

“Blessed are the Poor. . .” Concerning the Provenance of Logion 54 in ‘Thomas’

Tjitze Baarda, *Free University of Amsterdam*

I. Introduction

The Gospel of Thomas presents us with the following form of the blessing of the poor (NH II, 42:23b–24): πεξε ιϛ δε εἰμακαριος νε νρηκε δε τωτῃ τε ταῦτερο νᾶπητε (Jesus said: “Blessed are the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven”).¹

In the beginning of the research into the sayings of the Gospel of Thomas, this logion hardly got any attention, because it was usually regarded as a quotation or reminiscence of Luke 6:20: Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί, ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.² The only variation, “of heaven” (*loco* θεοῦ) was easily solved: “Here Thomas combines Luke 6:20. . . with Matthew 5:3. . .” (i.e. Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν).³ Obviously, Matthew was not its source, for ‘Thomas’ not only lacked the addition τῷ πνεύματι, but also read ὑμετέρα instead of αὐτῶν.⁴ Therefore, one usually emphasized its proximity to Luke. The variant “of heaven” was then explained as either a result of a “Mischzitat”, or as a variant arising from the author’s preference.⁵ All these early comments on Th 54 took it for granted that the saying was indebted to either the two “canonical” Gospels or at least one of them. Since τῷ πνεύματι (Matt) was usually interpreted as a redactional addition to a saying of Jesus transmitted in earlier tradition, one preferred the logion’s dependence on Luke which then was influenced by Matthew in one small detail.⁶

However, through the years there came a change into a different direction: ‘Thomas’ was not dependent on the Gospels, but based upon independent tradition. Wilson was one of the first scholars to suggest this; he rejected the view of Grant and Freedman that ‘Thomas’ combined Matthew and Luke, for Matthew deviated from both Luke and ‘Thomas’.⁷ Although he could not wholly exclude the possibility of a dependence on Luke,⁸ he still considers the possibility “that Thomas here preserves the original form.”⁹ This view has recently been

expressed by T. Zöckler in this verdict, "Von Matthäus kann Thomas somit nicht abhängig sein; ebensowenig aber von Lukas, der statt 'Reich der Himmel' in seiner Fassung 'Reich Gottes' überliefert."¹⁰ Zöckler, however, made this rash statement without any further argumentation, since his work departs from the preconceived idea that the Gospel of Thomas in its original form was derived from an independent tradition.¹¹

In view of the dissension on the origin of the saying it seems useful to make a fresh investigation: I will examine both these lines of reasoning applied to Th 54 and try to test the methods applied to defend either the dependence or independence of this saying. In doing so, I do not follow a hidden agenda which predetermines the outcome of such an examination by any preconceived idea. I merely want to avoid making generalizations with respect to the question of dependence or independence: each logion should be methodically scrutinized with respect to its origin.¹²

II. Non-canonical Sources?

1. "Q" or a Source related to "Q"?

Did the author of 'Thomas' quote from an earlier stage of the tradition preserved in Luke 6:20 and Matt 5:3? This was, as we have seen, the chief option of Wilson, although he was not sure, whether this pre-canonical source read τοῦ θεοῦ or τῶν οὐρανῶν. In his commentary on 'Thomas', H. Bloom¹³ gives a somewhat enigmatic indication: "Compare Matthew 5:3 (Q): Luke 6:20 (Q)". Does he suggest that neither of these Gospels was used by 'Thomas', but rather a document that was in some way related to their source: 'Q'? This idea may have come from a rather popular book "Q Thomas Reader,"¹⁴ which offers the following reconstruction of Q: "Blessed are you poor, for yours is the reign of God." This implies that the words τῷ πνεύματι, αὐτῶν, and τῶν οὐρανῶν are Matthaean redactional retouches of 'Q,' so that Luke preserves here the original form of the saying of their common source.

