

THE WEDDING HYMN OF ACTA THOMAE

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The puzzling, elusive Wedding Hymn of *Acta Thomae* 6-7 -- first published back in 1823 -- has not yet found a satisfactory interpretation and assessment.¹⁾ I assume that the lost original was written in East-Aramaic or Syriac: the Semitic *Doppeldreier* of the original -- a distichon with three beats in each line -- still seems to be detectable in the extant Greek version. This distichal meter was popular in Aramaic and Syriac poetry, notably in the *Psalms of Thomas*.²⁾ Compare, e.g., line 1 of our Hymn 'The Bride is the daughter of Light' with *Ps. Thomae* 1.1 'My Father, the joyful Light.'

If so then the 4:4 beat in couplet 27 of our Hymn alone speaks against the authenticity of the closing distichon. And Wilhelm Bousset was right in detecting Manichaeian theology in this couplet, notably in the Living Spirit,³⁾ as was Günther Bornkamm -- in seeing in this couplet a later Manichaeian addition (Zusatz).⁴⁾ As a matter of fact, 27 ἐδόξασαν τὸν πατέρα is redundant in view of 23 καὶ δοξάσουσι τὸν πατέρα τῶν ὄλων.

The translator of the Hymn into Greek uses sometimes two words to translate one single word of the original: 1 ἐνέστηκε καὶ ἔγκειται. 10 σημαίνουσιν καὶ ὑποδεικνύουσιν. 18 τὸν σκοπὸν καὶ τὸ θέαμα. 23 ἐν χαρᾷ καὶ ἀγαλλιάσει.

As is known, the extant Syriac version departs considerably from the original text -- due to its systematic *catholicizing* effort. It tries to remove every trace of Gnosticism. Accordingly, 'the Bride' (1) is replaced with 'my Church' (with far-reaching consequences).⁵⁾ The aeons are eliminated: 'the place of the blessed aeons' (10) is replaced with 'the place of life'; the thirty-two (7) are replaced with the twelve apostles and the seventy-two envoys (borrowed from Luke 10:1 and popular later among the Manichaeans;⁶⁾ in 15-17 the figures twice seven

and twelve are eliminated; finally, in 20 and 21, 'the great ones (grandees, princes)' and 'the eternal ones' -- i.e., the Gnostics -- are replaced with 'the just ones' and 'some.' In brief, the Syriac version must be used with extreme caution. But occasionally -- where there is no reason to suspect its catholicizing zeal -- it proves to be a helpful means in restoring the corrupt Greek text.

The Greek version of the Hymn is preserved in sixteen manuscripts. I retain Bonnet's MSS sigla (p.99). Here is its text as restored by me.

I. GREEK TEXT

- 1 Ἡ κόρη τοῦ φωτὸς θυγάτηρ,
ἧ ἐνέστηκε καὶ ἔγκειται τὸ ἀπαύγασμα τῶν βασιλέων
- 2 τὸ γαῦρον, καὶ ἐπιτερπὲς ταύτης τὸ θέαμα,
φαιδρῶ κάλλει καταυγάζουσα.
- 3 ἧς τὰ ἐνδύματα ἔοικεν ἑαρινοῖς ἄνθεσιν,
ἀποφορὰ δὲ εὐωδίας ἔξ αὐτῶν διαδίδοται.
- 4 καὶ ἐν τῇ κορυφῇ <αὐτῆς> ἴδρυται ὁ βασιλεὺς,
τρέφων τῇ ἑαυτοῦ ἀμβροσίᾳ τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτὸν ἰδρυμένους.
- 5 ἔγκειται δὲ ταύτης τῇ κεφαλῇ ἀλήθεια,
χαρὰν δὲ τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτῆς ἐμφαίνει.
- 6 ἧς τὸ στόμα ἀνέφικται καὶ προπόντως αὐτῆ·
< quoniam eo omnes laudes edit. >
- 7 τριάκοντα καὶ δύο εἰσὶν οἱ <έν> ταύτῃ ὑμνολογοῦντες,
< - - - - - >
- 8 ἧς ἡ γλῶττα παραπετάσματι ἔοικεν τῆς θύρας,
ὃ ἐκτινάσσεται τοῖς εἰσιούσιν.
- 9 ἧς ὁ αὐχὴν εἰς τύπον βαθμῶν ἔγκειται,
ὧν ὁ πρῶτος δημιουργὸς ἐδημιούργησεν.
- 10 αἱ δὲ δύο αὐτῆς χεῖρες σημαίνουσιν καὶ ὑποδεικνύουσιν,
τὸν χῶρον τῶν εὐδαιμόνων αἰώνων κηρύσσοντες.
- 11 οἱ δὲ <δέκα> δάκτυλοι αὐτῆς
τάς πύλας τῆς πόλεως ἀνοίγνύουσιν.
- 12 ἧς ὁ παστὸς φωτεινός, ἀποφορὰν
ὀποβαλασάμου καὶ παντὸς ἀρώματος διαπνέων,
- 13 ἀναδιδούς τε ὄσμην ἠδεῖαν σμύρνης τε
καὶ φύλλου, καὶ ἀνθέων παμπόλλων ἠδυσπνῶν.

- 14 ὑπέστρωνται δὲ ἐντὸς μυροσίνας,
αἱ δὲ κλισιάδες ἐν καλάμοις κεκόσμηται.
- 15 περιεστοιχισμένην δὲ αὐτὴν ἔχουσιν οἱ ταύτης
ᾧ δ' ἀριθμὸς ἑβδομος, οὗς αὐτὴ ἐξελέξατο·
(παρά)νυμφοι,
- 16 αἱ δὲ ταύτης παράνυμοί εἰσιν ἑπτὰ,
αἱ ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῆς χορεύουσιν.
- 17 δώδεκα δὲ εἰσιν τὸν ἀριθμὸν οἱ ἔμπροσθεν αὐτῆς
ὑπηρετοῦντες καὶ αὐτῇ ὑποκείμενοι,
- 18 τὸν σκοπὸν καὶ τὸ θέαμα εἰς τὸν νυμφίον ἔχοντες,
ἵνα διὰ τοῦ θεάματος αὐτοῦ φωτισθῶσιν.
- 19 καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα σὺν αὐτῷ ἔσονται
εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν χαρὰν τὴν αἰώνιον·
- 20 καὶ ἔσονται ἐν τῷ γάμῳ ἐκείνῳ,
ἐν ᾧ οἱ μεγιστᾶνες συναθροίζονται·
- 21 καὶ παραμενοῦσιν τῇ εὐωχίᾳ,
ἧς οἱ αἰώνιοι καταξιοῦνται·
- 22 καὶ ἐνδύσονται βασιλικά ἐνδύματα
καὶ ἀμφιάσονται στολᾶς λαμπράς·
- 23 καὶ ἐν χαρᾷ καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσει ἔσονται ἀμρότεροι,
καὶ δοξάσουσι τὸν πατέρα τῶν ὄλων.
- 24 οὗ τὸ φῶς τὸ γαῦρον ἐδέξαντο,
καὶ ἐφωτίσθησαν ἐν τῇ θείᾳ τοῦ δεσπότου αὐτῶν·
- 25 οὗ τὴν ἀμβροσίαν βρῶσιν ἐδέξαντο
μηδὲν ὄλων ἀπουσίαν ἔχουσαν,
- 26 ἔπιον δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴνου (αὐτοῦ),
τοῦ μὴ δίψαν αὐτοῖς παρέχοντος καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν.
- 27 [ἐδόξασαν δὲ καὶ ὕμνησαν σὺν τῷ ζῶντι πνεύματι
τὸν πατέρα τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὴν μητέρα τῆς σοφίας.]

