. Thom.* 27). To know these trees and taste their fruits in *Thomas* would then mean to have knowledge and possession of the true self.⁹ Such an elaborate conception is regarded by Lelyveld, probably rightly, as anachronistic.¹⁰

On the other hand, Trevijano Etcheverría cautiously prefers the sacramental interpretation, in part on the basis of the use of the five trees in *Pistis Sophia* and *2 Jeu*.¹¹ On this reading, the five trees are the 'five seals' found frequently elsewhere in Nag Hammadi literature. The principal problem here again is that the evidence adduced to solve the problem is all later than *Thomas*.

8 Puech, *En quête de la gnose*, 102. The five elements are sense, reason, thought, imagination and intention: thus F.C. Burkitt, *The Religion of the Manichees: Donnellan Lectures for 1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1925), 33, and 19 n. 2; or mind, thought, insight, counsel and consideration: see T. Pettipiece, *Pentadic Redaction in the Manichaean Kephalaia* (NHMS 66; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 223, translating the reference to the five elements in Theodore bar Konai's *Liber Scholiorum*.

9 Puech, *En quête de la gnose*, 103.

10 Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 47.

11 Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La reconversión de la escatología en protología', 145.

Thirdly, DeConick refers to the trees of paradise as interpreted in Philo as virtues (*Plant.* 36).¹² Philo does not make any reference to the number five, however, and *Thomas* is not interested in the cultivation of virtues as Philo is.

The final view is a negative one, that of Popkes. He is probably correct that the best conclusion, in the absence of further evidence, is to remain agnostic on the matter.¹³

19.3 Which do not move in summer or winter, and whose leaves do not fall. There are two dimensions to the imagery here. First, these trees in paradise do not ‘move’, a term elsewhere negatively valued in contrast to ‘rest’ and ‘standing’.¹⁴ This evokes the theme of stability, which recently appeared in 18.3 (on the theme, see further on 16.4 above). Secondly, and relatedly, the trees are unaffected by the seasons. The reason for this is probably the widespread idea that paradise came into being before the creation of the sun and moon, and therefore because of its prior existence is not subject to their influence.¹⁵ The paradisaical house in the *Gospel of Judas* is ‘the place where the sun and the moon will not have dominion’ (*Gos. Jud.* 45,14–24). More explicit on this theme is *Origin of the World*, which talks of ‘paradise, which is beautiful and is outside the orbit of the moon and the orbit of the sun in the land of wantonness ...’ (*Origin* 110,2–6). This goes back to *Jubilees*, in which paradise is created on the third day, before the luminaries which are created on the fourth day: for this reason, paradise can be envisaged as outside of time.¹⁶ The same is predicated of the church in *2 Clement*, ‘the first church, the spiritual one, created before the sun and moon’ (*2 Clem.* 14.1). One also finds analogous depictions to that in *Thomas* in Syriac literature: for Ephrem, for example: ‘The months blossom with flowers all around Paradise in order to weave throughout every season a wreath of blossom to embellish the slopes of Paradise ...’¹⁷

19.4 Whoever knows them will not taste death. Jesus here requires acquaintance with the paradisaical trees in the present: knowing them is a condition of immortality, or perhaps is simply synonymous with it (cf. the same function of ‘standing in the beginning’ and ‘knowing the beginning’ in GTh 18).¹⁸ On ‘not tasting death’, see the notes above on GTh 1.

12 DeConick, 105.

13 Popkes, ‘Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie’, 219.

14 Cf. GTh 50.3, however, where it is positive.

15 It is not merely that they belong to a transcendent realm (Williams, *Immovable Race*, 20).

16 On the connections between *Jubilees* and *Origin* in general, see Wintermute’s note in *OTP* II.56 note ‘m’.

17 Ephrem, *Hymns on Paradise*, 10.3 (tr. Brock). See also the rest of *Hymn* 10.

18 Cf. *Barn.* 11.10: ‘whoever eats from them (the beautiful trees in paradise) will live forever’.

Appended Note: The Five Trees in Paradise¹⁹

There has been little detailed study of the motif of the ‘five trees.’²⁰ One scholar has argued that this phrase is not original to *Thomas* but derives from a mistranslation of an Aramaic original, but this can be discounted.²¹ There is a great number of explicit or implied references to them; the aim here is merely to present a collection of the material rather than a detailed analysis.

The first possible candidate is actually Genesis. Stead poses the question: ‘But can one find five trees in the Genesis narrative thus: the Tree of Fertility (1, 29), the Tree of Beauty, the Tree of Nourishment, the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge (2, 9)?’²² The answer is: not very easily!

Another possibility is Philo’s *Plant.* 36: ‘For they say that in Paradise there were plants in no respect similar to those which exist among us, but rather trees of life, of immortality, of knowledge, of comprehension, of understanding, and of the knowledge of good and evil.’ Because the syntax is ambiguous, it is not clear here whether there are five or six trees specified; it is more likely that there are actually six.

³*Baruch* 4.7 (Slavonic), like Philo, is an expansion of Genesis, according to which the angel says: ‘When God made the garden, he commanded Michael to gather together two hundred thousand and three angels to plant the garden; and Michael planted the olive tree and Gabriel the apple tree, Uriel the nut tree, Raphael the melon, and Satanael the vine.’ In addition to the problem of the lateness of the Slavonic manuscripts (c. 13th–18th centuries), however, this account contains five trees in only *some* of the Slavonic manuscripts (mss. S and Z have six trees), and the five appear in none of the Greek texts. As such,

19 **Bibliography for Appended Note:** Puech, *En Quête de la Gnose*, II.99–105; V. Arnold-Döben, *Die Bildersprache des Manichäismus* (Köln: Brill, 1978), 7–34 (‘Das Bild vom Baum’); Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La escatología del Evangelio de Tomás’, 415–441; idem, ‘La reconversión de la Escatología en Protología’, 140–145.

20 The most extensive treatment is that of Puech, and there is some discussion of what Chadwick has called ‘pentadic mysticism’ more widely: see H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), 347, referring to an abundance of material in W.L. Knox, *St Paul and the Church of the Gentiles* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939), 155 n. 1.

21 Nagel’s complicated theory of an Aramaic original (in which ‘five’ is a mistranslation of ‘in the middle’) relies on the modification of a consonant, an added preposition (‘in’), a rearrangement of the word-order and appeal to Mandaean Aramaic grammar. See Nagel, ‘Erwägungen zum Thomas-Evangelium’, 382–383; for criticism of this view, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 58–59.

22 Stead, ‘Some Reflections’, 397.

both the antiquity of, and the intention to thematise, the number of trees is far from clear.²³

Perhaps more promising is *On the Origin of the World*, where, although the number is not mentioned, five trees are listed in quick succession: the fig tree, the pomegranate tree, the tree of life, the tree of knowledge, and the olive tree (110,30–111,8). These may refer to a sacramental process, at least in part, since the olive tree is explained as the source of the chrism or anointing.

In Manichaean literature, there is first an almost certain reference in the *Psalm-Book*. This appears to be a quotation of *Thomas*: the reference is to '[...] trees in paradise [... ...] summer and winter' (*Psalm-Book* 161,17–29). Although the number is missing, the context is a list of fives, and so it is probably clear enough that we are dealing with five trees. The exact reference is unclear, but when the disciple's knowledge is perfect, these—and the other fives—are seen as a spiritual unity. The five trees here are followed by mention of the five virgins who had oil in their lamps. Much more complex are the five trees in the *Kephalaia of the Teacher*, which appear to constitute elemental kinds of matter from which other living creatures are formed (*Keph.* 6); they are also linked to a heavenly source by a conduit, but are at the same time under the control of the zodiac (*Keph.* 48).²⁴ Finally, in a treatise preserved in Chinese, the 'labourer' chops down 'les cinq sortes d'arbres empoisonnés', and plants 'les cinq sortes d'arbres précieux lumineux'.²⁵ These latter are interpreted as 'la

23 On the variations, see H.E. Gaylor, *The Slavonic Version of III Baruch* (Dissertation, Hebrew University, 1983). I am grateful to Dr Naomi Hilton for drawing my attention to this thesis.

24 'Once again the enlightener speaks to his disciples: Five storehouses have arisen since the beginning in the land of darkness! The five elements poured out of them. Also, from the five elements were fashioned the five trees. Again, from the five trees were fashioned the five genera of creatures in each world, male and female. And the five worlds themselves have five kings therein; and five spirits, five bodies, five tastes; in each world, they not resembling one another.' (1 *Keph.* 6). 'Then the disciples questioned the enlightener. They said to him: "Look, in that the wheel has no root in this earth, from where did the stars and signs of the zodiac find this authority? They became masters over these five fleshs and five trees."' (1 *Keph.* 48). Translations from I. Gardner, *The Kephalaia of the Teacher: The Edited Coptic Manichaean Texts in Translation with Commentary* (NHMS; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 34, 129. Cf. elsewhere in 1 *Keph.* 48 the 'five shapes of tree' and the 'five worlds of the tree', and note also the very fragmentary 1 *Keph.* 120.

25 E. Chavannes & P. Pelliot, 'Un Traité manichéen retrouvé en Chine: Traduit et annoté', *JA* 18 (1911), 499–617 (559, 560). See further p. 562 for the characteristics of the trees, which overlap with the 'five' in the *Acts of Thomas*.

pensée, le sentiment, la réflexion, l'intellect, le raisonnement'.²⁶ This five-part division of the mind probably goes back to *Acts of Thomas* 27, with its νοῦς, ἔννοιαι, φρόνησις, ἐνθύμησις, λογισμός as noted above.

In the *Pistis Sophia*, two principal points are made about the five trees.²⁷ First, they will reign with Jesus in his inheritance of light, with the twelve saviours of the treasury, and the twelve orders which are the emanations of the seven voices. They occupy a high position, reigning over the three amens, the twin saviours and the nine guards (*PS* 86). Secondly, these trees have come forth from the 'Fatherless' but have also divided themselves (*PS* 95).

In 1–2 *Jeu*, the references are similarly mysterious.²⁸ The 'ranks of the five trees' are a stage through which the soul goes on its passage (2 *Jeu* 42; cf. 44). In one of the treatments of the passage of the souls of the disciples (2 *Jeu* 50), they go within the rank of the five trees, which are 'immovable' / 'unmoved' (ἀκαλεγτος). Jesus also commands the disciples to perform the mystery of the five trees, as well as that of the seven voices and the great light around the treasury (2 *Jeu* 44). These treatments have numerous points of overlap with those in the *Pistis Sophia*.

The *Untitled Text*, which appears with 1–2 *Jeu* in the Bruce Codex, has in its heavenly geography a place called 'Deep' (βαθος). In this 'Deep', there are three fatherhoods: in the first is the hidden God, in the third is 'Silence' and 'Spring'; in the second are the five trees, in the midst of which there is a table, and the only-begotten Word stands above the table (*Untitled Text* 4).

In the very fragmentary Balaizah fr. 52, all that can be deduced is that the five trees are five powers.²⁹ Theodore bar Konai refers to five evil trees: 'The sin which fell upon the dry part (of the earth) began to grow in the form of five trees.'³⁰

26 Puech, *En quête de la gnose*, 101.

27 See *PS* 1; 10; 86; 93; 95; 96.

28 1 *Jeu* 41; 2 *Jeu* 42, 44 (*bis*), 50.

29 '... The spiritual power, ere she had been revealed, her name was not this, but her name was Sige. For all they that were in the heavenly paradise were sealed in silence. But such as shall partake thereof shall become spiritual, having known all; they shall seal the five powers in silence. Lo, I have explained unto thee, O Johannes, concerning Adam and paradise and the five trees in an intelligible allegory.' (Bala'izah fr. 52, ll. 14–32). For text and translation, see W.E. Crum, 'A Gnostic Fragment', *JTS* 44 (1943), 176–179, and 'Appendix 6: Bala'izah Fragment 52', in M. Waldstein & F. Wisse, eds. *The Apocryphon of John. Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices II,1; III,1; and IV,1 with BG 8502,2* (NHMS 33; Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill, 1995), 195.

30 Chavannes & Pelliot, 'Un Traité manichéen', 528 n. 2, citing H. Pognon, 'Appendice II:

An interesting parallel from a distant milieu comes in a reference by E.O. James to the fact that ‘the five trees which sprang from the cosmic waters on Mount Maru in Kashmir conferred blissful immortality on the gods.’³¹

Extraits du *Livre des Scholies*, de Théodore bar Khouni, in idem, *Inscriptions mandaites des coupes de Khouabir* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1899), 181–193 (191).

31 E.O. James, *The Tree of Life: An Archaeological Study* (Leiden: Brill, 1966), 284.

Logion 20¹

20.1 ΠΕΧΕ ἸΗΘΗΤΗΣ ΝΙΤ ΧΕ ΧΟΟΣ ΕΡΟΝ ΧΕ ΤΜΝΤΕΡΟ ΝΗΠΗΥΕ ΕΣΤΗΤΩΝ ΕΝΙΜ
20.2 ΠΕΧΑΥ ΝΑΥ ΧΕ ΕΣΤΗΤΩΝ ΑΥΒΛΒΙΛΕ ΝΩΧΤΑΜ 20.3 (ς)СОВК̅ ΠΑΡΑ ἸΒΡΟΣ
ΤΗΡΟΥ 20.4 ῥΟΤΑΝ ΔΕ ΕΣΩΔ(Ν)ῤΕ ΕΧΜ̅ ΠΚΑῤ ΕΤΟΥῤ ῥΩΒ ΕΡΟΥ ΩΔΑΥΤΕΥΟ ΕΒΟΛ
ΝΗΝΟΥΝΟΣ ΝΤΑΡ ΝῤΩΩΠΕ ΝΚΕΠΗ ΝῤΑΛΑΤΕ ἸΤΠΕ

20.1 *The disciples said to Jesus, 'Tell us what the kingdom of heaven is like.'*
20.2 *He said to them, 'It is like a grain of mustard. 20.3 It is the smallest of all seeds. 20.4 But when it falls on worked soil, it (sc. the soil) produces a great branch and becomes a shelter for birds of the air.'*

Interpretation

This is the third of 14 parables in *Thomas* (on the parables, see above on GTh 8). It is also the first of a block of three logia which 'liken': GTh 20 concerns what the kingdom is like; GTh 21 is about what the disciples are like; GTh 22 draws a comparison with the likeness of those who enter the kingdom. GTh 20 shares elements in common with the versions of the parable of the Mustard Seed in both Mark and Matthew (Mk 4.30–32; Matt. 13.31–32; cf. Lk. 13.18–19).² There are two main aspects to it, which are closely related: first, a small/ large contrast (cf. also GTh 8; 96; 107) between the apparent insignificance of the kingdom in the present and a magnificent glorious future, and secondly, a conditional promise implied in the great results which occur in 'worked soil'.³ King is probably incorrect to say that the reader would identify with the seed, with the point of the parable then being: 'To be like a member of the community means to have

1 **Bibliography for GTh 20:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 61–66; J.D. Crossan, 'The Seed Parables of Jesus', *JBL* 92 (1973), 244–266 (253–259); H. Fleddermann, 'The Mustard Seed and the Leaven in Q, the Synoptics, and Thomas', *SBLSP* (1989), 216–236; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 328–335; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 66–69.

2 Fledderman comments that *Thomas* is closest to Mark ('Mustard Seed', 228), but (1) the reference to the kingdom of *heaven*, (2) the ῥΟΤΑΝ ΔΕ in 20.4, and (3) the production of the great branch, are all Matthean. Given these redactional features, it is unlikely that *Thomas*'s version is as primitive as Crossan ('Seed Parables', 258–259) and Plisch, 79, maintain.

3 Fledderman, 'Mustard Seed', 235. Valantasis rightly notes that it is not just a matter of comparative size (the 'main emphasis', according to Grant & Freedman, 140), 'because the factor of the state of the soil intervenes'.

access to mysterious and effective power, to have the capacity for transformation from smallness to greatness and nurturing strength.⁴ Rather, in keeping with the emphasis in *Thomas* on labour (cf. also 58; 107), the challenge is thus probably for the reader to *work* the metaphorical soil. The major emphases of GTh 20 are thus the transformation from insignificance to greatness, coupled with the promise, for those who labour, of (spiritual) security.

Notes

20.1 The disciples said to Jesus, ‘Tell us what the kingdom of heaven is like.’ Here, as Goodacre notes, *Thomas* employs the distinctively Matthean phrase ‘kingdom of heaven.’⁵ The disciples’ question does not in any way reflect *Thomas*’s ‘concern over the delayed eschaton.’⁶ On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above.

20.2 He said to them, ‘It is like a grain of mustard.’ Davies and Allison identify the type of mustard probably as black mustard, or possibly white mustard.⁷ It is possible that there is some further allegorical significance to the mustard seed: Clement understands it as ‘the elect seed’ (*Exc. Theod.* 1), and Hippolytus reports a view according to which it is a mark which only pneumatics display (*Ref.* 5.9.6), but to apply such interpretations to *Thomas* can only be speculation.⁸

20.3 It is the smallest of all seeds. This same hyperbole appears in the Synoptic versions (Mk 4.32 and parallels). The tiny size of mustard seeds was proverbial (cf. *m. Tohor.* 8.8; *m. Nid.* 5.2).

20.4 But when it falls on worked soil, it⁹ produces a great branch. The reference here is to adequate preparation for the kingdom.¹⁰ Even Crossan thinks that the reference to *worked* soil is a ‘Gnostic’ feature.¹¹ (It should not be

4 King, ‘Kingdom’, 55.

5 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 66–69.

6 DeConick, 106–107.

7 W.D. Davies & D.C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols. (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988–1997), II.417.

8 The reference to the mustard seed in *Dial. Sav.* 144.5–8 is too elliptical to see a meaning of the seed.

9 Sc. the soil, because the verbal prefix is masculine, and therefore corresponds to the soil (masculine κἄρ), and not the grain (βλῆλε, which is feminine).

10 Grosso, 149.

11 Crossan, ‘Seed Parables’, 258; cf. also Lindemann, ‘Gleichnisinterpretation’, 225.

seen as distinctively Gnostic in the sense of that word used in this commentary: see Introduction, 'Appended Note: Is *Thomas* "Gnostic"?', above.)

20.4 And becomes a shelter for birds of the air. Pokorný may well be correct here that there is an emphasis on security in the 'shelter'.¹² The reference to the Greek loan word σκέπη here perhaps relates to its use in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, where all who are called by the name of the Lord come under the σκέπη of a great willow tree (*Herm.* 67 [*Sim.* 8.1].1). *Thomas*'s version is that which has least connection with the Old Testament by comparison with all the Synoptics, which for Crossan is evidence of *Thomas*'s primitivity but for Goodacre is the opposite.¹³ (McArthur notes that *Thomas* is consistently more distant from the OT in its parables.¹⁴) Valantasis reads an application off from the birds: 'Others who are not naturally part of the production and growth of the Kingdom benefit from its development'.¹⁵ This is probably an over-reading, however, since *Thomas* is not in the habit of showering blessings upon outsiders.

¹² Pokorný, 64.

¹³ Crossan, 'Seed Parables', 258; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 190.

¹⁴ H.K. McArthur, 'The Parable of the Mustard Seed', *CBQ* 33 (1971), 198–210 (203–204). He argues that there are three Synoptic parables which have 'phrases obviously borrowed from the OT', and that *Thomas* 'has all three of these parables and has practically eliminated the OT references', viz. here in GTh 20, in 21.10, and in GTh 65–66.

¹⁵ Valantasis, 91.

Logion 21¹

21.1 πεχε μαριζαμ ν̄ῑς̄ δε ενεκμαθη̄της̄ εινε ν̄νιμ̄ 21.2 πεχαϑ̄ δε εϋεине ν̄ζη̄ω̄ηρε̄ ω̄ημ̄ εϋ[σ]ελιτ̄ λϋσω̄δε̄ ετ̄ω̄ῡ αν̄ τε 21.3 ζοταν̄ εϋϑ̄αῑ ν̄σῑ ν̄χ̄οεῑς̄ ν̄τ̄σω̄δε̄ σεναχοο̄ς̄ δε̄ κε̄ τ̄ν̄σω̄δε̄ εβολ̄ ναν̄ 21.4 ν̄τοοϋ̄ σεκακ̄ ᾱρη̄ν̄ μ̄ποϋ̄ν̄το̄ εβολ̄ ετροϋκαᾱς̄ εβολ̄ ναϋ̄ ν̄σε†̄ τοϋ̄σω̄δε̄ ναϋ̄ 21.5 διᾱ τοϋ̄το̄ †̄χω̄ μ̄μο̄ς̄ δε̄ εϋ̄ϑ̄αῑε̄ῑ ν̄σῑ π̄χε̄ρ̄νη̄εῑ δε̄ ϋ̄η̄η̄ ν̄σῑ π̄ρεϋ̄χῑοϋ̄ε̄ ϋ̄η̄ᾱρο̄εῑς̄ ε̄μ̄πᾱτεϋ̄εῑ ν̄ϋ̄τ̄η̄κᾱαϋ̄ ε̄ω̄ο̄χ̄τ̄ ε̄ροϋ̄ν̄ ε̄πεϋ̄η̄εῑ ν̄τε̄ τεϋ̄μ̄η̄τε̄ρο̄ ε̄τ̄ρεϋ̄ϋ̄ ν̄η̄εϋ̄σ̄κεϋ̄ο̄ς̄ 21.6 ν̄τω̄τ̄η̄ δε̄ ρο̄εῑς̄ ρ̄ᾱ τε̄ρη̄ μ̄π̄κο̄ς̄μο̄ς̄ 21.7 μοϋ̄ρ̄ μ̄μ̄ω̄τ̄η̄ ε̄χ̄ν̄ νε̄τ̄η̄†̄η̄ε̄ ρ̄η̄νοϋ̄νο̄ς̄ ν̄ᾱϋ̄νᾱμ̄ῑς̄ ω̄η̄νᾱ δε̄ νε̄ ν̄λη̄ς̄τ̄η̄ς̄ ρ̄ε̄ ε̄ρη̄ ε̄εῑ ω̄αρ̄ω̄τ̄η̄ 21.8 ε̄πεῑ τε̄χη̄ρεῑᾱ ε̄τε̄τ̄η̄̄ω̄ω̄τ̄ ε̄βολ̄ ρ̄η̄τ̄ς̄ σενᾱρ̄ε̄ ε̄ρο̄ς̄ 21.9 μᾱρεϋ̄ω̄ω̄πε̄ ρ̄η̄ τε̄τ̄η̄μ̄η̄τε̄ ν̄σῑ οϋ̄ρ̄ω̄η̄ε̄ ν̄ε̄πῑς̄τ̄η̄μ̄ω̄ν̄ 21.10 ν̄τᾱρε̄ π̄κᾱρ̄πο̄ς̄ π̄ω̄ς̄ ᾱϋ̄εῑ ρ̄η̄νοϋ̄β̄ε̄π̄η̄ ε̄πεϋ̄ᾱς̄ ρ̄η̄ τεϋ̄β̄ῑχ̄ ᾱϋ̄ρᾱς̄ϋ̄ 21.11 πε̄τε̄ οϋ̄ν̄ μᾱᾱδε̄ μ̄μοϋ̄ ε̄σω̄τ̄η̄ μᾱρεϋ̄ω̄ω̄τ̄η̄

21.1 *Mary said to Jesus, ‘What are your disciples like?’ 21.2 He said, ‘They are like children who are [so]journing in a field which does not belong to them. 21.3 When the owners of the field come, they will say, ‘Let us have our field.’ 21.4 They strip naked in their presence, in order to let them have it, to give their field to them. 21.5 Therefore I say, if the owner of the house knows that the thief is coming, he will be on guard until he comes, and will not let him dig into the house of his domain so as to carry off his possessions. 21.6 As for you, be on guard against the world. 21.7 Prepare yourself with great power lest the brigands find a way to come to you, 21.8 since the necessity which you expect will come about. 21.9 May there be in your midst a prudent man. 21.10 When the fruit ripened, he came quickly with his sickle in hand and harvested it. 21.11 He who has ears to hear, let him hear.’*

1 **Bibliography for GTh 21:** H. Quecke, “‘Sein Haus seines Königsreichs’. Zum Thomasevangelium 85. 9f., *Muséon* 76 (1963), 47–53; K. Toyoshima, ‘Neue Vorschläge zur Lesung und Übersetzung von ThEv. Log. 21, 103 und 68b’, *AJBI* 9 (1981), 230–241 (230–235); S. Petersen, “Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit”. *Maria Magdalena, Salome und andere Jüngerinnen Jesu in christlich-gnostischen Schriften* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 106–111; U.-K. Plisch, “Thomas in Babel: Verwirrung durch Sprache(n) im *Thomasevangelium*”, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 60–71 (64–66); J. Hartenstein, ‘Nackt auf fremden Land (Die Kinder auf dem Feld)—EvThom 21,1–4’, in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompandium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 878–882.

Interpretation

This saying is the second in a trilogy of sayings ‘likening’: see the interpretation of GTh 20 above (cf. also GTh 22). GTh 21 is the second longest logion after GTh 64, and the fourth of *Thomas’s* parables (on these, see *ad* GTh 8). After Mary’s first question, GTh 21 consists of three distinct sections in Jesus’ speech:²

- 21.2–4: The parable of the Children in the Field
- 21.5: The parable of the Householder and the Thief
- 21.6–9: Application to audience
- 21.10: Fragment of the parable of the Seed Growing Secretly
- 21.11: Concluding aphorism

The overall point of the speech is to exhort the disciples to be ready. This is most clear in 21.5–8, but the other elements require explanation. There are three principal difficulties: (1) What is the meaning of the first parable in 21.2–4? (2) How does this first parable lead logically (‘therefore ...’, ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥΤΟ) into the second in 21.5? (3) What is the meaning of 21.9–10, and its relation to what precedes? Some possible answers are as follows:

- (1) The parable of the Children in the Field (21.2–4) is best understood as a kind of allegory in which the ‘field’ is the world, the owners are hostile powers, and—as is explicitly stated by Jesus—the children are his disciples.³ The world and the body are of little significance and can be relinquished, whereas the soul is to be guarded jealously.

² For a similar account, see Grosso, 149.

³ Rightly, Grant & Freedman, 141; J.Z. Smith, ‘The Garments of Shame’, *History of Religions* 5 (1965–1966), 217–238 (236); DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 184. Bruce and Plisch take the parable quite differently. Bruce takes the view that it is the children who say ‘let us keep our field’, whereupon the owners, not the children, strip off, and let the children keep the field (Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 123). This is implausible, though, because (a) ‘our’ field most naturally points to the ‘owners of the field’, and (b) the motif of children stripping off is familiar from GTh 37. Plisch argues that the scenario in the parable is that the children sell their clothes to buy the field. The difficulty here is that any notion of buying and selling is absent, and the idea that clothes would be a fair exchange for a field is an odd one (Plisch, 82, and n. 5). As a result, his interpretation that the key is working to secure one’s own existence is flawed.

There then arises the more difficult question of what crisis is represented by the coming of the 'owners', or what the stripping signifies: is it (A) baptism⁴ and the joining of the community?⁵ Or is it (B) a moment of temptation and resistance to that temptation? Or is it (C) death?⁶ It is hard to decide. The reference to the children undressing might suggest (A) baptism, but the stripping in 21.4 seems to be a response to spiritual attack, and so might more naturally suggest (B) the renunciation of bodily desires when tempted or (C) the sloughing off of the body at death.

- (2) Whatever the particular event in 21.2–4, the two parables reflect the attitudes of the Thomasine disciple to the body/ world and the soul respectively. The parables see the attack of hostile powers from two contrasting perspectives. The hinge is the shift from the perspective from the parable of the Children in the Field (21.2–4), where the disciples are 'squatters' as far as the material world is concerned, to the parable of the Household and the Thief (21.5), where their status is as house-holders with respect to the soul. Both parables are thus warnings of the coming of enemies: 'when the owners of the field come ...' (21.3) and '... the thief is coming ...' (21.5). The first parable can therefore also be seen, like the second, as an exhortation to readiness.
- (3) The fragment in 21.9–10 is very obscure. One might surmise that the 'prudent man' of 21.9 is the one who in 21.10 came with his sickle, but the transition between the two sentences is not a smooth one. It is possible that the act of quick harvesting is the man of understanding's ready grasp of the truth because he has already laboured, but this is admittedly speculative. See notes on 21.9–10 below for some other possible interpretations.

Overall, 21.9–10 aside, the speech makes a degree of sense in answer to Mary's question about what kind of entities the disciples are. The disciples *qua* physical beings either (as in option B above) must remove bodily and worldly desires, or (as in C) will lose their bodies and their material environment; in either case, the disciples *qua* souls must jealously guard their true natures and be instructed in how to preserve them. There is a shift of emphasis, however, from Mary's question about the identity or nature of the disciples to Jesus' reply about the need to be prepared.

4 DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 185.

5 Smith, 'Garments of Shame', 236.

6 Pokorný, 65.

Notes

21.1 Mary said to Jesus, ‘What are your disciples like?’ This Mary is probably Mary Magdalene,⁷ i.e. the Mary of Magdala in Galilee known in the NT.⁸ It is an interesting reflection of *Thomas’s* context that he does not feel a need to disambiguate this particular Mary. One might compare the situation in the Roman church where there is apparently only one Mary (in Rom. 16.6); in the NT Gospels, Acts and the *Gospel of Philip* there is constant disambiguation. Mary’s question here resembles that in the *Sophia of Jesus Christ*: ‘Mariamme said to him, “Holy Lord, your disciples, whence came they, and where do they go, and what should they do here?”’ (*Soph. Jes. Chr.* 114,8–12).⁹ There is some ambiguity here about whether Mary is part of the group of disciples.¹⁰

21.2 He said, ‘They are like children who are sojourning in a field which does not belong to them.’ Valantasis makes the peculiar comment that the characterisation of the children as squatters indicates that they are not part of the inner circle of Jesus.¹¹ It is unclear, however, that the immediate disciples of Jesus are excluded from this characterisation. Plisch’s understanding of the characters as servants, with a different understanding of the verb rendered here as ‘sojourning’, is unduly complicated.¹²

7 Pokorný, 65, states that it is ‘obviously’ the Magdalene, and similarly Hartenstein, ‘Nackt auf fremden Land’, 879; Plisch, 81, leaves open the possibility that it is Mary the mother of Jesus.

8 On Mary Magdalene in early Christianity, see A. Marjanen, *The Woman Jesus Loved: Mary Magdalene in the Nag Hammadi Library and Related Documents* (NHMS 40; Leiden/ New York/ Köln, 1996); Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 94–194.

9 For discussion of the two questions together, see Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 106–111.

10 Pace Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 108, and Hartenstein, ‘Nackt auf fremden Land’, 879, who are more certain that she is part of it. In particular, Jesus’ reply is in the third person (*‘they are like ...’*), not the second person.

11 Valantasis, 92.

12 See Plisch, ‘Probleme und Lösungen’, 524, for the suggestion that the *Vorlage* of the Coptic ⲩⲛⲣⲉ ⲩⲛⲛⲓ was Greek παῖς, in the sense of servant (cf. Plisch, 82; idem, ‘Thomas in Babel’, 64). The related theme of children, having stripped, treading on their clothes, is also found in GTh 37.2, however. The parable is not intended to be realistic. It is also natural to see a connection with the children in GTh 22 (so, rightly, Nordsieck, 100). It follows from this that Plisch’s interpretation of εὐσεβῆρτ (as ‘who are entrusted with’) adopting the second sense of σο(ε)υλαε (see Crum, 808b) does not work so well, and the verb also seems more usually to mean to reside temporarily or ‘sojourn’ (for his view, see Plisch, 82, and idem, ‘Probleme und Lösungen’, 525). See Crum, 807a–809b, giving παροικεῖν and ξενίζειν as the first two equivalents.

21.3 When the owners of the field come, they (sc. the owners) will say, “Let us have our field.” The ‘owners’ are likely to be archontic powers, although they are not portrayed especially negatively here: ‘the owners ... are quite justified in requesting the return of the field’.¹³ The reference to ‘our field’ means that it must be the owners, not the children, who request the field.¹⁴

21.4 They (sc. the children) strip naked in their (sc. the owners’) presence, in order to let them (sc. the owners) have it,¹⁵ to give their field to them. There is then an unmarked change of subject: after the request of the owners in 21.3 it is then the children (not the owners) in 21.4 who strip naked: the motif of children stripping off is familiar from GTh 37.¹⁶ The reference to stripping is most likely to be of the body or bodily desire. It is striking here how close is the correlation in the parable between the stripping off and the renunciation of the field, i.e. the world. Plisch inexplicably introduces the notion of selling into the ‘giving’.¹⁷

21.5 Therefore I say, if the owner of the house knows that the thief is coming, he will be on guard until he comes. In this parable of the Householder and the Thief (cf. Matt. 24.43–44; Lk. 12.39–40), we have a reversal of the imagery: now the owner is the disciple. The motif of the ‘thief’ as an image of unexpected destruction is very common in early Christian literature.¹⁸ It is employed here, as elsewhere, to invite the response of being on watch. The particular threat, in keeping with the theme of the speech as a whole, is the possibility of the soul’s destruction. For the relations between GTh 21.5, 98 and 103, see the table in the interpretation of GTh 103.

21.5 And will not let him dig into the house of his domain so as to carry off his possessions. For the phrase ‘house of his kingdom/ domain’, cf. Ephrem, *Comm. Diat.* 18.7, but the phrase is not necessarily an Aramaism.¹⁹ On the ‘digging’ into the house, cf. notes on 98.2 below. The reference to the individual’s domain, or kingdom, suggests an allegorical reference to *the* kingdom.²⁰ One

13 Kee, ‘Becoming a Child’, 311.

14 *Contra* Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 123. Rightly Grant & Freedman, 141; Plisch, 82.

15 Plisch, 82 and n. 5 problematically understands the plural *ἰματῖα* as the antecedent of the singular ‘it’ in the Greek *Vorlage*.

16 *Contra* Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 123.

17 Plisch, 82 n. 5.

18 Matt. 24.43; Lk. 12.33, 39; 1Thess. 5.2, 4; 2Pet. 3.10; Rev. 3.3; 16.15; cf. *PS* 121 (unexpected death).

19 See above, Introduction, § 5.1, and at greater length, Gathercole, *Composition*, 60–61.

20 R.J. Bauckham, ‘Synoptic Parousia Parables and the Apocalypse’, *NTS* 23 (1977), 162–176 (168).

might compare here the wish of the power “Desire” to claim the soul in the *Gospel of Mary* (15,1–5).

21.6 As for you, be on guard against the world. There is a shift here from watchfulness in advance of the future hour in the Synoptics, to watchfulness against the world in *Thomas*.²¹ The ‘world’ here stands for the collection of threats to the soul which need to be resisted. Cf. the depiction of the world elsewhere in *Thomas* as a corpse (GTh 56).

21.7 Prepare yourself with great power. Lit. ‘Gird up your loins with great power’, as also in GTh 103 (and see discussion there). The phrase ‘great power’ may have some kind of technical sense: cf. GTh 85, where ‘Adam came into being from a great power’; but if so, the precise nuance is not clear. It is perhaps not a foregone conclusion that these powers will not be able to destroy the soul: it is essential for the Thomasine disciple to be on guard.

21.7 Lest the brigands find a way to come to you. The Graeco-Coptic term ληστῆς (ληστής) has been much discussed (cf. again GTh 103). The literal sense may be a thief (e.g. Mk 11.17 and parallels), or a revolutionary *novarum rerum cupidus* (cf. *BJ* 2.254: λησταί who were called *Sicarii*).²² Horbury defines ληστεία as ‘robber-like activity’.²³ The ‘brigands’ are a further personification of the threats to the soul, described as the ‘owners’ in 21.3, the ‘thief’ in 21.5, and ‘world’ in 21.6.

21.8 Since the necessity which you expect will come about. The word χρεία (‘necessity’) has proven very difficult. Commentators have interpreted it as ‘possessions’,²⁴ ‘the minimal essentials for sustaining life’,²⁵ ‘advantage’,²⁶ or ‘difficulty’.²⁷ A ‘negative’ interpretation, such as the last of these, is preferable to the positive options, because 21.7–8 issues a warning to be on guard *since* (ἐπει) the χρεία will come. It is therefore probably a shorthand for the threat of the brigands in 21.7. The scenario is likely to be a critical spiritual moment, such as death or temptation, which requires the particular vigilance of 21.6.

21 Grant & Freedman, 142.

22 On the term and its uses, see e.g. K.H. Rengstorf, ‘ληστής’, *TDNT* IV.257–262; M. Goodman, *The Ruling Class of Judaea* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 51–75.

23 W. Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 164 (and see 164–165).

24 DeConick, 112.

25 Plisch, 83.

26 Hedrick, 57.

27 Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 63.

21.9 May there be in your midst a prudent man. There is a tendency among interpreters to generalise the ‘prudent man’ simply as a reference to a proper disciple,²⁸ but the ‘man of understanding’ is not a characterisation of every elect disciple; *Thomas* says that there ought to be one ‘*in your midst*’.²⁹ The reason a man of understanding is required is that the disciples need to be prepared (21.7). The man of understanding therefore perhaps acts as a *mustagogos* in the interpretation of Jesus’ words, and perhaps especially in learning the truths which enable the ascent of the soul in GTh 50. An alternative is that he is someone who can arbitrate effectively in the community (the sense of the similar language in 1 Cor 6.5; Jas. 3.13), although this seems a little out of place in the collection of material in GTh 21 *in toto*.

21.10 When the fruit ripened, he came quickly with his sickle in hand. The subject of the main clause here is apparently the ‘prudent man’ of 21.9, but the meaning of the action with the sickle is as obscure as the identity of the man. DeConick considers 9–10 to have two different themes, one hermeneutical and one paraenetic.³⁰ Given that he considers the ‘man of understanding’ in 21.9 to be an interpreter in the community, Valantasis sees his role as ‘one who gathers the fruits of discernment’ in 21.10.³¹ Pokorný suggests that this is an ‘exhortation to a prompt and good decision’.³² For Hedrick, it is about ‘knowing both the precise moment for action and how to act’.³³ King, in her rejection of an apocalyptic understanding of the kingdom asks: ‘is there really anything apocalyptic about a man who goes out with his sickle to harvest ripe grain? *Thomas* describes him as “a man of understanding”. He knows what to do and gets the job done.’³⁴ Goodacre notes the distance from the OT here, by comparison with the Markan parallel (Mk 4.29).³⁵ GTh 21.10 is a fragment of the parable of the Seed Growing Secretly (Mk 4.26–29).

21.11 He who has ears to hear, let him hear. On this phrase, see note on GTh 8.4. In GTh 21 here, the aphorism perhaps underscores the mysterious and allegorical character of the speech.

28 E.g. Hedrick, 58.

29 Rightly, Valantasis, 94.

30 DeConick, 113–114.

31 Valantasis, 94.

32 Pokorný, 66.

33 Hedrick, 58; similarly Plisch, 83.

34 King compares the characters in GTh 35, 96 and 98: ‘They are all prepared, they know what to do, and this assures them of success’ (‘Kingdom’, 52).

35 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 189.

Logion 22¹

22.1 αἰ̅τ̅ ναγ̅ ἀρ̅νη̅κο̅υ̅ει̅ ε̅γ̅χι̅ ε̅ρω̅τε̅ 22.2 πε̅χα̅γ̅ ἡ̅νε̅φ̅η̅α̅θη̅τι̅ς̅ ἄ̅ε̅ ἡ̅ε̅ικ̅ο̅υ̅ει̅
ε̅τ̅χι̅ ε̅ρω̅τε̅ ε̅γ̅τ̅η̅τ̅ων̅ ἀ̅νε̅τ̅β̅η̅κ̅̅ ε̅ρ̅ο̅υ̅ν̅ ἀ̅τ̅η̅ἡ̅τε̅ρο̅ 22.3 πε̅χα̅γ̅ ναγ̅̅ ἄ̅ε̅ ε̅ε̅ι̅
(ε̅)νο̅ ἡ̅κο̅υ̅ει̅ τ̅η̅να̅β̅ω̅κ̅̅ ε̅ρ̅ο̅υ̅ν̅ ε̅τ̅η̅ἡ̅τε̅ρο̅ 22.4 πε̅χε̅ ἡ̅Ἰ̅ς̅ ναγ̅̅ ἄ̅ε̅ ρ̅ο̅τ̅αν̅ ε̅-
τε̅τ̅η̅ω̅α̅ρ̅̅ π̅σ̅ναγ̅ ο̅γ̅α̅ ἄγ̅ω̅ ε̅τε̅τ̅η̅ω̅α̅ρ̅̅ π̅σ̅α̅η̅ρ̅ο̅υ̅ν̅ ἡ̅Ἰ̅ε̅ ἡ̅π̅σ̅α̅ν̅β̅ο̅λ̅ ἄγ̅ω̅ π̅σ̅α̅ν̅β̅ο̅λ̅
ἡ̅Ἰ̅ε̅ ἡ̅π̅σ̅α̅η̅ρ̅ο̅υ̅ν̅ ἄγ̅ω̅ π̅σ̅α̅(ἡ̅)τ̅π̅ε̅ ἡ̅Ἰ̅ε̅ ἡ̅π̅σ̅α̅η̅π̅ι̅τ̅η̅̅ 22.5 ἄγ̅ω̅ ω̅ι̅να̅ ε̅τε̅τ̅η̅α̅ει̅ρε̅
ἡ̅φ̅ο̅̅ ο̅γ̅τ̅̅ ἡ̅ἡ̅ τ̅ς̅ρ̅ι̅μ̅ε̅ ἡ̅π̅ι̅ο̅γ̅α̅ ο̅γ̅ω̅τ̅̅ ἄ̅ε̅κ̅α̅α̅ς̅ ἡ̅ε̅ φ̅ο̅ο̅γ̅τ̅̅ ῥ̅ ρ̅ο̅ο̅γ̅τ̅̅ ἡ̅τε̅ τ̅ς̅ρ̅ι̅μ̅ε̅
ῥ̅ ς̅ρ̅ι̅μ̅ε̅ 22.6 ρ̅ο̅τ̅αν̅ ε̅τε̅τ̅η̅ω̅α̅ει̅ρε̅ ἡ̅ρ̅ἡ̅β̅α̅λ̅ ε̅π̅ι̅μα̅ ἡ̅ο̅γ̅β̅α̅λ̅̅ ἄγ̅ω̅ ο̅γ̅β̅ι̅λ̅̅ ε̅π̅ι̅μα̅
ἡ̅ἡ̅ο̅γ̅β̅ι̅λ̅̅̅ ἄγ̅ω̅ ο̅γ̅ε̅ρ̅η̅τε̅ ε̅π̅ι̅μα̅ ἡ̅ο̅γ̅ε̅ρ̅η̅τε̅ ο̅γ̅ρ̅ι̅κ̅ων̅̅ ε̅π̅ι̅μα̅ ἡ̅ο̅γ̅ρ̅ι̅κ̅ω̅(ἡ̅) 22.7 το̅-
τε̅ τε̅τ̅η̅α̅β̅ω̅κ̅̅ ε̅ρ̅ο̅υ̅ν̅ [ε̅]τ̅η̅[ἡ̅τ̅ε̅ρ̅]ο̅̅

22.1 *Jesus saw some little ones being suckled.* 22.2 *He said to his disciples, 'These little ones being suckled are like those who enter the kingdom.'* 22.3 *They said to him, 'Shall we, then, enter the kingdom as little ones?' 22.4 *Jesus**

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- 1 **Bibliography for GTh 22:** Klijn, 'The "Single One" in the Gospel of Thomas', 271–278; Kee, "Becoming a Child" in the Gospel of Thomas', 307–314; K.P. Donfried, *The Setting of Second Clement in Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 73–77; D. Patte, 'Entering the Kingdom like Children: A Structural Exegesis', *SBLSP* (1982), 371–396; T. Baarda, '2 Clement 12 and the Sayings of Jesus', in J. Delobel, ed. *Logia: Les Paroles de Jesus/The Sayings of Jesus* (BETL 59; Leuven: Peeters, 1982), 529–556, and also in Baarda, ed. *Early Transmission of the Words of Jesus* (Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1983), 261–288; T. Callan, 'The Saying of Jesus in Gos. Thom. 22/ 2 Clem. 12/ Gos. Eg. 5', *JRSt* 16 (1990), 46–64; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 223–242; K. Nash, 'The Language of Mother Work in the Gospel of Thomas: Keeping Momma out of the Kingdom', in M.A. Beavis, ed. *The Lost Coin: Parables of Women, Work and Wisdom* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 174–195; W. Loader, *Sexuality and the Jesus Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 199–207; W. Petersen, 'Textual Traditions Examined: What the Text of the Apostolic Fathers tells us about the Text of the New Testament in the Second Century', in A.F. Gregory & C.M. Tuckett, eds. *The Reception of the New Testament in the Apostolic Fathers* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005), 29–46 (35–38); Pratscher, *Der zweite Clemensbrief*, 161–164; A. Standhartinger, 'Einssein an Gottes Brust (Stillkinder)—EvThom 22', in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 883–887; S. Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato: The Theology of the Gospel of Thomas and Middle Platonism', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 181–205 (190–196); C. Mazzucco, 'I detti sui bambini e il Regno', in M. Pesce & M. Rescio, eds. *La trasmissione delle parole di Gesù nei primi tre secoli* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2011), 191–217; A. Gagné, 'Lire un apocryphe en synchronie. Analyse structurelle et intratextuelle du logion 22 de l'Évangile selon Thomas', in A. Gagné & J.-F. Racine, eds. *En marge du canon biblique: études sur les écrits apocryphes juifs et chrétiens* (Paris: Cerf, 2012), 225–249.

said to them, 'When you make the two one, and when you make the inside like the outside, and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below, 22.5 in order that you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male be not male nor the female female. 22.6 When you make eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot, and an image in place of an image, 22.7 then will you enter the [kingdom].'

Interpretation

This saying is the last of a trilogy (see interpretation of GTh 20), and is of central importance in *Thomas*.² Jesus' teaching in this dialogue combines three important and related soteriological images:³ (a) being like children (cf. the preceding GTh 21), with the added element that the children are *drinking*, (b) the dissolution of dualities, and (c) replacement of the external image with the internal. Initially, Jesus appears to explain the first (22.2) by the second (22.4–5), which is probably in part made possible by the assumption of an asexual character to small children: the dissolution of dualities is seen ultimately as focused on the asexual character of the true disciple (22.5).⁴ Thereafter, the inside/ outside language (22.4) is developed in 22.6. The references to eyes, hands and feet are resurrection imagery, though with reference to a new spiritual nature rather than to physical resurrection. The concluding reference to the image states as a requirement bringing forth a new, internal image to replace the old, as in GTh 70 ('when you bring forth what is in you, what you have will save you')—cf. also GTh 24.3—and the contrast between the physical and eternal images in GTh 83–84. The sequence in 22.4–6 has a number of parallels, but the literary relations among the earliest versions are very difficult to disentangle.⁵

2 See esp. Gagné, 'Lire un apocryphe en synchronie', 228–231, for a very helpful survey of scholarly approaches to the saying.

3 Valantasis, 96: 'More than any other saying, Saying 22 most specifically constructs the new subjectivity promulgated by this gospel.'

4 Kee, 'Becoming a Child', 313: 'Here it is evident that becoming as a child, and entering the kingdom, and achieving a state of asexuality are very nearly interchangeable terms.'

5 Cf. 2 *Clem.* 12.1–2; *Gos. Phil.* 67,30–68,17; *Gos. Egy.* / Cassianus in *Clem. Strom.* 3.13.92.2; *Ac. Pet.* 38 (*Mart. Petr.* 9); *Ac. Phil.* 140.

Notes

22.1 Jesus saw some little ones being suckled. For the language of ‘little ones’, see also 46.2. Jesus encounters here in GTh 22 not children in general (παιδία) as in Matthew and Mark (Mk 10.13–16; Matt. 19.13–15; cf. Mk 9.36; Matt. 18.2–5), but nursing babies:⁶ *Thomas* here agrees with Luke, who also has babies (βρέφη, Lk. 18.15). *Thomas*’s introduction is notable for its strangeness, because *Thomas* goes further than Luke in specifying that the babies are suckling when Jesus sees them. The scene is either of Jesus in a domestic setting, in which case it is also strange that Jesus is in the company of nursing mothers. (Other sayings with Jesus in a clearly private space are GTh 61; 99; also ‘this house’ in GTh 41?) Passages such as Xenophon’s reference to breast-feeding as among τὰ ἔνδον ἔργα of the woman (*Oec.* 7.23) suggest a domestic setting for GTh 22. Alternatively, the scenario could perhaps be a public space in which different babies are being nursed. This would be irregular, because of the taboo of nudity,⁷ but it is also quite possible that in some public settings the practice was regarded as more tolerable.⁸ Gagné makes the excellent suggestion that the suckling here is of interpretative significance, because of the theme of ‘drinking’ is related elsewhere to the acquisition of knowledge and union with Jesus (GTh 13; 108).⁹

22.2 He said to his disciples, ‘These little ones being suckled are like those who enter the kingdom.’ The Synoptic Gospels have two scenes where Jesus comments on the blessed character of children: in Mk 10.13–16/ Matt. 19.13–15/ Lk. 18.15–17, when the disciples try to prevent children coming and Jesus says only those who receive the kingdom like a child can enter it (or in Matthew: ‘become like children’); and in Mk 9.33–37/ Matt. 18.1–5/ Lk. 9.46–48 where in response to the disciples’ dispute about who is the greatest, Jesus again

6 According to a testimonium to Hippocrates cited by Philo, a child is a παιδίον until the age of seven years (*Opif.* 105).

7 P. Salzman-Mitchell, ‘Tenderness or Taboo: Images of Breast-Feeding Mothers in Greek and Latin Literature’, in L. Hackworth Petersen & P. Salzman-Mitchell, eds. *Mothering and Motherhood in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 141–164 (142).

8 I am grateful to Prof. Keith Bradley for his help with this topic.

9 Gagné, ‘Lire un apocryphe en synchronie’, 242–248; also A. Gagné, ‘Connaissance, identité et androgynéité. Conditions du salut dans *l’Évangile selon Thomas*’, in M. Allard, D. Couture & J.-G. Nadeau, eds. *Pratiques et constructions du corps en christianisme. Actes du 42ième congrès de Société canadienne de théologie* (Montreal: Fides, 2009), 131–147 (139–146).

summons a child (in Matthew, entry into the kingdom is again thematised).¹⁰ In line with the note on 22.1 above, here Jesus likens the elect not to young children more broadly, *παιδία*, as in the Synoptics, but to babies. This ties up with what we saw in GTh 4, where the ideal state is likened to that of a baby seven days old, because that baby is much closer to, and better informed about, the place of life than an old man. As becomes clear, however, other aspects of babyhood also come to the fore later. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, § 10.1 above.

22.3 They said to him, ‘Shall we, then, enter the kingdom as little ones?’ Presumably this is an expression of incredulity, rather like (though not necessarily influenced by) Nicodemus’ question about the possibility of being born again in John 3.4.

22.4 Jesus said to them, ‘When you make the two one.’ This is central to Jesus’ mission according to *Thomas* (GTh 11; 72; 106, though cf. 16), where he is concerned with inculcating unity. There is some focus here on the reversal of the division of humanity into male and female, with the language resembling that of marriage (Mk 10.8; Matt. 19.5–6; cf. Gen. 2.24). The point is broader, however, because other elements are mentioned before the reference to gender in 22.5 (cf. the different context of ‘making the two one’ in Eph. 2.14–16).

22.4 And when you make the inside like the outside, and the outside like the inside, and the above like the below. The language of the outside and inside here probably relates to GTh 70.1: ‘When you bring forth what is in you, what you have will save you.’ The inside therefore must be externalised, although the potential difficulty here is that this gives precedence to the interior, which is not the case in GTh 22.4. It could be that the ‘outside’, ‘inside’, ‘above’, ‘below’, language in 22.4 merely emphasises more strongly the language of making the two one. There could be a connection with GTh 89, although given the obscurity of that saying, it would be hazardous to make much of it.

22.5 In order that you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male be not male nor the female female. This might be taken in more spiritual terms as a reference to the union of male and female in the heavenly bridal chamber (cf. *Gos. Phil.* 70.9–22), or it might be taken with a more ethical edge: ‘as infants are devoid of sex awareness or shame, so should the disciples be’,¹¹ or it might refer (similarly, but with more emphasis on nature or identity)

10 In those places where the Synoptics have ‘receive the kingdom as/ like a child’, the analogy could perhaps be between the *kingdom* and the child rather than the disciples and children.

11 Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 123.

to the androgyny of the true disciple.¹² This statement obviously stands in some tension with GTh 114, where Jesus states that every woman who wants to enter the kingdom must become male. It is tolerably clear that in the later saying, being an ideal, living spirit is related to being male (see discussion below, *ad* 114). Nevertheless, there is a sense in which the true disciple transcends such gender distinctions: perhaps the reference in 22.5 is to the construction of an androgynous state, and the actualisation of the original male-female unity before the division.¹³ This Adamic unity is, however, more male than female (see *ad* GTh 114 on 'male androgyny'). Valantasis, relates this closely to the baby earlier in the saying: the body is 'trained and transformed into some other kind of body', which he says is a baby's body.¹⁴ 'This saying promulgates nothing less than a complete ascetical recreation of human subjectivity in every dimension of its existence.'¹⁵ Whether it advocates rejection of marriage and sex is not certain, though one can see how it might be understood in this sense.

22.6 When you make eyes in the place of an eye, and a hand in place of a hand, and a foot in place of a foot. Popkes is right to observe that 22.6 is apparently not about the overcoming of opposites, as was the case in 22.4–5.¹⁶ 22.6 speaks of replacement, rather than 'making the two one' as is found elsewhere. There are no less than three potential sources for the language and imagery here. (1) There is a peculiar correspondence here with the *lex talionis* in Exodus and the Sermon on the Mount, where we find the penalty of 'an eye "in place of" an eye, a tooth "in place of" a tooth, a hand "in place of" a hand, a foot "in place of" a foot' (ὄφθαλμὸν ἀντὶ ὄφθαλμοῦ, ὀδόντα ἀντὶ ὀδόντος, χεῖρα ἀντὶ χειρός, πόδα ἀντὶ ποδός, Exod. 21.24).¹⁷ (2) There is a similarity between *Thomas's* statements about the need to replace eye, hand and foot to enter the kingdom and the Synoptics' statement that an offending hand, foot or eye should be cut off/ out to enter the kingdom (Mk 9.43–48).¹⁸ (3) Finally, the imagery here is also that of resurrection: in *2 Macc.* 7.11, for example, the third brother declares that he will receive back his limbs from God. Closer is the theology of *Odes of Solomon*, where the saved individual has 'members in which there is no sickness or affliction or suffering' (21.4), and of the *Treatise on the*

12 Grosso, 153.

13 Pratscher, *Der zweite Clemensbrief*, 164 sees this in the *2 Clement* parallel.

14 Valantasis, 95.

15 Valantasis, 96.

16 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 217.

17 Cf. Matt 5.38 (Sahidic): οὐβαλ ἐπιμα ποῦβαλ etc.

18 See e.g. Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 226.

Resurrection, where there are ‘living members which are within’ in contrast to the dead external limbs (48.1–3). This thought comes to the fore in the next reference, to the ‘images’.

22.6 And an image in place of an image. GTh 84 contrasts two human images, a superficial ‘likeness’ (εἰκὼν) as opposed to the pre-existent ‘image’ (εἰκὼν). This image might best be seen as all-encompassing, rather than distinct from the eyes, hands and feet. It is the true soul which must be brought out, and which must replace the external appearance (GTh 70; cf. *Gos. Mary* 18,15–17; *Gos. Jud.* 35,2–6; Plotinus, *Enn.* 1.6.8).

22.7 Then will you enter the kingdom. The language of ‘entry’ into the kingdom emphasises the external aspect of the kingdom (cf. GTh 3, where it is outside and inside).¹⁹ Since all the elements of 22.4–6 are clarified in 22.7 as soteriological conditions for entry into the kingdom, Pagels’ view that *Thomas*, among other apocrypha, is advanced teaching for a superior group of Christians cannot be correct (see Introduction, § 10.5 above).

19 DeConick, 115, repeats the idea that the delay of the eschaton is a key theme here, though again it is absent.

Logion 23¹

23.1 ΠΕ.ΧΕ ΙϚ ΧΕ †ΝΑ.ΣΕ[Τ] ΠΙ ΤΗΝΕ ΟΥΑ ΕΒΟΛ Ζ̄Ν ΩΟ ΑΥΩ ΣΝΑΥ ΕΒΟΛ Ζ̄Ν ΤΒΑ 23.2
ΑΥΩ ΣΕΝΑΩΞΕ ΕΡΑΤΟΥ ΕΥΟ ΟΥΑ ΟΥΩΤ'

23.1 *Jesus said, 'I will choo[s]e you, one out of a thousand, and two out of ten thousand. 23.2 And they shall stand as a single one.'*

Interpretation

This saying combines three soteriological images in a compressed manner: (a) election, focusing on the activity of Jesus and his initiative in salvation, (b) 'standing', which highlights the spiritual power and stability of the saved disciples, and (c) the identity of the saved as a unity.² There is an additional aspect of the 'saved', that they constitute a tiny minority: the proportions here communicate the extremity of the contrast between the number of true disciples and that of the rest. The saying thus reveals an attitude (in all probability reflecting the reality) that the *Thomas* movement was very small in number (cf. GTh 73–75). The saying (esp. 23.1), or its precursor on which *Thomas* draws, is widely cited.³

Notes

23.1 **I will choose you.** This betrays a higher christology than is sometimes suggested in more egalitarian treatments of *Thomas's* view of Jesus: the portrait

1 **Bibliography for GTh 23:** Klijn, 'The "Single One" in the Gospel of Thomas', 271–278; Poirier, '*L'Évangile selon Thomas* (log. 16 et 23)', 15–18; Funk, "'Einer aus tausend, zwei aus zehntausend'", 85–92; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 504–506.

2 Valantasis, 97.

3 Basilides is reported as saying that only one out of a thousand, and two out of ten thousand, understood the truth (Irenaeus, *AH* 1.24.6; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 24.5.4); see W. Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule: Eine Studie zur Theologie- und Kirchengeschichte des zweiten Jahrhunderts* (WUNT 83; Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), 265–266. Cf. Origen, *Peri tou Pascha* 2.6.3; *PS* 134. See Funk, 'Einer aus tausend', 85–92, on the Manichaean usage (and see Introduction, § 4 above). Cf. also *Right Ginza* 305, 307; *Mandaean Prayers* 90 (Stroker, *Extracanonical Sayings*, 187).

here is of a transcendent Jesus who stands starkly over against humanity in salvation.⁴ The future tense is unusual.

23.1 One out of a thousand, and two out of ten thousand. The image here is the common-place of the small minority of the saved by contrast to the *massa perditionis*.⁵ The proportions of 1:1000 and 2:10000 appear first in Deut. 32.30, with a similar view expressed in Jeremiah 3.14, where redemption is also involved: ‘I will take you, one from a town and two from a clan, and I will bring you to Zion.’ Compare also ‘one man among a thousand’ (Eccles. 7.28). On the forms of the saying contemporaneous with, or later than, *Thomas* see Introduction, § 4.1 (Origen), and § 4.4–5, above.

23.2 And they shall stand. The sense of ‘standing’ is adamantine solidity (see above on 16.4). *Thomas*’s rather awkward shift from second person (‘I will choose you ...’) to third person (‘They will stand ...’) may well indicate that 23.1 goes back to a source, and that *Thomas* has appended in 23.2 a version of the ‘single one’ formula (cf. GTh 4, etc.).

23.2 As a single one. See discussion of this phrase in notes on GTh 4.3. The meaning is likely to be ‘as a single one’, ‘transform[ed] into a union’, ‘as one individual’, or ‘unified’.⁶ (It may perhaps therefore pick up the theme of union in GTh 22.) However, the zero article in the phrase ογα ογωτ could be taken in a plural sense (‘as single ones’), and this would comport better with GTh 16.4 (‘they will stand as solitary’, *σεναωζε ερατοϋ εϋο ημοναχος*); GTh 49.1 also has ‘the solitary and elect’ (*ημοναχος αγω ετσοττι*). As a result, there may be some vagueness in *Thomas*’s language of ογα ογωτ and μοναχος, despite the distinction between them drawn above (see Appended Note on μοναχος, after GTh 16).

4 Cf. e.g. A. Marjanen, ‘The Portrait of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas’, in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, et al., eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 209–219.

5 In classical tradition famously, ‘many are the thyrsus bearers, but few are the initiates’ (Plato, *Phaed.* 69C); in the NT, Matt. 22.14: ‘for many are called, but few are chosen’. Cf. *Sent. Sext.* 243; *Asclepius* 22 (Lat.)/ 65,38–66,5 (NHC VI/8).

6 Respectively, Valantasis, 97; Plisch, 88; Pokorný, 68; Hedrick, 62.

Logion 24¹

24.3 [έσ]τιν [... φ]ωτ'ε'ινω̄ [... χ]όσμω [... μ]ή [... έ]στιν

24.3 [... i]s [... l]uminous [... w]orld [... no]t [... is [...].

24.1 πεχε νεφμαθητης δε ματσεβον' επτοπος εκκῆμαγ επει ταναγκη ερον τε ετρῆωιηε ἰσωυ' 24.2 πεχαυ' ναγ δε πετεγῆ μααχε ἰμοϋ μαρεϋ'σωτῆ

24.3 ουῆ ουοειν' φροπ' ἰφοϋν ἰνοϋρῆοϋοειν αγω φρ ουοειν επκοσμος τηρϋ' εϋτῆρ ουοειν' ουκακε πε

24.1 *His disciples said, 'Show us the place where you are, since it is necessary for us to seek after it.'* 24.2 *He said to them, 'He who has ears, let him hear.'* 24.3 *There is light within a person of light, and he gives light to the whole world. If he does not give light, he is darkness.'*

Textual Comment

Although some of the Greek survives here, it is so fragmentary that it cannot have a material effect on the interpretation. We will make use of the surviving Greek adjective φωτεινός, however: hence 'luminous person', rather than 'person of light' in 24.3 below.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 24:** Saunders, 'A Trio of Thomas Logia', 55–58; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La reconversión de la escatología en protología', 133–162; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren in Thomasevangelium*, 82–96; T. Zöckler, 'Light within the Human Person: A Comparison of Matthew 6:22–23 and "Gospel of Thomas" 24', *JBL* 120 (2001), 487–499; P.-H. Poirier, 'Un parallèle grec partiel au Logion 24 de l'Évangile selon Thomas', in H.-G. Bethge, S. Emmel, K.L. King & I. Schletterer, eds. *For the Children, Perfect Instruction: Studies in Honor of Hans-Martin Schenke on the Occasion of the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostische Schriften's Thirtieth Year* (Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2002), 95–100; E.E. Popkes, 'Vom Lichtmenschen—EvThom 24', in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 888–892.

Interpretation

This saying of Jesus seems to bear little relevance to the disciples' question.² The response (cf. Matt. 6.22–23; Lk. 11.34–36, and more remotely, Jn 11.9–10; *Dial. Sav.* 125,18–126,1) focuses on the internal image of light which is said to indwell the elect exclusively. In contrast to the emphasis in GTh 23 on the stability of the elect, this saying warns against the failure to shine and exhorts the disciples to display their light.³ The characterisation of the internal image or soul in this saying as 'light' lends itself to meaning 'illuminating testimony to the truth'. As in GTh 70 ('when you bring forth what is in you, what you have will save you'), what is within needs to be made external. Otherwise the elect disciple becomes subsumed into the plight of the cosmos, rather than being of potential benefit.

Notes

24.1 His disciples said, 'Show us the place where you are, since it is necessary for us to seek after it.' The 'place where Jesus is' is a mysterious phrase, because it suggests that, even while speaking with the disciples, Jesus inhabits another realm. Since Jesus is 'the living Jesus', this may be 'the place of life' (4.1) which is probably coterminous with 'the place where the light came into being' (50.1). If that is the case, Jesus inhabits the two realms of life and the world simultaneously.⁴ Some commentators assume that the question is an inept one,⁵ but it may be that the disciples are rightly aware here that they do not yet inhabit this place, and so are seeking the salvation that exists there.

24.2 He who has ears, let him hear. See note above on GTh 8.4. What is curious about this particular instance is that in the canonical Gospels, in Revelation, in the *Gospel of Mary*, and in every other case in *Thomas*, this aphorism comes *after* the wisdom which Jesus encourages the hearer to contemplate. Here, however, it is an introductory phrase.

² Generally noted, e.g. by Valantasis, 97.

³ See Grosso, 155, on the latter point.

⁴ Pace DeConick, 120, this is not necessarily to be mirror-read as the community's response to the death of Jesus. It would then not make sense as it stands. Certainly Jesus' reply in 24.3 does not address the point very directly at all.

⁵ E.g. Hedrick, 63.

24.3 There is light within a luminous person (Co: person of light). The special designation ‘luminous’, which presumably cannot be a characterization of every human being, suggests that the elect are those who especially possess the light. The Coptic phrase ‘person of light’ appears in a mysterious saying, in a clearly exclusive sense (in parallel with ‘the pure’), in *Apocryphon of James* 10.4; cf. also *1 Enoch* 5.8: ‘and there will be a light in the illuminated man, and intelligence in the wise man.’⁶ There is a christological dimension to the light, in that the light is an extension in some sense of the person of Jesus.⁷

24.3 And he gives light to the whole world. This narrow scope is probably confirmed by the second half of the sentence, variations of which are conventionally applied in the Jesus tradition specifically to disciples (Matt. 5.14a; quoted in *Interp. Knowl.* 9,30–31; *Gos. Sav.* 97,21–22). In Phil 2.15, Paul addresses the believers as like ‘those who shine in the world’ (ΝΙΡΕΦΟΥΘΕΙΝ ΖΗΤΙΚΟΣΜΟΣ). The language is also reminiscent of what Jesus says of himself in John (‘I am the light of the world’ in Jn 8.12; 9.5; cf. 1.9, and GTh 77.1). ‘Giving light to the world’ is presumably a reference to the disciple advertising the presence of the light. The possibility envisaged in the final part of the saying suggests that a particular kind of behaviour accompanies having the light. This is an unusually positive statement about the potential of the world—it can be enlightened.⁸

24.3 If he does not give light, he is darkness. There is ambiguity in the final phrase, which could be impersonal (‘there is darkness’).⁹ On the personal reading, which is perhaps more likely, the disciple who fails to act appropriately not only becomes ineffective, but actually partakes in the world of perdition.

6 Poirier, ‘Logion 24’.

7 Rightly, Popkes, ‘Vom Lichtmenschen’, 879.

8 Zöckler, ‘Light within the Human Person’, 495–496; cf. Plisch, 90; Nordsieck, 117–118.

9 Plisch, 89–90.

Logion 25¹

25.1 πεχε ιϛ δε μερε πεκσον ν̄οε ν̄τεκ`ϣϣη 25.2 εριτηρει ιμοϣ ν̄οε ν̄τελοϣ
ῑπεκ`βαλ`

25.1 *Jesus said, 'Love your brother as your own soul; 25.2 guard him like the pupil of your eye.'*

Interpretation

There is a double catchword connection with GTh 26, since 'brother' (ϣον) and 'eye' (βαλ) appear in both. GTh 25.1 and 25.2 communicate the same point. As Grosso notes, *Thomas* is not just narrowly individualistic.² The saying exhorts care for the fellow-disciple as if he were a 'very delicate part of the body'.³ The implication of contact between disciples is notable here, because *Thomas* does not seem to talk in terms of a social community. The kind of interaction which *Thomas* presupposes among disciples is unclear. There may be meetings for instruction (see 21.9 and comment), as well as missionary activity carried out by pairs or groups (14.4–5; 73). These settings alone could provide context for a saying such as this.

Notes

25.1 Love your brother as your soul. This is the only direct reference to 'love' in *Thomas*; as such, the theme is not completely absent as was claimed by Bruce.⁴ GTh 25.1 resembles the great commandment which stems from Lev. 19.18 and which won great popularity in early Judaism, the New Testament and

1 **Bibliography for GTh 25:** G. Quispel, 'Love thy Brother', in idem, *Gnostic Studies*, vol. II (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1975), 169–179; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 45–49; Gathercole, *Composition*, 61–63, 263–266.

2 Grosso, 158.

3 Valantasis, 98.

4 Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 155–156; cf. idem 'The Gospel of Thomas', 21, 22–23. K. Grobel, 'How Gnostic is the Gospel of Thomas?', *NTS* 8 (1962), 367–373 (373), observes that 'concern for one's fellow man is crystal clear in 25', even if 'brother' in this saying is not as broad as 'fellow man'.

earliest Christianity more widely.⁵ However, the form of the ‘royal law’—as James 2.8 puts it—differs from the normal wording in having ‘brother’ in place of ‘neighbour’ and ‘as your soul’ instead of ‘as yourself’. The former probably suggests a focus on the fellow-disciple as the object of love.⁶ Pokorný, however, claims that there is ‘not a limitation of love but rather its concrete embodiment’,⁷ and Hedrick sees a focus akin to that of the Johannine epistles.⁸

The use of ‘soul’ (ΨΥΧΗ) is not too surprising given *Thomas*’s frequent use of the word elsewhere (28.3; 87.2; 112.1, 2), and paraphrases of Lev. 19.18 elsewhere in early Christianity even in Greek can refer to the soul; so ‘soul’ here, if a Semitism, is an insignificant one.⁹ As a result, the Coptic of 25.1 should not be reduced to a simple reflexive, since the soul in *Thomas* (as suggested in GTh 87 and 112) is probably the most precious element in the person.

25.2 **Guard him like the pupil of your eye.** The reference to guarding the brother may be an allusion to Gen. 4.9 (‘am I my brother’s keeper?’). Plisch notes that there may be a connection with GTh 26, which envisages one brother taking the mote out of the eye of another; hence, guarding would have the sense of spiritual counsel.¹⁰ ‘Guarding’ gives greater specificity to the love, as protection, presumably in a spiritual sense.

On ‘the pupil of your eye’, cf. Deut. 32.10; Ps. 17.8; Prov. 7.2. Reference to the pupil may be a dead metaphor/ simile,¹¹ or is simply a very precious part of the body, or there may be a mythological reference. Clement takes the view (perhaps agreeing with Theodotus) that the pupil is a symbol of the elect seed: ‘We admit that the elect seed is both a spark kindled by the Logos and a pupil of the eye and a grain of mustard seed and leaven which unites in faith the genera which appear to be divided’ (*Exc. Theod.* 1). It may be that ‘pupil of your eye’ stands in parallel to the ‘your soul’ because the eye and the soul were frequently seen as analogous, as the means of perception of the intelligible and sensible realms respectively.¹² It may be hazardous to read too much into the phrase, however, since 25.2 is reminiscent of a stock phrase about guarding a favourite.

5 DeConick, 125–127, provides an extensive list of parallels to this saying.

6 Grant & Freedman, 146; R.McL. Wilson, *Studies in the Gospel of Thomas* (London: Mowbray, 1960), 114; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 46; Plisch, 90.

7 Pokorný, 70.

8 Hedrick, 64.

9 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 61–63, and in addition, *Barn.* 1.4; 4.6.

10 Plisch, 92.

11 Cf. Pokorný, 70–71, translating the phrase as ‘apple of your eye’.

12 Cf. Philo, *Spec.* 3.194. Philo also considers the relation of the pupil to the eye as analogous to that of reasoning to the soul (*Opif.* 66; *Prob.* 140).

Logion 26¹

26.2 ... καὶ τότε διαβλέψεις ἐκβαλεῖν τὸ κάρφος τὸ ἐν τῷ ὀφθαλμῷ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ σου.

26.2 ‘... and then you will see clearly to cast out the speck which is in your brother’s eye.’

26.1 πεχε Ꞇε πχη ετꞆῃ πβαλ ῃπεκ`σον κναγ εροϋ` πσοει δε ετꞆῃ πεκ-
βαλ` κναγ αν εροϋ` 26.2 ροταν εκωαννοϋχε ῃπσοει εβολ ρῃ πεκ`βαλ` τοτε
κναναϋ εβολ ενοϋχε ῃπχη εβολ ρῃ πβαλ ῃπεκσον

26.1 Jesus said, ‘The speck which is in your brother’s eye you see, but you do not see the beam which is in your eye. 26.2 When you cast out the beam from your eye, you will then be able to see to cast out the speck from your brother’s eye.’

Textual Comment

There is no substantive difference between the Coptic and the (partially preserved) Greek here, and indeed the language is extremely close, even extending to a shared τότε / τοτε. The introductory καὶ τότε in the Greek suggests that an imperative clause preceded the extant text. This almost certainly suggests a difference in the Greek’s and Coptic’s syntax: as the καὶ τότε implies, the Greek almost certainly had the structure ‘[cast out the beam] and then you will see ...’, whereas the Coptic has a temporal clause: ‘when you ... then you ...’. The Greek here has the same structure as the Synoptic parallels, and so probably reflects the earliest form of *Thomas’s* text. On the other hand, as grammarians often note, ‘imperative + future’ is a common way of expressing a condition, and so the difference between the Greek and the Coptic is small.² The variation between the Coptic’s ‘cast out the speck from’ and the Greek’s ‘cast out the speck which is in’ is also reflected in the variation between Matt. 7.5 and

1 Bibliography for GTh 26: Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 75–82; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 30–33.

2 E.g. Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 415 (§ 501, b & d).

Lk. 6.42.³ Here again, the Greek is likely, though not certain, to reflect the earliest form of the text.

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Matt. 7.3–5/Lk. 6.41–42) has a natural link with its predecessor, both in terminology ('brother', 'eye') and in theme (cf. also 'seeing' in GTh 27.2). GTh 26 might be classified as a specific instance of loving one's brother, namely not correcting him in a hypocritical manner. The second half of the saying does leave the possibility of correction open, however. Commentators differ on whether to see in this saying constructive teaching about what qualifies a disciple to correct another,⁴ or more negatively, a description of 'hypercritical persons being completely unaware of their own personal failings'.⁵ The lament in 26.1 points in the direction of the latter. This matches the point in Irenaeus's quotation of the saying, where it is a warning against heretics not to criticise orthodoxy, because in doing so, they are applying double standards.⁶

Notes

26.1 The speck which is in your brother's eye you see, but you do not see the beam which is in your eye. The Greek word for 'speck' is the rather rare word *κάρφος*, which first alerted Grenfell and Hunt to the connection between the 'logia' and the Gospels.⁷

3 DeConick, 128, and Grosso, 158, argue that the Coptic is assimilated to Matthew here, but this is not necessarily the case: Sahidic Luke also has the same phraseology in 6.42, which may suggest that it is just the simplest translation.

4 Valantasis, 99.

5 Hedrick, 65.

6 Irenaeus presents this saying of Jesus to the Marcionites, in response to their accusation that it was unjust of God in the OT to command the Israelites to plunder the Egyptians: Irenaeus responds that (a) it was still an unequal recompense for their years of servitude, and (b) everyone, even a Marcionite, enjoys some benefit from pagans, whether it is gifts from pagan relatives or friends, or the *pax romana*. As a result, the Marcionites should remove the mote from their own eyes before criticising what the Israelites did (*AH* 4.30.3).

7 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 33.

26.2 (Co + When you) cast out the beam from your eye, and then you will see clearly (Co + be able to see) to cast out the speck from your brother's eye. The nuance of διαβλέπω is 'see clearly'; in the Coptic, according to Crum, ⲛⲁϮ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ means 'see opp not see, be blind'.⁸ The comparative rarity of both κάρφος in 26.1 and διαβλέπω here means that a literary relationship with the Synoptics is very probable.⁹

8 Crum, 234.

9 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 31.

Logion 27¹

27.1 λέγει ἰς· ἐάν μὴ νηστεύσῃ(ε) τὸν κόσμον, οὐ μὴ εὑρητ(ε) τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θ̅υ· καὶ ἐάν μὴ σαββατίσῃτε τὸ σάββατον, οὐκ ὄψεσθε τὸ(ν) π̅ρα.

27.1 *Jesus says, 'Unless you fast with respect to the world, you will not find the kingdom of God. 27.2 And unless you observe the Sabbath, you will not see the Father.'*

27.1 ΕΤΕ(ΤΗ)ΤῆΡΗΝΗΣΤΕΥΕ ΕΠΚΟΣΜΟΣ ΤΕΤΝΑΡΕ ΔΝ̅ ΕΤΜῆΠΤΕΡΟ 27.2 ΕΤΕΤῆΤῆΙΡΕ ἸΠΣΑΜΒΑΤΟΝ ἸΣΑΒ̅ΒΑΤΟΝ ἸΤΕΤΝΑΝΔΥ ΔΝ̅ ΕΠΕΙΩΤ̅

27.1 *'Unless you fast from the world, you will not find the kingdom. 27.2 Unless you observe the Sabbath, you will not see the Father.'*

Textual Comment

Some resolve the difficulty of τὸν κόσμον (νηστεύειν + genitive is the norm) by appealing to a scribal error, although there are other explanations.² As it stands, the language of 27.1 is just about acceptable, taking τὸν κόσμον as an accusative

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 27:** A. Guillaumont, 'ΝΗΣΤΕΥΕΙΝ ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ' (*P. Oxy.* 1, verso, l. 5–6); *BIFAO* 61 (1962), 15–23; A. Baker, 'Fasting to the World', *JBL* 84 (1965), 291–294; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'Las prácticas de piedad en el Evangelio de Tomás (logion 6, 14, 27 y 104)', 295–319; Baarda, 'If You do not Sabbatize the Sabbath ...', 178–201; P. Brown, 'The Sabbath and the Week in Thomas 27', *NovT* 34 (1992), 193; A.D. DeConick, 'Fasting from the World: Encratite Soteriology in the Gospel of Thomas', in U. Bianchi, ed. *The Notion of "Religion" in Comparative Research. Selected Proceedings of the XVIth IAHR Congress, Rome, 3rd–8th September 1990* (Rome: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 1994), 425–440; eadem, *Seek to See Him: Ascent and Vision Mysticism in the Gospel of Thomas* (VCSupps; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 126–143; P. Nagel, "Wenn ihr nicht den Sabbat zum Sabbat macht"? Zu EvThom Logion 27', in A. Drost-Abgarjan, J. Tubach & M. Zakeri, eds. *Sprachen, Mythen, Mythizismen. Festschrift Walter Beltz zum 65. Geburtstag* (HBO 32; Halle: Institut für Orientalistik, 2001), 507–517; A. Le Boulluec, 'De l'Évangile des Égyptiens à l'Évangile selon Thomas', in L. Painchaud and P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi"*. Québec, 29–31 mai 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 251–275 (270–274).
 - ² Taylor, *The Oxyrhynchus Logia and the Apocryphal Gospels*, 11; Ménard, 120 (as a possibility). Some suggest a wooden translation of a Syriac original, or that τὸν κόσμον is an accusative of respect. See Gathercole, *Composition*, 63–65.

of respect. It is very hard to decide whether Coptic has omitted 'Jesus said', or the Greek has added it.³

The Greek text is longer than the Coptic, and is generally taken to qualify 'kingdom' with τῷ θ(εο)ῷ. However, the questionable nature of the reading θ(εο)ῷ here has often been neglected. In recent scholarship, for example, Attridge does not even underdot the *theta*;⁴ DeConick does have a dot, which in her system of symbols indicates 'likelihood'.⁵ Uro talks of a reference to God 'with certainty'.⁶ When the fragment was first discovered, Grenfell and Hunt did not underdot the letter, but V. Bartlet and J.R. Harris had questioned the reading θ(εο)ῷ, and Taylor saw a clear iota after βασιλείαν τοῦ, and read ιου, 'a natural, though apparently quite exceptional abbreviation of Ἰησοῦ, Jesus'.⁷ This reading has the disadvantage, however, that Jesus himself would be referring to the 'kingdom of Jesus'.⁸ Having examined the fragment at length, some of the concerns of Harris and Taylor are justified, and the reading ι(ησ)ου is possible, but θ(εο)ῷ is also possible, and makes much better sense.⁹

This has an important implication, namely that the author of the Greek *Thomas* did not have reservations about using the title θεός positively, whereas the Coptic translator appears to have removed the title (cf. 'kingdom of God' vs 'kingdom' *tout simple*). The remaining references to the title 'god' (νοῦτε) in the Coptic GTh 30 and 100 may be more ambiguous.

3 Ricchuiti's assertion that the shorter Coptic 'almost certainly' reflects the earliest form is untenable, at least in its confidence ('Tracking Thomas', 213).

4 Attridge, 'Appendix: The Greek Fragments', 118; Nordsieck, 123, and Pokorný, 72, simply assume that θ(εο)ῷ is the correct reading.

5 DeConick, x, 129.

6 Uro, *Thomas*, 42.

7 Taylor, *The Oxyrhynchus Logia and the Apocryphal Gospels*, 67–68.

8 Taylor's response that λέγει Ἰησοῦς could introduce a paraphrase, and have the sense, 'He means ...', is weak (*The Oxyrhynchus Logia and the Apocryphal Gospels*, 76).

9 It certainly appears on first glance that there is an ι, then a (small) abraded letter (which could be an omicron), then a clear υ. On the other hand, having agonised over this letter for a great deal of time while examining the fragment on 7 May 2013, I concluded that a *theta* is not impossible. There is a slight curve on the vertical line on the left hand side, which could suggest a *theta*, although its length is not easily paralleled with the other *thetas* in the fragment; if it is a *theta*, the middle of the letter is abraded from top to bottom (across the top of the letter, the papyrus is broken through to nothing, and a hole is visible); more positively, some of the ink traces on the right hand side of the letter are compatible with a *theta* (including what may be a middle bar projecting outside of the circle, as elsewhere with *thetas* in the fragment). I am grateful to Dr Bruce Barker-Benfield of the Bodleian library for giving me permission to examine the fragment.

The absence of a Coptic equivalent for the *καί* at the beginning of 27.2 in Greek is insignificant; translators often omitted particles such as this, and asyndeton is common in Coptic (see textual comment on GTh 6, and discussion above in Introduction, § 2.1).

Interpretation

Different solutions have been proposed for the interpretation of this saying. (1) Baarda has considered GTh 27 as best understood in a Gnostic framework, with 'Sabbath' being a term for the Gnostic demiurge or his creation, so that the saying refers to the rejection of the demiurge (27.1) and the material world (27.2): the logion is about 'the total denial of present reality of the Cosmos and its Creator to enable the finding of the true reality of the kingdom and the Father'.¹⁰ A Gnostic conception is certainly not necessary, however, and does not comport with the sense of *Thomas* elsewhere.¹¹ (2) By contrast, DeConick sees a traditional Jewish practice here, which connected celibacy and Sabbath observance.¹² This proposal is weakened by the fact that *Thomas* is elsewhere so critical of Jewish practices (e.g. GTh 14, 52–53; see further Introduction, § 10.4, above, and notes on 27.2 below). The best explanation is probably that adopted by the majority of commentators, namely (3) that both Sabbath and fasting have become metaphors for something else.

First, 'fasting' and 'Sabbath observance' are placed here in parallel as two soteriological conditions. Baarda and King rightly aver there must be some degree of synonymous parallelism here, even if not absolute: 'fasting' and 'sabbatizing' are closely related ideas: namely, abstaining from food and from work respectively.¹³ The same is true of the results in the apodoses: 'The parallelism of structure identifies fasting with observing the Sabbath and identifies finding the kingdom with seeing the father.'¹⁴

Secondly, there is a reinterpretation of fasting and Sabbath observance,¹⁵ indeed, one might even call this a radicalising extension of them: the true disciple is not merely to fast from certain foods, but from the whole world,

10 Baarda, 'Sabbatize the Sabbath', 199.

11 See Introduction, § 10 ('Religious Outlook'), and the Appended Note, 'Is *Thomas* Gnostic?'

12 DeConick, 130.

13 Baarda 'Sabbatize the Sabbath', 197.

14 King, 'Kingdom', 73–74. Cf. also Nagel, 'Wenn ihr nicht den Sabbat zum Sabbat macht', 510, with a helpful outline of the structure.

15 Grant & Freedman, 147; Nordsieck, 125.

and is not to rest from labour on the Sabbath, but from worldly concerns at all times.¹⁶ A total renunciation of anything associated with evil is enjoined. The *Epistle of Ptolemy to Flora* also juxtaposes reference to fasting and Sabbath, after a similar explanation of circumcision:

He wanted us to be circumcised, not in regard to our physical foreskin but in regard to our spiritual heart; to keep the Sabbath, for he wishes us to be idle in regard to evil works; to fast, not in physical fasting but in spiritual, in which there is abstinence from everything evil.

(Ptolemy, in Epiphanius, *Pan.* 33.5.11–13)

Here, Sabbath observance and fasting are metaphors for total rejection of anything unholy. (We will encounter in GTh 53 an interpretation of circumcision similar to that of Ptolemy here.) This parallel adds weight to the probability that in GTh 27, the true disciple is to practice a life of extreme abstinence from evil, and is to avoid the mechanisms of worldly interaction.¹⁷

The radicalising is seen further in that these are not merely practices for an elite, but soteriological conditions, as is evident from the apodoses in both parts of the saying ('unless ... you will not find the kingdom ...; unless ... you will not see the Father').¹⁸

This saying has featured in discussions of both *Thomas's* original language, and its milieu. Several scholars have commented that the phrase 'fast to the world' suggests a Syriac original, on the grounds that it woodenly translates the Syriac phrase *š'm l'm*;¹⁹ this view is not without its difficulties, however.²⁰ *Thomas* here clearly reflects a fairly widespread second-century tendency to interpret elements of Jewish law metaphorically. A final possibility (though only that), is that the close connection between fasting and Sabbath observance here may reflect a distance from Judaism: as Schäfer notes, 'The view of the Sabbath as a fast-day seems to have been widespread among Greek and Latin authors.'²¹

16 See the suggestion of this in Plisch, 93–94.

17 Ménard, 120–121.

18 DeConick, 'Fasting', 441.

19 Guillaumont argues that the object marker *l-* has been mistakenly taken to mark the direct object, whereas in Syriac it can also identify an indirect object. In Greek a direct object of *ἠστέυειν* is awkward. Guillaumont, 'NHSTEYEIN TON KOΣMON', 21.

20 Gathercole, *Composition*, 63–65.

21 P. Schäfer, *Judeophobia: Attitudes Toward the Jews in the Ancient World* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 89, noting Martial, *Epigrammata* 4.4; Suetonius, *Aug.* 76.

Notes

27.1 Unless you fast with respect to (Co: from) the world. As noted the Greek makes sense (by the skin of its teeth) only by taking τὸν κόσμον an accusative of respect; the Coptic is perfectly acceptable, though ἐπικοσμος should not be taken in a dative sense but as denoting distance.²² Here we have a metaphorical fasting, because its scope ('the world') is so greatly expanded. Traditional Jewish and Christian fasting is also seen in a negative light elsewhere in *Thomas* (GTh 6, 14, though cf. 104). There is an interesting parallel to this saying in Clement, *Strom.* 3.15.99.4, where those who have 'made themselves eunuchs from all sin for the sake of the kingdom of heaven' are glossed as 'those who fast to the world' (οἱ τοῦ κόσμου νηστεύοντες; cf. *Ecl. Proph.* 14.1: τῶν κοσμικῶν νηστεύειν). Here, 'fasting to the world' is placed in parallel with making oneself a eunuch for the kingdom, confirming a sense of radical asceticism and suggesting a metaphorical or 'spiritualised' meaning for the fast. *Barn.* 3.3 interprets fasting in the first instance as abstinence from evil (which is then broadened to wider moral concerns). In *Herm.* 54 [*Sim.* 5.1] the shepherd tells Hermas that the fast which he has been observing so far is useless and futile (ἀνωφελής ... μάταιος, 54 [*Sim.* 5.1].3–4), but that there is another, true fast:

Do nothing evil in your life, and serve the Lord with a pure heart. Keep his commandments, as you walk in his decrees, and let no evil desire enter your heart. Trust God. And if you do these things and fear him and restrain yourself from every evil deed, you will live to God. And if you do these things, you will accomplish a great fast, acceptable to God.

(54 [*Sim.* 5.1].5)

It is not clear that the phrase 'fasting from the world' has any specific reference to abstinence from sex.²³

The world (also mentioned in the following saying, GTh 28) in *Thomas* is a corpse (GTh 56), so abstinence from or rejection of it is a desideratum (cf. GTh 110). Sellew rightly points out that the kind of fasting envisaged in 27.1 has nothing to do with recognition of sinfulness.²⁴ Baker shows that the very similar Syriac idiom used several times in the *Liber Graduum* means abstaining

22 On ε- in this sense, see Guillaumont, 'NHSTETEYIN TON KOΣMON', 17.

23 Pace DeConick, 'Fasting', 433, and Le Boulluec, 'De l'Évangile des Égyptiens à l'Évangile selon Thomas', 271.

24 Sellew, 'Pious Practice and Social Formation', 52.

from the world *qua* evil:²⁵ a similar meaning is very likely here in *Thomas*. The command concerns withdrawal and disengagement from that world.²⁶

The presence of ‘world’ in sayings 27 and 28 (3×) may indicate a catchword connection between the sayings.

27.1 You will not find the kingdom of God (om. Co). The sense of the apodosis (cf. GTh 49; Matt. 13.44–46) is straightforwardly soteriological. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above. The reading ‘of God’ in the Greek is not a cast-iron certainty, but is probable (see Textual Comment above).

