

Anti-Origenist Redaction in the Fragments of the *Gospel of Truth* (NHC XII,2): Theological Controversy and the Transmission of Early Christian Literature*

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Ancient polemicists claim that apocryphal texts contributed to the enduring popularity of the Origenist “heresy” in fourth- and fifth-century Egypt.¹ The anchorite Sopatrus associates “apocryphal literature” with “discussions about the image,” shorthand for Origenist debates over the loss of the image of God in humanity, and urges his hearers to avoid both apocryphal books and the theological controversy they incite.² In his festal letter of 401 CE, the archbishop Theophilus of Alexandria rails against Origenist teaching and urges Christians throughout Egypt to reject “Origen’s evils” and disregard “Scriptures called ‘apocrypha.’”³

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¹ Elizabeth A. Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 153.

² *Apophthegmata Patrum*, Sopatrus.

³ Theophilus, *Ep. Paschalis* 16.20 (= Jerome, *Ep.* 96). Shenoute quotes this passage from Theophilus’s festal letter at the end of *I Am Amazed*. See Hugo Lundhaug, “Shenoute’s Heresiological Polemics and Its Context(s),” in *Invention, Rewriting, Usurpation: Discursive Fights over Religious Traditions in Antiquity* (ed. Jörg Ulrich, David Brakke, and Anders-Christian Jacobsen; Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity 11; Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang Publishing Group, 2012) 239–261, at 239.

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Shenoute's association of Origenist themes with "apocryphal books" in *I Am Amazed* demonstrates that non-canonical writings continued to occupy a central position in Origenist theological debates well into the fifth century.⁴

On the basis of these and other polemical reports, some scholars have suggested that among the assortment of largely "apocryphal" texts discovered at Nag Hammadi are examples of the kinds of non-canonical writings that could have participated in the Origenist controversy.⁵ As early as the 1978 conference on Gnosticism at Yale, Rowan Greer speculated that the collectors of the Nag Hammadi texts might have been "a community of theosophical monks influenced by Origen."⁶ Jon F. Dechow has argued that monks may have discarded the Nag Hammadi texts from their libraries in response to the Origenist crisis in the fourth and fifth centuries.⁷ Armand Veilleux has linked the burial of the Nag Hammadi library more specifically to the backlash against Origenism that ensued following the death of Evagrius Ponticus in 399.⁸

More recently Hugo Lundhaug has labored to establish a surer connection between Origenism and the Nag Hammadi codices, first in his book, *Images of Rebirth: Cognitive Poetics and the Transformational Soteriology in the Gospel of*

⁴ *I Am Amazed* 14.22. For a new edition of this treatise, also called *Contra Origenistas*, see Hans-Joachim Cristea, *Schenute von Atripe: Contra Origenistas* (STAC 60; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011). Also relevant is a letter by Dioscorus in which he mentions monasteries that have "books and many treatises by the pest Origen and other heretics," though it is not certain whether the "books . . . by . . . other heretics" are apocryphal works. See Lundhaug, "Shenoute's Heresiological Polemics," 220–21.

⁵ While scholars now use the term "apocrypha" to designate specific collections of paracanonical writings, ancient Christians used the term as a polemical designation for ostensibly esoteric books allegedly regarded as authoritative by heretics. For this usage, see Irenaeus *Haer.* I.20.1; Hippolytus *Haer.* VII.20; Tertullian *Pud.* 10; and Clement of Alexandria *Strom.* III.4.29. Likely on account of the influence of Athanasius's *Festal Letter* of 367 CE, in which the Alexandrian bishop cautions Christians against reading extracanonical "books . . . called apocryphal," polemicists such as Sopatrus, Theophilus, and Shenoute would have considered the Valentinian *Gospel of Truth*, should they have encountered it, to be among the heretical βίβλοι ἀπόκρυφοί. See Albrecht Oerke, "κρύπτω, ἀποκρύπτω, κρυπτός, κρυφαίος, κρυφή, κρύπτει, ἀπόκρυφος," *TDNT* III.957–1000, esp. 997–1000; and *New Testament Apocrypha* (ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; trans. ed. Robert McL. Wilson; 2 vols.; rev. ed.; Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003) 1:113–15.

⁶ Rowan Greer, "The Dog and the Mushrooms," in *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism: Proceedings of the International Conference on Gnosticism at Yale, New Haven, Connecticut, March 28-31, 1978* (ed. Bentley Layton; 2 vols.; Studies in the History of Religions 41; Leiden: Brill, 1981) 1:146–75, at 147. When pressed on this point by Michel Tardieu during the ensuing discussion, Greer clarifies that the idea that the Nag Hammadi books belonged to Origenist monks is merely a "parenthetical suggestion" offered "in passing" (171, 172).

⁷ Jon F. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity: Epiphanius of Cyprus and the Legacy of Origen* (Patristic Monograph Series 13; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988) 172–95.

⁸ Armand Veilleux, "Monasticism and Gnosis in Egypt," in *The Roots of Egyptian Christianity* (ed. Birger A. Pearson and James E. Goehring; Studies in Antiquity and Christianity 1; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) 271–306, at 290.

Philip and the Exegesis of the Soul,⁹ followed by a spate of articles on the reception of the Nag Hammadi texts in fourth- and fifth-century Egypt.¹⁰ By highlighting ostensibly Origenist themes in this body of literature, Lundhaug argues persuasively that many of the Nag Hammadi texts could have numbered among the “apocryphal books” condemned by Sopatrus, Theophilus, and Shenoute. For instance, texts like the *Gospel of Philip* and the *Treatise on the Resurrection*, Lundhaug argues, would have resonated with Egyptian Origenists who believed in a spiritual, rather than a carnal, resurrection.¹¹ By situating texts from Nag Hammadi within the context of the Origenist controversy, Lundhaug urges scholars to think more broadly about the types of “Origenism” circulating in late antique Egypt. While scholars like Elizabeth Clark attribute much of the Origenism of the day to the writings of Evagrius Ponticus, Lundhaug takes seriously the reports of the polemicists and calls attention to themes in apocryphal literature that could also have contributed to the popularity of Origenist theology.

In this article, I build upon Lundhaug’s work by strengthening further the connection between Nag Hammadi texts and the Origenist debate in Egypt. I offer new evidence to suggest that the *Gospel of Truth*, an “apocryphal” text from Nag Hammadi, participated in the Origenist controversy in late antique Egypt. On the basis of a detailed comparison between the two versions of the *Gospel of Truth*—a nearly complete Lycopolitan copy from Codex I and a highly fragmentary Sahidic copy from Codex XII, of which I offer a fresh reconstruction—I seek to establish that the version from Codex XII was stripped of teachings that readers would have associated with Origenism. To be clear, I am not arguing that Origen influenced the author of the *Gospel of Truth*, a text that was likely composed sometime near the middle of the second century. Rather, a shared interest in Christian speculative theology that is at once exegetical and Platonic, coupled with Origen’s own critical interaction with Valentinian works, yielded many similarities between the *Gospel of Truth* and Origen. Therefore, ancient readers of the *Gospel of Truth* would have associated many of its themes with the teachings of Origen and his supporters. In

⁹ Hugo Lundhaug, *Images of Rebirth: Cognitive Poetics and the Transformational Soteriology in the Gospel of Philip and the Exegesis of the Soul* (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 73; Leiden: Brill, 2010).

¹⁰ Hugo Lundhaug, “Begotten, Not Made, to Arise in This Flesh: The Post-Nicene Soteriology of the Gospel of Philip,” in *Beyond the Gnostic Gospels: Studies Building on the Work of Elaine Pagels* (ed. Eduard Iricinschi et al.; STAC 82; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013) 235–71; idem, “Origenism in Fifth-Century Upper Egypt: Shenoute of Atripe and the Nag Hammadi Codices,” in *Studia Patristica LXIV: Ascetica; Liturgica; Orientalia; Critica et Philologica* (ed. Markus Vinzent; Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2013) 217–28; idem, “Shenoute of Atripe and Nag Hammadi Codex II,” in *Zugänge zur Gnosis: Akten zur Tagung der Patristischen Arbeitsgemeinschaft vom 02.-05.01.2011 in Berlin-Spandau* (ed. Christoph Marksches and Johannes van Oort; Patristic Studies 12; Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2013) 201–26; and idem, “Shenoute’s Heresiological Polemics.”

¹¹ Lundhaug, “Origenism in Fifth-Century Upper Egypt,” 225–27.

other words, sometime in the fourth or fifth century an anonymous editor removed elements of the text that could be read in support of the Origenist “heresy” in order to produce a theologically-acceptable version of this compelling homily on the gospel.

If persuasive, my findings both confirm and complicate the reports of anti-Origenists. The notion that some of the themes in the version of the *Gospel of Truth* from Codex I resonated with Origenist teachings lends credence to the reports of Sopatrus, Theophilus, and Shenoute, who claim that Christian apocryphal writings contributed to the popularity of Origenism in Egypt. Yet that Origenist teachings were removed from the version of the *Gospel of Truth* in Codex XII indicates that apocryphal texts were also part of the critical response to Origenism.¹² The version of the *Gospel of Truth* in Codex XII would have been of little use to an Origenist eager to find support for his theology in the early Christian exegetical tradition.

In what follows, I will discuss the history of scholarship on the fragments of the *Gospel of Truth* and recount the circumstances of their discovery and subsequent deterioration. Following a brief note on method, I will compare the textual complexions of the two versions of the *Gospel of Truth* and argue that the version in Codex XII likely underwent a stylistic and ideological redaction. I will then introduce two changes made to the text of Codex XII and interpret these instances of variation within the context of the Origenist controversy in late antique Egypt.¹³ Finally, I will reflect briefly upon what these changes might suggest about the status of the text among its fourth- and fifth-century readers.

