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Going Hungry for a Purpose: On *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 and a Neglected Parallel in Origen

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Abstract

Logion 69.2 of the *Gospel of Thomas* is quite similar to its parallels in Mt. 5.6 and Lk. 6.21a, the beatitude for the hungry, except for one detail: while in the Synoptic Gospels, the second part of the logion is a causal clause, in the *Gospel of Thomas* it is a purpose clause. If this twist of grammar is taken seriously, *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 finds material parallels in a range of early Christian texts that speak of fasting for the benefit of others. There may even be an otherwise neglected connection to a very similar macarism preserved in Origen's *Homilies on Leviticus* (10.2) that is sometimes classified as an Agraphon

Keywords

Gospel of Thomas, Synoptic Gospels, Beatitudes, Fasting, Origen, Agraphon

The relationship between the *Gospel of Thomas* (*Gos. Thom.*) and the Synoptic Gospels has been hotly debated ever since the entire text in its Coptic translation (NHC II,2) was discovered and published. Meanwhile this discussion has reached a very high level of sophistication, but there still seems to be a certain tendency to interpret *Gos. Thom.* not in its own terms, but in close dependence on the Synoptics. The following note on *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 will show how new aspects and connections are opened up if one is ready to take the Coptic version of this logion seriously as a text in its own right.

Gos. Thom. 69.2 and its Synoptic Parallels

The second half of logion 69 of the *Gospel of Thomas*, the macarism for the hungry, has clear parallels in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. In both cases the saying in question belongs to the beatitudes that open Jesus' programmatic sermon—in Matthew the Sermon on the Mount, in

Luke the Sermon on the Plain. These two versions of the Beatitudes—in the same position—tend to be traced back to Q.¹ A synopsis of the three versions looks as follows:

Table 1

Mt. 5.6	Lk. 6.21a	<i>Gos. Thom.</i> 69.2
μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.	μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες ἦν, ὅτι χορτασθήσεσθε.	ϺΜΜΔΚΔΡΙΟC ΝΕΤΖΚΔΕΙΤ ϺΙΝΔ ΕΥΝΔΤCΙΟ ΝΘΖΗ ΜΠΕΤΟΥϺϺ.

The relationship of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 has been understood in quite different ways in the relatively short history of research on this text. Back in 1964, W. Schrage, in his treatment of the logion, briefly envisaged the possibility that, due to the lack of Matthean and Lukan redactional features¹(Matthew's καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην and Luke's ἦν), it might come from Q (Schrage 1964: 149-50). Eventually, however, he decided to understand the logion as a secondary Gnostic reworking of the Matthean version.² Similarly, M. Fioger (1991: 200) understands our logion as a free combination of the two canonical parallels.

This view has not exactly found widespread following; the majority of researchers tend to interpret the lack of both Matthean and Lukan redactional elements, which Schrage also observed, to mean that *Gos.*

1. The scholarly discussion of the variations between Matthew and Luke is documented in Hieke 2001: 218-78. The reconstruction of Q 6.21a (by convention, the chapter and verse numbers of Luke are used to refer to the underlying passage in Q) is mainly achieved by deleting the peculiarities of the Matthean and Lukan versions; in *The Critical Edition of Q* (Robinson, Hoffmann and Kloppenborg 2000: 48-49) the saying runs: μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες ὅτι χορτασθῆσ [[εσθε]].

2. Cf. Schrage 1964: 150: 'Was so aussieht wie die Originalform, ist aber in Wahrheit das Ergebnis eines sekundären Eingriffs, der die für gnostisches Verständnis uninteressanten und konkurrierenden Interpretamente beiseiteschob und sich gemäß der Vorliebe für die 3. Ps. (nur Log 68 bildet eine durch die vorgegebene Tradition veranlaßte Ausnahme) auch hier für die Mt-Form entschied' (similarly Ménard 1975: 171). Schrage spent the rest of his study of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 struggling with the difficulty that the motif of 'filling the belly' (a proprium of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2) hardly coheres with a gnostic/ascetic worldview.