27.2 And (om. Co) unless you observe the Sabbath. There is almost certainly no specific reference to celibacy on the Sabbath in view here; DeConick’s observation to this effect is surprising given her assessment that *Thomas* advocates ‘a life of celibacy or singlehood’ in general.²⁷ Additionally, the meaning is probably not ‘maintaining the Sabbath all week long’.²⁸ ‘Sabbath’ (rather than ‘week’) is the more frequent sense of both the Greek and Coptic words: the phrase σαββατιζω τὸ σάββατον probably just means ‘observe Sabbath’.²⁹ Grobel’s argument, by contrast, that the reference is to literal Sabbath-observance is implausible.³⁰ It would be unlikely if a conventional statement about Sabbath observance were paired with such a radical statement about fasting, where one would expect a close parallelism. As a result, it is illegitimate to claim that ‘the phrase, “to observe the Sabbath as a Sabbath” present in *Thomas*, is indicative of its Palestinian heritage, suggesting that the Thomasites were tied closely to the “Hebrews” of the primitive Jerusalem organization of which James was the leader’.³¹ Bauckham has shown that there is ample parallel to the metaphorical use of Sabbath in the second century.³² The general view is correct, that the

25 Baker, ‘Fasting to the World’, 292–293; cf. also Guillaumont, ‘NHETEYEIN TON KOEMON’.

26 Valantasis, 101.

27 Pace DeConick, ‘Fasting from the World’, 433. She gives her view of the scope of *Thomas*’s encratism in a helpful summary at the bottom of the same page.

28 Brown, ‘Sabbath and the Week’, 193; cf. similarly Nagel, ‘Wenn ihr nicht den Sabbat zum Sabbat macht’, 513.

29 Lev. 23.32; 26.34–35; 2 Chr. 36.21. Cf. the use of σαββατιζω to refer to Sabbath observance in Ignatius, *Magn.* 9.1.

30 Grobel, ‘How Gnostic’, 373.

31 DeConick, ‘Fasting from the World’, 432.

32 See R.J. Bauckham, ‘Sabbath and Sunday in the Post-Apostolic Church’, in D.A. Carson, ed. *From Sabbath to Lord’s Day* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 251–298 (265–269). *Thomas*’s focus on the Sabbath as abstinence differs from the strand of interpretation which eschatologises the Sabbath, as e.g. Hebrews, and *Barn.* 15. Cf. also another sense of the Sabbath, as ‘the day from above, which has no night, and from the light which does not sink, because it is perfect’ (*Gos. Truth* 32,27–30).

reference is, as King puts it, to 'proper observance of the demands of the father',³³ though given the Sabbath imagery, these demands (at least in this saying) are probably patterns of abstinence. The verb σαββατιζω is used by Justin in a context about repentance (*Dial.* 12.3); Tertullian uses the loan-word *sabbatizare* to refer to abstinence from any ignoble deed (*Adv. Jud.* 4). Interestingly, both of them note the need to 'sabbatize' permanently, not just on one day in the week. In *Thomas* there may also be an implication of the need to cultivate the thoroughgoing 'rest' mentioned frequently in *Thomas* (GTh 50, 51, 60, 90), though this is less clear.

27.2 You will not see the Father. The reference to not seeing the Father (cf. Matt. 18.10; Jn 6.46; 14.9) is easily comprehensible as roughly synonymous with the apodosis in 27.1. The sanction is again soteriological: those who do not renounce the world and involvement in it will not rediscover the Father. It is not certain whether the vision of the Father here is also metaphorical or reflects a real expectation of visionary experience: see further on GTh 15 above. The theme of seeing appears either side of GTh 27 in both GTh 26 and 28.3.

33 King, 'Kingdom', 73. Cf. also Le Boulluec, 'De l'Évangile des Égyptiens à l'Évangile selon Thomas', 273 n. 105.

Logion 28¹

28.1 λέγει ἱ[σ]· ἔ[σ]την ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ κόσμου καὶ ἐν σαρκ[ε]ῖ ὥφθην αὐτοῖς 28.2 καὶ εὗρον πάντας μεθύοντας καὶ οὐδένα εὗρον δειψῶ(ν)τα ἐν αὐτοῖς 28.3 καὶ πονεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐπὶ τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνῶν ὅτι τυφλοὶ εἰσιν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶ[ν] καὶ! [οὐ] βλέπ[ουσιν] ...

28.1 *Jesus said, 'I s[t]ood in the midst of the world and I appeared to them in flesh. 28.2 And I found them all drunk, and I found none among them thirsting. 28.3 And my soul is distressed over the sons of men, because they are blind in thei[r] hearts and [do not] see ...'.*

28.1 πεχε ἰϭ̄ χε δειωρε ερατ̄ ρῆ τμητε ἡπκοσμος αγω δειογωνη εβολ ναγ ρῆ σαρξ 28.2 δειρε εροου τηρου εγταρε ἡπρε ελααγ ἡρητου εφοβε 28.3 αγω αταρχη † τκαε εχῆ ἡωηρε ἡρρωμε χε ρῆβλεεγε νε ρῆ πογρητ̄ αγω σεναγ εβολ αν χε ἡταγει επκοσμος εγωγοειτ̄ εγωγιε οη ετρογει εβολ ρῆ πκοσμος εγωγοειτ̄ 28.4 πλην τενοϋ σετορε ροταν εγωανηε πογηρητ̄ τοτε σεναρμετανοει

28.1 *Jesus said, 'I stood in the midst of the world and I appeared to them in flesh. 28.2 I found them all drunk; I found none among them thirsting. 28.3 And my soul is distressed over the sons of men, because they are blind in their hearts and do not see, for they came into the world empty, and they seek still to come out of the world empty. 28.4 However, now they are drunk, but when they cast off their wine, then they will repent.'*

1 **Bibliography for GTh 28:** Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 190–194; J.B. Bauer, 'De "labore" Salvatoris: Evang. Thom. Log. 28. 98. 107', *VD* 40 (1962), 123–130; Dunderberg, 'Thomas' I-Sayings and the Gospel of John', 46–49; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 132–135; Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 76–84; S. Witetschek, 'Scheinbar im Fleisch erschienen? Zur Frage nach doketistischer Christologie in EvThom 28', in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (BETHL; Leuven: Peeters, 2013), 563–573.

Textual Comment

The Greek, as far as it goes, and the Coptic are remarkably similar. All three loanwords in the Coptic (ⲕⲟⲥⲙⲟⲥ, ⲥⲁⲣϣ, ΥΓΧΗ) also appear in the Greek. The only real difference is that, as in previous sayings (cf. e.g. GTh 26.2; 27.2) the Coptic has a preference for asyndeton: neither of the two *καί*s in 28.2 in Greek has an equivalent word in Coptic (see Introduction, § 2: 'A Comparison of the Greek and Coptic Texts').

Interpretation

The two main foci of this logion, which may have a poetic structure,² are christology and anthropology. It is commonly asserted that this saying is the principal evidence of a sapiential christology in *Thomas*, with Jesus either Wisdom incarnate or a representative of Wisdom.³ It is difficult to assess how conscious this is, however, or whether the christological motifs in this saying are assembled from a patchwork of different traditions. Certainly the view of GTh 13.3, in which Jesus is characterised by Matthew as a wise philosopher, does not appear to be endorsed. One can certainly find parallels between GTh 28 and wisdom tradition, but the emphasis in this saying is on the state of the world rather than on the identity of Jesus (see also the discussion of GTh 90.1 below). The language in 28.1 is standard in descriptions of the incarnation and does not necessarily have any sapiential connotations.⁴ 1 Timothy's ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί (3.16), and *Barn.* 5.6 (ἐν σαρκί αὐτὸν φανερωθήναι) are very close to *Thomas* here.⁵ The exasperation of Jesus here fits with other sayings in *Thomas* as well (e.g. GTh 92), as does the more optimistic outlook at the end of the saying (cf. GTh 73).⁶ The characterisation of humanity as blind, empty and drunk provides the context for Jesus' distress, but the saying ends on an optimistic note.

2 Pokorný, 73. GTh 28.1–3 consists of four couplets, but 28.4 is more prosaic.

3 Davies, 'Christology and Protology', 674; cf. idem, *Christian Wisdom*; Nordsieck, 128: 'Repräsentant dieser Weisheit'; Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple*, 88–89; Nordsieck, 127.

4 Cf. Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 96; W.E. Arnal, 'The Rhetoric of Marginality: Apocalypticism, Gnosticism, and Sayings Gospels', *HTR* 88 (1995), 471–494 (473).

5 Cf. also *Barn.* 6.6/7, 9, 14; 14.5. Grosso, 159, refers to Jesus here in terms of heavenly pre-existence as in John's prologue.

6 Valantasis, 102–103, highlights the positive outlook of the saying.

Notes

28.1 I stood in the midst of the world. The presence of ‘world’ in sayings 27 and 28 (3×), as well perhaps as the ‘finding’ in 28.2, may indicate a catchword connection between the sayings (as perhaps also ‘seeing’ in GTh 27.2 and 28.3). The sense is probably not ‘in the centre of the world’ in a geographical sense, interesting though this suggestion is.⁷ The closest parallel is perhaps that of the risen Jesus standing ‘in the midst of’ (ἐν μέσῳ) the disciples in Luke 24.36 (cf. Matt. 18.20). The world here refers primarily to the people in it, hence the parallel between ‘in the midst of the world’ and ‘to them’ in 28.2.⁸

28.1 And I appeared to them in flesh. Scholars have generally now moved away from a docetic interpretation of this statement, such as can be found in Gärtner.⁹ (In this respect, one might draw attention to a movement in *Thomas* scholarship parallel to a similar tendency in scholarship on the *Gospel of Peter*.¹⁰) Indeed, it is even possible that there is some kind of *anti*-docetic intent here.¹¹ The reference is a general, imprecise one indicating that Jesus was in some sense ‘incarnate’ in flesh. The reference to standing in the midst of the world further reinforces the sense of contact between Jesus and material reality, as perhaps does Jesus’ pained soul in 28.3, although such emotions are also mythologised in systems without real incarnation.¹² The language of appearance is not necessarily suspicious. There are also references in *Thomas*

7 Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 62, suggesting the possibility of Palestine.

8 Hedrick, 67, rather than (as in Pokorný, 74) the material world.

9 Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 141–142. His attempt to drive a wedge between the language of *Thomas* and 1 Tim. 3.16 is strained. ὡφθην need not imply an appearance of something from the supernatural realm (cf. e.g. 1 Macc. 4.6; Ac. 7.26), and even if it did, this need not entail docetism. For criticism of the docetic interpretation, see Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple*, 86–87; R. Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La madre de Jesús en el Evangelio de Tomás (Logia 55, 99, 101 y 105)’; in idem, *Estudios sobre el Evangelio de Tomás* (Madrid: Editorial Ciudad Nueva, 1997), 271–284 (271), asserts that, for *Thomas*, Jesus had a carnal birth, even if there is no interest in his earthly mother. Hedrick, 67, however, maintains a view that Jesus is ‘not really human’. See further the discussion in Witetschek, ‘Scheinbar im Fleisch erschienen’.

10 See the discussions in P.M. Head, ‘On the Christology of the Gospel of Peter’, *VC* 46 (1992), 209–224; P. Foster, *The Gospel of Peter: Introduction, Critical Edition and Commentary* (TENTS; Leiden: Brill, 2010), 157–165.

11 Nordsieck, 127.

12 It is not necessarily the case that the incarnation is construed here in the same way as in, say, Paul or John.

to Jesus' mother and family (GTh 99, 101, 79).¹³ 'Flesh' appears also in GTh 29, perhaps as a catchword link.

28.2 And (om. Co) I found them all drunk, and (om. Co) I found none among them thirsting. Drunkenness can sometimes have a positive sense (e.g. *Odes Sol.* 11.7–8), but it is very clearly negative here, suggesting wilful stupidity. As noted above in connection with GTh 13, in Nag Hammadi writings drunkenness is a metaphor for ignorance (*Thom. Cont.* 139.37; *Ap. Jas.* 3.9) and imperfection (*Zost.* 73.12–15). Even more strongly, it can connote being under the influence of an evil delusion (Rev. 17.2; 18.3). The problem of the ignorance is compounded by ignorance of the ignorance: none are even thirsty, on which compare GTh 74's reference to the many around the well but none drinking from it. 'Thirsting' as recognising one's need is a traditional motif (*Isa.* 55.1; *Matt.* 5.6).

28.3 And my soul is distressed over the sons of men, because they are blind in their hearts and do not see. There is a hint here of possible loving concern for humanity in the reference to Jesus' pain, though the dominant sentiment is perhaps frustration. It is possible that the sense of *πονέῖν ἐπί* is 'labour on behalf of' (as in *Barn.* 20.2/ *Did.* 5.2), but equally possible linguistically (e.g. *Pss. Sol.* 2.14) and more likely in the context is a reference to anguish, given the subordinate clause ('... because they are blind etc.').¹⁴ 'Sons of men' is simply a reference to humanity in general. The image of humanity has changed from drunkenness to blindness, though the reference is still to ignorance. The last part of the Coptic might be translated 'cannot see' (see note on 26.2 above).

28.3 For they came into the world empty, and they seek still to come out of the world empty. The third image used after drunkenness and blindness is emptiness. This saying is a version of a widely distributed proverb which is both biblical and classical.¹⁵ The 'emptiness' in these other proverbs, however, refers to the lack of wealth possessed by the newborn or the dead. In this context in *Thomas* it is probably more the spiritual deficiency noted in GTh 67: the reference is to emptiness of knowledge.¹⁶

13 Riley, *Resurrection*, 128–129.

14 It is possible that GTh 28.3 is evidence for the application of *Isa.* 53.11 (*ἀπὸ τοῦ πόνου τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ*) to Jesus.

15 *Job* 1.21; cf. *Ps.* 48.18; *Eccl.* 5.15; *Philo, Spec.* 1.294–295; *1 Tim.* 6.7; *Polycarp, Phil.* 4.1; cf. *Seneca, Ep.* 102.25: *non licet plus efferre quam intuleris*. For bibliography, see I.H. Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles* (ICC; London/New York: Continuum, 1999), 635.

16 Cf. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 40, referring to emptiness of wisdom.

28.4 However, now they are drunk, but when they cast off their wine, then they will repent.¹⁷ The conclusion to the saying here is surprisingly optimistic in outlook. 'Casting off wine' here is probably an idiom for sobering up, rather than for stopping drinking.¹⁸ The advantage of the return to the imagery of drunkenness (over blindness and emptiness) is that drunkenness is naturally followed by sobering up. The final element returns to the more theological language of repentance, mentioned only here in *Thomas*. This accentuates the human agency involved in embracing the revelation of Jesus and the kingdom.

17 Hedrick's translation of the last phrase as a question ('will they then change their minds?') is unnecessarily negative.

18 So rightly Plisch, 95; Pokorný, 73 translates 'shake off their (intoxication from) wine'.

Logion 29¹

29.3 [...]ην πτωχ'ε'ί(α)(ν).

29.3 '... poverty.'

29.1 πεδεε ις εωδε ντα τσαρζ' ωωπε ετβε πνα ουωπηρε τε 29.2 εωδε πνα δε ετβε πωμα ουωπηρε νωπηρε πε 29.3 αλλα ανοκ' ιρ ωπηρε ιπαει δε πωζ ατρεινοσ ιμνιτρμμο ασογωζ ρν τεειμνιτηκε

29.1 *Jesus said, 'If the flesh has come into being because of the spirit, it is a marvel! 29.2 And if the spirit because of the body, it is a marvel indeed! 29.3 But I do marvel at how this great wealth has come to dwell in this poverty!'*

Textual Comment

The Greek here is so fragmentary that the only complete word preserved is the last 'poverty' (πτωχείαν), and so P. Oxy. I 1 is of no use for the interpretation here.

Interpretation

The principal interpretative questions in this enigmatic trilogy are twofold. First, the nature of the conditionals in 29.1–2, and secondly, the implications of this decision for *Thomas's* theology of the relationship between spirit and body.

On the first point, some have proposed (1) that 29.1 and 29.2 are alternatives; others (2) that they might both be true; still others (3) that neither can be true.² It is often thought that the particle introducing both conditional clauses (εωδε, 'if') is used to introduce a factual presupposition, that is, it is strictly speaking

1 **Bibliography for GTh 29:** Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 194–197; Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 186–190.

2 Grant & Freedman, 148; Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 194–195; Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 99; Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 189; Hedrick, 70; Grosso, 161.

not a condition but a presupposition ('since ...', 'if, as is the case, ...');³ this would entail view (2) above. This sense of εἰς is not consistent, however.⁴ There is little within *Thomas* to suggest that the two statements are true. Although it is difficult to be certain, perhaps the best explanation of 29.1–2—as is taken perhaps by the majority—is that they are 'two rejected alternatives, arranged in ascending order of improbability'.⁵ The reason for this is an apparent contrast with the reality expressed in 29.3. It is especially unlikely that, as Nordsieck argues, a positive relation between soul and body is assumed here.⁶

Secondly, one can ask whether 29.3 might presuppose a particular view of the soul-spirit's descent into bodies. There are various conceptions of the fall of the soul (or spirit) in the intellectual environment of *Thomas*. The understanding of the fall of the soul particular to *Thomas* is unclear, if indeed the author had a worked out idea: for some options, see Introduction, §10.1. What is clear in this saying is that the close relation of soul-spirit and body-flesh is something extremely regrettable, as GTh 112 makes clear: 'Woe to the flesh which hangs on the soul. Woe to the soul which hangs on the flesh.' The 'astonishment' in GTh 29 is therefore at something shocking, rather than at something wonderful.

Notes

29.1 If the flesh has come into being because of the spirit, it is a marvel! What is clear in this saying is the superiority of the spirit to the flesh in the heavenly/cosmic hierarchy.⁷ A difficulty lies in whether the preposition 'because of' (εἰς) should be understood in a causal sense ('as a result of the spirit') or in a final sense ('for the sake of the spirit').⁸ Zöckler sees an allusion to Genesis 2.7 and the creation of the flesh so that it can carry the infused breath of God.⁹

3 Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 409–410 (§§ 494–495); Crum, 63b.

4 A brief examination of the first half of Matthew's gospel in Sahidic shows a factual sense in 4.3, 6; 6.30; 7.11; 8.31(?); 10.25; 11.14(?); 12.28; 14.28(?), and a conditional sense in 5.29, 30; 6.23; 11.21(?); 12.26, 27. Indeed, in the last two cases, the conditions are clearly not met ('if Satan casts out Satan ...'; 'if I cast out demons by Beelzebul ...').

5 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 99.

6 Nordsieck, 130.

7 It is not that the flesh is positive here (*pace* Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 73); otherwise there would be no 'wonder'.

8 A point helpfully and clearly expressed in Nordsieck, 130.

9 Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 122.

Others have seen a reference to the incarnate flesh of Jesus.¹⁰ The main point is that the superiority of the spirit is maintained, as in GTh 29.3. The reference to 'flesh' may be a catchword link, picking up the use in GTh 28.

29.2 And if the spirit because of the body, it is a marvel indeed! This more elliptical contrasting statement is an even more paradoxical one. The hypothetical wonderment is at the idea that something in the fleshly realm could attract the generation of spirit.¹¹

29.3 But I do marvel at how this great wealth has come to dwell in this poverty! Plisch remarks that such an expression of 'wondering bewilderment' cannot have referred originally to Jesus, but must have been a commentator's gloss.¹² It is not so unimaginable, however: Jesus can be amazed in the Synoptic tradition as well (Mk 6.6; Matt. 8.10/ Lk. 7.9). The woeful situation of the soul within the body is a common-place.¹³ Some scholars have also, probably wrongly, seen a reference to incarnation in 29.3.¹⁴ A link with GTh 28 is unlikely, since the language of GTh 29 is suggestive of a cosmogonic or anthropological statement, rather than one specifically christological.

10 Valantasis, 103–104 (a possibility); Pokorný, 75.

11 DeConick, 135; *pace* Pokorný, 75, who writes of the work of spiritual conversions being implied here.

12 Plisch, 96.

13 Cf. *Gos. Phil.* 56,20–26; *Auth. Teach.* 27,25–27: 'Our soul is indeed ill, because she dwells in a house of poverty'.

14 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 99.

Logion 30¹

30.1 [λέγ]ει [ἰς· ὅπ]ου ἕαν ὦσιν [τρ]ε[ῖς], ε[ἰσὶν] θεοί· **30.2** καὶ [ὄπ]ο[υ] ε[ἰς] ἔστιν μόνος, [λέ]γω· ἐγὼ εἰμι μετ' αὐτ[οῦ]. **30.3/77.3** ἔγει[ρ]ον τὸν λίθο(ν) καὶ κεῖ [ε]ύρησεις με· **30.4/77.2** σχίσον τὸ ξύλον καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ εἰμι.
(Restoration *exempli gratia*.)

30.1 [*Jesus sa*]id, '[*Whe*]re there are [*three*], *th[ey are] gods*. **30.2** *And [where] there is o[ne] alone, I s[ay] I am with hi[m]*. **30.3/77.3** *Li[f]t the stone and you will [f]ind me*. **30.4/77.2** *Split the wood and I am there*.'

30.1 πε.εε ἰϛ̄ χε πμα εγῆ ὡομτ ἡνογτε ἡμαγ ρῆνογτε νε **30.2** πμα εγῆ σναγ η ογα ανοκ' †ϡοοπ' ημαγ' [cf. 77.2 πωρ ἡνογϡε ανοκ' †ἡμαγ 77.3 ϡι ἡπωνα ερραῖ αγω τετναρε εροει ἡμαγ]

30.1 *Jesus said, 'Where there are three gods, they are gods. 30.2 Where there are two or one, I am with him.'* [cf. 77.2 *Split wood, I am there; 77.3 lift the stone and you will find me there.*]

Textual Comment

This is probably the most complicated saying from a text-critical point of view, both because it is one of the two cases where there is considerable difference between the Greek and Coptic (cf. also GTh 36), and because the Greek text is extremely difficult to read at important points.

We will first address the reading of the Greek text, since only then will we be able to compare it with the Coptic.

30.1 at least can be reconstructed so that the Greek and Coptic say more or less the same thing:

1 **Bibliography for GTh 30:** A.F. Walls, 'Stone and Wood in Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 1', *VC* 16 (1962), 71–76; J. Jeremias, *The Unknown Sayings of Jesus* (London: SPCK, 21964), 106–111; C.H. Roberts, 'The Gospel of Thomas: Logion 30a', *JTS* 21 (1970), 91–92; B. Englezakis, 'Thomas, Logion 30', *NTS* 25 (1978–1979), 262–272; H.W. Attridge, 'The Original Text of *Gos. Thom.*, Saying 30', *BASP* (1979), 153–157; T. Onuki, 'Das Logion 77 des koptischen *Thomasevangeliums* und der gnostische Animismus', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 294–317; Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 149–171.

Coptic:	Jesus said, 'Where there are three gods, they are gods.'
Guillaumont:	[λέγ]ει [Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς· ὅπ]ου ἐὰν ὦσιν [γ' θ]ε[οί], ε[ισὶν] θεοί:
Attridge:	[λέγ]ει [Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς· ὅπ]ου ἐὰν ὦσιν [τρ]ε[ίς], ε[ισὶν] ἄθεοι:
SG:	[λέγ]ει [Ἰ(ησοῦ)ς· ὅπ]ου ἐὰν ὦσιν [... τρ]ε[ίς], ε[ισὶν] θεοί:

Roberts states that [τρ]ε[ίς] is preferable to [γ' θ]ε[οί], since it would be odd to have a numeral symbol γ' and then later ε[ίς] written in full.² On the other hand, [τρ] may be too short, as there ought to be 3–4 letters rather than just two. As far as the troublesome final characters are concerned ('gods', or 'atheists!'), Roberts reports on his autopsy (in 1969 or 1970) that the traces are compatible with either εισινθεοι or εισιναθεοι.³ In my own inspection of the manuscript, I found it very difficult to see an *alpha* before θεοι.⁴ Because of the Coptic, and the strangeness of a reference to ἄθεοι, θεοί is more probable. In any case, an interpretation can scarcely assume the presence of 'atheists'.

30.2 is less controversial. The reading is very likely to be καὶ [ὄπ]ο[υ] ε[ίς] ἐστιν μόνος, [λέ]γω· ἐγὼ εἶμι μετ' αὐτ[οῦ]. Roberts criticised Marcovich's reading η δυο in place of λεγω, on the grounds that it emends a Greek which makes sense so that it conforms to a Coptic text which does not.⁵ Roberts' autopsy also confirmed to him that the υ in Marcovich's δυο was impossible.⁶

What then are the similarities and differences between the Greek and the Coptic? As displayed above, we have a difference of order between the Coptic and P. Oxy. I 1. There has been a secondary joining of 30.3–4 to 77, on the basis of a Coptic catchword link (πῶε; see on GTh 77). It is unclear whether there is any theological consequence to this change of order, though there may be an amplified impression of pantheism in the Coptic. The Coptic's extra 'gods' in 30.1 is probably the result of a scribal error. The untranslated καὶ at the beginning of 30.2 is just another example of Coptic's preference for asyndetic

2 Roberts, 'Logion 30a', 91.

3 Roberts, 'Logion 30a', 92 n. 1.

4 22.ix.2008. Before θεοι, there is quite a lot of ink across the top (which is also visible in Bernhard's photo). Hence, I agree with DeConick, 136, that Attridge's reading (following Grenfell & Hunt's second reading) is unlikely. However, her alternative suggestion is not easier to substantiate: the lettering is just extremely unclear for both the letters preceding θεοι. It is interesting that Grenfell & Hunt initially did not suggest a letter before θεοι here, but then later did.

5 Roberts, 'Logion 30a', 91.

6 Roberts, 'Logion 30a', 91–92.

linkage.⁷ The only clear difference of substance is that the Coptic has made the condition of Jesus' presence 'two or one' in 30.2, rather than just one. In the absence of any reason to the contrary, it is probably easiest to see the Coptic's 'two or' as an addition. This may even have come in at a late stage in the Coptic, because the Coptic retains 'with *him*' singular.

Interpretation

Despite all the difficulties both with the text and the interpretation of this saying, as Englezakis notes, the issue begins with the question of what defines a minyan.⁸ There seems to be some contrast between a negatively valued 'three' in 30.1 and a positively valued 'one' in 30.2. The reduction of the minyan to 'one' in the Greek comports nicely with *Thomas's* emphasis on being solitary: the requirement of two or three in Matthew 18.20 ('For where there are two or three gathered in my name, I am there in their midst') is probably seen as unnecessary and even misguided. Whatever the polemic or otherwise in 30.1, there is a defence in 30.2 of solitarism,⁹ and this is amplified in 30.3–4 with the emphasis on Jesus' presence with the individual: Jesus is equally manifest in mundane situations such as making a fire ('split the wood') or building work ('lift the stone').

There is almost certainly some sort of relationship between *Thomas's* saying and the roughly contemporaneous options for interpreting Matthew 18.20 as reported by Clement of Alexandria. One interpretation which he notes records the demiurge being with the three, i.e. husband, wife and child (cf. 30.1), but that the saviour God is present with the single elect (cf. 30.2). It is difficult to know the precise relationship between Clement's report and GTh 30, however.¹⁰

7 See above on e.g. 26.2; 27.2, and Introduction, § 2: 'A Comparison of the Greek and Coptic Texts'.

8 Englezakis, 'Thomas, Logion 30', 264.

9 Englezakis, 'Thomas, Logion 30', 267.

10 *Strom.* 3.10.68–70. Clement reports various explanations of the 'three'. For additional information about the early interpretation of the Matthew passage, see C. Andresen, "Ubi tres, ecclesia est, licet laici": Kirchengeschichtliche Reflexionen zu einem Satz des Montanisten Tertullian *Matt 18:20*, in H. Schröer & G. Müller, eds. *Vom Amt des Laien in Kirche und Theologie* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 103–121.

Notes

30.1 Where there are three (Co: + gods), they are gods. The translation of the main clause as ‘... they are in God’ is impossible.¹¹ Since the Coptic’s additional ‘gods’ is probably the result of a scribal error, it can be discounted. Some have seen here a criticism of Christian trinitarian doctrine,¹² but if this were a concern of the author, *Thomas’s* incorporation of GTh 44 (with its reference to blasphemy of Father, Son and Spirit) would be something of an own goal. Hedrick’s allusion to polytheism perhaps rests too much on a context of Egyptian tritheism.¹³ A reference to three gods as judges is unlikely, as it rests too much on the shaky foundation of a Semitic original.¹⁴ Additionally, the Greek makes best sense as referring to three *people*. A polemical reference to a family of husband, wife and child, as we saw discussed by Clement, is a possibility. Plisch considers 30.1 hopelessly corrupt.¹⁵ This may be correct. The intention in the saying is probably critical of the ‘three’, but this is unclear in the texts as they stand.

30.2 And (om. Co) where there is one alone (Co: are two or one), I say (om. Co) I am with him. Most see an antithetical relationship between 30.1 and 2, but DeConick sees a reference to divine presence ‘whenever they gathered together and studied as well as whenever they were alone.’¹⁶ The point is probably an emphasis on Jesus’ presence with the individual, however, and a rewriting of Matthew 18.20 in that light. In its context in Matthew 18.15–20, the reference is to the number required to act as a ‘court’ of church discipline, but here the concern is the presence of Jesus in general.

30.3–4 Lift the stone and you will find me (Co + there). Split the (om. Co) wood, and (om. Co) I am there. Some have seen here a pantheistic worldview;¹⁷ others focus on Jesus’ omnipresence.¹⁸ A different view is taken by Jere-

11 W.G. Morrice, *Hidden Sayings of Jesus: Words Attributed to Jesus outside the Four Gospels* (London: SPCK, 1997), 121. This would require εἰν ἰν ὁυτῆ for ‘in God’ (the article is obligatory).

12 Grant & Freedman, 149; Pokorný, 76.

13 Hedrick, 71.

14 For discussion of this view (taken by Guillaumont, DeConick and, similarly, Englezakis), see Gathercole, *Composition*, 66–67.

15 Plisch, 97.

16 DeConick, 137.

17 Walls, ‘Stone and Wood’, refers to the possibility of a pantheistic, or, better, a ‘panchristic’ sense (72); also E.E. Popkes, “‘Ich bin das Licht’—Erwägungen zur Verhältnisbestimmung des Thomasevangeliums und der johanneischen Schriften anhand der Lichtmetaphorik’, in J. Frey, ed. *Kontexte des Johannesevangeliums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2004), 641–674 (653), though perhaps just in reference to GTh 77.

18 Pokorný, 76.

mias, who sees a commendation of quotidian labour (perhaps contra Eccl. 10.9).¹⁹ One might think this strange in the rarefied spiritual ambience of *Thomas*, however. Walls sees a metaphorical reference to (Christian) sacrifice, the stone representing the metaphorical altar and the wood the fire.²⁰ 'Raising the stone, cleaving the wood, the Gnostic offers true worship and thanksgiving. He alone knows how to offer the true, spiritual sacrifice: and, when he does so, Jesus is there.'²¹ This is ingenious, but stone and wood are not the most natural images of sacrifice. A reference to omnipresence is possible, though 30.3–4 are enigmatic: these statements probably simply refer to the perpetual presence of Jesus with the true disciple in all circumstances, however mundane. When these words are transplanted into GTh 77, a strong sense of omnipresence or even of panchristism is highly probable.

19 Jeremias, *Unknown Sayings*, 110–111.

20 Walls, 'Stone and Wood', 73.

21 Walls, 'Stone and Wood', 76.

Logion 31¹

31.1 λέγει ἰς· οὐκ ἔστιν δεκτὸς προφήτης ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ, 31.2 οὐδὲ ἰατρὸς ποιεῖ θεραπείας εἰς τοὺς γινώσκοντας αὐτόν.

31.1 *Jesus said, 'A prophet is not acceptable in his own homeland, 31.2 nor does a doctor provide treatments for those who know him.'*

31.1 πεχε ἰς μῆ προφήτης ὡνπ ἕμ πεφμε 31.2 μαρε σοειν ῤεραπεγε ἡνετ'σοογν ἡμοϝ`

31.1 *Jesus said, 'A prophet is not acceptable in his own village. 31.2 A doctor does not treat those who know him.'*

Textual Comment

The Greek and Coptic essentially agree. ὡνπ is an acceptable translation for δεκτός (δεκτός is consistently translated by the Sahidic this way in all its NT occurrences). There is similarly no difficulty with φμε as an equivalent of πατρίς.² In fact, over half of the cases of πατρίς in the Greek NT (5 out of 8) are translated with φμε in the Sahidic version.³ The Greek text of 31.2 is introduced with οὐδέ, but this is apparently another case—now becoming a regular pattern—in which Coptic prefers asyndeton.

Interpretation

This is the first of a series of *impossibilia*, or proverbial sayings which describe things which can or should never happen (GTh 31–35; cf. also 36.4).⁴ Here we

1 **Bibliography for GTh 31:** J.B. Bauer, 'Das "Regelwort" Mk 6,4par und EvThom 31', *BZ* 41 (1997), 95–98.

2 Pace J. Horman, *A Common Written Greek Source for Mark & Thomas* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2011), 91; Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas', 218.

3 See further Bauer, 'Regelwort', 97, with a slightly different count of 6. On my count 3 out of the 8 instances of πατρίς (Mk 6.1, 4; Heb. 11.14) are, interestingly, rendered with ποικ.

4 H.D. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3–7:27 and Luke 6:20–49)* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 161, 629.

notice the discomfort (31.1) and ineffectiveness (31.2) of the true disciple among his family and local acquaintances. The two halves of the section are clearly very closely related in sense: prophet corresponds to doctor, and homeland or home-town corresponds to 'those who know him'. This saying attests simultaneously to a missionary outlook, but also to a mood of extreme pessimism where one's home turf is concerned; it thus prepares the disciple for rejection.

Notes

31.1 A prophet is not acceptable in his own homeland (Co: village). There is no important difference between Greek and Coptic versions of *Thomas* here. Strictly speaking, *πατρις* can refer either to a hometown (as in the Coptic) or to a home region more widely. Unlike in the NT parallels (the saying appears in all four NT Gospels: Mk 6.4; Matt. 13.57; Lk. 4.24; Jn 4.44), the reference may well not be to Jesus himself, especially given the negative valuation of prophets in GTh 52 and 88 (cf. that of *αγγελος* in GTh 13).⁵ It is likely, however, that the reference is to disciples of the *Thomas* movement.⁶ The phrasing of the Greek probably reflects Lukan redaction.⁷

31.2 Nor does a doctor provide treatments for (Co: A doctor does not treat) those who know him. In the second half of the saying (unfamiliar from the NT Gospels, though cf. the transition in Mk 6.4–5), we move from the discomfort to the ineffectiveness of the Thomasine disciple among his family and local acquaintances. 'Provide treatments for' reflects the slightly unusual, and perhaps ambiguous Greek phrase *ποιεῖν θεραπειὰς εἰς*; the reference could also be to the doctor's inability to heal an acquaintance.

5 Hedrick, 78, takes the prophet to be the living Jesus, referring to GTh 28; Nordsieck, 135, also sees an autobiographical reference, though primarily in connection with the historical Jesus.

6 See Plisch, 100, for parallels in the relations of the philosopher to his *πατρις*.

7 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 187–188. The saying is likely to have developed from one of the references to the impossibility of healing adjacent to the Synoptic parallels to 31.1: Mark follows the rejected prophet saying with a comment on Jesus' inability to perform miracles, with the exception of a few healings; Luke 4.24 is preceded by Jesus attributing to his neighbours 'Physician, heal yourself', and a request that he do miracles in his home town as he did in Capernaum. This Lukan parallel is again closer.

The aphorism is odd, because, like the next logion which says that a fortified city cannot fall, it is patently untrue.⁸ Geoffrey Lloyd has commented to me on this saying: ‘Very curious. No parallel for that remark about doctors not treating those who know them comes to mind, and plenty of texts that contradict the principle. Some doctors travelled extensively and when they first arrived in a new town they would clearly not be known to their patients. But they soon would be, and if the Gos. Thom. principle had been applied, they would soon be out of a job.’⁹ For Galen, it was necessary to have taken the pulse of a patient *before* he gets ill in order to assess it when he is ill.¹⁰ The idea that a doctor knows that it is unwise to practise medicine among relatives and friends, given the danger of a loss of objectivity, is perhaps a modern imposition.¹¹ Overall, however, GTh 31.2 clearly amplifies the point made in 31.1: the Thomasine disciple is doomed to be an ineffective missionary among those who think they *know* him, but do not really understand.¹²

8 Patients were clearly known to their household or court physicians, on which see R. Jackson, *Doctors and Diseases in the Roman Empire* (London: British Museum Publications, 1988), 56–57, 61, and J. Scarborough, *Roman Medicine* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), 111. Emperors had their own physicians such as Antonius Musa (Augustus’s), Charicles (Tiberius’s), Xenophon of Cos (Claudius’s) and Galen (Marcus Aurelius’s). Cicero apparently had a close friendship with his doctor (*Ad Att.* xv.1a.1; *Ad Fam.* XIII, 20); also Seneca, *Ben.* VI 15.4.

9 Private email correspondence (28.ii.2008).

10 Galen, *On the Pulse for Beginners*: see C.G. Kühn, *Claudii Galeni Opera Omnia* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1965), VIII.642–643. Again, I am grateful to Geoffrey Lloyd for this observation.

11 Pace Bauer, ‘Das Regelwort’, 98. Bauer cites a renowned modern surgeon who states that he would only treat a family member in an emergency. Compare the report of the General Medical Council (UK), ‘Doctors should not treat themselves or their families’ (July 1998): ‘It is good practice for doctors and their families to be registered with a general practitioner outside the family, who takes responsibility for their health care. This gives the doctor and family members ready access to objective advice and avoids the conflicts of interest that can arise when doctors treat themselves or those close to them.’

12 Valantasis, 107, contrasts ‘false knowledge based on familiarity’ with true knowledge.

Logion 32¹

λέγει ἰς· πόλις οἰκοδομημένη ἐπ' ἄκρον [ῥ]ῥυς ὑψηλοῦ[ς] καὶ ἐστρηγμένη οὔτε πε[σ]εῖν δύναται οὔτε κρυ[β]ῆναι.

Jesus says, 'A city built upon a high [m]ountain, and fortified, can neither fall nor be hidden.'

πεδε ἰς δε ογπολις εγκωτ ἡμος ριχῆ ογτοογ εφχοσε εσταδρηγ ἡῆ βομ
ἡρσε ογδε σναδρωπῆ αν

Jesus says, 'A city built upon a high mountain, fortified, cannot fall. Nor can it be hidden.'

Textual Comment

Again, the Greek's καί is not translated (see above on asyndeton in textual comment on GTh 6.1). The Coptic also changes the syntax slightly from οὔτε X οὔτε Y in the Greek, to X ογδε Y. Greek ἐπ' ἄκρον is adequately translated by ριχῆ; the former is a very common idiom in Greek.²

Interpretation

Two elements are important in GTh 32 (cf. Matt. 5.14): indestructibility and missionary attraction, or as Grosso puts it, mission from a standpoint of solidity and transcendence of ordinary social relations.³ Like GTh 31 (and the whole series in 31–35), this saying is an 'impossibility'. The key difference from its Matthean counterpart lies in the shift from an eschatological community as the illuminated city on the hill,⁴ to—what? *Thomas's* version is more enigmatic, in

1 **Bibliography for GTh 32:** There are no special studies of this logion, to my knowledge. See the commentaries, ad loc.

2 *Pace* Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas', 219: the Greek is not an expansion.

3 Grosso, 164.

4 G. von Rad, 'City on a Hill', in idem, *The Problem of the Hexateuch and other Essays* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1966), 232–242 (242).

that it is not clear to what his mountain is an analogy. Valantasis sees the city as a symbol of the ‘community under its corporate aspect’,⁵ but it is more probably the individual disciple. The point is (a) the indestructibility of the true disciple because he transcends the slings and arrows both of everyday circumstances and of spiritual attack and persecution, and (b) the potential of the disciple to be identified by outsiders as a source of revelation.

Notes

A city built upon a high mountain. The mountain is not specified as ‘high’ in the Matthean parallel. The height corresponds to the impossibility of hiding the city at the end of the saying.

And (om. Co) fortified. Compare the plus in GTh 40 (par. Matt. 15.13), where the vine ‘is not established’ (ἐστὰ`χρηγ λη). On the theme of strength in *Thomas*, see further comment on GTh 35 and 98.

Can neither (Co: Cannot) fall. The oddity of this addition to the Matthean saying is that it renders it false on a literal level (cf. also the preceding GTh 31.2).⁶ At the metaphorical level, however, the point is the invulnerability of the true disciple. Cf. the theme of ‘standing’ in *Thomas* (see comment on GTh 16.4).

Nor (Co + can it) be hidden. In addition to the Matthean parallel, cf. *1 En.* 9.5. The point here seems to relate not so much to the hidden/ revealed motif in *Thomas* (see comment on GTh 5), but to the missionary outlook (see notes above on 14.4). There may be a catchword link between χρυβήγαλι/ ζων here, and μα εφρηπ (the ‘hidden place’) in GTh 33.2.

⁵ Valantasis, 107.

⁶ Grant & Freedman, 150.

Logion 33¹

33.1 λέγει ἰς· (ὁ) ἀκούεις [ε]ἰς τὸ ἐν ᾧτίον σου τοῦ [...]

33.1 Jesus said, ‘(What) you hear [i]n your one ear [...].’

33.1 πεχε ἰς πετῆκνασῶτῃ εροϋ ρῃ πεκῆμααχε ρῃ πεκεμααχε ταϱε οειϱ)
ἡμοϱ ριχῆ νετῆχενεπϱ 33.2 μαρε λααϱ γαρ χερε ρηβς ἡϱκααϱ ρα μααχε
οϱδε μαϱκααϱ ρῃ μα εϱρηπῆ 33.3 αλλα εϱαρεϱκααϱ ριχῆ τλχνια δεκαα
οϱον ηημῆ ετβηκῆ εροϱν αϱω ετῆημη εβολ εϱηαναϱ απεϱοϱοειη

33.1 *Jesus said, ‘Whatever you hear in your ear, in the other ear proclaim on your rooftops. 33.2 For no-one lights a lamp and places it under a bushel, nor does he put it in a secret place. 33.3 Rather he places it upon its lampstand so that everyone who enters and goes out will see its light.’*

Textual Comment

Editors usually supply a relative pronoun at the beginning of the Greek version (hence, (ὁ) ἀκούεις); the Coptic’s future (πετῆκνα-) makes the phrase indefinite. The Coptic text is often taken to be corrupt, with ‘in the other ear’ (ρῃ πεκεμααχε) thought to be a near dittography.² The Greek suggests that the Coptic may be an accurate translation of it, however: ‘in your *one* ear’ might imply another ear to follow. Of the Greek text that does survive, it is roughly the same in sense as the Coptic. The Coptic translation results in a pun: 33.1 appears to be linked to 33.2 by the word μααχε (‘ear’ in 33.1, and ‘bushel’ in 33.2). This might suggest that 33.2–3 had originally been placed elsewhere in the Greek or simply added at a Coptic stage.³ However, the Naassenes also juxtaposed the motifs of

1 **Bibliography for GTh 33:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 79–85; M. Marcovich, ‘Bedeutung der Motive des Volksglaubens für die Interpretation’, *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica* 8 (1969), 22–36.

2 E.g. Pokorný, 79; Hedrick, 74. Callahan, ‘No Rhyme or Reason’, 417, makes the intriguing suggestion that the text of 33.1 should be divided: πετῆκνασῶτῃ εροϋ ρῃ πεκῆμααχε ρῃ πεκεμα, αχε. ταϱε οειϱ) ἡμοϱ ριχῆ νετῆχενεπϱ; hence: ‘What you hear in your ear, in another place (ρῃ πεκεμα) speak (αχε). Proclaim it on your roofs.’ This might make the text slightly easier, but the phrase ‘in another place’ here would be a little odd.

3 So S.J. Patterson, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Historical Jesus’, in A.F. Gregory & C.M.

proclaiming from the rooftops and not hiding a light under a bushel (they are not adjacent in the Synoptic parallels): this may well suggest that they knew such a collocation in Greek already (possibly in *Thomas*).⁴ One can compare here Leipoldt's alleged Coptic word-play in GTh 4, but where, again, both Coptic words are natural translations of the Greek: see note above on GTh 4.1.

Interpretation

This saying is part of a sequence of 'impossibilities' (GTh 31–35; see comment on 31), with two impossibilities here in GTh 33.2. The first part of this saying (cf. Matt. 10.27/ Lk. 12.3) seems to give instruction to missionising, which is then grounded in 33.2–3 (cf. Mk 4.21; Matt. 5.15; Lk. 8.16; 11.33) in the luminescent identity of the elect disciple.⁵ There is thus a link in theme to GTh 32, with the former saying perhaps presupposing centripetal mission (or *attraction*), the present saying commanding centrifugal evangelising.⁶ Marcovich's interpretation, that 'the disciples of the Gnostic Jesus are expected to hear canonical sayings in one ear, and their Gnostic interpretation in the other' has the advantage of not appealing (uncharacteristically!) to textual corruption.⁷ It does not do justice, however, to the fact that the Coptic refers to *proclaiming*, rather than hearing, with the ear.

Notes

33.1 What (Co: Whatever) you hear in your one (om. Co) ear, in the other ear proclaim on your rooftops. With the exception of the reference to 'in the other ear', this instruction makes sense: the disciple is to pass on what he has heard. The 'other ear' is baffling.

Tuckett, eds. *The Oxford Handbook to the Early Christian Apocrypha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming, 2015).

4 See Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.7.28.

5 Grosso, 165, comments that 33.1 is an invitation to mission, which is then insisted upon in 33.2–3.

6 Pokorný, 79. The link with GTh 32 probably goes back to Matt. 5.14–15, which shares a common order with GTh 32–33 (thus Grant & Freedman, 151; see further, Gathercole, *Composition*, 131).

7 Marcovich, 'Textual Criticism', 95. Cf. M. Marcovich, 'Bedeutung der Motive des Volksglaubens für die Interpretation', 22–23, where he comments on a widely held motif in folklore of two independent ears.

33.2 For no-one lights a lamp. The assumption here is that the disciple, having been enlightened, becomes himself a light; cf. esp. GTh 24.3: 'There is light within a luminous person, and he gives light to the whole world.'

33.2 And places it under a bushel. The reference here is not to a 'bushel' measurement per se (approx. 9 litres), but to a container of that volume.

33.2 Nor does he put it in a secret place. Interestingly, although the sayings are secret (as in the Prologue), they are not to remain so. With μα εϕρημ, compare the reference to 'hiding' in GTh 32; there is thus perhaps a catchword connection.

33.3 Rather he places it upon its lampstand so that everyone who enters and goes out will see its light. The fact of the lamp apparently illuminating only the vestibule (rather than the whole house) does not necessarily point to a Hellenistic setting.⁸ Schröter may be correct in seeing a reference in the entering and going out to the elect disciple's origin and destiny in the kingdom (cf. GTh 49).⁹ *Thomas* is probably dependent on Luke here, expanding upon Lukan redaction.¹⁰

8 Rightly, Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 57–58.

9 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 375–376.

10 Gathercole, *Composition*, 194–196.

Logion 34¹

πεπετε τ̄ε δε οὐβ̄λλε εφωδαν̄σωκ̄ ρητ̄φ̄ ἄνοοβ̄λλε ωδ̄αγρε ἄπεσναγ̄ ἐπεσνητ̄
εγ̄ρειτ̄

Jesus said, 'If a blind man leads a blind man, they will both fall into a ditch.'

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Matt. 15.14; Lk. 6.39) is the fourth in the series of *impossibilia* (GTh 31–35; see comment on 31), with *Thomas's* version more closely resembling Matthew's wording than Luke's.² The point of the saying is the danger of catastrophe if one is led astray by false teachers. The saying reinforces the strict boundaries envisaged elsewhere in *Thomas* (cf. e.g. GTh 3; 13; 51–53). It is not clear that there is a polemic against any particular blind guides: as Hedrick notes, the image is general enough to apply indiscriminately.³

Notes

If a blind man leads a blind man. 'Leads' is correct, here; the sense is not 'drags'.⁴ The meaning is probably similar to that of the pagan parallels,⁵ and more specifically of the Matthean and Lukan parables, viz. that it is a reference to being led astray by false teachers. In the NT context there appears to be a

1 **Bibliography for GTh 34:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 85–88; Schüngel, 'Zur Neuübersetzung des Thomasevangeliums in der Alandschen Synopse', 275–291.

2 *Thomas*, like Matthew, phrases the saying as a conditional clause, rather than as two questions; *Thomas* and Matthew also share the emphatic placement of 'a blind man' in first position in the sentence. Cf. also the similarity to Matthew's version in *Ep. Ap.* 47, and perhaps *T. Reub.* 2.9.

3 Hedrick, 76; also Plisch, 104; Grosso, 165. Valantasis, 110, sees the reference to the world, i.e. 'those living in the dominant culture'.

4 *Contra* Schüngel, 'Zur Neuübersetzung des Thomasevangeliums in der Alandschen Synopse', 276, who has 'zieht': the verb is not merely σωκ but σωκ ρητ̄φ̄, whose usual sense is 'lead' (cf. on GTh 3.1 above, and see Crum, 327a).

5 For some examples, see Davies & Allison, *Matthew*, II.533. Philo, *Virt.* 7 is a notable parallel.

concern with the Pharisees, whereas the meaning in *Thomas* may simply be general, or perhaps concerned with seduction by the teaching of the *magna ecclesia*, but one cannot be sure.

They will both fall into a ditch. Matthean commentators such as Davies & Allison and Luz are right to interpret the image of falling into a ditch as depicting a 'catastrophic end'.⁶ The same applies here. The saying is a severe warning against entanglement with those outside the *Thomas* movement.

6 U. Luz, *Matthew 8–20* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 333 n. 65; cf. Davies & Allison, *Matthew*, II.533.

Logion 35¹

35.1 πεχε̅ ι̅ς̅ μη̅ βο̅μ̅ ἴ̅τε̅ οὐ̅δ̅α̅ β̅ω̅κ̅ ἑ̅ξ̅ο̅υ̅ν̅ ἐ̅π̅η̅ν̅ε̅ ἴ̅π̅χ̅ω̅δ̅ρ̅ε̅ ἴ̅ψ̅χ̅ι̅τ̅τ̅τ̅ ἴ̅χ̅ν̅α̅ρ̅ ε̅ι̅
μη̅τι̅ ἴ̅ψ̅μο̅υ̅ρ̅ ἴ̅νε̅ψ̅β̅ι̅λ̅ξ̅ 35.2 το̅τε̅ φ̅η̅λ̅π̅ω̅δ̅ω̅ν̅ε̅ ε̅β̅ολ̅ ἴ̅ψ̅ε̅φ̅η̅ι̅

35.1 *Jesus said, 'It is impossible for someone to enter the house of the strong man and subdue him, unless one binds his hands. 35.2 Then he will be able to take from his house.'*

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Mk 3.27; Matt. 12.29, and the rather different Lk. 11.21–22) is the last in the series of *impossibilia* in GTh 31–35 (see comment on 31). It is clearly an allegory. In the Synoptic tradition, the reference is to Jesus as the stronger man binding Satan, and plundering demonic property. In *Thomas*, the meaning may well be the same, but in the absence of context, it is unclear. The options are: (a) the sense of Jesus' victory remains, reconfigured as victory over the Thomasine 'world';² or (b) the subject is how the true disciple can overcome that world,³ or bodily passions,⁴ or, conversely, (c) the danger of a hostile power overcoming the true disciple.⁵

The christological meaning (a) is unlikely, in the absence of a conflict between Jesus and demonic forces, as in the context in the Synoptic parallels. Interpretation (c) is a theoretical possibility, but appears to be unparalleled in earliest Christian literature as an interpretation of the 'strong man' parable.⁶ Option (b) is probably to be preferred because it retains the general sense of the Synoptic parallel, while applying it to disciples. The language of 'binding'

1 **Bibliography for GTh 35:** Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 295–297.

2 Thus Grant & Freedman, 151; Pokorný, 80.

3 Hedrick, 77.

4 DeConick, 148; Grosso, 166.

5 Valantasis, 111. Plisch, 105, while remaining agnostic in the end, raises the possibility that the strong man is the Roman empire.

6 As Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 296, rightly comments, the two most likely interpretations are (i) a battle between Jesus and Satan, and (ii) that the Gnostic is the strong man.

suggests the action of disabling hostile powers.⁷ Such a sense is also paralleled in Theodotus:

This body the Saviour called an “adversary” and—Paul said—a “law warring against the law of my mind” and the Saviour advises us “to bind it” and to “seize its possessions as those of a strong man” who was warring against the heavenly soul

(*Exc. Theod.* 52.1)

Jesus’ instruction here in GTh 35 is therefore probably that the disciples grasp the nettle of overcoming threats, whether from external hostile powers or from the body.⁸

Notes

35.1 It is impossible for someone to enter the house of the strong man and subdue him, unless one binds his hands. The strong man, rather than his house, is preferred as the object subdued here,⁹ because (a) the immediate antecedent is the strong man, and (b) the parallels adduced by Crum suggest that a personal object is more usual for $\chi\iota \bar{\nu}\chi\bar{\nu}\alpha\bar{\rho}$,¹⁰ and (c) the clause is succeeded by a reference to ‘his’ (sc. the strong man’s) hands’. As Schröter notes, *Thomas* has a fondness for referring to ‘hands’ (cf. 9; 17; 21; 22; 41; 98).¹¹ King sees an emphasis in this statement on preparation and knowledge of what to do.¹²

35.2 Then he will be able to take from his house. If this last element of the parable is to be pressed, the plunder is probably the disciple’s own soul (whether understood as imprisoned by the body, or held hostage by powers). The re-capture of the soul from hostile forces is paralleled in a similar image in the Coptic *Gospel of Philip*: ‘he came forth to take it (sc. his soul) back, since it had been laid down as a deposit. It had fallen into the hands of robbers and been stolen, but he saved it’ (*Gos. Phil.* 53,10–13).

7 The word can be found, for example, throughout H.-D. Betz, *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 21992), e.g. 265 (*PGM* 28a.1–7) and 307 (*PGM* 101.1–53).

8 So DeConick, 148.

9 Pace e.g. DeConick, 147. In contrast also to Mk 3.27/Matt. 12.29.

10 Crum 777b (relevant here are Gen. 19.3; 33.11; Prov. 19.10; Hos. 12.7; Wis. 10.14).

11 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 296.

12 King, ‘Kingdom’, 52.

Logion 36¹

36.1 [... ἄ]πὸ πρῶι ἔ[ως ὀψ]ε μήτ[ε ἀφ'] ἔσπ[έρας ἕως π]ρῶι, μήτε [τῆ τροφῆ] ὑ]μῶν τί φά[γητε, μήτε] τῆ στ[ολῆ] ὑμῶν] τί ἐνδύ[ση]σθε. 36.2 [πολ.]λῶ κρ[ε]ί[-
[σσον]ές [έστε] τῶν [κρί]νων, ἄτ[ινα ο]ὐ ξα[ί]νει οὐδὲ ν[ή]θει. 36.3 [...]εν
ἔχοντ[ε]ς ἔ]νδ[υ]μα, τί ἐν[...]; 36.4 καὶ ὑμεῖς, τίς ἂν προσθ[εί]η ἐπὶ τὴν εἰλικιαν
ὑμῶν; αὐτὸ[ς δ] ὥσφι ὑμ[ε]ῖν τὸ ἔνδυμα ὑμῶν.

- 1 **Bibliography for GTh 36:** T.C. Skeat, 'The Lilies of the Field', *ZNW* 37 (1938), 211–214; P. Katz, 'Πῶς ἀξάνουσιν, Matt 6:28', *JTS* 5 (1954) 207–209; T.F. Glasson, 'Carding and Spinning: Oxyrhynchus Papyrus No. 665', *JTS* 13 (1962), 331–332; J.D. Crossan, 'Against Anxieties: Thomas 36 and the Historical Jesus', *Forum* 10 (1994), 57–68; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 70–75; J.M. Robinson & C. Heil, 'Zeugnisse eines schriftlichen, griechischen vorkanonischen Textes: Mt 6,28b 8*, P.Oxy. 655 I,1–17 (EvTh 36) und Q 12,27', *ZNW* 89 (1998), 30–44; J.M. Robinson, 'A Written Greek Sayings Cluster Older than Q: A Vestige', *HTR* 92 (1999), 61–77; J.M. Robinson, 'The Pre-Q Text of the (Ravens and) Lilies: Q 12:22–31 and P. Oxy. 655 (Gos. Thom. 36)', in S. Maser & E. Schlarb, eds. *Text und Geschichte: Facetten theologischen Arbeitens aus dem Freundes- und Schülerkreis. Dieter Lührmann zum 60. Geburtstag* (MThSt 50; Marburg: Elwert, 1999), 143–180; J. Schröter, 'Vorsynoptische Überlieferung auf P.Oxy. 655? Kritische Bemerkungen zu einer erneuerten These', *ZNW* 90 (1999), 265–272; J.M. Robinson & C. Heil, 'The Lilies of the Field: Saying 36 of the Gospel of Thomas and Secondary Accretions in Q 12.22b–31', *NTS* 47 (2001), 1–25; J. Schröter, 'Rezeptionsprozesse in der Jesusüberlieferung: Überlegungen zum historischen Charakter der neutestamentlichen Wissenschaft am Beispiel der Sorgensprüche', *NTS* 47 (2001), 442–468; J.M. Robinson & C. Heil, 'Noch einmal: Der Schreibfehler in Q 12,27', *ZNW* 92 (2001), 113–122; J. Schröter, 'Verschrieben? Klärende Bemerkungen zu einem vermeintlichen Schreibfehler in Q und tatsächlichen Irrtümern', *ZNW* 92 (2001), 283–289; S.E. Porter, 'P. Oxy. 655 and James Robinson's Proposal's for Q: Brief Points of Clarification', *JTS* 52 (2001), 84–92; J.M. Robinson & C. Heil, 'P. Oxy. 655 und Q: Zum Diskussionsbeitrag von Stanley E. Porter', in H.-G. Bethge, S. Emmel, K.L. King & I. Schletterer, eds. *For the Children, Perfect Instruction: Studies in Honor of Hans-Martin Schenke* (NHMS 54; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2002), 411–423; H. Hearon & A.C. Wire, "'Women's Work in the Realm of God" (Mt. 13.33; Lk. 13.20, 21; Gos. Thom. 96; Mt. 6.28–30; Lk. 12.27–28; Gos. Thom. 36)', in M.A. Beavis, ed. *The Lost Coin: Parables of Women, Work and Wisdom* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 136–157; R.H. Gundry, 'Spinning the Lilies and Unravelling the Ravens: An Alternative Reading of Q 12:22b–31 and P.Oxy. 655', *NTS* 48 (2002), 159–180; J.M. Robinson, 'A Pre-Canonical Greek Reading in Saying 36', in idem, *The Sayings Gospel Q: Collected Essays* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 845–883; D. Jongkind, "'The Lilies of the Field" Reconsidered: Codex Sinaiticus and the Gospel of Thomas', *NovT* 48 (2006), 209–216; J. Frey, 'Die Lilien und das Gewand: EvThom 36 und 37 als Paradigma für das Verhältnis des Thomasevangeliums zur synoptischen Überlieferung', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 122–180; Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 171–234.

36.1 '[... fr]om morning t[ill evening o]r from eve[ning till mo]rning, either [about the food] you will ea[t or] about the clo[thes] you [will] wear. **36.2** [You are mu]ch grea[ter than] the [li]lies, whi[ch nei]ther ca[r]d nor s[pi]n. **36.3** [...] have [...] [g]ar[me]nt, what [...]?' **36.4** [As f]or you, who could add to your time? He himself will [g]ive you your garments.'

36.1 πεχε ιϛ μηνη ροουϳ χι(ν) ρτοουγε ϳα ρουρε δϳω χιν ριρϳουρε ϳα ρτοουγε
 χε ου πε(τ)ετναταδϳ ριωτ^ϳ τηγτ̄

36.1 *Jesus said, 'Do not worry from morning to evening and from evening to morning about what you will wear.'*

Textual Comment

This saying has attracted an extraordinary amount of discussion, as is reflected in the bibliography. Most of this has concerned the antiquity of the reading 'which neither card nor spin' in 36.2 (see Appended Note below following the discussion of this saying). Our concern here in this comment is with what the Greek text is, and how that compares with the Coptic. On the former, there are two difficulties.

In the first case, the debate concerns whether to read [ο]ὐ ξα[ί]νει οὐδὲ ν[ή]θει (the lilies 'do not card or spin') or [α]ὐξά|νει οὐδὲ ν[ή]θει (the lilies 'grow but do not spin'). Grenfell and Hunt read the latter, but there is general agreement now that the οὐδέ probably requires another, prior negative verb and so 'neither card nor spin' ([ο]ὐ ξα[ί]νει οὐδὲ ν[ή]θει) is more likely.² Skeat and Glasson argued that the text must read οὐ + ξά|νει since the following οὐδέ demands a preceding οὐ (or something like it, e.g. another οὐδέ): it cannot simply be preceded by a positive statement, which would be, as Glasson remarked, 'intolerable Greek'.³ Eisele has noted a large number of counterexamples, but they should probably be regarded as exceptions rather than the norm.⁴ Eisele's instances, however, should make it clear that the confidence of some in the reference to 'carding' should not necessarily be so strong: the Greek is not 'intolerable'.

2 The 'does not card' view is encouraged by the original hand of Sinaiticus at Matt. 6.28.

3 Glasson, 'Carding and Spinning', 331–332.

4 Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 173–178; see also Porter, 'P. Oxy. 655 and James Robinson's Proposal's for Q', 92.

The second case, that of the Greek of 36.3, is even more difficult, and any reconstruction must be admitted to be speculation. Possibilities include [μηδ]ἐν ἔχοντ[εσ ἔ]γδ[υ]μα, τί ἐν[δύεσθε;] ('having no garment, what do/ will you wear?'); or [καί] ἐν ἔχοντ[εσ ἔ]γδ[υ]μα, τί ἐν[δέιτε;] ('and, having one garment, what do you lack?');⁵ alternatively, the subject could be the lilies, with something like [μηδ]ἐν ἔχοντ[α ἔ]γδ[υ]μα, τί ἐν[...;] ('they have no garment, but what do they ...?').⁶ There are difficulties with most views. (1) It is likely that [καί] ἐν is correct, since a scribe writing μηδέν (or [πόθ]εν⁷) would divide the words (which span two lines) μη|δέν and πό|θεν rather than before the -εν, and the line begins with εν.⁸ If a negative is required, perhaps [μήπω] ἐν might fit. (2) Reconstructions including e.g. τί ἐνδείτε; or τί ἐνδείσθε; ('what do you lack?') are problematic because ἐνδέω takes a genitive.⁹ A reference to ἐνδύω is more likely. We must, however reluctantly, concede that we simply do not know what the text was.

When it comes to comparison with the Coptic, these controversial elements are not really relevant, because the much shorter Coptic only parallels 36.1. The question then arises as to whether there is a theological reason for this. Grant & Freedman saw an editor wanting to remove traces of the use of sources.¹⁰ DeConick sees the omission of 36.2–4 as a result of the tension between the reference to God providing a garment (36.4) and the following reference to undressing (37.2).¹¹ Others consider the possibility of scribal error.¹² There is no obvious reason for parablepsis (and it would mean the scribe moving some distance down the page from which he was copying) and so one should reckon with the possibility of deliberate abbreviation. DeConick's explanation is a possibility, because there would be something of an anomaly between God giving clothes in 36.4 and the disciple being told to take clothes off in

5 A possibility raised in Robinson & Heil, 'Lilies of the Field', 5–6.

6 Schröter has suggested the lilies as the subject of the participle, though not of the main verb ('Verschrieben', 288); but this reconstruction is subject to the criticisms made by Gundry ('Spinning the Lilies') and Robinson ('The Pre-Q Text', 161 n. 3).

7 Suggested by Schröter, 'Verschrieben?', 288.

8 Skeat, cited in Robinson & Heil, 'Lilies of the Field', 5.

9 Robinson & Heil, 'Lilies of the Field', 7 n. 27 (citing an observation by Skeat).

10 Grant & Freedman, 152.

11 DeConick, 150. Similarly, Marcovich, 'Textual Criticism', 70, and Ricchuiti, 'Tracking Thomas', 223.

12 Nordsieck, 150, leaves open the possibility that it is either accidental or deliberate; also Plisch, 106.

GTh 37 immediately following. Alternatively, an excision may arise from a problem with talking of divine action ('He will give ...') in the milieu of the Coptic, though it depends upon who the subject is here (see discussion below). A difficulty with both of these proposed solutions is that they account for the excision of 36.4, but not for the removal of 36.2–3 as well. The theme of the superiority of the disciples to lilies in 36.2 in fact fits quite well with *Thomas's* theme of the superiority of the elect over the material cosmos (see discussion of GTh 2 above). A motivation therefore remains obscure, but an abbreviation in the Coptic probably remains more likely than an 'orthodox corruption' of a shorter text to produce the text of P. Oxy. IV 655.

Interpretation

The basic sense is clear: this saying like its Synoptic parallels (Matt. 6.25–34; Lk. 12.22–32; cf. Justin, *1 Apol.* 15) is 'against anxiety', especially in this case about clothing.¹³ (There is probably no need to appeal to any metaphorical sense of clothing, at least in 36.1–2.) As noted, the saying is unusual in that it is much longer in the Greek than in the Coptic. The two texts at least overlap considerably in meaning. The Coptic's concentration on clothes is, after all, the main point in the Greek as well. The latter mentions food and eating, but only in passing: after the initial command in the Greek not to worry about clothing or food, food is not mentioned again, while there is abundant reference to clothes.¹⁴

The Greek, however, grounds the exhortation against anxiety in divine provision, rather than leaving the reason implicit. The Coptic perhaps assumes a fit with those sayings in *Thomas* which accentuate indifference to external, bodily matters such as diet (GTh 14), money (GTh 95; 100), and family ties (55; 99).¹⁵ The Greek ends with a reference to the divine bestowal of a metaphorical garment upon the elect disciple (see note on 36.4 below). As noted in the textual comment, there are thematic and verbal connections with GTh 37.

13 Robinson, 'Pre-Canonical Saying Source', 855: 'Saying 36 of the *Gospel of Thomas* presents the same appeal as does its parallel in Q 12:27, to trust in God for the basic necessities of bodily existence.'

14 Plisch, 106, sees the possibility of this being not just a requirement, but also a necessity in the context of itinerant mission.

15 Valantasis, 112; Pokorný, 81; Hedrick, 79.

Notes

36.1 Do not worry from morning till evening or (Co: and) from evening till morning. The idiomatic merismus here is not exclusively a Semitism, but is picked up in early Christian literature, as well as being roughly paralleled in classical Greek.¹⁶

36.1 Either about the food you will eat or about the clothes you will wear (Co: about what you will wear). The Greek includes food in passing, but this will not be mentioned again.

36.2 You are much greater than the lilies (om. Co). Which particular flowers are in view is actually uncertain.¹⁷

36.2 Which neither card nor spin (om. Co). ‘Carding is a stage in preparing wool for spinning, in which the fleece is combed out into a mass of fibre.’¹⁸ After carding, the wool can be spun into yarn. The work in Matthew and Luke is divided between men (toiling) and women (spinning); here, both elements are the woman’s work. On the pairing, cf. Plato, *Polit.* 289C.

36.3 ... have ... garment, what ... (om. Co)? The meaning of 36.3 is irrecoverable. If human beings are the subject, then the participial clause is almost certainly negative, since the rest of the saying presupposes that God will provide a garment. The lilies could also be the subject (καὶ ὑμεῖς then introducing a change of subject).

36.4 As for you, who could add to your time (om. Co)? This provides a link with the previous sayings 31–35 which are all *impossibilia* (see on 31 above).

36.4 He will give you your garments (om. Co). What is lacking will be provided by perhaps the Father (as in the Matthean/ Lukan parallels), or perhaps Jesus. Jesus is the usual agent in *Thomas*, but a reference to Jesus in the third person would be strange. The garments may simply be meant literally, though there are two reasons why a metaphorical sense is more likely here. (1) The Greek is quite definite: τὸ ἐνδύμα ὑμῶν, rather than ‘a garment’ or ‘garments (whenever you may need them)’. (2) The question and answer suggest a correlation of God’s gift of a garment with an addition of time, suggesting a reference to the gift of new (and indestructible) life.

16 Gathercole, *Composition*, 69.

17 See Davies & Allison, *Matthew*, I.654. They suspect a general reference to flowers in the original saying.

18 Hearon & Wire, ‘Women’s Work’, 144.

Appended Note: A Scribal Error in Q?¹⁹

Robinson and Heil in a number of publications have claimed, on the basis of this saying: ‘A scribal error has turned up in Q!’²⁰ The reading ‘carding and spinning’ in P. Oxy. IV 655, which also survives in Matthew 6.28 κ^* , suggests—they contend—an ancient reading which was later mistaken as ‘growing and spinning’: a tiny change from $\text{ὀὐ ξαίνει οὐδὲ νήθει}$ (the lilies ‘do not card or spin’) to $\text{ἀὐξάνει οὐδὲ νήθει}$ (the lilies ‘grow but do not spin’). The sequence follows: ὀὐ ξαίνει in pre-Q/Thomas → ἀὐξάνει in Q → ἀὐξάνει in Matthew and Luke.

The most forceful objections to the Robinson-Heil hypothesis have come from Schröter. He notes that (a) the Robinson-Heil position assumes a *written* source in *Greek* behind Q;²¹ (b) the erased reading in Sinaiticus is, despite the frequent discussion of it by Robinson, irrelevant to the case; (c) Robinson treats the phrase in isolation from its surroundings.²² On this last point, Gundry comments that ‘unless the earlier text [i.e. Q’s *Vorlage*] said to consider *how* the lilies do not card ..., the hypothesis has it that a scribe’s honestly mistaking ὀὐ ξαίνει for ἀὐξάνει led him to back up, eliminate ἄτινα , substitute πῶς , and then—following πῶς ἀὐξάνει —insert ὀὐ κοπιᾷ in order that ὀὐδὲ νήθει might have a negative preceding it’.²³

Robinson’s view relies to a considerable extent on a reference to growing being out of place in the Q version.²⁴ This, however, is contradicted by references to growing in similar statements both in the Gospel tradition and outside: the presence of a reference to growing is entirely natural here.²⁵ Just as lilies appear from the ground purely by divine providence (without effort on their part), so disciples will be provided for by God. To take a parallel from Epictetus: ‘For how else does it come about that, with such regularity, as if by God’s command, when he commands the plants to flower, they flower, and to shoot,

19 See bibliography to GTh 36 above. The complicated series of exchanges is as follows: (a) Robinson’s (and Heil’s) initial sallies (1998, *HTR* 1999, in Maser & Schlarb 1999), then (b) Schröter’s response (1999) to Robinson-Heil; (c) the Robinson-Heil rejoinders: *NTS* 2001 and *ZNW* 2001 (d) Schröter’s surrejoinders in *NTS* 2001 and *ZNW* 2001; (e) Porter’s response (2001) to Robinson; Robinson/Heil rejoinder to Porter (2002). (f) A last (to date) statement by Robinson (2005), with further responses to Schröter and Gundry.

20 Robinson, ‘A Written Greek Sayings Cluster’, 61.

21 Schröter, ‘Vorsynoptische Überlieferung auf P.Oxy. 655’, 266.

22 Schröter, ‘Verschieben?’, 287.

23 Gundry, ‘Spinning the Lilies’, 173.

24 Robinson & Heil, ‘Lilies of the Field’, 15, 16; Robinson, ‘Pre-Canonical Greek Reading’, 875.

25 Schröter, ‘Rezeptionsprozesse’, 455 also takes it to be ‘völlig unproblematisch’.

they shoot, and to bear fruit, they bear fruit, and to ripen, they ripen' (*Diss.* 1.14.3).²⁶ Closer to home, the idea is also paralleled elsewhere in the Jesus tradition: just as lilies do not need to work in order to grow, so similarly 'the ground bears fruit by itself, first a blade, then an ear, then the full grain in the ear' (Mk 4.28).²⁷ As such it is a gross exaggeration that the reference to growing is 'confusing' and 'unsuitable',²⁸ even if other scholars do consider it secondary: arguments by scholars for the lateness of this or that phrase in the transmission of Q can hardly be regarded as 'objective' support for Robinson's theory.²⁹ Again, the problem is that Matthew and Luke do not draw attention to the fact of growing as carrying the argument, but the *manner* of the growing ($\pi\acute{\omega}\varsigma\ \alpha\upsilon\tilde{\xi}\acute{\alpha}\nu\epsilon\iota$): they appear out the ground and flourish without having to work. It is also, in any case, a difficulty in Robinson's approach that he assumes that 'tensions, irregularities, or inconsistencies' in texts suggest they are secondary, and that the more original, the smoother a text will be.³⁰

Finally, the problem raised by Skeat, that it is unlikely that P. Oxy. IV 655 and Matthew 6.28 \aleph^* would independently make the same change from 'grow' to 'do not card', is answered by Jongkind, who shows that \aleph^* (Scribe A) exhibits a number of peculiar tendencies, including knowledge of extra-canonical traditions: Sinaiticus's uncorrected text at Matthew 6.28 can be explained as a further example of this.³¹

In the end, it is difficult to be as confident as Robinson is in his conjectural emendation to the unknown text in a *Vorlage* of a hypothetical document.³²

26 Tr. R.F. Dobbin, *Epictetus: Discourses Book I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 30.

27 Robinson persists in this misapprehension in 'Pre-Canonical Greek Reading', 848 n. 9: 'growing fails completely to illustrate freedom from anxiety due to trust in God by abstaining from self-preserving activity.'

28 Robinson and Heil, 'Lilies of the Field', 15, 16; Robinson, 'Pre-Canonical Greek Reading', 875.

29 Robinson, 'Pre-Canonical Greek Reading', 875.

30 Robinson, 'Pre-Canonical Greek Reading', 848, 876. Gundry's sense is that the consensus view is of the opposite ('the usual preferring of a rough reading to a smooth one', 173). In fact, one cannot really assume either (see Gathercole, *Composition*, 132–133).

31 Jongkind, "'The Lilies of the Field' Reconsidered', 215.

32 Robinson might contest the fact that Q is only a hypothetical document, but he is open about the fact that his is a conjectural emendation ('Pre-Canonical Greek Reading', 854).

Logion 37¹

37.1 λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· πότε ἡμ[ε]ῖν ἐμφανῆς ἔσει, καὶ πότε σε ὀψόμεθα; 37.2 λέγει· ὅταν ἐκδύσησθε καὶ μὴ αἰσχυνθῆτε [...]θ[...]

37.1 *His disciples said to him, 'When will you be manifest to us, and when will we see you?' 37.2 He said, 'When you undress and are not ashamed [...]'*

37.1 πεχε νεφμαθητης δε αω η̅ροογ εκναογωνη εβολ ναη αγω αω η̅ροογ ε-
ναηαγ εροκ̅ 37.2 πεχε ι̅c̅ δε ροταν ετετ̅νωακεκ τηγτ̅η̅ ερηγ̅ μη̅πετ̅νω̅πε
αγω η̅τετ̅η̅ι̅ η̅νετ̅η̅ω̅τη̅η̅ η̅τετ̅η̅κααγ̅ ρα̅ πεcht̅ η̅νετ̅η̅ογερ̅η̅τε̅ η̅οε̅ η̅η̅ι-
κογ̅ει̅ η̅ω̅η̅ρε̅ ω̅η̅η̅ η̅τετ̅η̅χο̅π̅χ̅η̅ η̅η̅οογ̅ 37.3 τοτ̅[ε̅ τετ̅η̅αν]̅αγ̅ επ̅ω̅η̅ρε̅
η̅πε̅το̅η̅ αγω̅ τετ̅η̅α̅ρ̅ ρο̅τε̅ αη̅

37.1 *His disciples said, 'When will you be revealed to us, and when will we see you?' 37.2 Jesus said to them, 'When you undress and are not ashamed, and take your clothes and leave them under your feet like little children and tread upon them, 37.3 then [you will s]ee the Son of the living one and you will not be afraid.'*

Textual Comment

Here what survives of the Greek text into 37.2 is identical in meaning to the Coptic. ἐμφανῆς ἔσει is quite understandably rendered εκναογωνη εβολ in

¹ **Bibliography for GTh 37:** Kee, "‘Becoming a Child’ in the Gospel of Thomas", 307–314; Smith, 'The Garments of Shame', 217–238; Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 83–86; P.A. Mirecki, 'Coptic Manichaean Psalm 278 and Gospel of Thomas 37', in A. van Tongerloo & S. Giversen, eds. *Manichaica Selecta: Studies Presented to Professor Julien Ries on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (Manichaean Studies, 1; Leuven: International Association of Manichaean Studies and the Centre of the History of Religions, 1991), 243–262; A.D. DeConick & J. Fossum, 'Stripped before God: A New Interpretation of Logion 37 in the Gospel of Thomas', *VC* 45 (1991), 123–150; DeConick, 'Fasting from the World', 425–428; G.J. Riley, 'A Note on the Text of *Gospel of Thomas* 37', *HTR* 88 (1995), 179–181; DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 143–147; M.W. Meyer, 'Seeing or Coming to the Child of the Living One? More on *Gospel of Thomas* Saying 37', *HTR* 91 (1998), 413–416; DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics*, 101–104; Uro, *Thomas*, 70–74; Frey, 'Die Lilien und das Gewand', 122–180; Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 171–234.

37.1.² The Greek has αὐτῷ in the opening phrase which is not translated in the Coptic, and at the beginning of 37.2, the Coptic has the stereotypical πexε ic̄ where the Greek just has λέγει. These differences are trivial, however, and do not affect the sense.

In 37.3, which survives in Coptic, most editors read τoт[ε τετnαn]αγ, with varying degrees of confidence.³ Riley proposed instead τoт[ε τετ]n[n]nγ on the grounds that there was not enough room for the original reading, and that the traces of ink made the reading -nγ ‘beyond question’.⁴ Meyer produced a rebuttal on the basis that the ink which led Riley to propose an *eta* was simply not there, commenting that what Riley thought was the horizontal stroke across the n may merely have been the black background originally placed behind the page when it was photographed.⁵ DeConick agreed that the ink was not there, but concluded that what Riley saw was actually a shadow which disappears when the manuscript is photographed upside down.⁶ Riley, however, only consulted a photograph and microfilm. Certainly the Facsimile edition does contain a striking horizontal stroke; the new photograph published by DeConick, however, makes it clear there is no such thing. As such, -αγ is probable; it is not clear that any other letters can be read with confidence.

Interpretation

This saying has a clear link to the preceding, which both advocates indifference to material clothing and promises the new clothing of divine life. The main debate over GTh 37 (cf. *Gospel of the Egyptians* in Clement, *Strom.* 3.13.92.2) has concerned whether the garments are literal clothes, with the consequent implication of baptism (J.Z. Smith),⁷ or metaphorical, i.e. referring to the garment of

2 Cf. e.g. Rom. 10.20, where ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην becomes in Sahidic αιογωνε εβολ.

3 E.g. Guillaumont, et al., *Gospel according to Thomas*, 22; Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 68.

4 Riley, ‘A Note on the Text of *Gospel of Thomas* 37’, 180.

5 Meyer, ‘Seeing or Coming’, 56, 57.

6 A.D. DeConick, ‘Corrections to the Critical Reading of the Gospel of Thomas’, *VC* 60 (2006), 201–208 (207, 208).

7 Smith is followed by Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 119–121, and King, ‘Kingdom’, 67, for whom Smith’s ‘brilliant article ... has conclusively demonstrated the presence of baptismal references’. Hedrick, 81, sits on the fence between the baptismal view and the removal of the fleshly body.

the physical body.⁸ Valantasis's view focuses not on the body as the material self but as social identity.⁹

In his remarkably learned article, Smith argues that all four elements in Jesus' statement, (1) undressing; (2) being naked without shame; (3) treading on the garments; (4) being like children, can be paralleled in early Christian baptismal discourse. Baptismal nudity can be associated with new life, and the lack of shame associated with nudity from Gen. 2.25 is also used sometimes in baptismal contexts. Treading on the garments is thought by Smith to relate especially to standing on the *cilicium* at baptism, and the connection with children again evokes new life and reconstituted social relations.

On the other hand, such motifs can also be used outside the baptismal context.¹⁰ Some have criticised Smith's use of fourth- and fifth-century parallels (where most of the comparative baptismal material comes) to illuminate *Thomas*.¹¹ Baptismal language can also often be used in a metaphorical context. Some of the elements simply come from Genesis, such as being naked without shame (2.25); cf. 3.10, where Adam and Eve *are* afraid because they are naked.¹² In the absence of other clear ritual elements in *Thomas*, one should be cautious of seeing indications of baptism where the language is quite unspecific.¹³

DeConick emphasises that the etiquette of mystical vision is in view here: it is not so much about baptism but about encratism and vision mysticism: 'the removal of the garment describes the removal of the material body during ascension to a heavenly realm'.¹⁴ The saying is therefore a soteriological one, which leads to a new paradisaic state.¹⁵ DeConick's view has much to commend it, and a metaphorical reference to undressing is probable here. Beyond that, however, it is unclear whether the reference is to 'stripping off' worldly encumbrances (as in e.g. *Teach. Silv.* 105,13–17), or the material body (cf. e.g. *Gos. Phil.* 66,16–20; *Paraph. Shem* 42,28–43,1; 43,20–27?). Similarly ambiguous is whether the vision in 37.3 is a special event or a whole *life* of vision. The similarly structured conditions in GTh 27, with its requirements not only for seeing the Father

8 Pokorný, 83.

9 Valantasis, 114.

10 There is no indication of a baptismal context in the quotation in *Strom.* 3.13.92.2, although it is not definite that it was not present in the original *Gospel of the Egyptians*.

11 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 127.

12 Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 84, and Nordsieck, 155–156 stress the Adamic Genesis background without recourse to ritual.

13 Rightly, Uro, *Thomas*, 72.

14 DeConick, 'Stripped before God', 131.

15 DeConick, 'Stripped before God', 124, 139–140.

but also finding the kingdom suggest a continual existence in a renunciatory mode (also in GTh 37) as a necessity for continual vision of the divine, which is identified with salvation. What can be said is that GTh 37 refers to the soul's renunciation of the body or the world, and rising above it with the same indifference as children have when they take off clothes. This leads to the salvation of communion with Jesus.

Notes

37.1 His disciples said to him (om. Co), 'When will you be manifest (Co: revealed) to us, and when will we see you?' Cf. *Gos. Sav.* 107,4–9: 'O Lord, in what form will you reveal yourself to us, or in what kind of body will you come?' The disciples' questions seem odd addressed to Jesus in person. They seem to imply that the disciples know they do not see Jesus as he really is. The focus here is therefore on mystical experience in the present without excluding postmortem salvation. If there is any ritual practice necessary to prepare for this visionary experience, it is very obscure.

37.2 When you undress and are not ashamed. Or: 'when you divest yourself of your shame'. Smith rightly notes, however, that the Greek (καὶ μὴ αἰσχυνθῆτε) supports understanding $\bar{\text{m}}\text{p}\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{t}}\bar{\text{w}}\bar{\text{p}}\bar{\text{n}}\bar{\text{e}}$ as a verb.¹⁶ The circumstantial conversion of the negative can be written as (in this case) $\bar{\text{m}}\text{p}\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{t}}\bar{\text{w}}\bar{\text{p}}\bar{\text{n}}\bar{\text{e}}$ for $\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{m}}\bar{\text{p}}\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{t}}\bar{\text{w}}\bar{\text{p}}\bar{\text{n}}\bar{\text{e}}$.¹⁷

37.2 And take your clothes. The 'take' ($\bar{\text{n}}\bar{\text{t}}\bar{\text{e}}\bar{\text{t}}\bar{\text{w}}\bar{\text{p}}\bar{\text{i}}$) here might be redundant (cf. GTh 109.2), or it might refer to the taking off of the clothes (though an unusual way to express the point).

37.2 And leave them under your feet like little children and tread upon them. The imagery is by no means strange, but evokes precisely what children do when they kick off clothes, presumably then as now!¹⁸ Trampling here is clearly a metaphor evoking strong renunciation.¹⁹ This part of Jesus' reply is closest to that of the *Gospel of Egyptians* cited by Clement (in turn citing Cassianus): 'When you trample on the garment of shame and when the two become one and the male and the female are neither male nor female' (cf. also GTh 22).²⁰

16 Smith, 'Garments of Shame', 218 n. 4. *Contra* Hedrick, 80, who insists upon a difference between the Greek and Coptic here.

17 Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 260 (§ 334).

18 Plisch's surprise is unusual in this respect (Plisch, 108).

19 Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 85; DeConick, 'Stripped before God', 133; Pokorný, 83.

20 Clement, *Strom.* 3.13.92.2 for the text; in 3.13.93.1, the *Gospel of the Egyptians* is named.

37.3 Then you will see the Son of the living one and you will not be afraid. The reference here could be to seeing Jesus,²¹ or one's true self.²² GTh 3 refers to disciples as sons of the living one, but Jesus also refers to himself as the Son of the Father (e.g. GTh 99). The latter is probably more likely, in view of the disciples' questions in 37.1. If the reference is christological, this saying is noteworthy as containing a title for Jesus.

21 E.g. Pokorný, 83.

22 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 48; cf. Valantasis, 114.

Logion 38¹

38.1 λέ[γει ...]ο[...]τ[...]γ[...]κα[...]ν[...] 38.2? κα[...]ημ[...]σε[

38.1 [Jesus] sa[id ...] an[d ...] 38.2? An[d ...] da[ys?] ...

38.1 πεχε ιϭ χε ραρ̅ ἵσοπ̅ ατετῆρεπιθ̅ομαι εσωτῆ̅ ανεειωαχε ναει̅ ετ̅χω
ἡμοογ̅ ηητῆ̅ αγω̅ ηῆτητῆ̅ κεογα̅ εσοτμογ̅ ἡτοοτῆ̅ 38.2 ογῆ̅ ρῆροογ̅ ναωωπε
ἡτετῆωινε̅ ἡσωει̅ τετῆαρε̅ αν̅ εροει̅

38.1 *Jesus said, 'Many times you have desired to hear these words which I speak to you, and you have no other one from whom to hear them. 38.2 Days are coming when you will seek after me but will not find me.'*

Textual Comment

The Greek text here is too fragmentary to play a material role in the interpretation. There may have been a καί at the beginning of the Greek of 38.2, but which the Coptic has not translated (see e.g. textual comment on GTh 6.1 above on Coptic's preference for asyndeton).

Interpretation

It is possible, though unlikely, that there is a link with the preceding saying; more likely (though still uncertain) is a connection with GTh 39. The present saying on its own could presuppose the audience's desire to hear the truth from those *prior* to Jesus ('Many times *in the past, from others*, you have desired to hear ...'), which might facilitate a clearer link with GTh 39. However, the parallel in GTh 92 makes this unlikely:

1 **Bibliography for GTh 38:** H.W. Attridge, "Seeking" and "Asking" in Q, Thomas, and John', in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, K. De Troyer & M.W. Meyer, eds. *From Quest to Q: Festschrift James M. Robinson* (Leuven: Peeters/ Leuven University Press, 2000), 295–302; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 107–108.

Jesus said, 'Seek and you shall find. But the things about which you asked me when I did not then tell you, I now desire to say. But you do not seek them.'

Hence the point in 38.1, as in GTh 92, is that Jesus concealed true knowledge in the past. There is a clear bounding of the revelation of Jesus both over against this past (38.1) but also over against the future: this latter comes to the fore in 38.2, where possibly the death of Jesus is envisaged, as in GTh 12. Just as the hearer/ reader has not heard the wonders of knowledge from Jesus in the past, so also the present opportunity for accepting the truth must not be missed, for such an opportunity might not arise again (cf. GTh 59, where the lifetime of the hearer is the opportunity). There is an implied christology here as well, with Jesus' uniqueness being emphasised in 38.2. The uniqueness also belongs to 'these words', which implies a high degree of authority invested in this book, the *Gospel of Thomas*. The saying functions principally as a warning to accept the revelation contained in the work as a whole.

Notes

38.1 Many times you have desired to hear these words which I speak to you, and you have no other one from whom to hear them. There are some distant canonical parallels to 38.1.² Irenaeus, however, has read in the works of the Marcosians the saying (*AH* 1.20.2): 'Often have I desired to hear one of those words, but I have had no-one who might say it to me' (*saepius concupivi audire unum ex sermonibus istis, et non habui qui diceret mihi*).³ Irenaeus writes disapprovingly of their interpretation of the 'one' as the one true and unknown God, but takes the saying as authentic (*Sed et in eo quod dixit ...*). It is odd, however, for this to have been thought a word of Jesus, unless it were a response

² E.g. Matt. 13.17; Lk. 10.24.