■ The Fragments from Nag Hammadi Codex XII

While the version of the *Gospel of Truth* from Codex I features prominently in scholarship on Nag Hammadi and Early Christianity, the fragments from Codex XII remain largely unstudied. Few scholars even note the existence of a second copy of the text. This pattern of neglect likely stems from one of two concerns: a suspicion that the copy from Codex XII is too fragmentary to be of much use, or a fear that what little remains of the second version differs so drastically from the version in Codex I that it calls into question the reliability of the text of the *Gospel of Truth* as we know it. Einar Thomassen’s remarks are representative:

¹² In this respect my findings dovetail with Lundhaug’s interpretation of the *Gospel of Philip*, which, he argues, contains anti-Arian Christology. See Lundhaug, “Begotten, Not Made, to Arise in the Flesh,” 244–48; and *Images of Rebirth*, 377–94. Scholars have detected anti-Arian polemics in other Nag Hammadi texts as well, such as the *Teachings of Silvanus* and the *Tripartite Tractate*. See Roelof van den Broek, “The Theology of the Teachings of Silvanus,” *VC* 40 (1986) 1–55; and Alberto Camplani, “Per la cronologia di testi valentiniani: il Trattato Tripartito e la crisi ariana,” *Cassiodorus* 1 (1995) 171–95.

¹³ There are other variation units in the version of *Gospel of Truth* from Codex XII in which an anti-Origenist agenda might also be at work. However, since these examples are more ambiguous than the two I discuss, I mention them only in a note (see n. 44 below).

It must be admitted that there is no guarantee that the text now available to us, a Lycopolitan (“Subachmimic”) Coptic version in a manuscript from the middle of the fourth century, is a faithful reproduction of the Greek text known to the Valentinians of the second century. Intriguing in this regard are the fragments of a Sahidic version of *Gos. Truth* found in NHC XII, which seems to differ in several places from the text of NHC I. Unfortunately, the fragments are so small that a systematic study of the relationship between the two versions does not seem possible (and has, indeed, never been attempted).¹⁴

Scholarship on the fragments is sparse. Following Frederik Wisse’s transcription, initially published in 1985 and later revised and supplemented with notes in 1990,¹⁵ only a brief assessment of the fragments has appeared in print. At the close of R. Mortley, “The Name of the Father is the Son (Gospel of Truth 38),” Michel Tardieu offers the following addendum: “A careful comparison of the two extant versions shows that the Sahidic version (Codex XII) is based on a short text, on which the Akhmim version (Codex I) appears to be a commentary.”¹⁶ Since Tardieu never published the details of his “careful comparison,” it is not possible to evaluate his work. No additional studies have been published, though Jörgen Magnussen informs me that, in consultation with Stephen Emmel, he has conducted an investigation into the relationship between the two versions of the text and has arrived at the opposite conclusion: that the editor of the version in Codex XII likely shortened the text. In a recent paper delivered at the first international workshop of the NEWCONT project, Katrine Brix analyzed the fragments from Codex XII, yet her findings too remain unpublished.¹⁷

In this article I present the results of my own comparison of the two versions of the *Gospel of Truth*. In general, I agree with Magnussen and Emmel that the shorter version of the text is likely secondary. Additionally, I have detected several previously unnoticed ideological changes made to the shorter text, which suggest

¹⁴ Einar Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed: The Church of the ‘Valentinians’* (Leiden: Brill, 2006) 147. See also his discussion in “Notes pour la délimitation d’un corpus valentinien à Nag Hammadi,” in *Les textes de Nag Hammadi et la problématique de leur classification* (ed. Louis Painchaud and Anne Pasquier; Bibliothèque Copte de Nag Hammadi Section «Études» 3; Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 1995) 243–59, at 251–53.

¹⁵ See *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex): Introductions, Texts, Translations, Indices* (ed. Harold W. Attridge; Nag Hammadi Studies 22; Leiden: Brill, 1985) 119–22; and *Nag Hammadi Codices XI, XII, XIII* (ed. Charles W. Hedrick; Nag Hammadi Studies 28; Leiden: Brill, 1990) 239–47.

¹⁶ Mortley’s article appears in *Neoplatonism and Gnosticism* (ed. Richard T. Wallis and Jay Bregman; Studies in Neoplatonism 6; Albany: State of New York Press, 1992) 239–52 (see 250 for Michel Tardieu’s quotation).

¹⁷ Katrine Brix, “NHC I,3 and XII,2: Two Evidences, One Valentinian Gospel?” (paper presented at the annual NEWCONT conference, Oslo, Norway, 12 December 2012). The theme of the conference was “Textual Transmission and Manuscript Culture: Textual Fluidity, ‘New Philology,’ and the Nag Hammadi (and Related) Codices.”

that the version of the *Gospel of Truth* in Codex XII was not only abbreviated, it was also systematically stripped of theology that would have resonated with Origenist readers and perturbed anti-Origenist ones.

The circumstances surrounding the discovery and subsequent deterioration of the second copy of the *Gospel of Truth* are remarkably well documented. If James Robinson's account of the discovery of the Nag Hammadi library is to be believed,¹⁸ then Codex XII sustained the majority of its damage not gradually over the course

¹⁸ James Robinson, "From the Cliff to Cairo: The Story of the Discoverers, and the Middlemen of the Nag Hammadi Codices," in *Colloque international sur les textes de Nag Hammadi: Québec, 22–25 août 1978* (ed. Bernard Barc; Bibliothèque Copte de Nag Hammadi Section «Études» 1; Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1981) 21–58. Martin Krause and Rodolphe Kasser doubted many details of the find story recounted by Robinson, stating that they "do not consider as assured anything more than the core of the story (the general location and approximate date of the discovery), the rest not having for them more than the value of stories and fables that one can collect in popular Egyptian circles thirty years after an event whose exceptional significance the protagonists could not at the time understand" (*The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices: Introduction* [ed. James Robinson et al.; Leiden: Brill, 1984] 3). Recently, Robinson's account has come under fire again in articles by Mark Goodacre, "How Reliable is the Story of the Nag Hammadi Discovery?" *JSNT* 35 (2013) 303–22; and Nicola Denzey Lewis and Justine Ariel Blount, "Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices," *JBL* 133 (2014) 397–417. Goodacre attempts to call into question Robinson's account by pointing out inconsistencies in his multiple retellings of the find story. Likewise, Denzey Lewis dismisses much of Robinson's account as Orientalizing embellishment and favors Jean Doresse's earlier and less detailed account instead. For Doresse's own account, see "A Gnostic Library from Upper Egypt," *Archaeology* 3 (1950) 69–73; idem, "Sur les traces des papyrus gnostiques: Recherches à Chénoboskion," *Bulletin de l'Académie royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres* 36 (1950) 432–39; and idem, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics: An Introduction to the Gnostic Coptic Manuscripts Discovered at Chenoboskion, with an English Translation and Critical Evaluation of the Gospel According to Thomas* (New York: Viking Press, 1960). It is difficult to see the counter arguments of Goodacre and Denzey Lewis/Blount as anything more than nitpicking and quibbling over details. Pointing out that accounts differ concerning the number of people present at the discovery or the specific person who unearthed the codices does not call into question the core of Robinson's account (e.g., Goodacre, "How Reliable is the Story of the Nag Hammadi Discovery?" 307–8). Nor does dismissing the account as "overtly colonialist and orientalizing" (e.g., Denzey Lewis and Blount, "Rethinking the Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices," 410) constitute a substantive counter argument. In fact, Krause and Kasser's claim that Robinson's account amounts to little more than "stories and fables" circulating in "popular Egyptian circles" that "could not at the time understand" the significance of the discovery can likewise be dismissed as Orientalizing. Or again, Krause and Kasser doubt Robinson's account on the basis of the "fabricating capabilities of the Egyptian fellahin lured by the prospect of gain" (as reported by Herbert Krosney, *The Lost Gospel: The Quest for the Gospel of Judas Iscariot* [Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2006] 135). Ironically, in the course of his critique of Robinson, Goodacre himself uncovered convincing confirmation of the general reliability of Robinson's account. In *The Gnostics*, a 1987 Channel 4 (UK) series that interweaves contemporary gnostic spirituality with the Nag Hammadi materials, Muhammad 'Ali makes his first and only appearance on camera and corroborates more or less the story told by Robinson. Relevant for our present interest in the fragmentary remains of Codex XII is 'Ali's on-camera admission that his mother destroyed some of the papyri. In his words, "It was all just rubbish to us. Yes, my mother did burn some, in the bread oven." For a more detailed critical response to Goodacre and Denzey Lewis/Blount, see Hugo Lundhaug and Lance Jenott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices* (STAC 97; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015) 11–19, esp. 16–17 n. 49.

of the fifteen centuries it sat buried within the sands of Egypt, but in the hours and days following its discovery in 1945. After Muhammad ‘Ali al-Samman removed the codices from the earthen jar, he apparently tore off the cover from Codex XII and separated its leaves in order to distribute the twelve books evenly among the eight camel drivers. When the other men refused their portion, ‘Ali took the entire lot home and placed it atop a pile of straw on the patio, near the family’s clay oven. ‘Ali’s mother, Umm Ahmad, later tossed into the oven many of the loose fragments lying outside the covers.¹⁹ We can only assume that among the tinder Umm Ahmad used to cook the evening bread were several of the leaves now missing from the *Gospel of Truth*. As incredible as this story sounds, it was corroborated by multiple sources, including Umm Ahmad herself, who admitted to Robinson that she burned the fragments; the account also provides a plausible explanation for the otherwise perplexing hodgepodge of leaves now missing from Codex XII.²⁰

Umm Ahmad apparently sold the remaining loose leaves (including fragments from Codex XII), along with four bound codices, to Bahij ‘Ali, a local outlaw with ties to Cairo’s antiquities market, for a total price of £E 12 to £E 18 (according to Bahij) or £E 12 plus 40 oranges (according to Muhammad ‘Ali). At this time, Bahij ‘Ali may have stuffed the fragments from Codex XII into the cover of Codex X, which lacked most of its leaves. Bahij then traveled alone to Cairo and sold the books directly to Phocion J. Tano, an antiquities dealer and proprietor of the Antiquities Gallery. In 1949, Codex XII was transferred into the custody of the Department of Antiquities, and then relocated to the Coptic Museum in Cairo on June 9, 1952. The codex was officially declared national property in 1956.²¹

Images of the fragments appear in the 1973 Brill facsimile edition.²² However, four more fragments were successfully placed following the publication of the facsimile edition. Fragment 7 from Codex XII was placed at 59.24–27 and 60.24–26, and fragment 4 was placed at 53.24–25 and 54.24. Two fragments originally conserved with Codex VIII were also placed, the first at 59.22–23 and 60.21–22 and the second at 59.23–25 and 60.22–24. Since the photographs published in the facsimile edition of Codex XII were taken before these four fragments were successfully placed, following appendix one to this paper—my own transcription, reconstruction, and translation of the text—I offer as a second appendix images of fragments 1 and 3 with all of the smaller fragments placed. These images were

¹⁹ Robinson, “From the Cliff to Cairo,” 39–40. See also Robinson’s more recent article on the find story, “The Discovery of the Nag Hammadi Codices,” *Journal of Coptic Studies* 11 (2009) 1–21.