1 ἐνέστη et ἔνεστι codd. nonnulli 4 αὐτῆς addidi ex versione Syr. ὑπ' X et vers. Syr., coniec. Usener : ἐπ' codd. 6 "Da sie lauter Loblieder (mit ihm) spricht" ex vers. Syr. add. Bornkamm 7 ἐν ταύτῃ scripsi conlata vers. Syr. (in ea) : ταύτην codd. totum versum delet Macke, vix recte : XII apostoli filii et LXXII tonant in ea vers. Syr. 7b unum versum intercidesse vidit Lipsius : exspectes δοξάζοντες τὸν πατέρα τῶν ὄλων conlato v.23b 9 ἔγκειται : sunt scalae arduae vers. Syr. 10 χῶρον coniec. Bonnet (locum vers. Syr.) : χορὸν codd. (cf. c.54, p.171.9, et c.57, p.174.6 χῶρον codd. : χορὸν P; et praesertim c.148, p.257.6 χωρῶν locus vers. Syr. : χορῶν codd. ; c.156, p.265.2 χωρῶν in regionem vers. Syr. : χορῶν

codd.) κηρύσσοντες codd. praeter A (cf. *Apocal.* 11:4) : κηρύσσοσαι A (ft. recte) 11 δέκα ex vers. Syr. add. suad. Bonnet ἀνοιγνύουσιν coniec. Hoffmann : ὑποδεικνύουσιν per dittographiam codd. (cf. 10a) 12 ὀποβαλοῦσιν Hoffmann : ἀπό βαλοῦσιν codd. 13b καὶ ἀνθέων παμπόλων ἡδυπνῶν post 14 ὑπέστρωνται δὲ ἐντὸς μυρσίνας codd., huc transtulit Hoffmann : 'aliquid intercidisse videtur velut στέμματα' Bonnet 14b κλειστάδες coniec. Thilo (*ianuae* vers. Syr.) : κλειστάδες codd. 15 παρανύμφιοι coniec. Thilo (παρανυμφιοι coniec. Bonnet), *sponsi comites* ('groomsmen') vers. Syr. : νυμφιοι codd. 16b αὐ Thilo : οὐ codd. 26a αὐτοῦ addidi (cf. 25 οὐ) 27 delevi post G. Bornkamm, ut additamentum Manichaeorum

TRANSLATION

1. The Bride

- 1 The Bride is the daughter of Light:
the majestic effulgence of kings stands upon her;
- 2 delightful is the sight of her,
radiant with cheerful beauty.
- 3 Her garments are like spring flowers:
sweet fragrance spreads around from them.
- 4 On the crown of her head sits the King,
feeding with his ambrosia those who sit beneath him.
- 5 Truth rests upon her head,
(the movement of) her feet makes joy appear.
- 6 Her mouth is open, and it becomes her:
(for she utters with it all songs of praise.)
- 7 Thirty-two are they who sing praises (in) her,
(e.g., glorifying the Father of all.)
- 8 Her tongue is like a door-curtain (cf. *Hebrews* 6:19; 9:3; 10:20)
that is moved aside for those who enter in.
- 9 Her neck is shaped like the (lofty) steps
that the first Demiurge created.
- 10 Her both hands make signs,
proclaiming the place of the blessed aeons.
- 11 Her (ten) fingers
open the gates of the City.

2. Her Bridal Chamber

- 12 Her bridal chamber (cf. Mt. 9:15; 22:10) is full of light,
breathing a scent of balsam and every spice;
- 13 giving off a sweet fragrance of myrrh and silphium,
and of all kinds of sweet-smelling flowers.
- 14 Its floor is covered with myrtle twigs
and the portals are adorned with wands of reed.

3. Her Attendants

- 15 Her groomsmen keep her surrounded,
seven in number, whom she herself has chosen.
- 16 And her bridesmaids are seven,
who dance before her in chorus.
- 17 Twelve in number are those
who serve before her and are subject to her.

4. The Bridegroom and the Elect Ones

- 18 They have their gaze toward the Bridegroom (cf. Mt. 9:15; John 3:29)
so that by the sight of him they may be enlightened
(cf. John 1:7-9; *Hebrews* 6:4; 2 *Timothy* 1:10).
- 19 And they shall be with him forever
in that eternal bliss;
- 20 And they shall be present at that wedding (cf. Mt. 22:2)
at which the great ones are assembled (cf. Mk. 6:21;
Apocal. 6:15; 18:23);
- 21 And they shall attend the banquet (cf. *Apocal.* 19:9)
of which the eternal ones are deemed worthy (cf. Mt. 22:14).
- 22 And they shall put on royal robes (cf. Mt. 22:11-12)
and be arrayed in shining cloaks (cf. *Apocal.* 3:4-5; 3:18; 4:4;
6:11; 7:9; 7:13-14; 1 *Cor.* 15:53; 2 *Cor.* 5:3-4; 1 *Enoch* 62:15-16;
71:1; 108:12; 2 *Enoch* 22:8-10).
- 23 And all of them shall be in joy and exultation,
and they shall glorify the Father of all.
- 24 (For) his majestic Light they have received,
by the vision of their Lord they have been enlightened.
- 25 His ambrosial food they have received,
which is free of all decay;
- 26 Of <his> wine they have drunk,
which causes them neither thirst nor desire.
- 27 [And they glorified and praised along with the Living Spirit
the Father of truth and the Mother of wisdom.]