³ Cf. Epiphanius, *Pan.* 34.18.13: ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ εἰρηχέναι· πολλάκις ἐπεθύμησα ἀκοῦσαι ἓνα τῶν λόγων τούτων, καὶ οὐκ ἔσχον τὸν ἐροῦντα. *Ac. John* 98 has a slightly more distant parallel: 'John, one person must hear these things from me, for I need one who is to hear' (Ἰωάννη, ἓνα δεῖ παρ' ἐμοῦ ταῦτα ἀκοῦσαι· ἐνὸς γὰρ χρῆζω τοῦ μέλλοντος ἀκοῦειν). Similar to the version in the *Acts of John* is Manichaean *Psalm-Book*, 187, ll. 29–30: '(Jesus said,) I have something to say, but I have no-one to whom to say it' (οὐγῆτηῖ πετῆα.χ.004, μῆτηῖ πετῆα.χ.004 29α.β). On this Manichaean parallel, see P. Nagel, 'Apokryphe Jesusworte in der koptischen Überlieferung', in J. Frey & J. Schröter, eds. *Jesus in apokryphen Evangelienüberlieferungen* (WUNT 254; Tübingen: Mohr, 2010), 495–526 (518–519). A study of all the parallel passages together is a desideratum.

to an expression of faith (cf. Matt. 8.10: *παρ' οὐδενὶ τοσαύτην πίστιν ἐν τῷ Ἰσραήλ εὗρον*). GTh 38.1 makes more immediate sense than do the parallels in Irenaeus and the *Acts of John*.

38.2 Days are coming when you will seek after me but will not find me. For 'days are coming', cf. also GTh 79.3.⁴ This statement has a parallel among the canonical Gospels in Lk. 17.22 ('Days are coming when you will ... but will not ...'). It is possible that *Thomas* or a previous tradition has here replaced Luke's repetitious verbs of seeing (... *ιδεῖν ... ὄψεσθε*) with the seeking/ finding language. This divergence from Luke is paralleled in John 7.34: *ζητήσετε με καὶ οὐχ εὕρήσετε [με]*, which corresponds very closely to the second half of GTh 38.2 (cf. also Prov. 1.28).⁵ Interestingly, however, there is a patristic parallel to this half of GTh 38 as well. Three manuscripts of Cyprian's *Testimonia* have a parallel attributed to *Baruch* or *Barach*:⁶ 'For the time will come when both you and those who will have come after you seek me, in order to hear a word of wisdom and intelligence, but you will not find it/ me.'⁷ It is unlikely that GTh 38.2 is a response to the failure of the parousia to arrive;⁸ the sense is rather one of warning.

4 See discussion of *Thomas's* usage of the 'days are coming' phrase in Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 107–108.

5 See L. Zelyck, *The Reception of the Fourth Gospel in the Extra-Canonical Gospels* (PhD Dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2012), 86–87 on the relationship to John.

6 L.H. Brockington, 'The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch', *AOT* 835–895 (835).

7 *Testim.* 3.29: *veniet enim tempus, et quaeritis me et vos et qui post vos venerint, audire verbum sapientiae et intellectus, et non inuenietis.*

8 Thus DeConick, 155; eadem, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 172.

Logion 39¹

39.1 ἔλ[αβον τὰς κλεῖδας] τῆς [γνώσεως. αὐτοὶ ἔ]κρυψ[αν αὐτάς. οὔτε] εἰσήλ-
[θον, 39.2 οὔτε τοὺς] εἰσερ[χομένους ἀφῆ]καν [εἰσελθεῖν. 39.3 ὑμεῖς] δὲ γ[ε]ί-
[νεσθε φρόνι]μοι ὡ[ς ὄφεις καὶ ἀ]κέραι[οι ὡς περισσε]ρᾶ[ί.] (Restoration
exempli gratia.)

39.1 ‘... have t[aken the keys] of [knowledge and have] hid[den them. 39.2
They have neither] ente[red, nor all]owed [those who] ente[r to do so.] 39.3
But [you,] b[e clever]er a[s serpents, and in]nocen[t as dov]e[s].’

39.1 πεχε τ̄ δε Ἰφαραϊαίος μῆ ἡγραμματεὺς ἀχσι ἡωαυτ̄ ἡττινωσις ἀγο-
ποϋ 39.2 οϋτε ἡπογβωκ̄ ἐροϋν ἀγω νετογωϋ εβωκ̄ ἐροϋν ἡπογκαλυ 39.3
ἡτωτῆ Δε ωωπε ἡφρονιμος ἡθε ἡνηροϋ ἀγω ἡακεραῖος ἡθε ἡἡβρονῆπε

39.1 Jesus said, ‘The Pharisees and the Scribes have taken the keys of knowl-
edge and have hidden them. 39.2 They have not entered, and have not
allowed those who want to enter to do so. 39.3 But you, be clever as serpents,
and innocent as doves.’

Textual Comment

The extremely fragmentary Greek text largely agrees with the Coptic. In 39.2 the Coptic expands an element: what is probably merely ‘those entering’ in the Greek corresponds to ‘those wishing to enter’ (νετογωϋ εβωκ̄ ἐροϋν), for which there is not room in P. Oxy. IV 655.² As Baarda has noted, however, this does not necessarily exemplify a free stance of the Coptic version to its Greek

1 **Bibliography for GTh 39:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 91–95; A. Hultgren, ‘Jesus and Gnosis: The Saying on Hindering Others in Luke 11:52 and Its Parallels’, *Forum* 7 (1991), 165–182 (esp. 170–176); T. Baarda, ‘The Reading “Who Wished to Enter” in Coptic Tradition: Matt 23.23, Luke 11.52, and Thomas 39’, *NTS* 52 (2006), 583–591; H. Löhr, ‘Jesus und die Tora als ethische Norm nach dem *Thomas-Evangelium*’, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 363–379 (368–370).

2 So, rightly, Baarda, ‘The Reading “Who Wished to Enter”’, 591.

Vorlage, or that it had a different *Vorlage*; Baarda notes several parallels to the introduction of οὐρανῶν in Coptic versions of Matthew and Luke, which he explains on grounds of translation technique.³ On the other hand, it is striking that the three loanwords in Coptic GTh 39.3 (ⲁⲉ, φρονιμος, ἀκεραῖος) are almost certainly represented in what survives of the Greek.

Interpretation

GTh 39.1–2 is one of a doublet, and is paralleled in GTh 102 (cf. also Matt. 23.13; Lk. 11.52): ‘Jesus said, “Woe to those Pharisees, for they resemble a dog sleeping in the manger of some cattle, for it neither eats nor [allows] the cattle to feed.”’ While the sense is similar, however, it is clear that there is very little overlap in the detail. The Pharisees and the Scribes are probably not singled out by *Thomas* as specifically responsible (they are found in the Matthean version of the saying). They are probably here a periphrasis for ‘the Jews’ of GTh 43.3 (and probably, more immediately, GTh 40), although there is not necessarily reflected here a contemporaneous conflict with Jews.⁴ The aim of the saying is to paint those in the past who both rejected and suppressed the truth (39.1–2) as a backdrop for what is urged of the true disciples in 39.3: namely a combination of being both discerning about true knowledge as well as pure and uncontaminated with the teaching of others (such as those who resemble the Pharisees). Despite the suppression of true knowledge in the past, it is now available in the revelation of Jesus in *Thomas*. It is easily understandable why the author/editor of *Thomas* included this saying, given the presence of the noun γνώσις (also present in the Lukan version); although *Thomas* is not Gnostic in the strict sense, there is a clear emphasis in the work on knowledge (see Introduction, § 10.1).

3 Baarda, ‘The Reading “Who Wished to Enter”’, 583–591; similarly, Ricchuiti, ‘Tracking Thomas’, 226.

4 Cf. Hedrick, 83, suggesting the significant body of Jews in Alexandria as a possible opposition, and Grosso, 171, remarking that there may be a situation of conflict with traditional Judaism. Pokorný, 85, suggests, by contrast, that the saying has been changed such that it becomes an attack on the mainstream church.

Notes

39.1 The Pharisees and the Scribes have taken the keys of knowledge and have hidden them. Hultgren draws attention to possible Tatianisms here,⁵ but they are more a part of a Syrian (and indeed wider) environment more generally: ‘hiding’ appears in the Pseudo-Clementines,⁶ as well as in Luke 11.52 D it syr^{s.c.}; Justin refers to *keys* plural,⁷ as again do Luke 11.52 syr^{s.c.}. The knowledge here is the knowledge about one’s self mentioned first in *Thomas* in 3.4–5 (see notes ad loc., and Introduction, § 10.1). It is unclear how *Thomas* envisages the action of the Pharisees and the Scribes: if this language is not (a) merely the reproduction of a traditional saying, is the sense (b) the suppression of the truth prior to the revelation of Jesus, which has perhaps occurred throughout history, or (c) the attempt to obstruct Jesus’ own ministry?

39.2 They have not entered, and have not allowed those who (Co: + want to) enter to do so. There are various loose parallels to this part of the saying (of which the meaning is obvious).⁸ The dog-in-the-manger motif perhaps implicit here is made explicit in GTh 102 (see comment ad loc.).

39.3 But you, be clever as serpents, and innocent as doves. This paradox is paralleled in Matt. 10.16 as well as in P. Oxy. LX 4009 (which some have assigned to the *Gospel of Peter*).⁹ There is a strikingly similar Rabbinic parallel: ‘R. Judah said in the name of R. Simeon: “With me [*sc.* God] they are innocent like doves, but with the nations they are cunning like serpents.”’¹⁰ Valantasis

5 Hultgren, ‘Jesus and Gnosis’, 170–176; cf. also noting links to Tatian, Luomanen, “Let Him Who Seeks, Continue Seeking”, 139.

6 *Hom.* 18.16; *Recogn.* 1.54; 2.30.

7 *Dial.* 17.4.

8 See e.g. *Herm.* 72 [*Sim.* 8.6],⁵ where the hypocrites do not allow sinners to repent; *Auth. Teach.* 33.4–21: ‘These ignorant ones do not seek after God ... They are more wicked than the pagans because first of all they do not inquire after God ... Furthermore if they find someone else who asks about his salvation, their hardness of heart sets to work upon that man’; *Apoc. Peter* 78.26–31: ‘For neither will they enter, nor do they permit those who are going up to their approval for release.’

9 Cf. also Ignatius, *Polyc.* 2.2; *Teach. Silv.* 95.5–33. The reading ‘more than serpents’ is attributed by MS 1424 to ‘the Jewish Gospel’, often called the *Gospel of the Nazareans* by modern scholars. See e.g. B.D. Ehrman & Z. Pleše, *The Apocryphal Gospels: Texts and Translations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 208. For further discussion of the parallels, see P. Foster, ‘Are there any Early Fragments of the So-Called Gospel of Peter?’, *NTS* 52 (2006), 1–28 (13–15), and additional parallels in Ménard, 141.

10 *Cant. R.* 2.14 § 1: see M. Simon, tr. *Midrash Rabbah: Canticles* (London: Soncino, 1939), 128.

glosses 'wise' as 'sly' here, which is probably overly negative: despite the association which φρόνιμος could have not just with serpents but with *the* Serpent,¹¹ within *Thomas* the more natural associations are the wise fisherman (8.1–2), the 'prudent man' (21.9), and the shrewd merchant (76.2).¹² The emphasis is thus probably on 'shrewdness', rather than underhand cunning. The innocence probably refers to being uncorrupted by false teaching from any of the groups rivalling the *Thomas* movement.

11 See Lampe, *PGL* 1491b.

12 The suggestion in Grant & Freedman, 154, that there is a link between the 'serpents' here and the Naassenes is overly speculative.

Logion 40¹

40.1 ΠΕΧΕ Τ̄ ΟΥΒΕΝΕΛΟΟΛΕ ΑΥΤΟΨ̄ Μ̄ΠΣΑ ΝΒΟΛ̄ Μ̄ΠΕΙΩΤ̄ 40.2 ΑΥΩ ΕΣΤΑ΄ΞΡΗΥ
ΔΝ ΣΕΝΑΠΟΡΚ̄ ΞΑ ΤΕΣΝΟΥΝΕ Ν̄ΣΤΑΚΟ

40.1 *Jesus said, 'A vine has been planted outside of the Father, 40.2 but is not established. It will be pulled up from its root and will perish.'*

Interpretation

The principal question about this saying (cf. Matt. 15.13) concerns how broadly the illegitimate vine is to be understood.² The “maximalist” position of Haenchen and others takes the vine to comprise everyone outside of the *Thomas* group.³ The “minimalist” position of DeConick and Grosso sees the vine to be the Pharisees and Scribes just mentioned in GTh 39.⁴

A link between this saying and the previous is likely. The parallel in Matthew 15.13 (πάσα φυτεία ἣν οὐκ ἐφύτευσεν ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ οὐράνιος ἐκριζωθήσεται) is also connected to the Pharisees: Jesus’ statement there is a direct response to the disciples saying, ‘Do you realize that the Pharisees have heard that word (sc. Matt. 15.11) and have taken offence?’ Indeed, *Thomas’s* ‘vine’ is more specific than Matthew’s ‘every plant’. As such, a link with the saying about the Pharisees in GTh 39 is plausible. As in GTh 39, however, the Pharisees and Scribes as figures of the past are probably not specifically in view: they probably stand for the Jews as a whole (40.2 clearly envisages the vine as a present reality). This means that GTh 40 is to be associated with the other similar condemnations in GTh 43 (the Jews) and 102 (the Pharisees). The sense of GTh 40 advocated in this commentary is thus neither as general as the maximalist position, nor quite as narrow as that of DeConick and Grosso, though it is closer to the latter in seeing a connection to GTh 39.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 40:** P. von Gemünden, ‘Falsche Herkunft! (Vom Ausreißen der Pflanze)—Mt 15,13’, in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 441–444.

2 The Matthean saying is quite widely cited: see e.g. *Gos. Phil.* 85,29–31; Ignatius, *Trall.* 11.1.

3 Haenchen, *Botschaft*, 62; Valantasis, 116: ‘people, whoever they might be, who exist apart from the Father’; Plisch, 113; Hedrick, 85.

4 DeConick, 161; Grosso, 172.

This saying is an oracle of judgment, pronouncing doom upon those represented by the vine: ‘the “competitors” will be utterly destroyed’.⁵

Notes

40.1 A vine has been planted outside of the Father. If this vine is Israel and its ‘Pharisaic leaders’, then the idea here is that this Israel is an unauthorized institution. There may be a suggestion here that hostile powers are responsible for this institution. That *Thomas* expresses this in botanical terms recalls the parable of the Weeds (GTh 57), where the enemy came and sowed weeds among the farmer’s good seed.

40.2 But is not established. The Thomasine plus of ‘established’ also occurs in the addition to the city on a hill saying (GTh 32; cf. 104.2).

40.2 It will be pulled up from its root and will perish. Israel will suffer eradication at the final judgment. Again, this recalls the parable of the Weeds: ‘For on the day of the harvest, the weeds will be revealed. They will be pulled up and burned’ (57.4).

⁵ Hedrick, 85.

Logion 41¹

41.1 πε.χε ἰς χε πετεῦνταῖς ἔν τεφ'οιχ σενα† ναῖ 41.2 ἀγῶ πετε μῆταῖ
πκεῶνμ ετοῦνταῖς σεναῖτῆ ἦτοοτῆ

41.1 *Jesus said, 'Whoever has in his hand, to him it will be given. 41.2 And whoever does not have, even the little which he has will be taken from him.'*

Interpretation

Both halves of the saying are paradoxical: strictly speaking they do not make sense, as one cannot be given what one already has (41.1) and if one does not have, one cannot have that non-possession taken away (41.2). The paradox, however, merely strengthens the dualism (and, according to Ménard, the predestinarian tone²) in the saying. There are parallels in Mk 4.25/Matt. 13.12/Lk. 8.18 and Matt. 25.29/Lk. 19.26, as well as elsewhere.³

This 'basic observation from the world of capitalist economics'⁴ states that the "haves" will receive more, and the "have-nots" will become utterly destitute. The implied possession in the 'whoever' clauses is taken variously as (1) knowledge of the self⁵ and/or (2) the true interpretation of these sayings,⁶ (3) the 'divine substance' in all humans,⁷ (4) spiritual wealth more generally,⁸ or (5)—understanding the saying literally, in line with *Thomas's* comments about wealth elsewhere—as money.⁹ The foci in interpretations (1–3) are so closely intertwined in *Thomas* that it is difficult to choose between them: as a result, one can understand Grosso opting for the vaguer (4). The last of these (5) is

1 **Bibliography for GTh 41:** There are no special studies of this logion, to my knowledge. See the commentaries, ad loc.

2 Ménard, 142.

3 For Jewish parallels, see D.A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (WBC; Waco: Word, 1993), 373; Hedrick, 86. See also *Apoc. Peter* 83,19–84,6; Ps.-Clem., *Hom.* 18.16.4.

4 R.T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 211.

5 Valantasis, 117.

6 Valantasis, 117.

7 Pokorný, 86.

8 Grosso, 173.

9 Plisch, 114.

probably too literal for *Thomas*, however, and would be considerably at variance with the later parallel to the saying in GTh 70:

Jesus said, 'When you bring forth what is in you, what you have will save you. If you do not have that in you, what you do not have in you will kill you.'

This parallel means that there is probably in 41.1 a possession 'in you' which guarantees salvation, with the converse in 41.2. On the basis of the parallel, perhaps the best option is to take the possession as the true internal image (GTh 83–84) or the light within (GTh 24)—hence among the commentators Pokorný is perhaps nearest the mark.

The rhetorical point in GTh 41 is not so much ethical as one of reassurance to those who belong to the in-group.¹⁰ The contrast between 'whoever has' and 'whoever does not have' may suggest that the dualism within humanity is a predestinarian one (cf. GTh 23; 24), although the antithesis may be merely rhetorical.

Notes

41.1 Whoever has in his hand. One intriguing difference from the Synoptics is the reference to the 'hand', a common difference in *Thomas* (see note on GTh 35.1 above.) It is difficult to see what the force of 'hand' is here, however, unless it is a nuance of strength or power, rather than mere possession of an attribute.

41.1 To him it will be given. Here, *Thomas* retains the paradox (cf. on 41.2 below) with Mark and Luke, in contrast to Matthew's softening of it: 'it will be given to him *and he will have an abundance*' (Matt. 13.12; 25.29 [without 'to him']).

41.2 And whoever does not have, even the little which he has will be taken from him. The other difference from the Synoptic versions, the 'little', is probably secondary, an attempt this time to moderate the paradox inherent in the apparent contradiction implied by the confiscation of what is not possessed (Mk 4.25; Matt. 13.12; Matt. 25.29; Lk. 19.26):¹¹ the same strategy is apparent in

10 Pace Grosso, 173, who emphasises the need to abandon traditional religion and embrace the new.

11 Compare, analogously, F. Schnider, 'Das Gleichnis vom verlorenen Schaf und seine Redaktoren: Ein intertextueller Vergleich', *Kairos* 19 (1977), 146–154 (151), saying that *Thomas*

Luke 8.18 (where ‘even what he has’ becomes ‘even what *he thinks* he has’ / ‘even what *he seems* to have’) as well as in GTh 70 where the parallel to GTh 41’s ‘even the little which he has’ is ‘what you do *not* have in you’. The pronouncement of judgment here may refer specifically to those mentioned in GTh 39–40, viz. the Jews, or the Pharisees and the Scribes,¹² but there is no necessity to take 41.2 so narrowly.

makes his parable of the lost sheep more rational by adding the explanation the sheep is not any lost sheep, but the best one. Cf. also comment below on GTh 65.4. E.F. Osborn, ‘Parable and Exposition’, *Australian Biblical Review* 22 (1974), 11–22, comments similarly that *Thomas* resolves tensions in his parables, and Beardslee remarks that *Thomas* tends to introduce balanced parallelism, reducing hyperbole. W.A. Beardslee, ‘Proverbs in the Gospel of Thomas’, in D.E. Aune, ed. *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature. Essays in Honor of Allen P. Wikgren* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 92–103 (99). Cf. Perkins’s judgment that paradox and hyperbole are reduced in *Thomas*’s pronouncement stories. P. Perkins, ‘Pronouncement Stories in the Gospel of Thomas’, *Semeia* 20 (1981), 121–132 (121).

¹² DeConick, 162; Hedrick, 86 (as a possibility).

Logion 42¹

ΠΕΧΕ ἸϚ ΔΕ ΘΩΠΕ ΕΤΕΤῆΡΠΑΡΑΓΕ

Jesus said, 'Be passers-by!'

Interpretation

The cryptic character of this saying, the shortest in *Thomas*, has elicited a baffling diversity of interpretations.² These can be boiled down to eight.

(1) The most significant variant translation is: 'Come into being as you pass away!' This rendering is taken by Schoedel and Hedrick.³ Thus the sense would be something like that in 2 Cor. 4.16, i.e. that true existence is acquired through a metaphorical death. This translation is unnecessarily convoluted, however. The normal usage of ὥσπε + circumstantial (cf. in 1 Cor. 1.17; 12.10b; Heb. 6.12; *Gos.*

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 42:** Jeremias, *Unknown Sayings of Jesus*, 111–118; T. Baarda, 'Jesus Said: Be Passers-By: On the Meaning and Origin of Logion 42 of the Gospel of Thomas', in idem, ed. *Early Transmission of Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian and the Text of the New Testament* (Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1983), 179–205; A.J. Dewey, 'A Passing Remark: Thomas 42', *Forum* 10 (1994), 69–86; H. Paulsen, 'Werdet Vorübergehende', in idem, *Zur Literatur und Geschichte des frühen Christentums. Gesammelte Aufsätze* (WUNT 99; Tübingen: Mohr, 1997), 1–20; M.W. Meyer, "'Be passersby": Gospel of Thomas 42, Jesus Traditions, and Islamic Literature', in idem, *Secret Gospels: Essays on Thomas and the Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Continuum, 2003), 59–75, reprinted in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 255–271; P.H. Sellew, 'Jesus and the Voice from Beyond the Grave: G.Thom. 42 in the Context of Funeral Epigraphy', in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 39–73; J.D. Dubois, "'Soyez passant", ou l'interprétation du logion 42 de l'Évangile selon Thomas', in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi". Québec, 29–31 mai 2003* (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 93–105; C. Gianotto, 'Vangelo secondo Tommaso, log. 42: Verifica di una nuova proposta di interpretazione', in M. Pesce & M. Rescio, eds. *La trasmissione delle parole di Gesù nei primi tre secoli* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2011), 95–99.
 - ² For good surveys of the different views, see Meyer, 'Be passersby', on the translational options, and Dubois, 'Soyez passant', on the various interpretations.
 - ³ See Grant & Freedman, 155 (tr. by Schoedel); Hedrick, 87. For other advocates, and some criticism, see Meyer, 'Be passersby', 62–63.

Mary 8,7) is as a periphrastic imperative.⁴ Nor is it clear in *Thomas's* theology more broadly that one comes into being by passing away. So the most likely translation is 'Be passers-by!' or even simply 'Pass by!'

(2) Baarda wonders about another possible meaning in the Coptic's *Vorlage*: 'Be Hebrews' (*bryyn*); he suggests this partly on the basis of a connection with 'the Jews' in 43.3.⁵ The combination of GTh 42–43 means that the *Thomas* community identifies itself as the true 'Hebrews', in contrast to the negatively valued 'Jews' of the following saying. Both a Semitic *Vorlage* and a clear connection with the following saying are dubious, however.

The next set of interpretations are those which try to understand the saying without an implied object, emphasising that 'passing by' is shorthand for the kind of life-style envisaged for the true disciple. (3) Quispel takes the 'passer-by' to go back to the Hebrew *ober*, that is, an itinerant teacher.⁶ Baarda rightly questions whether *ober* had this technical sense, however.⁷ Patterson does not rely on such a Hebrew *Vorlage*, but thinks the meaning is still clear: 'Become itinerants', in line with his emphasis on *Thomas* as a document of *Wander-radikalismus* (cf. 12.2; 14) with its renunciation of family ties.⁸ Although Patterson's view is not as speculative as that of Quispel, the link between 'passing by' and 'itinerancy' is not strong: itinerant teachers perhaps 'pass *through*' (e.g. Acts 16.6; 20.2) rather than 'pass *by*'—the latter connotes ignoring or even avoiding, rather than intentional missionary activity.

Another set of options argues for an implied object. (4) For Haenchen, for example, the implicit object is the 'Jahrmart der Welt' (the 'fair' of the world, 'vanity fair').⁹ Similarly, Meyer argues for 'pass by the *world*', that is, 'renounce the world'.¹⁰ Valantasis takes a similar view, but with a more positive outlook

4 On the periphrastic imperative with $\omega\upsilon\omicron\eta\epsilon$ + circumstantial, see Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 294 (§369 a). Compare the similar Greek construction with $\gamma\acute{\iota}\nu\omicron\upsilon/\gamma\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon$ + present participle in Ezek. 2.8; *Sir.* 13.9; 33.23; 2 Cor. 6.14; Rev. 3.2.

5 Baarda, 'Jesus Said: Be Passers-By'.

6 Quispel, *Makarius, das Thomasevangelium und das Lied von der Perle*, 20–22. DeConick, 164, also says 'Hebrew'.

7 Baarda, 'Jesus Said: Be Passers-By', 194.

8 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 131. A potential parallel for this sense can perhaps be found in *Doctrina Addai*, fol. 28a ('wayfarers and sojourners'): see the text in G. Phillips, ed. *The Doctrine of Addai, The Apostle* (London: Trübner and Co., 1876), 42–43. This may also support sense (4), however.

9 E. Haenchen, 'Die Anthropologie des Thomas-Evangeliums', in H. Braun, H.-D. Betz & L. Schottroff, eds. *Neues Testament und christliche Existenz* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1973), 207–227 (212).

10 Meyer, 'Be passersby', 72. Emphasis mine.

emphasising freedom from the world.¹¹ (5) For DeConick, the original sense was that of passing by *all instructions by other masters*, and concentrating solely on Jesus.¹² The parallel adduced in support of this, however, is rightly observed by Gianotto as not being very close linguistically.¹³ (6) A specific context for GTh 42 has been ingeniously suggested by Sellew. He sees GTh 42 against the background of the frequent language in funerary inscriptions,¹⁴ in which the dead person is portrayed as addressing the ‘passer-by’, engaging him in conversation. Sellew takes GTh 42 as a warning¹⁵ ‘not to linger in this world, not to be caught up in the trap of conversation, or better, relations with the “living dead” all around them.’¹⁶ This is, then, a playful characterisation of outsiders as in the grave and urges true disciples to ignore them and ‘pass by’. This has the advantage of paying attention to a use of ‘passing-by’ language in the *Umwelt*, but it selects a very specific instance and is therefore probably too narrow.

Finally, some interpretations attempt to combine different elements. (7) Dewey’s view, that the saying is about ‘finitude and movement/ mission’ mixes (1) and (3).¹⁷ (8) Dubois claims that the build-up from GTh 36 to GTh 42 implies that the allusion to ‘Hebrews’ in this saying constructs an identity over against Judaism, with readers also expected to see ‘passage’ and ‘itinerancy’ as exhorted in the saying: hence (2) and (3) are combined, and perhaps even (1) as well.¹⁸ In the cases of both Dewey and Dubois, however, our uncertainty is perhaps being read back into the original, and—in addition to the problems attending readings (1) and (2)—it is hard to see how their two elements can both be implied at the same time by the wording of the saying. Others combine

11 Valantasis, 118.

12 DeConick, 164.

13 C. Gianotto, ‘Étude critique: la formation de l’*Évangile selon Thomas*: à propos d’une étude récente’, *Apocrypha* 18 (2007), 298–307 (306–307); idem, ‘Vangelo secondo Tommaso, *log.* 42’, 97–99.

14 P. Sellew, ‘Death, Body, and the World in the Gospel of Thomas’, in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica* 31 (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 530–534 (533). He is followed by J.W. Jipp, ‘Death and the Human Predicament, Salvation as Transformation, and Bodily Practices in 1 Corinthians and the *Gospel of Thomas*’, in M.F. Bird & J. Willitts, eds. *Paul and the Gospels: Christologies, Conflicts and Convergences* (London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2011), 242–266 (260).

15 Sellew, ‘Jesus and the Voice from Beyond the Grave’, 70.

16 Sellew, ‘Jesus and the Voice from Beyond the Grave’, 72.

17 Dewey, ‘A Passing Remark’ 83.

18 Dubois, ‘Soyez passant’, 104–105.

different views on the basis of distinctions between the saying in its original context, and its meaning in the final form of *Thomas*.¹⁹

Still further interpretations are imaginable: the implied object of ‘passing by’ could be the archons in GTh 50; in *Gos. Jud.* 35,3 ῥηπαρε is used in a statement about the need to ‘bring forth’ the perfect man within, which would make an interesting link with GTh 41; another work related to *Thomas* is *Dialogue of the Saviour*, in which the reader is instructed to ‘pass by’ the crossing over to the bridal chamber (124,3).²⁰

How is one to come to a conclusion? As Grosso has rightly reminded, much depends on the hermeneutic with which one approaches *Thomas*:²¹ a Gnostic view will rule certain options in and out, as will one which sees *Thomas* as a document of *Wanderradikalismus*. The criticisms made above mean that the interpretations other than that of Haenchen and Meyer are problematic. The view which implies the sense, ‘Pass by *the world*’, can be supported by various parallels. Plisch has drawn attention to a passage in Philo (*Imm.* 159), where there is a reference to ‘those who judge it right to pass by earthly things’ (οἱ τὰ γήινα παρέρχεσθαι δικαιούντες).²² These are the people who the addressees are enjoined to be. A connection is often made to the Arabic agraphon in which the world is a bridge to be passed over (though this is perhaps closer to the *Dialogue of the Saviour* than to *Thomas*).²³ Thus interpretation (4) is probably

19 For DeConick, 164, the saying in the original kernel had the meaning outlined above, whereas in *Thomas* as it stands, it has a sense closer to (4). For Nordsieck, 172–174, the original (dominical) sense was one of itinerancy, but it now may have a ‘Gnostic’ sense: it has thus shifted from (3) to (4).

20 A link with *Thomas* is evident in another passage about the crossing: ‘the passage which they will traverse, those solitary and elect ones, those who have known the Father’ (*Dial. Sav.* 120,25–121,1); cf. also 145,7–24.

21 Grosso, 174.

22 Plisch, 115.

23 On this agraphon, see J. Jeremias, ‘Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte des Agraphon: “Die Welt ist eine Brücke”’, *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, Phil.-hist. Klasse (1953, § 4), 95–103; H. Sahlin, ‘Die Welt ist eine Brücke’, *ZNW* 47 (1956), 286–287. One form of the saying is found on a mosque built in 1601 in Fatehpur-Sikri in India by the Mogul Akbar: ‘Jesus, on whom be peace, said, “This world is a bridge. Pass over it, but do not build your dwelling there.”’ See Jeremias, ‘Überlieferungsgeschichte’, 101, and T. Khalidi, *The Muslim Jesus* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 106 (§ 99) for Arabic precursors. A Latin version of this inscription is recorded by Petrus Alphonsi, a convert from Islam: *seculum est quasi pons: transi ergo: ne hospiteris* (*Disc.* XXVIII). See A. Hilka & W. Söderhjelm, *Die Disciplina Clericalis des Petrus Alphonsi*. Kleine Ausgabe (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1911), 45, ll. 12–13.

to be preferred, but any interpretation of such an elliptical saying will have to be tentative. If (4) is correct, however, then it would probably imply avoidance of such strategies as Justin's petitioning the emperor 'to obtain relief from what he believes to be the unjust practice of the Roman government in executing those who will not renounce their allegiance to Christ'.²⁴ Still less would a disciple of this mindset be eager to stand for public office, make benefactions, or promote the *res publica* in any other sphere.

24 D. Minns & P. Parvis, eds. *Justin, Philosopher and Martyr: Apologies* (OECT; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 44.

Logion 43¹

43.1 πεχδαγ ναϑ' ν̄σι νεϑ'ηδ̄θης χε ν̄τακ' νιμ' εκχω ν̄ναϊ ναν' 43.2
ϑ̄ν̄ νεϑ'χω ν̄μοογ νητ̄ν̄ ν̄τετ̄νειμε αν χε ανοκ' νιμ 43.3 αλλα ν̄τωτ̄ν̄
ατετ̄νωπε ν̄θε ν̄νῑογδᾱιος χε σεμε ν̄πωην σεμοτε ν̄πεϑκαρπος αγω
σεμε ν̄πκαρπος σεμοτε ν̄πωην

43.1 *The disciples said to him, 'Who are you who speak these things to us?'*
43.2 *(Jesus said to them,)* 'You do not understand who I am from the things
which I say to you, 43.3 but you have become like the Jews, for they love the
tree but hate its fruit, or love the fruit but hate the tree.'

Textual Comment

The omission of a change of speaker at the beginning of 43.2 is not particularly significant:² a similar omission occurs in GTh 113.

Interpretation

This dialogue is a little obscure, in part because it functions on three levels: (i) the “narrative” level of the dialogue between Jesus and the disciples in 43.1–2; (ii) the vignette about the Jews constructed by the analogy in 43.3, and (iii) the implied extra-textual reality. An ideal interpretation of GTh 43 as a whole would seek as much correlation as possible between these three levels. The point of comparison is *separation* and *inconsistency*:

- (i) The disciples separate the words of Jesus from who Jesus is (when in fact the words should lead them to understanding of Jesus).

On their own, GTh 43.1–2 are quite straightforward, but the complicating factor is the analogy in 43.3 because of its talk of the tree and the fruit and *vice versa*.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 43:** Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 21–22, 111–112.

2 Valantasis, 119, explores the potential meaning arising from the ambiguity in the text as it stands; Plisch, 116 n. 2 remarks that a conjecture is ‘unnecessary’.

Leipoldt considers that it may refer to an inconsistent love of the Father but not the Son:³

- (ii) The Jews are inconsistent in separating the fruit from the tree (i.e. they separate Jesus from God and claim to love God but hate his Son).⁴

The disciples, then, probably represent those outside of the *Thomas* movement who claim allegiance to Jesus but reject the true revelation in *Thomas*. Hence:

- (iii) Outsiders, like the disciples, are inconsistent in separating the words of Jesus from who Jesus is (i.e. they have access to true revelation but take a different view of Jesus).

Understood along these lines, there is some continuity with Jesus' botanical imagery in the Synoptic Gospels (in the assumption that the nature of the fruit is consistent with the nature of the tree and *vice versa*), even while *Thomas's* use of the tree/ fruit motif is deployed to a different end. Any detailed interpretation of the structure of this logion must remain tentative, however.

Notes

43.1 The disciples said to him, 'Who are you who speak these things to us?' This question on its own might be positive (cf. e.g. Mk 4.41), or a more sceptical inquiry into the legitimacy of Jesus ('who are you to say these things?').⁵ Embedded in this dialogue, it is an inquiry arising out of the disciples' ignorance. There has been some debate about the phrase 'these things': Pokorný sees a reference specifically to GTh 42;⁶ Dunderberg agrees that 'these things' are what precedes, but because of the plural 'these things' does not think the scope is confined to GTh 42.⁷ Indeed, because of the lack of narrative direction in *Thomas*, one could even extend the reference to include *Thomas* as a whole, not just what precedes GTh 43.

³ Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 64.

⁴ Or possibly: separate Jesus from his words.

⁵ Lambdin's translation implies a negative sense: 'Who are you, that you should say these things to us?'

⁶ Pokorný, 87.

⁷ Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 22

43.2 You do not understand who I am from the things which I say to you. Jesus does not answer the question in GTh 43.1 (cf. e.g. GTh 6; 24). On 43.1–2, compare John 8.25: ‘So they said to him, “Who are you?” Jesus said to them, “What I have told you from the beginning.”’

43.3 But you have become like the Jews.⁸ With this likening of the disciples to the Jews one might compare the identification of the apostles and the ‘apostolic men’ as ‘Hebrews’ in the *Gos. Phil.* 55,29–30. This statement is the only reference to ‘the Jews’ *per se* in *Thomas* (cf. GTh 39–40; 102; and ‘Israel’ in GTh 52), and it might hark back to GTh 39–40.⁹ On the other hand, however, it is the ignorance of the disciples, not of the Jews, which is thematised in GTh 43 as a whole. *Thomas* seems to assume as natural such a negative reference to ‘the Jews’. As Hedrick has noted, the distinction between the disciples and the Jews is striking and may well have implications for the date of *Thomas* (see above, Introduction, § 7: ‘Date’).¹⁰

43.3 For they love the tree but hate its fruit, or love the fruit but hate the tree. Various possibilities have been suggested for the tree/ fruit metaphor. Hedrick has raised the possibility of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.¹¹ Many draw parallels with the botanical imagery in the Synoptic Gospels, but *Thomas*’s usage here is actually unparalleled there.¹² It is inconsistency which is particularly attributed to the Jews here: one might compare the criticism of the Pharisees’ great attention to tithing but neglect of justice (cf. e.g. Matt. 23.23/ Lk. 11.42), or Jesus’ criticism of the response of ‘this generation’ to him and John the Baptist: ‘we played the flute for you and you did not dance; we sang a dirge and you did not mourn/ weep’ (Matt. 11.17/ Lk. 7.32). This double-tradition/ “Q” saying has two antithetical parts each composed of an incongruity, just as does GTh 43.3 here. Closest to home, the charge of inconsistency is levelled at the practice of circumcision in GTh 53: people would be

8 Valantasis’s translation ‘Judeans’ here (118–119) is probably not apposite. As Plisch, 116, has put it, the term is used here ‘not ethnically but typologically’.

9 Thus Nordsieck, 175.

10 Hedrick, 89.

11 Hedrick, 90.

12 For example, Grant & Freedman, 156, link GTh 43 to Matt. 7.16 (cf. also 7.17–20) and Lk. 6.43–44 via the observation that ‘the Jews do not understand that the nature of the tree is identical with that of the fruit’. There is of course overlap in the usage of the imagery to the extent that Grant & Freedman state, but this is not a sufficient explanation of the *meaning* of GTh 43. There is perhaps an interesting indication of the influence of Matthew here, however, given that GTh 43 is related to Matt. 12.33, GTh 44 parallels Matt. 12.31–32, and GTh 45 shares material with Matt. 12.34–35. See Gathercole, *Composition*, 131.

born circumcised if circumcision really were so valuable. The charge was sometimes levelled at Jews in Greek and Roman literature: Juvenal accuses Agrippa II and Berenice of an incestuous relationship, while contrasting this with the rigidity of their Sabbath-observance and refusal to kill pigs;¹³ Seneca states that the lamps should not be lit on the Sabbath, because the gods do not need light;¹⁴ Suetonius remarks upon Jews who concealed their origins and practice in order to avoid the *fiscus Iudaicus*;¹⁵ Callistratus, one of Plutarch's characters in the *Quaestiones Convivales* (early second century), wonders whether or not the Jews are consistent in not killing pigs.¹⁶ Perhaps the most striking example, however, comes in another Christian author in the course of a polemic against the Jewish food-laws: 'For to accept some of the things created by God for the use of men as finely created, but to refuse others as useless and redundant—how can this not be lawless?' (*Diogn.* 4.2).

13 See Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 79.

14 Seneca, *Ep. Moral.* 95.47.

15 Suetonius, *Dom.* 12.2. See discussion in Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 113.

16 Plutarch, *Quaest. Conv.* 4.5.1–2 (*Mor.* 669E–670B). See discussion in Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 72–73, 78.

Logion 44¹

44.1 πε.ξε ι̅ς.δε πετα.δε ουα.απειωτ̅. σενακω εβολ ναφ̅ 44.2 αγω πετα.δε ουα.επωηρε σενακω εβολ ναφ̅ 44.3 πετα.δε ουα.δε αππ̅να̅ ετουααβ σενακω αν εβολ ναφ̅ ογτε ρ̅μ̅ πκαρ ογτε ρ̅ν̅ τπε

44.1 *Jesus said, 'Whoever blasphemes the Father, he will be forgiven. 44.2 And whoever blasphemes the Son, he will be forgiven. 44.3 But whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit, he will not be forgiven either on earth or in heaven.'*

Interpretation

This saying contrasts with its Synoptic parallels (Mk 3.28–29; Matt. 12.31–32; Lk. 12.10) in two ways. First, where Matthew and Luke have the contrast between blasphemy against the Son of Man and blasphemy against the Spirit, *Thomas* structures the saying in a 'trinitarian' manner, so that blasphemy against Father and Son are both relativised. Secondly, whereas blasphemy against the Spirit is curious enough in the Synoptic Gospels, there one has a context which elucidates it. In *Thomas* on the other hand, there is not only no narrative context but also no other reference to the 'Holy Spirit' (or indeed to forgiveness or blasphemy).² Two possible explanations might be suggested for the inclusion of this saying by the author/ editor.

- (1) The first is a context of persecution. As Pliny and the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* attest, persecutors exhorted believers to curse Christ as a means of escaping the penalty for belonging to the church.³ Some groups may have reckoned

1 **Bibliography for GTh 44:** T. Baarda, "Vader—Zoon—Heilige Geest": Logion 44 van "Thomas"; *NTT* 51 (1997), 13–30; Gathercole, *Composition*, 179–183.

2 Blasphemy had various senses in Jewish and early Christian contexts, including cursing, but also compromising the oneness of God. See e.g. A. Yarbro Collins, 'Blasphemy', *EDEJ* 445.

3 Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96: 'I decided to dismiss charges against any on this list who stated that they were now not, nor had ever been Christians, if they repeated after me a prayer of invocation to the gods, made an offering of wine and incense to your statue which I had brought in to the court along with the statues of the gods for this purpose, and furthermore cursed Christ (*praeterea male dicerent Christo*). It is said to be impossible to compel those who are true Christians to do any of these things.' *Mart. Poly.* 9.3: 'Then, the proconsul urged him, and said, "Swear, and

- denial of the faith as permissible in times of persecution.⁴ The antithesis of Father and Son on the one hand with the Spirit on the other *might* make sense in this context, as one can imagine a situation of persecution in which believers might be required to curse/ blaspheme their God and Christ, but ‘the Holy Spirit’ would probably not be common knowledge. In this context, the meaning of ‘blaspheme’ in GTh 44 would be a formal curse.
- (2) Others have argued that the reference here is to early Christian prophecy.⁵ (This interpretation emphasises 44.3.) One of the earliest interpretations of the Synoptic saying appears in the *Didache*, which applies it thus: ‘And every prophet who speaks by the Spirit you shall not try or judge, for every sin will be forgiven, but this sin will not be forgiven.’⁶ In the context of *Thomas*, this would refer to itinerant missionaries, and so blasphemy would be a rejection of their divine message.
- (3) Valantasis and Pokorný see the concern in 44.3 as the rejection of the sayings in *Thomas*: the sin is unforgiveable because the Holy Spirit is the mediator of the sayings of Jesus,⁷ or—put slightly differently—‘the text conveys the spirit’, and the saying is thus a ‘textual polemic’.⁸

Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to decide among these different interpretations. As Hedrick notes, this reference to the Holy Spirit is quite unexpected (though the unexpected is almost expected in *Thomas*), and elsewhere in the Gospel there is ‘no practical role for a Holy Spirit’.⁹ Interpretation (1) is vulnerable to the charge that such a pragmatic stance might not have been very widespread, if it existed in a legitimised way at all; (2) is perhaps too specific, and the interpretation in the *Didache* may not have been widely held; (3) is

I will set you at liberty, slander Christ (λοιδόρησον τὸν Χριστόν).” Polycarp declared, “Eighty-six years have I served him, and he never did me any injury: how can I blaspheme my king and my saviour (καὶ πῶς δύναμαι βλασφημῆσαι τὸν βασιλέα μου τὸν σώσαντά με)?”

4 Eusebius reports that the second-century apologist Agrippa Castor accused Basilides of stating that ‘those who unguardedly renounced the faith in times of persecution’ (ἐξομνυμένους ἀπαραφυλάκτως τὴν πίστιν κατὰ τοὺς τῶν διωγμῶν καιρούς) were not guilty (Eusebius, *HE* 4.7.7); cf. also Irenaeus, *AH* 1.24.6. See Löhr, *Basilides und seine Schule*, 9, however, for critical remarks on the authenticity of these testimonia.

5 Plisch, 118; against this view Nordsieck, 181.

6 *Did.* 11.7: καὶ πάντα προφήτην λαλοῦντα ἐν πνεύματι οὐ πειράσετε οὐδὲ διακρινεῖτε· πᾶσα γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφεθήσεται, αὕτη δὲ ἡ ἁμαρτία οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται.

7 Pokorný, 88.

8 Valantasis, 121.

9 Hedrick, 91.

quite possible, but on the other hand a doctrine of “inspiration” may not have been held by the author in the way described. The saying remains enigmatic.

Notes

44.1 Whoever blasphemes the Father. The inclusion of a reference to the Father brings what had been a ‘Son of Man / Spirit’ saying in the Synoptics into line with the triadic formulae which appear already in the NT in 2 Cor. 13.13/14 (Lord Jesus Christ-God-Holy Spirit) and Rev. 1.4–5 (God-Seven spirits-Christ). It is Matthew’s Father-Son-Holy Spirit language (and sequence) above all, however, which becomes most influential in the second century (*Did.* 7.1, 3; *Mart. Polyc.* 22.3 [23.5]; Justin, *1 Apol.* 65.3; cf. Ignatius, *Eph.* 9.1; *Magn.* 13.1). Because of these quite early parallels, it is not necessary to see this saying as a very late accretion to *Thomas*.¹⁰ Baarda does, however, provide some fascinating examples from the middle ages which show that a “trinitarian” version of this saying was known to some Cathars.¹¹ For Quispel, this means that the saying is independent of the Synoptic Gospels, and came from the *Gospel of the Hebrews*.¹² This is not tenable; *Thomas* in this saying is probably dependent on Matthew.¹³ The relationship between GTh 44 and the Manichean and medieval versions of the saying also structured along similar lines merits further study.¹⁴

10 Hedrick, 91, seems to suggest that it may even derive from the fourth century; cf. also the comment in Valantasis, 120.

11 Baarda, ‘Vader—Zoon—Heilige Geest’, 21–22.

12 G. Quispel, *Tatian and the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 55; cf. also idem, ‘Latin Tatian or the Gospel of Thomas in Limburg’, *JBL* 88 (1969), 321–330 (329).

13 See discussion in Gathercole, *Composition*, 179–183, noting also criticisms of Quispel from Baarda and Tuckett.

14 A mediation of the saying into the middle ages via Manichean literature is a possibility. The trinitarian structure is apparent in 2 *Keph.* 416:12–16; 417:25–29. For two medieval Cathar references, see Baarda, ‘Vader—Zoon—Heilige Geest’, 21–22, the second of which is translated into English, with its wider context in F.P. Badham & F.C. Coneybeare, ‘Fragments of an Ancient (? Egyptian) Gospel used by the Cathars of Albi’, *Hibbert Journal* 11 (1913), 805–818 (814); see also the Tuscan gospel harmony: V. Todesco, A. Vaccari & M. Vattasso, eds. *Il Diatessarion in volgare italiano: testi inediti dei secoli XIII–XIV* (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1938), 244. ‘Son’, rather than Son of Man, is also found outside of the triadic structure (i.e. merely in contrast to the Holy Spirit) in *Synodicon Orthodoxiae* 9.

44.1 He will be forgiven. This, along with 44.2–3, is the only reference to forgiveness in *Thomas*; the rarity is unsurprising, given the infrequency of reference to sin (cf. 14.1; 104.2).

44.2 And whoever blasphemes the Son. It is natural to assume that Jesus is the Son here on the basis of his reference elsewhere to ‘my Father’ (GTh 61.3; 64.12; 99.2–3) and perhaps the instance of ‘the son/ Son’ in GTh 37.3. *Thomas* here has modified ‘Son of Man’ to ‘Son’, perhaps in suspicion of the former title: there is not a hostility to titles *per se*, however, or ‘Son’ would have to be avoided as well (cf. ‘my “lordship”’ in GTh 90). Some other later instances of this saying also have ‘Son.’¹⁵

44.2 He will be forgiven. See above on 44.1.

44.3 But whoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit, he will not be forgiven either on earth or in heaven. This part of the saying, based on Matthew’s version, removes the eschatological element,¹⁶ changing the bifurcation of the ages into an earth/ heaven duality.¹⁷ This part of the saying is employed just prior to *Thomas* in Nag Hammadi Codex II, near the end of the *Apocryphon of John*: ‘And they will be kept for the day on which those who have blasphemed the Spirit will be tortured. And they will be punished with an everlasting punishment’ (*Ap. John II 27,27–30*).

15 See the Manichaean and medieval references noted above.

16 Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 131.

17 Gathercole, *Composition*, 181.

Logion 45¹

45.1 πεχε̅ε̅ τ̅ε̅ μα̅χ̅ε̅λε̅ ε̅λοο̅λε̅ ε̅βολ̅ ε̅ν̅ ο̅ν̅τε̅ ο̅υ̅τε̅ μα̅κ̅ω̅τ̅ι̅ κ̅η̅τε̅ ε̅βολ̅ ε̅ν̅
σ̅ρ̅σ̅α̅μο̅υ̅λ̅ μα̅γ̅†̅ καρ̅πος̅ γ̅αρ̅ 45.2 ο̅[γ̅α̅]γ̅α̅θ̅ος̅ ρ̅ρω̅με̅ ω̅α̅φ̅ε̅ι̅νε̅ ν̅ο̅γ̅α̅γ̅α̅θ̅ον̅
ε̅βολ̅ ε̅ν̅ πε̅χε̅ρο̅ 45.3 ο̅γ̅κα̅[κο̅ς̅] ρ̅ρω̅με̅ ω̅α̅φ̅ε̅ι̅νε̅ ν̅ε̅ν̅π̅ο̅ν̅η̅ρον̅ ε̅βολ̅ ε̅ν̅ πε̅χε̅ρο̅
ε̅θ̅ο̅ο̅υ̅ ε̅τ̅ε̅ν̅ πε̅φ̅η̅†̅ δ̅α̅ω̅ ν̅α̅χ̅ω̅ ν̅ε̅ν̅π̅ο̅ν̅η̅ρον̅ 45.4 ε̅βολ̅ γ̅αρ̅ ε̅ν̅ θ̅ο̅γο̅ ν̅η̅†̅
ω̅α̅φ̅ε̅ι̅νε̅ ε̅βολ̅ ν̅ε̅ν̅π̅ο̅ν̅η̅ρον̅

45.1 *Jesus said, 'Grapes are not harvested from thorn-bushes, nor are figs gathered from thistles, for they do not produce fruit. 45.2 [A good] man brings forth good from his store; 45.3 an evil man brings forth wickedness from his evil store which is in his heart, and he speaks wickedness. 45.4 For from the overflow of the heart he brings forth wicked things.'*

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Matt. 7.16; 12.34–35; Lk. 6.44–45) again makes the point that there is an absolute distinction between the good, the elect disciples, on the one hand, and the evildoers outside on the other.² This has the double function of reinforcing the social boundary, and exhorting true disciples to live up consistently to their vocation. Natural law is invoked as confirming this (cf. GTh 53), hence the illustration from agriculture. The sheer obviousness of the illustration has the function also of trying to make the theologoumena in 45.2–4 appear similarly incontrovertible. For the *Thomas* movement, there is no middle ground in which one might imagine the 'evenly balanced' man as envisaged by, for example, the school of Shammai or the *Testament of Abraham*.³

Notes

45.1 Grapes are not harvested from thorn-bushes, nor are figs gathered from thistles, for they do not produce fruit. Here *Thomas* employs the form of

1 Bibliography for GTh 45: Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 100–106.

2 Valantasis, 121.

3 *Tosefta Sanh.* 13.3; cf. *T. Abr.* [Rec. A] 12.12–17. See F. Avemarie, *Tora und Leben: Untersuchungen zur Heilsbedeutung der Tora in der frühen rabbinischen Literatur* (TSAJ 55; Tübingen: Mohr, 1996), 39.

the *impossible* (cf. GTh 31–35), which sets the dualistic tone. The theme of ‘fruit’ harks back to GTh 43,⁴ and indeed GTh 43–45 are linked by a common connection to Matt. 12.31–35.⁵

45.2 A good man brings forth good from his store. The Coptic here is notable for including an inflected Greek form (ἄλογαθον), though the neuter form is not unknown in Coptic.⁶

45.3 An evil man brings forth wickedness from his evil store which is in his heart, and he speaks wickedness. DeConick takes this to be a statement about the Pharisees because of this saying’s position in the Kernel. It is a weakness of this theory of the original form of *Thomas*, however, that this saying as a whole is taken to have been ‘part of the rhetoric arguing for Jesus’ exclusivity as a prophet.’⁷ Since this theme is absent from GTh 45, doubt may be cast over whether such a section of a kernel along these lines existed. On 45.3 in particular, the language is far too general to draw any specific attention to the Pharisees. In parallel with 45.2, we have the inflected form πονηρον.

45.4 For from the overflow of the heart he brings forth wicked things. Again, here the Coptic includes the inflected Greek form (ἄρῆππονηρον). See on 45.2 above.

4 Nordsieck, 183.

5 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 131.

6 See Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 462–463 (‘Glossary’), *ad* ἀλογαθος, -ον and πονηρος, -ον.

7 DeConick, 169.

Logion 46¹

46.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΤΣ ΧΕ ΧΙΝ` ΑΔΑΜ ΟΥΑ ΙΩΡΑ(Ν)ΝΗΣ ΠΒΑΠΤΙΣΤΗΣ ΖΝ̄ ΝΧΠΟ Ν̄ΝΡΙΟΜΕ Μ̄Ν
ΠΕΤΧΟΣΕ ΔΙΩΡΑΝΝΗΣ ΠΒΑΠΤΙΣΤΗΣ ΟΥΙΝΑ ΧΕ ΝΟΥΩΣΠ̄ Ν̄ΣΙ ΝΕΦΒΑΛ 46.2 ΔΕΙΧΟΣΟ
ΔΕ ΧΕ ΠΕΤΝΑΘΩΠΕ ΖΝ̄ ΤΗΥΤ̄Ν ΕΦΟ Ν̄ΚΟΥΕΙ ΟΥΝΑΟΥΩΝ ΤΗΝ̄ΤΕΡΟ ΔΥΩ ΟΥΝΑΧΙΣΕ
ΔΙΩΡΑΝΝΗΣ

46.1 *Jesus said, 'From Adam to John the Baptist, there is no-one among those born of women higher than John the Baptist, such that his (sc. John's) eyes should break. 46.2 But I have said that whoever among you becomes a little one will know the kingdom. And he will be higher than John.'*

Textual Comment

The Coptic's reference to John's eyes literally *breaking* (ΝΟΥΩΣΠ̄ Ν̄ΣΙ ΝΕΦΒΑΛ) is very peculiar.² Plisch suggests textual corruption,³ and it may be that the better sense is 'eyes failing', a common biblical idiom referring to a state of being deeply troubled with no comfort:

Among those nations you shall find no ease, no resting place for the sole of your foot. There the Lord will give you a trembling heart, failing eyes (ἐκλείποντας ὀφθαλμούς), and a languishing spirit.

(Deut. 28.65)

My eyes fail from weeping (ἐξέλιπον ἐν δάκρυσιν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου), I am in torment within, my heart is poured out on the ground because my people are destroyed, because children and infants faint in the streets of the city.

(Lam. 2.11)

1 **Bibliography for GTh 46:** Kee, "Becoming a Child" in the Gospel of Thomas', 307–314; R.L. Webb, *John the Baptizer and Prophet: A Socio-Historical Study* (JSNTSuppS 62; Sheffield: JSOT/Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 78–81; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 480–485; T. Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament', *PIBA* 26 (2003), 17–26.

2 I have not been able to find a parallel to 'eyes breaking'. My colleague John Ray, the Professor of Egyptology in Cambridge, was also unaware of any such expression in Egyptian literature (personal communication, 9.xii.2011).

3 Plisch, 121.

This idiom may be suggested as a possible alternative. One possible Coptic rendering would then be $\text{NOY}\omega\chi\bar{\text{n}} \bar{\text{n}}\text{C}\text{I} \text{NE}\text{F}\text{B}\lambda\lambda$ instead of the text's $\text{NOY}\omega\text{C}\text{I} \bar{\text{n}}\text{C}\text{I} \text{NE}\text{F}\text{B}\lambda\lambda$, the verb $\omega\chi\bar{\text{n}}$ (Crum 539) instead of $\text{OY}\omega\text{C}\text{I}$ (Crum 513).⁴ An inner-Coptic scribal error would be quite comprehensible as χ and C are easily interchangeable (Crum gives $\text{OY}\omega\chi\text{I}$ as a variant spelling of $\text{OY}\omega\text{C}\text{I}$) and n/I confusion is also possible.⁵ Examples of the biblical-Coptic idiom $\lambda\text{N}\lambda\text{B}\lambda\lambda \omega\chi\bar{\text{n}}$ ('my eyes have failed') can be seen in Ps. 68.3/4 and Ps. 119/118.82.⁶ It is nevertheless, like all conjectures, a speculation.

Interpretation

The overall point of this saying (cf. Matt. 11.11/ Lk. 7.28⁷) is clear, despite some puzzling details. The saying is not primarily about John the Baptist but about the exalted status of the 'little one' over against everyone belonging to the old age. Valantasis comments that this saying reasserts (after GTh 45) the sense of hierarchy within humanity, but this time between old and new dispensations.⁸ There is a probable implication of a kind of new birth as little ones in 46.2,⁹ with a contrast to those 'born of woman' in 46.1.¹⁰

Thomas's cultural environment was permeated by the attitude summed up in the famous words of ben Sira: 'Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers in their generations ...' (*Sir.* 44.1). It is notable, then, that *Thomas* is unabashed about the novelty of the revelation of Jesus. Kinzig's study of the concept of newness in Christianity argues that, although the positive valuation of the 'new' in Christianity more broadly was never completely overshadowed by the church's employment of 'proofs from antiquity', only the Marcionites and

4 The -OY- would then be part of the 3rd pl. prefix rather than part of the stem. For the form, see the table in Layton, 'Dialect and Orthography', in idem, 'Introduction', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7. Volume I, 2* (in *Thomas*, see e.g. 93.1, 2; 47.4).

5 As Dr Christian Askeland has reminded me, the diagonal and horizontal lines in majuscule Coptic are very thin.

6 E.A.W. Budge, ed. *The Earliest Known Coptic Psalter* (London: Kegan Paul, 1898), 71, 130.

7 As Wilson has noted, the sayings are very similar in *Thomas* and the Synoptics, with the main difference being one of punctuation. R.McL. Wilson, 'Thomas and the Synoptic Gospels', *ExpT* 72 (1960), 36–39 (36).

8 Valantasis, 122.

9 Valantasis, 123.

10 Hedrick, 94, comparing Jn 1.12–13; 3.3–8; 1Jn 2.29; 4.7.

Montanists were thoroughgoing advocates of newness.¹¹ To these two groups the *Thomas* movement should probably be added: *Thomas* does not offer any defence against any accusation, real or hypothetical, of novelty; the same is true of GTh 52, where there is an unqualified recommendation of Jesus over against the dead prophets of Israel.¹²

Notes

46.1 From Adam to John the Baptist there is no-one among those born of women higher than John the Baptist. Lincoln's observation that Adam was not 'born of woman' and that therefore the scope is exclusive of Adam and John is perhaps over-pedantic.¹³ Hedrick notes the difficulty that we are not told why John is so highly valued in *Thomas*.¹⁴ The reason might be John's ascetic life-style. It may well be that there is an implied denigration of Hebrew Bible, as will appear more clearly in GTh 52.¹⁵

46.1 Such that his eyes should break. See the textual comment above on this curious phrase. Other translations, such as be 'cast down',¹⁶ 'downcast',¹⁷ 'averted',¹⁸ are not so much translations as attempts to change what is said in order to make some sense. Similarly, Nordsieck's reference to 'eyes not breaking' as an image of life beyond death is also a guess.¹⁹ If the conjecture suggested above is correct, the sense would be that there is none is greater than John such that John would be overcome with a sense of inferiority: similarly, in the

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- 11 W. Kinzig, *Novitas Christiana: Die Idee des Fortschritts in der Alten Kirche bis Eusebius* (FKD 38; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 582.
 - 12 Conversely, one might speculate that the attitude in this and other similar sayings might have something of the tone of those Roman authors who celebrate the advent of a new emperor after a disastrous predecessor or time of conflict.
 - 13 B. Lincoln, 'Thomas-Gospel and Thomas-Community: A New Approach to a Familiar Text', *NovT* 19 (1977), 65–76 (74).
 - 14 Hedrick, 94.
 - 15 Baarda compares *Treat. Seth* 62,27–64,1, where the whole sequence of patriarchs and Israelite prophets is mocked, and identified as part of the 'Adam to John the Baptist' sequence.
 - 16 Plisch, 121, though he recognises the difficulty, and—as noted above—suspects a corrupt text.
 - 17 Hedrick, 94; cf. also Pokorný, 91; Grosso, 179.
 - 18 Valantasis, 122.
 - 19 Nordsieck, 186.

Gospel of Judas, in contrast to the other disciples Judas can stand before Jesus, but cannot look at him (35,6–14).

46.2 But I have said that whoever among you becomes a little one will know the kingdom. The implication of the ‘I have said’ is that the words ‘whoever among you becomes a little one will know the kingdom’ are an allusion to a previous saying in *Thomas* or elsewhere.²⁰ The conjunction of ‘little ones’ and the kingdom is prominent in GTh 20–22, especially in GTh 22:

Jesus saw some *little ones* being suckled. He said to his disciples, ‘These *little ones* being suckled are like *those who enter the kingdom*.’ They said to him, ‘Shall we, then, *enter the kingdom* as *children*?’ Jesus said to them, ‘When you ... then *will you enter the [kingdom]*.’

It may be that this specific saying is in view in 46.2, or it may be the theme more widely; it is even possible, if unlikely, that an ‘exoteric’ canonical parallel (e.g. Mk 10.15/ Matt. 18.3/ Lk. 18.17) is in mind. Since the ‘little ones’ in GTh 22 are suckling babies (cf. the child seven days old in GTh 4), a similar image is probably suggested here in GTh 46. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above.

46.2 And he will be higher than John. This probably does not belong with what has already been said, hence the translation as a separate sentence. It highlights the ambiguous status of John the Baptist at the turn of the ages, with his exaltation in 46.1 being immediately relativised in 46.2.

²⁰ B.D. Chilton, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas as a Source of Jesus’ Teaching’, in D. Wenham, ed. *Jesus Tradition outside the Gospels* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1984), 155–175 (167): ‘Thomas himself gives us a clue that he is paraphrasing.’

Logion 47¹

47.1 πεχε ιϭ δε η̄ν̄ βοη̄ η̄τε ο̄γρωμε τελο ᾱρτο σναγ η̄ν̄χωλκ̄ η̄πιτε
σ̄η̄τε 47.2 αγω η̄ν̄βοη̄ η̄τε ο̄γρμ̄ρ̄αλ̄ ω̄η̄ω̄ε χ̄οεις σναγ η̄ η̄ναρ̄τιμα η̄πογᾱ
αγω η̄κεογα η̄ναρ̄εγ̄βριζε η̄μοϭ 47.3 μαρε ρωμε σε ρ̄πας αγω η̄τεγ̄νοϭ
η̄ϭ̄ε̄π̄θ̄ο̄μ̄ει ᾱσω η̄ρ̄π̄ β̄β̄ρ̄ρε 47.4 αγω μαγ̄νογ̄χ̄ η̄ρ̄π̄ β̄β̄ρ̄ρε ε̄ᾱσκ̄ο̄ς η̄ᾱς χ̄εκαᾱς
η̄νογ̄πω̄ρ̄ αγω μαγ̄νεχ̄ η̄ρ̄π̄ η̄ᾱς ε̄ᾱσκ̄ο̄ς β̄β̄ρ̄ρε ω̄ινα δε νεϭ̄τεκαϭ 47.5
μαγ̄χ̄λ̄ϭ̄ το̄εις η̄ᾱς ᾱω̄τη(η̄) η̄ω̄αῑεῑ επεῑ ο̄γ̄η̄ ο̄γ̄πω̄ρ̄ νᾱω̄ω̄πε

47.1 *Jesus said, 'It is impossible for a person to mount two horses or to stretch two bows. 47.2 And it is impossible for a servant to serve two masters; otherwise, he will honour the one and insult the other. 47.3 No-one drinks old wine and immediately desires to drink new wine. 47.4 Nor is new wine put into old wineskins, lest they tear. Nor is old wine put into a new wineskin, lest it ruin it. 47.5 An old patch is not stitched onto a new garment, since there would be a tear.'*

Interpretation

Most of the components of GTh 47 are paralleled in the Synoptics.² This saying weaves together no less than seven statements about impossible incompatibilities:³ (1) mounting two horses, (2) stretching two bows, (3) serving two masters, (4) wanting to move from old to new wine, (5) putting new wine into old skins, (6) putting old wine into new skins, and (7) stitching old onto new. *Thomas's* fondness for *impossibilia* is reflective of a hard-line stance which sees every

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- 1 **Bibliography for GTh 47:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 109–116; J.D. Crossan, *In Fragments: The Aphorisms of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), 124–127; P. Nagel, 'Der Spruch vom Doppeldienst im Thomasevangelium (Logion 47) und im manichäischen Psalmenbuch (Part I pl. 179, 27–29)', in W. Beltz, ed. *Der Gottesspruch in der koptischen Literatur: Hans-Martin Schenke zum 65. Geburtstag* (Hallesche Beiträge zur Orientwissenschaft 15; Halle: Institut für Orientalistik, 1994), 75–83; Riley, 'The Influence of Thomas Christianity on Luke 12:14 and 5:39', 229–234; Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament', 17–26.
 - 2 See the very helpful tabulation of the various Synoptic parallels in Plisch, 124. On the 2 *Clement* and Manichaean *Psalms-Book* parallels, see notes below on 47.2.
 - 3 Valantasis, 123, helpfully comments: 'The sayings about the number two evoke strict bifurcation of the two worlds.'

alternative as an unworkable contradiction. This has already been noted in the *impossibilia* in GTh 31–35 (cf. 36), and more recently in 45.1. The point here is presumably that the revelation of Jesus as preserved in the *Thomas* movement requires absolute loyalty.⁴

This much is agreed upon, but there has been debate about the significance of the shift in 47.3 to an ‘old’ vs ‘new’ contrast. (1) Valantasis and Pokorný see *Thomas* drawing attention to the benefits of the new as incompatible with the benighted old condition (with Valantasis emphasising dispensations and Pokorný the individual life before and after).⁵ (2) Riley and—apparently inconsistently, or seeing a tension within *Thomas*—Valantasis again argue that *Thomas* values the old over the new, giving priority to the image of the old wine.⁶ (3) DeConick, however, does not assign priority to one over the other, merely remarking that exclusive commitment to Jesus remains the theme.⁷ DeConick is probably correct here that there is no particular development in view between 46.1–2 and 3–5, and that the overall theme is the same. It is particularly apparent that 47.5 is not drawing any attention to the merits or demerits of old and new, and while it is the damage to the old that is noted in 47.4, there is no clear external-world referent to the wine and the skins. The point therefore remains one of the incompatibility of opposites, and of the need for exclusive commitment, rather than anything to do with old vs new dispensations, old vs new religious lifestyles, traditional piety vs new revelation.⁸

4 Grosso, 180, comments that the living Jesus demands exclusive dedication to his message.

5 Pokorný, 92; Valantasis, in common with his interpretation of GTh 46, sees the primary contrast between ‘the person of the old dispensation and the person of the new’ (123), although the contrast is also personal: ‘The new subjectivity must be clearly delineated from the old ...’ (124). Similarly, Hedrick, 96, for whom the gospel is new wine which opens the mind of those intoxicated by old religion.

6 For Riley, GTh 47 ‘values the old over the new throughout’ (‘The Influence of Thomas Christianity’, 234); cf. Valantasis, 124: ‘The aged wine presumably refers to the richness of the spiritual life presented to those who interpret these sayings, while the young wine refers to the lesser things of the world.’

7 DeConick, 173–177.

8 As was apparently the case for Marcion (according to Tertullian, *Marc.* 3.15).

Notes

47.1 It is impossible for a person to mount two horses or to stretch two bows. The reference to a man riding two horses may allude to the Roman *desultor*—a circus actor who jumped from one horse to another.⁹ The epithet of *desultor* was applied to Quintus Dellius, in view of his frequent changing of sides during the civil wars.¹⁰ If the author of *Thomas* was aware of either a literal or metaphorical *desultor* (or even if he was not), then his reference here draws attention either to the (a) inconstancy or (b) the freakish nature of the rider; on the other hand, (c) *Thomas* may be assuming that it was impossible. Drawing two bows involves even greater physical difficulty.

47.2 And it is impossible for a servant to serve two masters; otherwise, he will honour the one and insult the other. In the Synoptics (Matt. 6.24; Lk. 16.13), the other ‘master’ is Mammon.¹¹ According to Grant & Freedman, ‘something like Judaism is substituted for Mammon’.¹² It is difficult, however, to see any particular rival in view in *Thomas* here.

47.3 No-one drinks old wine and immediately desires to drink new wine. Cf. Lk. 5.39. The presumption here is that the old wine is better, though there is no really negative comment about the new.¹³

47.4 Nor is new wine put into old wineskins, lest they tear. Nor is old wine put into a new wineskin, lest it ruin it. The idea is presumably that the old wineskins are worn and fragile (cf. Josh. 9.4) and the new wine, still fermenting and producing gases, would burst such skins.¹⁴ The end of the second sentence (‘lest it ruin it’) is ambiguous: it could refer (1) to the old wine ruining the new wineskin, or (2) the new wineskin spoiling the old wine.¹⁵ The first sentence is drawn from the canonical Gospels (Mk 2.22 and parallels), and the second appears simply to be a reflex of the first, rather than reflecting any viticultural knowledge.

9 See e.g. Suetonius, *Julius* 39.

10 E. Badian, ‘Dellius’, *OCD*³ 442.

11 So also in 2 *Clem.* 6.1. See Pratscher, *Der zweite Clemensbrief*, 108–109.

12 Grant, ‘Notes on the Gospel of Thomas’, 177.

13 On the positive value of old wine, see e.g. *Sir.* 9.10; P. Oxy. XXXI 2596 line 8 (3rd cent. CE).

14 J.F. Ross, ‘Wine (2c)’, *IDB*¹ (1962), 849–852 (850).

15 For bibliography on wineskins see Hedrick, 97. Other viticultural observations can be found in Plisch, 125. I am also grateful to my colleague the Ven. John Beer, Archdeacon of Cambridge, and Wine Steward of Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge, for his advice on these matters.

47.5 An old patch is not stitched onto a new garment, since there would be a tear. Here the image is quite different from the Synoptic parallels, which talk of a new patch of unshrunk cloth being placed on an *old* garment (Mk 2.21; Matt. 9.16; Lk. 5.36). Here in *Thomas* the idea is in part the incongruity of stitching an old patch onto a new garment which presumably does not need it, and which could only be damaged by the addition of old material.

Logion 48¹

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ΔΕ ΠΩΩΝΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΔΥΩ ΦΝΑΠΩΩΝΕ

Jesus said, 'If two make peace with one another in this one house, they will say to the mountain, "Move away", and it will move.'

Interpretation

In contrast to the Synoptic parallels to this saying (Matt. 18.19; Mk 11.23/ Matt. 21.21; cf. also 1 Cor. 13.2), the focus is not on prayer (condemned in GTh 14) but on soteriology. The apodosis signifies the salvation that is, on strictly human terms, impossible.² More precisely, the focus is on what will lead to a position of ascendancy over the cosmos: a similarly poetic image of salvation is that of the stones serving the elect in 19.2 (cf. GTh 2; 13; 106: see comment above on GTh 2.4).

The principal debate has concerned the meaning of the 'house' in the protasis, which as the condition of salvation becomes important.³ For Valantasis, the reference is to a literal household.⁴ This is unlikely, in view of the reference to 'this one house'. For Grosso, it is the *Thomas* community, indicating that despite e.g. GTh 16 and 55, interpersonal relations (even social responsibility and reciprocal solidarity) are of significance to *Thomas*, but although passages such as GTh 25 and 69.2 stress solidarity, GTh 48 is not so clear on the point.⁵ Pokorný does speak of the overcoming of differences, but with a stress on actualising the original unity of human beings.⁶ This last is more likely in view of the wider emphases of *Thomas*, and especially as much of the language of this saying is repeated in GTh 106:

1 **Bibliography for GTh 48:** Crossan, *In Fragments*, 295–302; C.W. Hedrick, 'On Moving Mountains: Mark 11:22b–23/Matt 21:21 and Parallels', *Forum* 6 (1990), 219–237.

2 Hedrick, 99; Grosso, 181, 182.

3 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 433.

4 Valantasis, 124–125.

5 Grosso, 182.

6 Pokorný, 93.

Jesus said, 'When you make the two one, you will become sons of man. And when you say, "Mountain, move away!", it will move.'

The sense there is of the recovery of primordial unity: the theme of 'making the two one' establishes GTh 106 and (by extension) GTh 48 as belonging with GTh 22 and other sayings about reconstituted oneness. Hence the reference is probably to the individual person ('this one house') re-connecting what was divided at the fall (GTh 11.4). The unity advocated here in *Thomas* draws upon a conception of a fall and restoration conceived in terms of fracture and reconstitution. The unity required in salvation is not merely separation from God and reconciliation with God, but the unity and reconciliation of elements of the human person (see Introduction, § 10.2).

Notes

If two make peace with one another in this one house. The catchwords 'two' and 'one' (ܟܢܐܘܢܐ/ܝܚܕܐ) forge a link with GTh 47. The idea that the reference to 'making peace' goes back to a Western Aramaic or Syriac *Vorlage* is unjustified.⁷ There is a striking parallel in the Latin version of the *Didascalia: quoniam scriptum est in evangelio: Duo si convenerunt in unum et dixerint monti huic: Tolle et mitte te in mari, fiet* (*Didasc.* 15).⁸ (The Syriac version parallels Matthew much more closely.) For some this has reinforced the theory of a Syrian provenance.⁹

They will say to the mountain, "Move away", and it will move. The apodosis is a fusion of Mk 11.23/ Matt. 21.21, appended to the protasis which is closer to Matt. 18.19.

⁷ Gathercole, *Composition*, 74.

⁸ For the Latin text, see R.H. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum: The Syriac Version Translated and Accompanied by the Verona Latin Fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1929), 135 (cf. the Syriac in translation on 134); also cf. M.D. Gibson, tr. *The Didascalia Apostolorum in English* (London: Clay, 1903), 73; H. Achelis & J. Flemming, *Die syrische Didaskalia* (TU 25.2; NF 10.2; Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904), 345.

⁹ Plisch, 127.

Logion 49¹

49.1 ΠΕ.Χ.Ε. ἸϞ. Δ.Ε. ρΕΝΜΑΚΑΡΙΟϞ ΝΕ ΝΜΟΝΑΧΟϞ ΔΥΩ ΕΤϞΟΤΠ᾽ Δ.Ε. ΤΕΤΝΑΡΕ ΔΤΗΝ᾽ΤΕ-
ΡΟ 49.2 Δ.Ε. ἸΤΩΤ᾽Ν ῥ᾽ΝΕΒΟΛ ἸῤΗΤϞ ΠΑΛΙΝ ΕΤΕΤΝΑΒΩΚ᾽ ΕΜΑΥ

49.1 *Jesus said, 'Blessed are the solitary and elect, for you will find the kingdom. 49.2 For you are from it, and you will return there again.'*

Interpretation

This saying is an important statement of one of the central tenets of the *Gospel of Thomas*. It defines the identity of the blessed (49.1a), the content of the promised blessing (49.1b) and the theological grounds for the promise of the blessing (49.2).² The promised blessing consists of a guaranteed entry into the kingdom. This entry is expressed with future tenses in both 49.1 and 49.2, but the reference is not to an eschatological future: it is actually a return to a primordial, *protological* kingdom in paradise. GTh 18–19 are especially closely related to GTh 49 on this point. This paradise was after all the place of origin of the souls of the elect, a theme which is developed further in the closely related GTh 50. This logion raises the question of whether pre-existence is a property only of the elect, or whether it is more universal—GTh 24 and 70 suggest the former (see comments *ad locc.*).

Notes

49.1 Blessed are. This saying is the fourth beatitude of eleven in *Thomas* (see comment on *Thomas's* beatitudes on GTh 7.1).

49.1 The solitary and elect. On 'the solitary', see Appended Note following GTh 16 above. There has been debate over whether the categories 'solitary

1 **Bibliography for GTh 49:** Klijn, 'The "Single One" in the Gospel of Thomas', 271–278; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La reconversión de la escatología en protología', 133–162; Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 196–204; Gagné, 'Jésus, la lumière et le Père Vivant', 215–220.

2 Slightly differently, Valantasis, 125, labels the three parts (1) general beatitude, (2) application to audience with explanation, and (3) characterisation.

and elect' are (1) co-terminous,³ (2) two different groups,⁴ or (3) two different but overlapping groups, the membership of both of which is required,⁵ with the further possibility that (4) the 'solitary' are here a subset of the elect.⁶ All except (1) are groundless.⁷ There is no evidence for a differentiation: the 'saved' can be identified either as the solitary (GTh 75) or elect (GTh 23; 50). The pairing appears (in the reverse order) also in the *Dialogue of the Saviour* (120,6). Position (1) is taken by the great majority of commentators.

49.1 For you will find the kingdom. Cf. GTh 27; 97?; 107; 109 (cf. also Matt. 13.44). On the kingdom, see Introduction, §10.1 above.

49.2 For you are from it, and you will return there again. The pre-existence of the kingdom has limited precedent in the canonical Gospels: in Mk 10.40/ Matt. 20.23 and Matt. 25.34, the kingdom and its places are said to have been 'prepared', but this does not entail a real pre-existence. The idea of returning to the kingdom is also dependent on a particular psychology, according to which the soul (or spirit or image) is pre-existent, as is clearer in GTh 84, with its reference to 'your images which came into being before you—which neither die nor are revealed'.

3 Plisch, 129.

4 I am not sure than anyone has taken position (2). The attribution of this view (Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 158) to Lambdin in his translation ('Blessed are the solitary and elect') seems mistaken.

5 Valantasis, 126 ('in theory at least').

6 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 158.

7 Rightly, Gagné, 'Jésus, la lumière et le Père Vivant', 217.

Logion 50¹

50.1 πεχε ιϛ δε εγωδανξοοο νητην δε ντατετηνωπε εβολ των ξοοο ναγ
δε ντανει εβολ ρη πογοειν πμα εντα πογοειν ωπε ημαγ εβολ ριτοοτϛ
ογαατϛ δαωξ[ε ερατϛ] αγω αφογωνη ε[β]ολ ρη τογρικων 50.2 εγωδξοοο
νητην δε ντωτην πε ξοοο δε ανον νερωηρε αγω ανον ηρωτην ηπειωτ ετωνε
50.3 εγωδανξνε τητην δε ογ πε πμαειν ηπετηνωτ ετην τητην ξοοο
ερωοϛ δε ογκιμ πε ηη ογαναπαγσις

50.1 *Jesus said, 'If they say to you, "From where have you come?," say to them, "We have come from the light, where the light came into being all of its own accord and st[ood] and appeared in their images."* 50.2 *If they say to you, "Is it you?," say, "We are its children and we are the elect of the living Father."* 50.3 *If they ask you, "What is the sign of your Father in you?," say to them, "It is motion and rest."*

Interpretation

The main debate on this saying (which follows on closely from GTh 49) has been about the setting in which the dialogue was intended to have taken place.² (1) Turner and Pokorný take GTh 50 to be 'a piece of gnostic missionary briefing', or 'catechetical instruction for a missionary dialogue';³ hence, the dialogue is between the evangelised and the itinerant evangelist. (2) Valantasis sees a more hostile interaction between in-group and out-group, but one which functions

1 **Bibliography for GTh 50:** P. Bellett, 'El logion 50 del Evangelio de Tomás', *Studia Papyrologica* 8 (1969), 119–124; Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 103–111; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La reconversión de la escatología en protología', 133–162; DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 43–96; Popkes, "Ich bin das Licht"; 641–674; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 218–227; Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 196–204; C. Tornau, 'Die neuplatonische Kritik an den Gnostikern und das theologische Profil des Thomasevangeliums. Anhang: Zur Übersetzung von *EvThom* 50,1, NHC II,2, p. 42,1', in Frey, Popkes & Schröter, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium*, 326–359 (358–359); S.J. Gathercole, 'Quis et Unde? Heavenly Obstacles in *Gos. Thom.* 50 and Related Literature', in M. Bockmuehl & G.G. Stroumsa, eds. *Paradise in Antiquity: Jewish and Christian Views* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 82–99; Gagné, 'Jésus, la lumière et le Père Vivant', 215–220.

2 Hedrick, 101, says that we do not know if the setting is earthly or mythical. Grosso, 184, also emphasises the ambiguity.

3 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 86; Pokorný, 94.

more as the *Thomas* movement's 'celebration of their own identity' rather than as exemplifying real conflict 'out there'.⁴ (1) and (2) do not take into account the numerous parallels in dialogues with archontic powers, however. (3) DeConick takes this to be a dialogue between the soul and hostile powers, but emphasises strongly that this should be understood as preparation for mystical experience in the *present*, rather than *post mortem*.⁵ An important component in her argument is that GTh 59 requires a setting before death. Although the knowledge must be acquired before death, however, it does not necessarily follow that the employment of that knowledge must also be before death. (4) This is Jesus' preparation of the disciples for their *post mortem* heavenly ascent. This is probably the setting in many of the principal parallels elsewhere, e.g. in the *Gospel of Mary*, Epiphanius' *Gospel of Philip*, the *apolutrosis* ritual described by Irenaeus and Epiphanius as well as in the *First Apocalypse of James*, *Pistis Sophia*, *2 Jeu* and the Ophite diagramme as reported by Origen.⁶ This is thus the preparation which ensures that the reader 'will not taste death' (GTh 1).

In accordance with a number of instances of this motif, the questioning the elect will receive is threefold: who are they (50.2)? where are they from (50.1)? and, do they have the appropriate "pass" (50.3)? The answers to the first two questions are standard, in that many similar accounts state that the elect are entitled to ascend because of their identity as the true sons of the light and because they originated in the place to which they now intend to return.⁷ The third, the sign which the ascending soul is to display, is distinctive in character.

Notes

50.1 If they say to you, "From where have you come?" This question in the context of a heavenly ascent is found in several places: the *First Apocalypse of James* (33,15–16: $\bar{\eta}\tau\bar{\kappa}\ \omicron\gamma\epsilon\upsilon\omicron\lambda\ \tau\omega\bar{\nu}$) and the *Gospel of Mary* (16,4: $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\bar{\nu}\eta\gamma\ \chi\iota\bar{\nu}\ \tau\omega\bar{\nu}$) are noteworthy parallels because they connect 'whence' and 'whither' very closely; cf. GTh 50 in connection with the related previous saying (GTh 49). The same is true in the *Apocalypse of Paul* ($\epsilon\kappa\tau\omega\bar{\nu}\ \pi\epsilon$), in which the two questions appear in sequence (*Apoc. Paul* 23,2 and 23,11).

50.1 Say to them, "We have come from the light." The kingdom from which the elect come in GTh 49 is identified here as 'the light', the pre-existent

4 Valantasis, 127–129; the interpretation in Nordsieck, 204, is a combination of (1) and (2).

5 DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 43–99; *eadem*, *Voices of the Mystics*, 93.

6 On all these, see Gathercole, 'Quis et Unde?'

7 Popkes labels this the 'egressus-regressus' scheme ('Ich bin das Licht', 669).

paradisaic reality. Compare a similar element in Origen's account of the Ophite diagramme (*C. Cels.* 6.31): 'From you I am sent pure, *already part of the light of the Son and the Father*' (φωτὸς ἤδη μέρος υἱοῦ καὶ πατρὸς). There are three aspects of the light here.

50.1 Where the light came into being all of its own accord. The first aspect is its self-generation. This is a theme paralleled in those versions of the Gnostic myth in which 'Autogenes' (whose name means 'self-generated') is associated with light (he is 'god of light' in *Gos. Jud.* 47,20–21; cf. *Ap. John* II 7,15–32⁸).

50.1 And stood. Secondly, it 'stood' (if the restoration of the Coptic is correct). This rather awkward translation nevertheless communicates the continuity between the light and the 'standing' elect disciples (GTh 16; 23): this implies indestructibility and immovable rest (see comment above on GTh 16.4).

50.1 And appeared in their images. Thirdly, its appearance 'in their images' is a notorious crux, since the antecedent of 'their' is far from clear. (It can hardly be the questioners, who are the only third-person plural element so far.) Tornau has proposed quite plausibly a Greek *Vorlage* which read ἐν τῇ ἑαυτῶν εἰκόني, with ἑαυτῶν meaning '(our) own' rather than being specifically third-person.⁹ This still does not lead neatly to a clear interpretation, however: it is not obvious what it means for the light to appear in the images of the elect.¹⁰ There is clearly a relationship between GTh 50.1 and 83–84, but that is complicated by the fact that (i) the light in 83 is concealed and is not clearly said to appear, and (ii) the images are in 84 said *not* to appear but will nevertheless be seen.

The most likely sense is perhaps that the elect *qua* pre-existent beings were in possession of, indeed were identified with, their images which were infused with or which simply existed as light. In the text's present, these true luminescent images are now hidden within or behind the temporary images of external physical bodies (83.1). However, in the future, the condition of the images will again be the same as they were originally: this will happen *when you see your images* which came into being before you—which neither die nor are (*in the present*) revealed'. Then, the light will appear in the true images of the elect as it did primordially in 50.1.¹¹

8 Here 'Autogenes' may be identified with the Christ who is the light; the identification is clearer in the other texts of *Ap. John*. See Waldstein & Wisse, *Apocryphon of John*, 46–47.

9 Tornau, 'Die neuplatonische Kritik', 359.

10 Additionally, Popkes notes that 'their images' could either be the images *produced by them* (genitive of origin/ authorship) or the images in which they can be seen. Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 226. It is far from clear which is the case.

11 The only thing said in GTh 83–84 to remain eternally concealed is the *Father's* image.

50.2 If they say to you, “Is it you?” This corresponds to the frequent “Who?” question in the heavenly ascent: it is explicit in the version of the apolutrosis ritual in the *First Apocalypse of James* (33,15: $\bar{\nu}\tau\bar{\kappa}\ \bar{\nu}\mu\mu$). Indeed, the Berlin editors suggest the possibility of emending the text to $\bar{\nu}\tau\omega\tau\bar{\nu}$ ($\bar{\nu}\mu\mu$).¹² It is likely that something has gone wrong here, either in translation or copying, but the function of the question is clear enough.¹³

50.2 Say, “We are its children and we are the elect of the living Father.” Again this is a feature of the apolutrosis ritual: in reply to the questions of origin and identity, the soul in in the *First Apocalypse of James* (33,16–18) replies ‘I am a son, and I am from the Father.’¹⁴

50.3 If they ask you, “What is the sign of your Father in you?” Signs are also part and parcel of heavenly ascents, functioning as “passports” (or sometimes as devices to enable the soul’s concealment). In the *Apocalypse of Paul*, the Spirit instructs the apostle to give a sign ($\sigma\eta\mu\iota\omega\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$) to the Old Man to secure passage upwards, as similarly *1Jeu* envisages the ascending soul as possessing for each aeon a seal and a pebble with an inscribed cipher ($\sigma\phi\rho\alpha\gamma\iota\varsigma$, $\psi\eta\phi\omicron\varsigma$; e.g. *1Jeu* 33). For Clement on the other hand, the true Christian must show the symbol, or stamp ($\sigma\acute{\upsilon}\mu\beta\omicron\lambda\omicron\nu$, $\chi\alpha\rho\alpha\chi\tau\eta\rho$) of righteousness to the angels (*Strom.* 4.18.116.2).

50.3 Say to them, “It is motion and rest.” As far as I am aware, there is no parallel in heavenly ascents to this particular answer. Scholars who propose characteristics of the disciples as corresponding to ‘motion and rest’ do not do justice to the fact that this is ‘the sign of the Father in you.’¹⁵ These are not necessarily pure opposites, but can be compresent. In Plato’s *Parmenides*, for example, the One is both in motion and at rest ($\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\kappa\iota\upsilon\epsilon\iota\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\acute{\alpha}\nu\alpha\iota$, *Parm.* 145E; cf. 162B–163B). In Aristotle’s kinematics, ‘the eternal presence of motion in the universe, Aristotle argues, needs to rely on an eternal cause that guarantees its persistence.’¹⁶ This cause is itself an unmoved mover.¹⁷ In Plotinus, intellect moves and is at rest at the same time, and therefore so is the all ($\acute{\omicron}\ \delta\grave{\epsilon}\ \nu\omicron\upsilon\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\ \kappa\iota\upsilon\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$. $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\eta\kappa\epsilon$ $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\kappa\iota\upsilon\epsilon\iota\tau\alpha\iota$... $\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$ $\omicron\upsilon\bar{\nu}$ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\tau\acute{\omicron}$ $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$ $\tau\acute{\omega}$

12 See e.g. Plisch, 131 n. 5.

13 Bellet, ‘El logion 50’, 120–123 suggests the meaning ‘You are something!’ This makes little sense, however, even if it works as a translation of the Coptic.

14 Cf. Epiphanius’s *Gospel of Philip*, where the soul claims, ‘I am one of those from above.’

15 Valantasis, 135, for example suggests that the ‘motion’ is the labour of discipleship which results in ‘rest’ (cf. the sequence in GTh 58); also Grosso, 194.

16 I. Bodnár & P. Pellegrin, ‘Aristotle’s Physics and Cosmology’, in M.L. Gill & P. Pellegrin, eds. *A Companion to Ancient Philosophy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 270–291 (282).