Thom. 69.2 is not dependent on its parallels in either Matthew or Luke; it is a piece of independent tradition.³

This, however, does not automatically mean that *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 is of necessity older or contains older tradition than the synoptic parallels. It should at least be kept in mind that our logion with its pointed message easily lends itself to becoming proverbial, and in this process within what is called ‘secondary orality’, the loss of elements like Luke’s *νῦν* or Matthew’s *καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην* is quite understandable.⁴

In the interpretation of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 there is a tendency to interpret ‘hunger’ metaphorically, usually as spiritual hunger or hunger for knowledge,⁵ and sometimes this is directly referred to a Gnostic framework.⁶ A more ‘down-to-earth’ interpretation seems to be at work in A.D. DeConick’s (2006b: 108) classification of our logion as a ‘contrawisdom rule’ within the fourth speech of *Gos. Thom.*, which spells out who is worthy of Jesus’ teachings. What both of these interpretations have in common, however, is that they apply to *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 the logical structure of the synoptic parallels, i.e. a causal connection: the hungry are declared blessed *because* something positive will happen to them.

The Rendering of ⲱⲓⲛⲁ and its Implications

Causal Clause

The logical connection of the two halves of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 in terms of causality can be observed in most English, French and German translations of this logion. It may suffice to mention the following:

‘Selig (κακάριος [sic]) sind die Hungrigen, denn (ἰνα) man wird den Bauch dessen, der wünscht, sättigen’ (Guillaumont, Puech, Quispel, Till and ‘Abd al Masīh 1959: 41).

3. Cf. Sieber 1965: 35-36; Patterson 1993: 51-52; Zöckler 1999: 42; Nordsieck 2006: 273. It may be mentioned in passing that the peculiar order of the beatitudes in *Gos. Thom.* 68-69 can be interpreted either way; yet the comparatively loose structure of *Gos. Thom.* makes far-reaching conclusions from the order of the logia as we now have them in NHC II problematic. Strictly speaking, observations like those of Nordsieck 2008 (esp. 188) only apply to the extant Coptic text.

4. For *Gos. Thom.* 14 cf. Uro 1993 (esp. 323-24): what Uro suggests for this logion seems even more plausible in the case of the beatitudes. For a cautious assessment of the problem cf. already Tuckett 1988, esp. 157.

5. Cf. Kasser 1961: 94; Lelyveld 1987: 75; Valantasis 1997: 149.

6. Cf. Ménard 1975: 171; Fieger 1991: 200.

‘Blessed are they that hunger, for they shall fill the belly of him who desires’ (Wilson 1960: 80).

‘Heureux (μακάριος) sont ceux qui sont affamés, car (ὅτι) on emplira le ventre de qui veut’ (Ménard 1975: 68).

‘Heureux ceux qui sont affamés, car on emplira le ventre de qui le veut’ (Puech 1978: 22 n. 1).⁷

‘Blessed are the hungry, for the belly of him who desires will be filled’ (Lambdin 1989: 81).

‘Selig sind die Hungrigen, denn man wird den Bauch dessen, der (es) wünscht, füllen’ (Blatz 1990: 109).

‘Selig sind die Hungrigen, denn man wird den Bauch desjenigen, der wünscht, sättigen’ (Fieger 1991: 199).

‘Selig sind die Hungrigen, denn der Bauch dessen, der will, wird gesättigt werden’ (Zöckler 1999: 42).⁸

‘Selig sind die Hungrigen; denn der Leib dessen wird gesättigt werden, der es wünscht’ (Nordsieck 2006: 270).

‘Blessed are those who are hungry, for whosoever desires (it), his belly will be filled’ (DeConick 2006a: 224).

Looking at these translations, one would hardly expect the conjunction $\omega\text{I}\text{N}\Delta$ (ὅτι) in the Coptic saying. Although this conjunction can sometimes introduce a consecutive clause, it usually serves to introduce a purpose clause⁹—just as in Greek.¹⁰ The use of the Future III/optative

7. In the same footnote, Puech comments on this translation: ‘Entendre sans doute: ils empliront leur ventre de ce qu’ils voudront.’

8. Zöckler (1999: 42) acknowledges the rendering as a purpose clause as ‘[e]ine grammatikalisch ebenfalls mögliche Übersetzung’.