Let us suppose that this 'Q'-reconstruction is correct; then one must assume that in Th 54 for some reason θεοῦ was changed into τῶν οὐρανῶν: if 'Thomas' had copied 'Q' or a text related to 'Q', either 'Q' or this related text had already suffered from an alteration in the

course of textual transmission. Otherwise one must conclude that 'Thomas' was responsible for the variant reading, but if 'Thomas' could alter the text of "Q" or that of a related source, one must consider the possibility that 'Thomas' could as well have changed Luke's text (which was similar to "Q"), if he had Luke before him or merely memorized its text. In conclusion, one theoretically should admit two possibilities: 'Thomas' was dependent either on the assumed source of Luke¹⁵ or on Luke's Gospel.

2. A Jewish-Christian Gospel

Another approach linked 'Thomas' with the Jewish-Christian tradition. In Quispel's list of sources of 'Thomas', logion 54 is connected with the "Gospel of the Nazorees or another Jewish Christian Gospel."¹⁶ Quispel adduces parallels from the *Pseudo-Clementines*, which came, in his view, from a Jewish-Christian source.¹⁷ He had already mentioned the agreement between 'Thomas' and the *Pseudo-Clementines* in earlier studies,¹⁸ referring to *Hom.* 15.10, and *Recogn.* 2.28 (Syriac and Latin). He connected Th 54 with the Jewish Christians called "Ebionites", i.e. "the Poor",¹⁹ implying that this logion is "typically Jewish-Christian".²⁰ In fact, the important variant for Quispel is the reading "kingdom of heaven", instead of "kingdom of God", in a text that is fully in agreement with Luke 6:20.²¹

A fair examination of Quispel's argumentation was made by his pupil Van Amersfoort. He shows a willingness to accept a non-canonical source of Ebionitic provenance, but points out that this cannot be proven. He considers the possibility that the "Clementine" author alluded to a Lukan text influenced by Matthew, but even admitted that this author could have referred to Matthew's text which was corrected after Luke's text.²²

The problem is that the *Pseudo-Clementine* references²³ are mere allusions. In *Recogn.* 1.61, 1–2 (Latin and Syriac)²⁴ Caiaphas says that Jesus blessed *pauperes* (cf. Matt 5:3, Luke 6:20) and promised them earthly gifts, such as the inheritance of the land (cf. Matt 5:5, absent in Luke), food and drink (cf. Matt 5:6, diff. Luke 6:21). In *Recogn.* 2.28.3 (Latin and Syriac) we hear that Jesus blessed *pauperes*, and promised them the "kingdom of heaven"²⁵ (cf. Matt). In *Hom.* 15.10.4, the author refers to Jesus's teaching: *πλὴν ὁ διδάσκαλος ἡμῶν πιστοὺς πένητας ἐμακάρισεν*,²⁶ an allusion in which one cannot rule out

that "faithful poor" is merely a paraphrase of οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι (Matt). The author wants to emphasize the fact that Jesus does not bless just the poor, but the poor that are qualified as "faithful."²⁷ Interestingly enough, this emphasis has been explained by some as a refutation of an Ebionitic explanation of the macarism.²⁸

Even if, as Quispel suggests, the *Clementine* author gave the same interpretation of the saying as was found in 'Thomas', this would not imply that the author of this Gospel derived his form of the saying from the source that was used in the *Pseudo-Clementines*. It is not absolutely certain from which source the author(s) of the *Clementines* drew these quotations; theoretically one cannot exclude the possibility that they may have used Matthew's Gospel.²⁹ But even if one wishes to conjecture a specific Jewish-Christian Gospel which was linked with the Ebionites, "the poor," how do we know that 'Thomas' used this source, let alone whether his interpretation of the saying was the same as in the *Clementines*? The interpretation of 'Thomas' can only be tentatively deduced from its setting in the direct and wider context of this Gospel. Now, poverty in itself has a bad sense in 'Thomas', as in Gnostic literature: it tells us that the one who does not know himself dwells in poverty, is indeed poverty (logion 2, cf. 67). Is this a contradiction with our logion?³⁰ I do not think so. Even for 'Thomas' poverty is the place in which the great wealth has made its home (logion 29): the "poor" are not given up, there is a message of hope for them. We may compare the "Teaching of Silvanus", where Christ is said to have brought up "the poor" (Matt 5:3) from the Abyss and "the mourners" (Matt 5:4) from the underworld.³¹

