

strictness of each text, which every contributor was asked to include [18]), since there are various points of focus, such as textual analysis, scribal habits, variants, etc. Elliott's evaluation of the papyri containing the Catholic Epistles stands out from other chapters in terms of approach, in that it examines how the text of the papyri relate to the text established by the *Editio Critica Maior*. In his evaluation of the text of Matthew's Gospel, Wasserman adopts the method of Kyoung Shik Min, which maps the correspondence between the text of the papyri and that of the NA<sup>27</sup>. Here I should say that I found the approach and format of Wasserman's essay to be the most clear of all the essays.

Overall, this book is an important addition to our field and thus is to be recommended to anyone interested in the text of the New Testament, in spite of the apparent apologetic predispositions on the part of the editors. It should be noted that there are numerous typographical errors, which I list here: "Papryi" (p9); "P.Papyrus inv. 2" (47); "διαθήκη-γ'ρ" (73); "δεκαπντε" (92); incorrect chart (97); "7/1" should be 7/12 in chart (98); "Manuscript" (105); "suggests that were" (109 n.2); "edition." (114); P in "P<sup>45</sup>" is without Unicode (115); "ι<ει" (127); "Jesus affirmation" (149); "identity" should be "identical" (164); "Leonidas" should be "Leonides" (187 n.49); Coptic conjunction "AYO" should be "AYW" (243); "collection of come kind" (267); "what he though" (274); last word of *Did.* 3b in Table 15.1 is ὕμᾱς but should be ὕμῶν (286); "κρηθητε.ε'ν" in Matt 7:1 in Table 15.2 (289).

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***The Thunder: Perfect Mind: A New Translation and Introduction.***

Hal Taussig, Jared Calaway, Maia Kotrosits, Celene Lillie, and Justin Lasser. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

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Reviewed by Stéphanie Machabée, McGill University

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This book is a collaborative volume between Visiting Professor of New Testament at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Hal Taussig, and a team of students, who selected *The Thunder: Perfect Mind (Thunder)* from the Nag Hammadi corpus as the major text for their semester work in 2007 (xi). This book is divided into ten chapters and includes the Coptic version of *Thunder*, along with the editors' English translation of the text. This volume is a close literary analysis of *Thunder* and provides reflections on the meanings it has "in relationship to society, gender, violence, and identity through the ways in which it has been written and performed" (viii).

*Thunder* is the second text in codex VI of the corpus of manuscripts discovered at Nag Hammadi in 1945. The voice of *Thunder* uses "I am" statements in a powerful

and paradoxical way, expressing bold and shocking statements, such as “I am the whore and the holy woman / I am the wife and the virgin.” The first chapter of this collaborative volume provides introductory remarks on *Thunder*, including the editors’ strong concern with the text’s intense focus on gender. They feel that the standard G.W. MacRae translation under-translates the gendered dimensions of *Thunder*. They remark that the voice of the text also actively identifies itself as masculine, occasionally adopting the Coptic masculine copula “pe” self-referentially. These editors therefore strive to reflect these Coptic nuances in their English translation.

The second chapter discusses *Thunder*’s literary genre. *Thunder* seems to be an overlap of two major ancient literary traditions: aretalogies and wisdom mythology. While *Thunder* shares many similarities with these genres, simultaneously, it also subverts them. The listener of *Thunder* is presented with images that are often “puzzling, contrasting, and offensive” (18). The third chapter disputes the tendency in scholarship to characterize *Thunder* as “Gnostic.” Applying this suspect category to the text places it in “the kind of oversimplified category that the poem is actively seeking to disintegrate” (28).

The fourth chapter surveys the literary patterns, such as paradox, inversion, and contradiction, which strategically function in *Thunder* in order to subvert and challenge social understandings. The fifth chapter focuses more closely on the involvement of gender within the work. The common tendency of invoking *Thunder* “as a positive imagination of the feminine divine” (42) is acknowledged, but so are the complications in these kinds of readings. The editors apply postmodern gender theory to *Thunder* and view the text’s interest in subverting binary categories of logic as bespeaking “deconstruction rather than ‘empowerment’” (43).

The sixth chapter applies a generalized sociocultural analysis to the text’s language. Its language is situated within the prominent honour-shame and patron-client systems of the ancient Mediterranean world. It is concluded that *Thunder* actively focuses on these systems, along with the category of gender, making these categories “less eternal and more vulnerable to shifts and ambiguities of power, status, and identity” (60). The next chapter discusses the intersection of violence and identity in *Thunder*. The voice of the text is the victim of violence, and therefore “identity itself is a kind of violence” in *Thunder* (62). The dynamics between the “I” and “You” of the text confuse the constituents of existence.

The eighth chapter looks at the poetic quality of *Thunder*. In their translation, the editors make the first attempt to present the Coptic text in poetic format. This is an interesting decision that appears successful, for it highlights well the ample parallelisms and contradictions of *Thunder*. The ninth chapter contemplates the performance of *Thunder* in the ancient world. It discusses the probability of *Thunder* being performed and what kind of performance it may have been. This chapter is

only a preliminary study, but it does bring attention to the tendency in scholarship to treat such texts as solely written material. If *Thunder* was performed, it is fascinating to think what kind of reaction it may have wished to incite in its audience.

The final chapter concludes some of the discussions of the previous chapters and reflects on the role of *Thunder* in today's society. The text's challenge and critique of gender and other social categories can also be applied to modern issues regarding identity. Lastly, there is the Coptic edition of *Thunder* and the editors' own English translation. These are accompanied by extensive annotations that justify some of the editors' unconventional translation decisions and demonstrate knowledge of other existing translations.

This volume represents the first book-length treatment in English of *Thunder*. In summary, it applies various methodologies to the text and approaches it by looking at different issues that affect the ancient meanings of *Thunder* and the potential interpretations for today's world. At times the chapters can be repetitive, where the editors discuss issues that were dealt with in previous chapters, with the insights worded only slightly different. Overall though, this volume brings attention to some issues that have not been dealt with adequately in the scholarship on *Thunder*.

This volume is commendable for not simply treating *Thunder* as a "Gnostic" text, as is often the tendency in scholarship. The editors have done great work in opening the door for the scholarship on the performance of *Thunder*, where much potential lies. The editors make some fascinating observations regarding gender blurring and destabilization due to the presence of both masculine and feminine copulas in the Coptic text, but some of the arguments begin to fall apart when one considers that *Thunder* is likely a Greek to Coptic translation. These observations may not hold up as well with the non-gendered ἐγὼ εἰμι of Greek. The editors have chosen to highlight the gender nuances found in the Coptic that are difficult to translate in English, a decision which may be controversial to other scholars of the field, but it offers a fresh perspective on *Thunder* that paves new possibilities in understanding the intent of such a bizarre, yet fascinating, ancient text.

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***The Salvation of the Flesh in Tertullian of Carthage: Dressing for the Resurrection.***

Carly Daniel-Hughes. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.

ISBN: 9780230117730. Pp. 192.

Reviewed by Jennifer Otto, McGill University

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It is a pleasure to review *The Salvation of the Flesh in Tertullian of Carthage: Dressing for the Resurrection*, the first monograph by Carly Daniel-Hughes,