9. Cf. Plisch 1999: 27-28, esp. 28 (on $\omega\text{I}\text{N}\Delta$): ‘in der Regel final, gelegentlich konsekutiv gebraucht und wie $\chi\epsilon\kappa\lambda\alpha\varsigma$ mit energetischem Futur bzw. substantivisch transponiertem Instans (“Futur II”) verbunden.’

10. Cf. LSJ s.v.: There are two divisions in this entry: Adverb of place and of circumstance (A), and Final conjunction (B). To be sure, in the latter division one also finds the meaning ‘because’ (B.II.2), but the phrase cited as an example is not entirely clear in this respect, and the sub-entry closes with the remark ‘not found in literature’.

supports the notion of finality (cf. Layton 2004: 267 §339). This problem has not gone unnoticed. Wilson (1960: 80) has suggested that the best solution is ‘to take the words as a rather clumsy attempt to translate “Blessed are the hungry, for they shall be filled.”’ Similarly, for R. Nordsieck (2006: 272) a sensible rendering of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 has to be guided by the synoptic parallels.¹¹

The difference between the conjunction ὅτι in Mt. 5.6 and Lk. 6.21 (Sahidic χε) and ἵνα/ⲛⲓⲛⲁ in *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 is sometimes explained by reference to an underlying construction in a Semitic language.¹² Mostly the multivalent Aramaic conjunction ܐ is alleged to lurk behind the two Greek conjunctions in the Synoptics and *Gos. Thom.*¹³ This solution has been criticized by N. Perrin (2008: 54 with n. 16), who points out that, although the (Western) Aramaic ܐ can denote causality, it hardly introduces a purpose clause. His suggestion is that the—equally or even more multivalent—Syriac conjunction ܐ stands behind the variation between the Synoptics and Thomas (Perrin 2008: 54-55). In view of these learned and sharp-witted considerations, however, it may sometimes be helpful to ask whether these are in fact necessary hypotheses, that is, whether the Coptic (and sometimes Greek) text of *Gos. Thom.* as it stands is in fact so hopelessly unintelligible that one can only make sense of it by introducing an Aramaic/Syriac phrase behind the Coptic.¹⁴

11. Nordsieck 2006: 272: ‘Auch hier ist ein sprachliches Problem, da es zu Beginn des Nachsatzes wörtlich ⲛⲓⲛⲁ (gr. ἵνα) heißt, so dass auch übersetzt werden könnte: “Selig sind die, die Hunger leiden, d a m i t der Leib dessen gesättigt wird, der es wünscht” ... Jedoch ergibt sich daraus kein überzeugend nachvollziehbarer Sinn. Zudem kann das gr. ἵνα, dessen kopt. Lehnwort hier vorliegt, nicht nur final, sondern auch mit “daher” oder “denn” übersetzt werden; dann ergibt sich ein Satzbau, der auch der Par in Mt 5,6 = Lk 6,21 zugrunde liegt ...’

12. A. Guillaumont (1981: 191) has classified the use of ἵνα/ⲛⲓⲛⲁ with causal meaning as a spontaneous Semitism that is inspired by the language of the LXX. It should be observed, however, that ἵνα with causal meaning is not attested in the LXX, cf. Muraoka 2002: 270 s.v.: ἵνα can indicate purpose or result, the interrogative syntagma ἵνα τί can ask for reason or purpose, and ἵνα can introduce an object clause. See also Lust, Eynikel and Hauspie 1992: 214-15 s.v. It may be telling, too, that this sentence is not discussed at all in Böhlig 1984.

13. Cf. Sieber 1965: 36; followed by DeConick 2006a: 224.

14. At this point I may refer to a very detailed study by S. Gathercole on alleged Semitisms in *Gos. Thom.*, which is forthcoming. To put it briefly, Gathercole thoroughly demonstrates that the Coptic text of *Gos. Thom.* is understandable on its own terms, without recourse to a Semitic basis.