III. An early harmonized Gospel text as source?

Gärtner³² considers an alternative explanation: "this reading may also be explained as reflecting the texts of Tatian and Marcion." He refers to Von Soden's apparatus on Luke 6:20,³³ where we find among the witnesses that add τῷ πνεύματι T^a (= Arabic Diatessaron), and among the witnesses for τῶν οὐρανῶν again T^a and perhaps Marcion. Let us examine to what extent these two early witnesses can explain the reading in 'Thomas'.

1. Marcion's Gospel text can only be conjectured on the basis of Tertullian's quotation (*Adv. Marc.* 4.14): "Beati mendici,³⁴ quoniam illorum est dei regnum";³⁵ in a second quotation Tertullian replaces

“dei” with “coelorum.”³⁶ T. Zahn³⁷ gave as his reconstruction: μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, a reading also adopted by A. Harnack.³⁸ Zahn, however, considered the possibility that Marcion adopted the reading ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν (in that case Marcion agrees with Th 54, except for his reading αὐτῶν). However, there is reason to adopt τοῦ θεοῦ for Marcion, so that he and ‘Thomas’ differ in two respects.

2. Gärtner’s reference to the Diatessaron was based on Von Soden’s mentioning of its Arabic version in the apparatus of Luke 6:20 (add. τῶν οὐρανῶν, T^a). In fact, the Arabic harmony reads:³⁹

طوبى للمساكين بالروح فملكوت السماء لهم

(“Blessing for the poor in the spirit, for the Kingdom of Heaven <is> for them”). The Syriac text which the Arabic translator had before him was derived from Matt 5:3. However, the possibility exists that this Syriac Vorlage was a revision of the original Syriac Diatessaron. Therefore, it is important to consult Ephraem’s commentary on the Diatessaron. We find the following reconstructions of Ephraem’s text: “Beati pauperes in spiritu suo”⁴⁰ “Blessed are the poor in their spirits”⁴¹ “Beatum sit (or: est) pauperibus in spiritu suo”⁴² These reconstructions were based on the Armenian version of the commentary: երանի իցէ (Ms. B: է ասէ) աղքատաց յոգիս իւրեանց, “Blessing be (Ms. B: “is, he says”) to the poor in their spirits.”⁴³ The newly found Syriac text confirms the correctness of the Armenian version, for it reads:⁴⁴

ܒܠܥܡܐ ܠܡܫܐܕܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ, “Blessing is for the poor in their spirit.” In his comments,⁴⁵ Ephraem emphasizes that the Diatessaron contained the addition of “in their spirit”: “When he said: ‘Blessing to the poor’, he added ‘in their spirit,’ lest it would be extended to all <poor>”. Ephraem’s quotation confirms the correctness of the Arabic Diatessaron for the first part of the blessing. There is, however, ample reason to assume that the second part also preserved the reading of the Diatessaron, for another early witness of the Diatessaron, Aphrahat, presents us with the following text:

ܒܠܥܡܐ ܠܡܫܐܕܝܬܐ ܕܠܗܘܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ . ܡܠܟܘܬܐ ܕܫܡܝܐ ܕܡܫܐܕܝܬܐ

“Blessing is for the poor in their spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.”⁴⁶ The conclusion is that the Diatessaron goes back to the Greek form of the text found in Matthew.

In conclusion, Gärtner's view that Th 54 could perhaps be explained as an echo of the text in Marcion (1) or Tatian (2) is not a valid one. Consequently, the only possibilities that remain are: Th 54 was based either on an independent oral or written source or on the very text of Luke.