II. INTERPRETATION

1. *Structure.* The text of the Hymn, in the reconstruction offered above, easily falls into four parts: 11 + 3 + 3 + 9 couplets. The lion's share (couplets 1-11) belongs to the description of the Bride, i.e., of the *Lichtjungfrau* (1 τοῦ φωτός θυγάτηρ). She appears in the role of a mediator between the Heaven (in 11 she opens the gates of the heavenly City Jerusalem) and the pneumatics on earth: That is why her neck had been shaped by the first Demiurge (i.e., by the Father of all, cf. 7b and 23b) as "a lofty flight of steps" (9a), leading to that City. Consequently, Part I (1-11) anticipates Part IV (18-26): the redemption of the pneumatics (Gnostics), "the great and eternal ones" (20-21). It also anticipates the de-

scription of the Bridegroom (in 18-26) -- by indicating his place both at the wedding banquet and in the Pleroma: 4 "on the crown of her head sits the King." By ὁ βασιλεύς the Bridegroom (Savior or Christ) must be meant (as already Thilo had suggested), and not "the Father" or "ein dominierender Stern" (as Lipsius 305 and Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis*, 69 n.1, respectively, thought). For the ambrosia of this King is nothing else but the ambrosia provided by Christ (in the closing couplets 24-26), i.e., eucharist. Compare *Acta Thomae* 25 (p.140.13 Bonnet) and 36 (p.154.2), where ἡ ἀμβροσιώδης πηγὴ of Jesus and ἡ ἀμβροσιώδης τροφή along with ὁ ποτὸς τῆς ἀμπέλου τῆς ἀληθινῆς clearly refer to eucharist.

Part II (12-14) briefly describes the Bridal Chamber: such Bride, such her bride-chamber -- full of light, sweet fragrance, spring flowers, myrtle twigs, chastity and purity. Add to that that her bridesmaids are cheerfully dancing in chorus before her (16), just as she herself seems to be cheerfully moving her feet (in 5). Some of the wedding customs taken from the real life seem to be detectable in this *interpretatio Gnostica*. For example, the place of the bridegroom at the wedding banquet was really "above the bride" (as Bousset, *ZNW* 18 [1917] 21 f., had correctly pointed out): that is why the King sits "on the crown" of the Bride's head (4). It was the duty of the groomsmen to serve as the groom's guardians of the bride: that is why the seven groomsmen (i.e., planets) keep the Bride surrounded (in 15). Miss E.S. Driver had drawn attention to the similarity between the bride-chamber of our Hymn and the bride-chamber of the modern Mandaeans in Iraq: it is adorned with fresh flowers and myrtle, and tree-twigs of every kind.⁷⁾ The apotropaic decoration of the house entrance with myrtle twigs (dedicated to Aphrodite: Athenaeus XV, 676 ab) during a wedding ceremony was common enough in Greece (Plut. *Amatorius* 755 A; Stobaeus IV.22^a.24 [IV, p.506.19 Hense]).⁸⁾

Part III (15-17) resumes the spatial location of the Bride from 4: She is totally encompassed by her seven groomsmen (i.e., by the seven planets), being entertained by her seven bridesmaids (i.e., by the seven *archons* of those planets).⁹⁾ In addition, the twelve archons of the Zodiacal Circle serve before her (17).

Couplet 18 serves as a "bridge" between Parts III and IV: The attendants have their gaze and look fixed on the Bridegroom, who is probably seated above the Bride (cf. 4), in order to receive light from him and thus become "enlightened." The aeons are the ἀπαρχή of the ultimate redemption, a guaranty for the redemption of the pneumatics, who are to be understood under "the great and eternal ones" in 20-21. The nine couplets of Part IV (18-26), dealing with the Savior, serve as a counter-balance to the eleven couplets describing the Bride in Part I. The Savior is able to enlighten both the aeons and the pneumatics (18 and 24b) because he himself is Light as Son of the Light (Father of the all): in 24 Light is best explained as a synonym of Lord, referring to the Savior-Christ (cf. John 1:3 Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον, ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον). Light is the essence of all three divine persons, the Father of all (1, 24a), the Bride (1, 12), and the Bridegroom (18, 24).

Couplets 19-23 are strongly liturgical (or macaristic) in character ("And they shall..."). They are explained by the closing couplets 24-26. The redemption of the pneumatics will be achieved through the following sacraments, mysteries and Gnostic enlightenment: the eucharist (25-26), the enlightenment through Christ (18 and 24), the acquisition of the "royal raiment" (22), and above all through a Marcosian sacrament (?) of the Bridal Chamber (20-21).

The elaborate structure of the Hymn is enhanced by placing the same key-word at different strategic points (including a kind of *Ringcomposition*). A few examples: 1 φῶς and τὸ ἀπαύγασμα τὸ γαῦρον, 12 φωτεινός, 18 ἵνα φωτισθῶσιν, 24 τὸ φῶς τὸ γαῦρον and ἐφωτίσθησαν serve as a thread linking the Father of all, Bride and Bridegroom. Moreover, 10 οἱ εὐδαίμονες αἰῶνες, 19 εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα and αἰώνιος lead to 21 οἱ αἰώνιοι, meaning the elect Gnostics as the partakers in that eternal bliss. Furthermore, 2 ἐπιτερπέες, 5 χαρά, 19 χαρά and 23 ἐν χαρᾷ καὶ ἀγαλλιάσει, in addition to 16 χορεύουσιν, link the Bride with the pneumatics in the everlasting joy and exultation. Finally, 4 ἀμβροσία anticipates the eucharist of the closing lines (25-26), ἡ ἀμβροσία βρωσίς, and the Father of all seems to be glorified both by the Bride (in 6b and 7b) and the pneumatics (in 23b; couplet 27 is a later Manichaean addition).

2. *Exit Bardesanes and the Manichaeans.* The opening word ἡ κόρη means both 'maiden' and 'bride.' (it means 'bride' at *Odyssey* 18.279; Theopompus Com.14 ap. Σ Aristoph. *Plut.*768). Since bridal chamber (12) and Bridegroom (18) are mentioned in our Hymn, the meaning 'bride' is the most natural. Then Klijn's commentary: "She [i.e., the daughter of Light] is never called bride" (p.177) must be wrong. Now, the key-problem of the Hymn seems to be to identify the Bride, since it may lead us to the very Gnostic system from which the Hymn originally had derived. Who is she: the Near-Eastern 'Maiden of Light' (παρθένος τοῦ φωτός), or the Jewish Sophia-Achamoth, or rather a combination of both?

A. Dieterich¹⁰⁾ brought our 'daughter of Light' in connection with the *Lichtjungfrau* of the *Pistis Sophia* (pp.126.14 ff.; 212.12 ff. ed.C. Schmidt³ *et passim*). She is accompanied by seven maidens (i.e., seven planets, pp.138.26; 188.16 ff.; 211.33; 212.25; 216.7) and by twelve διδάκονοι (i.e., twelve zodiacal signs, pp.9.3; 126.18; 138.27; 148.24), as is our Bride. Then W. Bousset enriched the picture in his classical opening chapters on "Die Sieben und die Μητήρ" of his *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (esp. pp.62 n.1 and 69).