17 Thus also Grant & Freedman, 161, and Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 133 and n. 38 on *Thomas*, both citing *Ref.* 5.7.25 as attesting the Naassene view of the ‘unmoved mover’.

κύκλω κινεῖται ἄμα καὶ ἔστηκεν, *Enn.* 2.2.3). Applied to GTh 50, the sign might be the divine causation of movement from the resting divinity, or perhaps more likely a paradoxical simultaneity of motion and rest: the latter makes (i) a closer parallelism between motion and rest, (ii) perhaps does better justice to the reference to ‘movement’ on its own (without any explicit object), and (iii) κινεῖται (‘movement’, ‘motion’) is perhaps also more likely to refer to an intransitive ‘moving’.¹⁸ This is more likely on theological grounds, as (iv) the Father does not appear as an agent acting on other bodies in *Thomas*. (As an aside, it can also be noted that as a sign of the Father, κινεῖται can hardly have a negative sense here.¹⁹) This would be a further sign that in the disciple worldly opposites are resolved into a divine unity. Lelyveld’s view that this sign is in deliberate contrast to circumcision is overly speculative.²⁰ The reference to rest here leads directly into GTh 51, which thematises rest.

18 See Crum, 109a; in *Thomas*, cf. GTh 19.3 (though conversely 78.1).

19 As it does in e.g. 2Thess. 2.2; Heb. 12.26–27.

20 Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 109; also A. Gagné, ‘Structure and Meaning in Gos. Thom. 49–53. An Erotapokritic Teaching on Identity and Eschatology’, in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 23–31 (28–29): Gagné’s argument in part is connected with his chiasmic outline of GTh 49–54, in which GTh 50 is paired with GTh 53: on this, however, see comment on GTh 51 below.

Logion 51¹

51.1 ΠΕΧΔΥ ΝΔϚ ἸΒΙ ΝΕΦΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ ΔΕ ΔΩ ἸΖΟΟΥ ΕΤΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ ἸΝΕΤΜΟΟΥΤ᾽
ΝΔΩΩΠΕ ΔΥΩ ΔΩ ἸΖΟΟΥ ΕΠΚΟΜΟС ΒΒΡΡΕ ΝΗΥ 51.2 ΠΕΧΔΥ ΝΔΥ ΔΕ ΤΗ Ε-
ΤΕΤἸΣΩΩΥΤ᾽ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΗΤῚ ΔΣΕΙ ΑΛΛΑ ἸΤΩΤἸ ΤΕΤἸΣΟΟΥΝ ΔΝ ἸΜΟС

51.1 *His disciples said to him, 'When will the rest for the dead come, and when is the new world coming?' 51.2 He said to them, 'That (rest) which you are looking for has come, but you do not know it.'*

Textual Comment

The conjecture -ΤΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ ('the resurrection') for -ΤΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ, is unnecessary.² Pokorný comments that '*resurrection* (Gr. *Anastasis*) in part 1 is almost illegible':³ this is puzzling, as the word is not almost illegible; it is not there.

Interpretation

This dialogue is the first in a sequence (GTh 51–53) of reformulations of Jewish-Christian or traditional Christian views.⁴ Each saying shares the pattern of (1) a mistaken question by the disciples, which (2) assumes a position held widely by other Christians, but which (3) is corrected by *Thomas's* Jesus.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 51:** Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 486–494; Plisch, 'Thomas in Babel', 63–64.

2 See e.g. Plisch, 131.

3 Pokorný, 96.

4 A. Gagné, 'Structure and Meaning in Gos. Thom. 49–53. An Erotapokritic Teaching on Identity and Eschatology', in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 23–31, is right to emphasise the importance of the question-and-answer format of GTh 51–53, although I consider the unity of GTh 51–53 as a block to be a problem for his chiasmic outline of GTh 49–54 ('Structure and Meaning in Gos. Thom. 49–53', 25).

	<i>Rejected</i>	<i>Affirmed</i>
GTh 51	future rest for dead, new world	present rest
GTh 52	authority of prophets	living Jesus
GTh 53	physical circumcision	spiritual circumcision

In GTh 51, then, what is affirmed is left unstated, but can be inferred from the close parallel in GTh 113:

His disciples said to him, ‘When will the kingdom come?’ (Jesus said,) ‘It will not come by looking for it. It will not be said, “Look! Here it is!”, or “Look! There it is!” Rather, the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it.’

Here, as in GTh 51, one finds (1) a similar wrong-headed question, (2) the truth of the matter, and (3) the lament over ignorance of the truth. The ‘truth of the matter’ here, then is the present kingdom which is accessible, but not recognised by people. What is rejected by Jesus is a ‘rest’ expected in the future, or a resurrection for the dead, and a repristination of the present world.⁵

With regard to the former (which is picked up by Jesus: see Notes below), this saying is thus a part of early Christian controversy over resurrection.⁶ This took various forms: some was over the physicality of the resurrection, as already in 1 Corinthians 15,⁷ in Ignatius’s letter to the Smyrnaeans, and in 2 *Clement* 9.1. This is not the focus in *Thomas*, which here relates more to the debate over the now/ not yet of the resurrection, as in 2 Timothy 2.18 (with the heretics λέγοντες τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἤδη γεγονέναι), the *Treatise on the Resurrection*, where the elect already have resurrection (49,9–37),⁸ and the *Gospel of Philip*, according to which resurrection must precede death (56,15–19; 73,1–5). These cannot all be reduced to a simple “(over-)realised eschatology”, however, and the same is true of GTh 51. Although the disciples’ hope is said to have come, this should

5 Gathercole, ‘The Heavens and the Earth will be Rolled up’, 292.

6 For a very rough sketch of some of the debate, see M. Vinzent, *Christ’s Resurrection in Early Christianity and the Making of the New Testament* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011).

7 For the (widely misunderstood) nature of the controversy here see above all D. Endsjø, ‘Immortal Bodies, Before Christ: Bodily Continuity in Ancient Greece and 1 Corinthians’, *JSNT* 30 (2008), 417–436.

8 *Treat. Res.* may not be entirely consistent on this point, however.

be understood in the light of the sayings elsewhere in *Thomas* which talk of the eternity of the primordial kingdom. (What *has come* is the revelation of this by Jesus.) The point is clearer in the close parallel to this dialogue in GTh 113, noted above. As in this later saying, the point in GTh 51 is not that an event has taken place by which the eschaton has come, but rather that the kingdom is immanent. This is what crucially must be 'known' (51.2), though this knowledge and the 'rest' that comes with it need not be interpreted along 'Gnostic' lines in the technical sense.⁹

Notes

51.1 His disciples said to him, 'When will the rest for the dead come, and when is the new world coming?' Eschatological inquiries are made by the disciples in places such as Mk 13.4 and parallels, and Acts 1.6. For the phrase 'rest for the dead'; cf. *Sir.* 38.23: ἐν ἀναπαύσει νεκροῦ. The reference to 'rest' here probably picks up the end of GTh 50, making a catchword link between the two sayings; 'dead' may link to the reference to 'dead' prophets in GTh 52.2. 'New world' is an uncommon phrase, though it resembles Paul's 'new creation' (2 Cor. 5.17; Gal. 6.15) and the *'olam ha-ba* of Rabbinic literature (cf. already Mk 10.30 and parallels; Eph. 1.21).

51.2 He said to them, 'That (rest) which you are looking for has come, but you do not know it.' Grammatically Jesus' reference is not to the (masculine) new world of 51.1, but to the (feminine) rest. The four feminine markers in Jesus' reply (Τῆ ἐτεῖνῶσων ἔβολ ζητῆ ἄξει ἀλλὰ ἦτωτῆ τετῆκοοῦν ἀν ἦμος) make this clear. 'Know' here could more accurately be translated 'recognise' in this saying, but 'know' appears here to make clear the connection with other sayings about knowledge.

⁹ Pace Vielhauer, 'ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ: Zum gnostischen Hintergrund des Thomasevangelium', 281–299, for whom 'rest' is understood as Gnostic (albeit Gnostic in a generalised sense).

Logion 52¹

52.1 ΠΕΧΔΑΥ ΝΑΥ Ν̄ΒΙ ΝΕΦΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ ΔΕ ΧΟΥΤΑΥΤΕ ἸΠΡΟΦΗΤΗΣ ΔΥΩΔΑΔΕ Ϻ̄Μ
ΠΙΣΡΑΗΛ` ΔΥΩ ΔΥΩΔΑΔΕ ΤΗΡΟΥ ϺΡΑΪ Ν̄ϺΗΤΚ` 52.2 ΠΕ`ΧΔΑΥ ΝΑΥ ΔΕ ΔΤΕΤ̄ΝΚΩ
ἸΠΡΕΤΟΝϺ ἸΠΡΕΤ̄Ν̄ΙΤΟ ΕΒΟΛ ΔΥΩ ΔΤΕΤ̄ΝΩΔΑΔΕ ϺΔ ΝΕΤΜΟΟΥΤ`

52.1 *His disciples said to him, ‘Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel. And did all of them speak about you?’* 52.2 *He said to them, ‘You have neglected the living one in front of you, and spoken of the dead.’*

Interpretation

The principal theme in this, the second of three related dialogues (GTh 51–53), is the negative valuation of the prophets, i.e. of OT scripture *in toto*, by comparison with the authority of Jesus. Various attempts have been made to reduce the distance from a traditionally Jewish or Jewish-Christian understanding of Scripture. (1) The most radical of these is that of Quispel, who (although without reference to GTh 52) maintains, ‘dass der Autor des Thomasevangeliums und die Verfasser seiner Quellen das Alte Testament benutzt und als Heilige Schrift anerkannt haben ...’² (2) Pokorný has argued as follows: ‘The saying does not mean the rejection of the Jewish Bible, as was later the case with Marcion. It rejects only the so-called history of salvation (in German *Heilgeschichte*) ...’³ (3) Nordsieck also tries to salvage a more traditional understanding, by saying that the point is to focus on Jesus in the present and not dwell on the past.⁴

1 **Bibliography for GTh 52:** Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 77–81; P. Nagel, ‘“Vierundzwanzig Propheten sprachen in Israel” (EvThom 52)—Prophetenbild und Prophetenerwartung im Judentum und im Thomasevangelium von Nag Hammadi’, in D. Quintern & B. Dottke, eds. *Auch ein Licht durchbricht die Finsternis: Gelehrsamkeit, Wissenschaftsopposition, Universalismus (FS Karam Khella)* (Hamburg: Theorie und Praxis Verlag, 1999), 47–62; Baarda, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament’, 1–28; M. Moreland, ‘The Twenty-Four Prophets of Israel are Dead: *Gospel of Thomas* 52 as a Critique of Early Christian Hermeneutics’, in J. Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (NHMS 59; Leiden: Brill, 2006), 75–91.

2 Quispel, ‘Das Thomasevangelium und das alte Testament’, 243.

3 Pokorný, 97.

4 Nordsieck, 210, elsewhere remarking that he sees the core of GTh 52 as perhaps authentic (233).

(4) DeConick has argued that the closest parallel to the position attributed to Jesus comes in the Pseudo-Clementines, according to which the Law must be seen to receive its authority from Christ, rather than the other way around (*Rec.* 1.59).⁵

There are some specific problems with each of these. (1) There is no positive evidence elsewhere in *Thomas* for Quispel's theory of a conscious use of or reverence for the Hebrew Bible. (2) Pokorný has replaced what Jesus actually talks about (*viz.* the prophets), with a modern scholarly construct ('Heilsgeschichte').⁶ (3) Nordsieck's view fails because the disciples' question does not express an unusually nostalgic viewpoint, and (4) DeConick's view relates to the theme of the disciples' question (though not necessarily the view they are presupposing), but it is not the theme of Jesus' answer.

There are also problems which attend these views collectively. First, the tone of Jesus' reaction is really rather negative: it is surprising that for *Thomas* an apparently positive question which inquires about whether Jesus is the subject of OT prophecy is regarded as tantamount to ignoring him altogether. Secondly, the characterisation of the prophets as 'dead' is not simply a statement of biological reality.⁷ The realms of the dead and the living stand in binary opposition in *Thomas* (*cf.* e.g. GTh 11; 60; see comment on 'death' on GTh 1 above). Thirdly, the responses of Jesus in the adjacent dialogues in GTh 51 and 53 are not *qualifications* of traditional assumptions but are instead quite unqualified rejections of Jewish(-Christian) themes. The verdict of Baarda and Popkes that this saying is 'a fundamental break with tradition' is undoubtedly correct.⁸

As Moreland rightly notes, *Thomas* here is clearly interacting with a Christian view, rather than making an anti-Jewish point: the view rejected by Jesus is attributed to the disciples, and the criticism is of those who link the Jesus movement to a Hebrew past.⁹ The position implied in their question corresponds

5 DeConick, 184–185.

6 I am grateful to Prof. Robert Yarbrough for informing me that the earliest attested use of the German term appears in J. von Hofmann, *Weissagung und Erfüllung im Alten und im Neuen Testamente: Ein theologischer Versuch* (Nördlingen: C.H. Beck, 1841), I.8.

7 In Heb. 11.4, Abel is said to speak prophetically though he is dead.

8 Popkes, 'Differing Approach', 299; Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament', is correct that GTh 52 not only decisively contradicts Quispel's view but also discounts any other optimistic interpretations.

9 Moreland, 'Twenty-Four Prophets of Israel', 87; *cf.* 91; similarly, Gianotto, 'Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive', 169. Nagel's narrowing ('Vierundzwanzig Propheten', 53) of the characterisation of the disciples to Jewish-Christian Nazoreans is too restrictive.

quite closely to that of the NT Gospels and Paul; cf. e.g. Lk. 24.25, 27; Ac. 3.18, 24; 10.43 ('To him all the prophets bear witness'); Rom. 1.1–2; 3.21. This is what is being opposed by *Thomas's* Jesus.

Naturally, however, there were more than two views about Scripture on the table in the mid-second century. This raises the question of where *Thomas* belongs on the spectrum of first- and second-century attitudes.¹⁰ The *Epistle of Ptolemy to Flora*, though it addresses the Law rather than the biblical authors or prophets more widely, takes the view that the Law is a mix of the legislation of the just god, Moses and the elders: Moses' own teaching may have been well-intentioned, but was actually contrary to the Law of the demiurge (*Ep. Ptol. Fl. in Pan.* 33.4). At the far end of the spectrum is the position in works such as the *Apocryphon of John*, which not only four times identifies Moses' words as mistaken (*Ap. John* II 13,18–23; 22,22–25; 23,3–4; 29,6–10) but identifies the OT God with the weak archon 'Yaltabaoth-Saklas-Samael', the second and third names characterising him as foolish and blind (*Ap. John* II 11,16–18). Similarly, the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth* identifies the prophets as counterfeit, and fit only to be mocked (62,27–64,1).

Although the more positive views advocated by scholars do not do justice to the tone of Jesus' response, there is not sufficient evidence that *Thomas* has a clearly worked out view of the prophets as had the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth*. GTh 52 belongs near—though not at—the radical end of re-evaluations of Jewish Scripture in the second century.¹¹

Notes

52.1 His disciples said to him, 'Twenty-four prophets spoke in Israel.' The count here does not derive from the twenty-three prophets in *Vitae Prophetarum* when supplemented with John the Baptist:¹² this is unlikely given the ample parallels to the number 24 as the number of books in the Hebrew Bible.¹³ A count of twenty-four is attested in *4Ezra* 14.44–47 (94 books,

10 See J. Carleton Paget, 'Barnabas 9:4: A Peculiar Verse on Circumcision', *VC* 45 (1991), 242–254 (243–245), on the variety.

11 Carleton Paget, 'A Peculiar Verse on Circumcision', 247.

12 Grant & Freeman, 162; Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament', 12.

13 A different tradition counts 22 books. This is first attested in Josephus (Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.38: δύο δὲ μόνα πρὸς τοῖς εἴκοσι βιβλία), and also finds its way into Christian writings (Origen, *apud* Eusebius, *HE* 6.25.1–2; Jerome, *Preface to Samuel and Kings*). The number

consisting of 24 for general consumption, and 70 for advanced readers),¹⁴ the third-century commentator Victorinus of Pettau (on the authority of the *Epitomes* of Theodore),¹⁵ and (by a rather convoluted route) Numbers Rabbah 28.21.¹⁶ Numbers Rabbah 14.4 and Qoheleth Rabbah 12.11, among other places, also relate the priestly courses, and the twenty-four nails of the Rabbinic interpretation of Eccl. 12.11, to the twenty-four books of the bible:¹⁷

As there are twenty-four books, so were there twenty-four watches, and as there were twenty-four watches, so the number of nails should be twenty-four.¹⁸

(*Midr. Qoh.* 12.11)

As the number of priestly and levitical divisions is twenty-four, so the number of books in the bible is twenty-four.¹⁹

(*Midr. Num.* 14.4)

The enumeration probably results from this combination (following for convenience the most common Christian order today):²⁰

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- twenty-two (the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet) probably comes by combining Judges and Ruth, as well as Jeremiah and Lamentations. See R.T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church* (London: SPCK, 1985), 235–273; L.M. McDonald, *The Biblical Canon: Its Origin, Transmission, and Authority* (Peabody: Hendrickson 2007), 150–169.
- 14 In the Syriac and Ethiopic texts; the Latin is corrupt. See R.A. Coggins & M.A. Knibb, *The First and Second Books of Esdras* (Cambridge Bible Commentary; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 282.
- 15 Victorinus, *In Apoc.* 4.5 (on Rev. 5.8): *sunt autem libri veteris testamenti qui excipiuntur viginti quattuor, quos in epitomis Theodori invenimus.*
- 16 Explaining the ‘captain of fifty’ in Isa. 3.3, Numbers Rabbah reports: ‘There are twenty-four books in Scripture. Add to them eleven of the minor prophets, excluding Jonah which is a book by itself, the six orders [of the Mishnah] and the nine chapters of the Torath Kohanim [Sifra] and you obtain a total of fifty.’
- 17 For a helpful survey of the material, see Strack-Billerbeck, IV/1.419–423, and esp. 419–420.
- 18 A. Cohen, tr. *Midrash Rabbah: Ecclesiastes* (London: Soncino, 1939), 314.
- 19 J.J. Slotki, tr. *Midrash Rabbah: Numbers. Volume II* (London: Soncino, 1939), 580.
- 20 For the counting scheme, see Coggins & Knibb, *The First and Second Books of Esdras*, 282.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	5
Joshua, Judges, Ruth	3
Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah ²¹	4
Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes	6
Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel	5
The Minor Prophets ²²	1

As an enumeration of the *prophets as people*, Thomas's count is peculiar. It is unlikely that one intimately acquainted with Judaism would collapse the distinction between prophets and books, since it was a common-place that, for example, Moses wrote the Pentateuch, and Jeremiah wrote Lamentations as well as the prophecy that bears his name (2 Chr. 35.25).

52.1 And did all of them speak about you? The Coptic (lit. 'in you', as in Lambdin's translation) is a little obscure. Clarification is available in a parallel in Augustine, which has *de adventu eius*.²³ Hence the translation 'about you'.²⁴ The same Augustine parallel, where the clause is a question, and the questions introducing GTh 51 and GTh 53, suggest that GTh 52.1 should also be a question.²⁵

21 There is a clear consensus that Ezra and Nehemiah were regarded as a unity in antiquity. See e.g. H.G.M. Williamson, *Ezra, Nehemiah* (Waco: Word, 1985), xxi–xxiii. The principal evidence from antiquity is Melito of Sardis, *apud* Eusebius, *HE* 4.26.14; Origen, *apud* *HE* 6.25.2; Jerome, *Prologue to the Book of Kings*; *b. BB* 15a; *b. Sanh.* 93b.

22 On the unity of the minor prophets (i.e. that they were usually included together in a single roll), see A.A. Macintosh, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Hosea* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), li–liii. The most important evidence is *Sir.* 49.10; Melito, *apud* Eusebius, *HE* 4.26.14 (τῶν δώδεκα ἐν μονοβιβλίῳ); *b. BB* 14b; *b. Meg.* 24a; Jerome, *Prologue to the Twelve* (ll. 6–7), where he comments that *unum librum esse duodecim prophetarum*; Num. Rabbah 18.21.

23 *Contra adversarium Legis et Prophetarum* 2.4.14: *sed apostolis, inquit, dominus noster interrogantibus de Judaeorum prophetis quid sentiri deberet, qui de adventu eius aliquid cecinisse in praeteritum putabantur, commotus talia eos etiam nunc sentire, respondit: dimisistis vivum qui ante vos est, de mortuis fabulamini.*

24 Baarda, 'Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament', 10. For one alternative ('in you'), see e.g. Ménard, 155, taking it in the sense of 'dans le même esprit'; for another ('durch dich'), see Nordsieck, 210. Combining the two, Nagel, 'Vierundzwanzig Propheten', 54, interestingly suggests that 'in' refers to the fact that Jesus was present in the prophets, and that they spoke in, through, and out of him. This is a possibility, but is a rather paraphrastic interpretation of what would be an enigmatic usage.

25 See Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Old Testament', 8; E. Bammel, 'The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition', *NTS* 18 (1971–1972), 95–128 (115 n. 4).

52.2 You have neglected the living one in front of you. On the 'living one', see GTh Prologue; 37; 59; 111 (cf. also GTh 91, which has 'the one in front of you'). Bammel is clearly wrong to identify the living one as John the Baptist.²⁶

52.2 And spoken of the dead. Here the prophets are characterised negatively (cf. GTh 88). Cf. Lk. 24.5 for a contrast between Jesus, the living one, and the dead (τί ζητεῖτε τὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τῶν νεκρῶν;). On 'death' in *Thomas* see notes on GTh 1.

26 Bammel, 'The Baptist in Early Christian Tradition', 115 n. 4. There is no problem with Jesus referring to himself as 'the living one' (cf. the self-reference to 'the Son' in GTh 44).

Logion 53¹

53.1 ΠΕΧΔΥ ΝΑϞ Ν̄ΒΙ ΝΕϞΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ ΧΕ ΠΣΒΒΕ ΡΩΦΕΛΕΙ Η Μ̄ΜΟΝ 53.2 ΠΕΧΔΑϞ' ΝΑΥ
ΧΕ ΝΕϞΡΩΦΕΛΕΙ ΝΕ ΠΟΥΕΙΩΤ' ΝΑΧΠΟΥϞ ΕΒΟΛ Ζ̄Ν̄ ΤΟΥΜΑΔΥ ΕΥΣΒΒΗΥ 53.3 ΑΛΛΑ
ΠΣΒΒΕ Μ̄ΜΕ Ζ̄Μ̄ Π̄Ν̄Α ΔΑϞΘ̄Ν̄ Ζ̄ΗΥ ΤΗΡϞ'

53.1 *His disciples said to him, 'Is circumcision an advantage or not?'* 53.2 *He said to them, 'If it were an advantage, fathers would beget (children) by their mothers already circumcised.* 53.3 *Rather, true circumcision in the Spirit is entirely profitable.'*

Interpretation

The main focus here is negative rather than positive: physical circumcision is being rejected. In its place is an undefined spiritual circumcision. The language is derived from Paul (Rom. 2.25–3.2), but the position adopted is more radical: circumcision is not regarded as in any sense an advantage (*contra* Rom. 3.1–2), and this rejection of circumcision is even attributed to Jesus himself. This third dialogue in the sequence (GTh 51–53) completes the series of debates about wider (Jewish-)Christian beliefs and practices. The argument against circumcision in part is an argument from consistency: it does not comport with natural law to suppose that circumcision is a good.²

Thomas thus joins a wider argument about circumcision which we first see in Paul's letters. As almost all agree, GTh 53.2–3 cannot go back to Jesus.³ Paul never makes such arguments about circumcision, and never rejects it altogether: indeed, the formulation here in *Thomas* draws on Paul's language of circumcision in the Spirit, and the *value* of circumcision (Rom. 2.25–3.2), disagreeing with Paul's appraisal of its value. It is in the mid-second century that

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- 1 **Bibliography for GTh 53:** Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 99–103; Sellew, 'Pious Practice and Social Formation', 47–56; Marjanen, '*Thomas* and Jewish Religious Practices', 178–180; Gathercole, 'The Influence of Paul on the Gospel of *Thomas*', 72–94; J.W. Jipp & M. Thate, 'Dating *Thomas*: Logion 53 as a Test Case for Dating the *Gospel of Thomas* within an Early Christian Trajectory', *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 20 (2010), 221–240; Gathercole, *Composition*, 227–249.
 - 2 Gianotto's point ('Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive', 168) that one of the benefits of relativising circumcision may be female inclusion is probably not relevant to *Thomas*.
 - 3 Nordsieck, 216, is a rare example of a scholar seeing this saying as in some form (now irrecoverable) going back to Jesus.

we see closer analogies to *Thomas*. The nearest is that attributed to Q. Tineius Rufus, governor of Judaea in the early 130s CE and in the Bar Kochba revolt: 'If God is so pleased with circumcision, why does the child not come out of the womb circumcised?'⁴ Similar also is Justin: 'For if circumcision were necessary, as you think, God would not have made Adam uncircumcised.'⁵ The early Christian objection to circumcision, that various patriarchs such as Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah and Melchizedek were not circumcised, is quite common.⁶ More negative still is the demonising of circumcision in *Barnabas*.⁷ *Diognetus* resorts to ridicule, stating that taking pride in the mutilation of the flesh as a sign of election is 'worthy of mockery' (χλεύης ἄξιον, *Diogn.* 4.4). There is a hint of this tone, perhaps, in *Thomas's* saying, though not as strongly. The charge is more one of inconsistency: on this charge, see notes above on GTh 43.3.

Notes

53.1 His disciples said to him, 'Is circumcision an advantage or not?' Here the disciples inquire into the historic practice, enjoined upon Abraham in Genesis 17, of circumcision: that is, 'the excision of the foreskin or prepuce on the end of the penis to uncover the glans or corona'.⁸ The language of circumcision as an 'advantage' reflects Rom. 3.1–2.

53.2 He said to them, 'If it were an advantage, fathers would beget (children) by their mothers already circumcised.' Here, *Thomas* sides against Jewish tradition (and Paul) in rejecting physical circumcision outright.⁹ Indeed, this pronouncement can stand *pars pro toto* as a rejection of Judaism as a whole, given that circumcision was for many outsiders the defining characteristic of Judaism.¹⁰ Perhaps in part as a result of the kind of argument in 53.2, a Jewish

4 Tanhuma B 7 (18a). On Tineius Rufus, see W. Eck, 'Q.T. Rufus', *Brill's New Pauly* XIV:717, and especially S. Applebaum, 'Tineius Rufus and Julius Severus', in idem, *Judaea in Hellenistic and Roman Times: Historical and Archaeological Essays* (Leiden: Brill, 1988), 117–123.

5 *Dial.* 19.3: εἰ γὰρ ἦν ἀναγκαία, ὡς δοκεῖτε, οὐκ ἂν ἀκρόβυστον ὁ θεὸς ἔπλασε τὸν Ἀδάμ ...

6 Justin, *Dial.* 92.2; Cyprian, *Test.* 1.8, and Tertullian, *Adv. Jud.* 2. See further Gianotto, 'Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive', 168.

7 *Barn.* 9.4. See discussion in J. Carleton Paget, *Jews, Christians and Jewish Christians in Antiquity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 84.

8 D.A. Bernat, 'Circumcision', *EDEJ* 471–474 (471).

9 For parallels, see Jipp & Thate, 'Dating Thomas', 251–254.

10 See Schäfer, *Judeophobia*, 96–102. (Cf. the short-hand περιτομή, for 'Judaism' / 'Jews' in e.g. Gal. 2.9.)

tradition (already attested before *Thomas*) became more important according to which various patriarchs were deemed to have been born circumcised.¹¹

53.3 Rather, true circumcision in the Spirit is entirely profitable. This spiritual circumcision which Jesus puts in the place of the physical variety is not defined here, but there are various options.¹² Justin, *Dial.* 114 emphasises the Pauline contrast between physical and spiritual circumcision. It could be an ethical requirement, as in Philo, for whom circumcision represents the ‘excision of pleasures which bewitch the mind’ and the rejection of pride (*Spec.* 1.8–10), or as in *Gos. Phil.* 82,26–29, where Abraham was circumcised, ‘teaching us that it was proper to destroy the flesh’. Alternatively, a divine act of salvation may be in view, as in Paul’s conception of the circumcision *by* the Spirit (Rom. 2.29; Phil. 3.3; Col. 2.11), or *Odes of Solomon* 11.1–3. This ambiguity means that it is unclear whether the force is to practise spiritual circumcision or to rejoice in it having taken place.

11 See I. Kalimi, “‘He was Born Circumcised’: Some Midrashic Sources, Their Concepts, Roots and Presumably Historical Context”, in idem, *Early Jewish Exegesis and Theological Controversy: Studies in Scriptures in the Shadow of Internal and External Controversies* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2002), 61–76.

12 For various parallels, see Marjanen, ‘*Thomas* and Jewish Religious Practices’, 179; Gianotto, ‘Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive’, 168.

Logion 54¹

ΠΕΧΕ ΙϚ ΔΕ ΕΝΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΙ ΝΕ ΝΗΚΕ ΔΕ ΤΩΤῆ ΤΕ ΤῆΝΤΕΡΟ ΝῆΠΗΥΕ΄

Jesus said, 'Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.'

Interpretation

As is common in beatitudes, this saying (paralleled in Matt. 5.3 and Lk. 6.20) pronounces a blessing and then specifies the content of that blessing. In terms of the meaning, the main debate is about the identity of the 'poor'. (1) Baarda and Hedrick interpret this saying on a cosmological level, taking the poor to refer to those who are in a state of spiritual illness and ignorance; nevertheless, as GTh 29 has made clear, spiritual wealth has taken up residence in this poverty, and so 'there is a message of hope for them'.² (2) Valantasis, by contrast, emphasises strongly the material dimension, remarking that, 'mendicancy, pauperism, and beggary' characterise the itinerant *Thomas* disciples.³ Even if one is not so committed to the hypothesis of *Wanderradikalismus* in *Thomas*, the saying probably does refer to the *Thomas* movement as marginalised from sources of power and perhaps also as lacking in material wealth. One might compare the invective against rulers in GTh 78. The way the *Thomas* disciples appear—i.e. as lacking in power and wealth—belies the truth, however, which is that they are part of the ultimate *kingdom*.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 54:** T. Baarda, 'Drs. J. Slavenburg en de "Zaligspreking van de Armen"', *GTT* 97 (1997), 28–32; T. Baarda, "Zalig de Armen ...": John Dominic Crossan over Logion 54 van "Thomas", *GTT* 97 (1997), 127–132; P.J. Hartin, 'The Poor in the Epistle of James and the Gospel of Thomas', *HTS* 53 (1997), 146–162; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 448–461; T. Baarda, "Blessed are the Poor": Concerning the Provenance of Logion 54 in Thomas, *ARC* 33 (2005), 32–51; C. Quarles, 'The Use of the Gospel of Thomas in the Research on the Historical Jesus of John Dominic Crossan', *CBQ* 69 (2007), 517–536 (518–524); Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 50–52, 66–69.

2 Baarda, 'Blessed are the Poor', 35; cf. Hedrick, 107.

3 Valantasis, 131. He goes on to comment that the saying also functions secondarily, however, to characterise all disciples as 'poor' regardless of their economic status (132).

Notes

Blessed are the poor. The fifth macarism of 11: for a list see on GTh 7. *Thomas*, like Luke 6.20 (against Matt. 5.3), has no reference to ‘in spirit’.⁴ This point has been part of the long-standing discussion over which of the three versions is closest to the original. Only a view about the relationship between *Thomas* and the Synoptics reached on other grounds, however, could give reasons for defining the relationship between this phrase and its parallels. Commentators advocating independence often work with too scribal a model of possible dependence in approaching this saying,⁵ and there is also no reason to dismiss secondary orality.⁶

For yours is the kingdom of heaven. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, § 10.1 above. Kingdom ‘of heaven’ fits with *Thomas*’s usage elsewhere (cf. 20; 114), and is probably influenced by Matthew’s distinctive formulation (whether specifically by Matt. 5.3, or Matthew’s usage more widely).⁷ ‘Yours’, however, agrees with Luke.

4 The version in Polycarp, *Phil.* 2.3 is identical to Luke.

5 Plisch, 137: ‘there is no discernible reason for the compiler of the *Gospel of Thomas* to have changed the Jesus logion ...’; cf. J.D. Crossan, *Four Other Gospels: Shadows on the Contours of Canon* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 37: on a theory of *Thomas*’s dependence, ‘one would have at least to argue that *Thomas* (a) took the third person “the poor” from Matthew, then (b) the second person “yours” from Luke, and (c) returned to Matthew for the final “Kingdom of Heaven.” It might be simpler to suggest that *Thomas* was mentally unstable.’

6 Pace DeConick, 188.

7 See Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 66–69.

Logion 55¹

55.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙϞ ΔΕ ΠΕΤΝΑΜΕΣΤΕ ΠΕΦ'ΕΙΩΤ' ΔΝ' ΜΝ ΤΕΦΜΑΔΥ ΦΝΑΩΡ̄ ΗΔΟΗΤΗΣ ΔΝ
ΝΔΕΙ' 55.2 ΔΥΩ ΝΦΜΕΣΤΕ ΝΕΦ'ΣΝΗΥ' ΜΝ ΝΕΦΣΩΝΕ ΝΦΦΕΙ ΜΠΕΦΣ(ΤΑΥΡ)ΟΣ ΝΤΑΞΕ
ΦΝΑΩΠΕ ΔΝ ΕΦΟ ΝΔΖΙΟΣ ΝΔΕΙ

55.1 *Jesus said, 'Whoever does not hate his father and mother will not be able to be a disciple of mine. 55.2 And whoever does not hate his brothers and sisters, and take his cross like me, will not be worthy of me.'*

Textual Comment

As is common elsewhere in early Christian manuscripts, the staurogram is employed in the word for 'cross' (here: ϣρσ; in full, ϣταυρος).² This monogram functions neatly as both a combination of the key consonants (*tau* and *rho*, with *tau* also containing the relevant vowels), and an image of a person on a cross.

Interpretation

This hyperbolic logion (paralleled in Matt. 10.37–38/ Lk. 14.26–27; cf. Mk 8.34/ Matt. 16.24/ Lk. 9.23; GTh 101) consists of a pair of statements in synthetic parallelism ('father and mother' is complemented by 'brothers and sisters'; taking up the cross lends further specification to 'be a disciple'). The saying continues the theme of division envisaged in GTh 16, in which Jesus states, 'I have come to bring divisions on the earth ... For there will be five in a house, and three will be against two, and two against three; father against son, and son against father.' This saying *might* be part of a larger *Wanderradikalismus* package,³ but it need not be: it might simply be saying that the opinion of and

1 **Bibliography for GTh 55:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 120–123; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La madre de Jesús', 271–284; Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 269–274.

2 See L.W. Hurtado, 'The Staurogram in Early Christian Manuscripts: The Earliest Visual Reference to the Crucified Jesus?', in T.J. Kraus & T. Nicklas, eds. *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Text and Their World* (TENTS 2; Leiden: Brill 2006), 207–226.

3 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas*, 134; Valantasis, 132, links GTh 54–55 together as common elements in a poor, itinerant lifestyle.

affection for father, mother, brother and sisters must be discarded if it conflicts with true discipleship.

One notable point here is that there is a high status attributed to Jesus. He is the focus of discipleship (in the first half of the saying), and sets a standard which must be attained (in the second half).

There is also a rare focus on the cross. In addition to some who have seen the cross as a metaphor for something rather different,⁴ there has also been debate over the relative significance of the death of Jesus in *Thomas*. On the maximalist side, DeConick sees the imitation by disciples of Jesus' crucifixion as 'necessary for their salvation,'⁵ with *Thomas* referring to the cross elsewhere as well (GTh 87; 112).⁶ On the other side, Patterson—with most other scholars—sees this theme as separating *Thomas* quite sharply from the canonical Gospels.⁷ Although ideas of redemption and atonement are absent, the cross in this saying does have soteriological significance inasmuch as it represents a normative ideal of suffering which disciples must embrace just as Jesus did, but this is the only reference to Jesus' crucifixion in *Thomas*, and so it is not obviously a dominant conception of discipleship.

Notes

55.1 Whoever does not hate his father and mother will not be able to be a disciple of mine. There is an interesting parallel to 55.1 in GTh 101.1–2, although the latter does not really assist with the interpretation of the former: 'Whoever does not hate his father and his mother as I do cannot be a disciple of mine. And whoever does not love his Father and his Mother as I do cannot be a disciple of mine.' Here, as elsewhere in *Thomas* the Synoptic saying is supplemented with a contrasting saying (cf. e.g. 47.4a + b).

55.2 And whoever does not hate his brothers and sisters, and take his cross like me. This is a reference to carrying the cross (or crossbeam) on the way to crucifixion (Mk 15.21; Matt. 27.32; Lk. 23.26; Jn 19.17). The reference to 'like me'

4 It seems unlikely that the cross represents the world, i.e. something which must be rejected (thus Valantasis, 132).

5 DeConick, 189. Also emphasising the importance of this saying is F. Vouga, 'Mort et résurrection de Jésus dans la Source des logia et dans l'Évangile de Thomas', in Painchaud & Poirier, eds. *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica*, 1009–1024.

6 DeConick, 253, 294.

7 See, most recently, S.J. Patterson, 'The View from Across the Euphrates', *HTR* 104 (2011), 411–431.

should probably not be seen within the context of wider discussions of ὁμοίωσις θεῶ,⁸ though this might be prominent in other sayings (e.g. GTh 108).

55.2 Will not be worthy of me. There was probably a catchword connection with GTh 56 in the Greek original (55.2: ἀξιός; 56.2: ἴπιδλ).

8 E.E. Popkes, 'Die Umdeutung des Todes Jesu im koptischen Thomasevangelium', in J. Frey & J. Schröter, eds. *Deutungen des Todes Jesu im Neuen Testament* (WUNT 181; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 513–543 (526–527).

Logion 56¹

56.1 πεθε ιϛ δε πεταρσοϿων πκοσμοσ αϿ'ρε ευπτωμα 56.2 αϿω πεντα-
ε[[ε]]εε απτωμα πκοσμοσ ἥπρωα ἴμοϿ αν

56.1 *Jesus said, 'Whoever has come to know the world has found a corpse.*
56.2 *And whoever has found the corpse, the world is not worthy of him.'*

Interpretation

This saying can be considered in the company of its parallels elsewhere in *Thomas*:

GTh 80: Jesus said, 'Whoever has come to know the world has found the corpse. But whoever has found the body, the world is not worthy of him.'

GTh 110: Jesus said, 'Whoever has found the world and is rich, let him renounce the world.'

The closer parallel is GTh 80. The sense in both GTh 56 and 80 is that (a) the world belongs to the realm of death, and (b) the truly living disciple who has recognised this is superior to it. These characterisations of the world as spiritually dead are the two most anti-cosmic sayings in *Thomas*, since 'death' is perhaps the most negatively valued spiritual state (cf. GTh 1; 11; 18; 19; 52; 60; 85; 111: see comment on GTh 1).

Notes

56.1 Whoever has come to know the world has found a corpse. The sense here is of coming to know the world for what it really is, namely a corpse. It would be wrong to suppose that 'found' here must go back to a Semitic original meaning something like 'master' or 'dominate'.² The parallel of 'knowing'/'finding' in 56.1

1 **Bibliography for GTh 56:** Sellew, 'Death, Body, and the World', 530–534; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 136–149; Uro, *Thomas*, 55–62; Gathercole, *Composition*, 77–79, 250–262.

2 Gathercole, *Composition*, 77–78.

is a very natural one. Realising the true nature of the world is like finding a dead body. As Valantasis rightly comments, it is a shock to discover a corpse, and to see the world for what it is—the realm of death—is an alarming experience.³ The language here ‘indicates the intensity of the conflict between the mundane world and the new world created by those who have learned to recognize themselves’.⁴

56.2 And whoever has found the corpse. Again, ‘finding’ here does not need to be reinterpreted on the basis of a speculative *Vorlage*; 56.2 is here picking up on 56.1: one might translate 56.2, ‘And whoever has found *that* corpse ...’.

56.2 The world is not worthy of him. On the second clause, see the discussion elsewhere.⁵ It refers to the superiority of the true disciple to the material cosmos, as reflected in the motif of ruling, and the control which the elect exert over it (cf. e.g. the obedience of the mountains in GTh 48 and 106, and of the stones in 13.8): see, further, notes above on GTh 2.4. Reference to ‘worthiness’ links with the previous saying (55.2: ἀξιός; 56.2: ἴππῳ).

3 Valantasis, 133.

4 Valantasis, 133.

5 Gathercole, *Composition*, 250–262.

Logion 57¹

57.1 πεχε ι̅c̅ xε τῆν̅τερο̅ ἡπειωτ̅ εστ̅ν̅τω(ν) ἀγρωμε̅ εγ̅ν̅ταq̅ ἡμαγ̅ ἡνογ-
σροσ̅ ε̅τ̅[ἡανογ̅]q̅ 57.2 ἀπεq̅x̅x̅ εἰ ἡτογ̅ωη̅ ἀq̅σιτε̅ ἡογ̅ζιζ̅ανι[ο]ν̅ ε̅x̅ἡ̅
πεσρο[σ̅ ε̅]τ̅ἡανογ̅q̅ 57.3 ἡπε̅ πρωμε̅ κοογ̅ ε̅ρωλε̅ ἡπ̅ζιζ̅ανιον̅ πεx̅αq̅ ἡαγ̅ xε̅
ἡη̅πωc̅ ἡ̅τετ̅ἡ̅ωκ̅ xε̅ ε̅να̅ρ̅ωλε̅ ἡπ̅ζιζ̅ανιο(ν)̅ ἡ̅τετ̅ἡ̅ρωλε̅ ἡ̅π̅σογ̅ο ἡ̅ἡ̅μαq̅
57.4 ἡ̅ἡ̅ φοογ̅ γ̅αρ̅ ἡ̅π̅ω̅c̅ ἡ̅ζιζ̅ανιον̅ ἡ̅αογ̅ων̅ρ̅ ε̅βολ̅ c̅ε̅ρ̅ολογ̅ ἡ̅c̅ε̅ροκ̅ρ̅ογ̅

57.1 Jesus said, 'The kingdom of the Father is like a man who had [good] seed.
57.2 His enemy came in the night and sowed weeds over the good see[d]. 57.3
The man did not allow them to pull up the weeds. He said to them, "It is in
case you go to pull up the weeds and pull up the wheat along with them." 57.4
For on the day of the harvest, the weeds will be revealed. They will be pulled
up and burned.'

Textual Comment

The phrase xε̅ ε̅να̅ρ̅ωλε̅ in 57.3 may be corrupt,² but the general sense is clear.

Interpretation

This is the fifth of *Thomas's* 14 parables (see comment above on GTh 8). Various interpretations of this parable of the Tares (cf. Matt. 13:24–30) have been proposed. (1) King takes the following view: 'To be a member of the community means to be able to deal shrewdly and effectively with enemies. It means to be a moral person whose acts are like the sowing of good seed.'³ There is no emphasis on 'sowing of good seed' in the parable, however, so it is doubtful that this is a main theme. (2) Valantasis takes the view that the kingdom, i.e. the *Thomas* community, is a mixture of good and evil.⁴ On the other hand, the

1 **Bibliography for GTh 57:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 123–126; Crossan, 'Seed Parables of Jesus', 259–261; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 208–224; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 73–81; J.P. Meier, 'The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds (Matthew 13:24–30): Is *Thomas's* Version (Logion 57) Independent?', *JBL* 131 (2012), 715–732.

2 See discussion in Plisch, 141.

3 King, 'Kingdom', 55.

4 Valantasis, 134.

idea that the *Thomas* movement is a *corpus permixtum* is at odds with the rest of *Thomas*. (3) For Pokorný, the parable reflects a stance of openness towards outsiders and the possibility of their salvation: ‘The parable warns against the premature judgment and rejection of the others ... no human is called to judge the others.’⁵ This interpretation has some promise, but there is still a stark duality between the good seed and the weeds, and the agricultural imagery here is not particularly conducive to a sense of the permeability of the divide between the in-group and the out-group.

Valantasis and Pokorný are correct, however, that the main element of surprise in the parable is 57:3: the farmer’s refusal to remove the weeds straight away. Because of this, the parable probably answers the implied question: Why is evil permitted to remain?⁶ Even though a direct answer is not given in theological terms, the concern here is probably with the interim period before the end, as might be the case with the similar GTh 10. This allows for two possible interpretations, one cosmic, and one more anthropological. On the first view, the ‘man’ (= the Father) is in possession of ‘good seed’ (= the elect), among whom an ‘enemy’ (= evil forces) has scattered weeds (= the non-elect). The separation of the two will only appear at the harvest (= the end). On this view, *Thomas*’s parable here thus closely resembles Matthew 13:24–30, both in form and in meaning.⁷ An alternative possibility is that in which the good seed is the soul, which has become intermingled with matter, an interpretation which is also found in Theodotus and attributed to the Manichees.⁸ Finally, a version of Pokorný’s interpretation where the point is a warning against premature human judging (cf. GTh 26) may be correct. A certain and precise interpretation of the parable is unfortunately not possible.

5 Pokorný, 102.

6 Considerable difficulties arise if the parable is not taken in allegorical terms at all. Plisch is certainly correct to chastise Schrage’s interpretation (Plisch, 143 n. 2), but his own view works with too rigid a notion of what a parable is (in the contrast between ‘a real parable’ and ‘an allegory’—supposing a pure form of a parable), and so finds it difficult to accommodate the enemy and the warning of judgment in the interpretation of what is actually present in *Thomas*. Meier, ‘Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds’, 719, sees remnants of Matthew’s allegorical interpretation (n.b. also 721–722).

7 Apparently the view of Ménard, 160. Matthew’s parable almost certainly does not agonize over the church as a *corpus permixtum*, as Davies and Allison rightly note. The field is the world, not the church: Matthew does not envisage leaving weeds in the church until the parousia, for he advocates church discipline in 18:15–20 (Davies & Allison, *Matthew*, II.408–409).

8 Clement, *Exc.* 53.1; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 66.65.

Notes

57.1 The kingdom of the Father is like a man who had good seed. The first question which arises concerns what the point of comparison is here.⁹ Is the kingdom likened to the 'man'? Or with the whole vignette of the parable? The kingdom could be quite straightforwardly identified as the 'man who had good seed', as fits the syntax of the opening sentence: the man's possession of the good seed would then be analogous to the situation of original goodness in which the 'souls' of the children of the Father pre-existed. Or the focus of the 'kingdom' here could be on the current situation, with the kingdom 'spread over the earth' as in GTh 113.4. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above.

57.2 His enemy came in the night and sowed weeds over the good seed. The specific identity of the enemy is not clear here, and indeed there need not be a one-to-one correlation with a particular demonic figure: the event envisaged may be a kind of cosmic fall without a particular agent responsible. In contrast to the picture in GTh 21 and 29, where the 'good' falls into the bad, here the bad enters the good, but the reference is still to the cosmic process or event which brought about contamination of flesh and spirit, of the divine and material realms. Opposition is construed elsewhere in *Thomas* in terms of figures suggestive of archontic powers, however: GTh 21 talks of the opponents of the children in the field (21.3), as well as of the thief (21.5) and the robbers (21.7); GTh 50 refers to when 'they' ask about the origin, identity and mark of the elect. It is not unusual to alternate between speaking of evil forces in singular and plural terms: Paul, for example, can speak both of the devil (Eph. 6.11) and in the very next verse of evil 'rulers' and 'authorities' (6.12). GTh 57 here speaks in singular terms of the opposition, in harmony with GTh 21.5. The use of the word for weed (ζιζαν[ο]ν) probably reflects the influence of Matthew.¹⁰

9 Valantasis argues that there is an oddity here in that judgment is supposed to take place *within* the kingdom (Valantasis, 134). However, this is to misread the 'is like'. The point here is that the parable brings to light some aspect of the kingdom: it is not that the whole situation described is simply a parabolic account of the kingdom. Doran rightly talks of 'methodological caution against comparing unilaterally the Kingdom with the first character of a parable rather than with the whole parable'. See R. Doran, 'A Complex of Parables: GTh 96–98', *NovT* 29 (1987), 347–352 (348).

10 Meier, 'The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds', 726–727: 'This Greek noun (probably of Semitic origin) does not occur in the LXX, in other Greek versions of the OT, in secular Greek before the Christian era, or in the Apostolic Fathers. In the NT, it occurs only in this parable of Matthew and its interpretation.'

57.3 The man did not allow them to pull up the weeds. Here, the editor of the parable has clearly missed out the central part of the story which (a) describes the sprouting of the weeds, and (b) introduces the farm workers who see a need to get rid of these weeds (cf. Matt. 13.26–28).¹¹ There is a pattern of ‘missing middles’ in *Thomas*, as Goodacre has observed.¹² Both these events are assumed in the reference to the farmer not allowing the unspecified ‘them’ to uproot the weeds. Since there is no antecedent in *Thomas*’s parable, the parable here is probably an abbreviation of an earlier form, probably that of Matthew.

57.3. He said to them, “It is in case you go to pull up the weeds and pull up the wheat along with them.” The explanation of the farmer’s refusal here is the same as in Matt. 13.29. It is an explanation not specifically of the delay of a parousia, but more generally of the duration of a history in which the world and/ or the body contains sin. The partial response in GTh 57.3 is supplemented by 57.4. A theological answer is not given to the problem; rather the response sticks to the imagery of the parable, so that the problem is avoided.

57.4 For on the day of the harvest the weeds will be revealed. It is possible that 57.4 is spoken to the farm-hands, rather than being Jesus’ comment appended to the parable: in Matthew’s parallel it is clearly spoken to the workers.¹³ This additional explanation is that there is still an event to come, or an incomplete process, which will make the weeds evident. This is slightly incongruous, since according to 57.3 the weeds are already visible.¹⁴

57.4 They will be pulled up and burned. The language here suggests that an eschatological judgment is not an alien idea to *Thomas*. Although there is no direct parallel to this in *Thomas*, there are related ideas such as cosmic collapse (GTh 11; 111), exclusion from the kingdom (64.12), and lack of forgiveness (44). Especially relevant is Jesus bringing fire in GTh 10 (cf. GTh 16), given the similarity of theme between GTh 10 and 57.

11 As scholars have very frequently observed (Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 51; Crossan, ‘Seed Parables’, 261; Meier, ‘The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds’, 720).

12 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 109–127, and 110–111 on GTh 57 in particular on this point.

13 Hedrick, 110.

14 Meier, ‘Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds’, 723.

Logion 58¹

ΠΕΞΕ ΤΩ ΔΕ ΟΥΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ ΠΕ ΠΡΩΜΕ ΝΤΑΖΡΙΣΕ ΔΑΡΣΕ ΑΠΩΝΣ

Jesus said, 'Blessed is the man who has laboured and found life.'

Interpretation

The present saying sees the quest for knowledge and life as a struggle, but one which leads to salvation.² This is one of many sayings setting out the terms of 'not tasting death'.

Notes

Blessed is the man. This is the sixth macarism of *Thomas's* eleven: on these, see note *ad* GTh 7.1.³

Who has laboured. The translation 'suffered' is also possible.⁴ The sense of *ρισε* elsewhere in *Thomas* tends towards the meaning 'labour', however,⁵ and the sequence labour → salvation is a common one in *Thomas* (on the importance of work, see also GTh 20; 107; cf. 109). The main question then concerns the nature of the 'labour': is it the hard physical labour of 'ascetical activity',⁶ or is the labour primarily the 'textual' labour of interpretation? As is often the case in *Thomas*, the lack of contextual indicators makes a final verdict difficult, and

1 **Bibliography for GTh 58:** Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 69–76; J. Schröter, 'Die Forschung am Thomasevangelium im Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostische Schriften. Beobachtungen anhand von Logion 58 (NHC II, p. 43,7–9); ZAC 13 (2009), 38–47.

2 Various scholars have noted the parallel in 1Pet. 3.14a: ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ πάσχοιτε διὰ δικαιοσύνην, μακάριοι. See e.g. J.B. Bauer, 'De agraphis genuinis evangelii secundum Thomam coptici', *Verbum Domini* 37 (1959), 129–146 (141). The parallel in Jas 1.12 is no closer than the Sermon on the Mount parallels in Matt. 5.10–11; Lk. 6.22.

3 For various parallels to this beatitude, see Quispel, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the New Testament', 204.

4 So Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 76; DeConick, 195–196, giving priority to the parallels in e.g. 1 Peter and James.

5 Plisch, 144.

6 Valantasis, 135.

both are found elsewhere: on the precondition of world-denial for salvation, see e.g. GTh 27; the labour of 'seeking' leads to salvation in GTh 2.

And found life. This phrase combines two of *Thomas's* favourite themes, namely discovery and life/ salvation. Compare e.g. the combination in GTh 1: 'Whoever finds the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death'. Language of 'life' / 'living' (especially in contrast to death) features heavily in nearby sayings: see GTh 59; 60.4; 61.1.

Logion 59¹

ΠΕΞΕ ΤΕ ΧΕ ΘΩΩΤ Ν̄ΣΑ ΠΕΤΟΝΕ ΖΩC ΕΤΕΤ̄ΝΘ̄ΝΕ ΖΙΝΑ ΧΕ ΝΕΤ̄ΜΟΥ ΔΥΩ
Ν̄ΤΕΤ̄ΝΩΙΝΕ ΕΝΔΥ ΕΡΟΦ ΔΥΩ ΤΕΤ̄ΝΑΩΘ̄Ν̄ ΘΟΜ ΔΝ ΕΝΔΥ

Jesus said, 'Look at the living one while you are alive, lest you die and you seek to see him, but are not able to see.'

Interpretation

The predominant theme in this saying is the urgency of seeking salvation (cf. Isa. 55.6: 'Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near'). The viewpoint here is that one's earthly life is the opportunity to seek knowledge and true life, an opportunity which will have passed after death.

DeConick rightly emphasises the motif of visionary experience in this saying.² The language of visibility is very prominent here ('look at', 'seek', 'see', 'not ... see'). There is a good deal of visual language elsewhere in *Thomas* (e.g. GTh 5; 15; 27.2; 37; 38; 84), but, as noted in the Introduction, it is not quite as central (as it is in DeConick's view) to *Thomas* as a whole.

This saying is closely related to GTh 60;³ indeed Zöckler comments that it is a free paraphrase of 60.6.⁴

Notes

Look at the living one. The identity of the living one is perhaps Jesus (as in GTh 52; cf. Prologue). Jesus is also probably 'the son of the living one' in GTh 37, however, and so there is an ambiguity here: the Father is the object of vision in GTh 15.

While you are alive. Cf. GTh 38.2: 'Days are coming when you will seek after me but will not find me.' The theme of eschatological urgency, which Jeremias

1 **Bibliography for GTh 59:** Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 81–83; DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 123–125.

2 DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics*, 88–89.

3 So rightly Nordsieck, 234.

4 Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 189; Lelyveld considers 59–60 a unity (*Logia de la vie*, 87–94).

identified as central to Jesus' teaching,⁵ is developed in these sayings in the direction of making the life-time of the hearer the time available to see the divine.

Lest you die and you seek to see him, but are not able to see. The reference here may be to a postmortem consciousness of the missed opportunity; such an idea has a number of parallels.⁶

5 See the section headings in J. Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1963): 'Now is the day of salvation' (115); 'The imminence of catastrophe' (160); 'It may be too late' (169).

6 For the theme of the regret of the damned, see some parallels in R.J. Bauckham, 'Early Jewish Visions of Hell', *JTS* 41 (1990), 355–385.

Logion 60¹

60.1 <αφναγ> αγσαμαρειτης εφφι ν̄νογρειβ̄ εφβηκ̄ ερογν̄ ε̄τογδαia 60.2 πεχαγ̄ ν̄νεφ̄μαθητης̄ ξε̄ πῑ ν̄πκωτε̄ ν̄περειβ̄ 60.3 πεχαγ̄ ναγ̄ ξεκαας̄ εφναμοογτ̄ ν̄φογομ̄ 60.4 πεχαγ̄ ναγ̄ ρως̄ εφονε̄ φναογομ̄ αν̄ αλλᾱ εφωαμοογτ̄ ν̄φωωπε̄ ν̄ογπτωμᾱ 60.5 πεχαγ̄ ξε̄ ν̄κεσμοτ̄ φναωας̄ αν̄ 60.6 πεχαγ̄ ναγ̄ ξε̄ ν̄τωτ̄ν̄ ρωτ̄ τηγ̄τ̄ν̄ ωινε̄ ν̄σᾱ ογτοπος̄ ν̄ητ̄ν̄ ερογν̄ εγαναπαγς̄ις̄ ξεκαας̄ ν̄νετ̄ν̄ωωπε̄ ν̄πτωμᾱ ν̄σεογωμ̄ τηγ̄τ̄ν̄

60.1 (*He saw*) a Samaritan carrying a lamb as he went into Judaea. 60.2 *He* said to his disciples, ‘*He is around the lamb.*’ 60.3 *They* said to him, ‘*So that he might kill it and eat it.*’ 60.4 *He* said to them, ‘*While it is alive, he will not eat it. But if he kills it, it will become a corpse.*’ 60.5 *They* said to him, ‘*Otherwise, he would not be able to.*’ 60.6 *He* said to them, ‘*As for you, seek for yourselves a place inside rest, so that you do not become a corpse and are eaten.*’

Textual Comment

There is a main verb missing at the beginning of GTh 60.1. The previous saying ended with εναγ; most editors presuppose a haplography, and restore αγναγ (Layton) or αφναγ (Berliner Arbeitskreis).² Jesus’ opening statement in 60.2 is also very enigmatic, and is probably textually corrupt, or a mistranslation: Plisch’s conjecture that it is a mistranslation of Greek εἶναι περί is a good one, although it would make a rather banal point.³ Others turn 60.2 into a question: ‘(Why does) that person (carry) around the lamb?’⁴

1 **Bibliography for GTh 60:** Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 87–94; E.E. Popkes, ‘Das Lamm und der Ort der Ruhe—EvThom 60’, in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 893–898.

2 For the former, see Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 74; on the latter, see Bethge, ‘Werdet Vorübergehende’, 47–48; Plisch, 147.

3 Plisch, ‘Probleme und Lösungen’, 527.

4 Valantasis, 136. For other suggestions, see Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 188. Pokorný’s ‘stalking the lamb’ is a stretch (104).

Interpretation

In many respects GTh 60 is bewildering, in part because of the textual problems just noted.⁵ The scene is difficult to reconstruct: (i) a word is missing at the beginning; (ii) who is going into Judaea—Jesus or the Samaritan? (iii) Jesus' statement in 60.2 does not make sense. This makes the scene-setting for the dialogue very difficult to reconstruct. Some scholars have suspected here criticisms of the temple cult or of meat eating, but these are not evident.⁶ In the scenario itself, there is no hint that the lamb is stolen.⁷ Nevertheless, this saying is distinctive—along with GTh 61—in being a 'vignette',⁸ with a specification of the individual as a Samaritan (cf. e.g. 'a man' in GTh 72, or 'a woman' in 79) and a specification of place (on the way to Judaea).

As Valantasis rightly points out, however, the ethnic and geographical scene-setting becomes irrelevant, and the lamb takes centre stage.⁹ The key point is that human beings, like the lamb,¹⁰ are on their way to death (60.3): 'this world is a corpse eater' which will consume people (*Gos. Phil.* 73,19–22). The disciples thus need to act to avert this fate, so as not to 'taste death'.¹¹ As in GTh 59, there is chance of salvation while one is alive (60.4): indeed, GTh 60 could be regarded as an extension of GTh 59, or else they are distinct sayings linked by the phrase 'while alive' (ζῶς ἐτεῖνῶν/ ζῶς ἐφονεῖ). This phrase is not just an mnemonic link, but a key theological motif.

This is reinforced by the concluding application in 60.6. The disciples are warned that they must not suffer the same fate as this lamb: they must not fall into the realm of death and be destroyed. In the realm of life, the disciples are invulnerable (just as in 60.4 the lamb cannot be eaten while alive). If the disciples succumb to death, however, they are liable to be consumed like a slaughtered lamb.

5 There is no close Synoptic parallel. The interesting similarities in Heracleon fr. 12 (on Jn 2.13) are probably coincidental.

6 It is not 'signaled' here that 'the temple cult also was obsolete' (thus DeConick, *Recovering the Original Gospel of Thomas*, 90), nor is there discussion of blood sacrifice and meat-eating (*pace* Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 67; DeConick, 198–199).

7 Pokorný, 105.

8 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 78, 80; cf. Plisch, 153 n. 8.

9 Valantasis, 137.

10 The lamb is not the world, as suggested by Grant & Freedman, 166–167; also Valantasis, 137, suggesting that as such the lamb *must* be killed.

11 Pokorný, 104.

Notes

60.1 (He saw) a Samaritan carrying a lamb as he went into Judaea. Samaritans were regarded negatively in early Judaism and Christianity as half-way between Judaism and paganism.¹² As already noted, it is unclear whether it is Jesus or the Samaritan going into Judaea here, though if the reconstruction ‘He saw’ is correct, Jesus is more likely to be the one going.¹³ Either way, the setting places Jesus, the disciples and the Samaritan in Samaria, though near the border of Judaea.

The scene is perhaps a reminiscence of the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10.30–35), in which the man going from Jerusalem to Jericho is helped by a Samaritan. ‘Samaritan’ is the only indication of ethnicity in *Thomas* and ‘Judaea’ is the only clear place name in *Thomas*,¹⁴ and the parable of the Good Samaritan is the only parable to have any indications of ethnicity and geography among the canonical parables.¹⁵ (In the Lukan parable, the geography is ‘from Jerusalem to Jericho’, rather than ‘into Judaea.’)

60.2 He said to his disciples, ‘He is around the lamb.’ This strange expression has led to various explanations of mistranslation from a *Vorlage*.¹⁶ It is probably the case that there has either been a mistranslation or a corruption of the text here. From the statement of the disciples, one might expect Jesus to ask here, ‘Why is he taking the lamb?’¹⁷ Or perhaps, instead, Jesus observes, ‘The man is pursuing the lamb’, i.e. ‘trying to take away a lamb’ or ‘trying to catch a lamb’.¹⁸

60.3 They said to him, ‘So that he might kill it and eat it.’ The simple language of killing (ἐφναμοοῦτε) without any explicit reference to sacrifice, and focus on the Samaritan’s intention to eat the lamb, probably speak against any allusion to the Samaritan going to the temple.¹⁹

12 On the Samaritans, see R. Pummer, ‘Samaritanism’, *EDEJ* 1186–118.

13 Bethge, ‘Werdet Vorübergehende’, 47–48.

14 The exception, ‘Israel’ in GTh 52, may either refer to the place or the people; cf. also the implicit indication of geography GTh 71, which probably implies proximity to the temple.

15 I am thinking here of proper nouns; as in GTh 71, the temple is mentioned in Lk. 18.9–14, and of course one assumes that there the Pharisee especially but also the tax-collector are Jews (as indeed one assumes of most of the characters in Jesus’ parables).

16 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 80–81.

17 Cf. the translation in Nordsieck, 234: ‘Was will dieser mit dem Lamm machen?’

18 The translation, and glosses, proposed by Plisch, 147.

19 Cf. the possibility raised by Nordsieck, 234.

60.4 He said to them, ‘While it is alive, he will not eat it. But if he kills it, it will become a corpse.’ Jesus’ statement here establishes the close connection between this dialogue and the preceding GTh 59: ‘Look at the living one while you are alive (ζωὸς ἐτετῆονῆ; cf. here ζωὸς ἐφονεῖ), lest you die and you seek to see him, but are not able to see.’

60.5 They said to him, ‘Otherwise, he would not be able to.’ A banal remark akin to those of Socratic interlocutors: cf. e.g. *Meno* 78A: καὶ τοῦτο ἀνάγκη.

60.6 He said to them, ‘As for you, seek for yourselves.’ The introduction to the theological application here agrees verbatim with Jesus’ application of the parable of the pearl (ἡτῶτῆ ζῶτῆ τῆ γτῆ ὧνε ἦσα ... also in 76.3). This reinforces the semi-allegorical character of the episode in GTh 60.

60.6 A place inside rest. This curious use of ἐροῦν ε- (*lit.* ‘to inside’, Crum 685–686) perhaps suggests that ‘rest’ is conceived of as a concrete realm, rather than simply as an abstract noun: the ‘paradise’ in GTh 19 may specifically be in view. As elsewhere in *Thomas*, rest has the technical sense of ‘salvation’ here rather than the everyday sense. The use of ‘place’ here may also have the theological sense of soteriological space (cf. GTh 4, 18, 24, 64). As Vielhauer rightly notes, it is a space where one is removed from death and destruction,²⁰ but also where labour has come to an end.

60.6 So that you do not become a corpse and are eaten. The alternative to ‘life’ and ‘a place inside rest’ is consumption. This is used elsewhere in *Thomas*’ imagery: it is the curse of the man to be eaten by the lion in GTh 7.2, and the birds (implicitly) and the worms explicitly eat up the seed sown in GTh 9. This reference to consumption also forges a further link between this saying and GTh 76:

60.6: As for you, seek for yourselves a place inside rest,
so that you do not become a corpse and are eaten.

76.3: As for you, seek his unfailing and enduring treasure,
where no moth comes near to eat and no worm destroys.

Being ‘eaten’ is thus an image for the fate of those without knowledge, which in the parallelism in GTh 76 means destruction. It is possible, but unclear, that the reference to ‘corpse’ and consumption here indicate a warning against following the bodily dimensions of human existence.²¹

²⁰ Vielhauer, ‘ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ’, 293.

²¹ Popkes, ‘Das Lamm und der Ort der Ruhe’, 897.

Logion 61¹

61.1 πεξε ιϛ ογν̄ σναγ ναῖτον̄ ἡμαγ ρι ογβλοβ̄ πογα ναμογ πογα ναωνρ̄ 61.2
πεξε σαλωμη̄ ἡτακ̄ ἡιμ̄ πρωμε ρωσ εβολ ρῖ ογα ακτελο εχῖμ̄ παβλοβ̄ αγω
ακ'ογωμ̄ εβολ ρῖ τατραπεζα 61.3 πεξε ιϛ νασ χε ανοκ̄ πε πετωοοπ̄ εβολ
ρῖ πετ'ωηω̄ αγτ̄ ναει εβολ ρῖ να παειωτ̄ 61.4 ανοκ̄ τεκ'μαθητ̄ς 61.5 ετβε
παει τ̄χω ἡμοσ χε ροταν̄ εφωαωωπε εφωη(ω)̄' φναμογρ̄ ογοειν̄ ροταν̄ δε
εφωαωωωπε εφπηω̄ φναμογρ̄ ἡκακε

61.1 *Jesus said, 'Two will rest on a couch, one will die, the other will live.'* 61.2 *Salome said, 'Who are you, man, that you have come up as from one on to my couch and eaten from my table?'* 61.3 *Jesus said to her, 'I am he who is from the equal. I have been given some of what belongs to my Father.'* 61.4 *(Salome said,) 'I am your disciple.'* 61.5 *(Jesus said,) 'For this reason I say, "When he becomes equal, he will be filled with light. But when he becomes divided, he will be filled with darkness."*

Textual Comment

It is possible that the phrase 'as from one' in Salome's question (61.2) is textually corrupt (see notes below). Phrases marking the changes of speaker may have dropped out of 61.4 and 61.5, though there may have simply been an attempt to avoid repetition, since it is obvious who is speaking in each case. Salome is clearly the speaker in 61.4 because of the feminine article prefixing 'your disciple' (τεκ'μαθητ̄ς). In 61.5 the phrase εφωαωωπε εφωηω̄ ('when he is destroyed') is assumed by most editors to be a corruption of εφωαωωωπε εφωηω̄ ('when he becomes equal').

1 **Bibliography for GTh 61:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 126–129; Sell, 'Johannine Traditions in Logion 61', 24–37; H.W. Attridge, 'Greek Equivalents of Two Coptic Phrases: CG I,1.65,9–10 and CG II,2.43,26', *BASP* 18 (1981), 27–32; S. Bjorndahl, 'To Live and Die in Thomas 61', *Forum* 10 (1994), 87–94; Dunderberg, 'Thomas' I-Sayings and the Gospel of John', 49–56; K. Corley, 'Salome and Jesus at Table in the *Gospel of Thomas*', *Semeia* 86 (1999), 85–97; Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 198–202; Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 89–101; C. Losekam, 'Einssein statt Getrenntsein (Zwei auf dem Bett)—EvThom 61', in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompandium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 899–903.

Interpretation

This saying is linked to GTh 60 in that both form a distinctive pair of pronouncement stories: they are vignettes, with specification of character and place. The setting, unusually in *Thomas*, is private space (cf. perhaps GTh 22 and 41?). The scene is quite a shocking one. First, Jesus has apparently turned up uninvited (hence Salome's question in 61.2), going beyond even his *chutzpah* in Luke 19.5, where he at least gives Zacchaeus warning of his impending visit.² Second, Jesus appears to have clambered onto Salome's couch, making this a scene of intimacy,³ even a scene with sexual connotations.⁴ (Compare the surprise expressed by the disciples in Jn 4.27 at Jesus merely *speaking* alone with a woman.) Sharing a couch was an action of lovers or a married couple, either with the man reclining and the woman seated, or with both reclining.⁵

The link between 61.1 and the rest of the saying is not immediately obvious, and indeed many commentators treat them as separate units.⁶ Points in favour of their being joined are, first, that Jesus' statement in 61.1 fits well with a setting of Jesus and Salome sharing a couch (as in 61.2), and secondly, that the themes in 61.1 are perhaps revisited in 61.5. As Valantasis has put it, the saying 'shows evidence of careful crafting: Jesus begins the conversation with Salome with a reference to division and death, and ends it with a reference to division and darkness.'⁷

In fact, the challenge is not so much to integrate 61.1 with the rest of the saying, but to see how the framing statements in 61.1 and 61.5 cohere with the 'guts' in 61.2–4. Understanding the intimacy in the vignette is crucial here. The probable sense of the scene as a whole is Salome's movement from ignorance

2 On this aspect of Jesus' behaviour, see Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 68.

3 Valantasis, 140.

4 Rightly, A. Reinhartz, 'Reflections on Table Fellowship and Community Identity', *Semeia* 86 (1999), 227–233 (231); Losekam, 'Einssein statt Getrenntsein (Zwei auf dem Bett)', 901.

5 See the various passages and images discussed in M. Roller, 'Horizontal Women: Posture and Sex in the Roman Convivium', *AJP* 124 (2003), 377–422. Corley's contrast between Jesus dining with Salome in the Roman manner on same couch in *Thomas* and women sitting or kneeling in the Gospels ('Salome and Jesus at Table', 86) is something of a false antithesis, as a woman might also sit on a couch, but the overall point is a useful one; similarly, Losekam, 'Einssein statt Getrenntsein (Zwei auf dem Bett)', 901. Cf. esp. Lk. 7.38 (the sinful woman 'standing'), and 10.39 (Mary of Bethany 'seated at the Lord's feet').

6 Grant & Freedman, 167–168 (following the old numeration of the sayings, in which 61.1 = 61, and 61.2–5 = 62); DeConick, 200–204; Hedrick, 116–117.

7 Valantasis, 138.

(as is expressed in her 'Who?' question in 61.2), via Jesus' revelation of his identity in 61.3, to her confession of allegiance to him (61.4: 'I am your disciple'). The principal question then becomes whether she has become in some sense equal to Jesus,⁸ or whether her discipleship remains incomplete.⁹ There does not seem to be any qualification or diminution of Salome's confession, however. Indeed, the posture of Jesus and Salome on the couch may suggest that she, like Mary Magdalene in the *Gospel of Philip*, is portrayed here as a kind of 'beloved' or ideal disciple: just as Mary's special intimacy with Jesus in *Philip* is marked by (probably) kissing, so the connotations of Salome's sharing a couch with Jesus might similarly indicate the 'oneness' or equality of Jesus with his true disciple.

Corley has seen reflected in this saying a debate about the status of women,¹⁰ indeed more specifically, a controversy in the *Thomas* movement about the legitimacy of women reclining at meals like men.¹¹ There is too much mirror-reading here: Salome's femaleness is not thematised, nor is her posture. The equality is metaphysical rather than social. Much more prominent are christology and discipleship.¹²

Notes

61.1 Jesus said, 'Two will rest on a couch, one will die, the other will live.' Cf. Matt. 24.40, and esp. Lk. 17.34; in *Thomas*, the theme of 'life' has featured recently in GTh 58; 59 and 60.4 (in 59 and 60 in contrast to death). As noted above, this part with the end (61.5) frames the dialogue as concerned with life (cf. being 'equal' and 'filled with light' in 61.5) and death (cf. 'divided' and 'filled with darkness' in 61.5). If this saying is dependent upon the Lukan version, it has in the process of transmission at some point lost its 'apocalyptic' tone (from 'will be taken' to 'will die'), as Bovon notes;¹³ it is about the destiny of the individual instead.¹⁴ Those who propose that 61.1 is a discrete saying

8 So Valantasis, 139.

9 A. Marjanen, 'Women Disciples in the *Gospel of Thomas*', in R. Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 89–106 (92).

10 Corley, 'Salome and Jesus at Table', 89.

11 Corley, 'Salome and Jesus at Table', 85.

12 Grosso, 197, rightly emphasises the importance of christology in this saying.

13 F. Bovon, 'Les sentences propres à Luc dans l'*Évangile selon Thomas*', in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi"*. Québec, 29–31 mai 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 43–58 (50).

14 Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 200.

tend to produce rather banal interpretations of it, as an aphorism about the inevitability of death,¹⁵ or about ‘the uncertainty and capriciousness of human life’,¹⁶ or as ‘a proverb counseling resignation in the face of unpredictable disasters’.¹⁷ There is an interesting parallel to this saying, where Salome asks how long death will continue, and Jesus replies that one element will be saved (the soul), but the other, visible, element will not.¹⁸ The meaning of GTh 61.1 here in *Thomas* could be anthropological, as in that interpretation, or it could be a more traditional statement contrasting two human destinies.

61.2 Salome said. There is only one Salome named in the NT (Mk 15.40; 16.1), and her relations are unclear.¹⁹ Nothing is known of her except that she was a witness of the crucifixion, was one of the women who had supported Jesus’ ministry (Mk 15.41), and was one of the visitors to the tomb on Easter morning (Mk 16.1–8). She may be included here as Jesus’ host because of the mention in Mk 15.41 that she was one of the women who had provided for Jesus.

61.2 Who are you, man, that you have come up ... on to my couch and eaten from my table? Dunderberg suggests three possible ‘moods’ of Salome’s question: (i) surprise at a divine being eating with her; (ii) resentment that a fellow-human being is claiming the authority to teach her, and (iii) doubt that Jesus has the right to her hospitality.²⁰ It seems probable, however, that the shock is at a man joining her on her dining couch.

61.2 ... as from one The phrase ‘as from one’ (ζωε εβολ εἰς οὔνα) has been a crux since the discovery of the text.²¹ There are five principal options. (1) Some argue that the text is corrupt. It is marked as such by Layton and left out of Lambdin’s translation altogether.²² (2) Some propose, through mistranslation (perhaps also with a textual corruption) from the Greek, Salome referring

15 Bjoerndahl, ‘To Live and Die in Thomas 61’, 87–94.

16 Hedrick, 116.

17 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 80.

18 Clement, *Strom.* 3.9.64.1.

19 Later traditions identified her as the aunt of Jesus (combining Mk 15.40 + Jn 19.25), or as the mother of James and John (by combining Mk 15.40 + Matt. 27.56). According to the *Gospel of the Egyptians*, on the other hand, she was childless (*Strom.* 3.9.66.1–2). On Salome in early Christianity, see R.J. Bauckham, ‘Salome the Sister of Jesus, Salome the Disciples of Jesus, and the Secret Gospel of Mark’, *NovT* 33 (1991), 245–275, and Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 195–241.

20 Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 95–96.

21 See further Gathercole, *Composition*, 81–83.

22 Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 74–75.

to Jesus ‘as a stranger/ guest’ (ὡς ξένος → ὡς ἐξ ἑνός → ρωσ εβολ ρῆ ογα).²³ (3) Another Greek solution, adopted by the *editio princeps* and DeConick, sees ρωσ εβολ ρῆ ογα as a mistranslation of ὡς ἐκ τίνος (‘as whose?’, ‘as from whom?’).²⁴ (4) Attridge sees the same Greek behind the Coptic, though accented as ὡς ἐκ τινός, meaning ‘as from someone (special)’.²⁵ (5) Some see a mistranslation from Syriac: Jesus comes onto Salome’s couch ‘suddenly’ (*mn hḏ’, mhḏ’* → εβολ ρῆ ογα).²⁶ Finally, (6) it has also been suggested that the Coptic might make sense as it stands, given that according to *Excerpta Theodoti* 36.1, Theodotus’s Valentinians say that our angels were put forth in unity and ὡς ἀπὸ ἐνὸς προελθόντες.²⁷ It is hard to decide. Option (2) is attractive, because dining is a natural setting for a ξένος (in the sense of ‘guest’), but since Dunderberg has shown that the phrase makes sense as it stands, the interpretation that Jesus is taken to be from a divine realm of unity is also possible.²⁸ To Dunderberg’s reference can be added *Steles Seth* 120,32–34 (‘you have come from one ...’); cf. 122,23–25.

61.3 Jesus said to her, ‘I am he who is from the equal.’²⁹ Equality is an attribute of divine perfection in various Nag Hammadi texts,³⁰ and so Jesus’ response is clearly one of divine identity.³¹

61.3 I have been given some of what belongs to my Father. The sense here is not that what Jesus has is only partial, but that he shares in the unity/ equality of the Father. Compare Rev. 2.28, and Luke 2.49, where Jesus had to remain ρῆ να παειωτ.

61.4 (Salome said,) ‘I am your disciple.’ As Corley has rightly said, in her claim to be a disciple, Salome is asserting her status as one undivided and full

23 See e.g. Plisch, ‘Thomas in Babel’, 62–63.

24 Guillaumont, et al., eds. *Gospel according to Thomas*, 34–35; DeConick, 202.

25 Attridge, ‘Greek Equivalents of Two Coptic Phrases’, 31–32.

26 See e.g. Perrin, ‘Thomas: The Fifth Gospel?’, 71, and M. Wilcox, ‘Semitisms in the New Testament’, *ANRW* 2.25.2 (1984), 978–1029 (1009), for discussion of the Aramaic idiom in question.

27 Dunderberg, ‘Thomas’ I-sayings and the Gospel of John’, 51–53.

28 So also Losekam, ‘Einssein statt Getrenntsein’, 902.

29 Sell, ‘Johannine Traditions in Logion 61’, 31, argues that the Coptic here betrays a Greek *Vorlage* ‘*isos ho ὄν*—“the One Being Equal (to me)”’ (from Jn 5.18). The language is rather different from Jn 5.18, however.

30 Hedrick, 117. In the *Paraphrase of Shem*, the clouds are divided and unequal because of the wickedness of nature (39,17–28). On the other hand, in the *Tripartite Tractate*, the Son’s equality is a divine predicate (67,36–37), and the image of the light shares in the indivisibility of the light (94,28–32).

31 Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 97.

of light;³² it is even possible, as Corley goes on, that she is androgynous or male in status (cf. GTh 114).³³ Interestingly, in *Psalms of Thomas* 16, Salome appeals to Jesus on the basis that, '[I] am not double-minded, one is my heart and one my intention, there is no thought in my heart that is split or divided.'³⁴

61.5 (Jesus said,) 'For this reason I say, "When he becomes equal, he will be filled with light. But when he becomes divided, he will be filled with darkness."' Marjanen remarks that the conclusion of the saying suggests that Salome is not a 'masterless disciple' in the full sense like Thomas in GTh 13.³⁵ But 61.5 is an antithetical statement that does not seem easily to allow for the ambiguous status that Marjanen attributes to Salome, even though 'disciple' itself may be an ambiguous term in *Thomas*: it can designate 'the disciples' in all their ignorance, but also the legitimate inheritors of paradise (GTh 19.2).

32 Corley, 'Salome and Jesus at Table', 90.

33 Corley, 'Salome and Jesus at Table', 91–92.

34 C.R.C. Allberry, *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, vol. II (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1938), 223, lines 2–3.

35 Marjanen, 'Women Disciples in Thomas', 92.

Logion 62¹

62.1 πεχε ἰσ̄ χε εἶχῶ ἡναμύστηριον ἡνε[τῆπῶδ] ἡ[να]μύστηριον 62.2
πε[τ]ε τεκ'οὔναμ ἡααῖ μῆτρε τεκζβοῦρ' εἰμε χε εσρ οὔ

62.1 *Jesus said, I speak my mysteries to those who [are worthy of my] mysteries.* 62.2 *Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.'*

Interpretation

The surface link between the two sayings here is that of sharing knowledge only with the appropriate recipients. The question is then of whether there is also a substantive link in meaning. The meaning of 62.1 is clear enough, despite the lacuna; the difficulty lies in the meaning of the second half. Only if one derives the meaning of 62.2 from 62.1 can one easily forge a link between two two parts of the logion: in that case, those on the 'left' as the unworthy, and those on the 'right' as the worthy—as per the perennial symbolic valuation of 'right' and 'left' also found in some near-contemporaneous Valentinian writings.² Plisch criticises attempts to link the two parts of this logion as 'artificial'.³ He may be correct, but since 62.2 is obscure to us we should not pronounce prematurely.

Notes

62.1 I speak my mysteries to those who are worthy of my mysteries. As Valan-tasis says, there is a restrictive outlook here, which differs from that in which

1 **Bibliography for GTh 62:** M. Grosso, "I misteri ai degni". Un possibile testimonium del *Vangelo secondo Tommaso* in Origene, in *Matth. Comm. XIV,14*, *Adamantius* 16 (2010), 389–398; idem, 'A New Link between Origen and the *Gospel of Thomas: Commentary on Matthew 14,14*', *VC* 65 (2011), 249–256.

2 See e.g. *Val. Exp. On Bap.* 41,23–27; *Gos. Phil.* 60,27–28; *Gos. Truth* 32,5–17; cf. Irenaeus, *AH* 2.24.6. The phenomenon is widespread in religious and other discourse across many cultures. See R. Hertz, 'The Pre-eminence of the Right Hand: A Study in Religious Polarity', in R. Needham, ed. *Right and Left: Essays on Dual Symbolic Classification* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 3–31, and G.E.R. Lloyd, 'Right and Left in Greek Philosophy', 167–186 in the same volume.

3 Plisch, 154 n. 1.

the emphasis is more on the access of many to Jesus' revelation (e.g. GTh 28).⁴ It resembles the more exclusive sayings such as the pearls-before-swine logion (GTh 93). There is an emphasis on the important christological point that Jesus is a revealer (cf. e.g. GTh 17).

62.2 Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. In the Matthean parallel to this saying (Matt. 6.3), the point of the aphorism is that—contrary to the hypocrite who trumpets his largesse—the disciple of Jesus is not even to let his left hand know when his right hand is giving alms. Hedrick suggests this, but only as one possibility.⁵ Commentators who see 62.2 as disconnected from 62.1 often resort to rather banal interpretations, such as 'single-mindedness in any endeavour',⁶ or '[doing] what is necessary for its own sake.'⁷ Also possible is some kind of symbolic valuation of 'right' and 'left' hands, one application of which has already been noted.

4 Valantasis, 140–141.

5 Hedrick, 119. There is nothing in GTh 62 or its vicinity to encourage such an interpretation, and *Thomas* may even be averse to the indiscriminate almsgiving envisaged in the Sermon on the Mount (cf. GTh 14).

6 Hedrick, 119.

7 Plisch, 154.

Logion 63¹

63.1 πεχε τ̄ε χε νεγ̄ν̄ ογρωμε̄ ἡπλογ̄σιος̄ εγ̄ν̄ταϥ̄ ἡμαγ̄ ἡζαζ̄ ἡχρηνᾱ 63.2
πεχαϥ̄ χε †ηᾱρ̄χρω̄ ἡναχρηνᾱ χεκαας̄ εεινᾱχο̄ ἡταω̄[[ε]]ς̄ ἡτατω̄σε̄ ἡτα-
μογ̄ζ̄ ἡναεζωρ̄ ἡκαρ̄πος̄ ω̄ινᾱ χε̄ η̄ιρ̄ σρωζ̄ λλααγ̄ 63.3̄ ναεῑ νε̄ νεϥ̄μεεγ̄ε̄
ερωογ̄ ρ̄ἡ̄ πεϥ̄ζητ̄'̄ αγω̄ ρ̄ἡ̄ τογ̄ωη̄ ετ̄ἡμαγ̄ αϥ̄μογ̄ 63.4̄ πετεγ̄ἡ̄ μαχε̄ ἡμοϥ̄'
μαρεϥ̄'σωτ̄ἡ̄

63.1 *Jesus said, 'There was a rich man who had a lot of money. 63.2 He said, 'I shall make use of my money, so that I may sow, reap, plant, and fill my store with produce, so that I lack nothing.' 63.3 Such were his thoughts, but that very night he died. 63.4 He who has ears, let him hear.'*

Interpretation

This is the sixth of *Thomas's* 14 parables (see comment above on GTh 8). There are two principal points of dispute in GTh 63 (paralleled in Luke 12.16–20; cf. *Sir.* 11.19).²

First, what story is being told? It is a challenge to come to this parable without reading the Lukan account into it. Valantasis, for example, simply assumes—like Luke—that this is a ‘rich farmer who intended to invest in order to produce even greater wealth.’³ Hedrick thinks the opposite: ‘*Thomas's* protagonist is a wealthy investor who intends on becoming a farmer.’⁴ The economic potential of such a move is hardly underestimated by the rich man in 63.2: ‘The rich owned impregnable granaries: they could store the harvest, in expectation of profit at times of scarcity, when they could sell their grain

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 63:** Birdsall, ‘Luke XII. 16 ff. and the Gospel of Thomas’, 332–336; J.-M. Sevrin, ‘Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses dans l’Évangile selon Thomas. *EvTh* 63, 64, 65’, in J. Delmore, ed. *Les Paraboles évangéliques: Perspectives nouvelles* (Paris: Cerf, 1989), 425–439; Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions: The Creative Voice of Jesus*, 142–163; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 87–96; J.P. Meier, ‘Is Luke’s Version of the Parable of the Rich Fool Reflected in the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas?*’, *CBQ* 74 (2012), 528–547.
 - ² The Lukan version is probably influenced by *Sirach* 11, but *Thomas's* version is more distant from the version in *Sirach*.
 - ³ Valantasis, 141.
 - ⁴ Hedrick, 120; Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 68, had already argued for this view.

at a high price. Unlike the subsistence farmer, they could “defeat time”, as Brown puts it.⁵ If we bracket our knowledge of Luke, Hedrick’s interpretation is unavoidable.

Secondly, what is the point of the parable in *Thomas*? It seems unlikely that the protagonist is an example of a great man who is able to achieve a lot in his lifetime (with the parable being read allegorically about spiritual wealth).⁶ It is also not necessarily ‘contre les richesses’ *per se*, as in the title of Sevrin’s article. Nor is it quite as general as ‘man proposes, God disposes’.⁷ The point here seems to be an attack on commerce, especially when it is concerned with establishing a self-sufficiency in which one might claim to ‘lack nothing’ (63.2) because of material prosperity.⁸

This is confirmed by the location of GTh 63 as the first of a trio of parables warning against involvement in commerce:

- GTh 63: Parable of the Rich Fool:
rich man uses money so as to lack nothing;
- GTh 64: Parable of the Banquet:
those involved in business are prevented from access to banquet;
- GTh 65: Parable of the Wicked Tenants:
vineyard owner fails to receive hoped-for fruit and suffers catastrophe.

Notes

63.1 There was a rich man who had a lot of money. The introduction ‘there was a ... man’ may reflect the influence of Luke.⁹ As noted above, it is not clear that the man is a farmer at the outset.

63.2 He said, “I shall make use of my money, so that I may sow, reap, plant, and fill my store with produce, so that I lack nothing.” 63.3 makes it clear that the ‘saying’ in 63.2 is interior monologue.¹⁰ Presumably, the man himself will

5 C. Leyser, ‘Just How Rich Can a Christian Be?’ (Review of Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle*), *TLS* 21 (December 2012), 13–14 (13).

6 Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 132–133.

7 Plisch, 155; cf. Hedrick, 120.

8 Lindemann, ‘Gleichnisinterpretation’, 229; Valantasis, 141; Pokorný, 108.

9 See Meier, ‘Luke’s Version of the Parable of the Rich Fool’, 543–544.

10 On this interior monologue and its possible Lukan antecedent, see Meier, ‘Luke’s Version of the Parable of the Rich Fool’, 544–546.

not do the hard work. He aims to become a landowner who will be able to store up grain with the ultimate aim of being self-sufficient without working himself.

63.3 Such were his thoughts, but that very night he died. On sudden death despite such plans, cf. *Sir.* 11.19; Jas 4.13–14.

63.4 He who has ears, let him hear.¹¹ Cf. GTh 8; 21; 24, 65 and 96, and see note on GTh 8.

¹¹ Birdsall, 'Luke XII. 16 ff. and the Gospel of Thomas', 332–336, notes that this formula appears appended to the Lukan version of the parable in some late manuscripts, but attributes little significance to this since the formula is often added to Gospel pericopae, especially in lectionaries.