Purpose Clause

The recourse to an alleged precursor in a Semitic language largely seems to be motivated by a perceived need to find in *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 roughly the same meaning as its synoptic parallels. In Matthew and Luke, so the reasoning seems to run, the macarism for the hungry comes with the promise of a future reversal, so the same has to apply for *Gos. Thom.* 69.2. This can be the case, but it need not necessarily be so. If the Coptic text of *Gos. Thom.* in this instance is meant to be intelligible in its own terms, without recourse to an original version in a Semitic language, one question has to be asked: does *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 make sense if the second half of the logion—with $\omega\iota\text{N}\Delta$ followed by Future III—is understood as a genuine purpose clause? In fact, there are a number of translations that render it this way:¹⁵

‘Bienheureux ceux qui ont faim: afin qu’on rassasie le ventre de qui le veut!’ (Kasser 1961: 94).

‘Blessed are they that go hungry in order that they may fill the stomach of him who desires (to be filled)’ (Grobel 1962: 373).

‘Blessed are those who are hungry, so that the belly of him who hungers will be filled’ (Davies 1983: 21).

‘Blessed are they who hunger for the belly of the needy to be satisfied’ (Layton 1987: 392).

‘Blessed are they who are hungry, that the stomach of the one in want may be filled’ (Meyer 1990: 146).

‘Selig sind die, die Hunger leiden, damit der Leib dessen gesättigt wird, der (es) wünscht’ (Schröter and Bethge 2001: 176; cf. Plisch 2007: 179).

In this understanding, the hungry are not declared blessed because they may anticipate a later reversal of their fate. In fact, no reason is being given at all why they are declared blessed (just as in the other macarisms in *Gos. Thom.* 68-69). Rather, the purpose of their going hungry is specified: The macarism is addressed to those who radically share the little they have in order to support others who may be even worse off. If

15. S.J. Patterson (1993: 52) points out that the use of the conjunction $\omega\iota\text{N}\Delta$ instead of the synoptic $\delta\tilde{\omega}\tau\iota$ is ‘a noteworthy difference between Thomas and the synoptic versions’. He, too, prefers the rendering as a purpose clause.

this reading is correct, logion 69.2 is one instance where *Gos. Thom.*—far from being concerned with knowledge and spiritual progress only—encourages very concrete and material solidarity with those in need.¹⁶ To be sure, this is not exactly what one is used to, given that *Gos. Thom.* has got a reputation for propagating rather individualistic ethics—if any.¹⁷

However, this rendering of a difficult macarism is in line with what can be observed in Matthew and Luke—if Matthew’s καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην and Luke’s ὠν can be considered redactional.¹⁸ These additions reveal the need of coming to acceptable terms with a very harsh saying that declares the hungry blessed. If such a saying is not meant to become cynical, or is just some sort of ‘cheap comfort’ (as denounced in Jas 2.15-16), it needs to be backed by a strong eschatological hope that envisages a reversal of the fate of the poor in very real terms. This temporal/eschatological perspective would be more clearly spelt out by Luke’s addition of ὠν.¹⁹ Matthew seems to have taken a different road that is often termed a ‘spiritualization’ of the beatitudes: he seems to have added not only καὶ διψῶντες for the sake of balance and comprehensiveness, but also, and more importantly, τὴν δικαιοσύνην, one of

16. Cf. Grobel 1962: 373; Nagel 2004: 247-48; Plisch 2007: 180. In Layton 1987: 392, *Gos. Thom.* 69 comes with the heading: ‘The internally persecuted and the compassionate are blessed’.

17. Popkes 2007: 41-42 n. 7 acknowledges the translation with a purpose clause as grammatically possible (his focus is not so much on the different renderings of ὠν but on the rendering of τειο in the active or passive voice). In order to maintain the view of *Gos. Thom.* as propagating individualistic anthropology and ethics, his objection to the reading with a purpose clause is that it would be in conflict with *Gos. Thom.* 14 where almsgiving is strongly discouraged. Yet in logion 14 almsgiving is part of the classical set of Jewish pious practices (fasting, prayer, almsgiving, see also *Gos. Thom.* 6) and presumably rejected as such. Moreover, the dietary restriction commended in *Gos. Thom.* 69 seems to be fairly more radical than (regular) almsgiving. Maybe one could take up Popkes’s point with regard to the rejection of fasting in *Gos. Thom.* 14. On the whole, however, it seems that one should not expect too much conceptual coherence from a text like *Gos. Thom.*—to mention just another example: *Gos. Thom.* 95 prohibits lending money at interest while in *Gos. Thom.* 109 (the treasure in the field) the commendable protagonist of the parable does exactly this, lending money at interest.