²⁰ Robinson, “From the Cliff to Cairo,” 40. See also *Nag Hammadi Codices XI, XII, XIII*, 290.

²¹ *Nag Hammadi Codices XI, XII, XIII*, 289. See also Doresse, *The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics*, 116–36.

²² *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices: Codices XI, XII, and XIII* (ed. James Robinson; Leiden: Brill, 1973).

taken by the Coptic Museum in Cairo in 1977 and were made available to me courtesy of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity at Claremont College. I have used photo-editing software to create an image of Fragment 3 with all smaller fragments placed.

■ A Note on Method

Comparing largely reconstructed fragments with a nearly complete text brings with it certain methodological challenges. We must acknowledge and appreciate Einar Thomassen's skepticism and consider to what extent such a project is even possible. On the one hand, if one depends entirely on the text of Codex I for reconstructions, one runs the risk of comparing two similar texts, and the reconstructionist serves as little more than a copyist, or in this case, a dialectician. On the other hand, if one deviates from Codex I and offers creative though plausible reconstructions, one runs the risk of collating a text of their own making with an ancient one, a project of little historical benefit. Therefore, I have followed what I call the *principle of minimal difference*. Wherever possible, I have reproduced the text from Codex I in the lacunae of the fragments from Codex XII. Where this is not possible, I have attempted alternative renderings of similar concepts. And finally, in those instances in which the gaps in the fragments will not accommodate the text of Codex I, I have not supplied a reconstruction. The net result is the minimal difference between the two copies of the *Gospel of Truth*. That is to say, the two versions are at least this different, though in reality, they likely diverge even more. A minimal difference approach isolates only those instances of certain deviance between the two tractates, and should quell the fears of scholars, such as Thomassen, who question whether a detailed comparison of the two versions is even possible.

■ General Observations and the Question of Priority

One striking difference that emerges when we compare the reconstructed fragments of Codex XII to the near complete version in Codex I pertains to length. In nearly every variation unit, i.e., in those passages in which the texts diverge, the reading in Codex XII is shorter than the reading in Codex I. Observe the following table of variations between Codex I and Codex XII. Longer readings are underlined.

NHC I,3

30. He granted them to taste him and to
28–31 smell him and to touch the beloved
son.

31. For the material ones were strangers
1–4 and did not see his likeness and had
not known him.

NHC XII,2

53. [He] granted to taste [him and to
21–22 touch] his form.

53.28 He [was] a stranger [to them.]

<p>31. He both destroyed them <u>with</u> 26–28 <u>power and confounded them with</u> <u>knowledge.</u></p>	<p>54.19 He destroyed [them.]</p>
<p>31. He became a way for those who had 28–35 <u>gone astray and knowledge for those</u> <u>who were ignorant</u>, a discovery for those who were searching, and a support for those who were wavering, immaculateness for those who were defiled.²³</p>	<p>54. 20–25 And he set [upright those] who had stumbled. A [road came about] for the lost. [A . . .] came about for the [. . .] Immortality came about [for the] dead.</p>
<p>32. He <u>went</u> and searched for the one 2–3 that was lost.</p>	<p>54.28 [He sought] after the one that was lost.</p>
<p>34. He gives his fragrance to the light 5–9 and in his rest he causes it to surpass every form <u>(and) every sound.</u></p>	<p>57. 2–5 [He gives his fragrance] to the [light and in his] patience [it is exalted over] every [form.]²⁴</p>
<p>34. (Faith) brought the warm pleroma 30–31 <u>of love.</u></p>	<p>57. 18–19 [Faith] came to the [warm] pleroma.</p>
<p>34. This is the word of the gospel of the 34–36 discovery <u>of the pleroma.</u></p>	<p>57. 22–23 This is [the] word [of the gospel of the] discovery.</p>
<p>34.36– . . . for those who await the salvation 35.2 which is coming from on high.</p>	<p>57. 24–26 <u>It is salvation for those [who . . .</u> and who are] awaiting salvation [from above.]</p>
<p>35. Then, <u>at that time</u>, the pleroma 5–7 <u>proceeds</u> to come.</p>	<p>58. 2–3 [Then] the pleroma [comes.]</p>
<p>35. The deficiency <u>of matter</u> did not 8–10 come about through the limitlessness of the Father.</p>	<p>58. 4–7 [The] deficiency [did not] come about [on account of] error. <u>Indeed [it came about on</u> <u>account] of the divinity [of the]</u> <u>limitless [Father.]</u></p>
<p>35. (The Father) <u>is coming</u> to give time 11–12 for the deficiency.</p>	<p>58. 7–8 He gave [time for the deficiency.]</p>

²³ Although either “knowledge” or “discovery” could be the addition here given the lacuna in Codex XII, I have only underlined the former in view of the previous omission of knowledge in line 1 of the same fragment, and in light of the likely mention of discovery in line 23.

²⁴ It is not certain whether “form” or “sound” should be reconstructed here. Either way, one is lacking in XII.

35. 24–26	For this reason incorruptibility <u>breathed forth</u> ; it pursued <u>the one who had</u> sinned	58. 19–20	Because of this, [incorruption pursued] sin.
35. 27–29	Forgiveness is <u>the remainder for the light in the deficiency</u> , the word of the pleroma.	58. 23–24	Forgiveness [is] through [him, the] logos of [the] pleroma.
37. 8–10	The Word, who was <u>first</u> to come forth, was revealed to them.	60. 19–20	The Word, [who had] come, revealed them.
37. 15–18	It happened then, that he was <u>first to come forth</u> when the will of him who willed desired it.	60. 25–27	But he will come about [being] revealed when the will [of the one who wills desires it.]

Table 1. Variations between NHC I,3 and XII,2

Codex I preserves the longer reading in most variation units. Differences between the texts include addition of a helper verb, addition of an item in a series, addition of an explanation, added description, and finally ideologically motivated changes. Though I am chiefly interested in the ideological differences between the two versions, I offer now some observations on the other types of variation in order to answer the question of priority. Have the longer readings found their way into the text of Codex I, or have they been removed from the text of Codex XII? In other words, has Codex I increased in size or has Codex XII become shorter?

One important variation between Codex I and Codex XII may help us determine which version preserves the earlier text. Let us look carefully at the two versions of the parable of the lost sheep. I have underlined the most striking difference between the two.

Codex I

ἐνταῦδε πε πῶς ἐνταῦθ' ἔστιν ἑξήκοντα ἑπτὰ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑξήκοντος
ἄλλου ἀφῆκε τὸν ἕνα πρὸς τὰς ἑξήκοντα

He is the shepherd who left behind the ninety-nine sheep that were not lost. He went and searched for the one that was lost. (31.35–32.3)

Codex XII

πρὸς τὰς ἑξήκοντα τὰς ἑξήκοντα ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑξήκοντος
ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑξήκοντος ἀφῆκε τὸν ἕνα πρὸς τὰς ἑξήκοντα

This is [the shepherd who left behind] the ninety-nine [sheep,] those that were not lost. [He sought] after the one that was lost. (54.25–28)

An ardent interpreter of early Christian writings, the author of the *Gospel of Truth* reflects in this passage upon the parable of the lost sheep in Matt 18:12, which reads as follows in the original Greek and in Sahidic Coptic and English translation:²⁵

Τί ὑμῖν δοκεῖ; ἐάν γένηται τι ἀνθρώπῳ ἑκατὸν πρόβατα καὶ πλανηθῆ
ἔν ἐξ αὐτῶν, οὐχὶ ἀφήσει τὰ ἐνενήκοντα ἐννέα ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη καὶ
πορευθεὶς ζητεῖ τὸ πλανώμενον;²⁶

ΟΥ ΠΕΤΣΔΟΚΕΙ ΗΗΤῆ ΕΩΠΠΕ ΟΥΡΩΠΕ ΕΩΦΑΗΚΩ ΠΑΧ ΠΩΠΕ ΠΕΣΟΟΥ
ΠΤΕΟΥΧΑ ΣΩΡῆ ΕΒΟΛ ΠΖΗΤΟΥ. ΜΗ ΠΙΦΗΑΚΩ ΔΗ ΠΠΕΠΙΣΤΑΙΟΥΓΓΙΣ ΠΕΣΟΟΥ
ΖΙΣῆ ΠΤΟΟΥ ΠΙΦΩΚ ΠΙΩΠΠΠΕ ΠΣΑ ΠΕΤΣΩΡῆ.²⁷

What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays, will he not leave behind the ninety-nine on the mountains and go to find the one that is straying?

Though this comparison brings to light the *Gospel of Truth*'s tendency to allude to rather than quote Scripture, it is significant that both the Greek and the Coptic biblical texts contain the longer reading—the Greek with a participle and a finite verb, and the Coptic with a series of conjunctives.²⁸ In other words, the longer reading in Codex I is a more faithful rendering of the Greek and Coptic text of Matthew.²⁹ Of course, the possibility exists that the shorter reading is original, and that some Christian scribe noted the allusion and harmonized the passage with the biblical text. But if this were the case, one would expect other harmonizations as well, such as a mention of the mountains. Certainly the mountains would prove a more memorable aspect of the biblical text than a verbal auxiliary.