Lipsius (305 and 309 f.), Preuschen (75 f.), and especially Bornkamm (*Mythos* 85 f.) brought Bardesanes (Bardaisān, A.D. 154-222) into the picture. But, in my opinion, the enigmatic text of Bardesanes' psalm ap. Ephraem the Syrian, *Psalms* 55.5 ed. Beck, is irrelevant to our Hymn. It reads: " 'When shall we see thy wedding feast, o youthful Spirit?' [asks the mother, the Holy Spirit, her daughter, either Earth or Water]. She [i.e., the youthful Spirit] is the daughter whom she [i.e., her mother, the Holy Spirit] set upon her knees and sang to sleep." To be sure, a "Bridal chamber of light" does appear in Bardesanes:¹¹⁾ It is the *Crossing-place* at which the departed souls had been hindered because of *the sin of Adam* ("because the sin of Adam hindered them") -- until the coming of the Savior Christ: "Therefore, everyone that keeps my word [says Jesus] death forever he shall not taste," -- that his soul is not hindered when it crosses at the Crossing-place, like the hindrance of old..." But, as H.J.W. Drijvers in his dissertation on Bardesanes had pointed out,¹²⁾ the idea is not

Gnostic: the souls are stopped at the Crossing-place not because of a primordial Gnostic "fall" of the soul, but because of Adam's original disobedience of God's command. In conclusion, Bardesanes cannot help us in assessing *the Hymn*. His influence, however, seems to be detectable in *Acta Thomae*, but that is a different matter: there is a strong possibility that our Hymn had been composed long before, and then inserted into the *Acts of Thomas* by its author (Bornkamm 86 f. seems to confuse the two issues).

As for the Manichaeans, expressions like this one: "Jesus Christ, receive me into Thy Bride-chambers of light" or "into Thy Aeons" do occur in Manichaean Psalms (e.g., pp.54.5; 63.3; 79.17-20; 80.18 and 20 f.; 81.13 f.; 117.29 f.; 150.18 ?; 197.5 Allberry), but the point is that the Manichaean sources cannot help us in explaining our Hymn *on chronological grounds*: they are much later than our Hymn (contra the approach of, e.g., Geo Widengren¹³).

3. *Enter the Valentinian Vogue.* With the *ιερός γάμος* between Sophia-Achamoth and Savior-Christ of the wide-spread Valentinianism we are on safer ground (as already Thilo and Lipsius had recognized). The *locus classicus* is Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* I.7.1: ...τὴν μὲν Ἀχαμῶθ τὴν Μητέρα αὐτῶν μεταστῆναι τοῦ τῆς Μεσότητος τόπου λέγουσι καὶ ἐντὸς Πληρώματος εἰσελθεῖν, καὶ ἀπολαβεῖν τὸν νυμφίον αὐτῆς τὸν Σωτῆρα..., ἵνα συζυγία γένηται τοῦ Σωτῆρος καὶ τῆς Σοφίας τῆς Ἀχαμῶθ. Καὶ τοῦτο εἶναι "νυμφίον καὶ νύμφην" (cf. John 3:29), "νυμφῶνα" δὲ (cf. Mt. 22:10) τὸ πᾶν Πλήρωμα.¹⁴) (Cf. Hippolyt. *Elenchos* VI.34.4.) There can be little doubt about who the Bridegroom in our Hymn is: the Savior-Christ *is* the Light and Enlightener in 18 and 24 (cf. John 1:7-9), and certainly He is the giver of the holy eucharist (in 25-26). After all, the Father of all is *ἄγνωστος* and invisible, while the Savior-Christ is visible (24 "by the *vision* of their Lord they have been enlightened").

But the striking similarity between our Hymn, *Acta Thomae* and the Valentinianism is the *sacramental* character of the Bridal Chamber. It is expressed in the closing liturgical formulas of the Hymn -- no less than seven future-tenses ("And they shall...") in 19-23, capped with four explicatory aorists

in 24-26 ("For they have received..."). Doubtless, the redemption of the Aeons attending the sacrament of matrimony between Sophia and Christ serves as a guaranty for the future redemption of the pneumatics. This expectation is clearly expressed in *Acta Thomae* 12 s.f.: προσδοκῶντες (sc. ὑμεῖς) ἀπολήψεσθαι ἐκεῖνον τὸν γάμον τὸν ἀφθόρον καὶ ἀληθινόν, καὶ ἔσεσθε ἐν αὐτῷ παράνυμφοι συνεισερχόμενοι εἰς τὸν νυμφῶνα ἐκεῖνον τὸν τῆς ἀθανασίας καὶ φωτὸς πλήρη. Compare c.14 s.f. (of the same Act 1), where the heavenly wedding is preferred to "this marriage that passes away from before my eyes," and especially the elaborate speech of Mygdonia in c.124 (Act 10), contrasting her marriage to Karish (Charisius) with that to Christ:

... Εἶδες ἐκεῖνον τὸν παρελθόντα γάμον [ᾧδε καὶ μόνον delevi, om.U : habet P], ὁ δὲ γάμος οὗτος εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα μένει· ἡ κοινωνία ἐκεῖνη διαφθορᾶς ἦν, αὕτη δὲ ζωῆς αἰωνίου· οἱ παράνυμφοι ἐκεῖνοι ἄνδρες εἰσὶν καὶ γυναῖκες πρόσκαιροι, οἱ δὲ νῦν εἰς τέλος παραμένουσιν· ἐκεῖνος ὁ γάμος ἐπὶ γῆς ἴστησιν, (ὅπου θλίψις ἐστὶν ἀπαυστος, οὗτος δὲ ἐπὶ γεφύρας πυρὸς 15) ἴστησιν, explevi exempli gratia conplata versione Syriaca) φιλανθρωπίαν δροσίζων· ἐκεῖνος ὁ παστὸς λύεται πάλιν, οὗτος δὲ διὰ παντὸς μένει· ... σὺ (sc. Charisius) νυμφίος εἶ παριῶν καὶ λυόμενος, ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς νυμφίος ἐστὶν ἀληθινός, εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα παραμένων ἀθάνατος (καὶ ἀφθαρτος·) ἐκεῖνο τὸ ἀνακαλυπτήριον χρήματα ἦν καὶ πέπλα παλαιούμενα (cf. *Psalms* 101:27; *Hebrews* 1:11), τοῦτο δὲ ζῶντες λόγοι μηδέποτε παρερχόμενοι.16)

The renunciation of the carnal, earthly (choic and psychic) perishable marriage in favor of the spiritual (pneumatic) everlasting wedding on heaven is one of the key-motifs in *Acta Thomae*, as Bornkamm (68-81) had well pointed out. First the king's daughter in the city of Sandarūk (Andrapolis) renounces her earthly marriage in Act 1 (cc.4-15); then -- and especially -- Mygdonia does the same in Acts 9 and 10 (cc. 88; 93; 98; 117, culminating in the παράθεσις of c.124 quoted above); next the queen Tertia (in Act 11, esp. c.135) and finally the king's son Vīzan (Vazan) and his wife Manashar (in Acts 12 and 13, esp. c.150) follow the trend. Most probably, this prevailing motif of the *Acta Thomae* -- the spiritual marriage to Jesus -- was the reason for the author to insert our Hymn in Act 1.