IV. Argumentations for an independent source

1. *An argument based on a non-existing Jewish source*

A Dutch scholar, J. Slavenburg, discusses Th 54 with an appeal to the "Scroll of the War," in which he claims to have found the macarism "Blessed are they who for the sake of the Spirit have remained poor."⁴⁷ This ascetic Essene saying was echoed in the word of Jesus in 'Thomas', which in its turn mirrors the view of Jesus also expressed in the canonical Gospels: "Jesus said: 'Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.'" Surprisingly, this latter form of the saying is found *neither* in Matthew *nor* in Luke, *not* even in Thomas.⁴⁸ But what interests us in his argumentation is the occurrence of the blessing of the poor in the Qumran manuscript, which might point to a Jewish origin and even might support the Matthean form of the saying as original. However, there is not such a blessing in the *War Scroll*. It is true that the expression "humble (or: poor) of spirit" is attested there, namely in col. XIV:line 7⁴⁹:

בעניי רוח [...] סם לבב קושי ובתמימי דרך יתמו כול גויי רשעה

"Through the humble of spirit [. . .] the hard heart, and through the perfect of the way the nations of wickedness will be destroyed." The humble (or poor) of spirit do not lack spirit, but they are on the right track of the way of God, the Law. Whatever the importance may be for the phrase "humble of spirit," it is obvious that the *War Scroll* cannot be adduced as an explanation of the reading in 'Thomas'⁵⁰ or as evidence for an independent tradition. Slavenburg's approach is of no avail for the detection of a Jewish-Christian independent source.

2. *The methodological argumentation of John Dominic Crossan*

Crossan's point of departure is that 'Thomas' is independent of the so-called canonical Gospels. He mentions two reasons for that

view, the first one being the question of order, the second one that of content.⁵¹ He adduces for the latter argument Th 54 as a *decisive* proof text. Before he enters into a discussion of “content,” he first gives an earnest warning against wrong reasoning: “Here, unfortunately, as controversy came into the door methodology went out of the window,” and then presents four several steps for a sound methodology:

- 1 Before one can compare a document like ‘Thomas’ with the Gospels, one should first establish what—in the Gospels—is “traditional” and what is “redactional”.
2. If the “traditional” elements are found in ‘Thomas’, one can only say that there is a common tradition in both the Gospels and ‘Thomas’.
3. If ‘Thomas’ betrays a “redactional” element, this might be a strong argument for its dependence on the pertinent Gospel.
4. If “redactional” elements are absent from ‘Thomas’, this could mean two things: (a) ‘Thomas’ is independent, or (b) ‘Thomas’ is dependent, but its author removed the “redactional” elements. In the latter case the burden of proof lies with the one who maintains the dependence of ‘Thomas’.

These methodological steps seem sound enough. But then Crossan quotes a verdict of a scholar who applied these rules to the “synoptic” material in ‘Thomas’: “there is very little evidence, if any, for holding that our Synoptic Gospels were the sources of Thomas’ synoptic sayings. In the great majority of sayings there is no such evidence at all.” With the support of this verdict, Crossan goes on: “One example may again suffice,” and this example is exactly Th 54. Now we are able to see how the sound methodological procedure works in practice. He compares the three versions:

Luke 6:20b: Blessed are <u>you</u> poor,	for <u>yours</u> is the kingdom of God,
Matt 5:3: Blessed are <u>the poor</u> in <u>spirit</u> ,	for <u>theirs</u> is the kingdom of heaven,
Th 54: Blessed are <u>the</u> poor,	for <u>yours</u> is the kingdom of heaven.

First of all, it is clear that ‘Thomas’ lacks a redactional element, namely “in spirit.” However, one might argue that ‘Thomas’ is dependent on

Luke. But this does not work, Crossan says, for then "one would have to argue that 'Thomas'

- (a) took the third person "the poor" from Matthew,
- (b) <took> the second person "yours" from Luke,
- (c) returned to Matthew for the final "Kingdom of Heaven."