But if we are to believe that the fuller reading in Codex I is primary, then we need to account for Codex XII's verbal omissions in this passage and two others (i.e., 35.5–7 and 35.11–12). Why would someone omit these verbs? The answer is clear enough; what were probably participles in Greek became clunky, rambling sentences in Coptic. At some point after translation, the text of Codex XII, or one

²⁵ The author of the *Gospel of Truth* alludes to many biblical texts. By Jacqueline Williams's count, the most detailed and comprehensive to date, the *Gospel of Truth* makes no fewer than sixty "probable" or "possible" biblical allusions, drawn from thirteen separate books: Genesis, Matthew, John, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 2 Timothy, Hebrews, 1 John, and Revelation. Her count is made all the more impressive when we recognize that it is not a compilation of all allusions set forth by scholars, but a reduction of such a comprehensive list, a distillation down to the surest literary parallels. See Jacqueline A. Williams, *Biblical Interpretation of the Gnostic Gospel of Truth from Nag Hammadi* (Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 79; Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1988) 179–83.

²⁶ *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Nestle-Aland, 28th ed.

²⁷ George Horner, *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Southern Dialect, otherwise called Sahidic and Thebaic* (7 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon, 1911–1924; repr. Osnabrück, Otto Zeller, 1969).

²⁸ The Sahidic also renders the parallel passage in Luke 15:4 in this way, even though the auxiliary participle is lacking in all early witnesses except D.

²⁹ Although the omitted additional verb falls in a lacuna in Codex XII, there is no room for an additional four letters (i.e., ΔΙΓΕΙ) or more (e.g., ΔΙΓΩΚ, ΕΔΙΓΕΙ, or ΕΔΙΓΩΚ) either at the end of line 27 or at the beginning of line 28. The helper verb was almost certainly omitted from Codex XII.

of its ancestors, was made more concise and elegant, and superfluous verbs were excised. The alternative is much less likely. Why would an editor introduce these verbs? Biblical harmonization is a possible, though unlikely, explanation for the shepherd passage, but one searches in vain for an explanation for the other two. Therefore we must conclude that someone “cleaned up” the text of Codex XII or one of its ancestors, and that the fuller readings in Codex I are most likely representative of the earlier text (Figure 1). We can easily imagine that the other abridgements noted above belonged to this tidying effort as well.

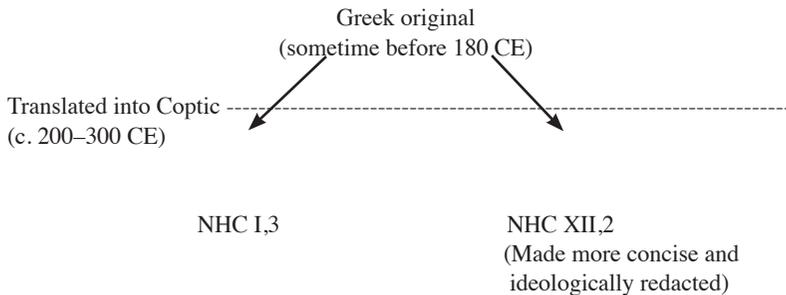


Figure 1. Stemma of the Gospel of Truth in NHC I and XI

The nature of the ideological changes to Codex XII reaffirms the priority of Codex I. As I will demonstrate, teachings associated with the theology of Origen and his followers present in Codex I are consistently missing from Codex XII. The development of late antique ecclesiastical politics and theological polemics make it much more likely that Origenist elements were removed from the *Gospel of Truth* than added to it. As Samuel Rubenson has argued persuasively, Origen’s influence upon Egyptian Christianity was pervasive and relatively unproblematic throughout the third and fourth centuries. Antony, Athanasius, and Evagrius all build upon the teachings of the Alexandrian theologian unapologetically. Only at the end of the fourth century, when Theophilus of Alexandria set his sights on Origen—whom he too initially endorsed!—did a conscious anti-Origenism emerge. Rubenson concludes: “There is no reason to believe that Origen’s influence was growing towards the end of the [fourth] century, but rather it was gradually becoming a problem, and that what Evagrius and his friends struggled for was the preservation, not the introduction, of a heritage ultimately dependent upon the school of Origen.”³⁰ Given this crescendo of anti-Origenism at the end of the

³⁰ Samuel Rubenson, “Origen in the Egyptian Monastic Tradition of the Fourth Century,” in *Origeniana Septima. Origenes in den Auseinandersetzungen des 4. Jahrhunderts* (ed. Wolfgang Bienert and Uwe Kühneweg; Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 137; Leuven: University Press, 1999) 319–37, at 337.

fourth century, the addition of Origenist teachings to the *Gospel of Truth* is much less likely than their removal. Thus, both internal and external evidence supports the general priority of the *Gospel of Truth* as we know it from Codex I.³¹

■ Evidence of an Anti-Origenist Redaction

Now let us examine two instances of ideological divergence between the two versions. In each case, the themes removed from Codex XII belong to the lexicon of Origenist thought. At issue are the accessibility of the divine image and likeness and the origin and uniqueness of the heavenly Word. The fact that Codex XII repeatedly omits Origenist themes suggests that this version of the *Gospel of Truth* was likely stripped systematically of its Origenist elements so that it could no longer lend support to the theology of Origen and his sympathizers.

Passage I: God's Image and Likeness in Humanity

The first indication of controversy arises in a passage about humanity's initial resistance to and eventual reception of the Savior's earthly teaching. Here are the two versions of the passage in synopsis:

Codex I (31.1–4)

For the material ones were strangers and did not see his likeness (εἰμῆ) and had not known him.

Codex XII (53.28)

He [was] a stranger [to them.]

One might initially suspect on account of the broader literary context that these sentences belong to different passages altogether, that they are not truly parallel. Whereas Codex I transitions into a discussion of the incarnation ("For he came by means of a fleshly form.") Codex XII shifts into a discussion of Son's encircling of humanity ("even though He was surrounding [them.]"). Yet it becomes clear that the two passages are parallel when we observe that both versions consist of five similar descriptions of the Savior's incarnation and humanity's initial resistance to his teaching, while also noting that Codex XII reverses the order of the last three descriptions:

³¹ This is not to say that Codex I lacks its own editorial changes. The version appears to include two Trinitarian glosses (24.9–14; 26.34–27.1). See Kendrick Grobel, *The Gospel of Truth: A Valentinian Meditation on the Gospel* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960) 92–95 and 108–9. Yet these changes are brief, occasional, and isolatable. Nothing in the text of Codex I indicates that it underwent a systematic stylistic or ideological redaction.

Codex I (30.34–31.6)

- (1) ...performing his will,
 (2) when many had received the light,
 (3) they turned to him.
 (4) For the material ones were strangers³⁰
 and did not see his likeness
 and had not known him.

Codex XII (53.26–29)

- (1) [...performing] his will
 (2) [then many received the] light.
 (5) He was in the [form of flesh.]
 (4) He [was] a stranger [to them]
 (5) For he came by means of a fleshly form. (3) even though he was surrounding
 [them...]³¹

The reason for the reordering is unclear, though one suspects that the reversal reflects the attempts of two independent translators to render a lengthy chain of Greek participles into Coptic. Nonetheless, it is apparent that we are not dealing with two separate passages, but variations on the same passage; we can understand the “stranger” statements reproduced above as parallel.

Codex I attributes humanity’s initial inability to recognize the Savior to its foreignness, blindness, and ignorance. The cosmological myth recounted earlier in the *Gospel of Truth* provides the background needed to understand how the children of the Father came to be in this condition.³⁴ In their primordial state, the souls of humanity went out in search of the Father and yet ironically ended up drifting further away from him. Their aimless wandering gave rise to anguish and terror and left them vulnerable to the wiles of a malevolent demiurge named Error, who encased them in human bodies and imprisoned them upon the earth. In order to remind humanity of its true identity as his children, the Father sent forth the Savior to reveal the good news of salvation and initiate the final restoration,

³² I agree with those commentators who argue that ϩΥΛΗ in 31.4 should be understood in a collective sense as “material ones.” See, e.g., the comment made by Harry Attridge and Elaine Pagels in *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex): Notes* (ed. Harold Attridge; Nag Hammadi Studies 23; Leiden: Brill, 1985) 87–88.

³³ The Coptic of this sentence (ⲉⲛⲉϩⲕⲧⲁⲉⲓⲧ ⲛⲏⲓⲃⲟⲩⲩ) is admittedly difficult. The question is how to interpret the verb and the following preposition. ⲕⲧⲁⲉⲓⲧ is the qualitative of ⲕⲧⲟ, so one’s first instinct is to translate it as “he was surrounding [them],” but then one would expect ⲉⲣⲟϥ after the verb, not ⲛⲏⲟϥ (Crum 128a). “He returned” may also be possible, but one then expects ⲉⲛⲉϩⲕⲧⲟ ⲛⲏⲟϥ (C128b). It is also possible to retain the qualitative sense of the verb but explore other meanings for the verb and preposition, e.g. “he was turned from them . . .” Given the frequent interchange of ⲉ-, ⲉⲣⲟ = and ⲛ-, ⲛⲏⲟ = as object markers (see C52a and 215a), I find the first option the most persuasive and adopt the translation above.

³⁴ For a discussion of the myth of Error in the *Gospel of Truth*, see Geoffrey S. Smith, “Constructing a Christian Universe: Mythological Exegesis of Ben Sira 24 and John’s Prologue in the *Gospel of Truth*,” in *Jewish and Christian Cosmogony in Late Antiquity* (ed. Lance Jenott and Sarit Kattan Gribetz; Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 155; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013) 64–81.

the *apokatastasis*. Yet as naturalized citizens of a foreign land, human beings were initially unable to recognize their Father's emissary, hence the claim that "The material ones were strangers, and did not see his likeness, and had not known him."