Logion 64¹

64.1 πεχε ιϛ δε ουρωμε νεγνηταϩ ρνηωμμο αγω νταρεϩσβωτε μηπδιπνον αϩ-
χοοϩ μηπεϩεμϩαλ ωινα εϩνατωϩμη ννηωμμοει 64.2 αϩβωκ μηπωροπι πεχαϩ
ναϩ δε παχοειϛ τωϩμη μμοκ 64.3 πεχαϩ δε ουγηται ρνηϩομητ αϩενεμποροϛ
σενηνηϩ ωαροει εροϩεϩε τναβωκ νταουεϩ σαϩνε ναϩ τρπαραιτει μηπδιπνον
64.4 αϩβωκ ωα κεοϩα πεχαϩ ναϩ δε απαχοειϛ τωϩμη μμοκ 64.5 πεχαϩ
ναϩ δε δειτοοϩ ουνει αγω σερατει μμοει νοϩϩημερα τναϛρϩε α(η) 64.6 α-
ϩει ωα κεοϩα πεχαϩ ναϩ δε παχοειϛ τωϩμη μμοκ 64.7 πεχαϩ ναϩ δε παϩ-
βηρ ναρ ωελεετ αγω ανοκ ετναρ διπνον τναϩι αν τρπαραιτει μηπδιπνον
64.8 αϩβωκ ωα κεοϩα πεχαϩ ναϩ δε παχοειϛ τωϩμη μμοκ 64.9 πεχαϩ ναϩ
δε δειτοοϩ νοϩκωμη εειβηκ αϩι νωωμη τναϩι αν τρπαραιτει 64.10 αϩει ηϛι
πρηϩαλ αϩχοοϛ απεϩχοειϛ δε νενητακταϩμοϩ απδιπνον αϩπαραιτει 64.11
πεχε πχοειϛ μηπεϩεμϩαλ δε βωκ επσα νβολ ανϩιοοϩε νετκναϩε εροοϩ ε-
νιοϩ δεκααϛ εϩναρδιπνει 64.12 ηρεϩτοοϩ μη νεϩωτ[ε σεναβ]ϩκ αν εϩοϩη
ενητοποϛ μηπαιωτ

64.1 *Jesus said, 'A man was having some guests. And when he had prepared the dinner, he sent his servant to summon the guests. 64.2 He went to the first and said to him, "My master summons you." 64.3 He said, "I have some claims against some merchants. They are coming to me in the evening. I am going to give them orders. Please excuse me from the dinner." 64.4 He went to another and said to him, "My master has summoned you." 64.5 He said to him, "I have bought a house and am required today. I shall not have the spare time." 64.6 He went to another and said to him, "My master summons you." 64.7 He said to him, "My friend is getting married, and I am to arrange the dinner. I shall not be able to come. Please excuse me from the dinner." 64.8 He went to another and said to him, "My master summons you." 64.9 He said to him, "I have bought a village. I am going to collect the rent. I shall not be able to come. Please excuse me." 64.10 The servant came and said to his master, "Those whom you invited to the dinner have asked to be excused." 64.11 The*

1 **Bibliography for GTh 64:** J.D. McCaughey, 'Two Synoptic Parables in the Gospel of Thomas', *ABR* 8 (1960), 24–28; Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 133–137; Sevrin, 'Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses', 425–439; G.E. Sterling, "'Where Two or Three are Gathered': The Tradition History of the Parable of the Banquet (*Matt.* 22:1–14/*Luke* 14:16–24/*GThom* 64)', in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 95–121 (including Greek and Coptic synopses on 112–121).

master said to his servant, "Go outside to the streets and bring whomever you find, so that they may dine." 64.12 Businessmen and mercha[nts will not en]ter the places of my Father.'

Interpretation

This parable is the seventh of *Thomas's* parables (on these, see *ad* GTh 8), and the longest saying in *Thomas*. It clearly is part allegory, as is the Lukan parallel (Lk. 14.12–24; cf. Matt. 22.1–14).² The concluding aphorism in 64.12 makes the point of the parable clear, such that (i) the host is the Father, (ii) the places in the banquet are 'places' in the kingdom, (iii) the guests who refuse to come are those who refuse to enter the kingdom, and (iv) the excuses of the invited guests in the parable stand for the encumbrances of business arrangements which prevent people from becoming disciples.³ This is the second of a trio of parables (GTh 63–65) pronouncing against the evils of commerce and its incompatibility with true discipleship. The guests had initially intended to attend the banquet (see on 64.1 below), but were prevented from doing so because of their commercial activities.

Notes

64.1 A man was having some guests. And when he had prepared the dinner, he sent his servant to summon the guests. This opening statement presupposes 'the practice of first sending an invitation to a guest and then summoning them at the time that the meal is ready'.⁴ The servants should not be seen as divine figures, despite the peculiar writing of 𐤒𐤌𐤅𐤋𐤃: the word is not a *nomen sacrum*, because there is no abbreviation (the line above also does not cover the whole word, as is normal).⁵

2 *Contra* Sterling, who remarks on the 'absence of an allegorical understanding of the parable in *Thomas*' ('Where Two or Three are Gathered', 106). It is true, however, that there is not any *salvation historical* allegory involving the destruction of Jerusalem, as in the rough parallel in Matthew (Lindemann, 'Gleichnisinterpretation', 231–232, and Sevrin, 'Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses', 432).

3 Sterling, 'Where Two or Three are Gathered', 105.

4 Sterling, 'Where Two or Three are Gathered', 98, citing as parallels Esth. 5.8; 6.14 and Philo, *Opif.* 78.

5 *Contra* Valantasis, 144–145.

64.2 He went to the first and said to him, “My master summons you.” This terse way of speaking by the servant perhaps taps into a stereotype: cf. the first spoken words of the *Republic* from the servant of Polemarchus to Socrates: ‘Polemarchus tells you to wait’ (*Rep.* 327B).

64.3 He said, “I have some claims against some merchants. They are coming to me in the evening. I am going to give them orders. Please excuse me from the dinner.” On ζοιπ as a ‘claim’ or loan, cf. Crum 678a, where ὀφείλημα is given as an equivalent in Deut. 24.10.

64.4 He went to another and said to him, “My master has summoned you.” See on 64.2 above. The change of tense from present to perfect is insignificant.

64.5 He said to him, “I have bought a house and am required today. I shall not have the spare time.” The house-buying does not appear in the Matthean or Lukan parallel. Sterling attributes its presence to ‘either the tradition behind *Thomas* or *Thomas* used *Deuteronomy* 20 to expand the list of potential excuses.’⁶ However, the ‘excuse’ in *Deuteronomy* 20.5 belongs to the man who has built a house and should dedicate it. The link between Deut. 20.6–7 and *Thomas* is not strong: *Thomas* is further away from *Deuteronomy* than Luke in his talk of buying a *village* not a farm/ vineyard, and in the reference to the *friend* getting married.

64.6 He went to another and said to him, “My master summons you.” Cf. 64.2 and 64.4.

64.7 He said to him, “My friend is getting married and I am to arrange the dinner. I shall not be able to come. Please excuse me from the dinner.” Perhaps the apparent difference between this case and the other more commercial excuses evaporates if we read the marriage as the same kind of transaction as the cases of business.⁷ In any event, if the meal is a ‘catered affair’, it is a business transaction for this invitee:⁸ ‘this too would probably have involved a considerable outlay of funds, and all for the folly of a feast.’⁹

64.8 He went to another and said to him, “My master summons you.” Cf. 64.2, 64.4, and 64.6.

64.9 He said to him, “I have bought a village. I am going to collect the rent. I shall not be able to come. Please excuse me.” Arnal here adduces a helpful parallel from an inscription, which refers to villages as the property of

6 Sterling, ‘Where Two or Three are Gathered’, 105.

7 Blomberg, ‘The Parables of the Gospel of Thomas’, 188, comments that the shift from groom to best man reflects strong aversion to marriage in Gnostic circles, which is possible but overly speculative, and may not apply in the case of *Thomas*.

8 Hedrick, 121.

9 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 142.

a single person.¹⁰ This is hardly a normal situation, however, since the owner is Ptolemaios, ‘military governor and chief priest of Koile Syria and Phoinike’.¹¹

64.10 The servant came and said to his master, “Those whom you invited to the dinner have asked to be excused.” On the writing of $\epsilon\mu\bar{\epsilon}\delta\alpha\lambda$, see above on 64.1.

64.11 The master said to his servant, “Go outside to the streets and bring whomever you find, so that they may dine.” On the writing of $\epsilon\mu\bar{\epsilon}\delta\alpha\lambda$, see above on 64.1. The reference here may have been to gentiles in earlier versions of the parables, but this probably was no longer the sense within *Thomas*.¹²

64.12 Businessmen and merchants will not enter the places of my Father. Cf. Zech. 14.21b. Lowe comments, a little speculatively, that there is a possible allusion here to the cleansing of the temple, in which case it may be that GTh 64 was drawn from a source in which this parable is connected to that incident,¹³ or was at least spoken in the temple: this is the case for the loose Matthean parallel (Matt. 22.1–14), but not the Lukan (Lk. 14.12–24).¹⁴

10 Arnal, ‘Rhetoric of Marginality’, 467; the reference is to Y.H. Landau, ‘A Greek Inscription Found near Hefzibah’, *IEJ* 16 (1966), 54–70 (59–61, ll. 22–23), where the property consists of ‘villages belong to me as property’.

11 Landau, ‘A Greek Inscription Found near Hefzibah’, 66.

12 Cf. Pokorný, 110.

13 M.F. Lowe, ‘From the Parable of the Vineyard to a Pre-Synoptic Source’, *NTS* 28 (1982), 257–263 (259).

14 Cf. the discussion of the common order of GTh 64–66 and the Synoptics in Lowe, ‘Parable of the Vineyard’, 260; McArthur, ‘The Gospel according to *Thomas*’, 65–66, and Gathercole, *Composition*, 131.

Logion 65¹

65.1 πεχααϑ χε οϑρωμε ν̄κρη[...]ς νεγντ̄[αϑ] ν̄ογμα ν̄ελοολε αϑτᾱαϑ
ν̄[ε]ν̄ογοειε ωινα εγναρ̄ ρωβ̄ εροϑ̄ ν̄ϑχι [ν̄]πεκκαρ̄πος ν̄τοοτοϑ 65.2 αϑ-
χοοϑ ν̄πεϑεμ̄ε̄ᾱλ χεκααδ ενογοειε να† ναϑ̄ ν̄πκαρπος ν̄πμα ν̄ελοολε 65.3
αγεμαρ̄τε ν̄πεϑεμ̄ε̄ᾱλ αϑϑιοϑε εροϑ̄ νε κεκοϑει πε ν̄σεμοοϑτϑ̄ αϑεμ̄ε̄ᾱλ βοκ̄
αϑχοοδ επεϑχοειδ 65.4 πεχε πεϑχοειδ χε μεωακ̄ ν̄π(οϑ)σοϑων(ϑ̄) 65.5
αϑχοοϑ ν̄κερ̄μ̄ε̄ᾱλ ανογοειε ϑιοϑε επκεοϑα 65.6 τοτε απχοειδ χοοϑ ν̄πεϑ-
ωηρε πεχααϑ̄ χε μεωακ̄ σεναωιπε ϑητϑ̄ ν̄παωηρε 65.7 αν̄ογοειε ετ̄ιμαϑ̄
επει σεσοοϑν χε ν̄τοϑ πε πεκληρονομοδ ν̄πμα ν̄ελοολε αϑσοϑϑ̄ αϑμοοϑτϑ̄
65.8 πετεϑν̄ μααχε ν̄μοϑ̄ μαρεϑ̄σωτ̄ι

65.1 *He said, 'A [...] man had a vineyard. He leased it to farmers so that they would work it, and he would receive its produce from them.* 65.2 *He sent his servant so that the farmers might give him the produce of the vineyard.* 65.3 *They seized his servant and struck him, nearly killing him. The servant went*

1 **Bibliography for GTh 65:** McCaughey, 'Two Synoptic Parables in the Gospel of Thomas', 24–28; Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 137–145; J.D. Crossan, 'The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen', *JBL* 90 (1971), 451–465; J.A.T. Robinson, 'The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: A Test of Synoptic Relationships', *NTS* 21 (1975), 443–461; K. Snodgrass, 'The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen: Is the Gospel of Thomas Version the Original?', *NTS* 21 (1975), 142–144; W.G. Morrice, 'The Parable of the Tenants and the Gospel of Thomas', *ExpT* 98 (1986–1987), 104–107; B. Dehandschutter, 'La parabole des vigneronns homicides (Mc., XII, 1–12) et l'évangile selon Thomas', in M. Sabbe, ed. *L'Évangile selon Marc: Tradition et Rédaction* (BETL 34; Leuven: University Press/Leuven: Peeters, 1988), 203–220; B.B. Scott, *Hear Then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 237–253; Sevrin, 'Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses', 425–439; W.E. Arnal, 'The Parable of the Tenants and the Class Consciousness of the Peasantry', in M. Desjardins & S.G. Wilson, eds. *Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000), 135–157; J. Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard: Ideology, Economics, and Agrarian Conflict in Jewish Palestine* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2006); E. Van Eck, 'The Tenants in the Vineyard (GThom 65/Mark 12:1–12): A Realistic and Social-Scientific Reading', *HTS* 63 (2007), 909–936; C. Quarles, 'The Use of the Gospel of Thomas in the Research on the Historical Jesus of John Dominic Crossan', *CBQ* 69 (2007), 517–536 (524–534); C. Gianotto, 'Il Vangelo secondo Tommaso e il problema storico di Gesù', in E. Prinzivalli, ed. *Lenigma Gesù. Fonti e metodi della ricerca storica* (Rome: Carocci, 2008), 68–93 (73–78); J.P. Meier, 'The Parable of the Wicked Tenants in the Vineyard: Is the Gospel of Thomas Independent of the Synoptics?', in C.W. Skinner & K.R. Iverson, eds. *Unity and Diversity in the Gospels and Paul: Essays in Honor of Frank J. Matera* (SBLCL 7; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 129–145; Gathercole, *Composition*, 188–194.

and told his master. 65.4 The master said, “Perhaps (they) did not recognize (him).” 65.5 He sent another servant. The tenants struck this one too. 65.6 Then the owner sent his son and said, “Perhaps they will respect my son.” 65.7 Since those tenants knew that he was the heir to the vineyard, they seized him and killed him. 65.8 He who has ears, let him hear.’

Textual Comment

Three minor points can be dealt with briefly. The word $\epsilon\mu\epsilon\lambda\lambda$ (‘servant’) in 65.2–3, 5, is written in a way which has suggested to some that it is intended as a *nomen sacrum*; this is not correct (see note on GTh 64.1 above). In 65.4, the manuscript perhaps has $\mu\epsilon\omega\alpha\lambda$ for $\mu\epsilon\omega\alpha\kappa$, and clearly has $\eta\pi\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\omicron\upsilon\omega\mu\eta\omicron\upsilon$, which most editors emend to $\eta\pi\omicron\upsilon\gamma\sigma\omicron\upsilon\omega\mu\eta\upsilon$.

This saying also has one of the most difficult textual problems in *Thomas*. The question is over the identity of the man, for which there are two main options: is he ‘a kind man’ ($\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\mu\epsilon\ \eta\chi\eta\eta[\sigma\tau\omicron]\varsigma$), or is he ‘a usurer’ ($\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\mu\epsilon\ \eta\chi\eta\eta[\sigma\tau\eta]\varsigma$).² The decision is relevant to how the scene in GTh 65 is set: is the owner of the vineyard positively or negatively valued? We will examine first the ‘kind man’ interpretation.

Understanding the protagonist as a ‘kind man’ was instinctive to some early interpreters of *Thomas* given that (i) in the Synoptic parallel, the vineyard owner represented God. Grant and Freedman simply assume the owner to be a positive figure.³ Nordsieck notes further that (ii) $\chi\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ appears nearby, in GTh 90, and (iii) given *Thomas*’s dualistic outlook, it is likely that one party is good and the other evil, and so it makes sense to see the owner as good in contrast to the undoubtedly wicked tenants.⁴ One might add (iv) that the adjacent saying about the rejection of the stone looks like a reference to the rejection of something *good*, which might reinforce the point that the tenants are defying someone good. Finally, (v) the epithet $\chi\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ can have a connotation of naivety as well as moral goodness, which might fit well as a description of the owner with his futile attempts to get his produce.⁵

2 In favour of $\chi\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ are Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 139; Ménard, 166, and Blomberg, ‘The Parables of the Gospel of Thomas’; for $\chi\eta\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$, see e.g. Arnal, ‘The Parable of the Tenants’; Kloppenborg, *Tenants in the Vineyard*.

3 Grant & Freedman, 171–172.

4 Nordsieck, 253.

5 LSJ, 2007 (‘ $\chi\eta\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ ’) II 4b, ‘(sometimes) simple, silly’.

On the other hand, none of these points is unassailable. In particular, one cannot, against (i), assume that the meaning of the parable in *Thomas* will be the same as that in the Synoptics. Against (iv), it is not necessarily the case that adjacent sayings in *Thomas* are mutually illuminating.

In part because of these criticisms, a number of interpreters (probably now in the majority) see the owner as a negative figure, and so give a text and translation which refers to a usurer.⁶ Pokorný remarks that (i) there is nothing in the parable to suggest that the figure is positive.⁷ Indeed, (ii) it looks as though the deal arranged is rather an extortionate one: according to 65.1 the tenants do all the work and the owner receives all the produce.⁸ Certainly there is no kindness involved in the deal; it is strictly business.⁹ Although $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$ does appear in *Thomas*, (iii) more immediate are references in GTh 63 to $\bar{\nu}\chi\rho\eta\mu\alpha$ (63.1) and $\tau\eta\nu\alpha\rho\chi\rho\omega\ \bar{\nu}\eta\nu\alpha\chi\rho\eta\mu\alpha$ (63.2). GTh 64 perhaps refers to claims upon debts in 64.3, which would support a reference to a $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$; the same parable also has a reference to the collection of rent. Lending at interest also appears in GTh 95 and 109.¹⁰ Finally, Arnal argues (iv) for $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$ on the basis of *Thomas*'s tendency to describe the professions or social standing of his characters.¹¹

These arguments are not impregnable either. Against (i), although there is nothing clearly positive about the owner, there is nothing clearly negative either. Point (ii) is not necessarily correct in seeing an exploitative arrangement: read literally, the tenants get nothing at all, but it is hard to imagine that sheer slave labour is referred to in GTh 65. Arnal's argument (iv) is not decisive, as *Thomas* also likes to describe their attributes (e.g. the 'wise' fisherman in GTh 8.1; the 'rich' man in 63.1). Two further points not often recognised should also be noted against the $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$ or 'usurer' interpretation. First, the contest between the two options is not an even one: the Greek word $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$ is considerably less common than $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$. The former does not appear in the LXX, NT, Philo or Josephus, by comparison with hundreds of occurrences of the latter.¹² For what it is worth, TLG shows that $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$ in the nom. sing. appears 49 times in its corpus, $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ in the nom. masc. sing. 1683 times. Secondly, it is

6 Pokorný, 111.

7 Pokorný, 113.

8 Arnal, 'Parable of the Tenants', 140–141; Plisch, 161.

9 Plisch, 160.

10 Some of these parallels are noted by Dehandschutter, 'Parabole', 218, and Sevrin, 'Trois paraboles', 437.

11 Arnal, 'Parable of the Tenants', 142–143.

12 According to Bibleworks software.

sometimes assumed, as we have seen, that $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$ fits the parable much better, but in fact there is nothing to suggest in the parable that the protagonist—even if a villain—is specifically a *usurer* at all. $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$ means ‘creditor’, ‘usurer’, ‘debtor’, according to LSJ,¹³ but the man in GTh 65 is apparently none of these things: he is a landlord.

In the end, it is probably necessary to admit defeat and acknowledge that it is simply very difficult to know. Hedrick is one example of a commentator who wisely sees that the better part of valour is discretion in this instance.¹⁴

Interpretation

This is the eighth of *Thomas's* parables (on these, see *ad* GTh 8). The interpretation of this parable (cf. Mk 12.1–9; Matt. 22.33–41; Lk. 20.9–16) only partially hinges on the unknown designation of the vineyard-owner just discussed, and so it is possible to see some of the key points. There are two main types of interpretation.¹⁵

The first sees a reference to a saviour figure. Popkes takes the reference to the killing of the son as a reference to the death of Jesus, comparing GTh 55 and 71.¹⁶ Schrage, similarly, saw the killing as the refusal of the Gnostic messenger,¹⁷ and McCaughey saw this accentuated in the statement ‘perhaps he did not recognize them’ (or *vice versa*) in 65.4.¹⁸ One difficulty with this interpretation lies in its indebtedness to the Synoptic interpretation. In particular, *Thomas* does not think, as do the Synoptics, in terms of the coming of Jesus as the climax in a series of divine embassies; compare the negative picture of prophets in GTh 52. This view also depends entirely on the vineyard-owner being ‘good’. *Thomas* has none of the christological overtones in the Synoptics: Mark’s mention of the son as ‘beloved’ (12.6) is absent, as is the note in Matthew and Luke that the son is killed *outside* the vineyard.¹⁹

13 Gianotto, ‘Il Vangelo secondo Tommaso e il problema storico di Gesù’, 76, translates ‘ricco’ (‘rich’), but I have not been able to find this as an equivalent of $\chi\rho\eta\sigma\tau\eta\varsigma$.

14 Hedrick, 124.

15 Scott’s interpretation of the parable as about the failure to grasp wisdom is probably too distant from the particulars of the parable (*Hear then the Parable*, 245).

16 Popkes, ‘Die Umdeutung des Todes Jesu im koptischen Thomasevangelium’, 515.

17 Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 144–145.

18 McCaughey, ‘Two Synoptic Parables’, 25.

19 McCaughey, ‘Two Synoptic Parables’, 26.

The second main interpretation sees the parable as a tale of the woes of involvement in commerce.²⁰ This view is almost certainly correct. GTh 65 is the last in a trio of parables about being involved in business.²¹ In fact, however, it is not so much the morality of business which is treated here but rather the fruitlessness and even danger of it.²² In this respect, the parable of the Tenants matches its two predecessors:

GTh 63: The Rich Fool—he intends to fill his store but dies;

GTh 64: The Banquet—the guests intend to attend a banquet, but cannot because of business transactions;

GTh 65: Wicked Tenants—the owner intends to receive fruit but suffers loss (and tenants seek a vineyard but thereby become murderous).

Like the rich fool and those invited to the banquet, then, the vineyard owner misses out on what he had hoped for because he had not reckoned on the ruthlessness of the tenants.²³ This climactic parable of the three thus highlights not only that the relevant characters miss out on what they had hoped to gain, but also that involvement in worldly transactions can actually lead to catastrophic loss.²⁴

Notes

65.1 A ... man had a vineyard. The dispute over the lacuna here is discussed above. Like Luke, indeed even more so, *Thomas* omits the reference to Isaiah in the scene-setting.²⁵ Isaiah 5 also surfaces later in Mk 12.9 and parallels, but *Thomas* has ended the parable by this time.

20 Sevrin, 'Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses', 438

21 See esp. Sevrin, 'Un groupement de trois paraboles contre les richesses'; e.g. Dehandschutter, 'La parabole' 217–218 also links to previous two.

22 Rightly, Valantasis, 144: 'the way of commerce satisfied neither party'; Hedrick, 125, sees the point as 'the hazards of involvement with the "world"'.

23 Kloppenborg, *Tenants in the Vineyard*, 250, links the protagonist of GTh 65 with characters in GTh 63–64.

24 Pace Van Eck, 'The Tenants in the Vineyard', 933–934, it is unclear that the vineyard owner emerges as an honorable character.

25 It is probably not a conscious 'deletion' (so Grant & Freedman, 172); rather *Thomas* omits the scene-setting in order to get to the point of the story, or simply because he is most familiar with the Lukan version.

65.1 He leased it to farmers so that they would work it, and he would receive its produce from them. By comparison with the Synoptics (and common sense), the deal appears very much an unequal one: they work, and he receives the produce (cf. ‘some of the produce’ in Mk 12.2).²⁶ Indeed, one might even say that this is an unrealistic element in contrast to that of the Synoptics.²⁷ This may simply be a compressed statement, however, unless—as is not obvious—the parable is meant to be completely unrealistic at the outset. Hedrick notes that the reference could be to ‘its’ (the vineyard’s) or ‘his’ (the owner’s) produce.²⁸

65.2 He sent his servant. As in the previous saying, the servants should not be seen as divine figures, despite the peculiar writing of $\epsilon\mu\bar{\epsilon}\alpha\lambda$ (see Interpretation of GTh 64 above).²⁹

65.2 So that the farmers might give him the produce of the vineyard. *Thomas* shares with Luke a final clause with this syntax, rather than Matthew’s and Mark’s ‘so that he might receive some of the produce from the farmers’.³⁰

65.3 They seized his servant and struck him, nearly killing him. The servant went and told his master. In contrast to the Synoptics, *Thomas* alone has a servant reporting back to the vineyard owner.

65.4 The master said, “Perhaps they did not recognize him.” This sense is the result of an emendation: the text reads instead, ‘Perhaps he did not recognise them’, which is improbable. This clause is rightly understood by Meier as an attempt to rationalise the sending of a further envoy:³¹ this is a feature of *Thomas*’s parables.³² The ‘perhaps’ is probably the result of the influence of Luke’s ‘perhaps’ in Lk. 20.13 (cf. GTh 65.6).

65.5 He sent another servant. The tenants struck this one too. The second in the sequence of envoys, who receives the same harsh treatment as the first, but is not killed like the son.

65.6 Then the owner sent his son and said, “Perhaps they will respect my son.” The son is the third, climactic envoy. As in 65.4, the ‘perhaps’ is probably the result of the influence of Luke’s ‘perhaps’ in Lk. 20.13.

26 Arnal, ‘Parable of the Tenants’, 140–141; Van Eck, ‘The Tenants in the Vineyard’, 924.

27 *Contra* the emphasis in Kloppenborg, *Tenants in the Vineyard*, 3, and *passim*.

28 Hedrick, 124.

29 *Contra* Valantasis, 144–145.

30 K. Snodgrass, *The Parable of the Wicked Tenants* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1983), 52.

31 Meier, ‘The Parable of the Wicked Tenants’, 140.

32 See comment on 41.2 above, and further, Osborn, ‘Parable and Exposition’, 11–22.

65.7 Since those tenants knew that he was the heir to the vineyard, they seized him and killed him. In anticipation of Kloppenborg's argument for a quasi-legal background here (he sees *Thomas* as reflecting legal reality better than the Synoptics),³³ Montefiore comments that 'it is hardly necessary to imagine that the original story turned on a nice point of law. It seems that the labourers in the parable were the kind of people who believed that possession is nine-tenths of the law.'³⁴ Notably, *Thomas* ends the story earlier than do Matthew, Mark, and Luke, who all describe the vineyard owner as avenging himself, killing the tenants and giving the vineyard to others. The quotation from Psalm 118 in the Synoptics' versions appears in *Thomas* in a discrete saying next in GTh 66.

65.8 He who has ears, let him hear. On *Thomas*'s use of this aphorism, see comment above on GTh 8.4.

33 Kloppenborg, *Tenants in the Vineyard*, 330–334.

34 Montefiore & Turner, *Thomas and the Evangelists*, 49–50.

Logion 66¹

ΠΕΔΕ ΤΣ ΧΕ ΜΑΤΣΕΒΟΕΙ ΕΠΩΝΕ ΠΑΕΙ ΝΤΑΥΣΤΟϞ ΕΒΟΛ̅ Ν̅ΒΙ ΝΕΤ̅ΚΩΤ̅ Ν̅ΤΟϞ ΠΕ
ΠΩΩΝΕ Ν̅ΚΩΣ

Jesus said, 'Show me the stone which the builders rejected—that is the corner-stone.'

Interpretation

This saying derives ultimately from Psalm 118.22 (ψ 117.22).² There is a common theme of rejection in GTh 65–66, even if the link may be of no interpretive significance.³ While GTh 65–66 and the Synoptics share a common order at this point (cf. Mk 12.1–9 + 10–11 and parallels), *Thomas* interrupts the link with a fresh 'Jesus said' at the beginning of GTh 66. Clearly the principal theme here is the rejection by the ignorant world of what is of crucial importance, the irony being that people who should recognise it do not. The 'stone' could be:⁴ (1) Jesus;⁵ (2) his message/ gnosis;⁶ (3) a combination of these two,⁷ or (4) the community.⁸

Even if GTh 65 is not centred upon Jesus, GTh 66 is still likely to refer to him—perhaps including his words. Rejection of Jesus is widespread in *Thomas*: in 28, he found the world blind and unrepentant; in GTh 16 people misunderstand his mission; in 43, the disciples, like the Jews, do not realize who he is; in 52, the disciples set him aside; in 91, the disciples fail to recognize him. A

1 **Bibliography for GTh 66:** See bibliography for GTh 65, and in addition, T. Baarda, "The Cornerstone": An Aramaism in the Diatessaron and the Gospel of Thomas?, *NovT* 37 (1995), 285–300.

2 Cf. Matt. 21.42/ Mk 12.10/ Lk. 20.17; Ac. 4.11; 1Pet. 2.7; *Barn.* 6.4; Irenaeus, *AH* 4.33.1.

3 Cf. Arnal, 'Parable of the Tenants', 145, who claims that the two sayings have nothing to do with one another.

4 The parallel in *Ref.* 5.7.35, where Adam(as) is the chief corner-stone has not led interpreters to attribute the same view to *Thomas*.

5 DeConick, 218; Nordsieck, 259; Pokorný, 114 includes in the conception of Jesus 'the inner divine substance of humanity that he represents'.

6 Hedrick, 128.

7 Grosso, 202.

8 Valantasis, 148.

range of groups, then, reject Jesus in *Thomas*—the world/ people, the Jews, the disciples. Although, it is difficult to see any specific group as ‘the builders’, it is likely that Jesus is the ‘cornerstone’, although this might well also extend to his message as well.

Notes

Jesus said. In the attribution of this saying to Jesus, *Thomas* reflects his stance of distance from, or hostility to, the Old Testament. It is unclear which, however: Grant & Freedman comment that *Thomas* ‘deletes’ the reference to reading what is written,⁹ whereas Goodacre emphasises the distance (cf. GTh 20; 21; 65), stating that the knowledge of the OT in *Thomas* is simply mediated through the Gospels here as elsewhere.¹⁰ As we have noted in connection with GTh 17, there was something of a tendency in early Christianity to attribute OT language to Jesus.¹¹

Show me. *Thomas*’s verb here is the most obviously distinctive feature in GTh 66. Schrage’s comment that this comes from the Synoptics’ Render unto Caesar pericope (Matt. 22.19/ Lk. 20.24) is possible, but impossible to prove.¹² In its favour are the points that in Luke, the pericopes are adjacent, and the Sahidic NT has at Luke 20.24 ματσαβοι, the same grammatical form as appears in GTh 66 with merely a variation in spelling. This (and other evidence in Crum 434b) demonstrates that Plisch’s rendering ‘educate me’ is unnecessary.¹³

As Ps. 118.22 and the Synoptic versions stand, there is the slight oddity of beginning with a free-standing accusative. 1Peter deals with this awkwardness in one way: it turns it into a nominative. *Thomas* deals with it a different way, by supplying a main verb for the object ‘the stone’.

The stone which the builders rejected—that is the corner-stone. A link with the wording of the Diatessaron Haarense is extremely tenuous, as Baarda

9 Grant & Freedman, 172.

10 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 189–190. It seems extremely unlikely that *Thomas* drew on the Hebrew text of Ps. 118. So Baarda ‘Cornerstone’, 294 n. 41, rightly, against Quispel, ‘Thomasevangelium und Altes Testament’, 247.

11 See Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La valoración de los dichos no canónicos’, 410, noting the phenomenon in Hebrews and Justin; cf. Gathercole, *Composition*, 241–242.

12 Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 146.

13 Plisch, 163.

has shown.¹⁴ 'Cornerstone' may be closer to 1Pet. 2.6 (cf. Eph. 2.20) than to the Synoptics' 'capstone', but in 1Pet. 2.7 the cornerstone is in any case identified with the 'capstone' of Ps. 118.

14 Baarda, 'The Cornerstone'.

Logion 67¹

ⲡⲈⲬⲈ ⲧⲢ ⲬⲈ ⲡⲈⲦⲪⲠⲠⲠⲚ ⲙⲡⲧⲏⲣⲥⲓ ⲉⲢⲓⲣ̅ ⲅⲣⲱⲗ ⲟⲩⲁ ⲁⲥⲓⲣ̅ ⲅⲣⲱⲗ ⲙⲡⲏⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲥⲓ

Jesus said, 'Whoever knows all, but is deficient in one thing, is deficient completely.'

Textual Comment

Some editors' conjecture of ⲟⲩⲁⲁⲥⲓⲣ̅ (ⲥⲓ)ⲓⲣ̅ for ⲟⲩⲁ ⲁⲥⲓⲣ̅ (and different word division) yields a different sense: 'Whoever knows all, but is deficient in *himself*, is deficient completely.'² Although it has been influential, such an emendation is unnecessary.³

Interpretation

Given that a reference to self-knowledge here is absent, interpretations emphasising that theme can be discounted.⁴ The saying makes the point that only complete knowledge is valid for the true disciple; it is not possible to select some elements of Thomasine knowledge and reject others. Presumably this might be a temptation for those who want to belong both to the *Thomas* movement as well as to other religious groups,⁵ or the saying is a warning against the kind of provision for imperfection attested in the *Didache*: 'for if you are able to bear the whole yoke of the Lord, you will be perfect; but if you cannot, do

1 **Bibliography for GTh 67:** G. Quispel, 'Hermes Trismegistus and Tertullian', *VC* 43 (1989), 188–189; L. Painchaud, M.-P. Bussièrès & M. Kaler, 'Le syntagme ⲡⲏⲁ ⲧⲏⲣⲥⲓ dans quelques textes de Nag Hammadi', in Painchaud & Poirier, eds. *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica*, 619–643.

2 The emendation goes back to Guillaumont, et al., *Thomas*, 38, and is adopted by Layton: see Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 78. Those accepting the emendation include Wilson, *Studies in the Gospel of Thomas*, 27; Valantasis, 146; Nordsieck, 260–261.

3 See, rightly, Plisch, 164. I am grateful to him for explaining the textual issue to me in personal conversation.

4 See above for those taking this view.

5 Grant & Freedman, 173, are wrong to say that the saying is 'incomprehensible'.

what you can' (*Did.* 6.2). A polemic against a particular rival group laying claim to knowledge falsely so-called is also possible.

Parallels to this 'all except one' include the often cited Mark 8.36 ('the whole world', but forfeiting the soul) and *Zostrianus's* statement: 'If he apprehends the glories, he is perfect; but if he apprehends [two] or one, he is drunk' (*Zost.* 73.12–15). Perhaps closest is the Rich Young Man pericope, where the man 'knows' the commandments (Mk 10.19/Lk. 18.20), and has kept them 'all' (Mk 10.20/Matt. 19.20/Lk. 18.21), but still 'one thing is lacking' (Mk 10.21/Lk. 18.22).

Notes

Whoever knows all, but is deficient in one thing. This may be a comment upon the disciple whose understanding is clear but who lapses in behaviour. In this case, the saying is a rigorist statement, demanding perfection. Alternatively, it may be a polemical remark against a rival, but quite similar group—a reference to another group focused around a variant *gnosis* ('who knows all') is a possible rival here. There is no subjective element here, as in Lambdin's translation ('feels a personal deficiency') and Valantasis' interpretation.⁶

Is deficient completely. There is not a problem in the verb's allegedly 'unmotivated perfect tense',⁷ given the form ⲁϥ̅. As Layton notes, this construction 'can also have *ingressive* meaning, expressing entry into a state; in other words, the distinction between being and becoming is cancelled'.⁸ Thus one could equally translate ⲁϥ̅ ⲥⲣⲱⲗ as either 'is deficient completely', or 'has become completely deficient'. The phrase ⲛⲣⲏⲁ ⲧⲏⲣ̅ⲓ literally means 'everywhere' (cf. Crum 154b: ⲏⲁ ⲏⲏⲏ), but often does not mean this. Here it means 'completely' in the sense of 'throughout' the person's whole being: this is in line with the conclusions of Painchaud, Bussièrès & Kaler who show that it often has a sense of universality in contrast to a particular, and marks 'intensité ou la totalité'.⁹ Depending on which view of the first part of the saying is correct, this is either a comment upon the spiritual bankruptcy of the imperfect disciple, or that of the rival group.

6 Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 79; Valantasis, 146–147.

7 Plisch, 165.

8 Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 141 (§ 180 (b)).

9 Painchaud, Bussièrès & Kaler, 'Le syntagme ⲏⲁ ⲧⲏⲣ̅ⲓ', 643.

Logion 68¹

68.1 ΠΕΣΕ ΙC ΔΕ ΝΤΩΤῆ ῥῆμα καριος ροτα(ν) εγωδανμεστε τηγτῆ ἡσερῆδιωκε
ἡμωτῆ 68.2 ΛΥΩ ΣΕΝΑΡΕ ΔΝ ΕΤΟΠΟΣ ῥῆ ΠΜΑ ΕΝΤΑΥΔΙΩΚΕ ἡμωτῆ ῥραῖ ἡζητῆ

68.1 *Jesus says, 'Blessed are you when they hate you and persecute you. 68.2
But they will not find a place, where they have persecuted you.'*

Textual Comment

The initial complication with this saying is that of the text. Haenchen, for example, has proposed an important move of the 'not'. Clement records four macarisms in sequence, one of which is close to GTh 68.2 in particular.

He says, 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for they will be called "sons of God"'. Or as some of those who change the Gospels (τινες τῶν μετατιθέντων τὰ εὐαγγέλια) say, he says, 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for they will be perfect.' *'And blessed are those who are persecuted for my sake, for they will have a place where they are not persecuted (ὅτι ἔξουσι τόπον ὅπου οὐ διωχθήσονται):* 'And blessed are you, when men hate you, when they cut you off, when they revile your names as evil for the sake of the son of man.'

(*Strom.* 4.6.41.2–4)

In part on the basis of the third beatitude in the sequence, Haenchen concludes that GTh 68.2 can be emended to: 'But you will find a place where you will not be persecuted.'² Plisch on the other hand probably correctly resists the temptation to emend the text, as it makes sense as it stands, and it is not certain that Clement has preserved the beatitude more accurately than our Coptic text, which has a number of differences.³

1 **Bibliography for GTh 68:** E. Haenchen, 'Spruch 68 des Thomasevangeliums', *Muséon* 75 (1962), 19–29; Toyoshima, 'Neue Vorschläge zur Lesung und Übersetzung', 235–239; J.S. Kloppenborg, 'Blessing and Marginality: The "Persecution Beatitude" in Q, Thomas and Early Christianity', *Forum* 2 (1986), 36–56.

2 Haenchen, 'Spruch 68', 27, a proposal which seems also to be accepted by Kloppenborg, 'Blessing and Marginality', 47, 48.

3 Plisch, 166–167. It remains possible that *Thomas* is Clement's source: Haenchen is probably

Interpretation

Important to the interpretation of this saying is the presence of a ‘you’ (plural) and a ‘they’.⁴ This is possible in 68.1 (where ‘they’ persecute and hate ‘you’ as in Matt. 5.11 and Luke 6.22⁵) and necessary in 68.2: if the third-person plural verbs are taken as passives, then nonsense results (‘but a place will not be found in the place where you were persecuted’).

The first half of this saying is unproblematic. Opposition from outsiders should not lead true disciples to consider themselves the objects of divine disapproval—quite the contrary. The second, more oblique half probably provides assurance of vindication: those true disciples who are despised by others really are the blessed elect, but the persecutors will eventually be excluded from very place where they have vilified the elect. There may well be, then, as some have averred, a reference to the exclusion of Jews and Jewish Christians from the land of Israel (see further notes on 68.2), but this perhaps relies too heavily on a view that the saying is dominical or goes back to Palestinian tradition.⁶

Notes

68.1 Blessed are you when they hate you and persecute you. This is the seventh of eleven beatitudes in *Thomas* (see above on GTh 7.1). Cf. Matt. 5.11 and, to a lesser extent Lk. 6.22. The next saying, GTh 69, contains two more beatitudes.

68.2 But they will not find a place, where they have persecuted you. As noted above, some see in this an exclusion of Jews from the land. This finds some support in various parallels.⁷ Azariah in *Add. Dan.* 3.38 laments in Israel’s exile the absence of a ‘place’ for sacrifice, and this reference is taken up by John

overscrupulous in his treatment of differences such as those between second and third persons. Haenchen, ‘Spruch 68’, 26.

4 For a survey of older interpretations, see Haenchen, ‘Spruch 68’, 19–24.

5 Matthew has an anonymous ‘they’ persecuting (among other things), and Luke has οἱ ἄνθρωποι ‘hating’.

6 Plisch, 166; H.-M. Schenke, ‘On the Compositional History of the Gospel of Thomas’, *Forum* 10 (1994), 9–30 (28), takes GTh 68 to be post-Bar Kochba.

7 Slightly different is the speech of Agrippa in Josephus, where, warning against war with Rome, he threatens that Jews who revolt will not find any place at all (*Bf* 2.397): ‘for those of you who are left will not find a place to flee, since everyone has the Romans as their masters, or fears that they will’ (οὐδὲ γὰρ περιλειφθέντες φυγῆς εὐρήσετε τόπον ἀπάντων ἐχόντων Ῥωμαίους δεσπότης ἢ δεδοικότες σχεῖν).

Chrysostom in his polemic against the Jews where he argues for the finality of the destruction of the temple: the closing words of *Demonstratio* 17 make it clear that Judaism relied on the temple, and that the impossibility of the temple's rebuilding means that Judaism is now obsolete. After quoting Daniel here, he repeats the phrase 'we have no place' (τόπος).⁸ Again, in the *Adversus Iudaeos*, Chrysostom comments that 'the Jews of today have no hope of recovering their forefathers' way of life', and shortly after quotes the same part of the *Prayer of Azariah*, clearly identifying the 'place' as the temple.⁹ It may well be that GTh 68.2, like Chrysostom, also turns this Jewish lament into a gentile gloat. There must remain doubt, however, about whether such a reference was intended in *Thomas*.

8 *Dem.* 17.3 (FOTC 73.258 / PG 48.836).

9 *Adv. Iud.* 4.4–5 (FOTC 68.85/ PG 48.878). For discussion of all this, see R.L. Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late Fourth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 128–160.

Logion 69¹

69.1 πεχε ιϭ ρ̅μακαριος νε ναει ν̅ταγδιωκε μ̅μοοϥ ρ̅ρα̅ ρ̅μ̅ πογρητ̅ νε-
τ̅μαγ̅ νενταρσοϥων πειωτ̅ ρ̅ν̅ οϥμε 69.2 ρ̅μακαριος νετ̅καειτ̅ ϥινα
εϥνατ̅cio ν̅ρη̅ μ̅πετοϥωϥ

69.1 *Jesus says, 'Blessed are those who have been persecuted in their hearts. They are those who have truly known the Father. 69.2 Blessed are those who hunger so that they may fill the belly of the one who desires.'*

Interpretation

The first beatitude, in GTh 69.1, is not really related in sense to 69.2.² In the absence of an obvious connection, the two can be interpreted separately.

69.1 Although 'persecution in the heart' might appear obscure,³ the interpretation is greatly helped by a parallel in Clement:

There is a persecution which arises from without (ἔξωθεν), from people assailing the faithful, either out of hatred, or envy, or avarice, or through diabolic agency. But the most painful persecution is internal (ἐνδοθεν), which proceeds from each person's own soul being vexed by impious lusts, diverse pleasures, and base hopes, and destructive dreams ... More grievous and painful is this persecution, which arises from within, which is ever with a person, and which the persecuted cannot escape, for he carries the enemy about everywhere in himself.

(*Quis* 25)

1 **Bibliography for GTh 69:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 147–151; Kloppenborg, 'Blessing and Marginality: The "Persecution Beatitude"', 36–56; S. Witetschek, 'Going Hungry for a Purpose: On *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 and a Neglected Parallel in Origen', *JSNT* 32 (2010), 379–393.

2 So rightly Plisch, 168.

3 Plisch, 168, raises the possibility of textual corruption, with the text having originally meant, 'Blessed are those who were persecuted (in so far as they are pure) in their hearts.' In the light of the Clement parallel, and the interpretation above, this is unnecessary.

GTh 68 has described those who persecute ‘from without’; GTh 69.1 now mentions the internal persecution in terms which would be amenable to *Thomas*—the impulses towards such things as lust and pleasure.⁴ Presumably such people are blessed not because of the temptations *per se*, but because they recognise such things as *persecutions* and fight against them.⁵ Or possibly, as DeConick says, it is a kind of perfectionism, which refers to such temptations as overcome.⁶

69.2 There are two main ways of interpreting this beatitude: either as similar in sense to the Synoptic parallels (Matt. 5.6, and especially Lk. 6.21a) as a reference to the hungry being blessed because they will be satisfied,⁷ or—understood without reference to the Synoptics—as a blessing upon those who temporarily abstain from food in order to feed another.⁸ The problem with the first interpretation is that it cannot really be sustained by the Coptic, whose subordinate clause is final, not causal.⁹

The reference, then, is to ‘social fasting’, that is, fasting in order to provide food (by the money saved) for others.¹⁰ This appears to have its origin already in Isa. 58.6–7, and is attested roughly contemporaneously with *Thomas* in the *Shepherd of Hermas*, which describes the practicalities involved in its author’s circles:

And this is what you must do: when you have fulfilled what has been written, you must taste nothing except bread and water on that day on which you fast. Then you must estimate the amount of the cost of the food you would have eaten on that day on which you intend to fast, and give it to a widow or an orphan or someone in need.

(*Herm.* 56 [*Sim.* 5.3].7)

Something very close to *Thomas*’s version, which also helps to confirm this interpretation of 69.2, is a parallel in Origen: ‘For we have found it said by the apostles in some book or other: “Blessed is he who also fasts for a poor man, in

4 Ménard, 171.

5 Valantasis, 148.

6 DeConick, 223.

7 DeConick, 224.

8 Grobel, ‘How Gnostic is the Gospel of Thomas?’, 373; Plisch, 168; Hedrick, 130.

9 On attempts to rectify this by reference to an Aramaic original, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 86–87.

10 I am grateful for discussion of this theme with my former colleague, Stephan Witetschek.

order to feed him.”¹¹ GTh 69.2 is an interesting case study in the need to bracket one’s knowledge of the Synoptics when interpreting *Thomas*.¹²

Notes

69.1 Blessed are those who have been persecuted in their hearts. This macarism is the eighth in *Thomas* (see note on 7.1).

69.1 They are those who have truly known the Father. On ‘knowing the Father’, see GTh 105.1 (and ‘seeing the Father’, 27.2).

69.2 Blessed are those who hunger. This beatitude is the ninth of eleven in *Thomas* (see note on 7.1). As per the interpretation above, the hunger, in contrast to that in the Synoptics, is intentional.

69.2 So that they may fill the belly of the one who desires. In contrast to interpretations along the lines of the Synoptics, the verb ἐϋναρτῶ should be taken as having an active, not a passive meaning as in Lambdin’s influential translation.¹³

11 Origen, *Hom. in Lev. 10.2: inuenimus enim in quodam libello ab apostolis dictum: beatus est qui etiam ieiunat pro eo ut alat pauperem*. For various other references, see Witetschek, ‘Going Hungry for a Purpose’.

12 Bethge notes how odd it is that this has so often been translated to conform to the Synoptic beatitude (‘Werdet Vorübergehende’, 48).

13 Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 81.

Logion 70¹

70.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙC ΖΟΤΑΝ ΕΤΕΤ̄ΝΩΔΧΠΕ ΠΗ Ζ̄Ν ΤΗΥΤ̄Ν ΠΑΙ ΕΤΕῩΝΤΗΤ̄ΝQ̄ QΝΑΤΟΥΧΕ
ΤΗΥΤ̄Ν 70.2 ΕΩΩΠΕ Μ̄ΝΤΗΤ̄Ν ΠΗ Ζ̄Ν Τ[ΗΥΤ]̄Ν ΠΑΕΙ ΕΤΕ Μ̄ΝΤΗΤ̄ΝQ̄ Ζ̄Ν ΤΗΝΕ
Q[ΝΑΜ]ΟΥΥΤ' ΤΗΝΕ

70.1 *Jesus said, 'When you bring forth what is in you, what you have will save you. 70.2 If you do not have that in [yo]u, what you do not have in you [will kill] you.'*

Interpretation

This is a loose reworking of the saying preserved in the Synoptics (Mk 4.25; Matt. 13.12; Matt. 25.29; Lk. 8.18) and GTh 41: 'Whoever has in his hand, to him it will be given. And whoever does not have, even the little which he has will be taken from him' (see above on this saying). GTh 70 is much more specific. The possession in question clearly distinguishes the saved from the condemned; i.e. it probably represents the 'light within the luminous person', as GTh 24 puts it, or the light within the outward physical image of the person in GTh 83, or the true image in contrast to that physical image in GTh 84. Commentators on GTh 70 gloss this with the Pauline language of 'the inner man',² with Pokorný adding that 'the Divine is a part of human substance';³ Grosso uses the language of the nucleus, or transcendent spiritual element, which corresponds to the heavenly prototype of the human being.⁴ These definitions attempt to capture the fact that the instrument of salvation (as 'outside' and 'inside' in GTh 3) is both within and transcendent, although the accent in this saying is on the former.

There is a connection with another set of sayings in *Thomas*, namely those which discuss the inside and the outside. The emphasis here on bringing forth what is within as a precondition of salvation calls to mind the sayings about 'outside' and 'inside' (GTh 22; cf. 89), since making the outside like the inside and *vice versa* is also made necessary for entering the kingdom in GTh 22.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 70:** There are no special studies of this logion, to my knowledge. See the commentaries, ad loc.

2 Plisch, 169; Pokorný, 117; Grosso, 213.

3 Pokorný, 118.

4 Grosso, 213.

The soteriological requirement here, then, is that this real image come to the fore, rather than remaining obscured: it needs to take precedence over the external visible image presented in the body and determine the identity and life of the individual. Similar ideas are found elsewhere. In the *Gospel of Judas*, Jesus says: 'Let whoever is [strong] among you men bring forth (ῥιπαρε) the perfect man and stand in the presence of my face' (*Gos. Jud.* 35). In the *Gospel of Mary*, Levi says: 'Let us put on the perfect man and bring him forth for ourselves', with the verb χηφο for 'bring forth' as in *Thomas* (*Gos. Mary* 18,15–17; cf. the Son of Man 'within you' in 8,18–19).

Notes

When you bring forth what is in you. 'Bringing forth' is much the more likely sense here, rather than 'acquire': in the imagery of this saying, the instrument of salvation is already within the person.⁵ 'What is in you' probably refers to the true image, or spirit, or light, hidden within the elect.

What you have will save you. This saying is notable for, strictly speaking, being the only 'soteriological' reference in *Thomas* as far as the specific vocabulary of 'salvation' is concerned. Obviously other phrases function as equivalents to salvation, such as entering 'the kingdom' (GTh 22; 99; 114.3), 'the places of my Father' (64.12), or the 'bridal chamber' (75), finding the kingdom (27.1) or seeing the Father (27.2), and the like.

If you do not have that in you. The antithesis to GTh 70.1 suggests that those who are not true disciples may be constituted differently from the elect (cf. the 'light within the luminous person', in GTh 24), and are merely material or animate rather than spiritual.

What you do not have in you will kill you. The antithesis of salvation and killing suggests that the theme of death in *Thomas* is very negative, and roughly identified with damnation: on 'death' in *Thomas* see note on GTh 1.

⁵ DeConick, 225; cf. C.M. Tuckett, *The Gospel of Mary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 101, on 18,17. DeConick's translation 'when you acquire within you that certain thing' is impossible because εἰς τὴν τῆν is not adverbial but adjectival, modifying the object πᾶ.

Logion 71¹

πε.ε.ε̄ τ̄.ε̄.ε̄ †να.ω.ρ[ω̄ρ̄ ῃπεε̄]ἰνεῑ ᾱγ.ω̄ ἡ̄ λ.α.α.γ̄ να.ω.κο.τ.τ.χ̄ [...]

Jesus said, 'I will dest[roy thi]s house, and no-one will be able to build it [...].'

Textual Comment

Layton notes that there is space for 6½–8 letters between the last surviving part of this saying and the beginning of saying 72.² Most scholars have resisted filling the lacuna. Schenke, following a suggestion from DeConick, changes the meaning dramatically by restoring ἡ̄[σα.β.λ.λ.ᾱῑ] at the end, yielding the sense '... no-one will be able to build it *except me*.' Despite his own confidence in the restoration,³ it must remain an unprovable speculation; indeed, DeConick herself does not entertain it.⁴

Interpretation

This saying parallels those in the Synoptic Gospels about the destruction of the temple (cf. the accusations in Mk 14.58/ Matt. 26.61; Mk 15.29/ Matt. 27.40). The

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 71:** G. Quispel, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Trial of Jesus', in T. Baarda, A. Hilhorst, G.P. Luttikhuisen & A.S. van der Woude, eds. *Text and Testimony: Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honour of A.F.J. Klijn* (Kampen: Kok, 1988), 193–198; Crossan, *In Fragments*, 307–312; Schenke, 'On the Compositional History of the Gospel of Thomas', 9–30; Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 133–156; Dunderberg, 'Thomas' I-sayings and the Gospel of John', 56–58; H.-M. Schenke, 'Bemerkungen zu #71 des Thomas-Evangeliums', *Enchoria* 27 (2001), 120–126; R. Cameron, 'Ancient Myths and Modern Theories of the Gospel of Thomas and Christian Origins', in idem & M.P. Miller, eds. *Redescribing Christian Origins* (Atlanta: SBL, 2004), 89–108 (93–98); Dunderberg, *The Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 101–106.
 - ² Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 80.
 - ³ Schenke, 'Bemerkungen zu #71', 124 (cf. DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics*, 106 n. 48): 'Nun gehört die Entdeckung von DeConick meiner Meinung nach zu solchen Dingen, die in sich so evident sind, dass sie eigentlich keines Beweises bedürfen' (!). See the similar confidence in Plisch, 171; more cautiously, Pokorný, 118.
 - ⁴ See DeConick, 226, where she does not consider it as an option.

principal debates on the saying have concerned the identity of the 'house', and secondly (if the 'house' is the Jerusalem temple) what this says about the date of this saying and *Thomas* as a whole (see Introduction, § 7.2, above).

On the 'house', the options are as follows.⁵ The most obvious, perhaps, is the sense in the similar Synoptic sayings, namely (1) the temple in Jerusalem.⁶ (2) Hedrick has proposed the 'family unit' (cf. GTh 16),⁷ and (3) Valantasis, more widely, 'the social arrangements that dominate the mundane world'.⁸ (4) Gaston and Riley have seen a reference to the physical body, such that this saying is a denial of bodily resurrection.⁹ The difficulty with (2) is that Jesus seems to be indicating a particular 'house' ('this house'), rather than entities as diffuse as family units. Valantasis offers no evidence for his view (3).

The main contenders have been (1) and (4), and Riley's view has come under severe attack, on various grounds. Cameron criticises Riley for making biblical resurrection the starting point of the discussion.¹⁰ This is an important point: why should *Thomas* be interested in resurrection? Dunderberg comments, on the other references in *Thomas* which Riley cites as evidence for house = body: 'The basic difficulty with this evidence is that the association of the "house" with body is not spelled out in any of these three sayings, but it is, in every case, the result of Riley's allegorical reading of them.'¹¹

Riley's objections to a literal reference to the temple amount to the absence of the theme elsewhere, and its unusually apocalyptic character.¹² The first point is irrelevant: in the closest parallel instances, *Thomas* criticises Scripture in GTh 52, and circumcision in GTh 53, but does not do so in other places. On the second point, a similar kind of destruction is envisaged in GTh 40 (the pulling up and destruction [τακο] of the illegitimate vine) and 57 (pulling up and burning the weeds) to that in GTh 71 (ωρωρῆ); in 11.1 heavens come to an end, and whole cosmos evaporates in 11.1. The 'non-apocalyptic'

5 For a full range of possibilities of meaning for 'house' in general, see DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics*, 105–106 (following a list by Cameron).

6 Crossan, *In Fragments*, 308; DeConick, 227; Nordsieck, 273; Grosso, 215.

7 Hedrick, 131.

8 Valantasis, 150.

9 L. Gaston, *No Stone on Another: Studies in the Significance of the Fall of Jerusalem in the Synoptic Gospels* (NovTSupps 23; Leiden: Brill, 1970), 152; Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 133–156.

10 Cameron, 'Ancient Myths and Modern Theories', 93–98.

11 Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 103.

12 Riley, *Resurrection Reconsidered*, 151.

Thomas (in contrast to ‘apocalyptic’ Synoptics) is not a particularly helpful construct.¹³

The likelihood here is that *Thomas* is referring to the temple of Jerusalem (cf. ‘destroy this house’ in Ezra 6.12), with this saying probably part of the anti-Jewish emphasis in *Thomas* (cf. GTh 39; 43; 52–53). In sum, GTh 71 attributes destruction of the temple to Jesus himself, and even more strikingly, and in obvious contrast to the numerous expressions of Jewish expectation of a rebuilt temple, Jesus announces its perpetual desolation.¹⁴

As was seen above (Introduction, § 7.2), this saying is most likely to reflect a date after the Bar Kochba revolt (i.e. post 135 CE), when the rebuilding of the temple would have been regarded as for all practical purposes impossible. Perhaps the motivation attributed by Martin Goodman to Justin and others applies to *Thomas* as well: ‘if Christians were to defend their own good name and seek converts in a Roman world in which, after 70, the name of the Jews excited opprobrium, it was easier to join in the attack and agree with the pagans that the defeat of the Jews and the destruction of the Temple were to be celebrated as the will of God.’¹⁵ If this is right, the anti-Judaism in this saying is more likely to reinscribe the *distance* between the *Thomas* movement and Jews than to reflect heated interaction between them.

Notes

I will destroy this house. Here, *Thomas* attributes destruction of the temple to Jesus himself: in addition to the Synoptic sayings noted above, cf. Jn 2.19; Ac. 6.14. Quispel’s view that this is the authentic version has not been widely followed.¹⁶ We have a rare instance here of an implied geographical marker (cf. also ‘Judaea’ in GTh 60): for the saying to work (‘*this* house’), Jesus is probably envisaged by the author in, or in the vicinity of, the temple (cf. Jn 2.19–20).

13 See Gathercole, ‘The Heavens and the Earth will be Rolled up’.

14 Compare the *Gospel of the Ebionites*: ‘I have come to do away with (καταλύσαι) sacrifices’ (fr. 6, apud Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.16.5); cf. Ps.-Clem., *Recogn.* 1.54, 64 and perhaps *Barn.* 16.2: ‘But what does the Lord say as he abolishes it?’ (ἀλλὰ πῶς λέγει κύριος καταργῶν αὐτόν;)

15 M. Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem: The Clash of Ancient Civilizations* (London: Allen Lane, 2007), 583, cited in J. Carleton Paget, ‘After 70 and All That: A Response to Martin Goodman’s *Rome & Jerusalem*’, *JSNT* 31 (2009), 339–365 (345).

16 Quispel, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Trial of Jesus’, 197–198.

And no-one will be able to build it ... In addition to the destruction of the temple being attributed to Jesus, the second striking point in this saying is the certainty about the impossibility of restoration. Jewish eschatological expectation about a renewed temple in the last days was extremely widespread.¹⁷

¹⁷ See e.g. E.P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: SCM, 1985), 77–90; also A.N. Chester, ‘The Sibyl and the Temple’, in W. Horbury, ed. *Templum Amicitiae: Essays on the Second Temple Presented to Ernst Bammel* (JSNTSup 48; Sheffield: JSOT, 1991), 37–69. Note for example Isa. 60.3–7; *Tob.* 14.5; *1 En.* 25.3–5; 90.29; 91.13; *Jub.* 1.15–17; *Ps. Sol.* 17.32; 4QPpPs 37 3.11 and 11QTemple 29.8–10.

Logion 72¹

72.1 [πε]ξε̅ ο̅υ̅ρ[ωμε] ναϥ̅ χε̅ χ̅ο̅ο̅ς̅ ν̅η̅α̅ς̅η̅η̅ϥ̅ ϥ̅η̅α̅ ε̅γ̅η̅α̅ρ̅ω̅ϥ̅ε̅ ν̅η̅η̅η̅α̅α̅ϥ̅
ν̅η̅πα̅ει̅ω̅τ̅ ν̅η̅η̅α̅ει̅ 72.2 πε̅χα̅ϥ̅ ναϥ̅̅ χε̅ ω̅ π̅ρ̅ω̅μ̅ε̅ ν̅η̅μ̅ πε̅ ν̅η̅τ̅α̅ρ̅α̅α̅τ̅ ν̅η̅ρ̅ε̅ϥ̅ω̅ϥ̅ε̅
72.3 α̅ϥ̅κ̅ο̅τ̅ῆ̅ λ̅η̅ε̅ϥ̅μ̅α̅θ̅η̅η̅ς̅ πε̅χα̅ϥ̅ ναϥ̅̅ χε̅ μ̅η̅ ε̅ε̅ι̅ω̅ο̅ο̅ῖ̅ ν̅η̅ρ̅ε̅ϥ̅ω̅ϥ̅ε̅

72.1 *A m[an] said to him, 'Tell my brothers to divide my father's property with me.'* 72.2 *He (sc. Jesus) said to him, 'O man, who has made me a divider?'* 72.3 *He turned to his disciples and said to them, 'Surely I am no divider?'*

Interpretation

The saying here (cf. Lk. 12.13–14) has nothing to do with 'showing that Christianity presents no break of any kind in historical Judaism'.² The principal point here concerns the identity of Jesus and the nature of his mission. The setting of the request in GTh 72.1 merely sets the scene for the two declarations by Jesus, which serve the same function, namely to reject the idea that his work is fundamentally about division. Rather, since Jesus has 'come from the undivided' (GTh 61) and requires his disciples to repair the binary divisions in themselves (GTh 22) which have existed since the fall and division of humanity (GTh 11), we are to see his task as in line with this (cf. also GTh 47; 48; 89; 106, and possibly 4; 108). This is not a matter of worldly or institutional unity, however, as is made clear by Jesus' claim to disrupt of worldly relationships in GTh 16.

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 72:** D. Gershenson & G. Quispel, 'Meristae', *VC* 12 (1958), 19–26; T. Baarda, 'Luke 12.13–14: Text and Transmission from Marcion to Augustine', in idem, *Early Transmission of the Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian and the Text of the New Testament* (Amsterdam: Free University Press, 1983), 117–172; repr. from J. Neusner, ed. *Judaism, Christianity and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 1.107–162; Riley, 'The Influence of Thomas Christianity on Luke 12.14 and 5.39; 229–234; S.J. Gathercole, 'Luke in the Gospel of Thomas', *NTS* 57 (2011), 114–144 (139–141); Gathercole, *Composition*, 87–88, 203–205.
 - ² *Pace* Gershenson & G. Quispel, 'Meristae', 25. Their theory of a pun on the Hebrew *holeq* behind the Coptic, meaning 'divider' in the sense of a divisive person is baseless (Gathercole, *Composition*, 87–88).

Notes

72.1 A man said to him. As Goodacre notes, the ‘introductory foil from an anonymous member of the crowd’ may well be Lukan.³

72.1 Tell my brothers to divide my father’s property with me. The man clearly treats Jesus as some sort of authoritative figure who could demand, on the basis of religious, civic, or perhaps even cosmic authority, the hoped-for redistribution. The situation envisaged by the author is not one brother left out of pocket by another (as in Lk. 12.13–14), but rather appears to concern a *group* of brothers (plural in GTh 72) who have maliciously excluded one of their number. There is perhaps a sense here that the two concerns of the man, namely his family relations and money, are both concerns which *Thomas* criticises.⁴

72.2 He said to him, ‘O man, who has made me a divider?’⁵ There is perhaps a threefold incredulity here in Jesus’ question, in the words ‘man’, ‘made’ and ‘divider’: he is not a divider, and could not be ‘made’ one, especially by a ‘man.’⁶ Jesus’ mission is a divine one, not one where he is at the beck and call of other people.

72.3 He turned to his disciples and said to them, ‘Surely I am no divider?’ It is a misunderstanding based on Lambdin’s ambiguous translation (‘I am not a divider, am I?’)⁷ to see Jesus asking a genuine question here. It is hardly imaginable that in *Thomas* Jesus wonders who he really is: the question is rhetorical.⁸

3 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 92; Meier, ‘Luke’s Version of the Parable of the Rich Fool’, 539–540.

4 DeConick, 229.

5 There is a distant connection here with the question of the Hebrew in Exod. 2.14; Ac. 7.35, which probably influenced Luke’s version.

6 The ‘o man’ may well arise from the influence of Lukan redaction (Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 93).

7 Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 81.

8 Cf. Valantasis, 151–152. Rightly, Plisch, 174: the implied answer is, ‘of course not.’

Logion 73¹

ΠΕΣΕ ΤΟ ΔΕ ΠΩΡΟΣ ΜΕΝ ΝΑΩΩΦ΄ ἸΕΡΓΑΤΗΣ ΔΕ ΣΟΒΚ΄ ΣΟΠΣ ΔΕ ἸΠΙΔΟΕΙΣ ΟΥΝΑ
ΕΦΗΛΑΝΕΧ΄ ΕΡΓΑΤΗΣ ΕΒΟΛ΄ ΕΠΩΣΣ

Jesus said, 'The harvest is great, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord to send out workers to that harvest.'

Interpretation

Saying 73 here (cf. Matt. 9.37–38/ Lk. 10.2) is the first in a trio of sayings which go together as a group (GTh 73–75), all of which highlight and validate the small number of true disciples by comparison with the *massa perditionis* outside (cf. GTh 23):

GTh 73: harvest great, workers few;

GTh 74: many around about the well, but no-one at or in it;

GTh 75: many outside, only solitaries inside.

On the other hand, GTh 73 is the most positive of the three towards outsiders, and impinges on the larger question of whether *Thomas* has a missionary outlook. Arnal comments that GTh 73 is 'an isolated saying' in this respect,² but supporting the idea is GTh 14.4 ('if you go into any region and you travel in the districts, and are received, eat what is set before you'): see the discussion of GTh 14.4 ad loc. above. Schröter is probably nearer the mark in taking this saying as indicative of 'Wandermission'.³ Hedrick notes that GTh 32–33 might also imply the same.⁴

1 **Bibliography for GTh 73:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 153–155; Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 231–232; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 41–42.

2 Arnal, 'Rhetoric of Marginality', 482.

3 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 231; also Plisch, 175; Hedrick, 135.

4 GTh 50 is not a missionary catechesis; see the interpretation above.

Notes

The harvest is great. The use of harvest imagery in a spiritual sense (cf. e.g. Jn 4.35–38) also fits with the parable of the sower (GTh 9); there is a diversity of usage in *Thomas*, as in the Synoptics, where the harvest can refer both to the work of mission (as in this saying) as well as to the day of reckoning (GTh 57; cf. Matt. 13.24–30, 36–43). ‘Harvest’ in some second-century literature can also have the sense of the ‘collection of spiritual seed’, but that is probably not in view here.

But the workers are few. The reference to the few as ‘workers’ may also have been part of the appeal of this saying, given the ‘few’ elect (cf. GTh 23) and the importance of ‘labouring’ in *Thomas* (see note on GTh 20 above). In addition to the Synoptic parallel noted above, a very similar sentiment with the same imagery is found in the *Gospel of Philip*: ‘Truth, which existed since the beginning, is sown everywhere. And many see it being sown, but few are they who see it being reaped.’ (*Gos. Phil.* 55,19–22).

Ask the Lord to send out workers to that harvest. This is a peculiar inclusion in *Thomas* both in its apparent reference to prayer, and in its use of the divine title ‘Lord’ (though cf. GTh 74, and ‘lordship’ in GTh 90). On the attitude in *Thomas* to prayer, see on GTh 14. The identity of the ‘Lord’ may be the Father, even though it would be unusual in *Thomas* to attribute activity to the Father; it is perhaps Jesus himself. If Jesus is the speaker in GTh 74, however, then there could be a parallel there to appealing to the Father as Lord.

Logion 74¹

πε.α.α.ϩ Δε π.χ.ο.ε.ι.ς ο.γ.ῆ ρ.α.ρ ἡ.π.κ.ω.τ.ε ἡ.τ.⟨ω⟩ω.τ.ε ἡ.ἡ. λ.α.α.γ Δε ρ.ἡ. τ.ω.ω.⟨τ⟩ε

He said, 'Lord, there are many around the well, but there is no-one in the well.'

Textual Comment

The two sources of water have both been subjects of discussion: the text has $\chi\omega\tau\epsilon$ ('penetration, separation') and $\omega\omega\eta\epsilon$ ('sickness'), neither of which make good sense. Proposed as alternatives are $\omega\omega\tau\epsilon$ ('well, cistern, pit', Crum 595a) and $\sigma\omega\tau$ ('drinking trough', Crum 833a; var. $\chi\omega\tau$ B). Most editors propose emending $\omega\omega\eta\epsilon$ at the end to $\omega\omega\tau\epsilon$.² More diverse has been opinion about the earlier $\chi\omega\tau\epsilon$, seen by Layton as a variation of $\sigma\omega\tau$ (hence Lambdin's translation 'drinking trough') but by Plisch as a variant of $\omega\omega\tau\epsilon$ (translated, 'well').³ Plisch's solution, according to which both are forms of $\omega\omega\tau\epsilon$, is perhaps simplest, and also brings the saying into line with the parallel in the *Celestial Dialogue*: $\pi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ πολλοὶ περὶ τὸ φρέαρ, καὶ οὐδεὶς εἰς τὸ φρέαρ; (Origen, *Contra Celsum* 8.15–16).

Interpretation

This saying forms part of the group of three sayings in GTh 73–75 which highlight the few/ many contrast between the true disciples and the world (cf. also GTh 23). Miller considers that the saying might be deliberately obscure and

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 74:** H.M. Jackson, 'Appendix', to 'The Setting and Sectarian Provenance of the Fragment of the "Celestial Dialogue" Preserved by Origen from Celsus's Ἀληθῆς λόγος', *HTR* 85 (1992) 273–305; R.J. Miller, 'Drawing a Blank from the Well: Thomas 74', *Forum* 10 (1994), 95–108.
 - ² Guillaumont, et al., eds. *Gospel according to Thomas*, 40; Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II,2–7: Volume One*, 80; Plisch, 176.
 - ³ Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II,2–7: Volume One*, 80–81; Plisch, 176. A more complex solution might be a word-division of ἡ.τ.χ.ω.τ. ε.ἡ.ἡ. ..., but this would not fit well with the subsequent Δε.

meaningless.⁴ This is something of a counsel of despair, however. Valantasis's view that the saying describes people as empty (relying on the translation 'nothing in the well') is unlikely as a translation (cf. the *Celestial Dialogue's* οὐδεις), and the well does not seem to represent a person.⁵ It is also far from clear that something has fallen into the well, and needs to be retrieved.⁶ the well is an image of 'spiritual water' (cf. GTh 13; 108).⁷ The point of the saying lies in the contrast between the two prepositions (compare the positions 'at the door' vs inside in GTh 75): many have access to true knowledge or revelation ('around the well'), but scarcely anyone ventures into ('in the well') that revelation fully (cf. Jesus finding everyone drunk but not thirsty in GTh 28).⁸

Notes

He said. Presumably the speaker is Jesus here, although it is possible that this is a fragment of a dialogue in which someone else was (possibly still in *Thomas* is) the speaker.⁹

Lord, there are many around the well. The *plus* of 'Lord' in *Thomas* over against the version in *Celestial Dialogue* may have simply been the result of oral variation, or it could reflect a copyist's error (perhaps Greek πῶς → Coptic πῶς¹⁰ → Coptic ⲡⲬⲤ?). Lord may also have been added to forge a catchword link with GTh 73; 'many' connects with GTh 75.

But there is no-one in the well. Compare Lambdin's translation of 'nothing in the cistern'.¹¹ Both because of the parallel in the *Celestial Dialogue*, and because of the consistent 'many vs few' pattern in GTh 73–75, a personal subject is more likely.¹²

4 Miller, 'Drawing a Blank', 105.

5 Valantasis, 152–153.

6 DeConick, 232. I leave aside here the question of whether this is the case in *Celestial Dialogue*; it is very unclear that this is the point in GTh 74, however.

7 Grant & Freedman, 176; cf. further Jn 4.14; *Gos. Sav.* 83 and fr. 19F.

8 Rightly, e.g. Nordsieck, 281.

9 So Plisch, 176.

10 Cf. πῶς in GTh 29.3, and ⲡⲡⲡⲟⲥ in GTh 57.3.

11 Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 81.

12 Rightly Miller, 'Drawing a Blank', 99; Plisch, 176; Grosso, 217.

Logion 75¹

ΠΕΞΕ Τ̄C ΟΥΝ ΖΑΖ ΔΖΕΡΑΤΟΥ ΖΙΡ̄Μ ΠΡΟ ΑΛΛΑ Μ̄ΜΟΝΑΧΟC ΝΕΤΝΑΒΟΚ` ΕΖΟΥΝ ΕΠΜΑ
Ν̄ΑΦΕΛΕΕΤ`

Jesus said, 'Many are standing at the door, but (only) the solitary will enter the bridal chamber.'

Interpretation

As per the sequence of GTh 73–75 as a whole, the contrast is between the few saved and the many unsaved: like GTh 74, this saying is more exclusivist in tone than GTh 73. Debate on this saying touches first upon the scenario: are the 'solitary' the bridesmaids (cf. Matt. 25.1–13, esp. v. 10),² or those to be united with the divine in some sense (i.e. as brides)?³ An additional, related, difficulty not usually observed is that *μᾱ ν̄αφελεετ* might refer to the bridal chamber, but it could also be the place where the marriage occurs (e.g. Matt. 22.9 sa; Crum 560a).⁴ Since the uniting of opposites in general, and union with Jesus in particular (GTh 108; cf. 61), is envisaged in *Thomas*, however, there is probably a reference to this union here; less likely in the context of *Thomas* is the image of the elect disciples celebrating the marriage of someone else, as if the disciples were compared with *bridesmaids* at a *marriage-feast*. The image is probably that each solitary individually is united to Jesus in the bridal chamber. The saying is a nice irony, in which those described by a word (*μοναχοc*) which might have connotations of celibacy and singleness are precisely those who will enter the bridal chamber.

Given this interpretation, further debate has centred upon the extent to which wider conceptions of the 'bridal chamber' (especially in the *Gospel of Philip* and Valentinian theology more widely, or the *Dialogue of the Saviour*)

1 **Bibliography for GTh 75:** Klijn, 'The "Single One" in the Gospel of Thomas', 271–278; J. Helderman, 'Die Herrenworte über das Brautgemach im Thomasevangelium und im Dialog des Erlösers', in W.L. Petersen, H.J. de Jonge & J.S. Vos, eds. *Sayings of Jesus: Canonical and Non-Canonical. Essays in Honour of Tjitze Baarda* (Leiden, Brill, 1997), 69–88.

2 E.g. Grant & Freedman, 176.

3 E.g. DeConick, 233.

4 Pokorný, 121, has 'wedding hall'.

might be brought to bear upon the interpretation here.⁵ Popkes, for example, sees the salvation as becoming androgynous in a Gnostic sense.⁶ Many commentators are cautious, however, in applying such conceptions:⁷ mystical union is possible without a Gnostic or Valentinian framework.⁸ What is clear in this saying is the contrast between the great (soteriological) privilege of union with Jesus which the few will enjoy, but which the majority will not experience.

Notes

Many are standing at the door. Like the previous saying, this conjures up an image of ‘many’ who are not far away, but nevertheless outside.

But (only) the solitary. On this designation (ΜΟΝΑΧΟΣ) see the Appended Note after the comments on GTh 16 above.

Will enter the bridal chamber. The bridal chamber is the place of salvation (like the ‘well’ in GTh 74). GTh 75 implies that Jesus is the bridegroom (as in GTh 104), with whom the souls are united.

5 In the tractate following *Thomas*, the *Gospel of Philip*, the bridal chamber is prominent as the hidden place of rest and light, where primordial unity is restored; later still in the codex is the *Exegesis on the Soul*, where the bridal chamber is a place of cleansing and, again, unity with the Father (132,10–13 & 34–35). See further A.D. DeConick, ‘The Great Mystery of Marriage: Sex and Conception in Ancient Valentinian Traditions’, *VC* 57 (2003), 307–342, for a broader discussion of marriage in Valentinian thought.

6 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 160.

7 DeConick, 233; Plisch, 179; Pokorný, 121.

8 Cf. Helderman, who argues that the ‘marriage’ is the unification with the saviour and with the heavenly self, through being fully ascetical and world-renouncing, in contrast to those ‘at the door’ who are merely interested (‘Herrenworte über das Brautgemach’, 78).

Logion 76¹

76.1 πεχε ιϛ χε τῆντερο ἡπειωτ᾽ ἐστῆτων ἀγρωμε ἡεωωωτ᾽ ἐγῆταϛ ἡμαγ ἡογφορτιον εαχεε ἀμαργαριτης 76.2 πεωωτ᾽ ἐτῆμαγ ογσαβε πε αϕτ πεφορτιον εβολ αϑτοογ ναϛ ἡπμαργαριτης ογωτ᾽ 76.3 ἡτωτῆ ζωτ᾽ τηγτῆ ὡινε ἡσα πεϛ᾽ ἐ᾽ρο εμαϛωσῆ εϕμῆν᾽ εβολ πμα εμαρε ἄοολεε τῆνο εζογῆ᾽ εμαγ εογωμ᾽ ογλεε μαρε ρϕῆτ τακο

76.1 *Jesus said, 'The kingdom of the Father is like a merchant who had a load of merchandise and who found a pearl. 76.2 That merchant was shrewd. He sold his load of merchandise and bought for himself this one pearl. 76.3 As for you, seek his unfailing and enduring treasure, where no moth comes near to eat and no worm destroys.'*

Interpretation

The parable of the Pearl is the ninth of *Thomas's* parables (on which, see *ad* GTh 8). GTh 76 (cf. Matt. 13.45–46) focuses on the infinitely precious nature of salvation: the implication is therefore that one should value 'exclusive commitment to Jesus' with the consequence of the 'abandonment of worldly affairs'.² This parable is clearly understood as having allegorical elements, since in GTh 76.3's explanation of the parable the clever merchant is the disciple, and the pearl is (in some sense) salvation. Were it not for the commentary in GTh 76.3, the parable on its own *could* be understood to refer to divine election. The explanation,

1 **Bibliography for GTh 76:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 155–160; R. Schippers, 'The Mashal-character of the Parable of the Pearl', in F.L. Cross, ed. *Studia Evangelica* II (TU 87; Berlin: Akademie, 1964), 236–241; B. Dehandschutter, 'La parabole de la perle (Mt 13, 45–46) et l'évangile selon Thomas', *ETL* 55 (1979), 243–265; S.R. Johnson, 'The Gospel of Thomas 76:3 and Canonical Parallels: Three Segments in the Tradition History of the Saying', in J.D. Turner, & A. McGuire, eds. *The Nag Hammadi Library after Fifty Years: Proceedings of the 1995 Society of Biblical Literature Commemoration* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 308–326; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 144–153; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 250–257; S.R. Johnson, *Seeking the Imperishable Treasure: Wealth, Wisdom, and a Jesus Saying* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2008); Gathercole, 'Luke in the Gospel of Thomas', 141–143; Gathercole, *Composition*, 88–89, 133–134, 205–207; S.R. Johnson, 'Retranslating the Gospel of Thomas: A Response', in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 575–580.

2 DeConick, 234; Hedrick, 139.

however, means it must be taken as very similar in meaning to its canonical counterpart (Matt. 13.45–46). It is closest in *Thomas* to the similarly structured parables of the Fisherman (GTh 8) and the Lost Sheep (GTh 107):

	<i>GTh 8</i>	<i>GTh 76</i>	<i>GTh 107</i>
Principal actor:	wise fisherman	shrewd merchant	shepherd
Action:	fishing/ finding	finding/ buying	searching/ finding
Precious possession:	a fish	pearl alone	one sheep
Quality of the one:	large	[unfailing, enduring] ³	largest
Alternative:	small fish	rest of merchandise	ninety-nine
Treatment of these:	thrown back	sold	left behind

There has been debate over the understanding of the ‘pearl’ (see note on 76.2 below). A precise solution may not be possible, even if in general terms the pearl must refer to the salvation in the kingdom that accompanies the revelation of Jesus. The emphasis here is on its uniqueness, the single focus which it demands, and its permanence.

Notes

76.1 The kingdom of the Father. For the Father’s kingdom, cf. GTh 57; 96–98; 113 (‘my Father’s kingdom’ in 99). On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above.

76.1 Is like a merchant who had a load of merchandise and who found a pearl. *Thomas* has a general merchant who finds a pearl by accident (unlike the pearl dealer in Matthew).⁴ There may be a catchword connection with the ‘finding’ in 77.3, though perhaps only at the Coptic stage.

76.2 That merchant was shrewd. Although the canniness of the merchant does not dominate the saying, it is highlighted here (the statement is absent from Matthew);⁵ compare the ‘wise fisherman’ in GTh 8.

³ This description features in the explanation of the parable.

⁴ Nordsieck, 288; Plisch, 180.

⁵ King, ‘Kingdom’, 56; Valantasis, 154.

76.2 He sold his load of merchandise. In contrast to Matthew's pearl-dealer who sells *everything* he has, *Thomas's* merchant only sells his consignment of merchandise.⁶

76.2 And bought for himself this one pearl. The implication is that the pearl is a very expensive one.⁷ Even if the *Hymn of the Pearl* (*Acts Thom.* 108–113) were near enough in milieu to the *Gospel of Thomas*, it would not be much help because the meaning of the pearl there is quite obscure. Dehandschutter understands the pearl in a Gnostic framework.⁸ Lindemann, on the basis of the juxtaposition of GTh 76–77, suggests that it might be Jesus himself.⁹ Pokorný suggests the 'human soul with its divine core'.¹⁰ Dehandschutter's Gnostic understanding is unhelpful, and the referent is not necessarily so specific as Jesus himself: the precise sense is unclear.

76.3 As for you, seek his unfailing and enduring treasure. The antecedent of 'his' can easily be taken as the Father in 76.1 (not the merchant). This statement has a complicated tradition history (cf. esp. Matt. 6.19–20; Lk. 12.33).¹¹ Its sense is clear enough, however.¹²

76.3 Where no moth comes near to eat and no worm destroys. The pair 'moth' and 'worm' is unparalleled in the Synoptics, but appears in what looks like an interpretation of this saying in *Gos. Truth* 32,31–33,32, which begins with reference to the light 'which does not fail' (εταμαρωχῆν, 32,34; cf. εμαρωχῆν in GTh 76.3) and instructs the disciple, 'Do not be moths. Do not be worms' (33,16–17). The association of moths and worms in the parable therefore looks like a second-century variant.

6 This distinction is fruitless, however, for identifying *Thomas's* version as more 'realistic' and therefore more authentic (Gathercole, *Composition*, 133–134).

7 For outlandishly expensive pearls, see e.g. Suetonius, *Julius* 50, where Caesar buys a pearl for Servilia at a price of six million sesterces. Pliny the Elder (*NH* 9.119–121) reports a story in which Cleopatra has a pair worth ten million (and eats one of them).

8 Dehandschutter, 'Parabole de la perle', 258–259.

9 Lindemann, 'Gleichnisinterpretation', 220.

10 Pokorný, 122.

11 See Johnson, *Seeking the Imperishable Treasure*, and the response in Gathercole, *Composition*, 205–207, as well as Johnson's rejoinder, 'Retranslating the Gospel of Thomas: A Response', 575–580.

12 King comments that the wealth is a 'metaphor for spiritual things' ('Kingdom', 55).

Logion 77¹

77.1 πε.ξε̅ ιϛ̅ .ξε̅ ανοκ̅ πε πογοειν̅ παει̅ ετ̅ρι.ιδωγ̅ τηρου̅ ανοκ̅' πε πτηρη̅' ν̅τα
πτηρη̅' ει̅ εβολ̅ ν̅ρητ̅' αγω̅ ν̅τα πτηρη̅' πωρ̅ ωραοει̅ 77.2 πωρ̅ ν̅νουγ̅ωε̅ ανοκ̅'
†ν̅μαγ̅ 77.3 ρι̅ ν̅πωνε̅ ερρα̅ι̅ αγω̅ τετναρ̅ε̅ εροει̅ ν̅μαγ̅

77.1 *Jesus said, 'I am the light who is above all things. I am the all. From me the all came forth, and the all reaches to me. 77.2 Split a piece of wood—I am there. 77.3 Lift the stone and you will find me there.'*

30.3/77.3 ἔγει[ρ]ον τὸν λίθο(ν) κα̅κει̅ [ε]ὑρήσεις με· 30.4/77.2 σχίσον τὸ ξύλον κα̅γὼ̅ ἔκει̅ εἶμι. (Restoration *exempli gratia*.)

30.3/77.3 *Li[f]t the stone and you will [f]ind me. 30.4/77.2 Split the wood and I am there.*

Textual Comment

As has been recognized by a number of scholars, the linkage of GTh 77.1 to GTh 77.2–3 probably happened at the Coptic stage, since GTh 77.1 and GTh 77.2 are joined by the catchword πωρ, in the double sense of 'reach' and 'split'.² It is highly probable, then, that the earliest form of this saying merely consisted of 77.1, and so the interpretation will be concerned with that part alone. The alternation of GTh 77.2 and 77.3 in the Coptic and Greek is of no real significance since the two sentences are synonymously parallel.

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 77:** Walls, 'Stone and Wood in Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 1', 71–76; Dunderberg, 'Thomas' I-sayings and the Gospel of John', 58–60; A. Marjanen, 'Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?', in R. Uro, ed. *Thomas at the Crossroads: Essays on the Gospel of Thomas* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 107–139 (121–124); Popkes, 'Ich bin das Licht', 641–674; Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 106–109; A. Standhartinger, 'Vom Aufscheinen (Holz und Stein)—EvThom 77.2 f.', in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 904–908; Onuki, 'Das Logion 77 des koptischen Thomasevangeliums', 294–317; Eisele, *Welcher Thomas*, 149–171.
 - ² See e.g. Haenchen, 'Literatur zum Thomasevangelium', 161–162; C.M. Tuckett, 'The Gospel of Thomas: Evidence for Jesus?', *NTT* 52 (1998), 17–32 21 (n. 17); Popkes, 'Ich bin das Licht', 655; Standhartinger, 'Vom Aufscheinen (Holz und Stein)', 907.

Interpretation

The remarkable statements in GTh 77.1 have as their main focus christology, often neglected or downplayed in the study of *Thomas*. GTh 77.1 makes statements, in sequence, of Jesus' (a) supremacy over, (b) identification with, (c) origination of, and (d) his status as the goal of, 'all things' or 'the all'.

There has been debate over the precise worldview and christology here: it cannot readily be called (1) Pauline, as argued by Nordsieck, since if 'the all' is the world, then the identification between Jesus and the all is stronger than in the texts he cites.³ A second option is (2) panentheism (or 'panenchrism'): Valantasis, Pokorný and Hedrick opt for this: 'the speaker permeates all things but still remains "I"—that is, distinct from all things'.⁴ Finally, (3) there may be a pantheistic meaning, as argued by Grant & Freedman, Plisch and Grosso;⁵ Orbe uses the term 'pancrismo'.⁶

The difficulty in deciding between (2) and (3) lies in the fact that a panentheistic interpretation may entail too much watering down of the language of identification in 77.1, whereas on a pantheistic interpretation, it seems difficult to the point of impossibility to see how the corpse-like world of GTh 56, or the 'poverty' of GTh 29.3, could be part of Jesus. Before a decision can be taken, there is the question of what the *pan-* is, i.e. the meaning of 'all things' or '(the) all'. (A shift in meaning from $\tau\eta\rho\upsilon\gamma$ to $\pi\tau\eta\rho\upsilon\gamma$ in 77.1 would seem forced.) The most likely explanation, given the difficulties already noted, is a reading (noted above in the interpretation of GTh 2), which sees the all not as the material universe, i.e. heaven and earth, but as the totality of the pneumatic element.⁷ On this interpretation, Jesus as the light is identified with the light within all elect people.

3 Nordsieck, 292, citing Rom. 11.36; 1 Cor. 8.6; Col. 1.16–17. Cf. however, the hyperbolic statement in Col. 3.11 sa: $\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha \pi\tau\eta\rho\upsilon \lambda\gamma\omega \pi\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\bar{\nu} \pi\tau\eta\rho\upsilon \pi\epsilon \pi\epsilon\bar{\nu}\bar{\epsilon}$.

4 Hedrick, 141; cf. also Valantasis, 156; Pokorný, 123.

5 Grant & Freedman, 178; Plisch, 183; Grosso, 220. In the definition of one of Umberto Eco's characters, 'a pantheist believes that God is everywhere, even in that speck of a fly you see there', in *The Mysterious Flame of Queen Loana* (London: Secker & Warburg, 2006), 341.

6 A. Orbe, *Cristología gnóstica: Introducción a la soteriología de los siglos II y III*, 2 Volumes (Madrid: La Editorial Católica, 1976), 1:10. Cf. Walls, 'Stone and Wood', 72, on the pantheistic, or more strictly 'panchrismic Gnostic sense' in the Coptic.