In his view, such a procedure would be rather strange: "It might be simpler to suggest that Thomas was mentally unstable."⁵² This last reason makes Crossan conclude that Thomas was independent of the intra-canonical gospels. Fortunately he adds, "this working hypothesis will have to be tested in every single case to be considered." Let us test his decisive proof text.

First of all, his argument under (a) does not work: both Matthew–Luke and Th 54 have what Crossan calls "the third person": μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί. Crossan is misled here by his own translation presented in his workbook "Sayings parallels": Thomas, "Blessed are *the* poor", Luke, "Blessed are *you* poor."⁵³ But what is more important: in his argument (b) he should have followed his own rule and have considered at least the possibility that this might have been a "redactional" element in Luke.⁵⁴ Then the only real difference is "the kingdom of heaven." However, apart from the fact that many textual witnesses in Luke have the same deviation, which demonstrates that the saying of Matthew could easily influence the text of Luke (cf. Appendix), it may have been an independent deliberate change of the Lukan text by the author. In that case, there is no need for Crossan's argument (c). To vary Crossan's words: "One example does not suffice," at least if one would follow Crossan's own sound methodology. For if we follow his procedure we might arrive at the following possibilities:

- 1. 'Thomas' knew the common text of Luke, but offered one deviation.
 - 1a. 'Thomas' knew this variant through a different version of the saying.
 - 1b. 'Thomas' knew the text of Luke, but made a redactional change.
 - 1c. 'Thomas' knew – by memory – both Luke and Matthew ("Mischzitat")
- 2. 'Thomas' knew an independent tradition with a text such as found in Luke, but with one deviation.

So if we earnestly apply Crossan's methodology, we should first consider the first possibility and its three considerations. If one or more of these considerations seem to be valid, there would be no reason to consider the second possibility. Or at least, if one still wants to maintain the existence of an independent tradition, one must bear the burden of proof, namely (to use Crossan's words) "to explain in precise detail" why the first possibility is not maintainable. One cannot take one's refuge to the general verdict which Crossan quoted that "there is very little evidence, if any, for holding that our Synoptic Gospels were the sources of Thomas' synoptic sayings. In the great majority of sayings there is no such evidence at all," for it is an essential part of his methodology that "this working hypothesis will have to be tested in every single case to be considered." Since I agree with this latter view, I will make an attempt to apply such an examination in the following paragraphs.

V. The first possibility: 'Thomas' knew Luke's text

1. *A preliminary question.*

The first possibility is described as follows: 'Thomas' knew the common text of Luke, but offered his text with *one* deviation. This implies that we have already discarded the possibility that 'Thomas' was dependent on Matthew. Matthew's text did not suffer from synoptic harmonizations.⁵⁵ The fact that 'Thomas' (1) does not present the words 'in the spirit' in the blessing and (2) presents 'yours' in the promise, clearly shows that he was not dependent on Matthew; but it remains possible that he was dependent on Luke's text which reads μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί, ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. Now, it turns out that Luke's text suffered harmonizations from Matthew in textual transmission. For example, there are two Lukan manuscripts (903 and 2487)⁵⁶ that offer the complete text of Matthew. In a great number of manuscripts of Luke we find the addition of τῷ πνεύματι;⁵⁷ Matthew's αὐτῶν, although it is found in ms. W only, is present in several versional witnesses. This shows that we have to reckon with the possibility of contamination from the side of Matthew's text (cf. the Appendix).

2. Did 'Thomas' go back to a variant reading in Luke?

So we have to consider the possibility mentioned under IV.2 (1a): 'Thomas' knew this deviation through a different version of the saying. Was there ever a Greek text of this kind in Greek tradition? In fact, we find several cursives with the text μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί, ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν (= Thomas, cf. the Appendix). It is true, that these cursives are all of a late date, but Mss. 157 and 1241 are often linked to the so-called Caesarean text and have some affinities with the Alexandrian text. So one cannot exclude the possibility that they mirror a quite early stage of textual tradition. The fact that Clement quotes the Lukan text in this form: τίς λαλήσει κύριος ὑμῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, "to whom shall the Lord say: 'Yours is the kingdom of heaven'"⁵⁸ might tell us that the reading was perhaps known in Egypt in a rather early time.⁵⁹ All these witnesses betray a tendency to replace τοῦ θεοῦ with τῶν οὐρανῶν.