The sacramental character of couplets 19-23, referring to the pneumatics (20-21) and echoed in c.12 s.f., is best ex-

plained by the sacrament of the "Bridal Chamber" as practised by the Marcosians: "Εὐτρέπισσον σεαυτὴν ὡς νύμφη ἐκδεχομένη τὸν νυμφίον ἑαυτῆς, ἵνα ἔσῃ ὃ ἐγὼ καὶ ἐγὼ ὃ σύ. καθίδρυσσον ἐν τῷ νυμφῶνί σου τὸ σπέρμα τοῦ φωτός. λάβε παρ' ἐμοῦ τὸν νυμφίον καὶ χώρησον αὐτὸν καὶ χωρήθητι ἐν αὐτῷ." (Iren. I.13.3). Οἱ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν νυμφῶνα κατασκευάζουσι καὶ μυσταγωγίαν ἐπιτελοῦσι μετ' ἐπιρρήσεών τινων τοῖς τελουμένοις καὶ πνευματικῶν γάμον φάσκουσιν εἶναι τὸ ὑπ' αὐτῶν γινόμενον κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα τῶν ἄνω συζυγιῶν (I.21.3). The redemption of the pneumatics through the Bridal Chamber was well known to the Valentinians (as Iren. I.7.1; Clement, *Exc. ex Theodoto*: 63-65; 68; 79, and Heracleon Fr.12 Brooke attest). The sacrament of the Bridal Chamber (or the spiritual marriage for the consecrated ones) is prominent in the *Gospel of Philip* (Nag Hammadi II.3), Logia 61; 66; 67; 68; 73; 76; 79; 80; 82; 87; 95; 102; 124-127. In logion 76 (p.69.24 ff.) we even read that the Bridal Chamber is *the highest* among the sacraments. It also occurs in the *Exegesis on the Soul* (NH II.6), pp.132.13 ff.; 132.25 ff. Both Gnostic treatises are Valentinian in character.¹⁷⁾

In conclusion, the Valentinian background of our Wedding Hymn seems to be probable enough. If so then our Hymn must be dated in the second half of the second century A.D.

4. *Back to the Lichtjungfrau.* At the same time, there are differences of significance between the Hymn and the Valentinianism. Apparently, we are expected to envisage the Bride (Sophia) as restored in the Pleroma (Bridal Chamber). But it is disturbing to find the seven planets (and their seven archons) in her company, "keeping her surrounded" (15). In the Valentinian system they belong to the Hebdomad (our world), along with the twelve zodiacs. Moreover, it is unthinkable of the Valentinians to call the invisible Father "the first Demiurge" (as our poet seems to do in 9). In Valentinus the first Demiurge is the Savior: Πρῶτος μὲν οὖν δημιουργὸς ὁ Σωτὴρ γίνεται καθολικῶς (Clem. *Exc. ex Theod.*46.2; cf. Iren.I.5.2). (In addition, Bornkamm 83 had remarked that our Bridegroom does not show the characteristics of the Valentinian Σωτὴρ, nor is there in the Hymn any hint at the "fall" of Sophia.) On the other hand, the presence of the seven attendants (and twelve servants) with the *Lichtjungfrau* (e.g., in the *Pistis Sophia*) is established.

Hence I would assume that our poet is combining the Valentinian Sophia with the Near-Eastern Maiden of Light as a *Himmels-göttin*. Manichaeen *Kephalaia* p.24.18 f. Polotsky explicitly state: "Wisdom (Σοφία) is the Maiden (παρθένος) of Light," but, again, Manichaeen sources are posterior to our Hymn.

5. *Enter Jewish Wisdom Poetry*. But there is more to this Gnostic syncretism: our Bride shows some striking similarities with the Jewish Wisdom. Here are some of them.¹⁸⁾

1 ἀπαύγασμα : in *Sap. Sol.* 7:26 Sophia is called ἀπαύγασμα φωτὸς αἰδίου; in 7:29 she is described as being fairer than the sun, and above all the constellations of the stars; being compared with light, she is found to be *before it* (φωτὶ κρινομένη εὐρίσκεται προτέρα). cf. Philo *De migrat. Abrahami* 40 σοφία... θεοῦ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον φέγγος, οὗ μίμημα καὶ εἰκὼν ἥλιος. Hence she is the enlightenment: Philo *De spec. legg.* III.6 φωτὶ τῷ σοφίας ἐναυγάζομαι. I.288 διανοίας δὲ φῶς ἐστὶ σοφία. *De congressu erudit. gratia* 47: Sophia is φῶς ψυχῆς.¹⁹⁾

1 κόρη: in *Sap. Sol.* 8:2 Sophia is compared to a beautiful bride; at 8:3 she lives with God (as a spouse?), συμβίωσιν θεοῦ ἔχουσα. In Philo *De Cherubim* 49 God is called husband of Wisdom (σοφίας ἀνὴρ).

3 ἀποφορὰ εὐωδίας : in *Sirach* 24:15 Wisdom gives a scent of perfumes as cinnamon and aspalathus (sweet balm), and as a choice myrrh, galbanum, onyx and stacte. Compare couplets 12-13 of our Hymn.

5 χαρά : in *Sap. Sol.* 8:16 Sophia is source of gladness and joy. Cf. *Sirach* 6:28. - ἀλήθεια : cf. *Proverbs* 8:7 ὅτι ἀλήθειαν μελετήσεν ὁ φάρυξ μου, / ἐβδελυγμένα δὲ ἐναντίον ἐμοῦ χεῖλη ψευδῆ.

6 ἥς τὸ στόμα ἀνέφικται : in *Sirach* 24:2 Wisdom opens her mouth in the assembly of the Most High, and is honored in the presence of His (heavenly) hosts. Cf. *Prov.* 8:4 ff. - As for her place (cf. couplets 4, 9, 11), in *Sap. Sol.* 9:4 (= *Iren.* I.13.6) Sophia sits by the God on His throne; in *Sirach* 24:4 she dwells in the high places, her throne is in the pillar of cloud (i.e. in heaven).

15 οὗς αὐτὴ ἐξελέξατο : Sophia herself chooses her attendants (here, groomsmen): *Sap. Sol.* 6:16 ὅτι τοὺς ἀξίους αὐτῆς αὐτὴ περιέρχεται ζητοῦσα κτλ.; cf. *Proverbs* 9:1-6, where Sophia invites people to her feast.