7 Marjanen, 'Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?', 121; cf. Dunderberg, *Beloved Disciple in Conflict*, 108. Also possible, though more remote, are a technical christological title, and the aeons of the pleroma.

There is an apparent difficulty with the ‘high’ interpretation of the all as the pneumatic element, since GTh 2.4 states (in the Coptic) that the successful disciple will ‘reign over the all’ (ϣⲛⲁⲓⲣ̅ ⲡⲣⲟ ⲉⲗⲓⲛ̅ ⲡⲧⲏⲣⲣⲁ). There the sense (as was argued above) is likely to be the material, phenomenal world. This might raise problems for an identification of Jesus with the all. On the other hand, the phrase ‘over the all’ (ⲉⲗⲓⲛ̅ ⲡⲧⲏⲣⲣⲁ) in 2.4 is almost certainly a later accretion (it appears neither in P. Oxy. IV 654 nor in Clement’s quotations from his source in *Strom.* 2.9.45.5; 5.14.96.3): as a result, GTh 77.1 is not in conflict with *Greek* GTh 2 as we have it; it is the later scribe or translator who introduces the difficulty. This has the great advantages of meaning that the ‘I am’ predication does not need to be diluted into panentheism, and explaining how Jesus might be imagined both as the all and above the all. Jesus is ‘the all’ in the sense that he is identified with the totality of the spiritual element of light wherever that element may reside.

A further possible contribution of this saying to our understanding of *Thomas* is not usually noted, namely how it might reflect *Thomas*’s understanding of the fall. There is a strong suggestion here that ‘the all’—understood as light—coming forth from Jesus leads to some kind of alienation from him: the verb ⲉⲓ is suggestive of movement (cf. ⲁⲱⲡⲉ, which might be more likely to connote a kind of creation). This statement can therefore be brought into relation with the other statements about a fall (e.g. GTh 11; 29). See further the discussion in the Introduction, § 10.1.

Notes

77.1 **Jesus said, ‘I am the light’.** Compare the similar Johannine statements (Jn 8.12; 9.5; 11.9; 12.35–36, 46) and *Ep. Pet. Phil.* (NHC VIII) 133,26–134,1; cf. 134,9–10. In *Thomas*, however, the light does not straightforwardly transcend humanity, but lies within humanity.⁸ There is a continuum between (a) the light in human beings, (b) the light which is Jesus, and (c) the Father: compare GTh 77 here with GTh 24, 50 and 83.

77.1 **Who is above all things.** Cf. Jn 3.31 for Jesus ‘above all’ (ἐπάνω πάντων; cf. the same phrase in Philo, *Somn.* 2.78), and the language in the NT of Jesus as ‘Lord of all’ (Ac. 10.36; Rom. 10.12; cf. Rev. 17.14; 19.16). *Thomas* retains a sense of the transcendence and supremacy of Jesus.

8 In contrast to John: see E.H. Pagels, ‘Exegesis of Genesis 1 in the Gospels of Thomas and John’, *JBL* 118 (1999), 477–496.

77.1 **I am the all.** See discussion above.

77.1 **From me the all came forth.** If ‘the all’ were the phenomenal world, the sense of ‘coming forth from’ would probably be that of creation (cf. 1 Cor. 8.6, and the Father ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα). Since the all is more likely to be the totality of the spiritual element, the ‘coming forth’ is probably more like an emanation (perhaps resulting in a fall).

77.1 **And the all reaches to me.** Corresponding to Jesus as the origin (‘from me the all came forth’) is the balancing teleological remark (cf. Col. 1.16 and—with reference to the Father—Rom. 11.36; 1 Cor. 8.6). Here the sense may be that Jesus, since he *qua* light is dispersed through the cosmos (cf. the *Gospel of Eve*, *apud* Epiphanius, *Pan.* 26.3.1), attracts the spiritual element to union with himself. This may further define the identification of Jesus and the disciple in GTh 108.1–2 (‘he will become like me. I myself will become him’): the *Gospel of Eve* quotation applies here as well.⁹

77.2–3 **Split a piece of wood—I am there. Lift the stone and you will find me there.** In its later location in GTh 77, this couplet, with its theme of Jesus’ permeation of even the lowliest elements of material creation (cf. Eccl. 10.9), perhaps changes the sense of GTh 77.1 to a form of pantheism. For more detailed comment, see on GTh 30. ‘Finding’ here connects GTh 77 to 76 by a catchword link.

9 ‘I am you and you are I. And wherever you are, there am I. And I am sown in all things. And from wherever you want, you (may) gather me. But when gathering me, one gathers himself.’

Logion 78¹

78.1 πε.δε ιϛ δε ετβε ου ατετῆει εβολ ετσωδε εναυ εγκαω εφκιν ε[βολ] ριτῆ
πτῆγ 78.2 αγω εναυ εγρ[ω]μ[ε ε] γῆωτῆν εγσῆν ριωδβ ἡ[θε ἡμετ] ἡρρωδου
μῆ νετῆμεγιστανος 78.3 ναει εν[ε]ωτῆν ε[τ]σῆν ριωδου αγω σεη[α]ω[ε]-
σογν τῆε αν

78.1 *Jesus said, 'Why have you come out to the countryside? To see a reed shaken by the wind? 78.2 Or to see a m[an] who is wearing a soft garment li[ke your] kings and your nobles? 78.3 They have soft garments on, but they are unable to know the truth.'*

Interpretation

The main interest in this saying concerns the very probable application to Jesus of words which in the Synoptics Gospels are about John the Baptist (Matt. 11.7–8; Lk. 7.24–25). *Thomas's* reader could not be expected to see any reference to John.² The focus of the saying's meaning, however, is not in dispute. Here *Thomas* questions the relationship between truth and power: those who are powerful do not understand the truth; the implied contrast is with the *Thomas* movement which may be powerless (cf. GTh 54) but which does possess the truth. Valantasis notes that, in the absence of a narrative context, this saying is little more than a 'harangue'.³

Notes

78.1 **Why have you come out to the countryside?** The question seems a rhetorical one, with a sense like: 'What are you doing here?!' The implied audience is urban elites, and Jesus is located in the countryside, but it is not clear here that

1 **Bibliography for GTh 78:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 160–164; R. Cameron, "What Have You Come Out To See?" Characterizations of John and Jesus in the Gospels, *Semeia* 49 (1990), 35–69.

2 As far as I can see, every commentator assumes this view. See Valantasis, 157; DeConick, 240–241; Nordsieck, 296; Plisch, 184; Pokorný, 124; also Cameron, "What Have You Come Out To See?", 44.

3 Valantasis, 158.

‘the city is singled out for trenchant criticism.’⁴ Wilson has suggested a literary relationship to the Synoptics here: since the question in the Synoptics is ‘What did you go out into the desert to see?’, there is a difference of punctuation, with the Synoptics placing the “question mark” after ‘to see’, and *Thomas* putting it before.⁵ The verb εἰ εβολ links GTh 78.1 to 77.1.

78.1 To see a reed shaken by the wind? It is very unclear that there is any literal reference here to the natural world (though of course one is more likely to see reeds in the countryside),⁶ or from the point of view of *Thomas's* editor to Herod Antipas.⁷ The reed in the wind is obviously a person who is easily influenced to side with a particular party in power, or by persuasive words (cf. the image of the wind in Eph. 4.14). Hedrick refers to ‘allegiances [which] change like the wind’.⁸

78.2 Or to see a man who is wearing a soft garment? This was particularly apposite as a contrast to John the Baptist, who wore a garment of camel’s hair (Mk 1.6/Matt. 3.4). Presumably *Thomas* here assumes that Jesus similarly wore cheap, rough clothes.

78.2 Like your kings and your nobles. Since the two nouns seem complementary here, the rendering ‘nobles’ is given here for the ambiguous μεγατᾶ-
νοσ,⁹ despite the possible translation ‘ruler’.

78.3 They have soft garments on, but they are unable to know the truth. The implication here is that a life focused upon comfort and luxury is incompatible with understanding true spiritual realities, or perhaps more precisely: those ‘whose social status is marked by their clothing are excluded from recognising the truth’.¹⁰ ‘Truth’ (με) perhaps links GTh 78, albeit weakly, with the next saying (cf. 79.2).

4 Arnal, ‘Rhetoric of Marginality’, 489.

5 Wilson, ‘Thomas and the Synoptics’, 36.

6 Valantasis, 157.

7 A suggestion of Plisch, 185 n. 4, who comments that Antipas issued coins with reeds. This understanding of the reed would be possible at the historical-Jesus stage, but becomes even less likely at a greater historical remove from Antipas.

8 Hedrick, 142.

9 Meaning ‘grandee’ (Lampe, 837a), ‘king’ or ‘noble’. According to *TLG*, the earliest unambiguous references to μεγατᾶνος as a nominative form are in *Test. Sol.* (3rd cent.?) and Agathangelus (5th cent.). The earlier form is μεγατᾶν (cf. e.g. the nom. sing. in *Sir.* 10.24).

10 Plisch, 185.

Logion 79¹

79.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΟΥΣΖΙΜ[Ε] ΝΑϞ ΖἸ ΠΗΝΩΕ ΧΕ ΝΕΕΙΑΤϞ [Ἰ]ΘΖΗ ἸΤΑΖϞΙ ΖΑΡΟΚ ΑΥΩ
ἸΚΙ[Β]Ε ΕΝΤΑΖϞΑ[Ϟ]ΝΟΥΩΚ 79.2 ΠΕΧΑϞ ΝΑ[Ϟ] ΧΕ ΝΕΕΙΑΤΟΥ ἸΝΕΝΤΑΖϞΩΤἸ
ΑἰΠΛΟΓΟϞ ἸΠΕΙΩΤ ΑΥΑΡΕΖ ΕΡΟϞ ΖἸ ΟΥΜΕ 79.3 ΟΥἸ ΖἸΖΟΥϞ ΓΑΡ ΝΑΩΩΠΕ
ἸΤΕΤἸΧΟΟϞ ΧΕ ΝΕΕΙΑΤϞ ἸΘΖΗ ΤΑΕΙ ΕΤΕ ἸΠϞΩ ΑΥΩ ἸΚΙΒΕ ΝΑΕΙ ΕΠΟΥϞ ΕΡΩ-
ΤΕ

79.1 *A woma[n] in the crowd said to him, 'Blessed are the womb which bore you and the brea[s]ts which nursed you.'* 79.2 *He said to he[r], 'Blessed are those who have heard the word of the Father and have truly kept it.'* 79.3 *For days are coming when you will say, "Blessed are the womb which has not conceived and the breasts which have not given milk."*

Interpretation

This saying has parallels in two different parts of Luke.² Its main point, as is apparent from the presence of 'Blessed are ...' in each of the three parts, is to define the true nature of blessedness for women in particular. A wrong definition appears first (bearing great children) in 79.1, followed by Jesus' correction in 79.2; he then follows this by saying that his point of view will eventually be admitted to be true by the audience. In the absence of an historical-eschatological scenario for *Thomas* in 79.3, it is likely that the author is advocating some kind of ascetical identity for women.³ *Thomas* may be sympathetic with the position of those criticised by Clement as 'opposing God's creation', who styled Salome as one who 'did well' not bearing children, and saw one of Jesus' roles as to 'destroy the works of the female'.⁴ The ambiguity of to when exactly in the future 79.3 refers, however, allows for Uro's interpretation that

1 **Bibliography for GTh 79:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 164–168; Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 267–269; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 97–108.

2 GTh 79.1–2/ Lk. 11.27–28; GTh 79.3/ Lk. 23.29.

3 Valantasis, 159, noting a reference here to a specifically female asceticism; cf. Jacobson, 'Jesus against the Family', 215; DeConick, 242.

4 Clement, *Strom.* 3.9.63.1; 3.9.66.1–2 and (citing the *Gospel of the Egyptians*) 3.9.63.2 respectively. Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 269, sees *Thomas* as more negative than Luke about the family here.

celibacy (if in view here) may only be a preferred, rather than compulsory, state in the present.⁵

Notes

79.1 A woman in the crowd said to him. Goodacre notes the Lukan character of the anonymous interlocutor from the crowd (cf. GTh 72.1).⁶

79.1 Blessed are the womb which bore you and the breasts which nursed you. The first, wrong, definition of blessedness taps into a culturally widespread attitude of what constitutes greatness for a woman, namely having great children.⁷

79.2 He said to her, ‘Blessed are those who have heard the word of the Father and have truly kept it.’ Jesus pronounces his correction. This is the ninth of eleven beatitudes in *Thomas*. (See on 7.1 above; 79.1 and 79.3 are not included, because they are not Jesus’ blessings.) Here, as perhaps also in GTh 99, we have a preference for the language of ‘Father’ over that of ‘God’ (cf. ‘God’ in Lk. 11.28).⁸ A particular reason for the word in this saying may be a contrast between the mother, negatively valued in 79.1 and the Father, positively valued here. There is a similar context and content in GTh 99.2, though the point there is the true definition of relation to Jesus, rather than the character of true blessedness as here in 79. ‘Truly’ (ἐν ὀυμῆ) perhaps is a catchword link to the previous saying, which ends with a reference to truth (μῆ).

79.3 For days are coming. This phrase (cf. GTh 38.2) echoes the familiar OT phrase (οὐρανὸς ἡμέρας ... κατασπεῖ ← ἰδοὺ ἡμέραι ἔρχονται ← *hnh ymym b`ym*), though *Thomas* is more distant from the OT than the Synoptic counterpart Lk. 23.29: the frequent OT phrase invariably has ‘behold’,⁹ as does the Lukan parallel to *Thomas*. (Elsewhere, however, Luke does not have ‘behold’ in versions of this expression.¹⁰)

5 Uro, ‘Asceticism’, 222.

6 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 100–102.

7 Plisch, 187.

8 Cf. ‘the will of my Father’ in 99.2/ ‘the will of God’ in Mk 3.35, but ‘Father’ in Matt. 12.50.

9 In the Greek, 1 Sam. 2.31; 2 Kgs 20.17; Am. 4.2; 8.11; 9.13; Zech. 14.1; Isa. 39.6; Jer. 7.32; 9.24; 16.14; 19.6; 23.5, 7; 28.52; 30.18; 31.12; 37.3; 38.27; 38.31. Cf. Heb. 8.8.

10 Lk. 5.35; 17.22; 19.43; 21.6.

79.3 When you will say, **“Blessed are the womb which has not conceived and the breasts which have not given milk.”** There has been debate about the kind of eschatology, if any, envisaged here. Pokorný has suggested the possibility of apocalyptic sufferings at the end, but it is more likely that an ascetic point is being made, as argued above, whether this is enjoined (or only recommended) in the present, or regarded as a reality in the future state.¹¹

11 Cf. Pokorný, 125.

Logion 80¹

80.1 πεχε ιϛ δε πενταρσοϿωνι πκοσμος αϿρε επσωμα 80.2 πενταρρε δε επσωμα πκοσμος ι̅π̅Ͽα ι̅μοϿ̅ αν̅

80.1 *Jesus said, 'Whoever has come to know the world has found the body.*
80.2 *But whoever has found the body, the world is not worthy of him.'*

Interpretation

This saying is one of a trio of similar sayings dispersed through *Thomas*:

- GTh 56: Jesus said, 'Whoever has come to know the world has found a corpse. And whoever has found the corpse, the world is not worthy of him.'
- GTh 80: Jesus said, 'Whoever has come to know the world has found the body. But whoever has found the body, the world is not worthy of him.'
- GTh 110: Jesus said, 'Whoever has found the world and is rich, let him renounce the world.'

As can be seen here, GTh 80 is identical to 56, except for the substitution of 'corpse' (πρῶμα) with 'body' (πῶμα): the author seems to be playing on the similar senses, and the graphic and phonetic resemblances of the two words.²

Both parts of GTh 80 are elliptical, and difficult to interpret. Pokorný sees the body in a (potentially) positive light, on the grounds that the Spirit can reanimate the corpse and make it a body.³ Valantasis sees the body as the spiritual community.⁴ Neither of these find much support from the text of GTh 80 or from *Thomas* more widely. More likely is an interpretation similar to the meaning of GTh 56, namely, a concern with coming to see the true nature of the world (80.1), upon which the true disciple rises above that world (80.2). Plisch remarks that 'body' in GTh 80 can easily be interpreted synonymously

1 **Bibliography for GTh 80:** Sellew, 'Death, Body, and the World', 530–534; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 136–149; Uro, *Thomas*, 55–62; Gathercole, *Composition*, 77–79, 250–262.

2 The tone is perhaps slightly milder (thus Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 71).

3 Pokorný, 125–126.

4 Valantasis, 160.

with 'corpse' in the earlier saying, especially since 'body' also appears to be used negatively in GTh 87. This must remain a tentative interpretation, however.⁵

Notes

80.1 Whoever has come to know the world has found the body. There is an ellipsis here: the object of knowledge is probably (as in GTh 56) '(the true nature of) the world', 'the world (as it really is)'. The result is that the disciple 'has found the (dead) body (that the world is)'.

80.2 But whoever has found the body, the world is not worthy of him. I.e., 'whoever has found *that* body (i.e. the world)'. This discovery is clearly highly valued, hence the conferral of the high status: the person is no longer simply part of the world, but has transcended it. On the phrase, 'the world is not worthy' (cf. Heb. 11.38), see on GTh 56.2.⁶

5 Plisch, 188.

6 On the relation to Heb. 11.38, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 250–262.

Logion 81¹

81.1 ⲡⲉⲗⲉⲓⲥ ⲛⲉ ⲛⲉⲛⲧⲁⲗⲣ̅ ⲣ̅ⲓⲛⲙⲁⲟ ⲙⲁⲣⲉϥ̅ ⲣⲣⲟ 81.2 ⲁⲗⲱ ⲡⲉⲧⲉϥ̅ⲛⲧⲁϥ̅ ⲛ̅ⲟϥ̅ⲁⲗⲛⲁ-
ⲙⲓⲥ ⲙⲁⲣⲉϥ̅ⲁⲣⲛⲁ

81.1 *Jesus said, 'Whoever has become rich, let him reign; 81.2 and whoever has power, let him renounce it.'*

Interpretation

This saying (cf. *Dial. Sav.* 19,13–14) is joined with GTh 80, at least from the perspective of GTh 110, which combines elements of GTh 80–81 (see interpretation of GTh 110 below); GTh 82 also has 'kingdom'. Davies takes the view that GTh 81 'may indicate that those who have found self-knowledge and who metaphorically rule ought not to think that this automatically entitles them to political authority within the movement',² but 81.2 is about renunciation rather than a warning against a presumption. Nordsieck takes 81.1 to advocate being liberal and generous *like* a king;³ this puts quite a strain on the Coptic, as well as on how *Thomas* might have understood kings.

The main question arising from this saying among scholars is whether 81.1 should be understood metaphorically, in terms of spiritual wealth and reign,⁴ or ironically, as a sarcastic demand ('if you have money, go ahead and reign, why don't you!'), with an implied condemnation of such a course.⁵ Another way of expressing the difference is whether the elements of the couplet stand in complementary parallel (exercise spiritual power; renounce worldly power) or antithetical parallel (go ahead and exercise worldly power! no—not really; renounce it). The ironic view does not necessarily fit as well within *Thomas's* style, however, and the elements of 81.1 make good sense as referring to spiritual wealth and reign, both of which are found elsewhere in the Gospel (see notes below). There is an interesting parallel in Plotinus with much of the same language (*Enn.* 1.4.14).

1 **Bibliography for GTh 81:** There are no special studies of this logion, to my knowledge. See the commentaries, ad loc.

2 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 104.

3 Nordsieck, 301–302.

4 Valantasis, 161; Hedrick, 146.

5 Plisch, 188–189; both options are mentioned by Pokorný, 126.

Notes

81.1 Whoever has become rich, let him reign. On the connection between spiritual wealth and reign, cf. 1Cor. 4.8. On spiritual wealth, cf. GTh 3.5; 29.3; 85.1. The rule envisaged is presumably that of GTh 2.4.

81.2 And whoever has power, let him renounce it. This is probably meant in a more literal sense, referring to abdication from positions of worldly might. It is probably an expression of hope that those in authority would acknowledge the truth of the incompatibility of spiritual and worldly power (cf. GTh 78).

Logion 82¹

82.1 πεχε ις δε πετρην ερωει εφρην ετσατε 82.2 αυω πετουνη' ιμοει φουνη' ιτηιητερο

82.1 Jesus said, 'He who is near me, is near the fire; 82.2 and he who is far from me is far from the kingdom.'

Interpretation

Most of the interest in this saying has centred on its possible authenticity, and the various parallels. For the close parallels in Origen, Didymus, *Gospel of the Saviour*, and the *Exposition of the Gospel* in Armenian (which may well be influenced by *Thomas*) see Introduction, § 4.1–2 above. On the authenticity (and the more distant parallels), see note below (*ad* 'Jesus said').

As far as the sense is concerned, the question is what 'fire' means, and a great number of potential solutions has been offered. Some advocate fire in the sense of (1) judgment.² Plisch sees it as (2) the danger of suffering and martyrdom.³ Others, such as Pokorný, identify the fire more positively as (3) moral purification;⁴ Valantasis identifies it as the fire of (4) 'transformative interpretation'.⁵ King combines (3) and (4) into a fire of (5) 'ascetic/ moral purification and illu-

1 **Bibliography for GTh 82:** J.B. Bauer, 'Das Jesuswort "Wer mir nahe ist"', *ThZ* (1959), 446–450; J.B. Bauer, 'Echte Jesusworte', in W.C. van Unnik, ed. *Evangelium aus dem Nilsand* (Frankfurt: Heinrich Scheffer, 1960), 108–150 (122–124); Jeremias, *Unknown Sayings of Jesus*, 66–73; O. Hofius, 'Unknown Sayings of Jesus', in P. Stuhlmacher, ed. *The Gospel and the Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991 [1983]), 336–360; DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 105–109; E.K. Broadhead, 'An Authentic Saying of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas?' *NTS* 46 (2000), 132–149; C.W. Hedrick, 'An Anecdotal Argument for the Independence of the *Gospel of Thomas* from the Synoptic Gospels', in H.-G. Bethge, S. Emmel, K.L. King & I. Schletterer, eds. *For the Children, Perfect Instruction: Studies in Honor of Hans-Martin Schenke on the Occasion of the Berliner Arbeitskreis für koptisch-gnostische Schriften's Thirtieth Year* (NHMS 54; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 113–126; Nagel, 'Apokryphe Jesusworte in der koptischen Überlieferung', 499–501.

2 Bauer, 'Das Jesuswort', 448; Grosso, 227, also emphasising theophany with the judgment.

3 Plisch, 190.

4 Pokorný, 127.

5 Valantasis, 162.

mination'.⁶ DeConick sees the fire as theophanic, and referring to the 'nearness' of, or (6) union with Jesus in mystical visionary experience.⁷

Although it is hard to be definite, Plisch's view is probably closest. Against views (3–6), fire is generally negative and destructive in *Thomas* (cf. GTh 10, 13, 16, 57), but—against (1)—it is unlikely that being near to Jesus invites divine judgment. Positively, the rough parallel to this saying in Ignatius has fire in a list of potential sufferings which may be inflicted upon Christians by their persecutors.⁸ So the meaning of the saying is, put more prosaically: it may be that following Jesus is highly dangerous (82.1), but not following him is even worse, as access to the kingdom can only be had through him (82.2).

Notes

Jesus said. In this particular saying, the introductory formula is of interest because, although not closely paralleled in the Synoptic Gospels,⁹ Origen (with hesitation), Didymus and the *Armenian Exposition of the Gospel* introduce this statement as a saying of Jesus. This raises even more sharply than in other places in *Thomas* the question of authenticity.¹⁰ (The saying was already much discussed as an agraphon by Resch and Jeremias even before the publication of *Thomas* in Coptic.) Various points have been adduced as evidence of the saying's authenticity. (1) One factor is Ménard's argument that, when retroverted into Aramaic, the saying has four phrases (or two four-beat stichoi) with alliteration and rhyme.¹¹ (2) For Jeremias, 'the most important indication of authenticity is the purpose of the saying', in the sense that it echoes Jesus' message of eschatological urgency.¹² (3) Broadhead has argued that the 82.1 is most likely

6 King, 'Kingdom', 70 (with reference to the context in 83 and 81).

7 DeConick, 247. As she puts it elsewhere, Jesus is 'God's glory surrounded by fire' as in Jewish speculative tradition (*Voices of the Mystics*, 91).

8 Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 4.2: 'Why have I given myself up to death, to fire, to the sword, to the wild beasts? Well, "near to the sword, near to God", and "in company with wild beasts, in company with God"—as long as it is in the name of Jesus Christ.'

9 Cf. however Mk 9.49; Mk 7.6/Matt. 15.8 and esp. Mk 12.34.

10 Chilton 'Gospel according to Thomas', 168, even talks about a consensus on authenticity. More moderately, Higgins accepts the saying as authentic, but 'with some hesitation': A.J.B. Higgins, 'Non-Gnostic Sayings in the Gospel of Thomas', *NovT* 4 (1960), 292–306 (303).

11 Ménard, 'Les problèmes de l'Évangile selon Thomas', 60; Jeremias, *Unknown Sayings of Jesus*, 71–72. See discussion in Gathercole, *Composition*, 90–91.

12 Jeremias, *Unknown Sayings of Jesus*, 72.

to go back to John the Baptist in the first instance, but that this first half was then taken up by Jesus and supplemented with the reference to the kingdom.¹³

If one were to apply the traditional ‘criteria of authenticity’, it satisfies the criterion of coherence (with e.g. Mk 8.34, on the dangers of discipleship, and Jesus’ relation to the kingdom in e.g. Mk 10.14; Matt. 7.21; Lk. 22.29; 23.42), and among the second-division criteria, the retroversion of Jeremias might show its Aramaic quality; the ‘multiple attestation’ question is more difficult, as it is hard to know to what extent the other parallels are indebted to *Thomas*.¹⁴ As has been widely shown, however, the criteria are deeply flawed (see Introduction, § 11.5–6, above).

Few would dispute that GTh 82 is just the kind of thing which Jesus might well have said. On the other hand, it might also be that it is primarily Aesopic fable tradition exerting an influence upon *Thomas* here, as it does elsewhere. This is most prominent in *Thomas*’s redaction of Matt. 23.13/ Luke 11.52/ GTh 39 in GTh 102, where the Pharisees’ attempts to prevent people from entering the kingdom is supplemented with the image of the dog in the manger. GTh 82 also has a close connection with the Aesop tradition, as the sayings ὁ ἐγγὺς Διός, ἐγγὺς κεραυνοῦ (‘he who is near Zeus is near the thunderbolt’) and πόρρω Διός τε καὶ κεραυνοῦ (‘far from Zeus, far from the thunderbolt’) have (separately) been preserved in collections of Aesopic tradition;¹⁵ cf. Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 4.2: ἀλλὰ ὁ ἐγγὺς μαχαίρας, ἐγγὺς θεοῦ, ὁ μεταξύ θηρίων, μεταξύ θεοῦ.¹⁶

13 Broadhead, ‘Authentic Saying of Jesus’, 147–148 and 148 respectively.

14 Grant & Freedman, 90, imply that Origen took the saying from *Thomas*; for the contrary view, see Hedrick, ‘Thomas and the Synoptics’, 45.

15 ὁ ἐγγὺς Διός, ἐγγὺς κεραυνοῦ: see ΠΑΡΟΙΜΙΑΙ ΑἰΣΩΠΙΟΥ 7. Text in E.L. Leutsch & F.G. Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1831), II.228; B.E. Perry, *Aesopica* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois 1952), I.290. Discussion of ms. in L. Cohn, ‘Die Sprichwörter des Cod. Laur. LVIII 24’, in idem, *Zu den Paroemiographien* (Breslau, 1887), 1–44 (esp. 3). For πόρρω Διός τε καὶ κεραυνοῦ, see (Ps.-)Diogenianus, 7:77b. Text in Leutsch & Schneidewin, *Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum*, 1:300. Comment in W. Bühler, *Zenobii Athoi Proverbia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), I.188–275. The maxim appears already in Synesius, *Oratio de regno* 11 (c. 400 CE). Cf. *Dixit philosophus: Rex est similis igni: Cui si nimis admotus fueris, cremaberis; si ex toto remotus, frigebis.* (Petrus Alfonsi, *Disc.* XXVI). See Hilka & Söderhjelm, *Die Disciplina Clericalis des Petrus Alfonsi*, 39, ll. 24–26, cited in Bauer, ‘Das Jesuswort’, 449.

16 Ignatius seems to quote the first half as a kind of proverbial proof-text, given the introductory ἀλλὰ, its elliptical character, and the fact that he seems to coin the secondary saying about the beasts off the back of it.

He who is near me, is near the fire. If the danger of persecution is implied here, this is paralleled in GTh 3, where inquisition of members of the *Thomas* movement may be implied, and in the blessing upon the persecuted in GTh 68.

And he who is far from me is far from the kingdom. There is an exclusivist claim here that not being a disciple is the same as being outside the pale of the kingdom. This saying brings Jesus and the kingdom into very close relationship. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above.

Logion 83¹

83.1 πε.σε̅ ιϛ̅ δε̅ νη̅κων̅ σε̅ο̅νον̅ ε̅βολ̅ ἡ̅πρω̅με̅ λ̅γω̅ πο̅γο̅ειν̅ ε̅τ̅νη̅ρη̅το̅υ̅ ρ̅η̅η̅ι̅
ϋ̅ν̅ ο̅ικ̅ων̅ 83.2 ἡ̅πο̅γο̅ειν̅ ἡ̅πει̅ω̅τ̅ι̅ ϣ̅η̅α̅δ̅ω̅λ̅η̅ι̅ ε̅βολ̅ λ̅γω̅ τε̅ϋ̅ρ̅ικ̅ων̅ ϋ̅η̅η̅ι̅ ε̅βολ̅
ϋ̅ι̅τ̅η̅ πε̅ϋ̅ο̅γο̅ειν̅

83.1 *Jesus said, “The images are visible to man, but the light which is within them is hidden. In the image (or, reflection) 83.2 of the light of the Father it will be revealed, but his image is hidden by his light.”*

Textual Comment

The problematic element is the adverbial phrase ‘in the image of the light of the Father’, which may either be the hiding-place of the light in 83.1 (‘the light in them remains concealed in the image of the light of the Father’; thus Lambdin²), or the location of the revelation of the light in 83.2 (‘In the image of the light of the Father, it will be revealed’). Plisch sees both of these as problematic, on the grounds that ‘the expression “the image of the light of the Father” is simply nonsense, since the light of the Father does not have any image.’³ As a result, he proposes emending ἡπογοειν to πογοειν: this results in a clear sentence division between 83.1 and 83.2.⁴ This is a possibility, but there may be other solutions which do not require a textual conjecture. Elsewhere the light can be said to have an image (e.g. ‘the image of the light’, in *Tri. Trac.* 94,24–25; *Paraph. Shem* 10,31; 39,16; cf. ‘the likeness of the light’ in *Paraph. Shem*

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 83:** DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 100–117; J.Ma. Asgeirsson, ‘Plato’s Timaeus and the Gospel of Thomas’, in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, A.D. DeConick & R. Uro, eds. *Thomasine Traditions in Antiquity: The Social and Cultural World of the Gospel of Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 155–174 (162–171); Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 227–233 (and 216–347 more generally); E.E. Popkes, ‘Das Licht in den Bildern—EvThom 83’, in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 909–915; E.E. Popkes, ‘The Image Character of Human Existence: GThom 83 and GThom 84 as Core Texts of the Anthropology of the Gospel of Thomas’, in J. Frey, J. Schröter & E.E. Popkes, eds. *Das Thomasevangelium: Entstehung—Rezeption—Theologie* (BZNW 157; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 416–434; Patterson, ‘Jesus Meets Plato’, 190–196.
 - ² Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II,2–7: Volume One*, 85; also, as far as the structure is concerned, DeConick, 247.
 - ³ Plisch, 191.
 - ⁴ ‘Images are visible to man, but the light which is within them is hidden in the image. The light of the Father will reveal itself, but his image is hidden by his light.’

3.34–35), so the idea is not necessarily nonsensical. There are also other options for the interpretation, as we shall see.

Interpretation

This saying is closely related to GTh 84 which follows. Some elements of it are reasonably clear. There are four statements, which are concerned with visible—invisible—visible—invisible respectively.

There is initially (in 83.1) a contrast between the *visible appearance* of human beings on the one hand, and the *invisible light* within them on the other (cf. the ‘light within a luminous person’ in GTh 24.3), between images in the sensible realm, and spiritual light in the intelligible realm. This is how human beings are constituted in the present. By contrast, the reverse is true of the constitution of the Father:⁵ his image is within his light (83.2), that is, he is surrounded by light. Although the light within humans is hidden at present, it will be revealed in the future (83.2).

The unclear element is, as has already been noted, the adverbial phrase ‘in the image of the light of the Father’, which may either be the ‘hiding-place’ of the light in 83.1 (‘concealed in the image of the light of the father’), or the location of the revelation of the light in 83.2, as in the translation above. A potential difficulty with the former is how the image within a person might be *concealed* in the image of the light of the Father: an image seems much more likely to be an instrument of revelation than of concealment; hence it makes better sense to tie the phrase ‘in the image of the light of the Father’ to what follows (‘it will be revealed’) than to what precedes (‘is hidden’). The way in which the light of the Father reveals the light within people is that the light within people shows up *reflected in* the light of the Father. For further detail, see the notes.

Notes

83.1 The images are visible to man, but the light which is within them is hidden. People can see each others’ physical, visible appearances,⁶ but the

⁵ Rightly, Plisch, 192.

⁶ Given 84.1, the images are very probably exclusively human; cf. Nordsieck’s more generalising view (307).

divine realm, though immanent, is invisible: on this latter, compare GTh 113.4, in which ‘the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth and people do not see it’. The language of ‘images’ may ultimately go back to Genesis, but the emphasis here is more on the outward appearances of people, rather than a theology of the *imago dei*: there is no thought in GTh 83–84 that people are made in the image of a higher power.⁷ The light within these images may well only belong to the elect, rather than humanity as a whole, as per GTh 24.3: ‘there is light within a luminous person’. Because it is within, it is invisible.

83.2 In the image (i.e. reflection) of the light of the Father it (sc. the light within people) will be revealed. One possible key to the interpretation of this statement is to take ‘image’ in the sense not of form or likeness, but of ‘reflection’ (LSJ 485b: ‘image in a mirror’). The framework of understanding in GTh 83.2 may be similar to that in the eschatological scene at the end of *Concept of our Great Power*:

Then the souls will appear, who are holy through the light of the Power, who is exalted, above all powers, the immeasurable, the universal one, I and all those who will know me. And they will be in the aeon of beauty of the aeon of judgment, since they are ready in wisdom, having given glory to him who is in the incomprehensible unity; and they see him because of his will, which is in them. *And they all have become as reflections (νῆρικων) in his light.* They all have shone, and they have found rest in his rest.

(*Conc.* 47,9–26)

If this parallel is appropriate, GTh 83.2 is referring to a future event in which the light within the elect⁸ will appear: at present, their light is not evident, but when the time comes, it will be revealed *in reflection of* the Father’s light.⁹ The event may be eschatological and universal, or it could be an individual one which occurs when the person attains knowledge, or experiences mystical

7 Pace DeConick, 248. It is also a difficulty for Popkes’ view of a background to *Thomas* in the *Apocryphon of John* that the precise use of εἶμα and εἰκων for ‘the different aspects of the image character of human existence’ does not work for GTh 83 (Popkes, ‘The Image Character of Human Existence’, 430). GTh 83 uses εἰκων both for the outward, physical human image and for the image of the Father.

8 Probably not the light of the Father (as argued by Valantasis); it is more likely that 83.2 is speaking of the future revelation of what in 83.1 is hidden.

9 On the view proposed here, it is unlikely that the ‘image of the light of the Father’ is Jesus (the view of Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 144).

vision (cf. 5.1). It may be that there is some Platonic background, as a number of scholars say, but there is no very precise source.¹⁰

83.2 But his image is hidden by his light. The point here may be that the Father himself remains invisible, although this would contradict GTh 15, which refers to vision of the Father. More likely perhaps is that the Father is surrounded by light, and in this surrounding light the Father (alone) can see his own image: the image is contained within the light, rather than penetrating it and going outside. This idea may be seen in the *Apocryphon of John*:

For it is he who contemplates him[self] in his light which surrounds [him], namely the spring [of] living water ... And in every direction he [perceives] his image (εἰκὼν) by seeing it in the spring of the [Spirit].¹¹

Here, the Father sees himself in the light-water surrounding him; he perceives his image as the light reflects it back to him. This might make sense of the apparent paradox at the end of this saying in *Thomas*, where the Father has an image, but it is hidden by his light.

10 Pokorný, 128; Hedrick, 148. There may be a contrast between the hidden light and the visible light in the cave allegory, but the parallel is inexact.

11 *Ap. John* II 4.19–24 and parallels in the other manuscripts.

Logion 84¹

84.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙϚ Ν̄ΡΟΥ ΕΤΕΤ̄ΝΑΥ ΕΠΕΤ̄ΝΕΙΝΕ ΩΔΡΕΤ̄ΝΡΑΩΕ 84.2 ΖΟΥΑΝ ΔΕ Ε-
ΤΕΤ̄ΝΩΔΑΝΝΑΥ` ΔΝΕΤ̄Ν̄ΡΙΚΩΝ` Ν̄ΤΑΖΩΩΠΕ ΖΙ ΤΕΤ̄ΝΕΖΗ ΟΥΤΕ ΜΑΥΜΟΥ ΟΥΤΕ
ΜΑΥΟΥΩΝΖ ΕΒΟΛ ΤΕΤ̄ΝΑΦΙ ΖΑ ΟΥΗΡ`

84.1 *Jesus said, 'When you see your likenesses, you rejoice! 84.2 But when you see your images which came into being before you—which neither die nor are revealed—how much will you bear!'*

Interpretation

In this saying, the theme of the revelation of images continues from GTh 83, with a shift from the third person to direct address in the second person plural. The revelation of the images in GTh 83, as they appear in the Father's light, may be the same as the vision in 84.2. The contrast introduced now in GTh 84 between 'image' and 'likeness' means that here an allusion to Genesis 1.26–27 is more apparent.² The main point here is straightforward: 'It contrasts the act of gazing at one's corporeal likeness with the vision of one's heavenly self, image, or angelic counterpart.'³ Popkes emphasises here that *Thomas* (along with the *Apocryphon of John*) depends on a Gnostic interpretation of Gen. 1.26–27,⁴ arguing that the image theology here cannot be accounted for by early Jewish interpretation but that *Thomas* depends here on the full Gnostic myth (see further notes below).⁵ The distinction between an immortal and a transient, external image, which is the main point here, is not uniquely Gnostic, however.⁶

1 **Bibliography for GTh 84:** DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 148–172; Asgeirsson, 'Plato's Timaeus and the Gospel of Thomas', 162–171; Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 227–233 (and 216–347 more generally); Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 190–196; Popkes, 'The Image Character of Human Existence', 416–434.

2 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 229–230.

3 DeConick, *Voices of the Mystics*, 94.

4 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 321.

5 Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 343–344.

6 Cf. 1 Cor. 15.49; Philo, *Opif.* 134; cf. Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 194.

Notes

84.1 When you see your likenesses, you rejoice! The reference here is to the everyday non-theological events of seeing one's likeness in a mirror, window, shadow or in water (or—less commonly—in a portrait or bust), events which are pleasant.⁷ 'Likeness' here (εἰκὼς) is distinguished from the 'image' in 84.2 (εἰκῶν), although the external likeness in 83.1 was designated by εἰκῶν.⁸

84.2 But when you see your images which came into being before you. These 'images' are the pre-existent beings which existed in the beginning (GTh 18), and come from the light (GTh 49–50). Philo also distinguishes between the man in his present (νῦν) form, and the first, noetic man formerly (πρότερον) created (*Opif.* 134).

84.2 Which neither die nor are revealed. The first element of this parenthetical remark is easily comprehensible—the pre-existent images are understandably everlasting entities. That they are not revealed probably means that they never appear in the sensible realm, hence the vision of these images in 84.2 is an intellectual-spiritual vision, in contrast to the everyday sense of sight involved in 84.1. Again, Philo refers to the true idea of 'man' made in the image of God as both imperishable and visible only to the intellect, in contrast to the visible mortal man (*Opif.* 134).

84.2 How much will you bear! Rather than being a genuine question,⁹ this is probably an exclamation of what a painful shock it will be for those who encounter their true images.¹⁰ The idea perhaps recalls what is also expressed in Plato's cave allegory:

7 So Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 194: 'one's own likeness, say in a mirror, a pool, or a painting.' Unlikely is a more technical sense suggested in Plisch, 193, 194 n. 3, (a view noted also by Pokorný, 129) of seeing fellow human beings.

8 Popkes, 'The Image Character of Human Existence', 430, notes: 'While the term εἰκῶν describes the image character of mankind to the upper deity, εἰκὼς marks the likeness of mankind to Yaldabaoth and his archons.' He is correct to take the term as a representation inferior to the 'image' in 84.2 (even if the distinction is not observed in GTh 83; cf. also *Apoc. Paul* 19,28–29, where Paul's image *below* is designated by εἰκὼς). Popkes emphasises that this parallels the terminology in *Ap. John* (see esp. *Menschenbild*, 229, 321–322, and 313–342 more widely).

9 οὔτις does not appear always to have an interrogative sense: see e.g. *Psalms of Heracleides* 5 (Allberry, *Manichaean Psalm-Book* II, 192, line 8); also Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 61 (§ 73).

10 See e.g. DeConick, 249, who also emphasises the dimension of the pain involved in the transformation. *Pace* Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 194, who takes the reference to be to the greatness of the image which they will reclaim and 'bear' in the heavenly realm.

When one of them (i.e. a prisoner in the cave) was untied, and forced to stand up suddenly, turn his head, and walk, and look towards the light, he would find all these things painful.

(*Rep.* 7 [515C])

If he was forced to look at the light itself, would it not hurt his eyes?

(*Rep.* 7 [515E])

Hence the vision in *Thomas* of the true images, which is undoubtedly positive overall, is initially discomforting. Perhaps there is some correspondence here to the idea that the final rest and rule promised in GTh 2 must be preceded by (disturbing) astonishment (see on GTh 2 above).

Logion 85¹

85.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΙC ΧΕ ΗΤΑ ΑΔΑΜ ΩΩΠΕ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΗΝΟΥΓΝΟC ΗΔΥΝΑΜΙC ΜΗ ΟΥΝΟC
ΗΜΗΝΤΡΗΜΑΟ ΑΥΩ ΗΠΕΦΩΩΠΕ Ε[ΦΗΠ]ΩΔ ΗΜΩΤΗ 85.2 ΝΕΥΑΖΙΟC ΓΑΡ ΠΕ [ΝΕΦ-
ΝΑΧΙ †]Π[Ε] ΑΝ ΗΠΜΟΥ

85.1 *Jesus said, 'Adam came into being from a great power and a great wealth, but he did not become [wor]thy of you. 85.2 For if he had been worthy, [he would] not [have tas]ted death.'*

Interpretation

This is one of a number of sayings which draw attention to the exalted status of the disciple in *Thomas*. Adam here, like the world elsewhere (GTh 56; 80; 111), is not worthy of the elect. This is evident from the fact that he tasted death whereas the true disciple will not (GTh 1).

Notes

85.1 Adam came into being. Adam (also mentioned in GTh 46.1) is the only OT figure named in *Thomas*.² There is no reason to suppose an exalted superhuman Adam (or 'Adamas') of a Gnostic or related sort (especially in the light of GTh 46, where Adam is clearly human).

85.1 From a great power and a great wealth. Power and wealth are divine attributes of a sort in Rev. 5.12. Using similar language, *Teaching of Silvanus* 112,8–10 refers to a 'Great Power and a Great Glory' who 'has revealed the world'. The phrase 'great power' is common in the Nag Hammadi literature, usually referring either to a supreme deity (e.g. in *Concept of our Great Power*), but also to other positive, lesser entities.³

The identity of the creator figure in GTh 85 is unclear. The Father is probably not a creator in *Thomas*, since he is not in general depicted as an agent. Jesus

1 **Bibliography for GTh 85:** Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 49–54; Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 190–196.

2 G.C. Stead, 'New Gospel Discoveries', *Theology* 62 (1959), 321–327 (326).

3 In *Allogenes* 50, there are various 'great powers'. In *Ap. John*, Sophia is in possession of a great power, which Yaldabaoth took from her (II 10,19–21 and parallels).

is a possibility, since he is in some sense the source of everything in GTh 77.1, but it would perhaps be peculiar for Jesus to refer to himself so obliquely in this way. Interestingly, Jesus speaks in GTh 101.3 of his true mother who gave him life, which may be evidence of a female creator figure, and would fit with the gender of 'power' and 'wealth', at least in the Coptic (ΔΥΝΑΜΙΣ, ΜΗΤΡΪΜΑΘ, both feminine); a female Spirit may be in view. The designation 'a great power and a great wealth' leaves open the possibility of some sort of demiurgic figure. Although sometimes evil (e.g. in 'classical' Gnostic works such as *Ap. John* and *Gos. Jud.*), two points reinforce the positive valuation of Adam's creator here (whether Jesus or a demiurge): first, wealth of a spiritual kind is positively valued in *Thomas* (29.3; 81.1), as elsewhere in early Christian literature (and Nag Hammadi texts); secondly, the point of referring to this origin of Adam is to highlight the drastic nature of his fall into death (probably) from such an exalted position.

Thomas may be consciously taking a position in the discussion of Adam's origins (even if that position is not completely clear to us). It is evident that GTh 85.1 contrasts with the *Second Treatise of the Great Seth*, where Adam is created as a counterfeit man by the Hebdomad, an evil demiurge (62,27–31). *Thomas* may be closer to the view of the Valentinians as reported in Irenaeus: 'they declare that Paradise, situated above the third heaven, is a fourth archangel, from whom Adam derived certain qualities while he conversed with him' (*AH* 1.5.2). Closer to *Thomas* is the view which Irenaeus attributes to Saturninus, namely that man was created by the angels, but being too weak to stand, he was given a spark of life by 'the Power' (*AH* 1.24.1). Hippolytus's Naassenes see Adam as enlivened by 'many powers' (*Ref.* 5.7.6). How much *Thomas* is in continuity with the older view of the supreme creator God as the maker of Adam, explicitly upheld in e.g. Theophilus (*Autolyc.* 2.18), is unclear.

85.1 But he did not become worthy of you. On the theme of unworthiness, cf. GTh 56; 80; 111.

85.2 For if he had been worthy, he would not have tasted death. On 'tasted death', see comments and bibliography *ad* GTh 1. Probably more than Adam's physical death is envisaged here, since mere biological death (something experienced by Jesus as well—no doubt—as some of the *Thomas* movement: cf. 55.2) would probably not indicate unworthiness. An allusion to Adam's death as penalty or *Unheil* is probably in evidence; Adam not only experienced physical death but expulsion from paradise (cf. GTh 19), and therefore forfeited the state of primeval innocence. Hence *Thomas* probably participates in the second-century discussion of whether Adam was to be saved, taking the negative position of Tatian which was so strongly to be condemned by Irenaeus (*AH* 1.28.1; cf. Irenaeus's own view in *AH* 3.23.8). This is interesting in the

context of the second century, when Adam became a subject of discussion in his own right in Christian texts, rather than simply as a type of Christ (only mentioned by name 9× in the NT; cf. the depiction in Paul in Rom. 5.12–19; 1 Cor. 15.22, 45). He is not an object of any speculation in the Apostolic Fathers.

Logion 86¹

86.1 πεχε τς δε [νβαωορ ογν̄τ]αχ ν[ο]υ[βηβ] αχω ηραλατε ογν̄ταῡ μαῡ
μη[ε]υμαξ 86.2 πωρηε δε μηρωμε μ̄νταῡ ηη[ογ]μα ερικε ητεϑ̄απε
ηϑ̄μ̄τον̄ μη[μο]ϑ̄

86.1 *Jesus said, '[Foxes ha]ve [hole]s, and birds have their nests, 86.2 but the son of man does not have a place to lay his head and rest hi[mself].'*

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Matt. 8.20/Lk. 9.58²) has a three-tier scheme, with birds above in the sky, foxes below the earth in holes, and the 'son of man' upon the earth.³ The main point has been variously described. Gärtner sees evidence of Gnostic redaction in the addition of 'rest' to the Synoptic saying.⁴ Pokorný accents the 'vulnerability and even the homelessness of human beings compared with the rest of the creation'.⁵ Hedrick emphasises the theme of itinerant mission, with the 'son of man' highlighting insignificant misery (cf. Job 25.4–6);⁶ similarly, Patterson identifies a 'lament that befits the plight of the wandering itinerant'.⁷ Doran sees more the thought of alienation.⁸

Although the Gnostic reading is not helpful, the addition of 'rest' is significant, because of the theme's importance as a soteriological category in *Thomas* (esp. GTh 60; 90; cf. 50; 51). As a result, the place of rest in this saying is probably not a room of one's own (as in the itinerancy interpretation), but rather rest

1 **Bibliography for GTh 86:** F.A. Strobel, 'Textgeschichtliches zum Thomas-Logion 86 (Mt 8,20/Lk 9,58)', *VC* 17 (1963), 211–224; R. Doran, 'The Divinization of Disorder: The Trajectory of Matt 8:20//Luke 9:58//Gos. Thom. 86', in B.A. Pearson, A.T. Kraabel & G.W.E. Nickelsburg, eds. *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 210–219; Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 227–231; N. Perrin, 'Thomas: The Fifth Gospel?', *JETS* 49 (2006), 67–80; Gathercole, *Composition*, 91–93.

2 The minor variations are 'birds' rather than the Synoptics' 'birds of the air', and the addition of 'and rest it/ himself' at the end.

3 Plisch, 197 n. 5.

4 Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 60.

5 Pokorný, 130–131.

6 Hedrick, 152, noting GTh 14; 36 and perhaps 42 as parallels.

7 Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 134.

8 Doran, 'Divinization of Disorder', 218–219.

in a theological sense. Taking 'son of man' in a more general sense than in the Synoptics (see notes below), the meaning of GTh 86 is that true rest is not to be found from this world.

Notes

86.1 Foxes have holes and birds have their nests. We are here in the realm of the material world. Plisch is right that the choice of foxes and birds is not arbitrary, for they occupy the spheres above and below human beings (cf. GTh 3.1–3 Gk).⁹

86.2 But the son of man does not have a place to lay his head and rest himself. There may be a connection between 'son of man' here and Adam in GTh 85, but even if so, no particular illumination results. At least five interpretations of 'son of man' are theoretically possible. (1) A Gnostic 'Son of Man' in the sense of a primordial, divine figure;¹⁰ (2) Jesus;¹¹ (3) a member of the *Thomas* movement;¹² (4) a combination of the two, such that Jesus is the 'Exemplum des wahren Menschen', which the disciple can follow and share in (cf. GTh 108);¹³ (5) human beings in the widest sense: a more 'uncanonical' translation such as 'child of humankind' is of course possible.¹⁴ If it is right as proposed above that the theme of 'rest' is crucial, and the point is that this rest is not available from the material world, then a view close to (3) and (5) is most likely: to the *Thomas* movement, the message is that they are right not to seek solace in the material world (and that they should not seek to do so); furthermore, the words of Jesus in the Gospel are the only hope for salvation for those outside.

9 Plisch, 197 n. 5.

10 Cf. *Ap. John* II 14,14–15 and parallels.

11 Plisch, 196.

12 Pokorný, 130–131.

13 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 227.

14 M.W. Meyer, 'Albert Schweitzer and the Image of Jesus in the Gospel of Thomas', in idem, *Secret Gospels: Essays on Thomas and the Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Continuum, 2003), 17–38 (21).

Logion 87¹

87.1 ΠΕΧΑϞ Η̅ΣΙ ̅Ϛ Ε ΟΥΤΑΛΛΑΠΩΡΟΝ̅ ΠΕ ΠΣΩΝΑ ΕΤΑϞΕ Ν̅ΟΥΣΩΜΑ̅ 87.2 ΑΥΩ
ΟΥΤΑΛΛΑΠΩΡΟΣ ΤΕ Τ̅ΥΧΗ ΕΤΑϞΕ Η̅ΝΑΕΙ Η̅ΠΣΗΑΥ

87.1 *Jesus said, 'Wretched is the body which depends on a body, 87.2 and wretched is the soul which depends on these two.'*

Interpretation

This saying is a near doublet of GTh 112 ('Woe to the flesh which depends on the soul. Woe to the soul which depends on the flesh'). There are interesting parallels to the saying in the Macarian corpus, e.g.:²

Woe to the body, when it stands on its own nature, because it is destroyed and dies. And woe to the soul, if it stands on its own nature alone ...³
(*Spiritual Homilies 1*)

This parallel might suggest a focus on (1) the interdependence of body and soul in GTh 87 as well.⁴ The difficulty, however, is that the Coptic is not easily amenable to this: 87.1 criticises the interdependence of one body and another, and of the soul and bodies.

Another view, proposed by DeConick, is that the reference is not to 'hanging' in the sense of 'depending' but of 'crucifixion'. As a result, the couplet is (2) a lament of the situation of embodiment, as likened to crucifixion.⁵ There are difficulties with translating the saying in terms of crucifixion, however, and the embodiment of the soul cannot really be in view in 87.1; the problem is with *two* bodies.⁶

1 **Bibliography for GTh 87:** Uro, *Thomas*, 58–62; Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 186–190.

2 For further discussion, see Introduction, § 4.1.

3 Cf. the almost identical: 'Woe to the body, when it stands on its own nature, because it is destroyed and dies. And woe also to the soul, if it stands on its own nature alone ...' (*Homilies* 9.3.7). For the Greek texts, see Introduction, § 4.1.

4 See the discussion of Uro's emphasis on interdependence in comment on GTh 112 below.

5 DeConick, 254.

6 Gianotto ('Étude critique', 307) remarks that the verb εἶπε here is qualitative (ἀπέ), whereas a reference to crucifixion would require a transitive usage.

Davies has argued that the body depending upon the body is the human body depending upon eating meat, and therefore the saying is (3) a criticism of a carnivorous diet, alluding to the same theme in GTh 11.⁷ It is difficult to see this point supported elsewhere in *Thomas*, however, even in GTh 11. GTh 14.4–5 in particular advocates a flexible stance towards eating.

Grosso sees the second body not as a human body but as the world, and the point is thus (4) a criticism of the person who is too integrated into the world, at great cost for the soul.⁸ The symmetry of the two bodies, and the ‘hanging’ of the soul from both perhaps makes this unlikely, but the ‘world’ interpretation remains a possibility.

Plisch sees ‘the body which depends on a body’ as (5) a reference to sex and marriage.⁹ ‘Depends’ thus has the sense of ‘depends for its happiness or pleasure’, or for protection and provision: it is in any case a *bodily* dependence. If this interpretation is correct, the saying is a slightly veiled criticism of marriage and sex. A more general application of Plisch’s view is seen by Valantasis and Hedrick, who see in the saying (6) a criticism of dependence upon other people in general, contrasting dependence with solitariness and making the two into one.¹⁰

Overall, Plisch’s view perhaps does best justice to the fact that there is a kind of symmetry in the reference to two bodies (implying that they are similar bodies); a change in meaning from (literal) body to (metaphorical) world is not impossible, though it is a stretch. Against a criticism of a more general dependency (6) is the fact that 87.2 refers specifically to *two* bodies. The saying makes good sense as lamenting the situation when a soul is dependent for its satisfaction upon two distinct persons, which fits well as a lament of marriage and specifically of sexual relations.¹¹

Notes

87.1 Wretched is the body which depends on a body. The ‘Wretched is ...’ formula in GTh 87 contrasts with the beatitudes in *Thomas*, but is not quite as negative as the ‘Cursed is ...’ or ‘Woe’ formulae (GTh 7.2, and 102; 112): it is

7 Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 108.

8 Grosso, 232.

9 Plisch, 198; I am grateful to Uwe-Karsten Plisch for explaining his view in personal conversation.

10 Valantasis, 167–168; Hedrick, 153; cf. similarly Pokorný, 131.

11 This reading does better justice to 87.2 than Grosso, 232, allows.

more lament than imprecation (see note on GTh 7.2). The verb εἶπε can mean hang in a physical sense (hence DeConick's interpretation as crucifixion), or dependency in a personal sense.¹²

87.2 And wretched is the soul which depends on these two. Other systems use the language of the soul hanging on the body. The Platonic view, for example, as cited by DeConick, is the fastening of the soul upon the body in the manner of a crucifixion.¹³ Secondly, there is the Valentinian hymn cited in Hippolytus, where, in the great continuum of being, the visionary sees 'flesh hanging from soul' (σάρκα μὲν ἐκ ψυχῆς κρεμαμένην).¹⁴ Neither of these two themes seems in view in GTh 87. Nor is there a criticism here of the soul as a merely psychic entity (i.e. at a level inferior to the pneumatic).¹⁵ The criticism is of the person who is dependent—in 87.2 at a more 'psychological' level—on their marital status.

12 Crum 88b–89a.

13 See M. Hengel, *Crucifixion in the Ancient World and the Folly of the Message of the Cross* (London: SCM, 1977), 67 and n. 4. The idea derives from Plato, *Phaed.* 83D, where the soul is fastened to the body by desire which is like a nail; cf. also Philo, *Post.* 61.

14 Hippolytus, *Ref.* 6.36.7. The wider use of this language means that the specification of DeConick, 253, of the 'hanging' here very specifically in terms of crucifixion is unlikely: a more cosmological and anthropological sense is probably in view.

15 Janssens, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas', 323.

Logion 88¹

88.1 πεχε̅ τ̅ε̅ χε̅ να̅γγελος̅ νη̅γ̅ ω̅αρ̅ω̅τ̅η̅ μ̅η̅ ν̅προ̅φη̅της̅ λ̅γ̅ω̅ σε̅να̅†̅ νη̅τ̅η̅
ν̅η̅ε̅τε̅γ̅η̅τ̅η̅τ̅η̅σε̅ 88.2 λ̅γ̅ω̅ ν̅τ̅ω̅τ̅η̅ ρ̅ω̅τ̅τ̅η̅γ̅τ̅η̅ νε̅τ̅η̅το̅τ̅η̅νε̅ τ̅α̅λ̅γ̅ ν̅α̅γ̅
ν̅τε̅τ̅η̅χ̅ο̅ος̅ νη̅τ̅η̅ χε̅ λ̅ω̅ ν̅ρ̅ο̅ο̅γ̅ πε̅το̅γ̅η̅ν̅η̅γ̅ ν̅σε̅χι̅ πε̅τε̅ π̅ω̅ο̅υ̅

88.1 *Jesus said, 'Messengers and prophets will come to you, and will offer you what you have. 88.2 And you for your part, give them what you have, and say to yourselves, "When will they come and take what belongs to them?"'*

Interpretation

There are three main interpretations of this saying proposed thus far.

The first view, taken probably by a majority, sees a rule about provision for itinerant preachers, on analogy with *Didache* 11–13.² The 'messengers and prophets' are thus wandering missionaries and Christian prophets who will visit the *Thomas* community ('will come to you') and proclaim the word ('offer you ...').³ The community, in return for the spiritual blessing of the teaching received, offers material help (cf. Rom. 15.27): the addressees are to 'give them what you have' (88.2). The cryptic last part of the saying is explained by Grosso as involving the need for the community to be organised and anticipate the coming of such people, and their 'taking what belongs to them'.⁴ The difficulty with this view is that the itinerants give the disciples addressed 'what you have'. Plisch attempts to gloss this with 'i.e. what is due to you', but the reference is fairly clearly to possession, i.e. to 'what you (already) have'.⁵

The second, minority, view takes the saying as a scene of final judgment: 'On the day when mortal life ends the heavenly messengers give men their proper heritage.'⁶ On this view, however, it is difficult to see why prophets

1 **Bibliography for GTh 88:** There are no special studies of this logion, to my knowledge. See the commentaries, ad loc.

2 Nordsieck, 318; DeConick, 255; Plisch, 199; Pokorný, 132; Hedrick, 154; Grosso, 233–234.

3 Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 72.

4 Grosso, 234.

5 Plisch, 199.

6 Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 146; noted also (though not advocated) by Nordsieck, 318, citing K. Berger & C. Nord, *Das Neue Testament und frühchristliche Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1999), 664 (*non vidi*).

are specifically highlighted, why these judges give the disciples what they (the disciples) have, and how GTh 88.2 would make sense.

A third view, peculiar to Valantasis, sees this saying as highlighting the exalted status of disciples, in that they have knowledge which surpasses that of angels and oracular speakers.⁷ It is hard to make sense of such a strange scene, however.

A solution to the problem may lie in an interpretation which has elements of the first view (which fits most of the evidence), but which can also do justice to the fact that the true disciples already possess what is offered by the itinerant preachers.

What perhaps works best is to suppose an encounter between Thomasine disciples on the one hand ('you'), and other early Christian 'messengers and prophets' on the other, an encounter which is more confrontational than that proposed in the first view above. In this confrontation, the messengers and prophets offer the *Thomas* disciples the gospel of salvation and eternal life, but the latter of course already possess life (88.1); in that sense these other early Christian workers are pictured as offering the *Thomas* disciples what they already have. On the other hand (88.2), these other Christian itinerants have not taken possession of the life which the *Thomas* movement enjoys: hence the elect addressed in this saying are to offer the truth to those messengers and prophets (88.2a), even as the Thomasine elect lament the fact that the other Christians do not accept it (88.2b). A similar idea, of the stubbornness of others near to the truth, and a similar tone of frustration, is perhaps expressed in GTh 74: 'Lord, there are many around the well, but there is no-one in the well' (see on this above, ad loc.). As Hedrick notes, it is unclear whether the saying is a warning or an encouragement.⁸ Any interpretation of this confusing saying must remain provisional, however.

Notes

88.1 Messengers and prophets will come to you. On the syntax (lit. 'messengers will come to you, and prophets'), cf. III.1. ἀγγελος here is to be understood in the terrestrial sense of 'messenger',⁹ and prophet in the sense of Christian prophet rather than OT prophets (cf. the 'prophets, sages and scribes' sent by Jesus in

⁷ Valantasis, 168–169.

⁸ Hedrick, 155.

⁹ For the translation 'messenger', see Bethge, 'Werdet Vorübergehende', 46.

Matt. 23.34; *Did.* 11, 13). There was no special office of ‘messenger’ in the early church, but there were those who played such roles.¹⁰

88.1 And will offer you what you have. The verb †, while conventionally translated ‘give’, can have the sense of wider sense of ‘offer’.¹¹ This is the sense here: ‘(try unsuccessfully) to give’, because the Thomasine disciples have no need of what is offered as they already possess it.

88.2 And you for your part, give them what you have. Literally, ‘... the things in your hand(s), give them to them.’ Here, the *Thomas* disciples are to present the knowledge that they themselves have discovered to those others who claim to be Christians.

88.2 And say to yourselves, “When will they come and take what belongs to them?” Jesus anticipates the Thomasine disciples’ great frustration with these others who will not come and find the truth which they (the true disciples) possess. These others are entitled to this revelation—it ‘belongs to them’—but refuse to accept it.

10 See e.g. *1Clem.* 65.1; Ignatius, *Polyc.* 7.2; 8.1.

11 E.g. Matt. 27.34/ Mk 15.23 sa, where the soldiers offered, אַרְתִּי, Jesus wine, which he refused.

Logion 89¹

89.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΤΣ ΧΕ ΕΤΒΕ ΟΥ ΤΕΤΝΕΙΩΔΕ ΜΠΣΑ ΝΒΟΛ` ΜΠΠΟΤΗΡΙΟΝ 89.2 ΤΕΤΝΗΡΝΟΕΙ
ΔΝ ΧΕ ΠΕΝΤΑΧΤΑΜΙΟ ΜΠΣΑ ΝΖΟΥΝ ΗΤΟΥ ΟΝ` ΠΕΝΤΑΧΤΑΜΙΟ ΜΠΣΑ ΝΒΟΛ`

89.1 *Jesus said, 'Why do you cleanse the outside of the cup? 89.2 Do you not realise that he who made the inside also made the outside?'*

Interpretation

This saying is paralleled in Matthew and Luke (cf. *Thund.* 20,18–22), with the significant difference that 89.2 reverses the order of the outside/ inside contrast (cf. esp. Lk. 11.40).² The saying has evoked a variety of interpretations, which may be classified as (1) ritual vs ethical, (2) social, and (3) anthropological.

The first sees the main concern of the saying in Jewish ritual washings.³ As Marjanen remarks: 'the main purpose of the logion is ... to emphasize that purifying one's outside does not help to correct the deficiency in one's inside.'⁴ Uro sees that such a view of Jewish practices fits with the rejection and spiritualisation of other observances such as circumcision and Sabbath observance,⁵ while observing the polemic here as aimed at other Christians,

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- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 89:** A. Baker, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Diatessaron', *JTS* 16 (1965), 449–454; R.J. Miller, 'The Inside is (Not) the Outside: Q 11:39–41 and GThom 89', *Forum* 5 (1989), 92–106; Iacopino, 'Mt 15,11 e Lc 11,39–40 nel *Vangelo di Tommaso*', 85–93; R. Uro, "'Washing the Outside of the Cup": Gos. Thom. 89 and Synoptic Parallels', in J.Ma. Asgeirsson, K. De Troyer & M.W. Meyer, eds. *From Quest to Q: Festschrift James M. Robinson* (Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 2000), 303–322; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 117–119.
 - ² See Matt. 23.25–26/ Lk. 11.39–40 (cf. also Mk 7.18; Matt. 15.17). Among other places, Lk. 11.40 in P45 C D shares this reversed order with *Thomas*. Uro, 'Washing', 317, notes that *Thomas* here is closer to Luke but much shorter. *Thomas* may have modified the Lukan version, removing the material about the inside being bad.
 - ³ DeConick, 256–257, helpfully refers to *m. Kel.* 25.1–8 for discussion of the inside and outside of vessels.
 - ⁴ Marjanen, 'Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?', 120.
 - ⁵ Uro, 'Washing the Outside of the Cup', 319, with reference to GTh 6; 14; 27; 53. Cf. Iacopino, 'Mt 15,11 e Lc 11,39–40 nel *Vangelo di Tommaso*', 90–91: 'Il senso gnostico a tutto il discorso viene dall' 89, dove la polemica contro le norme di purità transpare più dissimulata, ma altrettanto viva.' Also Grant & Freedman, 184; Grosso, 235; Hedrick, 156.

however, rather than at Jews.⁶ (Hence, the reference could be to baptism.) This interpretation sees the logic as similar to that of Luke's version: the same one made outside and inside, therefore why do you cleanse the outside (only), or indeed, why do it at all? The problem with that is that the emphasis in 89.2 is on the creator as maker of the *outside*.

Others consider that GTh 89 has lost the earlier reference to ritual washing.⁷ Thus Miller sees the inside/ outside as referring to social boundaries, concerning insiders and outsiders, which may be particularly relevant in a Jewish milieu, he argues.⁸ It does not yet have an anthropological sense, he maintains.⁹ This fits better with the emphasis in 89.2. The difficulty with Miller's view, however, is that *Thomas* does not seem overly concerned with social inclusion, and his view is not easily able to account for 89.1.

Thirdly, an anthropological reading concerned with the inside/ outside dichotomy does have the advantage of reflecting a theme widespread in *Thomas*, and not least on the point of the unification of 'outside' and 'inside' (cf. esp. GTh 22).¹⁰ This makes good sense of 89.2, and 89.1 could then be paraphrased: 'Why do you make a distinction between the outside and the inside?' The problem there is again (as in the anti-ritual interpretation) that the emphasis is in 89.2 on the creator as maker of the *outside*. There would be something of a *non sequitur* between 89.1 and 89.2.

Views (1) and (3) raise the important question of creation. Marjanen notes that the Father is implied as a creator here,¹¹ and Uro similarly comments that material creation seems positive.¹² If we could be sure about the meaning of the cup, this would be clearer. Part of the difficulty in interpreting *Thomas*'s version is that it seems to have become garbled in the course of abbreviation: it has a 'missing middle', specifically a missing premise.¹³ In addition, *Thomas*'s reversal of the Lukan order of the outside and inside in 89.2 leaves a real difficulty remaining, because it seems to be stressing the importance of the *outside*.

6 Uro, 'Washing', 319–320.

7 Gianotto, 'Quelques aspects de la polémique anti-juive', 166; Pokorný, 133.

8 Miller, 'Inside is (Not) the Outside', 95.

9 Miller, 'Inside is (Not) the Outside', 103.

10 Valantasis, 169–170; Pokorný, 133.

11 Marjanen, 'Is Thomas a Gnostic Gospel?', 118, 120; cf. Miller, 'Inside is (Not) the Outside', 94.

12 Uro, 'Washing', 319–320.

13 Goodacre, *Thomas and the Gospels*, 117–119.

One, perhaps remote, possibility is to see a parallel with GTh 53, where in response to a question about the validity of circumcision, Jesus replies: 'If it were an advantage, fathers would beget (children) by their mothers already circumcised.' (53.2). It may be that the same logic obtains in GTh 53 and 89:

[*Premise 1: The ideal state is the new-born state*]

Premise 2: People are born uncircumcised.

Conclusion: Therefore: don't bother with physical circumcision.

Premise 1: The creator also made the outside (not just the inside).

[*Premise 2: He made it perfectly well, 'uncleansed' by you.*]

Conclusion: Therefore: do not bother cleansing (baptising?) the outside.

If this is right, then there is a criticism of cleansing on the basis that it would be an attempt to improve upon creation, most likely as a criticism of Christian baptism: this would also fit well with the circumcision analogy in GTh 53. Like circumcision, baptism cannot work because it is a vain attempt to improve what God has made. But it must be admitted that this is speculative.

Notes

89.1 Why do you cleanse the outside of the cup? This is a rhetorical question implying negative criticism, like Jesus' other 'Why?' (εἵ τίς οὐ) question in GTh 78. The identity of the 'cup' is not immediately straightforward, and therefore the cleansing is not self-evident either. Seeing the cup as the 'vessel' of the body, or the person more broadly, finds support in Matt. 23.25–26/ Lk. 11.39–40.¹⁴

89.2 Do you not realise? GTh 89.2 reinforces the negativity of the rhetorical question in the first half of the saying with this expression of incredulity, common in Paul's letters (Rom. 7.1; 1 Cor. 6.2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 19; 9.24); but the wording here in *Thomas* (τετάρῃνοι ἀν χε ...) is closest to another passage—also incredulous—loosely parallel to this saying in the Synoptics (Mk 7.18; Matt. 15.17).

14 Cf. the description of the body as a σκεῦος (LSJ, sense 3; Lampe 1236b, senses 3–6); cf. 2 Cor. 4.7; 1 Thess. 4.4.

89.2 That he who made the inside also made the outside? Cf. Lk. 11.40. As noted, although it might have been more natural for Jesus to say ‘that he who made the outside also made the inside’, the syntax of the Coptic on the other hand stresses the point that the maker made the outside. In contrast to the ‘great power and great wealth’ from which Adam came (GTh 85), the maker here in 89.2 is grammatically masculine.

Logion 90¹

90.1 ΠΕΣΕ ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΕ ΑΜΕΙΓΝΩ ΔΑΡΟΕΙ ΧΕ ΟΥΧΡΗΣΤΟΣ ΠΕ ΠΑΝΑΞΒ' ΑΥΩ ΤΑΜΗΤΧΘΕΙΣ
ΟΥΡΜΡΑΩ ΤΕ 90.2 ΑΥΩ ΤΕΤΝΑΞΕ ΑΥΑΝΑ{Υ}ΠΑ{Υ}ΣΙΣ ΝΗΤΩ

90.1 *Jesus said, 'Come to me, because my yoke is kind and my lordship is mild, 90.2 and you will find rest for yourselves.'*

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Matt. 11.28–30) ultimately goes back to Wisdom tradition, especially as expressed in *Ben Sira*.² (1) Some see Wisdom themes as still strongly in evidence;³ (2) DeConick emphasises Targumic connections,⁴ and (3) others interpret the saying along Gnostic lines.⁵

In reverse order, (3) the Gnostic view has little to commend it; although 'rest' is a common enough theme in Nag Hammadi texts (and cf. the use of the Matthean saying in *PS* 95), it is very widespread across a great variety of literature.⁶ On the other hand, (2) DeConick's Aramaic background is not compelling either.⁷ Even (1) Wisdom, despite its popularity, is not necessarily significant. Although some scholars see Wisdom as permeating *Thomas*, the theme is not really so prominent.⁸ The epithet 'wise' is certainly positive in GTh 8 (cf. 'clever' in 39; 'shrewd' in 76), but the designation of Jesus by Matthew as 'wise philosopher' in GTh 13.3 seems to be regarded as inadequate. As a

1 **Bibliography for GTh 90:** J.B. Bauer, 'Das milde Joch und die Ruhe, Matth. 11,28–30', *TZ* 17 (1961), 99–106; A.D. DeConick, 'The Yoke Saying in the *Gospel of Thomas* 90', *VC* 44 (1990), 280–294; C.N. Jefford, 'Bearing the Yoke: A Tradition of Wisdom behind Thomas 90', *Forum* 10 (1994), 109–128.

2 Lady Wisdom makes her appeal (cf. *Sir.* 24.19: 'Come to me'); she has a yoke (cf. *Sir.* 51.26: 'put your necks under her yoke'); 'and you will find rest' (*Sir.* 6.28: 'you will find rest from her').

3 Jefford, 'Bearing the Yoke', 124; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 129.

4 DeConick, 'The Yoke Saying'.

5 Vielhauer, 'ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ'; Dehandschutter, 'La parabole de la perle', 252.

6 Dehandschutter provides a wealth of instances of 'lordship' in Nag Hammadi texts, but they do not shed any particular light on GTh 90. Dehandschutter, 'La parabole de la perle', 252 and n. 28.

7 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 93–94.

8 Cf. e.g. Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 204: 'a wisdom gospel that has been brushed over with the animating notions of Middle Platonism'.

result, one should perhaps not press *Thomas's* Jesus into the mould of 'wisdom christology'. (See discussion of GTh 28 above.) It may be that *Thomas* is in any case rather detached from Jewish wisdom literature such as Sirach, and so for the author/ editor and his readers there was little association with wisdom. Jefford's statement that 'it is the personification of Wisdom through whom this saying is offered' thus reads too much into GTh 90.⁹ What is clear, here, however, is that there is an emphasis on the person of Jesus and his character, and his ability to provide salvation in the shape of rest.

Notes

90.1 Come to me, because my yoke is kind and my lordship is mild. There is an implicit christology here, especially in the reference to the 'yoke' (i.e. authority), and 'lordship', unique in *Thomas* in identifying Jesus as Lord, or at least, master (cf. the unclear references in GTh 73–74). This is an invitation not so much to discipleship ('come to me', rather than 'come after me'), as to a master/ servant relationship.¹⁰ In this case, the master offers relief from troubles in exchange for easy and generously apportioned tasks to be carried out by the subordinate. It is not clear that there is a polemic here against other kinds of yokes which are harsher.¹¹

90.2 And you will find rest for yourselves. In addition to the Matthean parallel, cf. Jer. 6.16 ('and find rest for your souls'). Here, 'rest' has a soteriological sense (esp. GTh 60; 86; cf. 50; 51),¹² with a more specific connotation of relief from the world, and possibly also of divine, immovable perfection (cf. the divine marks of 'motion and rest' in GTh 50; and the 'standing' motif).¹³

9 Jefford, 'Bearing the Yoke', 124.

10 A.J. Dewey, 'Keep Speaking until You Find ...: Thomas and the School of Oral Mimesis', in R. Cameron & M.P. Miller, eds. *Redescribing Christian Origins* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 109–132 (116), is thus wrong to see 90.1 as suggesting 'a wisdom teacher orally inviting students to enter his tutorship'—it is lordship which is promised.

11 As might be the case in Matthew (cf. Jesus' light burden and the heavy burdens of the Scribes and the Pharisees; Matt. 11.30; 23.4). Hedrick, 157, may be correct that the yoke is easy because of the 'lax ritual obligations', especially if one sees a link with GTh 89. In *Thomas*, there could be a contrast with the oppressive burden of living in the world (e.g. GTh 56, 86).

12 Hedrick, 157; Grosso, 237.

13 Valantasis, 171 highlights the aspect of ceasing from activity.

Logion 91¹

91.1 ΠΕΧΔΥ ΝΔΨ` ΧΕ ΧΟΟΣ ΕΡΟΝ ΧΕ ΝΤΚ ΝΙΜ` ΟΥΝΑ ΕΝΔΡΠΙΣΤΕΥΕ ΕΡΟΚ` 91.2
ΠΕΧΔΨ ΝΔΨ ΧΕ ΤΕΤΗΡΠΡΑΖΕ ΜΠΡΟ ΝΤΠΕ ΜΗ ΠΚΑΖ ΔΨΩ ΠΕΤΗΠΕΤΗΜΤΟ ΕΒΟΛ`
ΜΠΕΤΗΝΣΟΥΩΝΨ` ΔΨΩ ΠΕΕΙΚΑΙΡΟΣ ΤΕΤΗΝΣΟΟΥΝ ΔΗ ΝΡΠΡΑΖΕ ΜΜΟΨ`

91.1 *They said to him, 'Tell us who you are, so that we might believe in you.'*
91.2 *He said to them, 'You inquire into the appearance of the sky and the earth, but the one who is in front of you you do not know, nor do you know this season and inquire into it.'*

Interpretation

This saying retains the 'weather' theme of the Synoptic parallels (Matt. 16.2–3, esp. 3b; Lk. 12.54–56, esp. 56), enabling the play on *καιρός* in the sense both of seasonal time (e.g. 'the season for figs', Mk 11.13) and time of salvation.² The criticism is of those who concern themselves with the former, but are not interested in the latter, which is of far greater significance. The indictment is both of the listeners' ignorance of Jesus and the 'moment of decision-making',³ but also of their *method* for discovering what is of supreme importance.⁴

Notes

91.1 **They said to him.** One might assume that the question here is posed by the disciples, but there has not been any reference either to a named disciple or to the group since GTh 72. A number of scholars emphasise the absence of specification.⁵ In Matthew, Jesus is asked by the Pharisees and the Sadducees; in Luke there is no question (and Jesus addresses the crowd).

1 **Bibliography for GTh 91:** There are no special studies of this logion, to my knowledge. See the commentaries, ad loc.

2 *Thomas* is rather closer to Lk. 12.56 than to Matthew.

3 Plisch, 205.

4 Valantasis, 172.

5 E.g. Valantasis, 171; Hedrick, 158.

91.1 Tell us who you are, so that we might believe in you. Cf. Jn 8.25 ('Who are you?') and Jn 6.30 ('... so that we may see and believe in you').⁶ There is a more pronounced christological emphasis in GTh 91.1 than in the Synoptic parallels.⁷

91.2 He said to them, 'You inquire into the appearance of the sky and the earth.' Rather than a merismus (meaning 'everything') the reference in sky and earth is to the weather and seasons.⁸ The Synoptic parallel refers to forecasting the weather on the basis of what is going on in the present: clouds portend rain, a southerly wind anticipates hot weather (Luke 12.54–55), and in the old proverbial paraphrase of Matt. 16.2–3: 'Red sky at night, shepherds' delight; red sky in the morning, shepherds' warning'. Similarly, here in *Thomas*, Jesus goes on to criticise a focus on such common wisdom as of purely secondary, worldly importance by comparison with what Jesus' audience has missed.

91.2 But the one who is in front of you. There is ambiguity in the Coptic, which could read 'but that (thing) which is in front of you', referring to an impersonal element.⁹ GTh 5 has the same ambiguity in Coptic, and the Greek is missing in the key place. GTh 52.2, however, has a similar statement, with a more clearly personal meaning, referring to Jesus himself ('you have ignored the living one in front of you').

91.2 You do not know ... nor do you know. Or, perhaps better in this context, 'recognize'. ('Know' has been retained in the translation to highlight the connections with other places in *Thomas*.) It is perhaps implied in Jesus' reply that preferable to 'faith' or 'believing' is inquiry leading to knowledge, in a possible polemic against assigning great importance to faith, as was common in early Christianity.¹⁰ 'Recognizing', or 'knowing' (κοοῦν) is a familiar theme from *Thomas* already (see Introduction, § 10.1–2 above). Here it is not reflexive as in GTh 3 but has the objects 'what is before you' and 'this season'.

91.2 This season. Jesus elsewhere insists on the time being limited for recognition of Jesus: compare GTh 59, where there is also reference to looking out

6 Nordsieck, 326.

7 Grosso, 238.

8 Pace Plisch, 205.

9 For reference to Jesus, see Plisch, 205; Pokorný, 134, and perhaps Hedrick, 158. For the impersonal sense, see Nordsieck, 325. Grant & Freedman, 185, specify the sense of 'self-knowledge'.

10 Thus Valantasis, 171. The πῖστ- word group is no less common in the Apostolic Fathers (e.g. 35 × in 1 *Clem.*; 44 × in Ignatius; 10 × in Polycarp, *Phil.*; 8 × in 2 *Clem.*; 20 × in *Barn.*) than in the NT.

for 'the living one' during one's own lifetime; similarly GTh 38 says the time for hearing Jesus' words is temporary: cf. also what follows in GTh 92.2.

91.2 And inquire into it. Inquiry (ῥηρησαζε) appears only here in *Thomas*, though is probably very similar to the motif of 'seeking' which is frequent and highly commended (GTh 2; 76; 92; 94; cf. 'asking' in GTh 4), and leads to the promise of finding life. In this respect, the reference to inquiry at the end of this saying leads naturally into the next, with its reference to seeking and investigating.

Logion 92¹

92.1 ΠΕΧΕ ἸϞ ΧΕ ΩΠΙΝΕ ΑΥΩ ΤΕΤΝΑΒΙΝΕ 92.2 ΑΛΛΑ ΝΕΤΑΤΕΤῆΧΝΟΥΕΙ ΕΡΟΥΥ
ἸΝΙΖΟΥΥ ΕῆΠΙΧΟΥΥ ΝΗΤῆ ἸΦΟΥΥ ΕΤῆΜΑΥ ΤΕΝΟΥ ΕΖΝΑῖ ΕΧΟΥΥ ΑΥΩ ΤΕΤῆΩΠΙΝΕ
ΔΝ ἸΧΩΟΥ

92.1 *Jesus said, 'Seek and you shall find. 92.2 But the things about which you asked me when I did not then tell you, I now desire to say. But you do not seek them.'*

Interpretation

This saying begins a block of material which appears together in Matthew and (partially) in Luke: GTh 92/ Matt. 7.7/ Lk. 11.9; GTh 93/ Matt. 7.6; GTh 94/ Matt. 7.8/ Lk. 11.10.² Jesus orders the audience to seek the truth in the interpretation of his words,³ and intensifies the command with a rebuke of the audience's lack of interest in the present. There is some connection with GTh 38, although there are also differences. GTh 92 stresses a past when the disciples asked but Jesus did not answer, in contrast to the present, in which Jesus is now willing to answer but the audience is no longer interested.⁴ Like 92, GTh 38 emphasises a past in which the disciples inquired ('many times you have desired to hear these words ...') but also warns of a future when it will be too late ('days are coming when you will seek after me but will not find me'). The relationship between the narrative audience and the readers of *Thomas* is rather unclear, however.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 92:** E. Peretto, 'Loghia del Signore e Vangelo di Tommaso', *Rivista biblica* 24 (1976), 13–56 (39–42); Attridge, "Seeking" and "Asking" in Q, Thomas, and John', 295–302; Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 356–370.

2 For other examples of such clusters, and the implications, see Gathercole, *Composition*, 131.

3 Plisch, 207; Pokorný, 135.

4 Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 361: 'Jesus withheld his clearest revelations from his disciples until the very end of his life.'

Notes

92.1 Seek and you shall find. Like Matt. 7.7 and Lk. 11.9, this statement appears in the form of an imperative with an attached promise (cf. GTh 94/ Matt. 7.8/ Lk. 11.10, on which see below).⁵ This recalls the programmatic statement in GTh 2 about the need to do this (cf. also seeking the living one in GTh 59, and the treasure in GTh 76). This continues the theme of GTh 91: inquiry ('seek') leads to knowledge ('you shall find'). As Watson notes, this new setting yields a very different sense from the earlier context of 'seeking' as prayer.⁶

92.2 But the things about which you asked me. The 'things' here are presumably the substance of Jesus' saving revelation.

92.2 When I did not then tell you, I now desire to say. This also harks back to GTh 91 and understanding the present season. It looks back to a period of Jesus' ministry when he did not reveal the truth; as such, it may be describing the public ministry of Jesus as a time of ignorance—one impulse for this might be the various instances in the Synoptic Gospels when Jesus refuses to answer questions.⁷ Or again, a possible parallel is John 16.25 with its contrast between a period of Jesus speaking figuratively and a future time when he will speak openly. The present epoch, 'this season' in GTh 91, is a time of revelation and the opportunity to find salvation. There will come another time in the future, however, when it will be too late (after death, in GTh 59; later in the audience's experience in GTh 38).

92.2 But you do not seek them. Despite the present season of revelation, at least some of the addressees are, as in the previous saying, wilfully ignorant. Compare also Jesus' incredulity in GTh 113: 'the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it.'

5 For discussion of parallels, see further Tuckett, *Gospel of Mary*, 157 n. 72.

6 Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 361.

7 Mk 11.33 (par. Matt. 21.27/ Lk. 20.8) explicitly refers to Jesus' refusal to answer a question, that of the origin of his authority; in Lk. 23.9, Herod asks numerous questions, which Jesus refuses to answer; Jesus makes no reply to Pilate and the chief priests in Mk 15.5; he is silent in the face of the High Priest's charge: Mk 14.61/ Matt. 26.63.

Logion 93¹

93.1 ⲙⲡⲣⲓⲧ ⲡⲉⲧⲟϣⲁⲃ ⲛⲛⲟϣⲣⲟⲡⲓ ⲁⲉⲕⲁⲥ ⲛⲟϣⲛⲟⲩⲟϥ ⲉⲧⲕⲟⲡⲣⲓⲁ 93.2 ⲙⲡⲣⲛⲟϥⲁⲉ
ⲛⲛⲓⲙⲁⲣⲓⲧⲧⲏⲥ ⲛⲓⲛⲉⲩⲟⲩⲁϥ ⲩⲛⲓⲛⲁ ⲁⲉ ⲛⲟϣⲁⲁⲓⲧⲧⲏⲥ ⲛⲓⲛⲁ[...]

93.1 *Do not give what is holy to dogs, lest they cast them into the dung.* 93.2
Do not cast pearls [to] pigs, lest they make them'

Textual Comment

It is not necessary to restore ⲡⲉⲕⲉ ⲓⲉ at the beginning (cf. e.g. GTh 27; 101).² The penultimate word has a mistaken singular suffix (ⲛⲟϣⲁⲁⲓⲧⲧⲏⲥ). Suggestions for the final word have included ⲛⲓⲛⲁⲓⲧⲧⲏⲥ ('make them *nothing*'), ⲛⲓⲛⲁⲓⲧⲧⲏⲥ ('make them into *mud*'), ⲛⲓⲛⲁⲓⲧⲧⲏⲥ and ⲛⲓⲛⲁⲓⲧⲧⲏⲥ ('break them *into pieces*').³ In Matthew, the danger is 'lest they trample them under their feet', but it is difficult to make this fit the Coptic text.

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Matt. 7.6) appears in a cluster of material found together in Matthew (see above on GTh 92). It is probably easier simply to see both instructions as *impossibilia*, or ridiculous scenarios which are to be avoided. When it comes to the *meaning*, the explanations in the reception of this enigmatic saying are not much help as they are very diverse.⁴ In the *Didache*, 'what is holy' is the Eucharist, from which the unworthy are to be excluded (*Did.* 9.5). Among the Naassenes, the pearls are the elect souls who have been cast down

1 **Bibliography for GTh 93:** H. von Lips, 'Schweine füttert man, Hunde nicht—ein Versuch, das Rätsel von Mt 7,6 zu lösen', *ZNW* 79 (1988), 165–186; S. Schreiber, 'Cavete Canes! Zur wachsenden Ausgrenzungswalenz einer neutestamentlichen Metapher', *BZ* 45 (2001), 170–192 (180–187); U.-K. Plisch, "Perlen vor die Säue"—Mt 7,6 im Licht von EvThom 93', *ZAC* 13 (2009), 55–61.