Codex XII simply says that "He was a stranger [to them]."³⁵ One might chalk this shorter reading up to Codex XII's preference for laconic sentences. However, the removal of a theologically-loaded concept such as the "likeness" of God indicates that the editor was not merely concerned with economy of words. Those familiar with the Bible in Coptic translation would have recognized the term $\epsilon\iota\iota\epsilon$ from Gen 1:26, where the first man is created in the divine "image ($\chi\iota\kappa\omega\iota\iota$)" and "likeness ($\epsilon\iota\iota\epsilon = \delta\mu\omega\iota\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$)."³⁶ At stake in this change is whether human beings after the fall continue to bear the image and likeness of God—one of the most hotly debated and divisive issues during the Origenist controversy. When considered within the context of fourth- and fifth-century Egypt, the intentional removal of a reference to humanity's inability to recognize the divine likeness cannot be regarded as merely stylistic.

The roots of the "image and likeness" controversy lie in Origen's own writings. He maintained that God patterned the preexistent rational souls initially after his image; yet as souls rise and fall depending upon their merits, they move closer to or farther away from the divine image.³⁶ God's image is not lost as the souls stray from him; it only dims. Origen also taught that while God lends his image to the rational souls, he withholds his likeness until the eschaton. He finds support for this doctrine in a close reading of the biblical creation account. Origen, like exegetes before him,³⁷ distinguishes God's image from his likeness on the basis of a comparison of Gen 1:26 with 27. He concludes that the omission of "likeness" in v. 27 "points to nothing else but this, that the human received the honor of God's image in its first creation, whereas the perfection of God's likeness was reserved for it at the consummation."³⁸

Macarius and Evagrius developed Origen's doctrine of the image and likeness. Macarius articulated a more rigorous version of Origen's teaching by asserting humanity's total loss of the divine image. He speaks of a "twofold disaster" suffered by Adam when he transgressed in the Garden and lost both the image and likeness

³⁵ The Coptic text as I reconstruct it reads: $[\eta\epsilon]\gamma\zeta\omicron\bar{\eta}\omega\bar{\eta}\eta\omicron\eta\epsilon[\epsilon\rho\omicron\omicron\gamma]$, which literally translates as "He [was] a foreign face [to them]." It is tempting to understand this as a claim not about the Savior's strangeness or foreignness, but about the nature of his physical face. Such a statement could be interpreted within the context of Origenist debates about the nature of the divine body. However, the term $\zeta\omicron$ in the *Gospel of Truth* often carries a broader connotation of "presence" or "manifestation" (see, e.g., 19.31; 24.2, 5; 31.23; 34.4), perhaps a translation of $\pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\sigma\omega\pi\omicron\nu$ in its generalized sense. Therefore, I understand the expression $\zeta\omicron\bar{\eta}\omega\bar{\eta}\eta\omicron$ to mean not "strange face" but "stranger" or "foreigner," the Coptic equivalent of $\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omicron\gamma\epsilon\eta\eta\varsigma$ or a similar term. For related expressions (i.e., $\rho\omega\eta\epsilon\bar{\eta}\omega\bar{\eta}\eta\omicron$ and $\chi\iota\tau\bar{\eta}\omega\bar{\eta}\eta\omicron$) see Crum 565b.

³⁶ Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 305.

³⁷ Irenaeus, *Haer.* V.6; Clement, *Strom.* II.38.5.

³⁸ Origen, *Princ.* III.VI.1. All translations of Origen's *Princ.* come, with occasional modification, from G. W. Butterworth, *Origen: On First Principles* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

of God.³⁹ Evagrius too posits the loss of God's image, though he remains optimistic that by means of asceticism (ἀσκησις) and knowledge (γνώσις) one's mind can return to the divine image and even commune with the members of the Trinity.⁴⁰

Separationist notions of humanity's total loss of God's image provoked critical responses from anti-Origenists like Methodius, Epiphanius, and Jerome, who not only took aim at their contemporaries, but also located the origins of this more recent stripe of Origenist theology in the teachings of Origen himself. Detractors also obscured the distinction between the image and likeness maintained by many Origenists.⁴¹ Thus, Jerome reprimands Origen for teaching that "God's image and likeness in which the human was created were lost, and were no longer in the human after paradise."⁴²

Let us return now to the *Gospel of Truth*. The changes to the passage in Codex XII become theologically significant when understood within the context of Origenist debates concerning the extent to which the divine image and likeness abide in human beings after the fall. The wording of Codex I would have been especially provocative to anti-Origenist readers since it echoes 1 John 3:2, a verse appealed to by Origen and later Origenists in support of the idea that God withholds his likeness until the end of time.⁴³ The author of the *Gospel of Truth* has in mind this same verse, which teaches that when God's children finally receive his full revelation they will "see him as he is (ὁψόμεθα αὐτὸν καθὼς ἐστίν)" and "become like him (ὅμοιοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα)." The children of the Father, according to Codex I, are unable initially to see the Savior's likeness at his incarnation because they remain estranged from him until they receive the light of divine revelation.

Codex XII eliminates all echoes of 1 John 3:2 by removing the references to humanity's blindness and inability to access the divine likeness. The editor also relocates the charge of foreignness from humanity to the Savior, thereby suppressing any allusion to a prior transgression that transformed God's image bearers into a race of foreigners and strangers. The resultant text is a brief and theologically-innocuous claim about the Savior's status as a stranger at his incarnation. What remains of the passage would hardly have attracted Origenists or incensed anti-Origenists. The editor has effectively withdrawn the passage from debates about the image and likeness altogether.

³⁹ Macarius, *Hom.* 12.1.

⁴⁰ See Evagrius, *Keph. Gnost.* 3.28, 32, 69; 5.51, 81; 6.73. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 309–10.

⁴¹ Origen himself was not always explicit about the distinction between the two. See *Princ.* I.II.6, II.X.7, II.XI.3, III.I.13.

⁴² Jerome, *Jo. Hier.* 7. Italics from the passage as quoted by Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 307.

⁴³ Origen, *Princ.* III.VI.1. Epiphanius's *Letter to John of Jerusalem apud Jerome*, *Ep.* 51.7.3. Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 303–4.

Passage 2: The Logos among the Logoi

A second passage suggests that controversy surrounding the origin and status of the divine Logos also occasioned changes to Codex XII.⁴⁴ The editor has reworked the text in order to distinguish the Logos from the other heavenly *logoi* and downplay, if not remove altogether, any reference to his protological emanation from the Father. These changes relate to anxiety about Origen's precosmic spiritual universe more generally.⁴⁵ Here is a synopsis of the passage in question:

⁴⁴ I have detected additional variants in Codex XII that might also betray anti-Origenist concerns. At issue in the first passage (I.35.8–10 // XII.58.4–7) might be the nature of the material world. In Codex I we read that, "The deficiency of matter (ὀυλη) did not come about through the limitlessness of the Father." Codex XII, however, reads "[The] deficiency [did not] come about [on account of] error. Indeed [it came about on account] of the divinity [of the] limitless [Father.]" One could argue that by omitting "matter" Codex XII transforms an allusion to the creation of the material world and the soul's imprisonment in a material body (keeping the myth of Error in the opening of the *Gospel of Truth* in mind)—a view that could have been associated with Origenism—into a banal reference to the onset of "deficiency." Yet there are other differences between the two versions, indicating that contesting the nature of the material world might not have been the editor's only concern. The agent responsible for introducing deficiency appears also to be contested. The passage in Codex XII, however, is too fragmentary to reconstruct with any certainty. My own reconstruction is an attempt at conforming the text of Codex XII as closely as possible to the text of Codex I (see note on method above), but the two passages likely differ more drastically.

One could argue that a critical attitude toward illegitimate claims to knowledge and the redemption of Satan motivated changes made to other passages in Codex XII. The latter became a hot topic during the Origenist controversy, but the textual evidence from Codex XII is not as compelling as one would like it to be. Where Codex I (35.24–26) reads, "For this reason incorruptibility breathed forth; it pursued the one who had sinned in order that he might rest," Codex XII (58.19–20) has only, "Because of this [incorruption pursued] sin." Despite the fact that the passage pertains to sinful humanity, a fourth- or fifth-century reader could have interpreted it as a reference to the Origenist doctrine of the redemption of Satan. The changes made to Codex XII, however, could be read as anticipating and precluding this interpretation. In two additional passages the editor of Codex XII may have cut references to soteriological gnosis in the *Gospel of Truth* (cf. I.31.26–28 and XII.54.19 and I.31.28–35 and XII.54.20–25, where "knowledge" may have been removed from the list of five soteriological manifestations of the Savior). One might relate these changes to the backlash to the "gnostic" Origenist Evagrius following his death in 399 CE or to Shenoute's denunciation of the misguided "dark knowledge" espoused by his apocrypha-reading Origenist opponents. See especially the passages discussed by Lundhaug, "Shenoute's Heresiological Polemics and Its Context(s)," 246–49.

⁴⁵ I have borrowed this expression from Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 18.

Codex I (37.7–18)

While they were still depths of his thought,
the Word, who was first to come forth,
revealed them along with a mind that speaks
the one Word in silent grace.

He was called "thought", since they were in
it before they were revealed. It came about,
then, that he was first to come forth, at the
time when the will of the one who willed
desired it.

Codex XII (60.18–28)

When [they were in the depths of] his
thought, the Word, [who had] come,
revealed them.
...Word who speaks...

...the day that remained...

[He was called] 'thought', since [he]
remained in [it] when he was not yet
[revealed]. But he will come about
[being] revealed when the will [of the
one who wills desires it].

The passage in Codex I appears within the context of a larger section of the *Gospel of Truth* in which the author reflects upon the process of "return" (CTO) as the culmination of the Father's soteriological program.⁴⁶ This particular passage details the protological emanation of the *logoi*, elsewhere called aeons, which are the pre-embodied souls of humanity and the Savior alike. The *logoi* reside in the depths of the Father's thought. When the Father desires to externalize his indwelling thoughts, he sends forth one of the *logoi*, "the Logos who was first to come forth." This *logos* then works with Mind—a faculty of the Father that is not well defined in the text—to reveal the remaining *logoi*. Protology and salvation history often overlap in the *Gospel of Truth*, since what happens in the heavens prior to creation anticipates the present and future reality of the Father's children on earth.⁴⁷ Thus by detailing the primordial emanation of the *logoi*, the author illustrates the Father's ability to execute his divine will from the beginning of time until its end, establishes a precedent for the revelatory work of the Word following his incarnation, and anticipates the final return by depicting the primordial intimacy shared by the Father and his children.