6. *Three Problems.* (a) 22 *The shining royal raiment*. The elect ones (implying both the Aeons and the pneumatics), present at the heavenly Wedding Banquet, shall put on *two* kinds of raiment: first, royal robes (βασιλικὰ ἐνδύματα), and then

shining cloaks (togas or mantles, στολᾶς λαμπράς). And that reminds us at once of the *Hymn of the Pearl* in the same *Acta Thomae* (cc. 108-113): its poet seems to be insisting on the fact that the royal garment of the King's son consists of two pieces: ἐσθής plus στολή: c.108 (p.220.3 and 8 Bonnet); 110 (p.222.1); 113 (p.224.9 f.). Notice that the poet of the *Wedding Hymn* does not call the raiment of the wedding-guests ἔνδυμα γάμου (from Mt. 22:11-12), as one would expect in view of the use of this phrase by the Gnostics -- by the Valentini-ans (ap. Clem. *Exc. ex Theod.* 61.8 τὰ πνευματικά... σφύζεται, "ἐνδύματα γάμων" τὰς ψυχὰς λαβόντα; 63.1) and by the Naassenes (ap. Hippolytus *Elenchos* V.8.44). Nor does he call it "robes that never grow old," πέπλα μὴ παλαιούμενα, as the author of *Acta Thomae* does (in c. 124 s.f., quoted above, inspired by Ps. 101:27 = *Hebrews* 1:11; hence in *Manichaean Psalms* 146.42 and 155.10 Allberry: "I have received my washed clothes (cf. *Gen.* 49:11; *Apocal.* 7:14; 22:14), my cloak (στολή) that grows not old").

Our poet calls it *royal* raiment, and that links him with the *Hymn of the Pearl*, where the name ἐσθῆς βασιλική is supported by the fact that the prince's raiment has the image of the "King of kings" (Parthian *šāhinšāh*) embroidered all over it (c. 112, p.223.19 f. καὶ ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ τῶν βασιλέων βασιλέως ὄλη δι' ὄλης; cf. c.110; p.222.19). In addition, the μεγαστᾶνες of our Hymn (20) may be paralleled by the μεγαστᾶνες, βασιλεῖς, οἱ ἐν τέλει, οἱ πρωτεύοντες and οἱ δυνάσται of the *Hymn of the Pearl*, c.109 (p.220.22); c.110 (p.221.16 ff.). Now, Geo Widengren has convincingly shown that the *Hymn of the Pearl* is best explained in the geographical, political and cultural background of the Parthian dynasty of the Arsacids (whose fall was in A.D. 226).²⁰ And I wonder whether the poet of the *Pearl Hymn* and the poet of the *Wedding Hymn* may not be one and the same person.

To the question about the nature and origin of the heavenly "royal garment" of the pneumatics in our Hymn I have no positive answer. However, if, on the one hand, *light* dominates the entire Hymn (Father of all, Bride and Bridegroom are all light; both the Aeons and the pneumatics receive light from them, 24), and if, on the other hand, the "glittering robe of splendor"

of the *Hymn of the Pearl* seems to be no other thing but the primordial *Lichtmantel der Seele*, then it is an educated guess to assume that the "royal robe" of our Hymn suggests the Gnostic ultimate return of the spirit to the everlasting realm of light. If so, then the Manichaeans have correctly understood the *Hymn of the Pearl*: compare the "raiment of light" in *Kephalaia* p.36.24 Polotsky; *Manichaean Psalms* 50.25; 81.9; 193.10 *et passim*; probably also in the *Psalms of Thomas* 2.32; 2.37 and 11.7.²¹⁾ Other possible parallels may be: "Kleider (ἔνδυμα) des Lichtes" in the *Pistis Sophia* p.227.5 and 11; 6.9 *et passim*; ἔνδυμα οὐράνιου of the Sethians (in Hippolyt. *El.* V.19.21); *Gospel of Philip* logion 24 (meaning obscure to me); the Ophites ap. *Iren.* I.30.9 (*Adam autem et Evam prius quidem habuisse levia et clara et velut spiritalia corpora, quemadmodum et plasmati sunt: venientes autem huc, demutasse in obscurius et pinguius et pigrius*).

-- The *Qumran Manuale disciplinae* col.4.7 f. "every everlasting blessing and eternal joy in life without end, a crown of glory and a garment of majesty in unending light." 1 *Enoch* 62:15-16 Garments of glory and life from the Lord of spirits for the righteous and elect ones risen from the earth; 71:1; 108:12 Those who love God's holy name will be clad in shining light... "and they shall be resplendent for times without number." 2 *Enoch* 22:8-10 The raiment of the blessed, composed of God's glory and light, "shining like the rays of the sun." 1 *Cor.* 15:53; 2 *Cor.* 5:3-4; *Apocal.* 3:4-5; 3:18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9; 7:13-14; *Ascension of Isaiah* 4:16; 7:22; 8:14 (about the spiritual bodies of the blessed); *Isaiah* 61:10; *et alibi*.

(b) *The Thirty-two*. The text as transmitted reads: τριάνοντα καὶ δύο εἰσὶν οἱ ταύτην ὑμνολογοῦντες. Lipsius (306) had suggested that the thirty-two Valentinian Aeons are meant, praising the Father through the mouth of Sophia. Since then this interpretation had become the *communis opinio*. But, first of all, the Valentinian Pleroma consists of thirty -- not thirty-two -- Aeons: an Ogdoad, a Decad, and a Duodecad. This is supported by Luke 3:23: "That is why the Savior, they say, did nothing in public for *thirty* years, thus setting forth the mystery of these Aeons" (*Iren.* I.1.3; I.3.1). I think, Lipsius' number thirty-two is due to a misunderstanding of

the text of Hippolytus (*Elenchos* VI.31.3), which reads:

Καὶ γίνονται τριάκοντα (οἱ) αἰῶνες μετὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ
καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος· τινὲς μὲν σὺν αὐτῶν ταύτῃ
εἶναι θέλουσι τὴν τριακοντάδα τῶν αἰώνων, τινὲς δὲ
συνυπάρχειν τῷ Πατρὶ Σιγῆν καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς καταριθ-
μεῖσθαι τοὺς αἰῶνας θέλουσιν.

All Hippolytus seems to be saying here is that one Valentinian school of thought counted thirty Aeons by including the pair Christ-Holy Spirit (but excluding Father-Bythos and Silence-Sige), while another Valentinian school counted Father and Silence as one pair of Aeons (but excluding the pair Christ-Holy Spirit, as an additional emanation outside the Pleroma): in both cases the total number of Aeons is thirty.