2 Plisch, 207–208; *pace* Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 86.

3 See Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 86.

4 See further DeConick, 264, on the later parallels in *Recognitions*.

into this world, and the work of the dogs and pigs is intercourse between man and woman (Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.8.33). In an allusion in the *Gospel of Philip*, this saying is applied to the perfect instruction which only the children are allowed to receive, whereas people likened to dogs and pigs only receive the spiritual equivalent of bones and acorns (*Gos. Phil.* 80,23–81,14). Tertullian uses the aphorism to restrict admission to baptism (*Bapt.* 18.1, linking the saying with 1 Tim. 5.22). According to Epiphanius, the Basilideans took the saying to mean that one should not confess before persecutors (*Pan.* 24.4–5).⁵ Others saw the saying as justifying keeping mysteries from those not initiated (the Elchasaïtes in Hippolytus, *Ref.* 9.17.1; cf. Tertullian, *Praescr.* 26). Clement evinces a certain worry about porcine readers of his work when he uses the sayings (*Strom.* 1.12.55.3–4), and also says that God does not reveal himself without a degree of caution (*Strom.* 2.2.7.4). Origen applies it to those in the church who neither leave like unbelievers nor stay faithful as Christians (*Hom. in Jos.* 21.2). Also of possible relevance is 2 Peter 2.22, where false teachers are likened to dogs and pigs.⁶

Among modern commentators, some see GTh 93 as a ‘mission rule’, exhorting disciples not to waste *Jesus’ words* on the unworthy,⁷ or, more moderately, ‘an admonition to proclaim the gospel in a careful way that avoids the possibility of misunderstanding or ridicule.’⁸ DeConick, by contrast, sees it in connection with GTh 92.2 (‘you asked me when I did not then tell you’), explaining why Jesus did not answer the disciples’ questions in the past.⁹ Others see a connection with 92.1, and thus in a sense which restricts the seeking and finding to the worthy.¹⁰ A connection with GTh 92 is helpful. Obviously to advocate withholding the words of Jesus from those outside *tout simple* is out of the question, or no-one could ever join the movement at all. A qualification, however, that the words of Jesus should not be entrusted to outsiders until they display their readiness (and worthiness) is both more realistic, and fits (to some extent) the scenario in GTh 92.¹¹

5 See also F. Williams’ valuable notes in his translation: *The Panarion of Epiphanius of Salamis* (NHMS 63; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 79 nn. 20–21.

6 Von Lips, ‘Schweine füttert man’, 168, 172.

7 Plisch, 209.

8 Pokorný, 136.

9 DeConick, 264.

10 Valantasis, 175; Nordsieck, 331.

11 It only partially fits GTh 92, because it seems there that the audience is still not ready. Nor is the transition from 92–93 seamless, since GTh 91–92 presuppose ignorant addressees, whereas GTh 93 does not.

Notes

93.1 Do not give what is holy to dogs, lest they cast them into the dung. Scholars have disagreed over the realism of this aphorism. Plisch has maintained a real life setting, and an everyday rule of piety applicable to the situation of the bones of sacrificed meat ending up on the streets, to be eaten by dogs.¹² Hedrick considers it unrealistic however, objecting that ‘dogs do not throw things on dung piles’.¹³ The final clause in 93.1 probably does make Plisch’s view difficult, and the instruction ‘do not give’ probably suggests something more intentional than *allowing* sacrificial meat *to fall into the hands of* the dogs. It is more straightforward to see the saying in line with 93.2 (which all agree *is* unrealistic) as a ridiculous scenario.

93.2 Do not cast pearls to pigs, lest they make them ... An unquestionably unrealistic scenario, in synonymous parallelism with 93.1.

12 Plisch, ‘Perlen vor die Säue’, 58: ‘Die Regel ist also eine ganz praktische Vorschrift für den religiösen Alltag.’ Cf. also Plisch, 208–209.

13 Hedrick, 161.

Logion 94¹

94.1 [πε.χ]ε̅ τ̅ε̅ πετῶνινε̅ φναβ̅σινε̅ 94.2 [πεττω̅ρ̅μ̅ ε̅]ζ̅ογ̅ν̅ σεναογ̅ων̅ ναϑ̅

94.1 *Jesus [sai]d, 'He who seeks will find. 94.2 To him [who knocks], it will be opened.'*

Interpretation

This saying (cf. Matt. 7.8; Lk. 11.10) appears in a cluster of material found together in Matthew (see above on GTh 92). It follows on from GTh 92 in the same way as Matt 7.8 and Luke 11.10 follow on from an imperative form of the 'seek and ye shall find' saying.² For further detail on 'seeking-finding' see on GTh 92 above.

These images again represent the inquiry-knowledge schema mentioned in GTh 91 and 92. *Thomas* differs in an important way from the Matthean and Lukan versions of the saying, where the 'seek-ask-knock' trio is an exhortation to prayer: the references to seeking and knocking are sandwiched between a reference to *asking*, and the illustration in which Jesus refers to human fathers not giving sons the opposite of what they *asked* and the theological point that God will give to those who ask of him. In Luke the point is even clearer, with this section having followed on from the Lord's prayer. *Thomas* has no reference to asking and being given either at the beginning or at the end, which may reflect *Thomas's* attitude to prayer (see above on GTh 14).³ In *Thomas* the saying is about the labour of interpretation which leads to knowledge. The terminology of seeking harks back to GTh 2, which thematises seeking as the right approach to this book.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 94:** Attridge, "Seeking" and "Asking" in Q, Thomas, and John', 295–302; Watson, *Gospel Writing*, 356–370.

2 GTh 94 differs from GTh 92 in being formed with 'articulated attributive clause constructions' (the article with a relative clause) rather than imperatives. See Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 332–333 (§ 411).

3 Plisch, 210; Pokorný, 135.

Notes

He who seeks will find. Cf. e.g. *Gos. Mary* 8,20–21. The theme of seeking and finding is a central one in *Thomas* (esp. GTh 2; 76; 92; 107; cf. differently 97).

To him who knocks, it will be opened. This is a further metaphorical amplification of the previous point, using the image of knocking at a door (cf. the exclusion of those at the door in GTh 75).⁴

⁴ In view of the parallelism with GTh 94.1, 94.2 is not to be understood literally (in terms of hospitality in a mission situation), as Plisch, 210, suggests is possible.

Logion 95¹

95.1 [πεδε̅ ι̅c̅ xε̅] εωωπε ου̅ν̅τη̅τ̅η̅ τ̅η̅ ρο̅μ̅τ̅ ἡ̅π̅ρ̅† ε̅τ̅μ̅η̅c̅ε 95.2 α̅λλ̅α † [ἦ̅μ̅ο̅c̅]
ἡ̅π̅ε̅†[ε̅]τ̅η̅α̅x̅ι̅τ̅(ḡ) α̅η̅ ἡ̅τ̅ο̅ο̅τ̅c̅

95.1 [*Jesus said,*] *If you have money, do not lend it at interest; 95.2 rather, give [it] to one from whom you will not receive it back.*

Interpretation

This saying begins with reiterating the biblical² and early Christian³ prohibition of taking interest on a loan; 95.2 then intensifies it with the command to lend without expecting the money back at all (Lk. 6.30–35).⁴ The assumption here is, as Grosso remarks, that in *Thomas's* asceticism, renunciation of the material goods is a condition for following Jesus.⁵ One might soften this slightly to saying that the true disciple's *indifference* to money means that it can be disposed of freely. Almsgiving is not rejected as in GTh 14, but renamed and redefined.⁶

Notes

95.1 If you have money. The author regards it as imaginable that a disciple may have surplus money, though one cannot generalize about the *Thomas* movement on this basis.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 95:** There are no special studies of this logion, to my knowledge. See the commentaries, ad loc.

2 Exod. 22.24/25; Lev. 25.35–37; cf. Neh 5.7, 10; Ps. 15.5; Ezek 18.8, 13, 17; 22.12. Note the restriction, rather than blanket prohibition, in Deut. 23.19–20.

3 The earliest condemnation of usury in early Christianity is usually taken to be the vision of usurers in hell in *Apoc. Petr.* 31 Co/ 10 Eth. See J.K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 606, for translations of the parallel versions. See further R.P. Maloney, 'The Teaching of the Fathers on Usury: An Historical Study on the Development of Christian Thinking', *VC* 27 (1973), 241–265; L.J. Swift, 'Usury', in E. Ferguson ed. *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity* (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1997), 1150–1151.

4 Cf. *Did.* 1.5; Clement, *Strom.* 2.18.84.4; Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.17.

5 Grosso, 242.

6 Valantasis, 175.

95.1 Do not lend it at interest. Lending at interest is also mentioned again in GTh 109, in one of *Thomas's* 'immoral' parables (cf. discussion of GTh 98 below). On *Thomas's* reasoning, see the next comment.

95.2 Rather, give it to one from whom you will not receive it back. The reason for the prohibition of usury in GTh 95.1, then, is not merely the broader opposition to engagement in business in *Thomas* (cf. GTh 64), or the practical risk involved in lending money,⁷ or the philosophical critique that it is unnatural for money to breed money.⁸ The OT prohibitions are unlikely to be of interest to *Thomas* (cf. GTh 52). Nor perhaps is it only the patristic critique that usury contradicts the principle of Christian love which entails that one should give without expecting even repayment, let alone interest, though this may be part of *Thomas's* concern (cf. GTh 25).⁹ Perhaps alongside the altruistic element, what is equally prominent is that *Thomas* encourages a lack of concern with money. Just as diet and clothes are clearly *adiaphora*—'eat whatever is set before you' (GTh 14), and 'do not be concerned about what you will wear' (GTh 36)—so the same carefree approach to money appears here: a similar attitude is displayed in GTh 100.2 with its injunction to give to Caesar what is Caesar's.

⁷ Plato, *Laws* 742C.

⁸ Philo, *Virt.* 14.82–83, following Aristotle, *Pol.* 1258B, who calls it *μάλιστα παρὰ φύσιν*.

⁹ Swift, 'Usury', 1150: 'Although the New Testament has virtually nothing to say on the subject ... the church fathers inveighed against usury on the basis of Old Testament prohibitions ... and the conviction that the practice is inherently opposed to the demands of Christian love.'

Logion 96¹

96.1 π[ε.ξε] τ̄c χε τ̄π̄π̄τερο μ̄πειωτ̄ εστ̄ν̄τω[ν λγ]ςριμε 96.2 α.σ.χ.ῑ ν̄ογκογει
ν̄σαειρ [α.σ.ε]οπῑ ε̄ν̄ ογωωτε α.σα.α.γ̄ ν̄ε̄ν̄νο[σ̄ ν̄]νοεικ̄ 96.3 πετεγ̄μ̄ μα.α.χ.ε
μ̄μογ̄ μα[ρε]γ̄σωτ̄μ̄

96.1 *Jesus s[aid], 'The kingdom of the Father is lik[e a] woman. 96.2 She took a little leaven, [h]id it in some dough, and made it into lar[ge] loaves. 96.3 He who has ears, le[t] him hear.'*

Interpretation

Thomas here moves from Sermon on the Mount/Plain material (in GTh 92–95) to a trio of parables (GTh 96–98), all of which are concerned with ‘the kingdom of the Father’. This first, the parable of the Leaven (cf. Matt. 13.33/ Lk. 13.20–21), like the second in GTh 97, has a female protagonist. It is *Thomas’s* tenth parable (see comment above on GTh 8). GTh 96 is interpreted in two principal ways.

The first interpretation focuses upon the woman as model of action: as Doran notes, *Thomas* has the woman as the subject of all three verbs (‘She took ..., hid ..., and made ...’).² King says of the woman, along with the attackers in GTh 35 and 98: ‘They are all prepared, they know what to do, and this assures them of success.’³ Along different lines, Heldermann thinks that a Manichaean redactor has edited GTh 96–98 *en bloc*:⁴ as a result GTh 96 is about a catechumen (likened to Martha), over against the elect (like Mary) in GTh 97.⁵ Hearon and Wire also draw attention to the prominent role of the woman.⁶ For some,

1 **Bibliography for GTh 96:** Doran, ‘A Complex of Parables’, 347–352; Fleddermann, ‘The Mustard Seed and the Leaven’, 216–236; J. Helderman, ‘Manichäische Züge im Thomasevangelium’, in S. Emmel, et al., eds. *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit: Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses, Münster, 20.–26. Juli 1996* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999), II.488–493; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 328–335; Hearon & Wire, “Women’s Work in the Realm of God”, 136–157.

2 Doran, ‘Complex of Parables’, 348.

3 King, ‘Kingdom’, 52.

4 Helderman, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 493.

5 Helderman, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 492.

6 Hearon & Wire, 137–138, noting also that calling this saying the ‘parable of the Leaven’ obscures this point.

this prominence also reflects the prominent position of women in the *Thomas* community.⁷ Doran emphasises the striving involved in the woman's action, a point at which Grant & Freedman see a rather Pelagian attitude in such an emphasis.⁸ Doran sees *Thomas* as striking a balance between divine and human agency, however: 'While 96 and 98 stress the action of the individual, 97 shows that the individual on her/his own cannot survive.'⁹

Secondly, others emphasise as more prominent the point that the kingdom begins small and hidden, but grows into something disproportionately large.¹⁰ The first and second views are not mutually exclusive: King can also say that one point is that 'to belong to the kingdom means to have access to hidden, but effective power',¹¹ and Doran can also note that the 'unseen action of the leaven is juxtaposed to the mysterious advent of God's reign.'¹²

To evaluate these two emphases, it seems unlikely that the emphasis lies on the woman's behaviour. The emphasis is not on 'the practical know-how of the good baker';¹³ any quite mediocre baker or housewife of the time would have known to do this much. Although *Thomas* has the woman as the subject three times, this is only one occasion more than the Synoptic parallels. Nor are her actions particularly dramatic or remarkable, as those of the figures in GTh 35 and 98 are. It is also hard to see how a quotidian domestic image would reflect the gender-inclusivity of the *Thomas* community.

Much more likely to be important is the contrast between small and large (cf. GTh 8; 20; 107). *Thomas* refers to the amount of yeast as 'small' and the loaves as 'large', neither of which epithets appears in the Synoptic parallels.¹⁴ Hence the primary theme is similar to that of the parable of the Mustard Seed, namely the apparently inconspicuous character of the kingdom in the present, whose greatness will nevertheless eventually be clearly apparent.¹⁵ There may be a sense that the leaven is the light or image within—which is not small, but

7 Valantasis, 176–177; Grosso, 243.

8 Doran, 'Complex of Parables' 351–352; Grant & Freedman, 187.

9 Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 352.

10 Nordsieck, 339; Pokorný, 138; Hedrick, 165.

11 King, 'Kingdom', 56.

12 Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 351–352.

13 Pace Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 348.

14 Higgins, 'Non-Gnostic Sayings in the Gospel of Thomas', 301; Fleddermann, 'The Mustard Seed and the Leaven', 230; Petersen, 'Jülicher', 193.

15 Nordsieck, 339; Hedrick, 165. In dealing with the Matthean version, Davies and Allison mention various possibilities, most of which in some degree emphasize the contrast between the small leaven and the large loaves (*Matthew*, II.422).

is invisible and perhaps insignificant from the world's point of view.¹⁶ If this is the case, there is similarity with the views of both the Naassenes, for whom the yeast is interpreted in conjunction with Luke 17.21 as the kingdom within,¹⁷ and Clement (and probably Theodotus), for whom the leaven is (at least in part) 'the elect seed'.¹⁸ In the Valentinian interpretation criticised by Irenaeus the woman is Sophia, the yeast is Christ and the three loaves are the pneumatics, psychics and hylics;¹⁹ this is an interpretation specifically of the Matthean version and is not relevant here.²⁰

Notes

96.1 The kingdom of the Father is like a woman. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, § 10.1 above. For the 'kingdom of the Father', cf. GTh 57; 76; 97–98; 113 (cf. 99). There is perhaps a deliberate jolt here in the clash of genders, which may be intended to signal that the kingdom is to be understood in paradoxical terms. The syntax here in *Thomas* differs slightly from the Synoptics' version in likening the kingdom to the woman, rather than (as in Matthew and Luke) to the leaven. This enables GTh 96 and 97 to function as a pair of parables where a female character is the protagonist (with GTh 98 as rather different).

96.2 She took a little leaven, hid it in some dough, and made it into large loaves. In contrast to the paradox just noted, we are introduced to a very standard activity of a woman at the time of *Thomas*. For 'little leaven', cf. 1 Cor. 5.6. The leaven is positive here, in contrast to its usually negative use in antiquity (cf. Ignatius, *Magn.* 10.2).

16 It is unlikely to be a reference to the *Thomas* community, as Valantasis argues: 'this similitude posits a very positive and natural growth from a small, hidden group of people, to a large body capable of providing others with sustenance' (176). This reference to sustenance is to read the parable too literally.

17 Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.8.8.

18 Clement, *Exc. Theod.* 1.1.3.

19 Irenaeus, *AH* 1.8.3: 'For they teach that the woman represented Sophia; the three measures of meal, the three kinds of men—spiritual, animal, and material; while they say that the leaven denoted the saviour himself.'

20 *Contra* W.R. Schoedel, 'Gleichnisse in Thomasevangelium', in W. Harnisch, ed. *Gleichnisse Jesu. Positionen der Auslegung von Adolf Jülicher bis zur Formgeschichte* (Wege der Forschung; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1982), 369–389 (383–384), who ascribes significance to this parallel.

96.3 He who has ears, let him hear. This is the sixth, and final usage of this formula in *Thomas*. For discussion, see note on GTh 8. Here it perhaps signals the need to interpret this parable in an allegorical sense.

Logion 97¹

97.1 πεχε τ̄ε δε τμη̄ντερο ἡπε̄[ιδτ̄ ε]ϛ̄τ̄ν̄των λῡςριμε ε̄ςϛι ρα ο̄ῡλ̄[μ̄ει] ε̄ϛ̄με̄ ἡ̄νο̄ειτ̄ 97.2 ε̄ςμο̄ο̄ῡε ρ̄[ι τε]ρῑη̄' ε̄ςο̄ῡνο̄ῡ ἀπ̄μᾱᾱδε ἡ̄πο̄λ̄η̄[ε]̄εῑ ο̄ῡω̄β̄η̄ ἀπ̄νο̄ειτ̄' ω̄σο̄ῡ ἡ̄ςω̄ς [ε]̄! τε̄ρῑη̄ 97.3 νε̄ςσο̄ο̄ῡη̄ ἀη̄ πε̄ νε̄ ἡ̄πε̄σε̄ρῑμε̄ ε̄ρῑ-
σε̄ 97.4 ἡ̄τ̄αρ̄ε̄σ̄π̄ω̄ε̄ ε̄ρῑο̄ῡη̄ ε̄πε̄ςνε̄ῑ ἀςκᾱ πο̄λ̄μ̄εῑ ἀπε̄ςη̄τ̄' ἀς̄ρε̄ ε̄ροϛ̄ ε̄ϛ̄' ω̄ο̄ειτ̄'

97.1 *Jesus said, 'The kingdom of the Fa[ther] is like a woman who was carrying a jar full of meal. 97.2 While she was away on a long journey, the handle of the jar broke and the meal emptied out behind her on the road. 97.3 She did not realise it. She did not feel tired. 97.4 When she reached her house, she put the jar down and found it empty.'*

Interpretation

The parable, which is *Thomas's* eleventh (see comment above on GTh 8), has no Synoptic parallels,² but like its predecessor in GTh 96, it has a female protagonist. Its peculiarity has ensured that it has attracted a number of different lines of interpretation.³

- ¹ **Bibliography for GTh 97:** R. Merkelbach, 'Logion 97 des Thomasevangeliums', *BASP* 22 (1985), 227–230; B.B. Scott, 'The Empty Jar', *Forum* 3 (1987), 77–80; Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 350–352; J. Helderman, 'Log 97 vom manichäischen Gesichtspunkt ausgesehen', in W. Beltz, ed. *Der Gottesspruch in der koptischen Literatur: Hans-Martin Schenke zum 65. Geburtstag* (Halle: Druckerei der Martin-Luther-Universität, 1994), 149–161; J. Helderman, 'Manichäische Züge im Thomasevangelium', in S. Emmel, et al. eds. *Ägypten und Nubien in spätantiker und christlicher Zeit: Akten des 6. Internationalen Koptologenkongresses, Münster, 20.–26. Juli* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1999), II.483–494 (n.b. in the opening footnote of Helderman, 'Manichäische Züge', he disowns the 1994 essay, 'Log 97', as mis-edited); Nagel, 'Das Gleichnis vom zerbrochenen Krug', 229–256; K. Blessing, 'The Woman Carrying the Jar of Meal', in Beavis, ed. *The Lost Coin: Parables of Women, Work and Wisdom*, 158–173; U.-K. Plisch, 'Die Frau, der Krug und das Mehl. Zur ursprüngliche Bedeutung von EvThom 97', in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Coptica—Gnostica—Manichaica. Mélanges offerts à Wolf-Peter Funk* (BCNH 7; Louvain: Peeters, 2006), 747–760; S. Petersen, 'Die Frau auf dem Weg (Vom Mehlkrug)—EvThom 97', in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 916–920.
- ² It has nevertheless attracted some advocates at least tentatively in favour of its authenticity (Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 351; Higgins, 'Non-Gnostic Sayings', 303–305; Stead, 'Some Reflections', 392–393).
- ³ See the survey of some views in Merkelbach, 'Logion 97', 227–228; Helderman, 'Manichäische

(1) The most common interpretation sees the parable as focused upon the woman's ignorance or emptiness, with the parable therefore being a warning of the danger of loss, or a more straightforward description of how ignorance leads to emptiness.⁴ One cannot help feeling, however, that if this were correct, the parable would have been better introduced, "The kingdom of the Father is *not* like ...".⁵

(2) Scott sees a parallel with 1 Kings 17.12 and the incident with Elijah and the widow, in which she is provided with an everlastingly full jar of meal. In contrast to 1 Kings, however: "There is no prophet to come to the widow's aid; nor will her jar be filled. The kingdom is not identified with divine intervention but divine emptiness. Like the Leaven, this parable attacks and subverts the myth of the appearance of God."⁶ This seems, however, like a rather post-modern, "death of God" interpretation. The problem is that this view of the kingdom scarcely fits with the understanding of the kingdom elsewhere in *Thomas*. DeConick, in a similar manner, sees this parable as reflecting that the kingdom had not come as expected, and thus the parable is 'the story of expectations dashed'.⁷ This is scarcely compatible with *Thomas's* positive depiction of the kingdom elsewhere, however.

(3) Doran takes the view that this parable must be interpreted in close association with GTh 96 and 98.⁸ These adjacent parables emphasize the agency of individuals, whereas GTh 97 stands in tension with them, emphasizing our lack of control over our destinies:⁹ the woman is not negligent, but is simply ill-fated.¹⁰ This sounds odd as a parable of the *kingdom*, however.

Zügel, 487–488; Nagel, 'Gleichnis vom zerbrochenen Krug'; Plisch, 'Die Frau, der Krug und das Mehl'.

4 Grant & Freedman, 187; Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 148; Lindemann, 'Gleichnisinterpretation', 232; King, 'Kingdom', 56–57; Valantasis, 178–179; Nordsieck, 340–341; Hedrick, 166; an option suggested by Higgins, 'Non-Gnostic Sayings', 304. L. Cerfaux (with G. Garitte), 'Les Paraboles du royaume dans l' "Évangile de Thomas"', in L. Cerfaux, *Recueil Lucien Cerfaux: études d'exégèse et d'histoire religieuse de Monseigneur Cerfaux* (Gembloux: Duculot, 1962), III.61–80 (80), sees a contrast between this woman with an empty jar and the Samaritan woman who has a jar full of living water.

5 Rightly, Petersen, 'Die Frau auf dem Weg', 919.

6 Scott, 'The Empty Jar', 79.

7 DeConick, 271.

8 Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 351.

9 Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 352.

10 Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 350.

(4) Nagel sees as the point that suffering in itself is not a guarantee of getting to the goal (the kingdom); some suffering leads to emptiness, like the wretches in *Gos. Phil.* 63,11–21 whose ‘labour’ (ζῆς) is in vain.¹¹ Nagel emends *Thomas’s* ἤπεσεῖνε εἰσε to ἤπεσεῖνε ε(ς)εἰσε, resulting in the meaning, ‘she did not realise *while* she was struggling’.¹² Again we have the problem of the discontinuity between kingdom and parable, with no point of continuity.

(5) Plisch takes the view that the parable (in its original, pre-*Thomas* form) is a ‘metaphor for the imperceptible spread of God’s kingdom removed from human reach’, just as the kingdom is spread across the earth unnoticed in GTh 113.¹³ This at least makes sense of the introductory formula. However, it necessitates the excision of 97.3 as a later accretion, which Plisch considers (because of its focus on ignorance) as incompatible with 97.1.¹⁴

(6) K. Blessing, relating this parable to other ‘lost and found’ parables (cf. Luke 15 and GTh 109), speculates that the woman may be ‘set up’ for salvation having experienced worldly loss, and that this parable may be about knowledge.¹⁵ It is, however, about knowledge only in the sense that it refers to ignorance.

(7) Merkelbach’s interpretation focuses almost exclusively on the journey, and the fact that the meal has left a path to follow: the one on the way has effectively found the kingdom because of the trail.¹⁶ This view has some appeal, as it has a positive, kingdom related sense, but it probably neglects too many of the details of the parable to be correct.

Finally, (8) Helderma interprets the parable from a radically different stand-point, namely that the emptying of the jug can be taken as a *good* thing in itself.¹⁷ Manichaeism supplies the context in which labour (ζῆς) can be seen as a bad thing, and conversely *amerimnia* a good.¹⁸ Relatedly, in the Manichaean

11 Nagel, ‘Gleichnis vom zerbrochenen Krug’, 242–243.

12 Nagel, ‘Gleichnis vom zerbrochenen Krug’, 241–242.

13 Plisch, 215; this is an option suggested by Higgins, ‘Non-Gnostic Sayings’, 304. There is some similarity here with the interpretation in Petersen, ‘Die Frau auf dem Weg’, 919, with different emphasis.

14 Plisch, ‘Die Frau, der Krug und das Mehl’, 757–758.

15 Blessing, ‘The Woman Carrying the Jar’, 167; cf. 169.

16 Merkelbach, ‘Logion 97’, 229.

17 Helderma, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 490.

18 Helderma, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 491–492.

Psalm-Book, Luke 10.38–42 is a parable of the elect who are free of work (Mary) and the working *hearers* (Martha).¹⁹ (For Helderman, Mary corresponds to the woman here in GTh 97; Martha to the figure GTh 96, on which see the discussion above.) Because one needs to find a milieu in which labour is valued negatively, Helderman draws the strong conclusion: ‘Demnach möchten wir den Schluss ziehen, dass die Botschaft des Gleichnisses in Logion 97 nur vom manichäischen Denken her voll zum Klingen kommt.’²⁰ He notes an analogous parable in the Macarian corpus which is strikingly similar to GTh 97:

It is as if someone goes away and travels on a long journey to a particular city, and carries a bag full of sand, but this has a very small hole at the bottom. And the further he goes, it spills out all along the way, and his load is lightened. And when he has reached his destination in the city, the very heavy sand has emptied out, and he is relieved and is perfectly rested from the weight of the sand. (So it is with the tested soul when it leaves its burden of sin behind ...).²¹

In favour of Helderman’s view, understanding *εἰς* as ‘Arbeit/Mühe’²² (‘work’, ‘struggle’) is much more plausible than the conventional translations of ‘accident’ or ‘problem’.²³ More negatively, however, the Manichaeic background is not necessary—as is evident from the Macarian parallel.

An interpretation (9!) which draws on Helderman but is not indebted to a Manichaeic background can be identified. It is first necessary to clarify the imagery in 97.3b, where *εἰς* appears. In addition to Helderman’s ‘Arbeit/Mühe’, *εἰς* can also mean what results from that, namely ‘weariness’ (Crum 711b);

19 Helderman, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 492.

20 Helderman, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 492.

21 ὡς περ ἐάν τις ὁδεύῃ ὁδὸν μακρὰν ἀπερχόμενος εἰς πόλιν τινά, βασιτάξῃ δὲ μαρσίπιον μεστὸν ἄμμου, τὸ δὲ τοιοῦτον ἔχη κάτωθεν ὁπὴν λεπτοτάτην, καὶ ὅσω βαδίζει καθ’ ἑλῆς τῆς ὁδοῦ ἀπορρέῃ καὶ αὐτὸς κουφίζεται, καὶ τέλος κατανήσαντος ἐν τῇ πόλει ἢ βαρυτάτη ἄμμος ἐκενώθη καὶ αὐτὸς ἡλαφρύνθη καὶ ἀνεπαύθη τελείως ἀπὸ τοῦ βάρους τῆς ἄμμου. See H. Berthold & E. Klostermann, eds. *Neue Homilien des Makarius/Symeon* (TU 72; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1961), 121, ll. 8–13 (*Hom.* 23.4 [Aus Typus III]) = H. Berthold, ed. *Makarios/Symeon: Reden und Briefe*, 2 vols. (GCS; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1973), 212, ll. 16–21 (*Hom.* 20.1.3). I am unsure of the relationship between the two manuscripts edited in these editions, but the text of the parable is identical in both.

22 Helderman, ‘Manichäische Züge’, 491.

23 Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 89; DeConick, 270.

in any case, it can be understood in a negative sense as ‘suffering struggle’, something which at least in certain respects is negatively valued everywhere. As a result of this, it is possible to understand *Thomas’s* parable in line to some extent with the Macarian parallel: the protagonist embarks on a long journey with a heavy load, but due to a hole in the vessel, the load leaks out onto the road and gets progressively lighter, so that at the end of the journey, the main character actually feels rested. The application, then, explicit in Macarius, is that *in the course of the long journey of life the elect soul is initially burdened with sins and passions (97.1), but strips these off (97.2), such that in the end it finds rest (97.3).*²⁴ (See further the notes below.) Such a scenario is of course right up *Thomas’s* street. If it is right that the protagonist represents the soul, that may account for the fact that GTh 97 is about a woman, because the soul is feminine in Greek and Coptic, and is female in her many personifications (cf. e.g. in the *Exegesis of the Soul* in the same codex as *Thomas*; the Macarian parable is strange in this respect). Any interpretation of this enigmatic parable, however, must remain tentative. Nevertheless, that offered here at least avoids unusual translations of $\epsilon\iota\kappa\epsilon$, textual emendations, and viewing certain elements as later, incompatible accretions.

Notes

97.1 The kingdom of the Father is like a woman. For the ‘kingdom of the Father’, cf. GTh 57; 76; 96; 98; 113 (cf. 99). The kingdom is reflected in the whole scenario rather than simply identified with the woman *per se*. GTh 97 evokes the previous parable, where there was also a clash between the referent and the image: the ‘kingdom of the Father’ and the ‘woman’ are rather oxymoronic here. (On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, § 10.1 above.)

97.1 Who was carrying a jar full of meal. Again, as in GTh 96 this is combined with a very standard activity of a woman: in GTh 96, baking bread; here carrying meal. The ‘full’ jar contrasts with the empty jar in 97.4. Schrage takes the meal to be the divine essence of the Gnostic, but this has not been accepted by many, and is clearly incompatible with the wider interpretation of the parable proposed here.²⁵ There are similarities and differences with the Macarian parable, with the jar full of meal contrasting with the bag of sand.

²⁴ Crum, 711b, gives $\alpha\eta\alpha\pi\alpha\gamma\epsilon\iota\kappa\epsilon$ as an antonym of $\epsilon\iota\kappa\epsilon$.

²⁵ Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 185.

97.2 While she was away on a long journey. The phrase is a biblical idiom: cf. Num. 9.10; Prov. 7.19 (ⲁϥⲃⲱⲕ ⲉϥⲓⲛ ⲉϥⲟϥⲛⲟϥ): the same idiom in Greek (ὁδὸν μακρὰν) appears in the Macarian parable. It is perhaps odd that a woman is on a long journey (the strong sense conveyed is that she is alone), and also that a jar of meal should be carried such a long distance.

97.2 The handle of the jar broke. Nagel supposes that this is a mistranslation of an original in which the *bottom* of the jar has leaked, with π-ⲛⲁⲗⲁⲅⲉ ← π-ⲟϥϥ ('handle') ← π-ⲟϥϥ ('foot'), which is ingenious, but unnecessarily speculative.²⁶ Evidently the jar only had one handle.²⁷ It is likely that what is envisaged is that the handle—the most vulnerable part of a jar—broke off and in the process part of the jar also developed a hole.²⁸

97.2–3 And the meal emptied out behind her on the road. She did not realise it. Presumably she was carrying the jar on her head, or on her back, for the meal to empty out behind.²⁹

97.3 She did not feel tired. The translation here, especially of ϣⲓϥⲉ ('trouble, effort, difficulty' in GTh 8.3 and 107; cf. 58), is difficult.³⁰ Plisch remarks that this statement is 'almost incomprehensible',³¹ and, as we have seen, Nagel feels obliged to emend the text. The Macarian parable does help out considerably at this point. There, the result of all the sand leaking out is that when the man arrives at his destination, his burden is lightened (καὶ ἀὐτὸς κουφίζεται) and he is 'relieved' (ἡλαφρύνθη) and 'perfectly rested from the weight of the sand' (καὶ ἀνεπαύθη τελείως ἀπὸ τοῦ βάρους τῆς ἄμμου). This helps yield a rational meaning for GTh 97, according to which, as the woman's grain leaks out, she experiences no ϣⲓϥⲉ in the sense of suffering labour or tiredness. The journey has become easier along the way, not harder.

97.4 When she reached her house, she put the jar down and found it empty. Presumably, the thought here is that in the end, she (the soul) experiences rest at her final destination.

26 Nagel, 'Gleichnis vom zerbrochenen Krug', 237–238.

27 Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 73; Plisch, 214.

28 Plisch, 214; thus, broken is more likely than 'damaged', 'cracked'; for these latter, see Nagel, 'Gleichnis vom zerbrochenen Krug', 238–239.

29 Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 73, and Plisch, 214, presume it is on her head.

30 See J.B. Bauer, 'Arbeitsaufgaben am koptischen Thomasevangelium', VC 15 (1961), 1–7 (3), for a survey of early translations of 97.3.

31 Plisch, 214.

Logion 98¹

98.1 πεχε τ̄ τῆν̄τερο ἡπειωτ̄ ἐστ̄ν̄των εὐρωμε εφοῶω εμοῦτ̄ οὐρωμε ἡμεριστανος 98.2 ἀφωωλῆ ἵτσηφε εἰ̄ πεφνει ἀχχοτ̄ ἵτχο δεκαας εφ-
ναεμε δε τεφσιχ̄ ἡατωκ̄ εζοῦν 98.3 τοτε ἀφωτ̄ ἡπμεριστανος

98.1 *Jesus said, 'The kingdom of the father is like a man who wanted to kill a nobleman. 98.2 He drew his sword at home and drove it into the wall, in order to find out whether his hand would be strong enough. 98.3 Then he killed the nobleman.'*

Interpretation

The parable of the Assassin, which is the twelfth parable in *Thomas* (see comment above on GTh 8), has no parallel in the Synoptics (or, indeed, anywhere else). Pokorný sees it as an 'immoral parable', comparing it with the Unjust Steward (Lk. 16.1–8), and the Hidden Treasure in GTh 109 where the protagonist lends money at interest.² There is a majority scholarly view of GTh 98, as well as a 'minority report'.³

Probably the majority of scholars take the view that the assassin represents the disciple who must prepare himself rigorously for the battles involved in discipleship.⁴ The closest analogues in the Synoptics are usually seen to be Jesus' figures of towerbuilding (Lk. 14.28–30) and going to war (14.31–32).⁵ The

1 **Bibliography for GTh 98:** Hunzinger, 'Unbekannte Gleichnisse Jesu', 211–217; Bauer, 'De "labore" Salvatoris', 123–130; Lindemann, 'Zur Gleichnisinterpretation im Thomas-Evangelium', 220–222; T. Schramm & K. Löwenstein, *Unmoralische Helden: Anstößige Gleichnisse Jesu* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), 53–55; Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 347–352; N. Förster, 'Die Selbstprüfung des Mörders (Vom Attentäter)—EvThom 98', in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 921–926; C.W. Hedrick, 'Flawed Heroes and Stories Jesus Told: The One about a Killer', in T. Holmén & S.E. Porter, eds. *Handbook for the Study of the Historical Jesus*, vol. 4: *Individual Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 3023–3056.

2 Pokorný, 141; cf. Schramm & K. Löwenstein, *Unmoralische Helden*.

3 For a more detailed history of research, see Hedrick, 'Flawed Heroes and Stories Jesus Told', 3034–3038.

4 Grant & Freedman, 188; Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 120; Plisch, 216; Pokorný, 141.

5 As a result of the close analogy, some see in the parable of the Assassin an authentic saying of Jesus; the criterion of embarrassment also plays a role: see Hunzinger, 'Unbekannte

analogy is not exact:⁶ the Lukan sayings concern counting the cost *before* embarking upon discipleship, whereas the *Thomas* saying is usually taken to be preparation in the course of discipleship.⁷ The goal of the preparation can be variously described as planning attack upon the world,⁸ or upon the internal enemy, desire.⁹

The minority interpretation (advocated by Hunzinger and Nordsieck) makes God the assassin, and is intended as a reassurance to the disciples that God would not set a plan in train without first knowing that it could be completed.¹⁰

Some scholars have offered other interpretations which have not been widely followed. A Gnostic reading is now no longer regarded as plausible.¹¹ For Plisch, an alternative to the majority view is the possibility that the theme is the unexpected arrival of the kingdom of God.¹² This sees events from the perspective of the nobleman, however, whereas the point-of-view in the parable is closer to that of the assassin. According to King: 'The interest of the parable seems twofold: one to emphasize that to belong to the community means to have access to power through knowledge, and secondly that that power will allow a person to overcome his or her enemies, even if they are powerful.'¹³ Doran follows the interpretation that GTh 98 emphasises responsibility and action, like GTh 96, with GTh 97 stressing that this is not sufficient.¹⁴

Gleichnisse Jesu', 211–217; Higgins states that 'the boldness of its theme forbids any other author than Jesus himself' ('Non-Gnostic Sayings', 304); Frey, 'Lilien und das Gewand', 177 (a possibility). Stead ('Some Reflections', 392) comments that the parable 'recalls the intrigue-ridden atmosphere of the Herodian court', though of course such a mood is also more widespread; cf. also Förster, 'Die Selbstprüfung des Mörders', 922–925, on the cultural context.

6 Again, for Higgins: 'In all three the theme appears to be thorough preparation before action' (Higgins, 'Non-Gnostic', 304). But this is not quite true: the Lukan protagonists only 'sit down and consider', so if this is preparation, it is much different. For Hunzinger, 'Unbekannte Gleichnisse Jesu', 212–213, both *Thomas* and Luke 14.31–32 are about preparation for a military operation, but the *Thomas* parable is not really this.

7 Grant & Freedman, 188, refer to counting the cost in the *Thomas* saying, however.

8 Valantasis, 179–180.

9 DeConick, 272.

10 Hunzinger, 'Unbekannte Gleichnisse Jesu', 217; Nordsieck, 343.

11 Cf. the Gnostic interpretations in Haenchen, 'Literatur zum Thomasevangelium', 177; Lindemann, 'Gleichisinterpretation', 222.

12 Plisch, 216.

13 King, 'Kingdom', 58.

14 Doran, 'Complex of Parables', 351–352.

Hedrick's view is that the parable advocates bold action *without* serious planning.¹⁵

The majority view is probably correct. The idea that God, or the Father, in *Thomas* plans and is an agent does not quite fit with *Thomas* elsewhere. Even if the analogies from Luke 14 are not exact, GTh 98 makes good sense as drawing attention to two phases, that of preparation (98.2), and that of execution (98.3). Such a scenario is apparent in a number of places in *Thomas* where one sees imagery of violent attack: GTh 21.5–6 speaks of guarding one's house against the thief, i.e. the world; GTh 21.7–8 go on to exhort preparation against attacking brigands; GTh 103 pronounces a blessing on the one who knows where marauders will enter. The principal difference between these passages and GTh 98 is of course that in the parable of the Assassin the protagonist (i.e. the disciple) is the assailant, rather than the assailed. There is, however, a closer analogy in GTh 35:

Jesus said, 'It is impossible to enter the house of the strong man and subdue him, unless one binds his hands. Then he can take from his house.'

The logic of GTh 35 is very similar to the Assassin, with its two phases of (a) binding the strong man's hands preparatory to (b) plundering his house.

Still unanswered are the questions of what exactly the preparation *is*, and what the final goal is in the parable. Definitive answers are not available, but it is reasonable to suppose that reference is to (a) the ascetical disciplines commended in *Thomas*, as conditions of (b) being able to master the world rather than being mastered by it.

Notes

98.1 The kingdom of the father is like a man who wanted to kill a nobleman. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above. For 'kingdom of the Father', cf. GTh 57; 76; 96–97; 113 (cf. 99). On μεγιστανος ('nobleman', or 'ruler') see notes on GTh 78 above: the point here is not his nobility, but his power. This parable most probably describes what the kingdom is like from the disciple's point of view (rather than from the divine vantage point). The disciple has a great opponent to overcome.

15 Hedrick, 167; see further his, 'Flawed Heroes and Stories Jesus Told', 3044, although he thinks that the original meaning in Jesus' mind is 'lost forever' (3046).

98.2 He drew his sword at home and drove it into the wall. This is phase 1, the experiment in private. Hedrick notes that the particular type of sword here is probably a short, double-edged dagger.¹⁶ Driving a sword through a wall was not such a difficult task as it perhaps might be in some houses today; Ezekiel was able to dig through the wall of his house with his hands (Ezek. 12.7), and cf. the ‘digging’ or ‘cutting’ into the house in GTh 21.5.¹⁷ Plisch remarks that the likely building material of the wall was ‘air-dried mud bricks’.¹⁸

98.2 In order to find out whether his hand would be strong enough. On ‘would be strong enough’, cf. τῶκ εζογν as a translation of ἐπισχύω in Lk. 23.5.

98.3 Then he killed the nobleman. The goal of discipleship is not to be dominated by rulers, but to rule (cf. notes on GTh 2 above).

16 See discussion in Hedrick, ‘Flawed Heroes and Stories Jesus Told’, 3040–3041.

17 A reminiscence of Eph 2.14–16, even with its breaking through a wall, and ‘killing an enemy’ (Stead, ‘Some Reflections’, 392–393), is unlikely.

18 Plisch, 216; also Hedrick, ‘Flawed Heroes and Stories Jesus Told’, 3041.

Logion 99¹

99.1 ΠΕΧΕ ἸΗΔΘΗΤΗΣ ΝΑϞ ΧΕ ΝΕΚ'ΣΝΗΥ ἡ̅ ΤΕΚΜΑΔΥ ΣΕΔΖΕΡΑΤΟΥ ΖΙ ΠΣΑ ΝΒΟΛ
99.2 ΠΕΧΑϞ ΝΑΥ ΧΕ ΝΕΤἸΝΣΕΙΜΑ ΕΪΡΕ ἸΠΟΥΩΩ ἸΠΑΕΙΩΤ' ΝΑΕΙ ΝΕ ΝΑΣΝΗΥ ἡ̅
ΤΑΜΑΔΥ 99.3 ἸΤΟΟΥ ΠΕ ΕΤΝΑΒΩΚ' ΕΖΟΥΝ ΕΤΜἸΤΕΡΟ ἸΠΑΕΙΩΤ'

99.1 *The disciples said to him, 'Your brothers and your mother are standing outside.'* 99.2 *He said to them, 'Those who are here who do the will of my Father—these are my brothers and my mother.'* 99.3 *It is they who will enter the kingdom of my Father.'*

Interpretation

There is happily a general consensus on this dialogue, that the point is the construction of a new 'fictive family'; in other words, the meaning is the same as in the Synoptic parallels (Mk 3.31–35; Matt. 12.46–50; Lk. 8.19–21; *Gos. Eb.* in Epiphanius, *Pan.* 30.14.5).² Some take this further and see *Thomas* advocating abandonment of natural family.³ Grosso sees a rejection of the hierarchical values of the *oikos*, but we do not know that the *Thomas* movement was more egalitarian (see further note on 'brothers' below).⁴ Even if this language of 'abandonment' and 'rejection' is perhaps too strong, there is certainly an implied indifference to natural ties (and GTh 101 probably does justify the strong language).

Notes

99.1 **The disciples said to him, 'Your brothers and your mother are standing outside.'** *Thomas* is distinctive in introducing the disciples as those who

1 **Bibliography for GTh 99:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 185–189; M.H. Smith, 'Kinship is Relative: Mark 3:31–35 and Parallels', *Forum* 6 (1990), 80–94; Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La madre de Jesús', 271–284; Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 269–274; Luomanen, "Let Him Who Seeks, Continue Seeking", 130–137; Gathercole, *Composition*, 196–198.

2 Valantasis, 180; Nordsieck, 347; Plisch, 218; Pokorný, 142; Hedrick, 168.

3 Grant & Freedman, 188; DeConick, 273.

4 Grosso, 247.

announce Jesus' family.⁵ Of the family here, only James is mentioned elsewhere in *Thomas* (GTh 12).⁶ The implication here is that—as is rarely made clear in *Thomas*—Jesus is inside private space (cf. GTh 61; 22?; 41?).

99.2 He said to them, 'Those who are here who do the will of my Father.' Obedience to the will of the Father perhaps highlights the importance of ethics for *Thomas*, as is also reflected in the various imperatives: 'know' (GTh 5), 'seek' (76, 92, 94), 'love/guard your brother' (GTh 25) etc. 'Father', as opposed to 'God' is perhaps from Matthean redaction; cf. also *2 Clem.* 9.11, but could simply be the result of *Thomas*'s own preference. The reference to the Father also has the function here of lending additional strength to the kinship motif.

99.2 These are my brothers and my mother. Jesus ignores the demands of his natural family, and instead observes that obedient disciples are his true kin (cf. similarly GTh 79). The reference to 'brothers and mother' means that there is no specificity to the place of others in the fictive family. The point here in *Thomas* is mere belonging to the family rather than role in it. On the other hand, elsewhere in *Thomas* Jesus is clearly a son: though he is never actually identified as the Son spoken of in GTh 37 and 44, he does refer to the Father as 'my Father' (61, 64, and twice in this saying). This need not imply an egalitarian relation of Jesus to the disciples (or even among the disciples), since brotherhood in antiquity by no means automatically entailed equality, as for example in Plutarch.⁷

99.3 It is they who will enter the kingdom of my Father. On 'entering the kingdom' see *ad* GTh 22 (cf. also GTh 39, 64, 114). Distinctive in this saying is the description of the kingdom in terms of a household, with the Father as *paterfamilias*, although without any further roles specified in detail. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, § 10.1 above.

5 Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 266.

6 This is assuming that the references in GTh 21.1 and 114.1 are to Mary Magdalene, not to the mother of Jesus.

7 See e.g. *Frat. Am.* 486F–487B and the treatment of it in R. Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters: Christian Siblingship in Paul* (London/ New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 101, and surrounding discussion.

Logion 100¹

100.1 ΔΥΤΣΕΒΕ Ἰϸ ἀγνοῦβ ἀγῶ πεχαγῶ ναγῶ χε νεθηπῶ ἀκαϊσαρῶ σεῶιτε ἴμον
ἴνῶδῶμῶ 100.2 πεχαγῶ ναγῶ χε † να καϊσαρῶ ἴκαϊσαρ 100.3 † να πνοῦτε
ἴπνοῦτε 100.4 ἀγῶ πετε πῶει πε ματῆνῶειϸ

100.1 *They showed Jesus a gold coin and said to him, 'Caesar's men demand taxes from us.'* 100.2 *He said to them, 'Give Caesar's property to Caesar; 100.3 give God's property to God; 100.4 and what is mine, give to me.'*

Interpretation

This dialogue was evidently popular, because it has a number of parallels both among the Synoptics (Mk 12.13–17; Matt. 22.15–22; Lk. 20.20–26),² and outside (*P.Egerton 2*, fr. 2r; and *Exc. Theod.* 86; *PS* 113; Justin, *1 Ap.* 17.2; *Sent. Sext.* 20). There is general agreement on the sense: 'Each power receives what properly belongs to it.'³ The question of the structure of Jesus' reply is crucial: is Caesar—God—Jesus an ascending tricolon, according to which there is a God inferior in importance to Jesus; or, does Jesus simply appear at the end because he has

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- Bibliography for GTh 100:** J. Guey, 'Comment le "denier de César" de l'Évangile a-t-il pu devenir une pièce d'or?', *Bulletin de la Société française de Numismatique* 15 (1960), 478–479; J.N. Sevenster, 'Geeft den Keizer, wat des Keizers is, en Gode, wat Gods is', *NTT* 17 (1962–1963), 21–31; Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 189–192; E. Cuvillier, 'Marc, Justin, Thomas et les autres: Variations autour de la pericope du denier à César', *ETR* 67 (1992), 329–344; S. Arai, 'Caesar's, God's and Mine: Mk 12:17 par. and Gos. Thom. 100', in H. Preissler & H. Seiwert, eds. *Gnosisforschung und Religionsgeschichte. FS Kurt Rudolph zum 65. Geburtstag* (Marburg: Diagonal-Verlag, 1994), 43–48; Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas', 58–64; S. Witetschek, 'Ein Goldstück für Caesar? Anmerkungen zu EvThom 100', *Apocrypha* 19 (2008), 103–122; Goodacre, *Thomas and the Synoptics*, 112–115.
 - Assessing the priority or dependence of *Thomas* vis-à-vis the Synoptics is hard, but perhaps not impossible. Goodacre observes the familiar Thomasine 'missing middle' (*Thomas and the Synoptics*, 112–115). There are also some minor agreements between Lukan redaction and *Thomas* which might support Goodacre's argument (see Gathercole, 'Luke in the Gospel of Thomas', 134–135). Untenable is the argument that *Thomas's* version is more primitive 'according to the laws of form criticism', as argued by G. Quispel, 'Some Remarks on the Diatessaron Haarense', *VC* 25 (1971), 131–139 (135).
 - Valantasis, 181.

been tacked on by the editor? The absence of evidence elsewhere in *Thomas* for a demiurge (though see discussion on 85.1 above) means that the latter explanation may well be correct. Since the immediately preceding GTh 99 refers to ‘those who are here who do the will of my Father’ (99.2), the references in GTh 100 to God and Jesus may well belong together, over against the reference to Caesar, yielding what is more like a two-part than a three-part contrast. Giving taxes to Caesar is uncontroversial for *Thomas*, given the indifference to money elsewhere in the Gospel: compare GTh 95 with its exhortation to give away money, just as other property such as clothing (GTh 36) is a matter of indifference (see above Introduction, § 10.1–2). By contrast, what is of supreme concern is giving the Father what is due to him, in the form of obedience (99.2 and 100.3), which comes about by rightly responding to Jesus’ revelation (GTh 100.4; cf. 17 et al.).⁴

Thomas’s attitude in this saying seems similar to that suggested by the *Sentences of Sextus*:⁵

18 A sage without property is like God. 19 Make use of worldly things for real necessities. 20 Carefully render to the world the things of the world, but the things of God to God. (τὰ μὲν τοῦ κόσμου τῷ κόσμῳ, τὰ δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ τῷ θεῷ ἀκριβῶς ἀποδίδου.) 21 Consider your soul to be a deposit from God.

The ascetical tendency in the *Sextus* version comports well with the indifference to property exhibited in the roughly contemporaneous *Thomas* saying. When embedded in *Thomas*, the saying is perhaps more negative to Caesar than it is in the Synoptics, and *Sextus* is similarly disparaging of the world.⁶

Notes

100.1 They showed Jesus a gold coin and said to him. It is unclear who is showing the coin and addressing Jesus here. It could be the disciples: probably

4 Since there is no reference to the ‘image’ of Caesar in *Thomas’s* saying, there is almost certainly no question of a reference to humanity’s divine image here, as is sometimes thought to be the case in the Synoptics (Davies & Allison, *Matthew*, II.217, trace this interpretation back to Tertullian).

5 I owe this reference to Dr Daniele Pevarello.

6 D. Pevarello, ‘Christians in Cynic rags? Caesar’s denarius and the ideal of poverty in *Sextus the Pythagorean*’, unpublished paper delivered at the Oxbridge PhD New Testament Seminar (2009), 7.

Jesus' fellow-countrymen—those who are subject to the same taxation as is Jesus—are in view.

The fact that we have a *gold* coin (ⲛⲟϣⲃ) here is an oddity:⁷ the Synoptics have the (silver) denarius, and *Pistis Sophia* has a 'stater' (Coptic ⲥⲁⲧⲉⲣⲉ is a normal translation of denarius, as e.g. in the Sahidic translations of this pericope).⁸ In the time of Tiberius, the gold *aureus* weighed 7.72 g, and was minted in Lyons and Rome; in the second century, after various fluctuations, it was reduced to 7.4–7.25 g.⁹ It was still worth 25 denarii: *Thomas* thus increases the value of the coin considerably. Some have tried to explain the difficulty by arguing for an Aramaic/ Syriac origin for this formulation,¹⁰ whereas Witetschek takes it as evidence for the very late inclusion of this saying in *Thomas*, after the Diocletianic reform (305 CE), and in Egypt.¹¹ The Aramaic explanation is weak, and the variation in the coin may simply be of the kind that often happens in translation, as for example in the case of the King James Version's 'penny', and the 'shilling' (or, 'schelling') in the Dutch Bible Society translation. By analogy, the *assarion* in Matt. 10.29/ Lk. 12.6 becomes variously a 'farthing' (KJV), a 'penny' (NIV) and even a 'cent' (NASB). Plisch's explanation that the gold coin is 'an unrealistic exaggeration' may well be right: *Thomas* is perhaps deliberately turning the scene into a parabolic one.¹²

100.1 Caesar's men demand taxes from us. In *Thomas*, Caesar is introduced early on by the interlocutors, not by Jesus.¹³ The word here for 'tax' (ⲱⲩⲏ) is general (cf. Luke's φόρος), in contrast to the more specific 'poll-tax' of Matthew and Mark (ⲕⲏ̅ⲛⲟⲥ),¹⁴ and *Thomas* is probably not interested in the details of the taxation.¹⁵ Understood on its own, without reference to the Synoptic

7 Titian's *The Tribute Money* also has a gold coin in the scene, according to J. Kosnetter, 'Das Thomasevangelium und die Synoptiker', in J. Kissler, F. Krones & U. Schöndorfer, eds. *Wissenschaft im Dienste des Glaubens: Festschrift für Abt. Dr. Hermann Peichl* (Wien: Katholische Akademie, 1965), 29–49 (34).

8 See further Crum, 366a.

9 A. Mlasowsky, 'Aureus', *Brill's New Pauly* II.386–388.

10 Guey, 'Le denier de César', 478–479; DeConick, 274.

11 Witetschek, 'Ein Goldstück für Caesar?', 122.

12 Plisch, 219.

13 North comments that the punchline in Jesus' conclusion is ruined in *Thomas* because Caesar is already mentioned by the disciples at the outset: see R.G. North, 'Chenoboskion and Q', *CBQ* 24 (1962), 154–170 (165).

14 Arai, 'Caesar's, God's and Mine', 46.

15 On taxation in the time of the original event in the ministry of Jesus, see F.F. Bruce, 'Render to Caesar', in E. Bammel & C.F.D. Moule, eds., *Jesus and the Politics of his Day* (Cambridge:

parallels, Jesus is not asked a question: thus the statement might even be an encouragement to pay the tax. On the other hand a Synoptic-like question could be implied: 'Caesar's men demand taxes from us, *but should we pay those taxes?*'

'Caesar' in Jesus' own time was Tiberius. If the rough date ascribed to *Thomas* in the present commentary (see Introduction, 'Date' above) is correct, the Caesar at the time of composition may have been Antoninus Pius (138–161 CE) or Marcus Aurelius (161–180 CE).

100.2 He said to them, 'Give Caesar's property to Caesar.' The implication here is that coins, as belonging to the economy of the empire, are the property of the emperor. The same indifference to money which is envisaged of the disciple is found in GTh 95.2, with its reference to giving money to those who—like Caesar!—will not repay it. There is not an explicitly negative valuation of Caesar here, though it might well be assumed from what is said about those in power in GTh 78.¹⁶ An implied contempt for the realm of Caesar and his property may be implied: the repetition of Caesar's name may suggest that 100.2 can be read as dismissive (cf. 'Let the dead bury their dead', in Matt. 8.22/Lk. 9.60).

100.3 Give God's property to God. This is unlikely to be a reference to the temple tax.¹⁷ The two main options here have been to see in 'God' an 'inferior or evil god of the material world'¹⁸ and an archontic demiurge (cf. GTh 21 and the lion in GTh 7),¹⁹ or a positive reference to the Father. In favour of the demiurgic interpretation is (a) the apparent scale Caesar-God-Jesus, and (b) *Thomas's* lack of fondness for the term 'god', especially in the Coptic text where the only other occurrence is in the mysterious GTh 30, and (c) the fact that demiurges and archons can be called by the title 'god' in Nag Hammadi texts.²⁰ There are

Cambridge University Press, 1984), 249–264, or for a view more sceptical of the Synoptic gospels, F.E. Udoh, *To Caesar What is Caesar's: Tribute, Taxes, and Imperial Administration in Early Roman Palestine 63 BCE–70 CE* (Providence, RI: Brown University Press, 2005).

16 So rightly Arai, 'Caesar's, God's and Mine', 46. He also adduces the parable of the Assassin (GTh 98) as evidence of the same, though this is inadmissible.

17 Pace Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 122.

18 J.D. Crossan, 'Mark 12:13–17', *Int* 37 (1983), 397–401 (400).

19 Baarda, 'The Gospel of Thomas', 63–64; cf. Grant & Freedman, 189; Cuvillier, 'Marc, Justin, Thomas et les autres', 342; Arai, 'Caesar's, God's and Mine', 43–44.

20 E.g. among many instances, *Gos. Jud.* 34,6–13; *Tri. Trac.* 100,28; *Testim. Truth* 47,15; 48,1, and the surrounding context. Conversely it is sometimes said of the supreme being that he should not be called god: 'it is not right to think about him as a god or something similar. For he is more than a god, since there is no one above him, nor does anyone lord it over him ...' (*Ap. John* II 2,33–35); *Zost.* 13,4–5 'that perfect child who is higher than god'.

difficulties with this demiurgic interpretation of GTh 100, however. In the first place, there is no clear evidence for a demiurgic creator elsewhere in *Thomas*.²¹ Secondly, the word θεός probably appears in the Greek fragments (27.1 Gk) in a positive sense, though the text is damaged (see discussion *ad* GTh 27). If the reference here is to the Father, then there is continuity with ‘doing the will of [Jesus’] Father’ in GTh 99, and no ascending tricolon.

100.4 And what is mine, give to me. The last element, referring to Jesus himself, is a distinctive feature of *Thomas*’s version over against all the others,²² and presupposes a high christology.²³ Plisch and DeConick are probably correct to remark that this third element is an *ad hoc* appendage tacked on because of the *Thomas* community’s reverence for Jesus.²⁴ The question remains what ‘belongs to Jesus’. For Valantasis, it is the community around Jesus’ words, but it is hard to see how this can be ‘given’ to Jesus by the audience.²⁵ For Patterson it is ‘support for the Thomas mendicants’, but the point is probably something more fundamentally soteriological.²⁶ Arai says that it is ‘the authentic “I”’, or ‘what is within you’ (GTh 70),²⁷ i.e. the internal image. This is more likely, given the prominence of this theme in *Thomas*, and the fact that this internal image is the light that is continuous with the being of Jesus himself. The other main possibility is that what is due to Jesus is response to his revelation.

21 Uro, *Thomas*, 31–53, and 42–43 specifically on GTh 100.

22 L. Walt, “Rendete a tutti ciò che è dovuto” (*Rm* 13,7): Paolo, Gesù e il tributo a Cesare, in M. Pesce & M. Rescio, eds. *La trasmissione delle parole di Gesù nei primi tre secoli* (Brescia: Morcelliana, 2011), 71–94 (85).

23 Plisch, 220; cf. also Hedrick, 169.

24 DeConick, 275; Plisch, 220.

25 Valantasis, 181.

26 Patterson, *Thomas*, 148–149, cf. 137–138.

27 Arai, ‘Caesar’s, God’s and Mine’, 47.

Logion 101¹

101.1 ΠΕΤΑΜΕΣΤΕ ΠΕΦΕΙ[ΩΤ] ἄν ἡν̄ τεφῖμααῡ ἡταρ'ε' φναωρ̄ μ[αθητη]ς ἡει
α(η) 101.2 ΔΥΩ ΠΕΤΑΜΡΡΕ ΠΕΦ[ΕΙΩΤ ΔΗ Μ]ἡ̄ τεφμααῡ ἡταρε φναωρ̄ μ[αθητης
η]ει ΔΗ 101.3 ΤΑΜΑΔΥ ΓΑΡ ἡΤΑς[...]ΟΛ [ΤΑΜΑΔΥ] ΔΕ ἡΜΕ Δς† ηει ἡΠΩΝΗ

101.1 'Whoever does not hate his fat[her] and his mother as I do cannot be a d[iscipl]e of mine. 101.2 And whoever does [not] love his [Father a]nd his Mother as I do cannot be a d[isciple of] mine. 101.3 For my mother who [...]; but [my] true [Mother] has given me life.'

Textual Comment

The usual, introductory ΠΕΧΕ ἰϛ ΧΕ is lacking, but this is so common that it hardly requires emendation. Various suggestions have been made for the lacuna in 101.3: (1) Layton's edition, noting also a suggestion of Emmel, cautiously suggests ἡτας[† ηει ἡΠς]ΟΛ ('who deceived me');² (2) Plisch suggests ἡτας[χποι ΔςβΟΛΤ ΕΒ]ΟΛ ('who gave birth to me, destroyed me');³ (3) DeConick has ἡτας[χποι †χΩκ ΕΒ]ΟΛ ('who begot me gave me death');⁴(4) and Hedrick's commentary cautiously leaves a blank. Plisch's suggestion, and perhaps also that of DeConick, are rather too long to fill the lacuna, however. It is probably best left blank.

Interpretation

This saying has a parallel in GTh 55.1: 'Whoever does not hate his father and mother will not be able to be a disciple of mine.' The additional 'as I do' in GTh 101.1 is also not present in the Synoptic parallels to the saying (Matt. 10.37; Lk. 14.26). The usual view of this saying is probably correct, namely that there is a contrast between the rejection of biological parentage and affirmation

1 **Bibliography for GTh 101:** Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La madre de Jesús', 271–284; Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 269–274.

2 Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II,2–7: Volume One*, 88.

3 Plisch, 220.

4 DeConick, 277–278.

of spiritual parentage, which consists of the Father referred to elsewhere in *Thomas*, but also the (here ambiguous) maternal Spirit.⁵ The recent GTh 99, where Jesus *ignores* the request of his family is possibly milder than GTh 101 here, with its language of hatred.

Notes

101.1 Whoever does not hate his father and his mother as I do cannot be a disciple of mine. The ‘as I do’ recalls what in *Thomas* is the very recent refusal by Jesus to acknowledge his earthly mother and brothers (GTh 99); here the rejection by Jesus is of Mary (and possibly Joseph as well).⁶ DeConick also sees the ‘perpetuation of the world’ as one part of the target.⁷

101.2 And whoever does not love his Father and his Mother as I do cannot be a disciple of mine. The Father is familiar enough already (see *ad* GTh 3); the Mother is expanded on a little in the second half of 101.3.

101.3 For my mother who The text is unfortunately too fragmentary to identify with any precision the (almost certainly negative) attitude to physical maternity and birth.

101.3 But my true Mother has given me life. The contrast here is not between a biological mother and a disciple who is a spiritual relation (as per GTh 99).⁸ The reference here is to a feminine power. Trevijano Etcheverría identifies the figure as the Holy Spirit of GTh 44.⁹ Another possibility (which may also refer to the Holy Spirit) is ‘the great power and the great wealth’, who produced Adam, and is/ are grammatically feminine (GTh 85). The Spirit, a connection with Adam, and the life-giving Mother are combined in the *Hypostasis of the Archons*, where Adam addresses the spirit-endowed female counterpart who has been removed from him during his sleep: ‘And when he saw her, he said, “You are the one who has given me life; you will be called the mother of the living. For she is my mother.”’ (*Hyp. Arch.* 89,13–16). There are numerous

5 Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 272; Nordsieck, 352–353 (adding that the Spirit is in some way identified with Wisdom); DeConick, 278; Plisch, 222; Hedrick, 170 (tentatively); Grosso, 249.

6 Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 274.

7 DeConick, 278.

8 Valantasis, 182, is unusual in seeing the spiritual parentage in this saying as arising out of the community.

9 Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘La madre de Jesús’, 271.

parallels to a female, maternal Spirit in apocryphal texts and Manichaean literature.¹⁰ The Spirit specifically as life-giver derives from the OT (Job 33.4) and is picked up in Jn 6.63 and 2 Cor. 3.6. 'Given to me' perhaps picks up on the end of GTh 100 ('give to me').

10 See e.g. *Gos. Heb.* fr. 2; *Gos. Phil.* 55,24–27; see further parallels in Plisch, 222–223, and Grosso, 249. For Manichaean parallels, see e.g. Index to I. Gardner & S.N.C. Lieu, eds. & tr. *Manichaean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), sub 'Living Spirit/ Mother of Life'.

Logion 102¹

πεδε τ̄ [χε ο] γοει ναγ ἡφάρισαιος δε εγεινε [ἡν] ογογροφ εφ' ἡκοτκ' ειλῆ
πογονεφ' ἡξ[ἡν] εροογ δε ουτε φογωμ αν ουτε κς[ω] ἡν ἡνεροογ εογωμ

Jesus said, ['W]oe to those Pharisees, for they are like a dog sleeping in the manger of so[me] cattle, for it neither eats nor al[low]s the cattle to feed.'

Interpretation

In addition to the Synoptic versions, this saying is closely paralleled in GTh 39.1–2 (cf. Matt. 23.13; Lk. 11.52): ‘The Pharisees and the Scribes have taken the keys of knowledge and have hidden them. They have not entered, and have not allowed those who want to enter to do so.’² The sense of GTh 102, amplified by reference to the dog in the manger fable, is clear: the opponents not only fail to understand the truth themselves and thereby to enter the kingdom, but also hinder others from doing so. Pokorný sees here a criticism of the mainstream church, whereas Hedrick identifies the Pharisees as perhaps a cipher for Jews more generally.³ It is unclear whether the wider Christian church is in view or the emerging Rabbinic movement; the former are a closer target for *Thomas*, though the latter might be suggested by the reference to the Pharisees. The allusion to the dog in the manger fable may reflect a popularity of that image in the second century, given that the earliest other references (cited below) are in Strato of Sardis (fl. 117–135 CE)⁴ and Lucian (c. 120–190), who are roughly contemporaneous with *Thomas* on the date argued for in this commentary.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 102:** I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel, ‘Das Thomas-Evangelium aus Nag’ Hammâdi und Lukian von Samosata’, *AcOr* 13 (1961), 131–133; I. Trencsényi-Waldapfel, ‘Der Hund in der Krippe’, *AcOr* 14 (1962), 139–143; G. Moravcsik, ‘“Hund in der Krippe”: Zur Geschichte eines griechischen Sprichwortes’, *Acta Antiqua* 12 (1964), 77–86; J. Priest, ‘The Dog in the Manger: In Quest of a Fable’, *Classical Journal* 81 (1985), 49–58; J. Leonhardt-Balzer, ‘Wer vertreibt den Hund aus der Futterkrippe? (Vom Hund in der Krippe)—EvThom 102’, in Zimmermann, ed. *Kompendium der Gleichnisse Jesu*, 927–931; Löhr, ‘Jesus und die Tora als ethische Norm’, 368–370.

2 For further parallels, see comment on GTh 39 above.

3 Pokorný, 145; Hedrick, 171.

4 On the *floruit* of Strato in the principate of Hadrian, see Priest, ‘Dog in the Manger’, 57, and N. Hopkinson, ‘Straton of Sardis’, *OCD*³ 1149.

Notes

Woe to those Pharisees. The ‘woe’ formula also appears twice in GTh 112 (on similar formulae in *Thomas*, see note above on GTh 7.2). The sense is probably pure invective, rather than calling down judgment, or tapping into honour and shame protocols.⁵ The Pharisees constituted a movement in the time of Jesus concerned with extending purity throughout the nation of Israel, and they played a decisive role in the shaping of the Rabbinic movement after 70 CE.⁶ The syntax of this sentence (lit. ‘woe to them, the Pharisees’) is not so distinctively Semitic to require an Aramaic or Syriac source behind *Thomas*.⁷

For they are like a dog sleeping in the manger of some cattle, for it neither eats nor allows the cattle to feed.⁸ Although this story is not attested in the ancient Greek and Roman fable collections, the proverbial ‘dog in the manger’ makes its appearance twice in Lucian: ‘... like the dog lying in the manger, which does not eat the barley itself, nor lets the horse eat it which can’ (*Indoct.* 30); ‘like the dog in the manger which neither ate the barley itself, nor permitted the hungry horse to eat it’ (*Timon* 14).⁹ Strato’s version is less close to *Thomas* and Lucian than these two are to each other: ‘... like the dog in the manger with the roses, and stupidly barking, it neither gives the good thing to itself nor to anyone else’ (Strato, *ad Gk Anth.* 12.236).¹⁰ The fable appears subsequently in Hesychius’ *Dictionary* (fifth century CE), and in a number of later manuscript collections.¹¹

5 Valantasis, 182, translates, ‘Damn the Pharisees’. For the honour/ shame interpretation, see Hedrick, 171.

6 See further J. Schaper, ‘The Pharisees’, in W.D. Davies, et al. eds., *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. III (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 402–427; R. Deines, ‘Pharisees’, *EDEJ* 1061–1063. See e.g. the schematic presentation of the ‘sects’ in Josephus (*BJ* 2.119–166; *AJ* 13.171–173; 18.11–25).

7 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 98.

8 At the risk of offending dog-lovers, I have translated pronouns referring to the dog with ‘it’, to avoid the difficulty that the dog is masculine in Coptic, but feminine in the Greek parallels.

9 *Indoct.*: τῆς κυνός ... τῆς ἐν τῇ φάτνῃ κατακειμένης, ἢ οὔτε αὐτῆ τῶν κριθῶν ἐσθίει οὔτε τῷ ἵππῳ δυναμένῳ φαγεῖν ἐπιτρέπει. *Timon*: καθάπερ τὴν ἐν τῇ φάτνῃ κύνᾳ μῆτε αὐτὴν ἐσθίουσαν τῶν κριθῶν μῆτε τῷ ἵππῳ πεινῶντι ἐπιτρέπουσαν. Leonhardt-Balzer (‘Wer vertreibt den Hund aus der Futterkrippe?’, 929–930) notes the relative similarity of *Thomas* to *Indoct.* rather than to *Timon*.

10 As is the case in such anthologies, the attribution may not be completely certain.

11 For the Hesychius reference, see Moravcsik, ‘Hund in der Krippe’, 79; see Moravcsik’s article, and Treccényi-Waldapfel, ‘Der Hund in der Krippe’ on the transmission in later collections more widely.

Logion 103¹

πεχε τ̄ δε ογμα[κα]ριος πε πρωμε παει ετσοογ(ν) δε ε[ν̄ δω] ἡμερος
 ενληστης νηγ ερογ(ν) δυνα [εγ]ματωογν̄ ἡρωω[ε]ογρ̄ ἡτεφ̄ ἡν̄τε[ρο] δω
 ἡρωογρ̄ ἡμοφ̄ εχ̄ν̄ τεφ̄†πε ε[δ] τερη ενπατογει ερογν̄

Jesus said, 'Bl[es]sed is the man who knows a[t what] point the brigands will enter. Then [he] will arise and muster his kingd[om] and prepare himself b[e]fore they come in.'

Interpretation

This parabolic macarism (cf. Matt. 24.43; Lk. 12.39) is another statement of the need for the disciple to be prepared for confrontation. We have encountered a parable to this effect recently in GTh 98 (the parable of the Assassin), and this theme began in GTh 21, where the illustration of the householder being on watch for the thief (21.5) is applied practically to the audience who must be on guard against the world and robbers (21.6). GTh 103 is closer to GTh 21 than to GTh 98, which uses “offensive” imagery whereas the other two are about how to *defend* against incursion. There is a consistent pattern in these sayings, however, of (1) a main character, (2) an opponent, (3) a danger, (4) the preparation whereby the danger can be averted, and (5) the desired outcome:

	<i>GTh 21.5</i>	<i>GTh 98</i>	<i>GTh 103</i>
Main character	householder/ king?	assassin	king
Opponent	thief	ruler	brigands
Danger	thief digging/ stealing	weakness/ failure	brigands entering
Preparation	advance knowledge/ vigil	practice thrust	advance knowledge
Resolution	not allowing entry	killing the ruler	mustering for battle

1 **Bibliography for GTh 103:** Toyoshima, 'Neue Vorschläge zur Lesung und Übersetzung', 230–235.

The clearest statement of the practical meaning of this motif comes directly after GTh 21.5 with its householder/ thief image: ‘As for you, keep guard against the world. Prepare yourselves with great strength, lest the brigands find a way to come to you.’ (GTh 21.6–7). There are several connections between GTh 21.6–7 and GTh 103 here: (a) the similar structure, (b) the reference to ‘brigands’ (ἄληστῆς), and (c) the idiom of ‘girding up one’s loins’, for preparing. This clearly justifies the interpretation of the macarism in GTh 103 as an exhortation to readiness. A necessary element in this readiness is, as in GTh 21.5, knowledge.

There may not be any particular danger in view (thus Plisch).² Alternatively, Grosso suggests that the danger is the passions of the flesh, and temptation which needs to be resisted;³ Pokorný identifies it as the world, with the vulnerable ‘point’ being the human soul, and the warning, ‘against the loss of the divine substance’;⁴ for DeConick it is the ‘demons, the desires of the body’.⁵ It is hard, and probably not necessary, to choose between the anthropological, cosmological and demonological interpretations.

Notes

Blessed is the man who knows. This is the last of eleven beatitudes in *Thomas* (on the formula, see note on GTh 7.1). Noteworthy here is the connection between blessing and knowledge. Although the ‘man who knows’ is a character in a parable, there is clearly a commendation of real knowledge in disciples.

At what point. The translation ‘point’ here reflects the ambiguity of the Graeco-Coptic *μερος* (‘part’), which might be spatial, or temporal.⁶ In the former case, the ‘part’ would be a region or district of the man’s ‘kingdom’;⁷ in the latter, the ‘part’ is the part of the day or night. Although a spatial sense is more common for *μερος*, the temporal sense fits with the (admittedly loose) Synoptic parallel (Matt. 24.43; Lk. 12.39): ‘Know this, that if the householder knew at what watch of the night (Lk: at what hour) the thief was coming, (Matt: + he would have kept watch and) he would not have allowed his house to be broken into.’

² Plisch, 225.

³ Grosso, 251.

⁴ Pokorný, 145.

⁵ DeConick, 280.

⁶ Rightly, Nordsieck, 357; Plisch, 225; Grosso, 251. Valantasis’s emphasis on the shift from the Synoptics’ temporal horizon to *Thomas*’s spatial imagery is thus misguided (183).

⁷ LSJ, *μέρος*: IV 1 ‘part[s] of the country; region[s]’; IV 4 ‘district’.

The brigands will enter. On the Graeco-Coptic term ληστῆς (ληστής), see above on 21.7.

Then he will arise and muster his kingdom. Lit. ‘So that he might arise ...’: the whole of GTh 103 is in Coptic a single sentence. The reference to ‘kingdom’ indicates that the main character is a king, so the attack is not merely a theft from a private estate.⁸

And prepare himself before they come in. ‘Prepare himself’ is literally the biblical idiom ‘gird up his loin(s)’⁹ (very common in the OT; in the NT, Lk. 12.35; Eph. 6.14; 1Pet. 1.13): see also GTh 21.7. It means not ‘departure’¹⁰ or ‘arming oneself’¹¹ *per se*, but *preparing oneself* for actions. The use of the phrase may be indicative of a relationship to Luke’s version:¹² Luke’s Jesus exhorts the disciples to gird up their loins (Lk. 12.35), before recounting the parable in which the master of the house will gird himself (Lk. 12.37), and the instruction parallel to this saying in GTh 103 (Lk. 12.39).

8 Although there may be some exceptions, the overwhelming majority of references to $\mu\bar{\nu}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron$ (cf. βασιλεία) are to kingdoms proper. ‘Kingdom’ (here written $\mu\bar{\nu}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron$) is restored; Hedrick has proposed that $\mu\bar{\nu}\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron$ (‘treasure’) is also possible, but the parallel with GTh 21 makes ‘kingdom’ very likely.

9 There is no particular significance in $\dagger\pi\epsilon$ being singular (*pace* Plisch, 225); Crum (423a) notes that the singular is to be expected when only one person is in view.

10 Plisch, 225.

11 DeConick, 280.

12 Pokorný, 146, raises the possibility of Lukan influence.

Logion 104¹

104.1 ΠΕΧΑΔΥ Ν[Ι]Ϛ ΧΕ ΔΜΟΥ ΝΤΗΩΛΗΛ΄ ΜΠΟΥΥ ΑΥΩ ΝΤΗΡΗΗΣΤΕΥΕ 104.2 ΠΕΧΕ
ΙϚ ΧΕ ΟΥ ΓΑΡ΄ ΠΕ ΠΙΝΟΒΕ ΝΤΑΕΙΑΔΔ΄ Η ΝΤΑΥΧΡΟ ΕΡΟΕΙ ΖΗ ΟΥ 104.3 ΑΛΛΑ ΖΟΤΑΝ
ΕΡΩΔΑΝ ΠΝΥΜΦΙΟΣ ΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΗ ΠΝΥΜΦΩΝ ΤΟΤΕ ΜΑΡΟΥΝΗ΄ΣΤΕΥΕ ΑΥΩ ΜΑΡΟΥΩ-
ΛΗΛ΄

104.1 *They said to [Je]sus, ‘Come, let us pray and fast today.’ 104.2 Jesus said, ‘What sin have I committed, or how have I been defeated? 104.3 But when the bridegroom comes out of the bridal chamber, then let them fast and pray.’*

Interpretation

The first two parts of this saying are straightforward: people exhort Jesus to join their prayer and fasting, he refuses because he has no need to do so. There are five main options for interpreting this saying in a way which takes account of the difficult conclusion in 104.3.

(1) Like its counterpart in the Synoptic Gospels (Mk 2.18–20; Matt. 9.14–15; Lk. 5.33–35), this saying could mean that it is wrong to fast and pray while Jesus is present, but that when he departs (cf. GTh 12), they will be appropriate.² There are two problems with this, however. First, the positive view of fasting and prayer runs counter to the prohibition against them in GTh 14, though this may not be seen as a difficulty for the interpretation of GTh 104 by those who consider contradiction as par for the course in *Thomas*. Perhaps a more significant difficulty, however, lies in *Thomas*’s reference to Jesus leaving the bridal chamber (the Synoptics speak of the bridegroom leaving the wedding guests). If this event referred to Jesus’ departure from the world, then the bridal chamber would effectively be a reference to the *world*. This is unlikely, however, given that in GTh 75 (and very commonly elsewhere in other, especially Valentinian, literature) the bridal chamber is a soteriological metaphor.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 104:** P. Sellew, ‘Pious Practice and Social Formation in the Gospel of Thomas’, *Forum* 10 (1994), 47–56; Trevijano Etcheverría, ‘Las prácticas de piedad en el Evangelio de Tomás’, 321–349; Helderman, ‘Die Herrenworte über das Brautgemach im Thomasevangelium’, 78–80; Segelberg, ‘Prayer among the Gnostics?’, 58–60.

2 DeConick, 281, mentions this as a possibility.

(2) A second view sees fasting and prayer as viable practices for true disciples only *in extremis*, such as for those whose state of oneness/ wholeness 'breaks down'.³

(3) More negatively still, the statement could apply to those who have apostatised.⁴

(4) The practices might simply apply to another group altogether. Segelberg and Sellew make the important point that prayer and fasting appear to be dismissed as practices for others, not for Jesus and his disciples.⁵ Segelberg draws attention to the third-person plural 'let *them* fast and pray', and concludes: 'It has nothing to do with Jesus and the disciples.'⁶

(5) Grant & Freedman, followed by Valantasis, take the view that the criticism of traditional practices is unqualified, and that the situation in 104.3 is purely hypothetical. 'Since no Gnostic leaves the bridechamber (see Saying 75), this means that the Gnostic will never fast.'⁷ Valantasis comes to the same result, while taking the groom as Jesus, rather than 'the Gnostic': 'there will never be a time when the groom has left the nuptial chamber, because Jesus' voice perpetually speaks in the sayings read and interpreted.'⁸ Speaking in such hypothetical terms is not paralleled elsewhere in *Thomas*, however.

(6) Helderman raises the possibility that the saviour leaves the bridal chamber in the sense that at the end of history the Gnostic Jesus will leave the pleroma to come and destroy the ignorant.⁹ Thus GTh 104 is a saying of judgment. Such a larger mythology is not clearly assumed in *Thomas*, however, and a judgment scene in any conventional sense is not apparent.

(7) Another way to take GTh 104.3 is to see (a) Jesus' departure from the bridal chamber as referring to *the passing of the time of salvation*, the eschatological event at which the world ends, and (b) prayer and fasting as describing some

3 Loader, *Jesus' Attitude Towards the Law*, 494.

4 Trevijano, 'Las prácticas de piedad', 345–346; similarly, Jipp, 'Death and the Human Predicament', 259.

5 Sellew, 'Pious Practices', 54, says that the saying shifts the practices to a different community.

6 Segelberg, 'Prayer among the Gnostics?', 59.

7 Grant & Freedman, 191.

8 Valantasis, 185.

9 Helderman, 'Herrenworte', 79.

kind of future state of perfection.¹⁰ This interpretation gains plausibility when seen in connection with the *Gospel of Philip*. In the first place, *Philip* is the *locus classicus* for bridal chamber theology. Secondly, *Philip* shares the emphasis on grasping the soteriological blessing of the bridal chamber in this present age: 'If anyone becomes a son of the bridal chamber, he will receive the light. If anyone does not receive it while he is here, he will not be able to receive it in the other place.' (*Gos. Phil.* 86,4–7). Thirdly, the *Gospel of Philip* also discusses the place of prayer relative to these two epochs or 'places':

Those who sow in winter reap in summer. The winter is the world, the summer the other aeon. Let us sow in the world that we may reap in the summer. *Because of this, it is fitting for us not to pray in the winter.* Summer follows winter. But if any man reap in winter he will not actually reap but only pluck out, since it will not provide a harvest for such a person.

(*Gos. Phil.* 52,25–33)

It is interesting that *Philip* here has a schema according to which prayer does not take place in the present age but—presumably reconceptualised accordingly—in the next.

	<i>Gospel of Thomas</i>	<i>Gospel of Philip</i>
(i)	time not to pray or fast	winter = the world = time of sowing, not <i>praying</i>
(ii)	bridegroom leaves bridal chamber	
(iii)	time for fasting and prayer	summer = other aeon = time of reaping

Such a scheme would make sense for *Thomas* who rejects prayer 'today' (104.1: $\bar{\mu}\pi\pi\omicron\gamma$) but not in the future (104.3: 'when the bridegroom comes out ...'). Quite how *Philip* conceives of prayer, associated with 'reaping' in 'summer', in the age to come is unclear.¹¹ Perhaps, given that prayer means being with the Father in the inmost realm, the *pleroma* (*Gos. Phil.* 68,8–17),¹² it refers to the kind of union with the Father which is only possible in the other aeon. *Thomas* does

10 Cf. GTh 11; 111.

11 On the analogies of 'winter: world' and 'summer: age to come', see also *Herm. [Sim. 3–4]* 52–53.

12 Cf. prayer as entering the holy of Holies in Heb. 10.19–22.

not quite share this temporal schema, but as has been mentioned, there is a distinction between ‘today’ and the time of Jesus’ absence from the bridal chamber. In this later epoch, prayer is perhaps reconceptualised in *Thomas* as a kind of immediate union, and fasting might mean that the world and matter have been decisively rejected (cf. GTh 27).

Against this interpretation, however, is the potential objection that it is too convoluted to be credible. It may well be the case that, as in interpretation (4) above, the saying is about the willful persistence of the ignorant in their traditional practices, now that Jesus and the opportunity for salvation are no longer with them. This does justice to the peculiar statement ‘let them ...’ in the conclusion.

Notes

104.1 They said to Jesus. The speakers are probably, though not certainly, the disciples: cf. in the Markan and Lukan parallels, ‘some people’ (and ‘the disciples of John’ in Matt. 9.14).¹³

104.1 Come, let us pray and fast today. The implication is perhaps a fixed day of fasting (cf. *Did.* 8.1), accompanied by prayer (which is more likely to be assumed not to take place only on a particular day). The reference to prayer here is evidence of the incorporation of Lukan redaction (from Lk. 5.33).¹⁴

104.2 Jesus said, ‘What sin have I committed, or how have I been defeated?’ These two questions are probably synonymous, ‘defeat’ referring either to sinning,¹⁵ or to being exposed as sinful.¹⁶ The questions presume negative answers, and so this saying presupposes the sinlessness of Jesus found elsewhere in early Christianity.¹⁷ The implied response to the initial invitation in 104.1 is thus also clearly negative. The link between fasting and sin is traditional, and perhaps the references to sin and defeat here connect with prayer, on the assumption that one only needs to pray out of weakness (or for forgiveness of sins, as in the Lord’s prayer). As Plisch has put it, for *Thomas* here, ‘praying and fasting are an expression of a disheartened religious mind.’¹⁸ GTh 104.2 may well be related to the *Gospel of the Nazaraeans*, or a source common to both: ‘They said to him:

13 Hedrick, 173, also raises the possibility that the Pharisees or other rivals are in view.

14 See Gathercole, *Composition*, 198–199.

15 Rom. 12.21a; 2 Pet. 2.20.

16 Cf. John 8.46: ‘who among you has convicted me of sin?’

17 Jn 7.18; Rom. 8.3; 2 Cor. 5.17; Heb. 4.15 (cf. Heb 7.16?); 1 Pet. 2.21–23.

18 Plisch, 226; cf. Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 126.

“Let us go and be baptized.” ... He said to them, “*How have I sinned, such that I should go and be baptized by him?*”¹⁹

104.3 But when the bridegroom comes out of the bridal chamber, then let them fast and pray. France notes the contrast between the Synoptics’ ‘removal’ (ἀπαρθῆ) and *Thomas*’s lack of reference to violent death (the bridegroom ‘comes out’ or ‘comes forth’).²⁰ Compare Bovon’s contrast between Luke’s ‘one will be taken, the other will be left’, and ‘one will die, one will live’ in GTh 61.1.²¹ The word for ‘bridal chamber’ (νυμφῶν, νυμφών) is probably more specific than GTh 75’s μα νῶελεετ, which can be either bridal chamber or the place of the marriage feast (see comment on GTh 75). This second reference to prayer is a result of the influence of Lukan redaction (see also above on 104.1).

19 *Quid peccavi ut vadam et baptizer ab eo?* (G. Naz. in Jerome, *Adv. Pelag.* 3.2.1.) Quispel, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the New Testament’, 190–191, thinks this evidence that *Gos. Naz.* is related to *Thomas* via *Gos. Heb.*: he sees *Gos. Ebion.* and *Gos. Naz.* as ‘just recensions of an underlying Gospel of the Hebrews’, which was a source for *Thomas*. Unfortunately, this is merely a tissue of speculation upon speculation.

20 France, *Gospel of Mark*, 140 and n. 37.

21 Bovon, ‘Sentences propres’, 50.

Logion 105¹

πεδε τ̄ δε πετνασοϋων πειωτ̄ μ̄ν τ̄μαδϋ σεναμοϋτε ερωϋ δε πωηρε
μ̄πορη

Jesus said, 'Whoever knows the Father and the Mother will be called "son of a prostitute".'

Interpretation

This is a puzzling saying, as can be seen from the multiplicity of approaches to it.

- (1) Nordsieck and Davies see this saying as a christological statement according to which Jesus, although the one who truly knows the Father and the maternal Spirit, is nevertheless accused particularly by Jews of being illegitimate.² A reference specifically to Jesus is implied by some translations, such as Lambdin ('He who knows the father and the mother ...'³), but is unlikely. The future πετνασοϋων most probably makes the statement indefinite ('Whoever knows the father and the mother ...').⁴
- (2) Another approach sees this saying as critical of family ties. For DeConick and other commentators, those who know father and mother are denounced as those who remain too close to their biological families.⁵ However, 'will be called "son of a prostitute"' is an odd sort of denunciation: the implication of the wording is 'will be called (by others)' or 'will generally be known as', not called such specifically by the addressees of *Thomas*. The phrasing is unlikely to mean 'should be regarded in this way by true disciples'. The Coptic's '*the* father and *the* mother' are perhaps also against this. Coptic is just as fond as English of possessive pronouns, and so one

1 **Bibliography for GTh 105:** Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La madre de Jesús', 271–284.

2 Nordsieck, 362; Davies, *The Gospel of Thomas: Annotated and Explained*, 126.

3 Layton & Lambdin, 'The Gospel according to Thomas', *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 91.

4 Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 239 (§ 311 i); cf. Grosso, 252–253.

5 DeConick, 283–284; cf. Ménard, 204; Valantasis, 185; Hedrick, 175; Grosso, 253–254.

might expect 'his father and his mother' instead, whereas ΠΕΙΩΤ Μῆ ΤΗΛΛΥ suggests more readily 'the Father and the Mother'.⁶

- (3) Plisch's interpretation removes the difficulty by adding a 'not' ('whoever does *not* know'). The saying then means: 'Only the one who has full spiritual cognition (of father and mother) is not a son of a whore; everybody else who is still connected to the biological kin and does not have full knowledge of his spiritual parental identity is rightfully called a son of a whore ...'⁷ Adding a 'not' is a rather desperate measure, and the parallel which Plisch adduces from the *Gospel of Philip* (52,21–24) is not unproblematic either, because it refers to orphans who *do* know their mothers but not their fathers.
- (4) A fourth possibility, suggested by Grant & Freedman, is that in this saying Jesus is taken to anticipate the criticisms which *Thomas* Christians will meet: although they are truly those who know the supreme Father and spiritual Mother, the Holy Spirit (cf. GTh 101), the elect disciples will be accused of being spiritually illegitimate. This is the most likely interpretation. It does justice to the language of 'knowing *the* father and *the* mother': cf. 69.1: 'those who know the Father' (ΝΕΝΤΑΞΣΟΥΩΝ ΠΕΙΩΤ), and the numerous other instances of '*the* Father'. It also makes sense of the 'will be called' phraseology. The accusation of bastardy against disciples makes sense as an extension of the same accusation against Jesus himself: just as Jesus was accused of being a 'son of a prostitute' (*quaestuariae filius*, Tert. *Spect.* 30, c. 196–197 CE),⁸ so the same could be applied to his true disciples.