Two aspects of this theology became associated with Origenism in the fourth and fifth centuries: the protological emanation of the Word from the Father and the notion that the Word initially existed as one of the preexisting souls.⁴⁸ Origen himself did not conceive of the Word as an emanation of the Father; he apparently forged his

⁴⁶ *Gos. Truth* 33.33–43.24. See Harold Attridge and Elaine Pagels, *Nag Hammadi Codex I (The Jung Codex): Notes*, 70 and 113.

⁴⁷ Einar Thomassen, *The Spiritual Seed*, 146–65.

⁴⁸ Origenists were not the only Christians criticized for advocating emanation theology in Late Antiquity. The accusation surfaces frequently within the Trinitarian debates of the fourth century. However, the additional discomfort in this passage with the notion that the Word initially existed as one of the preexisting souls, coupled with the anti-Origenism already detected in Codex XII, leads me to conclude that the aversion to emanation theology in this passage is best interpreted as part of a critical response not to, say, Arianism, but to Origenism.

own position in reaction to the theology of some of his Valentinian contemporaries.⁴⁹ Yet, over time, the doctrine came to be associated with Origen. In the first decade of the fourth century, Pamphilus and Eusebius co-authored an *Apology for Origen* in which they sought to defend the teacher from Alexandria against nine charges, the second of which being that he reduced the Son to a Valentinian “emanation” (*prolatio*). That Rufinus translated the *Apology* into Latin in 397 CE indicates that there was still need to defend Origen against this charge nearly a century later.⁵⁰ Despite the fact that Origen and many of his sympathizers rejected the doctrine of emanation,⁵¹ it was clearly regarded as “Origenist” in the fourth century.⁵²

Another feature of this passage that resonates with later Origenism is the idea that the Word was one of the preexistent souls created by God. The Word is the first of the *logoi* to come forth; the others soon follow. While emanation theology may have found its way into the Origenist tradition sometime after Origen’s own lifetime, the Alexandrian theologian did maintain that the Word was originally one of the preexistent rational souls. Using language reminiscent of the *Gospel of Truth*, Origen reports that “in the beginning [God] created what he wished to create, i.e., rational beings.” And since God possessed “in him no cause that could give rise to variety and diversity . . . he created all his creatures equal and alike.”⁵³ Though Origen does not say that the Father created the Word first, he does assert that the Word distinguished himself among the *logika* by resisting the urge to stray from the Father.⁵⁴ He “clung to God from the beginning of the creation and ever after in a union inseparable and indissoluble.”⁵⁵ The Word was not endowed with his privileged position; he earned it on account of his fidelity. This teaching of Origen endured into the fourth century in the theological system of the Origenist Evagrius.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ Rowan Williams, *Arius: Heresy and Tradition* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001) 133–36.

⁵⁰ Dechow does not take into consideration the date of Rufinus’s translation when he suggests that emanationism and other Trinitarian concerns dissipated as anti-Origenist charges by the late fourth century. See *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 250–51.

⁵¹ E.g., Alexander of Alexandria’s epistle to Alexander *apud* Theodoret, *Hist. eccl.* 1.3.

⁵² The charge of emanationism was not a complete polemical fiction, however. In a letter to Eusebius of Nicomedia (*apud* Theodoret, *Hist. eccl.* 1. IV), Arius suggests that Hellanicus of Tripoli—supporter of the Origenist Alexander of Alexandria—conceived of the Son as an “emanation” (προβολή) from the Father.

⁵³ Origen, *Princ.* II.IX.6.

⁵⁴ Origen, *Princ.* I.VIII.3; *Comm. Jo.* 1.32.

⁵⁵ Origen, *Princ.* II.VI.3

⁵⁶ Evagrius, *Keph. Gnost.* 5:67, 69. See Kevin Corrigan, *Evagrius and Gregory: Mind, Soul and Body in the 4th Century* (Ashgate Studies in Philosophy and Theology in Late Antiquity; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009) 131.

Origen's economy of heavenly *logika* provoked criticism from opponents because it left dangerously thin the veil between Christ and humanity.⁵⁷ Theophilus of Alexandria contests Origenist theories of the mechanics of the incarnation rooted in interpretations of the Christ hymn in Philippians 2. At issue is the uniqueness of Christ. He accuses Origen of maintaining that when Paul says, "He, being in very nature God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself taking on the form of a servant" (Phil 2:6-7), he refers to the Savior's divine soul divesting itself of divinity before descending into a human body.⁵⁸ Yet, Theophilus retorts, if "our souls and the Savior's were of one substance," then Origen "assimilates the Savior to our own condition" and fails to distinguish the Savior's incarnation from our own embodiment.⁵⁹

The precosmic spiritual universe of Origen and his sympathizers received unambiguous condemnation at the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553 CE. Especially pertinent are anathemas 6 and 13, in which those who believe that "one mind out of the whole supposed head of rational beings remained immovable from the divine love and contemplation" or that "Christ will have not a single difference at all from even one of the rational beings, not in substance, nor knowledge, nor power over all things or activity, but all will be on the right hand of God as their Christ is, just as in their fabled preexistence," are anathematized.⁶⁰

The editor of this passage in Codex XII demonstrates a keen awareness of the controversial nature of Origenist logos theology by eliminating these elements from the text. By means of a series of strategic changes, including simplifying "come forth" (εἰ ἐβρολ; ἐξέρχασθαι) to "come" (εἰ; ἔρχασθαι), removing both references to the logos as "first" (ἄρτι) among the *logoi* to emerge, and shifting to the future tense at the end of the passage, the redactor transforms a discussion of primordial emanation first of the Word and then the other *logoi* into an account of the revelatory work of the Word, past and future. The Word does not emanate from the Father; he arrives on scene from some undisclosed locale to assist in the revelation of the *logoi*, only to remain in the divine thought until his own revelation, which will take place sometime in the future at the instigation of the Father.⁶¹ Thus, the modified passage still operates within the broader context of this section of the text—humanity's return to the Father—but it does so without recourse to emanation theology or placing the Word on an equal plane with the souls of humanity prior to creation.

⁵⁷ Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 443.

⁵⁸ Theophilus, *Paschal Letter of 402*, 14.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Translation from Dechow, *Dogma and Mysticism in Early Christianity*, 456 and 458.

⁶¹ For a discussion of similar Christologies in Valentinian and other early Christian sources, see Geoffrey Smith, "Irenaeus, the Will of God, and Anti-Valentinian Polemics: A Closer Look at *Against the Heresies* I.12.1," in *Beyond the Gnostic Gospels: Studies Building on the Work of Elaine Pagels* (ed. Eduard Iricinschi et al.; STAC 82; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013) 93–147, at 100–9 and 115–17.

■ The Redaction of Apocryphal Literature

That the text of the *Gospel of Truth* changed over time will come as little surprise to scholars familiar with the transmission histories of texts from Nag Hammadi and related finds. Evidence of textual fluidity abounds in each instance in which multiple copies of a single treatise survive. Instability within the textual tradition of the *Gospel of Truth* and other Nag Hammadi and related texts can be understood within a broader pattern of textual fluidity in the transmission of non-canonical literature. It is widely known that non-canonical texts were transmitted more freely than canonical texts.⁶² But what does the free transmission of non-scriptural writings reveal about their status among those who read and changed them? The question is too broad to answer for all non-canonical writings—a diverse assortment of texts composed and redacted each for their own reasons—but it is worth considering with respect to the *Gospel of Truth*. What does the removal of Origenist themes reveal about the status of the *Gospel of Truth* in the opinion of its editor?

To some, the changes might indicate that the redactor did not have much respect for the text. On a certain level, the redaction of a text implies that an editor considers a text's ideas inadequate and its integrity violable. Yet when considering the instability of the text of the *Gospel of Truth*, we must keep in mind its genre. When held to the standard of the relative stability of the textual tradition of the New Testament, the *Gospel of Truth* comes across as a fluid text. But there is no reason to think that the *Gospel of Truth* was either composed or regarded as scripture by early Christians. Although Irenaeus does accuse some Valentinians of having a “Gospel of Truth (*Veritatis Evangelium*)” as a fifth gospel in addition to the canonical four,⁶³ we must resist the urge to identify uncritically this text with the *Gospel of Truth* known from Nag Hammadi, an untitled treatise given its title by modern editors. And even if Irenaeus were referring to something like the *Gospel of Truth* as we know it, there is reason to suspect that heresiological interests have colored his report, since no Valentinian author quotes from or even alludes to the *Gospel of Truth*, a surprising omission if it numbered among the community's canonical gospels. What we do find in Valentinian texts—including the *Gospel of Truth*—are numerous references to the canonical gospels, the same gospels revered as Scripture by Christians like Irenaeus. As Elaine Pagels and Lance Jenott have recently put it, texts like the *Gospel of Truth* were intended to “supplement” rather than “supplant” the writings of the New Testament.⁶⁴ Therefore, the analogy between the texts of the *Gospel of Truth* and New Testament writings is not very helpful.

⁶² For a discussion of this phenomenon, see François Bovon, “The Synoptic Gospels and the Noncanonical Acts of the Apostles,” *HTR* 81 (1988) 19–36.

⁶³ Irenaeus, *Haer.* III.11.9.

⁶⁴ Lance Jenott and Elaine Pagels, “Antony's Letters and Nag Hammadi Codex I: Sources of Religious Conflict in Fourth-Century Egypt,” *J ECS* 18 (2010) 557–89, at 559.

As a deeply exegetical exposition of God's program of salvation from beginning to end, the *Gospel of Truth* actually has less in common with New Testament writings than it does with Origen's *De principiis*, a treatise that was incidentally also stripped of much of its "Origenist" theology near the end of the fourth century. Thus, Rufinus's own explanation for his heavy-handed "translation" of Origen might give us a better sense of the considerations that may have motivated the editor of the *Gospel of Truth* to make the changes he did.