Back to the text of couplet 7: In couplet 6 we read that the Bride's *mouth* is open (because she utters all songs of praise, most probably of the Father). And in couplet 8 we learn that her *tongue* is like a door-curtain in a temple. Now, sandwiched between the Bride's *mouth* and *tongue* is our couplet 7: It must refer to something *in her mouth*. Certainly, she has not opened her mouth in order to *listen* the praises of the Thirty-two (*contra* the translation of Werner Foerster: "Her mouth is opened and (it is) becoming to her. There are thirty-two who sing her praise").²²⁾ Syriac version can help us in restoring the text; it reads: "The twelve apostles of the Son and the seventy-two *thunder forth in her*." 'In her' (*in ea*) means 'in her mouth.' Thus read <έν> ταύτῃ for ταύτην.

Now, Thilo (p.136) had suggested that thirty-two *teeth* are meant. But if our Bride is Sophia, then the later Jewish speculation of *Sefer Yezirah* ('Book of Creation') may be a closer parallel: The book opens with the statement that God created the world by means of thirty-two secret paths of *Wisdom*, consisting of the twenty-two elemental letters of the Hebrew alphabet plus ten *Sefirot beli mah*, total thirty-two.²³⁾ If so, then Sophia seems to be using all the sounds available in her mouth in order to praise the Father (cf. 6b, 7b), in the same way in which she uses all her ten fingers to open the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem (in couplet 11).

(c) 9 *Her neck is shaped like the lofty steps*. The comparison is puzzling and unparalleled. My guess is that the image should be brought in connection with the gates of the heavenly

City in 11: The vertebrae of Sophia's neck are envisaged as the steps of a lofty stone-stairway leading to that City. Lipsius (306 f.) referred to *Canticum* 4:4 'Your neck is like David's tower, girt with battlements' and to 7:4 'Your neck is like a tower of ivory.' A closer parallel seems to be in the later *Acta Philippi* (composed c. A.D. 400, referred to by Lipsius), c.138 (p.70.4 Bonnet), where the Savior's cross of light, reaching down to the Abyss, has the shape of a *ladder provided with steps* (καὶ ἦν ὁ σταυρὸς ἐν ὁμοιώματι κλίμακος ἐχούσης βαθμούς), so that the masses of people can be saved and see τὸ φῶς τοῦ Θεοῦ. Bousset (*Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* 68) thought the neck's steps "sind nichts anderes als die etagenmässig übereinander gelagerten Himmelssphären."

7. *Conclusions*. Starting from the assumption that the extant Greek version of the Wedding Hymn still reflects the meter (the Semitic *Doppeldreier*) of the lost Syriac original, and using the extant Syriac version wherever it seemed reliable, I was able to offer a reconstruction of the corrupt Greek version of the Hymn. It shows an elaborate structure (of 11 + 3 + 3 + 9 couplets) and a skillful poet. As a matter of fact, our Hymn proves to be a gem of Gnostic poetry, comparable only to the Naassene Hymn in Hippolytus (*Elenchos* V.10.2).²⁴ (The *Hymn of the Pearl* belongs to a rather different literary genre -- a Hellenistic romance in verse, 105 couplets long.)

The popular Valentinian ἱερὸς γάμος between Sophia-Achamoth and Savior-Christ makes the core of our Hymn. The Marcosian sacrament of the Bridal Chamber seems to have been known to our poet, while the influence of Bardesanes (and of Manichaeism) is not detectable in the Hymn. The very theme of the heavenly "spiritual marriage" which dominates the entire *Acta Thomae* seems to have been the reason for its author to insert our Hymn in the *Acts of Thomas*.

At the same time, the Hymn shows some influence of the Near-Eastern Maiden of Light (such as present in, e.g. the *Pistis Sophia*) and it reveals a strong inspiration coming from the Jewish Wisdom poetry. Finally, if I am right in seeing some common motifs in our Hymn and in the *Hymn of the Pearl*, we may posit one and the same poet for both Hymns. In brief, our

Hymn is a classical example of the Gnostic syncretism. Most probably, it belongs to the Syrian Judeo-Christian Gnosticism and is slightly earlier than *Acta Thomae* (second half of the second century A.D.). The *Fortleben* of the Hymn is of interest, attesting to its importance. First, a Manichaean poet had added a clumsy couplet (27), trying to adapt the Hymn to the Manichaean creed. Then a Syriac redactor undertook major surgery and rewriting, in a futile effort to eliminate the Gnostic elements and convert the Hymn into Catholicism; of course, he had replaced the Manichaean closing couplet with the orthodox Trinitarian dogma.

But once restored to its original shape, the Wedding Hymn shines in its beauty, just as the Bride it so vividly describes -- $\varphi\alpha\iota\delta\rho\tilde{\omega}\ \kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\epsilon\iota\ \kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\upsilon\acute{\alpha}\zeta\upsilon\sigma\alpha$ (2).

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NOTES

1) The Greek version of *Acta Thomae* was first published by J.C. Thilo, *Acta S. Thomae Apostoli* (Lipsiae, 1823). Thilo's Commentary (p.121 ff.) is still valuable. The best Greek edition so far is that of M. Bonnet, in R.A. Lipsius and M. Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, II.2 (Leipzig, 1903), pp.99-288. - The Syriac version was published by W. Wright, *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles* (London-Edinburgh, 1871), I, p.171 ff. (Syriac text); II, p.146 ff. (English translation). A recent English translation of the Syriac version with a Commentary was provided by A.F.J. Klijn, *The Acts of Thomas* (Supplements to Novum Testamentum, 5, Leiden, Brill, 1962).

Here is a select bibliography on the Wedding Hymn: K. Macke, 'Syrische Lieder gnostischen Ursprungs,' *Tübinger Theol. Quartalschrift* 56 (1874), 1-70. R.A. Lipsius, *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden* (Braunschweig, 1883), I, 301-311. G. Hoffmann, 'Zwei Hymnen der Thomasakten,' *Zeitschr. f. die neutestamentl. Wiss.* 4 (1903), 295-309. E. Preuschen, *Zwei gnostische Hymnen* (Giessen, 1904). Wilhelm Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (Forschungen zur Religion u. Lit. des Alten u. Neuen Testaments, 10, Göttingen, 1907), 68-70; Idem, 'Manichäisches in den Thomasakten,' *ZNTW* 18 (1917), 10 f. and 20-23. Especially Günther Bornkamm, *Mythos und Legende in den apokryphen Thomas-Akten* (FRLANT, N.F.31, Göttingen, 1933), 68-81; 82-89 and 103-106. Idem, in + Edgar Hennecke, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, 3., völlig neubearbeitete Auflage herausgegeben von Wilhelm Schneemelcher (Tübingen, Mohr, II, 1964), 297-372, esp. 302 f. = *New Testament Apocrypha*, English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, II, 1965), 425-531, esp. 432 f.