18. In the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this has indeed become the majority view for both instances; for documentation see Hieke 2001: 231-77.

19. In the parlance of the International Q Project, this variation between Matthew and Luke is defined as Variation Unit 6.21³: ‘Luke’s adverb ὠν (*bis*)’. For the scholarly discussion of the matter and evaluations, see Hieke 2001: 267-77, esp. 267-75 for voices in favour of the adverb being Luke’s redactional addition.

his main themes.²⁰ Thus the saying in Matthew does not refer to any concrete lack of food, but rather to an ethical concern. It seems that the phrasing of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 is one more attempt to come to terms with a traditional saying that declares the hungry blessed. Different from Matthew and Luke, however, this is not only achieved by additions that qualify the hungry, but by a clever re-phrasing and by the addition of an explicit object—presumably not identical with those declared blessed.

Social Fasting

The strong social concern—involving even one's own food resources—that becomes apparent in a literal translation of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 is certainly unusual in *Gos. Thom.*,²¹ but it is not without parallels in early Christianity. There is some evidence for a practice that may be called 'social fasting',²² voluntary fasting in order to support others with the resources that have been saved by this self-restriction. In the *Shepherd of Hermas*, it is recommended as a private act of sharing.²³ In his *Apology*, Aristides refers to it as the way poorer members of the community take part in the support of imprisoned fellow-Christians.²⁴ Roughly the same

20. In the parlance of the International Q Project, this variation between Matthew and Luke is defined as Variation Unit 6.21²: 'Matthew's καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην'. For a scholarly discussion of the matter and evaluations, see Hieke 2001: 231-66, esp. 238-63 for voices in favour of the phrase being Matthew's redactional addition.

21. Grobel 1962: 373 mentions *Gos. Thom.* 25 as one more 'crystal clear' expression of social concern.

22. The respective texts are listed by Arbesmann 1969: 486. In what follows, only the earlier texts (second and third centuries) will be mentioned. For an interpretation of *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 in the light of the respective passages in the *Shepherd of Hermas* and Aristides' *Apology*, see also Nagel 2004: 247-48.

23. Hermas, *Sim.* 5.3.7: 'This is how you are to proceed: When you have fulfilled what is prescribed, on the day when you fast you shall taste nothing except bread and water, and by calculating the quantity of the expenditure you would have had on that day for the food you would have consumed, and putting it apart, you shall give it to a widow or an orphan or someone in need; and thus you shall be humble, so that from your humility the one who receives may fill his soul and pray for you to the Lord.'

24. Aristides, *Apol.* 15.7 (P.Lond. 2486, 20-31): 'When they see someone poor die, they put up a generous collection, each one as he is able, and bury him. When they hear that those judged or imprisoned have been sentenced because of the name of Christ, they put up a collection and send them what they need, if possible, and relieve them. If someone is a slave or poor, they fast two or three days, and what they can set apart for themselves, they send to those, and they themselves feel like rejoicing when those have reason to rejoice.' (The text seems to be corrupt here.)

phenomenon—albeit in a more institutionalized form—can be observed in the *Didascalia*,²⁵ but shortly after the respective passage ‘social fasting’ is mentioned as a regular practice, too, when the ‘proceeds’ of the fasting before Easter are claimed for the support of the poor;²⁶ in the corresponding passage in the later Apostolic Constitutions, it is even applied to the regular fasting on Wednesdays and Fridays.²⁷ Thus, *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 is not the only early Christian text that commends the voluntary restriction of one’s own food supply for the benefit of others, there are a number of parallels in the second and third centuries—and later as well (see the references in Arbesmann 1969: 486). Apart from the notoriously opaque ‘fasting the world’ (*Gos. Thom.* 27; cf. Sellew 1994: 52), it is only this particular kind of fasting for a purpose that seems to be acceptable in *Gos. Thom.*²⁸

A Close Relative to Gos. Thom. 69.2

One text on fasting for the benefit of others has not yet been mentioned because it deserves special consideration as a very close but usually neglected parallel to *Gos. Thom.* 69.2, a saying that is preserved in Origen’s *Homilies*

25. *Didasc.* 5.1.3-4: ‘Therefore it is appropriate for all you faithful, from your possessions to support and relieve, through your bishop, those who are becoming martyrs. But if there is someone who has got nothing, let him fast, and what he has gained on that day, let him direct that to the brothers. But if you live in abundant wealth, given your possibilities, it is appropriate that you support them or expend all your property so that you may free them from bonds, for these are worthy of God and sons fulfilling his own will ...’