Rufinus recognized the value of Origen's *De principiis* as a masterpiece of biblical exposition, and after many requests from Latin speaking Christians eager to read the work firsthand, he decided to translate it. Yet his task involved more than mere translation. In his translator's preface, Rufinus openly admits that he has modified *De principiis*, introducing his own conjectural emendations by omitting, altering, and clarifying portions of the text.⁶⁵ He felt free to modify *De principiis* in part because he believed that heretics had introduced their own readings into the work: "Origen's books . . . have been corrupted in many places by heretics and evilly disposed persons."⁶⁶ The corrupt state of Origen's text requires the efforts not of a "mere translator," but of a "father of words" who knows Origen's teachings so well that he can detect heretical adulterations and bring the text back into conformity with the Alexandrian theologian's original thought. To adapt the words of one New Testament scholar, Rufinus changed the text of *De principiis* in order to make Origen "say" what he already knew him to "mean."⁶⁷ Admiration of Origen inspired Rufinus to create a version of *De principiis* immune to the charges of heresy of his day.

The editor of the *Gospel of Truth* likewise may have seen himself as a "father of words," charged with the task of purifying the text of "heretical" interpolations. The changes made by this "father of words" strongly suggest that he preferred to strip the *Gospel of Truth* of its "Origenist" teachings and keep the text around rather than see a beloved homily on the gospel swept away by the surging tide of anti-Origenism. Despite his best efforts, however, the edited version of the *Gospel of Truth* was largely destroyed—though not by fourth- and fifth-century anti-Origenists who targeted apocryphal writings, but, if Robinson's find story is to be believed, by the mother of an Egyptian peasant who, on one evening in 1945, decided to stoke her fire with a few scraps of papyrus from Codex XII.

⁶⁵ Rufinus makes similar claims about the state of Origen's text in the epilogue to his translation of Pamphilus's *Apology for Origen*, also known as *Concerning the Adulteration of the Works of Origen*.

⁶⁶ Origen, *Princ.* preface.3.

⁶⁷ Bart Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* (2nd ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) 322.

■ Appendix I: Transcription, Reconstruction, and Translation of the Fragments from Codex XII

Fragment 1 against the fibers (53.19–29) = NHC I,3 30.27–31.1

.....

- [5-7] . . . [15-17]
- 20 [αγω] ηετσωτῆ ερω[α 9–11] [and] those who hear [him...]
 [αα]† ηαγ ῆ††πε [ἦμοα ἠῆ ῆπσωα] [he] granted them to taste [him and to]
 [ῆπσ]μοτ ῆταα πω[ἠρε ῆμεριτ] [touch] his form. The [beloved son]
 [ααο]γωῆη ηαγ εβωλ [εαταμοα] appeared to them, [teaching them]
 [επει]ωτ π'ατωααε [ἦμοα ε] [about the] father, the unspeakable one.
- 25 [ααηα]ε ῆπεαηεεγε η[αητοα ε] [When he had breathed] his thought into
 [αειρ]ε ῆπεαοαω[α ααα αε] [them, performing] his will, [then many]
 [αῆπποα]οειη ηεα[[π]αῆπσ[μοτ ῆσα] [received the] light. He was in the [form]
 [ρε ηε]γρο ῆωῆμο ηε [εροα] [of flesh.] He [was] a stranger [to them]
 [4-5] ^{vac} εηεααετῆη[οα] [] even though He was surrounding
 [them.]

Fragment 1 with the fibers (54.19–28) = NHC I,3 31.25–32.2

.....

- [ἠρε εταλ]ῆλοητ ααπορ[αα] ensnaring [bonds.] He destroyed [them]
- 20 [.....]ἠρε ααοα[ε ε] [] new. And he set [upright]
 [ααῆ δε ῆηαε]ῆταααααε ο[α] [those] who had stumbled.
 [ηοειτ ααωη]ε ῆηαεῆ εταο[ῆ] A [road came about] for the lost.
 [οα ααω]ηε ῆηαεῆ ετ[...] [A ...] came about for the [...]
 [..... οα]ῆῆταηοα ααω[ηε] Immortality came about
- 25 [ῆηαεῆ ετη]οαητ παεῆ η[ε πω] [for the] dead. This is [the]
 [ωσ ῆταααω ῆα]ῆῆῆταεο[αα] [shepherd who left] behind the 99

[ΠΕΣΟΟΥ] ΗΔΕΙ ΕΤΕΠΠΟΥΣΩ[ΡΗ] [sheep,] those that were not lost.
 [ΔΥΩΙΝΕ ΠΙC]Δ ΠΑΙ ΠΓΔΥΩΡΗ[] [He sought] after the one that was lost.

Fragment 2 against the fibers (57.1–29) = NHC I,3 34.4–35

[ΠΗΟΥ ΕΒΟΛ] ΖΗ ΗΔ Η[ΙΗ ΕΔΩΛΗ] [it] in every place, [if it]
 [ΤΩΖ ΜΠ ΤΖΥΛΗ] ΤΗΠC Π[ΕΥCΤ] [mixes with] all [matter, he]
 [ΗΟΥΥΕ CΤ] ΠΗΟΥ ΕΠΡ[ΥΟΕΙΗ] [gives his fragrance] to the [light]
 [ΔΥΩ ΖΗ ΤΕCΗΠ]ΤΖΑΡΩΖΗΤ [ΥΧΟCΕ] [and in his] patience [it is exalted]
 5 [ΕΧΠ CΗΟΤ Η]Η ΠΗΔΔΧ[Ε ΓΑΡ] [over] every [form. For] the ear
 [ΔΗ ΠΕ ΠΕΤΩΩ]ΑΠ ΔΔΔ Π[ΕΠΠΔ] [is not the one that] smells, but the [breath]
 [ΠΕΤΩΩΛΠ ΕΡΟ]Υ ΠΠΡΗΤΕ ΕΠ[ΕΠΠΔ] [smells] as the [breath draws]
 [CΩΚ ΕΒΟΛ Π]ΠCΤΗΟΥΥΕ [ΕΡΟΥ] the fragrance [to itself.]
 [ΔΥΩ ΠΕΙΩΤ ΠΕ]ΤΓΠΓΟΗ ΗΔ[Υ.] [And the father] gives rest to [it.]
 10 [..... Π]ΗΟΥ ΕΧΩΥ [.....] ...it, upon it...
 [.....ΕΒΟΛ] ΖΗ ΠCΤΗΟΥΥΕ Π] ...[from] the [first] fragrance,
 [ΩΡΠ ΕΤΑΡΩ Ο]ΥΕΒΟΛ ΖΗ Η[CΤ] [which becomes cold.] One of the
 [ΗΟΥΥΕ ΠΕ ΟΥ]ΥΓΥΧΙΚΟΗ Π[ΠΔ] [fragrances is a] psychic [form...]
 [CΗΔ.....], ΕΡΕΠΗΕ[ΡΙC] ...the division
 15 [ΠΟC.....Ζ]ΠΠΔ Η[ΙΗ.....] ...in every place...
 [.....Ε]ΤΒΕ [ΠΕΙ ΔΥΕΙ] ... On account of [this]
 [ΠΙ ΠΗΔΖΤΕ ΔΥΩΛ] ΕΒΟΛ Π[ΠΠΕ] [faith came. It] destroyed [the]
 [ΡΙCΗΟC ΔΥΩ ΔΥΕ]Ι ΕΠCΩ[Κ ΕΒΟΛ] [division and it] came to the [warm]
 pleroma
 [ΕΤΖΗΗ ΧΕ]Κ[ΔΔC Π]ΗΕCΥΩ[ΠΠΕ] [so that] the cold might not exist [to]
 20 [ΕΥCΩΤ] ΕΕΙ Η[ΔΥ Π]Δ ΠΔΡΩ [ΔΥ] [return and] come to it. [And]
 [Ω CΗΔ]ΒΩΛ Ζ[Π Π]ΤΩΤ Π[ΖΗΤ ΕΤ] [it will] release agreement of [perfect]
 [ΧΗΚ] ΠΔΙ Η[Ε Π]ΩΛ[ΧΕ ΠΠΩΠΗΟΥΥΕ] [mind.] This is [the] word [of the gospel]

	[πῖσι]ἡ εἰρη[ἀγ]τᾶ φ[εοε]ωπῖν	[of the] discovery which was preached.
	[οὐ πο]ύχα εἰ π[ε]πῖνα εἰ εἰτ...	It is salvation for those [who...]
25	[...] εἰροο[. εγ]κοητ[ε]ρολ θη	... [who are] awaiting salvation [from]
	[τῶ πῶ]ύχα εἰ εἰτ[ε]ογ. [...]	[above,] which they...
	[...ογ]ηθ[ε] π[α]εἰ εἰτ[ε]χ[...]	revealed. This, which ...
	[...] εγκοητ[ε]ρολ[...]	...awaiting from...
	^{vac} :χω[]	...