2) *A Manichaean Psalm-Book*, Part II, edited by C.R.C. Allberry (Manichaean Manuscripts in the Chester Beatty Collection, Vol.II; Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1938), pp.203-227. - For a list of Aramaic and Syriac poems composed in the *Doppeldreier* see T. Sävje-Söderbergh, *Studies in the Coptic*

Manichaean Psalm-Book: Prosody and Mandaean Parallels (Uppsala, 1949), 88-90.

3) ZNTW 18 (1917), 10 f. 4) *Mythos und Legende*, 88.

5) Compare, e.g., Klijn's Commentary, pp.168-179.

6) Cf. *Manichaean Psalm-Book*, pp.22.24; 140.38 f. Allberry; *Kephalaia* p.12.27 f. H.J. Polotsky (*Manichäische Handschriften der Staatlichen Museen Berlin, Band I, Stuttgart, Kohlhammer, 1940*); Augustine, *De haeresibus* c.46.

7) E.S. Driver, *The Mandaeans of Iraq and Iran* (Oxford, 1937), 63, quoted by Geo Widengren, *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism, Uppsala Universitetis Årsskrift 1946:3*, p.113.

8) Cf. J. Köchling, *De coronarum apud antiquos vi atque usu* (RGV XIV.2, Giessen, 1914), p.64 f.; R. Ganszyniec, in *RE* XI (1922), 1594.40 ff. (s.v. Kranz); K. Baus, 'Der Kranz in Antike u. Christentum,' *Theophaneia* II (Bonn, 1940), 61-71.

9) Cf. Origen *Contra Celsum* VI.31. Thilo 144; Bornkamm 83 n.1.

10) *Abraxas* (Leipzig, 1891), pp.101 ff.; 104 ff.

11) Ap. Ephraem the Syrian, *Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardesanes*, ed. C.W. Mitchell, vol.II (London, 1921), p.164.32-40 (Syriac text), p.LXXVII (English translation), completed by A.A. Bevan and F.C. Burkitt.

12) H.J.W. Drijvers, *Bardaisan of Edessa* (Assen, 1966), 155.

13) Especially in *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism* (above, note 7), pp.109-112.

14) A solid critical edition of Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* Book I has been provided recently by A. Rousseau and L. Doutreleau, S.J., in *Sources Chrétiennes*, vol. 264 (Paris, 1979).

15) Compare the Činvat-bridge of the Iranian religion -- the way to heaven for the virtuous souls (*Vd.* 19.28-32): Geo Widengren, 'Iranische Religionsgeschichte,' *Nhmen* 1 (1954), 35 f., and n.99 on the *Toten-Brücke*.

16) Cf. Lipsius 303 f.; Bornkamm 77 f.

17) Also in Nag Hammadi VII.2 (*2 Log. Seth*), pp.57.13 ff.; 66.1-67.21. Cf. Karl Rudolph, *Die Mandäer*, II (Göttingen, 1961), pp.317 f.; 318 n.3. -- The Valentinian ἘΡΘΟΣ γΑΜΟΣ between Sophia and Christ may well have its source in the Ophitic system ap. Irenaeus I.30.12: *Et descendentem Christum in hunc mundum induisse primum sororem suam Sophiam, et exultasse utrosque refrigerantes super invicem: et hoc esse "sponsum et sponsam"* (cf. John 3:29) *definiunt*. It is not difficult to see how different this account is from our Hymn: The union between Christ and Sophia in the Ophitic account forms part of Christ's descent (*in quem [i.e. Iesum] Christum perplexum Sophiae descendisse, et sic factum esse Iesum Christum*), not of their ultimate redemption in the Pleroma (Bridal Chamber), as in the Valentinian account and in our Hymn.

18) Many of the parallels between our Hymn and *Sap. Sol.* and *Sirach* have been pointed out by Klijn, in his Commentary, pp.170-178: I have enlarged the list within the allotted space.

19) Cf. also Philo *De sacrif. Abelis et Caini* 78, and H. Leisegang, in *RE* III A (1927), 1033.

20) In *Zeitschr. f. Religions- u. Geistesgeschichte* 4 (1952), 105-114. Cf. R. Reitzenstein, *Das iranische Erlösungsmysterium* (Bonn, 1921), 70 ff.

The same idea in Th. Nöldeke, *Zeitschr. der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 25 (1871), 676-679, and in F.C. Burkitt, *Urchristentum im Orient* (Tübingen, 1907), 152. Cf. Bornkamm, in Hennecke-Schneemelcher (above, note 1), II, 303-305 = English translation II, 433-437; Klijn (above, note 1), 273-281.

21) Cf. Alfred Adam, *Die Psalmen des Thomas und das Perlenlied als Zeugnisse vorchristlicher Gnosis* (Beihefte zur Zeitschr. f. d. neutestamentl. Wiss., 24; Berlin, 1959), 66 f.; Peter Nagel, *Die Thomaspsalmen des koptisch-manichäischen Psalmenbuches* (Quellen, N.F., 1; Evangelische Verlagsanstalt Berlin, 1980), 102; G. Widengren, *The Great Vohu Manah and the Apostle of God*, *Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift* 1945:5, pp.76 ff.

22) In Werner Foerster, *Gnosis: A Selection of Gnostic Texts* (Zürich, Artemis Verlag, 1969), English translation edited by R. McL. Wilson (Oxford University Press, 1972), I, p.345.

23) Cf. G. Scholem, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 16 (1971), 783-786; W. Bousset (*Hauptprobleme der Gnosis*, 69 n.1) was the first to refer to *Sefer Yezirah* (cf. also Klijn, 171). I am aware of the fact that the 'Book of Creation' is later than our Hymn (it may have been written somewhere between 3rd and 6th centuries A.D.), but its Pythagorean and other sources are much older. Cf. Franz Dornseiff, *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie* (Stoicheia, 7; Leipzig, Teubner, 1922), 35 and 140. - Compare also the thirty-two hermeneutic rules of the Talmud.

24) On which see M. Marcovich, 'The Naassene Psalm in Hippolytus,' in B. Layton, Ed., *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, Vol.2: Sethian Gnosticism (Studies in the History of Religions, vol.41; Leiden, Brill, 1980), 770-778.

A D D E N D U M

To p.368 f. I am aware of the fact that some couplets seem to indicate four beats (instead of three) in the lost Syriac original, notably 13 and 15. But the difference may well be explained as expansion on the part of the Greek translator. So in 15, the Syriac original might well have read: 'Her groomsmen surround her, / seven of them, elected by her,' and in 13 *ὄσμῃ ἡδεῖα* 'sweet odor' may well mean the same as *εὐωδία* of couplet 3, while *παμπόλλων* in 13b could be an addition of the Greek translator. I trust that the Semitic *Doppeldreier* are visible enough in the rest of the couplets, with the exception of the spurious last couplet.

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