Notes

Whoever knows the Father and the Mother. A reference here to biological parents, of whom knowledge is the norm, would make the saying very odd. Rather, the sense is of heavenly parentage. The heavenly, spiritual Mother is not such common currency as the Father, but cf. GTh 101 ('my true Mother gave me life'), and may be equated with the Holy Spirit (cf. GTh 44) and possibly also the 'great power and great wealth' (GTh 85).⁹ (For discussion of the Mother, see

6 Compare GTh 55: ΠΕΤΝΑΜΕΣΤΕ ΠΕΥ'ΕΙΩΤ' ΔΗ' Μῆ ΤΕΥΜΑΛΥ ... ΔΥΩ ΠῆΜΕΣΤΕ ΝΕΥ'ΣΙΝΗΥ' Μῆ ΝΕΥ'ΣΩΝΕ, and GTh 101: ΠΕΤΑΜΕΣΤΕ ΠΕΥ'ΕΙΩΤ' ΔΗ' Μῆ ΤΕΥ'ΜΑΛΥ ... ΔΥΩ ΠΕΤΑΜῆΡΕ ΠΕΥ'ΕΙΩΤ' ΔΗ' Μῆ ΤΕΥ'ΜΑΛΥ ...

7 Plisch, 229.

8 See Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy*, 176–179, on this passage.

9 See Trevijano Etcheverría, 'La madre de Jesús'.

GTh 101.) As such, the reference is to spiritual knowledge of these heavenly and divine parents.

Will be called “son of a prostitute”. This metaphorical accusation more naturally fits a reference specific to Jesus, but can also be found in a more general sense: see e.g. *Pes. Rabb.* 21.6 (100b–101a), where the ‘son of a prostitute’ is envisaged as saying that there are two gods.¹⁰ Closer in time to *Thomas* are the frequent references in Philo to those polytheists who are symbolically ἐκ πόρνῆς, in the sense that they have many divine fathers whom they worship but are ignorant of the real Father (*Mig.* 69; *Dec.* 8; *Conf.* 144; *Spec. Leg.* 1.331–332).

10 For the passage, see W.G. Braude, tr. *Pesikta Rabbati: Discourses for Feasts, Fasts, and Special Sabbaths* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 422; for discussion, see P. Schafer, *Jesus in the Talmud* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 109–111.

Logion 106¹

106.1 πεχε̅ ι̅c̅ δε̅ ροταν̅ ε̅τε̅τ̅n̅ω̅αρ̅ π̅c̅n̅α̅γ̅ ο̅γα̅ τε̅τ̅n̅α̅ω̅ω̅πε̅ n̅ω̅n̅ρε̅ m̅π̅ρω̅με̅

106.2 α̅γω̅ ε̅τε̅τ̅n̅ω̅αρ̅n̅̅x̅o̅o̅c̅ δε̅ π̅τ̅o̅o̅γ̅ π̅ω̅ω̅με̅ ε̅βo̅λ̅ q̅n̅α̅π̅ω̅ω̅με̅

106.1 *Jesus said, 'When you make the two one, you will become sons of man.*

106.2 *And when you say, "Mountain, move away!", it will move.'*

Interpretation

This saying is paralleled in a number of places in the Synoptics (Mk 11.23; Matt. 21.21; cf. 17.20), with both parts related to, and rephrasings of, prayer statements. *Thomas's* saying has nothing to do with prayer. GTh 106 repeats to a large extent the language of GTh 48:²

Jesus said, 'If two make peace with one another in this one house, they will say to the mountain, "Move away", and it will move.'

The point of GTh 106 is to assert that those who engage in the activity of recovering the primordial unity which existed prior to the cosmic disruption will attain to true humanity (106.1) and also attain a position of ascendancy in the cosmos. Valantasis rightly notes that GTh 106 brings together three important themes in *Thomas*: becoming one, true humanity (being sons of man), and spiritual supremacy over physical realities. The two apodoses may be related: becoming true sons of man (106.1) and having supremacy over the world (106.2) might be traced back to Genesis, where Adam was to have dominion over the earth (Gen. 1.26, 28; cf. Dan. 7.13–14).

Notes

106.1 **When you make the two one.** Schröter rightly emphasises that this protasis is significant for our understanding of *Thomas's* soteriology.³ The clause

1 **Bibliography for GTh 106:** Klijn, 'The "Single One" in the Gospel of Thomas', 271–278.

2 It is a doublet also in Matthew (17.20; 21.21).

3 Schröter, *Erinnerung an Jesu Worte*, 433.

repeats the familiar theme of recovering primordial unity, and those who achieve this will be true human beings (see Introduction, §10.1–2).⁴ *Thomas* envisages the fall into duality in a number of ways (male/ female; inside/ outside, etc.), but the reference here is general.⁵ This protasis is probably related to (and derived from) Matt. 18.19, where ‘if two agree’, what they ask will be done for them.⁶

106.1 You will become sons of man. The phrase ‘sons of man’ is usually taken to refer to true human beings, with small variations around the edges.⁷ Grosso makes the nice observation that ‘sons of man’—the disciples’ *true* identity—might well stand in contrast to the ‘son of a prostitute’ in the previous saying (GTh 105).⁸ In addition to the contrast of authenticity vs (alleged) inauthenticity, there may be a gender contrast (cf. a possible similar contrast between mother and Father in 79.1–2).

106.2 And when you say, “Mountain, move away!”, it will move. This statement recalls the Synoptic sayings about having faith sufficient to tell mountains to move (Mk 11.23; Matt. 17.20; 21.21; cf. Lk. 17.6; 1 Cor. 13.2). In the Synoptics, the point is that with faith nothing is impossible. In *Thomas*, the main interest is that those who cultivate unity will reach the position of having authority over the world: similarly, in GTh 2 ‘finding’ leads ultimately to ruling; in GTh 19.2, ‘these stones will serve’ true disciples. The superiority over the world is also expressed in the ‘world is not worthy’ sayings (GTh 56; 80; 111). See further the notes on GTh 2.4 above.

4 Bauer, ‘De agraphis genuinis’, 131: ‘veri homines, perfecti scilicet’, in reference to a view of Leipoldt.

5 It is not specifically or exclusively gender difference which is in view (cf. Plisch, 231).

6 P. Pokorný, ‘Die Herrenworte im Thomasevangelium und bei Paulus. Ein Beitrag zur Überlieferungsgeschichte der Sprüche Jesu’, in P. Nagel, ed. *Carl-Schmidt-Kolloquium an der Martin-Luther-Universität 1988* (Halle-Wittenberg: Martin-Luther-Universität, 1990), 157–164 (161).

7 Nordsieck, 365, sees Jesus as the son of man in the first instance, which can also include true disciples (similarly, Valantasis, 186); DeConick, 285, sees Adam in his pristine state as the model and goal (similarly, Pokorný, 148; Hedrick, 176). Cf. also Ignatius, *Rom.* 6.2, where after his death, Ignatius ‘will be a man’.

8 Grosso, 254.

Logion 107¹

107.1 πεδεε ιϭ δε τηνητερο εστητω(ν) ευρωμε νωωσ ευνηταϩ ημαγ νωε
νεσοου 107.2 λογα ηρητοϩ σωρη επνοσ πε ακω ηπστεψιτ ακωμε ησα
πιογα φαντερε εροϩ 107.3 ηταρεϩρισε πεχαϩ ηπεσο[[ϳ]]ο'ϳ' δε τοϩοϩκ'
παρα πστεψιτ'

107.1 *Jesus said, "The kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep.*
107.2 *One of them, the largest, wandered off. He left the ninety-nine, and*
searched for this one until he found it. 107.3 *When he had laboured, he said*
to the sheep, "I love you more than the ninety-nine.""

Interpretation

The parable of the Lost Sheep (cf. Matt. 18.12–14; Lk. 15.3–7) has attracted a large number of explanations. It is *Thomas's* thirteenth parable (see comment above on GTh 8). Some minority interpretations can be mentioned before discussing the two main options.

An interpretation along Valentinian lines is unlikely, whether it is based on Irenaeus's report (*AH* 1.8.4; 2.5.2) or the *Gospel of Truth* (also paralleled in *AH* 2.24.6).² In the former case, *Thomas's* shepherd is the saviour who seeks for Achamoth.³ In the latter case, the ninety-nine are the heavenly world, the pleroma, and the one is 'that part of the light world which is not "at home," but outside, imprisoned in the material world', but which when restored brings

1 **Bibliography for GTh 107:** Cerfaux & Garitte, 'Les Paraboles du royaume dans l'Évangile de Thomas', III.76–79; Bauer, 'De "labore" Salvatoris', 123–130; Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 193–197; Schnider, 'Das Gleichnis vom verlorenen Schaf', 146–154; W.L. Petersen, 'The Parable of the Lost Sheep in the Gospel of Thomas and the Synoptics', *NovT* 23 (1981), 128–147; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 158–164; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 424–430; A. Lorenzo Molinari, 'The Parable of the Lost Sheep and its Lost Interpretation: A Proposal for *Gospel of Thomas* 107 as Stage 1 in an Early Christian Jesus Trajectory', in L. Painchaud & P.-H. Poirier, eds. *Colloque internationale: "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les textes de Nag Hammadi"*. Québec, 29–31 mai 2003 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 301–322.

2 Cf. Schnider, who interprets the parable along the more general lines of the Gnostic redeemer myth ('Gleichnis vom verlorenen Schaf', 151), and twice refers to *Thomas's* concern as 'esoteric' (151, 154).

3 So, tentatively, Bauer, 'De labore Salvatoris', 127, on *Thomas's* version as well.

perfection.⁴ There is no trace in GTh 107 of *Thomas's* dependence upon the Valentinian myth.⁵

More recent interpretations include that of King, who comments that 'the emphasis of the parable is on love for those who, having gone astray, have been found.'⁶ Hedrick considers the parable to be about spiritual insight (which may be seen as illogical, like the action of the shepherd), as opposed to common wisdom.⁷ For Valantasis, the 'one' sheep is the self over against the ninety-nine who represent the 'dominant culture', whether the point is the relative value of each, or the need for the self to withdraw from the great majority.⁸ Similarly, for Pokorný, the one leaves the majority of the mainstream church.⁹

Considerable light is shed on the parable by its closest analogues in *Thomas*, namely GTh 8 and 76, which help decide the key question of whether the protagonist is the Father/ Jesus or the disciple.¹⁰ In the parable of the Dragnet (GTh 8), is the wise fisherman Jesus who chooses the 'single' elect, or is it the disciple who casts aside all other options in preference for true knowledge? In the parable of the Pearl (GTh 76), is the shrewd merchant the divine agent of election who casts aside the rest of humanity in preference for the precious true disciple, or is he that true disciple who has counted all rubbish for the sake of having the pearl of knowledge, the only treasure worth having? So also here: is the shepherd the divine Father or Jesus on the one hand, or the elect disciple on the other?¹¹ As has been noted in the discussions of the other parables, the similarities among the three are striking:

4 Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 236. There is no sense in GTh 107, however, that 'the alterations to the parable of the lost sheep in Logion 107 seem to be based upon precisely these ideas' (236). Indeed the shepherd's greater love for the one does not make good sense against this background.

5 For further interpretations recorded by Irenaeus, see *AH* 1.16.1 (the Marcosians); 1.23.2 (Simon Magus), and *AH* 2.24.6 (paralleling the *Gospel of Truth*). Irenaeus' own interpretation can be seen in 3.23.1 (where the sheep is Adam).

6 King, 'Kingdom', 58.

7 Hedrick, 177.

8 Valantasis, 187–188.

9 Pokorný, 149.

10 Grant & Freedman, 192–193, leave the matter open.

11 See e.g. Haenchen, *Botschaft*, 47, for the view that the shepherd is God/ Jesus.

	<i>GTh 8</i>	<i>GTh 76</i>	<i>GTh 107</i>
Introduction:	'The man is like ...'	'kingdom ... is like ...'	'kingdom is like ...'
Principal actor:	wise fisherman	shrewd merchant	shepherd
Action:	fishing/ finding	finding/ buying	searching/ finding
Precious possession:	a fish	'this one pearl'	'this one' sheep
Quality of the one:	large	[unfailing, enduring] ¹²	largest
Alternative:	small fish	rest of merchandise	ninety-nine
Treatment of these:	thrown back	sold	left behind

Two elements might point in favour of the 'divine election' interpretations of these parables: (i) the language of "choosing" in *GTh 8*, and (ii) the contrast between the one and the many might lead the reader to connect these with *GTh 23*: 'I will choose you, one out of a thousand, and two out of ten thousand. And they will stand as single ones.' (iii) The parallel with the Synoptic Gospels might suggest a parable about divine rather than human action.

On the other hand, assuming that *Thomas's* parables correspond in function to their Synoptic counterparts is a dangerous assumption. Taking these parables in *Thomas* as parables of the elect disciple coming to knowledge also has much to commend it: (i) the language of "finding" which is common to all three parables appears frequently in *Thomas* as the activity of the elect (*GTh 1, 2, 49, 77, 90, 92, 94, 110, 111*). Most decisively in favour of this interpretation, however, is (ii) the interpretation of the parable of the pearl supplied in *GTh 76.3*: 'As for you, seek his unfailing and enduring treasure, where no moth comes near to eat and no worm destroys.' The pearl is thus clearly the treasure of knowledge, rather than the true disciple. Given the structural similarities among these three parables it is tempting to take them to have this common application. Finally (iii), the 'labour' (ⲉⲓⲥⲉ) involved in the shepherd's search for the sheep makes good sense as an element of the disciple's quest (cf. *GTh 58*; also 2; 109).¹³

The focus in this parable lies, then, in the total concern of the disciple with the salvation provided by Jesus and the complete indifference to all other

¹² This description features in the explanation of the parable.

¹³ It could also, however, be taken as integral to Jesus' work of revelation: cf. the travail of Jesus' soul in *GTh 28.3* (Bauer, 'De labore Salvatoris', 126–127, sees a reference in *GTh 107* to the passion). This is a less prominent theme in *Thomas* than the effort required of the disciple.

competing concerns.¹⁴ As Petersen rightly commented in response to Schnider, the parable is ‘not intrinsically Gnostic’ in *Thomas*. Against Petersen, however, the acceptance of an Edessan provenance should not lead one to assume ‘a reader of *Thomas*, acquainted with all the OT precedents’, and that Israel is the lost sheep.¹⁵ Much more in tune with the rest of *Thomas* is the focus on the treasured possession of salvation in contrast with an indifference to or rejection of all else.

Notes

107.1 The kingdom is like a shepherd who had a hundred sheep. Schnider points out that the introductory ‘kingdom’ formula is distinctive to *Thomas*, thus bringing it into relation to the other kingdom sayings.¹⁶ On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, § 10.1 above. As noted above, the point of comparison with the kingdom in this parable is that the shepherd denotes the disciple, and the theme is that disciple’s attitude to the kingdom.

107.2 One of them, the largest. As Bruce notes, the main difference in *Thomas*’s version is that while in the Synoptics, ‘the owner puts himself to exceptional trouble over the hundredth sheep just because it is lost’, *Thomas* ‘rationalises the situation’ in explaining that this sheep is the *largest*.¹⁷ Lorenzo Molinari agrees, for different reasons.¹⁸ *Thomas* highlights the worthiness of the object of the searching, which would fit well with the object being the

14 Petersen, ‘Parable of the Lost Sheep’, 128–130; Plisch, 232; Grosso, 255.

15 Petersen, ‘Parable of the Lost Sheep’, 133. A contrast between the milieu of *Thomas* as Jewish and the ‘Gentile (or mixed Jewish-Gentile)’ milieu of the Synoptics is surely misguided (cf. e.g. GTh 52–53), especially his idea that the readers of *Thomas* were ‘Jews and proselytes who considered Jesus to be a prophet or the messiah’ (‘Parable of the Lost Sheep’, 136). Petersen’s rabbinic parallels to the counting of the sheep of Israel fail because in the parable here Israel is on his reading one sheep among the many nations. Although he criticises Jeremias for reading the parable too much through the lens of the canonical gospels, Petersen himself does not seem to consider the possibility that the shepherd might be the disciple rather than God.

16 Schnider, ‘Gleichnis vom verlorenen Schaf’, 150–151; also Plisch, 232.

17 Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins*, 151; cf. Grant & Freedman, 192; Schnider, ‘Gleichnis’, 151 (‘eine rationale Erklärung’).

18 Lorenzo Molinari, ‘Parable of the Lost Sheep’, considers the original parable to be a vicious story about the abandonment of the 99, those such as the Pharisees and Scribes (312–313), with *Thomas*’s version also serving to justify this outrageous action (316).

knowledge of salvation, rather than human beings. The 'great' here is best explained not as a reference to Israel as a 'great' nation, but on the analogy of the great fish in GTh 8.¹⁹ It is possible that this accentuation of the 'large' sheep is in contrast to Matthew's 'little ones', who are the theme of the Matthean parable (Matt. 18.10 and 18.14, bracketing the parable in 18.12–13);²⁰ against this, however, *Thomas* can also value the 'little one' (GTh 46.2).

107.2 Wandered off. There is no real difference here with either Luke's 'lost' sheep, or Matthew's which has merely strayed (with *Thomas* closer to the latter). The shepherd still has to 'search for' and 'find' the sheep (107.2).

107.2 He left the ninety-nine, and searched for this one until he found it. Unlike Matthew and Luke, *Thomas* does not specify where the others are left. *Thomas*'s subordinate clause corresponds exactly to Luke 15.4 (ἄντηρεψε εἶς ἐξ ὧν εὔρησεν αὐτό). As in the analogous sayings (GTh 8 and 76), the wise disciple selects the one true treasure and discards everything else; the ninety-nine therefore corresponds essentially to competing but inferior interests which the true disciple leaves behind.

107.3 When he had laboured. Petersen's translation ('Having tired himself out ...') captures the sense nicely.²¹ The 'labour', a difference from the Synoptics' version of the parable, highlights the hard work required of the disciple in the quest for the knowledge (cf. e.g. GTh 20, 58, 109).²²

107.3 He said to the sheep, "I love you more than the ninety-nine." The shepherd speaking to the sheep is distinctive to *Thomas*'s version. One might suppose here the influence of the Matthean parable ('he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine'; Matt. 18.13; cf. Lk. 15.7), such that what is 'correct only at the time of the finding' in Matthew becomes generalised and rationalised in *Thomas*.²³ This is speculative, however.

19 Pace Petersen, 'Parable of the Lost Sheep', 133.

20 Plisch, 232.

21 Petersen, 'Parable of the Lost Sheep', 129.

22 It is possible that this slightly enigmatic reference to 'labour' also arises by interference from another piece of Jesus tradition which refers to rescuing sheep, namely the halakhic discussion in Matt 12.11 of whether it is classified as 'labour' on the Sabbath to rescue a sheep from a pit. It may be relevant here that the *Gospel of Truth* pairs the parable of the Lost Sheep with this discussion (31.35–32.37).

23 The quotation is from Davies & Allison, *Matthew*, II.775, referring to the explanation of Lindemann.

Logion 108¹

108.1 πεδεε ιϛ δε πετασω εβολ ρη̄ ταταπρο φηαωωπε η̄ταρε 108.2 ανοκ ρω
†ηαωωπε εντοϋ πε 108.3 αγω νεθηη† ηα'ογωνη εροϋ†

108.1 *Jesus said, 'Whoever drinks from my mouth will become like me. 108.2 I myself will become him, 108.3 and what are hidden will be revealed to him.'*

Interpretation

Alongside the commonplace of the revelation of the hidden in GTh 108.3 (cf. GTh 5, 6), the dominant motif here is that of the disciple becoming like, or even sharing in the identity of the revealer. This idea is attributed by Irenaeus to Marcus Magus, who allegedly said—in particular to his female adherents: 'Adorn yourself as a bride expecting her bridegroom, so that you may be what I am, and I what you are' (*ut sis quod ego et ego quod tu*).² Similarly, the *Gospel of Eve* is cited by Epiphanius as follows:

I stood upon a high mountain and saw a tall man, and another who was short. And I heard something like the sound of thunder. I went nearer to hear, and he spoke to me and said: 'I am you and you are me (ἐγὼ σὺ καὶ σὺ ἐγὼ). And wherever you are, I am there, and I am sown in all things ...'³

One can also compare the *Gospel of Philip*, according to which the one who acquires the name with the chrisim 'is no longer a Christian but a Christ' (*Gos. Phil.* 67,26–27), in accordance with *Philip's* theology of becoming like the divine which one beholds (61,20–35). Very similar language appears again in *Pistis Sophia* 96. There is a much wider theology in the Greek philosophical tradition of ὁμοίωσις θεῶ.⁴

1 **Bibliography for GTh 108:** DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 105–115; Marjanen, 'Portrait of Jesus', 209–219.

2 Irenaeus, *AH* 1.13.3.

3 Epiphanius, *Pan.* 26.3.1.

4 See the excellent survey of the theme in G.H. van Kooten, *Paul's Anthropology in Context: The Image of God, Assimilation to God, and Tripartite Man in Ancient Judaism, Ancient Philosophy and Early Christianity* (WUNT 232; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 124–181. Popkes, *Menschenbild*, 176 makes the link between ὁμοίωσις θεῶ and GTh 108.

What is particularly difficult to define here is the nature of the identity between Jesus and the disciple. As Zöckler rightly notes: 'Es können verschiedene Formen der mystischen Identifikation mit einer erlösenden Figur unterschieden werden.'⁵ A 'soft' reading of this likeness might, beginning from the surrounding references to revelation in 108.1 and 108.3, understand this identity as a shared knowledge of heavenly origin: this is something which even the elect do not have unless they take on board the revelation of Jesus.⁶ On accepting Jesus' words, however, the elect share with Jesus that they have come from the kingdom (cf. GTh 49). A 'stronger' reading, on the other hand, might see the identity more in terms of an inclusion of the disciple somehow into the being of Jesus (cf. Jesus' identification with the all in GTh 77?), or that on coming to knowledge the disciple takes on an identity constituted by the inner, invisible image which is synonymous with Jesus himself (cf. GTh 84?). The softer reading is uncontroversial within the limits of what *Thomas* says elsewhere; the only question is whether it does justice to the strength of the language in 108.2.⁷ The harder readings attempt to do justice to 108.2, but are more speculative because they receive less support from elsewhere in *Thomas* though they can be paralleled. Perhaps a strong reading is the better option, according to which the true disciple who has actualised salvation is thereby defined so completely by the true light image—which is 'part' of Jesus himself—that he is thereby identified with Jesus.

This identification of the disciple with Jesus raises the question of whether there is a 'twin theology' (as, for example, in the *Acts of Thomas*). This is thought to apply first and foremost to the disciple Judas Thomas, because the name 'Thomas' is related to the Aramaic/Syriac for 'twin', *t'm*(?). It may also have been inspired in part by Jesus having a brother called Jude/Judas (Mk 6.3/ Matt. 13.55). Thereafter, it is thought to be possible that believers in general might enter into this relation of twinship. Some scholars argue for the presence of this idea in *Thomas*, largely on the basis of the Prologue (identifying this work as the gospel message of the twin), the ideal of masterless discipleship in GTh 13.5, and perhaps especially GTh 108 here.⁸ GTh 108 does not quite envisage

5 Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 245–246.

6 So Marjanen, 'Portrait of Jesus', 214.

7 Plisch interprets the statement as referring to a union with Jesus, which is perhaps too weak.

8 For a positive verdict, see e.g. Gunther, 'Judas Thomas', 114; Janssen, 'Evangelium des Zwillinges?', 231, 236; Gagné, 'Sectarianism, Secret Teaching and Self-Definition', 234–236, and especially M. Frenschkowski, 'Zwillingsmythologie in der Thomastradition', in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 509–528. Poirier, 'Évangile de Thomas, Actes de Thomas, Livre de Thomas',

twinship, however, but rather a kind of identity: there is probably no sense of Jesus' twinship in *Thomas*. Without the later writings which characterise Thomas as Jesus' twin (such as the *Acts of Thomas*) one could not divine on the basis of GTh 13.5 and 108 such a view of Thomas in his Gospel.⁹

Notes

108.1 Whoever drinks from my mouth will become like me. GTh 108 begins with a weaker statement about the *resemblance* of the disciple to Jesus as a result of receiving revelation. Something like 'drinking' from Jesus has already been mentioned in *Thomas*, in GTh 13 where Thomas has drunk 'from the bubbling spring which I have dug' (cf. Jn 4.13–14; 7.37–38), which is also associated with masterless discipleship. Plisch suggests that 108.1 may reflect a kiss of peace in *Thomas's* community, but this is probably overstressed.¹⁰ More appropriate might be a communal drink, as reflected in the use of similar language in Irenaeus' report of Mark the Mage, but this is probably not necessary either. More proximate is GTh 13, where Thomas has drunk from the spring which Jesus has dug; the same idea is implied in the image of the cistern as a place of salvation in GTh 74 (cf. GTh 47). Drinking from Jesus' mouth here can be straightforwardly interpreted as the acceptance of Jesus' words of revelation, without recourse to ritual elements which are not found elsewhere in *Thomas*.

108.2 I myself will become him.¹¹ The saying then becomes stronger, with the sense of identity between Jesus and the disciple increased by comparison with GTh 108.1.

108.3 And what are hidden will be revealed to him. The closest parallel in *Thomas* is GTh 5.1, and one might also compare the revelation and the event of 'seeing' in 83–84.¹² In this state, the disciple is in full possession of the secret knowledge of his origin and destiny. The theme (and language) of the 'hidden' being revealed continues into GTh 109.

22, sees the *Acts* as a development of what is already present in the *Gospel*. In contrast, see DeConick, 45; Meyer, 'Beginning', 45; Pagels, *Beyond Belief*, 57; Perrin, *Thomas: The Other Gospel*, 124.

9 For a cautious discussion of the twin motif, see Uro, *Thomas*, 10–15.

10 Plisch, 233. See the various helpful parallels he supplies, however.

11 For the Coptic construction, see Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 202 (§ 255).

12 The revelation of the hidden in GTh 6 is of a rather different character.

Logion 109¹

109.1 πεδεε ιϛ δε τμη̄ντερο εστ̄νητων ευρωμε εῡνηταϳ [μη̄]μαγ 'ε̄νη τεϳ'ωωϳε
νηνογερο ευϳ[ηη ε]ϳο νατσοογν' εροϳ 109.2 αγω μη̄[μη̄νσα τ]ρεϳμοϳ αϳκααϳ
μη̄πεϳ[ωηρε νε] πωηρε σοογν αν' αϳϳι' τωωϳε ετ̄μη̄μαγ αϳτααϳ [εβο]λ 109.3
αγω πε[η]ταρτοοϳϳ αϳει εϳκαει α[ϳϳ]ε απερο αϳαρχει η̄τ ϳομη̄τ' ετ̄ηνε
μη̄[νε]τ̄ϳοϳωϳϳ

109.1 *Jesus said, 'The kingdom is like a man who had in his field a hi[dden] treasure without knowing of it. 109.2 And a[fter] he died, he left the field to his [son]. The son did not know. He took that field and sold it. 109.3 And the one who bought it went ploughing. [He fou]nd the treasure, and began to lend money at interest to whomever he wished.'*

Textual Comment

Most of the restorations in this lacunose saying are broadly agreed, except that Hedrick contests the reading μη̄[μη̄νσα τ]ρεϳμοϳ ('after he died') in 109.2, preferring μη̄[η̄ατϳμοϳ η]ρεϳμοϳ on grounds both of sense (bequeathing *before* death), and that it fills the space better.² The size of writing at the bottom of this page (p. 51 of NH II) is irregular, however, and I am unsure how to make sense of Hedrick's Coptic here.³ The sense of the text provided above is unproblematic: the bequest would only take effect upon the father's death.

Interpretation

GTh 109 is the last of *Thomas's* 14 parables (see on GTh 8 above), and like most of them, it has given rise to a wide variety of interpretations. It is paralleled in

1 **Bibliography for GTh 109:** Schrage, *Verhältnis*, 196–199; B. Dehandschutter, 'Les paraboles de l'évangile selon Thomas: la parabole du Trésor caché (log. 109)', *ETL* 47 (1971), 199–219; J.D. Crossan, 'Hidden Treasure Parables in Late Antiquity', *SBLSP* (1976), 359–379; Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions*, 117–141; Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 154–158; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 225–243; Liebenberg 'To Know How to Find', 109–119.

2 Hedrick, 180.

3 Hedrick simply translates 'before he died', which is awkward as a rendering of his text.

Matt. 13.44, and has loose parallels elsewhere,⁴ although none of them really provides a solution to the meaning, which must be found within *Thomas*.

(1) The parable might mean that revelation comes ‘in the concrete engagement with the world, with the mundane.’⁵ This is an un-Thomasine theme, however, despite Liebenberg’s attempt to see it elsewhere.⁶ (2) Some interpretations focus on the negative characters, the father and son, and their ignorance and loss;⁷ the parable is thus a warning. Such a reading neglects the prime importance of the climactic third character. (3) Lindemann and Patterson see this main character as *negative*, because of his despicable engagement in usury (cf. GTh 95), and so take the parable to be a warning against wealth which is reinforced by the connection to GTh 110 with its condemnation of riches.⁸ This neglects the fact, however, that the lending happens in the parabolic world, and that the ignorance vs finding motif is something much more prominent in *Thomas*. (4) Some interpret the parable in a strongly allegorical manner, seeing perhaps a sequence of *hylikos—psychikos—pneumatikos*,⁹ or Israel—Jewish Christians—Gentile (*Thomas*) Christians.¹⁰ On the former, one might expect the second man to have a slightly higher station in the parable than his father, whereas both are equally ignorant. In any case, as Gärtner notes, the tripartite structure could be purely literary,¹¹ and Grosso notes that *Thomas* might have a fondness for tripartition (cf. GTh 44; 50; 65; 86; 100).¹² (5) Hedrick rather gives up on a definite interpretation, and says that the meaning is ‘open-ended’.¹³

Because of the importance of the theme in *Thomas*, and because of the literary structure of the parable, the ‘finding’ by the third man is likely to be

4 Horace, *Sat.* 2.6.10–13 appears to refer to a well-known story along these lines; cf. also Philo, *Imm.* 91–92. For various rabbinic parallels, see e.g. Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, 32, 198, and see further parallels in Crossan, ‘Hidden Treasure Parables’.

5 Liebenberg, ‘Know How to Find’, 119.

6 See e.g. on GTh 8 above.

7 Crossan, ‘Hidden Treasure Parables’, 365; King, ‘Kingdom’, 56–57.

8 Lindemann, ‘Gleichnisinterpretation’, 234; Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 146.

9 Wilson, *Studies in the Gospel of Thomas*, 93 (raising this as a possibility); Dehandschutter, ‘Les paraboles de l’Évangile’, 217. In *Studies in the Gospel of Thomas*, 93 n. 2, Wilson presents a related view, that the ‘treasure’ might be the interpretation of the OT, which was hidden from both Israel and the *magna ecclesia*. This is less vulnerable to the criticism above, but runs aground on the fact that *Thomas* seems to have no interest in the correct interpretation of the OT (cf. GTh 52).

10 Plisch, 236.

11 Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 237–238.

12 Grosso, 257.

13 Hedrick, 181.

the focal point. ‘Finding’ appears as a soteriological good in GTh 1; 2; 8; 27; 38; 49; 56; 58; 77?; 80; 90; 92; 94; 97?; 107; 110; 111, and so it is reasonable to suppose that this is the sense of 109.3. There need not be a great distinction between the first two men, though their ignorance may represent the fact that the truth was ‘unnoticed by generations of people who lack the knowledge.’¹⁴ The sense of the parable is not quite ‘l’acte d’abandon total en faveur du bien suprême’,¹⁵ because *Thomas*—unlike Matthew—does not say that the character got rid of, or ignored, everything else in order to get the treasure (cf. also GTh 8; 76; 107). The parable is quite similar to the parable of the Pearl, however—the pearl is another ‘treasure’ which is ‘found’ (GTh 76). What may well mark out the third man is that he is the only one of the three to *work* (‘ploughing’) and who gets his reward;¹⁶ both the terminology of ‘labour’ (εργα; GTh 58; 107; though cf. 8; 97) and effort in general (e.g. GTh 2) are important elsewhere in *Thomas*. What he finds is the treasure of salvation, i.e. rest in the kingdom. The imagery of usury might point to the great spiritual profit that the true disciple receives: compare the sixty-fold and one-hundred-and-twenty-fold yield of the seed in the parable of the Sower (GTh 8). On the moral question, see note on 109.3 below.

Notes

109.1 The kingdom is like. This is another kingdom parable (cf. GTh 8?; 20; 57; 76; 96–98; 107), with the first man mentioned certainly not himself embodying the kingdom. (On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above.) The closest analogy in the parable to the kingdom is the treasure, as is explicit in Matthew’s version, but in *Thomas* it is the vignette as a whole which encapsulates a key truth about the kingdom. There is general agreement that this parable in its Matthean form presupposes the *presence* of the kingdom, which is also the case for *Thomas*’s version.¹⁷

109.1 A man who had in his field a hidden treasure without knowing of it. The opening of this parable is considerably more elaborate than Matthew’s version, with *Thomas* wanting to draw attention to the theme of ignorance; this first person mentioned is not the ‘hero’ of the parable. The theme of

14 Pokorný, 150.

15 Dehandschutter, ‘Les paraboles de l’évangile’, 218.

16 Valantasis, 190; Gärtner, *Theology of the Gospel of Thomas*, 237–238. Gärtner’s other suggestion, that a doctrine of reincarnation underlies this parable, is extremely unlikely (238). GTh 59 looks as though it would in any case contradict the idea of reincarnation.

17 On the point in Matthew, see Davies & Allison, *Matthew*, II.435.

treasure recalls the earlier parable of the Pearl (GTh 76),¹⁸ a pearl which at the end of that saying is glossed as a ‘treasure’ (εζο). That pearl was, implicitly, hidden, as it was discovered by the merchant in a consignment of merchandise. As ‘unknowing’ (ατσοογν), the owner of the field, however, lacks one of the essential characteristics advocated by *Thomas*, knowledge.

109.2 And after he died, he left the field to his son. The son did not know. The son is also defined in very similar language as ignorant. It is just possible that there is an anti-familial implication here, but this may be to press the imagery too far.

109.2 He took that field and sold it. As Hedrick notes, ‘taking X and doing Y to X’ is a very common Semitism or biblical idiom (cf. Matt. 13.33).¹⁹

109.3 And the one who bought it. Being an element in a parable, there is no real conflict here with the author’s real stance on commerce. This element can be compared with GTh 76, where the merchant sells his consignment of merchandise in order to be able to buy the pearl, which is also explained as a treasure.

109.3 Went ploughing. This element perhaps draws attention to the element of ‘working’ integral to finding knowledge in a number of sayings (e.g. GTh 58; 107.3). Interestingly, the man who digging to plant a tree finds a treasure in Philo, *Imm.* 91–92 is likened to discovering treasure from God χωρις και πόνου, ‘without labour’ (cf. GTh 8).

109.3 He found the treasure. ‘Finding’ is one of the key verbs employed in *Thomas* to describe coming to the knowledge of salvation (see references in the interpretation above): ‘finding’ language continues into GTh 110 and 111.

109.3 And began to lend money at interest to whomever he wished. This clause highlights the great prosperity of the man who found the treasure. This statement is not at odds with GTh 95, since the presence of a motif in a parable does not signal approval of the theme in the real world.²⁰ This is one of the so-called ‘immoral parables’, on which see the interpretation of GTh 98.

18 Dehandschutter, ‘Les paraboles’, 212: ‘la parabole jumelle de la perle’.

19 Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions*, 137, citing a number of examples including Matt. 13.33. A Semitism of this kind does not of itself, however, indicate a Semitic *Vorlage* for *Thomas*. See Gathercole, *Composition*, 100.

20 The idea that there is a ‘serious discrepancy’ (Valantasis, 190; cf. Hedrick, 180, and Lindemann and Patterson as discussed above) is unfounded. *Pace* Hedrick, *Parables as Poetic Fictions*, 140–141, since the usury motif is embedded within a parable, there is no question of the readers or auditors being left to come to a conclusion about the morality of the third man becoming a banker. Cf. the motif of lending at interest in Matt. 25.27; Lk. 19.23. *Thomas* leaves unambiguous its stance towards usury in the real world in GTh 95.

Logion 110¹

ΠΕΧΕ ΙϚ ΔΕ ΠΕΝΤΑΖΩΝΗ ἸΠΚΟΣΜΟΣ Ἰϥῤ ρῖμαλο μαρεφαρνα ἸΠΚΟΣΜΟΣ

Jesus said, 'Whoever has found the world and become rich, let him renounce the world.'

Interpretation

There is a difficult ambiguity here. The jussive main clause is unambiguous, but the relative clause could refer either to (a) the person who has 'found the world (to be what it is)', that is, a corpse,² and thus is spiritually rich, or to (b) the person 'who has discovered the rules of the visible world', and has thereby profited from the world.³ Some help comes from the parallels to GTh 110:

GTh 56: Jesus said, 'Whoever has come to know the world has found a corpse. And whoever has found that corpse, the world is not worthy of him.'

GTh 80–81: Jesus said, 'Whoever has come to know the world has found a corpse. But whoever has found the body, the world is not worthy of him.' Jesus said, 'Whoever has become rich, let him reign; and whoever has power, let him renounce it.'

GTh 110 is thus an abbreviated version of GTh 80–81, and therefore probably means: recognising the external, material world for what it is (finding the world), and finding instead what is of true spiritual value ('and is rich'), should lead to an uncompromising rejection of its values ('let him renounce the world').

1 **Bibliography for GTh 110:** Sellew, 'Death, Body, and the World', 530–534; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 136–149.

2 Grant & Freedman, 195.

3 Pokorný, 151.

Notes

Whoever has found the world. The ellipsis in the phrase ‘finding the world’ is similar to that of ‘knowing the world’, or ‘coming to know the world’, in GTh 56 and 80. Both phrases presumably mean ‘finding out what the world truly is’ or ‘coming to know the character of the world.’ ‘Finding’ here connects GTh 110 on both sides with GTh 109 and 111; ‘world’ (as well as its components, heaven and earth) also comes in GTh 111.

And become rich. Plisch and Hedrick note a grammatical infelicity here, but Layton provides some analogous examples.⁴ The use of the conjunctive implies that the action is subsequent to the finding of the world; the translation with a past tense here reflects that in GTh 81. A reference to metaphorical wealth is likely because (i) the interpretation of ‘finding the world’ proposed above probably requires it; (ii) this is the sense in the parallel GTh 81, and (iii) the previous saying GTh 109 has just likened the elect person to one who has discovered a treasure which enables him to set himself up as a banker.⁵ The metaphorical use of riches to refer to spiritual wealth is common enough.⁶ The true disciple in GTh 110, then, is the one who has both discovered the true nature of the world, and come into possession of the greatest riches in the form of the treasure of salvation.

Let him renounce the world. The possession of spiritual riches means that the world, in the sense of *the world's system of values*, with its esteem of wealth and honour, should be rejected by the true disciple. There is resemblance here to Mk 8.34–37 and parallels, in which the command to *deny* oneself is explained partly on the basis that gaining the *world* but losing one's soul would be ridiculous; an even closer conjunction comes in Titus, with its injunction to ‘renounce impiety and worldly passions’ (Tit. 2.12).

4 Plisch, 236–237; Hedrick, 182; cf. Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 280–281 (§ 353), e.g. his reference to Shenoute III 41:5–6.

5 Plisch, 237, links 109–110.

6 In addition to the ‘treasure’ in GTh 76 and 109, cf. e.g. 2 Cor. 8.9; 9.11; Heb. 11.26; Eph. 1.18, for riches as salvation; as understanding, in Col. 1.27 (‘the riches of this glorious mystery’); 2.2 (‘complete riches of fulness of understanding’). The motif can also be used of abundance in an ethical context: Lk. 12.21 (‘rich towards God’); 1 Tim. 6.18 (‘rich in noble deeds’); Jas. 2.5 (‘rich in faith’).

Logion 111¹

111.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΤΣ ΔΕ ΜΠΗΥΕ ΝΑΣΩΛ` ΑΥΩ ΠΚΑΡ ΜΠΕΤΝΗΤΟ ΕΒΟΛ` 111.2 ΑΥΩ ΠΕΤΟΝΕ
ΕΒΟΛ ΖΝ ΠΕΤΟΝΕ ΦΝΑΝΑΥ ΔΝ ΕΜΟΥ 111.3 ΟΥΧ ΖΟΤΙ ΕΙΤ ΧΩ ΜΜΟΣ ΔΕ ΠΕΤΑΡΕ ΕΡΟΦ`
ΟΥΑΑΦ ΠΚΟΣΜΟΣ ΜΠΩΔ ΜΜΟΦ` ΔΝ

111.1 *Jesus said, 'The heavens and the earth will roll up in your presence; 111.2 and he who lives from the living one will not see death.'* 111.3 *It is not that Jesus said, 'Whoever has found only himself; the world is not worthy of him.'*

Interpretation

The point of this saying is to observe that those who are truly 'alive', viz. the true disciples, will be mere bystanders or spectators at the dissolution of the world;² death will not touch them as a result of it. Their immunity from death arises from the fact that they derive their life from the true source of life ('living from the living one'), not merely from themselves. GTh 111 finds a close parallel in 11.1–2: 'This heaven will pass away, and the one above it will pass away. But the dead will not live, and the living will not die.'

Notes

111.1 **The heavens and the earth will roll up.** On the syntax³ (*lit.* 'the heavens will roll up, and the earth'), cf. also GTh 88.1. 'The heavens and the earth' correspond to the cosmos or world in GTh 111.3.⁴ The muted character of eschatology in

1 **Bibliography for GTh 111:** B. Gierth, 'Un apophtegme commun à la *Pistis Sophia* et à l'*Évangile selon Thomas*?', *RevScRel* 64 (1990), 245–249; Hogeterp, 'The Gospel of Thomas and the Historical Jesus', 381–396; Popkes, 'Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie', 211–233; Gathercole, 'The Heavens and the Earth will be Rolled up"', 280–302; Gathercole, *Composition*, 250–262.

2 Valantasis, 191.

3 Plisch, 238, sees it as strange, but such a pattern is common in Greek. Cf. e.g. 1Jn 2.17: καὶ ὁ κόσμος παράγεται καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ. P.-H. Poirier, *L'Évangile selon Thomas* (NH II,2; P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655), *Témoins de la théologie chrétienne primitive?*, in J. Schröter, ed. *The Apocryphal Gospels within the Context of Early Christian Theology* (Leuven/ Paris/ Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 95–125 (123), suggests that 'and the earth' is an interpolation.

4 Rightly, Gierth, 'Un apophtegme commun', 248.

Thomas comes out here: of terms which can be used to depict the disintegration of the cosmos, 'roll up', like 'pass away' in GTh 11, is one of the least violent. The image of the rolling is probably the rolling up of a scroll (Isa. 34.4; Rev. 6.14) or perhaps a garment (Heb. 1.12).⁵ The emphasis is on the impermanence of the cosmos by contrast with the immutability of the living sphere.⁶ On heaven and earth passing away in Jesus tradition, cf. Mk 13.31/Matt. 24.35/Lk. 21.33; Matt. 5.18; Lk. 16.17.

111.1 In your presence.⁷ It is possible that this refers to the author's view of an imminent end.⁸ The principal point, however, is the irrelevance of the disintegration of the heavens and the earth to the disciples: they will observe the end of the cosmos as unaffected bystanders.⁹

111.2 And the one who lives from the living one. The identity of the 'living one' is left vague (cf. GTh 59); it might refer specifically to the Father (cf. GTh 3, 'the living Father'; also 37, 50) or Jesus (cf. Prologue, 'the living Jesus'; also 52).¹⁰ The final statement in 111.3 reinforces this point that *Thomas's* theology is not a humanistic one.

111.2 Will not see death. This identity as 'the living' is permanent. It guarantees immunity from death (cf. GTh 1, etc.) at the disintegration of the cosmos in 111.1. The phrase 'see death' appears in Ps. 89.48; Lk. 2.26; Jn 8.51; Heb. 11.5 (contrast *Thomas's* preferred 'taste death' in GTh 1; 18; 19; 85).

111.3 It is not that Jesus said, 'Whoever has found only himself, the world is not worthy of him.' On 'finding', cf. also GTh 109–110: the latter also has a reference to the 'world'. There are two possible ways to construe the sentence,

5 Cf. also *Or. Sib.* 3.823; *PS* 3. For the comparison of this image with other eschatological terminology, see Gathercole, 'Heavens and the Earth', 295–296.

6 Cf. the reference to $\sigma\omega\lambda$ in the Manichaean *Psalm-Book*: 'Thou endurest, thou shalt endure also; the universe shall roll up, but thou shalt not roll up'. (Allberry, *Manichaean Psalm-Book* II, 190; translation slightly modified); similarly the comparison in Heb. 1.12, in the context of Heb. 1.10–12, quoting the words from Ps. 101.26–28.

7 *Contra* the proposal in Gierth, 'Un apophtegme commun', 248, which seems to take $\epsilon\beta\omega\lambda$ in 111.1 with the verb $\sigma\omega\lambda$ (thus, 'repulse', 'reject'), rather than, as must be the case, as part of the phrase $\epsilon\bar{\iota}\tau\omicron\ \epsilon\beta\omega\lambda$ ('presence').

8 I am grateful to Dr Edward Adams for alerting me to this possibility; cf. also Nordsieck, 377.

9 In this respect, Popkes' account of *Thomas's* eschatology, that it is 'prinzipiell falsch bzw. bedeutungslos' ('Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie', 223), is nearer the mark than Hogeterp's interpretation ('Gospel of Thomas and the Historical Jesus') of *Thomas* as reflecting the same 'now/ not yet' as does the NT. As I have argued in 'Heavens and the Earth', however, Popkes' latter epithet is more apposite than the former.

10 Pokorný, 152, notes the ambiguity.

with the two principal factors in question involving (a) whether the sentence is a question or a statement, and (b) how to understand the Coptic phrase $\pi\epsilon\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon\ \epsilon\pi\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\upsilon$.

- (i) The standard way to translate this sentence is as a rhetorical question: ‘Does not Jesus say, “Whoever has found himself is superior to the world?”’¹¹ The Coptic $\pi\epsilon\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon\ \epsilon\pi\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\upsilon$ is then taken as a pure reflexive: ‘whoever has found himself’. It would be strange in particular, however, for $\omicron\gamma\chi\ \chi\omicron\sigma\tau\iota$ to introduce a question. I know of no parallel.
- (ii) The better solution is one proposed by Leipoldt as a reading of the text, but which he finds incompatible with *Thomas’s* theology.¹² If one takes the phrase $\pi\epsilon\tau\alpha\lambda\epsilon\ \epsilon\pi\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\upsilon$ as merely reflexive (‘whoever finds himself’), then the only real option—as in option (i)—is to take GTh 111.3 as a rhetorical question.¹³ However, the word $\omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha(\tau)$ need not merely emphasise the reflexive $\epsilon\pi\omicron\upsilon$. It also regularly means ‘only’, ‘alone’, ‘by oneself’/ ‘of one’s own accord’.¹⁴ In light of these factors, the sense is probably ‘whoever has found *only* himself’. In this sense, the saying does fit within *Thomas*, since salvation is not just a matter of self-discovery, but also ‘living from the living one’ (111.2).¹⁵ This interpretation does justice to both (a) the usual sense of $\omicron\gamma\chi\ \chi\omicron\sigma\tau\iota$, as introducing a corrective statement, and (b) to the theology of *Thomas* as a whole.

11 See e.g. Layton & Lambdin, ‘The Gospel according to Thomas’, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7: Volume One*, 93; DeConick, 293; Plisch, 238; Pokorný, 151.

12 Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 53, 76; cf. Plisch, 240, although he follows option (i) in his translation (238).

13 The word can be used in pure reflexives: see e.g. Sahidic Gal. 6.3; Eph. 5.2; 2 Tim. 2.13.

14 Layton, *Coptic Grammar*, 118 (§152). For the implication (a) ‘only’, see Lk. 4.9: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve *him only* ($\eta\alpha\upsilon\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\upsilon = \alpha\upsilon\tau\hat{\omega}\ \mu\acute{o}\nu\omega$)’; Phil. 4.15: ‘not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except *you only* ($\eta\tau\omega\tau\eta\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\tau\ \tau\eta\gamma\tau\eta = \acute{\upsilon}\mu\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \mu\acute{o}\nu\omega\iota$)’; 1 Tim. 5.5: ‘The widow who is really in need and *left on her own* ($\epsilon\tau\omicron\sigma\epsilon\tau\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\tau\epsilon = \mu\epsilon\mu\omicron\nu\omega\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta$) ...’. For (b) ‘alone’ with a reflexive (as here in 111.3), see Jn 5.19: ‘I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing *by himself* ($\epsilon\lambda\pi\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\upsilon = \acute{\alpha}\varphi\ \acute{\epsilon}\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$)’; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.’ For (c), the sense ‘of his own accord’, as opposed to by someone else, see Heb. 5.5: ‘Christ did not glorify *himself* ($\eta\alpha\upsilon\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\upsilon = \acute{\epsilon}\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{o}\nu$) so as to become a high priest, rather it was the one who said to him ...’. Cf. GTh 50.1, in the reference to ‘the place where the light came into being from itself, of its own accord’ ($\epsilon\beta\omicron\lambda\ \epsilon\gamma\tau\omicron\sigma\tau\epsilon\ \omicron\gamma\alpha\alpha\tau\epsilon$).

15 As Plisch, 240, helpfully notes.

The function of GTh 111.3, then, is as an explanatory gloss to reinforce GTh 111.2, and to guard against a misunderstanding of *Thomas's* soteriology as a matter of *mere* self-knowledge. It is not necessary to suppose that this gloss 'hardly derived from the compiler of the *Gospel of Thomas*', but was added by a later scribe, as some suppose.¹⁶ Mark 7.19b is a well-known example of a similar kind of gloss added by the author of the Gospel (cf. e.g. Jn 19.35; 21.20). The clarification is rather like that appended to Jesus' challenge to Peter in John's Gospel, that the beloved disciple could in theory survive until the parousia (21.22); since this started a rumour that this had been meant as a fact, the author reminds the reader of Jesus' actual words: 'But Jesus did not say that he would not die; he only said, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"' (21.23). One might also compare Paul's clarification that Scripture does not say 'seeds' plural, but 'seed' singular (Gal. 3.16). The purpose of the clarification in *Thomas* is to amplify the point in 111.2 that life is from the living one, and is not intrinsic to the world or even to the self.

16 Plisch, 239; also Hedrick, 183.

Logion 112¹

112.1 πεχε τ̄ε δε ουοει ν̄τσαρζ̄ τ̄αιε ετοωε ν̄τ̄ϋχη 112.2 ουοει ν̄τ̄ϋχη τ̄αιε ετοωε ν̄τσαρζ̄

112.1 *Jesus said, 'Woe to the flesh which depends on the soul. 112.2 Woe to the soul which depends on the flesh.'*

Interpretation

This saying has a close parallel in GTh 87: 'Wretched is the body which depends on a body, and wretched is the soul which depends on these two.'² Despite this parallel, the sayings are too different to be synonymous.³ The two statements here in 112.1 and 112.2 are not each to be understood on their own terms, which would make the interpretation of GTh 112.1 very difficult. Rather they form a kind of merismus: the point is that Jesus warns his disciples of too close an association between the flesh and the soul; the two spheres should be kept apart from one another.⁴ The reason for this is probably the superiority of the soul, rather than because both spheres are positive but merely different.⁵ There is no specific opposition here to the idea that Jesus came in flesh.⁶ On the other hand, it is difficult to see here a criticism restricted to an 'unhealthy dependence' which leaves room for a more constructive kind of dependence: Plutarch may 'advocate an ethos emphasizing an intimate interaction and mutual dependence between soul and body', as Uro puts it, but Plutarch is not a good parallel to *Thomas* at this point.⁷ *Thomas's* framing of the saying as a 'double woe' seems too strong to allow for this interpretation.

1 **Bibliography for GTh 112:** Uro, *Thomas*, 58–62; Patterson, 'Jesus Meets Plato', 186–190.

2 There are also close parallels in the Macarian corpus, though with almost the opposite meaning, namely that soul and body should be *interdependent*. See e.g. *Homilies* 9.3.7 and the very similar *Spiritual Homilies* 1, both cited above in the comment on GTh 87. See further Introduction, § 4.1.

3 Plisch, 241, pushes the two rather too close together in seeing a sexual connotation in 112.2.

4 I owe this point to Prof. Francis Watson. Similarly, Grant & Freedman, 196.

5 So, rightly, Grosso, 259; *contra* Valantasis, 193.

6 Thus Moreland, 'The Twenty-Four Prophets of Israel', 85.

7 *Pace* Uro, *Thomas*, 59–60.

Notes

112.1 Woe to the flesh which depends on the soul. The meaning is probably not specifically to do with crucifixion here.⁸ There may be a hint of it, but the language is general and can have other applications. For example, a close verbal (though not conceptual) parallel exists in the Valentinian hymn cited by Hippolytus (σάρκα μὲν ἐκ ψυχῆς κρεμαμένην).⁹ In most systems, this woe would on its own be very strange, as the idea of the flesh depending on the soul would be an unobjectionable one. When combined with GTh 112.2, however, the point can be seen to be the perils of soul and flesh becoming too intimately entangled.

112.2 Woe to the soul which depends on the flesh. This aphorism is much more natural on its own than is GTh 112.1, and could be said to be the main force of the saying. ‘Soul’ hanging on ‘flesh’ is contrary to properly conceived cosmology and anthropology, and so would mean ethical disaster. According to GTh 29.3, it is a present fact that the soul inhabits the poverty of the body and the material world, but that soul must nevertheless strive to be independent of the flesh. *Thomas* thus disagrees with the sentiment of Irenaeus: ‘Now since man is a living being compounded of soul and flesh, he must needs exist by both of these’.¹⁰ For further discussion of the saying, see comment on GTh 87.

8 *Pace* DeConick, 294.

9 Hippolytus, *Ref.* 6.36.7.

10 Irenaeus, *Dem.* 2 (tr. Robinson).

Logion 113¹

113.1 ΠΕΧΔΥ ΝΑϞ Ν̄ΒΙ ΝΕϞΜΑΘΗΤΗΣ ΔΕ ΤΗΝ̄ΤΕΡΟ ΕΣ̄ΝΝΗΥ Ν̄ΔΩ Ν̄ΖΟΟΥ 113.2 (ΠΕΧΕ
ῙC ΔΕ) ΕΣ̄ΝΝΗΥ ΔΝ Ζ̄Ν̄ ΟῩΘΩΩΤ̄ ΕΒΟΛ̄ 113.3 ΕΥΝΑΔΧΟΟΣ ΔΝ ΔΕ ΕΙCΖΗΗΤΕ Μ̄ΠCΑ
Ν ΕΙCΖΗΗΤΕ ΤΗ 113.4 ΑΛΛΑ ΤΗΝ̄ΤΕΡΟ Μ̄ΠΕΙΩΤ̄ ΕCΠΟΡΩ̄ ΕΒΟΛ ΖΙΔ̄Ν ΠΚΑΖ ΔΥΩ
Ρ̄ΩΜΕ ΝΔΥ ΔΝ ΕΡΟC

113.1 *His disciples said to him, ‘When will the kingdom come?’* 113.2 *(Jesus said,)* *‘It will not come by looking for it.* 113.3 *It will not be said, “Look! Here it is!”, or “Look! There it is!”* 113.4 *Rather, the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it.’*

Interpretation

This dialogue resembles GTh 18 and especially GTh 51 (cf. also Luke 17.20–21). The latter also has a question about an event supposedly in the eschatological future (‘when will the rest for the dead come, and when is the new world coming?’), in response to which Jesus asserts that the reality about which the disciples inquire is already present (‘that which you are looking for has come, but you do not know it’). In GTh 113 also, Jesus dismisses the ‘when’ question, stating that the kingdom is (as it always has been) accessible now: as in GTh 3, the kingdom is not to be found up above or down below. The kingdom is not purely transcendent but accessible.² Nor is it confined to a particular region: the point of 113.4 is not so much that it is on the earth *per se*, as that it is ‘spread out’ everywhere rather than in a particular place, as 113.3 (not ‘here’ or ‘there’ only) makes clear.

The disciples probably function as a mouthpiece for views widely held among Christians about a climactic future expectation. The consummation of the kingdom was still expected, as reflected in the widely used Lord’s Prayer (Matt. 6.10/ Lk. 11.2/ *Did.* 8.2). Across the NT, the language of ‘inheriting’ the kingdom is used, strongly suggesting its future character (Matt. 25.34; 1 Cor. 6.9–10; 1 Cor. 15.50; Gal. 5.21; Eph. 5.5; Col. 1.12; Jas 2.5), and this idiom is picked

1 **Bibliography for GTh 113:** Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 114–123; Liebenberg, *Language of the Kingdom*, 486–494; Hogeterp, ‘The Gospel of Thomas and the Historical Jesus’, 381–396; Popkes, ‘Von der Eschatologie zur Protologie’, 211–233; Gathercole, “The Heavens and the Earth will be Rolled up”, 280–302.

2 Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium*, 119.

up also by Ignatius (*Eph.* 16.1; *Philad.* 2.3) and Polycarp (*Phil.* 5.3, citing 1 Cor. 6.9–10). The same sentiment is present in 1 *Clement's* language of the kingdom's future revelation (1 *Clem.* 50.3), and in 'the kingdom to come' in 2 *Clement* 5.5. Against this background, the certainty of *Thomas's* position is striking, although it too has its source in Jesus' teaching in Luke 17.20–21 (cf. also Matt. 12.28/ Lk. 11.20), a saying already alluded to in GTh 3.

The second point which *Thomas* is making, in addition to the accessibility of the kingdom, is the ignorance of people about it. In addition to here and in GTh 51, this theme is given prominence in GTh 97 and 109.1–2, as a counterpoint to the 'knowledge' essential in the book.

Notes

113.1 His disciples said to him, 'When will the kingdom come?' This is part of a set of silly questions which the disciples pose to Jesus. Some others are also concerned with eschatology (cf. GTh 18; 51), as well as with other themes (the identity of Jesus in GTh 43, circumcision in GTh 53). Such questions are opportunities for Jesus to correct existing views. This instance is concerned with the disciples' false idea that the kingdom is a future reality. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, §10.1 above.

113.2 <Jesus said.> As all editors note, it is essential to take the rest of this logion as speech from Jesus, despite the absence of any explicit indication of a change of speaker in the Coptic. Cf. the similar omission in e.g. GTh 61.4–5.

113.2 It will not come by looking for it. Cf. Lk. 17.20 ('the kingdom of God does not come *with observation*', μετὰ παρατηρήσεως); *Thomas's* Coptic is not quite identical, involving probably also the notion of 'waiting'. The English 'look for' captures the sense of ⲩⲱⲩⲣ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ, because both can either mean 'wait for' ('look for', especially in earlier English, as e.g. in the KJV) or—with a more visual emphasis—'look out for'.³

113.3 It will not be said, "Look! Here it is!", or "Look! There it is!" Cf. Lk. 17.21. Grant & Freedman note the popularity of Luke 17.21 with the Naassenes.⁴ Cf. also *Gos. Mary* 8,15–19: 'Beware that no one lead you astray saying, "Look, here", or "Look, there." For the Son of Man is within you.'

3 Visuality is not necessarily a less common element in ⲩⲱⲩⲣ ⲉⲃⲟⲗ: see Crum, 838ab, who gives Greek parallels with ὄραω, ἐπεῖδον, παρακύπτω, βλέπω, and the substantive σκοπία; cf. Gathercole, *Composition*, 101.

4 Grant & Freedman, 196, citing Hippolytus, *Ref.* 5.7.20 (the reference to the *Gospel of Thomas*) and 5.8.8.

113.4 Rather, the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it. Valantasis notes that the world and the kingdom are thus not separate or antagonistic.⁵ It is notable that *Thomas* uses the term ‘earth’ (καθ) here, rather than ‘world’. The reference here is thus not to the world *qua* material realm, but to the world *qua* accessible space.⁶ The very close parallel in the Macarian corpus may give a clue to the Greek *Vorlage* of 113.4: ὡς φησιν ὁ κύριος· ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ χαμαὶ ἤπλωται καὶ οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὐκ ἐμβλέπουσιν αὐτήν,⁷ with *Thomas* (at least in the Coptic) having ‘Father’ instead of ‘God’ (on this difference, see comment on GTh 27 above).

5 Valantasis, 193.

6 Unlikely here is a reference to something like the ‘sign of extension’ (cf. *Did.* 16.6), which by contrast is something clearly visible; cf. Justin, *Dial.* 90.4.

7 Ps.-Macarius, *Hom.* 35.1.5. See further discussion in Introduction, § 4.1, above.

Logion 114¹

114.1 ΠΕΧΕ ΣΙΜΩΝ ΠΕΤΡΟΣ ΝΑΥ ΧΕ ΜΑΡΕ ΜΑΡΙΖΑΜ ΕΙ ΕΒΟΛ Ν̄ΖΗΤῆ ΧΕ Ν̄ΣΖΙΟΜΕ
Ν̄ΠΩΔΑ ΔΝ̄ Ν̄ΠΩΝΖ 114.2 ΠΕΧΕ ῙC ΧΕ ΕΙCΖΗΗΤΕ ΔΝΟΚ̄ †ΝΑCΩΚ̄ ἸΜΟC ΧΕΚΑΔC ΕΕΙ-
ΝΑΔC Ν̄ΖΟΟΥΤ̄ ΩΙΝΑ ΕCΝΑΩΩΠΕ ΖΩΩC Ν̄ΟΥΠῆΔΑ ΕΦΟΝΖ ΕΦΕΙΝΕ ἸΜΩΤῆ Ν̄ΖΟΟΥΤ̄
114.3 ΧΕ CΖΙΜΕ ΝΙΗ̄ ΕCΝΑΔC Ν̄ΖΟΟΥΤ̄ CΝΑΒΩΚ̄ ΕΖΟΥΝ ΕΤΜῆΠΤΕΡΟ Ν̄ΠΗΥΕ

114.1 *Simon Peter said to them, 'Let Mary come out from us, because women are not worthy of life.'* 114.2 *Jesus said, 'Behold, I will draw her so that I might make her male, so that she also might be a living spirit resembling you males.'* 114.3 *For every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.'*

Textual Comment

Davies claims that this saying, with the additional exception of GTh 1, is a later accretion, on the basis of five alleged anomalies:² (i) the peculiarity of a

1 **Bibliography for GTh 114:** K.H. Rengstorf, 'Urchristliches Kerygma und "gnostische" Interpretation in einigen Sprüche des Thomasevangeliums', in U. Bianchi, ed. *Le Origini dello Gnosticismo. Colloquio di Messina 13–18 Aprile 1966* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 563–574; J.J. Buckley, 'An Interpretation of Logion 114 in *The Gospel of Thomas*', *NovT* 27 (1985), 245–272; M.W. Meyer, 'Making Mary Male: The Categories "Male" and "Female" in the Gospel of Thomas', *NTS* 31 (1985), 554–570, reprinted in *Secret Gospels: Essays on Thomas and the Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Continuum, 2003), 76–95; Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 138–143; E. Castelli, "'I Will Make Mary Male': Pieties of the Body and Gender Transformation of Christian Women in Late Antiquity', in J. Epstein & K. Straub, eds. *Body Guards: the Cultural Politics of Gender Ambiguity* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 29–49; S. Arai, "'To Make her Male": An Interpretation of Logion 114 in the Gospel of Thomas', in E.A. Livingstone, ed. *Studia Patristica* 24 (Louvain: Peeters, 1993), 373–376; P. Schüngel, 'Ein Vorschlag, EvTho 114 neu zu übersetzen', *NovT* 36 (1994), 394–401; K. Vogt, "'Becoming Male": A Gnostic and Early Christian Metaphor', in K.E. Børresen, ed. *Image of God and Gender Models in Judaeo-Christian Tradition* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 170–185; Marjanen, 'Women Disciples', 94–106; Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 169–178; M.W. Meyer, 'Gospel of Thomas Saying 114 Revisited', in idem, *Secret Gospels: Essays on Thomas and the Secret Gospel of Mark* (Harrisburg, PA: Continuum, 2003), 96–106; J. Brankaer, 'L'ironie de Jésus dans l'Évangile de Thomas: le logion 114', *Apocrypha* 16 (2005), 149–162; Schüngel, 'Zur Neuübersetzung des Thomasevangeliums', 275–291; Gagné, 'Connaissance, identité et androgynité', 135–139.

2 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 175; so also, cautiously, Marjanen, 'Women Disciples', 103–104.

saying opening with one disciple addressing the other disciples; (ii) the idea of Jesus 'guiding'; (iii) the form of the phrase 'kingdom of heaven', as opposed to the form 'kingdom of the Father' elsewhere in this section of *Thomas* (GTh 96–99, 113); (iv) the idea of someone 'becoming a living spirit', and (v) the contradiction with GTh 22, where male and female are relativised. In response to these observations the following points might be made.

- (i) There is no consistent pattern to the introductions of sayings. Many begin 'Jesus said'; others begin with statements or questions from the disciples, others are initiated by those outside the college of disciples, and others have no introduction at all. There are various unique occurrences: only in GTh 21 does a single disciple address Jesus; in GTh 72 an unnamed 'man' addresses Jesus; in GTh 79 a woman from a crowd speaks; only GTh 100 begins with an action rather than a statement; only GTh 91 begins, 'They said to him'; only GTh 14 begins, 'Jesus said to them', and so on.
- (ii) The peculiarity of Jesus 'guiding' is unremarkable. There are not many actions attributed to Jesus in *Thomas* (apart from speaking), and most of them Jesus only does once ('guarding' in GTh 10; 'giving' in GTh 17; 'choosing' in GTh 23, etc.).
- (iii) This point relies entirely on Davies' peculiar structuring of *Thomas*, which has as far as I am aware has not been accepted by other scholars. See the discussion in the Introduction, § 8 ('The Structure of *Thomas*') above.
- (iv) The absence of any other reference to a 'living spirit' is unremarkable. Again, there are a number of phrases which only appear once in *Thomas*, and references to the 'living one' or the epithet 'living' (8× outside GTh 114) and the noun 'spirit' (5× outside GTh 114) are remarkably frequent given *Thomas*'s brevity, and so to find them in combination is not surprising.
- (v) GTh 22 and 114 may be contradictory, but that depends upon what is meant by 'male' and 'female' in each case. See further the discussion below.

Davies concedes that taken alone, 'any one of these discrepancies could be overlooked', contending that it is their cumulative force which is significant.³ It is apparent, however, that only the last could conceivably be regarded as a discrepancy, and its significance for a theory of GTh 114 as a later addition would then depend on (a) whether the contradiction was real, and (b) if it were,

3 Davies, *Gospel of Thomas and Christian Wisdom*, 175.

whether that would necessitate a theory of a later gloss.⁴ One might also note the point of Janssens, that it is curious that by comparison with *Thomas*, the *Gospel of Mary* 'se termine sur une note analogue'.⁵

Interpretation

Some scholars have speculated about why *Thomas* should end here, though the question is not easily answered.⁶ Janssens' observation, just noted, about the similar ending of the *Gospel of Mary*, is important to bear in mind.

The principal question in the interpretation of this saying concerns the meaning of 'making Mary male'.⁷ At the outset, however, two other approaches to this saying will be dealt with, namely the arguments (1) that the statement of Jesus is ironic, and (2) that the salvation of a woman is construed as a two-stage process.

(1) First, it has been argued in different ways by Brankaer and Schüngel that Jesus' remark in 114.2 ('so that I may make her male') is in fact ironic. Brankaer considers Jesus to be sarcastically mocking Peter (who has obviously not understood GTh 22) with a response whose central point is Jesus' action of 'drawing' Mary to be a living spirit. 'L'expression "comme vous, mâles" est adressée aux disciples et a sans doute une connotation ironique.'⁸ Brankaer argues that the disciples have, so far in *Thomas*, shown themselves very much not to be 'living spirits'. She argues more tentatively that reference to the 'kingdom of the heavens' may also be a negative one in view of the destruction of the heavens according to GTh 111 and the negative comment upon locating the kingdom in heaven in GTh 3.⁹ The saying is to be read on two levels, the surface level

4 For a different line of opposition to Davies, see Brankaer, 'L'ironie', 151, arguing that GTh 114 draws a number of Thomasine strands together in conclusion.

5 Janssens, 'L'Évangile selon Thomas', 324.

6 See the suggestions of Grant & Freedman, 198, and Plisch, 244. Lelyveld, *Logia de la vie*, 132, calls GTh 114 an 'épilogue'.

7 For a marvellously detailed survey of additional scholarly interpretations of this saying, see Buckley, 'An Interpretation of Logion 114', 247–250. Meyer, 'Gospel of Thomas Saying 114 Revisited', 99–100, is cautious about whether there may be a definitive interpretation discoverable at all.

8 Brankaer, 'L'ironie', 160.

9 Brankaer, 'L'ironie', 160–161.

according to which Jesus adopts Peter's own perspective,¹⁰ and the level which focuses on Jesus' recreation of Mary as a living spirit. In response to Brankaer's case, two points can be made. On the less important point about the kingdom of 'heaven', it can be observed that 'kingdom of heaven' is used elsewhere positively, and even by Jesus himself (GTh 54; cf. GTh 20). Furthermore, although this is not always the case, the disciples can be treated by Jesus in *Thomas* very positively, and as in possession of salvation (e.g. GTh 49–50). The main difficulty with Brankaer's interpretation is the chopping and changing in Jesus' reply to Peter. On her view one must suppose the following alternation between Jesus' 'serious' voice (in bold type) and his mocking voice (in italics):

(114.2) Jesus said, **'Behold, I will draw her so that I might make her male, so that she also might be a living spirit resembling you males.** (114.3) **For every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven.'**

The principal problem lies in particular in taking the suggestion about Mary becoming male in 114.2 sarcastically ('si Jésus dit qu'il va faire Marie comme eux, hommes, il se moque peut-être de ses disciples'¹¹) and the similar statement in 114.3 straightforwardly ('l'accès au Royaume est promis par Jésus aux femmes qui se font mâles, et non aux disciples').¹² Overall, then, this approach probably cannot be accepted.

Moving to Schüngel's rather different case for an ironic reading, 114.2 is made into a question, mocking Peter: 'Jesus sagte: Seht doch hin! Soll ich, ausgerechnet ich sie so traktieren, dass ich sie männlich mache?'¹³ In response it can be stated that *ωκ* need not be rendered in the negative sense of drag '*ohne, ja gegen Wunsch und Willen*'.¹⁴ It can, like the Greek *ἔλω*/*ἐλώω*, be used in the sense of a saviour 'drawing' people to salvation (see note on 114.2 below). One might add that turning a sentence gratuitously into a question does look rather like a counsel of despair. Other criticisms have also been made by others.¹⁵

10 An analogy has been drawn by Brankaer to GTh 12, where Jesus might be said to adopt the limited, intra-cosmic perspective of the disciples, even though the fate of the cosmos has been set out in GTh 11.

11 Brankaer, 'L'ironie', 160.

12 Brankaer, 'L'ironie', 161–162.

13 Schüngel, 'Ein Vorschlag', 290.

14 Schüngel, 'Ein Vorschlag', 289.

15 Brankaer, 'L'ironie', 149–150 n. 2, comments on the improbability of the syntax proposed by Schüngel; various aspects of his hypothesis are also criticised effectively in Marjanen, 'Women Disciples', 97–98.

(2) It might be asked whether the superior male position is an ultimate one, that is, whether the two final clauses ('so that I might make her male, so that she also might be a living spirit resembling you males') are sequential or synonymous. The majority view has been that the disciples as males are in the ultimate position of being 'living spirits' to which Mary is to be conformed. Buckley, however, has argued that Jesus making Mary male is only a step on the way to her salvation. The complete *ordo salutis* is 'female → male → "living spirit"'.¹⁶ While this might work for 114.2, which is ambiguous, the difficulty lies in 114.3, where Jesus implies that Mary making herself male is the sufficient condition for her entry into the kingdom.¹⁷ This is very close, as we shall see.

(3) We can move to address the main question, the character of the 'maleness' and Mary's transformation.¹⁸ This has been variously understood.

- (i) Some have seen here the idea that men and women alike are transformed into Osiris, though this is too indebted to an (uncertain) Egyptian provenance for *Thomas* in general, or this saying in particular (see Introduction, § 6: 'The Provenance of *Thomas*', above).¹⁹
- (ii) Some have argued that the maleness is a kind of embodied masculine identity, where women perhaps renounce female appearance (by e.g. cutting hair and wearing men's clothes) but especially abandon the traditional female role of maternity: the saying thus enjoins sexual asceticism.²⁰
- (iii) A related, and overlapping, ascetical interpretation is that of DeConick, whereby the 'becoming male' is about the re-entry of the woman, Eve, into Adam to produce an androgyne.²¹ A version of this is probably the majority view, where there is 'gender-neutrality': for Valantasis, males also

16 Buckley, 'An Interpretation of Logion 114', 246.

17 Buckley glosses over this point, remarking that Mary must return to the spiritual state of Gen. 2.7 *via* the male element' ('An Interpretation of Logion 114', 247).

18 Marjanen, 'Women Disciples', 99–101, provides a helpful taxonomy of some of the views here, rightly noting that they are not all mutually exclusive.

19 Rengstorf, 'Urchristliches Kerygma und "gnostische" Interpretation', 570; cf. also Leipoldt, *Evangelium nach Thomas*, 76–77.

20 Suggested by Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas and Jesus*, 155, focusing especially on the latter (citing examples of the other phenomena provided by Castelli).

21 DeConick, *Seek to See Him*, 18; DeConick, 297, also assumes that (ii) is correct; view (ii) is not mutually exclusive of other views.

need to become female, 'and both into a single one'.²² For Hedrick, women can also 'become male-female'.²³

- (iv) Another possibility is the abolition of sexual differentiation, though in a male direction,²⁴ i.e. 'male androgyny', by comparison with the more pure androgyny in view (iii).²⁵ Gagné rightly emphasises the point that Mary must return to a state of being like 'le premier *homme* androgyne (Gn 2,22)'.²⁶ Petersen's view lies somewhere between (iii) and (iv), emphasising that GTh 114 is to be read against the backdrop of the sublimation of worldly distinctions in GTh 22 but emphasises the maleness of the gender neutrality as well.²⁷
- (v) Finally, there is the view of a reversal, of an extreme transformation out of femaleness into maleness (thus without the more 'egalitarian' sense of androgyny). Nash's feminist interpretation of *Thomas* takes this view, and sees *Thomas* as thereby reprehensible, reflecting 'a harsh and violent process for women, amounting to psychic rape, a lobotomy of the female self'.²⁸

How then should this reference be taken? Given the difficulty of the dialogue, it is easier to criticise the views of others than to come up with a constructive alternative. One path to avoid is to take a rather dewy-eyed view of *Thomas* which attempts to rescue GTh 114 from any suspicion of unfashionable 'sexism'. As Marjanen rightly notes: 'in logion 114 salvation is defined by employing the patriarchal language patterns of the contemporary culture. It is important to realize that it is not only Simon Peter's statement which displays this attitude but also Jesus' response.'²⁹

22 Valantasis, 195.

23 Hedrick, 186.

24 Grant & Freedman, 198.

25 The phrase 'male androgyny' comes from D. Wallace, 'Androgyny as Salvation in Early Christianity' (PhD Dissertation, Claremont Graduate University, 2000), 103–141, 241–243 (*non vidi*), cited in Meyer, 'Saying 114 Revisited', 103. This seems to be the view that DeConick ascribes to Peter in GTh 114, and which is therefore *opposed* on her view (DeConick, 297).

26 Gagné, 'Connaissance, identité et androgynéité', 139 (emphasis original).

27 Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 175–177.

28 Nash, 'The Language of Mother Work', 175; cf. King's slightly more muted point: 'The statement at some level operates only on the basis of an unremitting patriarchalism.' ('Kingdom', 66).

29 Marjanen, 'Women Disciples', 102.

The clear points in the saying are as follows. (1) The disciples are in a privileged position as living spirits (cf. GTh 49–50). (2) This is related, rather than unconnected, to their maleness. (3) This maleness relates in part to being male in a literal sense (drawing attention to what were thought to be spiritual qualities of men, rather than focusing on physical characteristics): otherwise the specific reference to *women* in 114.3, and the contrast between Mary and the male disciples, would be meaningless.³⁰ (4) This maleness does not consist *merely* in their position *qua* men but rather also in the disciples' elect status, or knowledge, or some other soteriological blessing (otherwise all men *qua* men would be saved). The best way to construe Jesus' statements in GTh 114.2–3 is as follows: *the disciples are male both naturally (in that men are deemed to possess spiritual strength), and by virtue of being living spirits; Mary must also attain to maleness (in both these senses) in order to reach perfection—she must make up for her deficient female gender, and attain the knowledge and status which men also require.* As a result, view 'iv' above, that of 'male androgyny' as expressed by Gagné, is nearest the mark; the position taken here is also very similar to view (2), that of Buckley, though not regarding the two elements of maleness as attained sequentially by Mary. (The process can be construed either as Jesus' action or Mary's action: the question of agency is not a matter of concern for the author.³¹) The disciples' maleness consists in their being *both* men *and* living spirits. Mary becoming male results in her becoming a living spirit like the men, and being able to enter the kingdom. The strong suggestion of the saying is that the male disciples occupy a spiritual position above that of Mary. This is quite in keeping with a number of philosophical traditions according to which women are characterised by deficiency: most famously, Aristotle, but also those closer to *Thomas* such as Philo³² and the Valentinian Theodotus.³³ According to

30 Cf. the view of purely symbolic maleness. See Meyer, 'Male and Female', 567, where Mary shares in symbolic 'femaleness' just as all human beings do; cf. also his 'Saying 114 Revisited', 103–104.

31 Marjanen, 'Women Disciples', 98–99: 'perhaps the disagreement between "Jesus making Mary male" and "every woman making herself male" is not so great after all.'

32 *Fug.* 51: αἰεὶ γὰρ προνομίαν τοῦ ἄρρενος ἔχοντος ἐνδεῖ καὶ ὑστερίζει τὸ θῆλυ; *Quaest. Exod.* 170: λέγεται ὑπὸ φυσικῶν ἀνδρῶν οὐδὲν ἕτερον εἶναι θῆλυ ἢ ἀτελές ἄρρεν. For a helpful discussion, see Meyer, 'Male and Female', 563–564.

33 See references below. Williams comments: 'it would seem that subordination, weakness, dependency, imperfection, and so forth, still belong among the connotations that Theodotus attaches to the social position of women.' M.A. Williams, 'Variety in Gnostic Perspectives on Gender', in K.L. King, ed. *Images of the Feminine in Gnosticism* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2000), 2–22 (15).

the Gnostic *Zostrianus*, femininity is ‘madness and bondage’, and masculinity ‘salvation’ (*Zost.* 131,5–8).

The question then arises of the compatibility of this saying with GTh 22.5 (‘in order that you make the male and the female one and the same, so that the male be not male nor the female female’), where there is apparently a more ‘pure’ androgyny (cf. view ‘iii’ above). In the first place, one can note that other texts are able to combine the two perspectives. The *Tripartite Tractate*, for example, can contrast being ‘weak like a female nature which has abandoned its virility’ (*Tri. Tract.* 78,10–13) and ‘... forms of maleness, since they are not from the illness which is femaleness ...’ (*Tri. Trac.* 94,16–18), on the one hand, with an eschatological androgyny in the purer form: ‘For the end will receive a unitary existence just as the beginning, when there is no male nor female, nor slave and free ...’ (*Tri. Trac.* 132,20–25). Similarly, for Theodotus, Adam contained both male and female (*apud* Clement, *Exc.* 21.3); people as children of the female are formless matter until they receive from the husband and become children of that husband (*Exc.* 68); similarly the seed, which having been unformed is ‘changed into a man and becomes a son of the bridegroom ... having been made masculine ...’ (*Exc.* 79).³⁴ As a result, composed of female matter and male form, they become male. The peculiar mathematics is: female + male = male. Or, to put it another way that may be closer to *Thomas* (with Clement, *Strom.* 6.12.100.3), neither male nor female = Male.³⁵

Secondly, the tension could simply reflect a tension in the original Genesis narrative, on a particular reading of Genesis 2. In the second creation account in Genesis 2.4–20, the human being was male, yet contained within himself femaleness, which in 2.21 was then drawn out of him, so that there then existed distinct humans, a male and a female. The saved state, then, may well reflect the *Urzeit* of Gen. 2.4–20 when male and female are *both* one and the same (as in GTh 22), *and* exist as a male androgynous Adam (as here in 114).

Notes

114.1 Simon Peter said to them, ‘Let Mary come out from us, because women are not worthy of life.’ Gärtner and Petersen note parallels to Peter’s antag-

34 Cf. in a slightly different vein, *Exc.* 21.

35 Thus Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 176–177.

onism to Mary as a woman in the *Gospel of Mary* and the *Pistis Sophia*.³⁶ These parallels also confirm that the Mary in question is the Magdalene (on Mary, see note on 21.1 above).³⁷ It is, however, perhaps an interesting reflection of *Thomas's* environment that 'Mary', the commonest Jewish female name in Palestine in antiquity, is not disambiguated here (cf. GTh 21, although here in GTh 114 it would be more awkward because it occurs in direct speech). Simon Peter's remark does not introduce the topic of female leadership roles, but rather that of belonging in the kingdom.³⁸ If one can 'mirror-read' this dialogue, Pokorný would be correct in noting that the issue is the justification of women's presence in the community.³⁹

114.2 Behold, I will draw her. Cf. Jn 6.44, and in particular Jn 12.32: 'I will draw all people (πάντας ἐλκύσω/ ἴνασεκ οὔον ηη) to myself' (12.32). A later instance refers to how Ezekiel 'draws' (ζωκ) people to contemplation.⁴⁰

114.2 So that I might make her male. Here Jesus is the agent of transformation (cf. 114.3: 'every woman who makes herself male'). Note the comments above about the transformation into a male androgyne. Cf. 1 *Apoc. Jas.* 41,15–19: 'The perishable has gone up to the imperishable and the female element has attained to this male element.'

114.2 So that she also might be a living spirit resembling you males. Valantasis notes the interesting point that Jesus says 'you males', not 'us males'.⁴¹ He perhaps transcends the male/ female divide altogether. It is possible that ἡζοογτ is a further qualification of ἡἡἡ, 'that she too may become a living male spirit, being similar to you', to emphasise the non-biological nature of the maleness and femaleness.⁴² Two points speak in favour of the more conventional translation (e.g. that of Lambdin: 'so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males'). First, the word order suggests that it is better to take ἡζοογτ as qualifying the more proximate ἡἡἡ. Secondly, there is a certain tautology in a translation along the lines of '... so that I might make her male,

36 *Gos. Mary* 17,18–22; *PS* 36 and 146, noted in Gärtner, *Theology*, 253; cf. also *Gos. Phil.* 64,1–3. For full discussion, see Petersen, *Zerstört die Werke der Weiblichkeit*, 163–188.

37 It is just possible, but very unlikely, that another Mary is meant (Plisch, 247 n. 3). J. Lagrand, 'How was the Virgin Mary "Like a Man"? A Note on Matthew I 18b and related Syriac Christian texts', *NovT* 22 (1980), 97–107 (107), is wrong to insist that the Mary is the mother of Jesus.

38 *Contra* Plisch, 244.

39 Pokorný, 155.

40 *Acrostic Hymns* 1.14.

41 Valantasis, 195.

42 Plisch, 247 n. 4; Pokorný, 155–156.

so that she also might be a living male spirit ...'. Even on the other translation, however, Jesus states that he will elevate Mary to the status of the male disciples.

114.3 For every woman who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of heaven. Plisch takes $\chi\epsilon$ here not causally ('For ...') but 'als $\chi\epsilon$ neue recitativum' (i.e. a second 'so that ...') on the grounds that the logical flow from 114.2–3 is problematic;⁴³ but the tension of who the agent of transformation is remains even on this view. On the kingdom in *Thomas*, see Introduction, § 10.1 above. There may be a catchword link with the two references to 'kingdom' in GTh 113.

43 Plisch, 'Probleme', 528.

Subscriptio¹

ΠΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ ΠΚΑΤΑ ΘΟΜΑΣ

The Gospel according to Thomas

Textual Comment

The originality of this title to the work as a whole is frequently disputed.² There are no real grounds for doubting it, however. (i) The attribution to Thomas is attested in the main body of the work, in the *incipit*, where Thomas is identified as the scribe already in P. Oxy. IV 654. (ii) The work is already called the *Gospel according to Thomas* in the early-third century by (Ps.-)Hippolytus, who is familiar with its content.³ (iii) Shortly after the *Elenchus*, Origen in the 230s or 240s refers to a *Gospel according to Thomas*, and he is also—independently of Hippolytus—familiar with its content.⁴

Interpretation

This title clearly locates *Thomas* among existing Gospels; in addition to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, it is possible that the *Gospel of Mary* and some other Gospels had also already been written. Named Gospels written roughly contemporaneously with *Thomas* probably include the *Gospel of Judas*, the *Gospel of Truth*,⁵ and the *Gospel of Peter*, and perhaps a little later, the *Gospel of Philip*.

1 **Bibliography for *Subscriptio***: S.J. Gathercole, 'Named Testimonia to the *Gospel of Thomas*: An Expanded Inventory and Analysis', *HTR* 104 (2012), 53–89.

2 For the view that the title is secondary, see e.g. J.M. Robinson, 'Foreword', in Kloppenborg, et al., eds. *Q-Thomas Reader*, vii–x (viii). For questioning of this certainty, see Poirier, *L'Évangile selon Thomas* (NH II,2; P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655), *Témoin de la théologie chrétienne primitive?*, 104.

3 *Ref.*: 5.7.20, where he cites something like GTh 4.

4 See *Homiliae in Lucam* 1 for reference to the title, and on Origen's knowledge of *Thomas*, see further Introduction, § 3.2 and § 4.1, above.

5 That there were works circulating in the mid-second century under these titles is clear from Irenaeus (*AH* 1.31.1–2 and 3.1.9 respectively), whether or not the titles correspond to what we know as the gospels of *Judas* and *Truth*.

Notes

The Gospel. The term (often in the plural) was used in Greek for ‘good news’ in a more general sense, as in the widely cited *Priene Calendar* inscription.⁶ The verb εὐαγγελίζω (esp. in the middle) and the feminine noun εὐαγγελία were used in the Septuagint, after which εὐαγγέλιον was frequently used in the NT to refer to the preached message of the good news. Then the term came to refer to a larger oral body of teaching about Jesus, and then a written body of material, perhaps under the influence of Mark 1.1. There is plenty of evidence that εὐαγγέλιον was used in the first half of the second century to refer to a book,⁷ in the *Didache* (e.g. 15.3–4), Marcion,⁸ and perhaps 2 *Clement* (8.5). Justin in the 150s refers to the memoirs of the apostles ἀ καλεῖται εὐαγγελία (1 *Ap.* 66.3; cf. *Dial.* 2.10), which suggests a conventional usage.⁹

According to Thomas. This summarises the relation of Thomas to the Gospel noted in the Prologue: he is scribe, but not author or owner—it is not ‘of’ Thomas. Gospels could be followed by a genitive, as in the *Gospel of Truth* (i.e. the ‘truthful Gospel’, or the Gospel which contains the truth) and the *Gospel of Judas* (the Gospel in which Judas is a protagonist, but in no sense an author). The preposition κατά also appears in the titles in Coptic NT manuscripts.¹⁰ On Thomas, see further comment on the Prologue above.

6 See C.A. Evans, ‘Mark’s Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel’, *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 1 (2000), 67–81.

7 J.A. Kelhoffer, “‘How Soon a Book’ Revisited: EUANGELION as a Reference to “Gospel” Materials in the First Half of the Second Century’, *ZNW* 95 (2004), 1–34.

8 Kelhoffer, ‘How Soon a Book Revisited’, 3–4.

9 Kelhoffer, ‘How Soon a Book Revisited’.

10 S.J. Gathercole, ‘The Titles of the Gospels in the Earliest New Testament Manuscripts’, *ZNW* 104 (2013), 33–76.

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In this new commentary on the controversial *Gospel of Thomas*, Simon Gathercole provides the most extensive analysis yet published of both the work as a whole and of the individual sayings contained in it. This commentary offers a fresh analysis of Thomas not from the perspective of form criticism and source criticism but seeks to elucidate the meaning of the work and its constituent elements in its second-century context. With its lucid discussion of the various controversial aspects of Thomas, and treatment of the various different scholarly views, this is a foundational work of reference for scholars not just of apocryphal Gospels, but also for New Testament scholars, Classicists and Patrologists.

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