26. *Didasc.* 5.20.9: ‘Therefore you, too, shall grieve for them (sc. the Jews) on the Sabbath-day of Passover until the third hour of the following night; and then rejoice in the resurrection of Christ and enjoy yourselves in their presence and give up your fasting, and what has been left over during the six days of your fasting offer to the Lord God. But you who have many riches, serve the poor and needy and relieve them carefully, that the profit of your fasting may be accepted.’

27. *Apos. Con.* 5.20.18: ‘After the week of fasting, impose upon yourselves to fast every Wednesday and every Friday, and to provide the surplus of your fasting to the poor.’

28. Cf. Davies 1983: 21: ‘When Thomas does speak in favor of fasting—“Blessed are those who are hungry, so that the belly of him who hungers will be filled” (69b)—he enjoins the sharing of scanty rations rather than self-starvation.’ Trevijano Etcheverria 1984: 301-302, 316 interprets *Gos. Thom.* 104 in the sense that fasting is only an option for those who have recognized themselves sinners and have left the ‘bridal chamber’, that is, for apostate ex-Gnostics. For a less pointed interpretation in a similar direction, see Sellew 1994: 54.

on *Leviticus*.²⁹ Origen has just been discussing the motif of ‘Castrating oneself for the Kingdom of Heaven’, comprehensively understood as self-restraint in many forms. Fasting can be seen as one element of it:

So this, for Christians, is the reason for fasting. But there is also another one that is even more religious, the praise of which is even pronounced by the writings of certain Apostles. For in a certain book we find it said by the Apostles: ‘Blessed is he who also fasts in order that he may feed the poor one.’ This person’s fasting is highly appreciated with God and truly sufficient in dignity. For we imitate the one ‘who laid down his soul for his brothers’. (Origen, *Hom. in Lev.* 10.2)

This macarism comes very close to that in *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 if the second half of our logion is understood as a purpose clause. Certainly, the fact that Origen’s homily is only preserved in Rufinus’s Latin translation and *Gos. Thom.*, for this passage, only in the Coptic translation from Nag Hammadi, makes the comparison of the two sayings quite difficult, but it is nevertheless revealing:

Table 2

Origen, <i>Hom. in Lev.</i> 10.2	<i>Gos. Thom.</i> 69.2
Beatus est	2ΜΜΑΚΑΡΙΟC
qui etiam ieiunat	ΝΕΤΖΚΑΕΙΤ
pro eo, ut	ϠΙΝΑ
alat	ΕΥΝΑΤCΙΟ
pauperem	ΝΘΖΗ ΜΠΕΤΟΥ(Ϡ)

Two major differences between the two sayings are to be noted, both of which show *Gos.²⁹Thom.*’s connection with its synoptic counterpart, the beatitude for the hungry. In *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 the hungry are addressed in the plural, which leads to the ambiguous form ΕΥΝΑΤCΙΟ, that can be understood as a genuine third person plural or as a circumlocution of the passive voice (cf. Layton 2004: 135-37 §175).³⁰ Moreover, *Gos. Thom.* 69.2, just like the Sahidic translation of the synoptic parallels, employs

29. The parallel has already been pointed out, rather in passing, by Stead 1959: 327. Stead’s observation seems to have been forgotten in the following decades, possibly due to the causal understanding of ϠΙΝΑ in *Gos. Thom.* 69.2.