Fragment 2 with the fibers (58.1–29) = NHC I,3 35.5–35

	[πῖ πο]ύοειν παῖ [εἰτε] μῖ θάιβ	[Is] this not [the] light that [has no]
	[εἰ πῖ]ρητ[ε] χῖπῖν[ον] εψχε φαυ	[shadow? Then] the pleroma
	[εἰ πῖ]ι πιπληρω[να· ἀγω]	[comes. And]
	[πῖπε]ψτα φωπε [εἰρολ εἰτην]	[the] deficiency [did not] come about [on]
5	[τῶ πῖ]πλλην[ε] ἀγω δ[ε] φωπε εἰτην	[account of] error. Indeed [it came about on]
	[ητῶ] πῖρῖπῖρητ[ε] πῖπεωτ[ε] πῖ	[account] of the divinity [of the] limitless
	[ἀτ]φῖτ[ε] δ[ε] πῖο[ύ]οειω πῖπῖφτα	[Father.] He gave [time for the deficiency]
	[κα]ίτοι ηεφωοη [πῖι ηῖλλαυ]	and yet [no one] came
	[εἰτ]ἡδφταγ[ο] πῖπῖρητ[ε] πῖεἰ πῖπῖ	[who] would be able to proclaim (that) in
10	[ἀτ]χωθῖ ἄλλ[α] ογ[α]φῖ πῖπῖ	this [way comes the] undefiled [one.] But
	[βα]θος πῖπεωτ[ε]...	[the] depth of the father is [multiplied...]
	[]ε ρολωε ρατ[τοοτ]	
	[]φωπε· ε[]	
	[]ηετ εἰτε.[]	
15	[]πῖτε πῖ.[]	
	[]πῖι[ηε]	

	[] ΟΥΗ ΠΕΓΓΙΤΟ ΕΒΟΛ ΓΑΡ ΣΕ]	[For] the [turning back]
	[ΜΟ]ΥΤΕ ΕΡΟ[Ι ΧΕ ΟΥΜΕΤΑΝΟΙΑ]	[is] called [“repentance.”]
	ΕΤΒΕ ΠΑΪ Δ[ΔΦΘΑΡΣΙΑ ΠΩΤ ΠΙΣΑ]	Because of this, [incorruption pursued]
20	ΠΗΘΕ[[Δ]]ΖΙ[ΗΔ] ΧΕΚ[ΔΔΣ ΕΙΕΦΩ]	sin in order that a physician [might]
	[ΠΕ] ΠΙ ΟΥ[ΤΑΔ]ΣΟ· Π. []	[arrive.]
	[] Π·[...] ΦΩΠΕ[...]	
	[ΠΚΩ] ΕΒΟΛ [ΠΕ] ΖΙΤΟΦ[ΤΩ ΠΠΛΟ]	Forgiveness [is] through [him, the] logos
	[Γ]ΟΣ ΗΤΕ [Π] ΠΑΗ[ΡΩΗΔ ΠΑΪ]	of [the] pleroma. For [this one,]
25	[ΓΔ]Ρ ΕΨΑΙ[Π]ΩΤ ΕΠ[ΗΔ ΕΤΕ ΟΥΠ]	he runs to the [place that has]
	[Π]ΩΦΠΕ [ΠΗ]ΔΥ Ε[ΒΟΛ ΧΕ ...]	sickness, because...
	[ΠΤ]ΟΟΤΩ Η[...] ΛΙ. []	from him...
	[Π]ΩΤΑ· ΕΒΟΛ ΧΕ Π[ΕΤΡΩΤΑ]	[the] deficiency, because the [deficient one]
	[Ι]† ΠΤΟΟΤΩ ΤΑΪ Τ[Ε ΘΕ ...]	gives through him. This [is the way ...]

Fragment 3 with the fibers (59.18–30) = NHC I,3 36.14–26

.....

	[ΠΑΪ ΖΠ ΤΟΥΗΗΤΕ Δ]ΥΨΑ[ΧΕ Ε]	[because of this, Christ] was spoken about
	[ΠΧΤ ΧΕΚΑΔΣ Σ]ΕΗΔΑΧΙ ΠΟ[ΥΣΤΟ]	[in their midst, so that] those who are
20	[ΠΙ ΗΔ] ΕΤΨΠΡΤΩΡ ΔΥΩ [ΧΕ]	disturbed might receive a [return, and]
	[ΚΑΔΣ ΠΣ]ΕΣΙ ΠΠΤΩΖΩ· Π[ΙΓΩ]	the ointment. [For]
	[ΖΣ ΓΑΡ ΠΕ] ΠΗΔΕ ΠΤΕ ΠΕΙ[ΩΤ]	[the ointment is] the mercy of the Father.
	[ΙΗΑΗ]ΔΕ ΣΕ ΗΔΥ ΔΥΧΙ ΠΠ[ΙΓΩ]	Therefore, [he will] have mercy on them.
	[Σ ΕΤΕ ΠΔΕ] Π Ε ΔΥΧ[ΩΚ ΕΒΟΛ Π]	They received the [ointment,] i.e. they
25	[ΣΚΕΥΟΣ] ΓΑΡ ΕΤΗ[ΗΖ ΧΙ ΠΠ]	became perfect. For full [vessels receive]
	[ΤΩΖΣ ΖΟ]ΤΑΗ ΓΑΡ ΕΙ[ΨΑΗΩΛ Ε]	[ointment.] For if ointment [is]
	[ΒΟΛ ΠΙ] ΠΤΩΖΣ [ΠΟΥΣΚΕΥΟΣ]	[dispersed from a vessel, it]

	[ϰψογϵ]†Γ· ΤΛΟΕΙΣϙ [ΕΤΡΕϰ̄̄̄]	[becomes] empty. The cause [that brought]
	[ΠΟΥΧΡΕ]Δ ΠΒΩΛ Ε[ΒΟΛ ΠΠΠ]	[about the lack] is the dispersion [of]
30	[ΤΩϞϞ] ΤΕ ΨΑϞϞΔ[ΤΑΚΛΥΖΕΠΠ]	[the ointment.] It blows [over...]

Fragment 3 against the fibers (60.17–30) = NHC I,3 37.7–21

.....

	[1–2] ψ [14–16]	
	[1–2] . ΕΠΕΙΔ[Π ΕΥϞ̄̄̄ ΠΒΑΘΟϞ Π]	[...] When [they were in the depths of]
	[Π]ΕϞΜΕΕΥϙ Ε ΠΛΟΓΟ[Ϟ ΠΤΑϞ]	his thought, the Word, [who had] come,
20	[Ε]† ΔϞΟΓΟΗϞΟΥ ΕΒΟΛ [5–7]	revealed them. [...]
	ΠΕ ΠΛΟΓΟϞ ΕΤΨΔ[ΧΕ 6–8]	is the Word who speaks [...]
	[1–2 Π]ΕϞΟΟΥ ΕΤΕΗΕϞϙ[ΕΤ· ΑΥ†]	[...] the day that remained. [He was]
	[ΡΕΠϞ] Χϙ ΜϙΕΥϙ· ΕΠΕ[ΛΗ ΗΕϞ]	[called] 'thought,' since [he]
	[ϙω Π]ϞΗ[ΤϞ] ΕΜΠΔΤϞ[ΟΥΩΗϞ]	[remained] in [it] when he was not yet
25	[ΕΒΟ]Λ· ϞΗΔΨΩΠΕ Δ[Ε ΕϞΟΥ]	[revealed.] But he will come about
	[Ω]Π̄̄̄ ΕΒΟΛ ϞΟΤΔΠ [ΕϞΨΔΗΕΥ]	[being] revealed when the will [of the one]
	[ΔΟΚΕΙ] Π̄̄̄ ΔΙ ΠΟΥΨΩ [ΠΠΕΤϞ]	[who wills desires it.]
	[ΟΥΨΩ]Ε ΠΟΥΨΩ [ΔΕ ΠΕΤΕ ΠΕΙΩΤ]	[But] the will is [that which the father]
	[κω Π]ΠΕϞϞΗΤ ΤΗ[ΡϞ ...]	[has in] his whole heart [...]
30	[4–5]ΙΩΤ ΑΥΩ Π[ΕΤϞΕΥΔΟΚΕΙ]	[...] father and that [which pleases him.]

■ Appendix II: Images of the Fragments from Codex XII

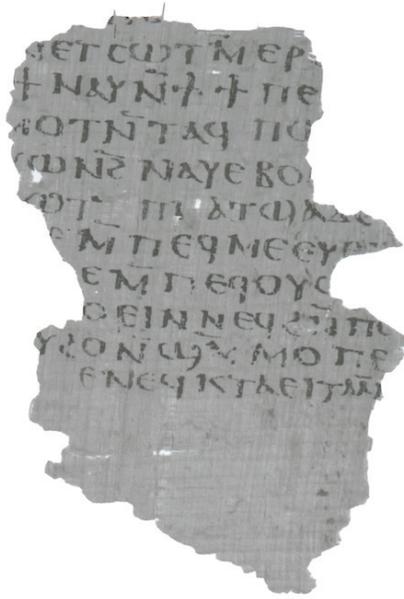


Figure 2

Fragment 1 against the fibers (53.19–29) = NHC I,3 30.27–31.1

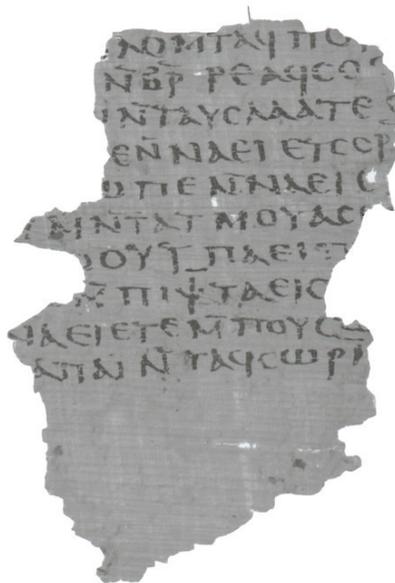


Figure 3

Fragment 1 with the fibers (54.19–28) = NHC I,3 31.25–32.2

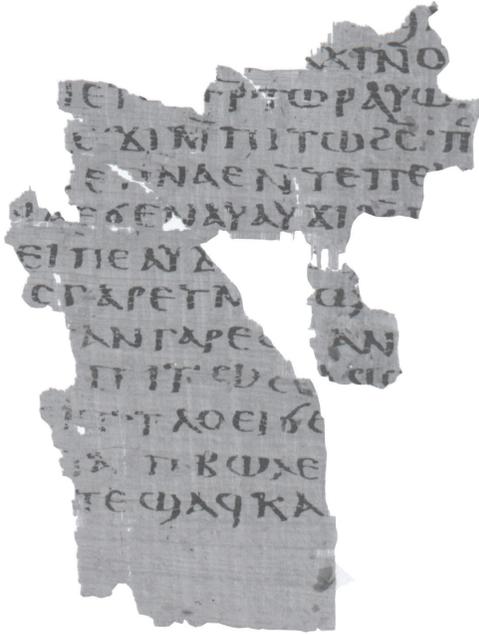


Figure 4

Fragment 3 with the fibers (59.18–30) = NHC I,3 36.14–26



Figure 5

Fragment 3 against the fibers (60.17–30) = NHC I,3 37.7–21