30. This ambiguity is pointed out by Popkes 2007: 41-42 n. 7 as a major difficulty in translating *Gos. Thom.* 69.2. On this issue, see also Nagel 2004: 247. Materially, however, the difference is a minor one compared to the different renderings of ϠΙΝΑ.

the Qualitative of the genuine Coptic verb $\alpha\kappa\omicron$ ($\alpha\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\tau$),³¹ and not the rather technical loanword $(\text{P})\text{NHCTEY}\epsilon$ (cf. *Gos. Thom.* 6; 14; 27; 104). These differences need to be taken into account when the relationship of these two sayings is discussed: G.C. Stead (1959: 327) thought *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 ‘was known to Origen’. If one wished to understand him as postulating a literary relationship in the sense that Origen copied this saying from one version of *Gos. Thom.*, this would be difficult to maintain. But Stead’s phrase—which is in fact only a passing remark—is wisely open enough to allow for other, less direct ways of reception, including a specific re-phrasing by Origen (or Rufinus, for that matter) for the sake of clarification.

Long before *Gos. Thom.* was known, E. von Dobschütz (1894: 84-104) tentatively favoured the provenance of the macarism in Origen from the ‘Kerygma Petri’ (that is only preserved in fragments), but conceded that this is not provable. Now *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 could provide a link between the macarism for the hungry, which apparently Matthew and Luke already had to struggle with, and Origen’s recommendation of fasting for the benefit of others: the macarism for the hungry, it seems, could not only be accommodated or ‘domesticated’ by some kind of spiritualization (as in Matthew), but also by applying it—more and more explicitly—to a deliberate restriction of one’s own diet for a given purpose. Maybe Origen himself supports this connection: he introduces the macarism in a fairly circumstantial way: ‘etiam quorundam Apostolorum litteris praedicatur. Invenimus enim in quodam libello ab Apostolis dictum ...’ His rather detached, if not embarrassed, way of speaking (‘quorundam Apostolorum litteris’, ‘in quodam libello’) could be an indication that Origen considered the source of this macarism as in some way obscure³²—but that does not prevent him from quoting it, apparently with approval. Thus it could possibly be the case, as Stead

31. This verb, from which the adjective $\alpha\eta\kappa\epsilon$ (poor) is derived, denotes not only hunger, but also more generally a lack of resources or poverty, hence involuntary restrictions; cf. Crum 1939: 663 s.v.; Westendorf 1977: 360 s.v.

32. Similarly already Resch 1906: 267 who uses the term ‘apokryph’. This, however, can hardly apply in a technical sense, since Origen explicitly acknowledges the apostolic origin of the saying. It seems that, for Origen, canonicity and apostolicity were not strictly identical—this distinction is also fundamental for the discussion of the apostolic authorship of Revelation by Dionysius of Alexandria (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 7,25). Resch (1906) included the macarism cited by Origen in his collection of Agrapha, although Origen does not introduce it as a saying of Jesus. It may be for that formal reason that the macarism does not appear in the most recent and otherwise quite comprehensive collection of Agrapha (Pesce 2004).

thought (see above), that Origen knew *Gos. Thom.* 69.2, but since a macarism like this is very likely to become proverbial and circulate in Christian lore, there could also be some intermediary, although this does not seem to be strictly required: given that this macarism is cited in the context of a sermon, one should perhaps be ready to grant Origen the preacher some liberty in adapting the texts he quotes for his purposes—particularly if the source of the saying, as seems to be the case here, is a less-known one.

Conclusion

The macarism for the hungry in *Gos. Thom.* 69.2 takes a very subtle twist. It is largely in line with its synoptic parallels, but the phrase $\omega\iota\lambda\alpha\ \epsilon\upsilon\lambda\alpha\tau\iota\omicron\ \bar{\nu}\theta\eta\ \bar{\mu}\pi\epsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\omega$ is best understood as a purpose clause denoting the finality of the (then voluntary) hungering. This strict application of grammar does not make the saying senseless, rather it opens up a range of parallels in early Christian literature where social fasting, i.e. self-restriction in order to provide material support for others, is encouraged. The most striking parallel appears toward the end of Origen's tenth homily on Leviticus, a saying which, despite some lexical and grammatical differences, is structurally very close to *Gos. Thom.* 69.2. The interpretation of this logion offered above thus makes it part of one trajectory in the interpretation of Jesus' macarism for the hungry, which does not lead into 'spiritualization', but into concrete, material support: the hungry will be filled not sometime in the future, but by the support of others who, if need be, may even make a genuine sacrifice for that purpose. They are the ones declared blessed.

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