3. Did 'Thomas' contain a redactional change?

Even if one would not be willing to accept that Th 54 could have been derived from such a deviant Greek form of Luke 6:20, one cannot rule out the possibility mentioned under IV.2 (1b) that 'Thomas' knew the Lukan form, but shared this tendency and made a redactional change. 'Thomas' speaks nine times about "the kingdom" as such,⁶⁰ six times of "the kingdom of the Father,"⁶¹ three times of "the kingdom of Heaven,"⁶² but never of "the kingdom of God," as far as we can infer from the Coptic text.⁶³

However, at this point there are some differences between the Coptic text and the Greek fragments, which may raise the question to what extent the Coptic translator faithfully rendered the underlying Greek text. In Logion 3, for example, the Coptic text reads "the kingdom," whereas the Greek fragment (Pap. Ox. 654, l. 15) seems to have had some addition. In the text the incomplete line reads: καὶ ἡ βασ[...]: some have reconstructed βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ,⁶⁴ others βασιλεία τοῦ πατρὸς,⁶⁵ but several have opted here for βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.⁶⁶ One can hardly decide what the correct reading was, but this last reconstruction seems to fit well in the context of the saying, which

reacts to a statement made by some leaders that the kingdom is in heaven and then concludes with the statement that the kingdom of heaven is inside of you and outside of you.⁶⁷

There is another difference between the Coptic and the Greek in logion 27, where the Coptic reads “you will not find the kingdom,” whereas the Greek reads: οὐ μὲν εὑρηται τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. Therefore we cannot wholly exclude the possibility that also in Logion 54 the Greek originally read ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, just as in Luke, whereas the Coptic has “kingdom of heaven.” In that case, there would not have been a redaction on the side of ‘Thomas’, but only of the Coptic translator. However, we cannot be absolutely certain that this was the case. The Greek text might as well have contained the reading ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. If that was the case, we must allow that ‘Thomas’ himself could have made a redactional change in Luke’s text.

4. *Could ‘Thomas’ present a “Mischzitat”?*

Our last possibility was: (1c) ‘Thomas’ knew by memory both Luke and Matthew (“Mischzitat”). As to our first proposition that ‘Thomas’ knew Luke, one cannot theoretically exclude the possibility that this author quoted from an oral tradition that circulated in the second century. This could, of course, have been an independent oral trajectory, but in a saying that became so well-known from the so-called canonical Gospels, one should not be surprised if “secondary oral” tradition⁶⁸ was the source from which he took his logion. Such a secondary oral tradition could already have contained a mixed text of the two “canonical” sayings, but equally possible is that ‘Thomas’ eventually created the mixture.

VI. The second possibility:

‘Thomas’ quoted from an independent source?

The preceding discussion shows that there are several possibilities to explain the mixed quotation in our logion. If one of these possibilities might explain the form of the saying in ‘Thomas’, the burden of proof lies with the person who wants to defend the existence of an independent tradition “to explain in precise detail” (Crossan) why that possibility or any other cannot be maintained. In my view this is an impossible task. Of course we have to consider the other possibility

(mentioned under IV. 2 and suggested by Crossan): 'Thomas' knew an independent tradition with a text such as found in Luke, but with one deviation. To suggest such a view is another thing than prove it. Of course, one may invent such an independent tradition,⁶⁹ but one should follow the sound methodical procedure which Crossan had developed. Then it turns out that his preconceived idea about the existence of such an independent source for our logion is just one explanation among several others that might explain the form of this saying. "One example may . . . suffice," Crossan said, but exactly this one example sufficiently shows that there are alternative explanations for the form of the saying in Th 54.

VII. Conclusion

Our contribution dealt with the question of the provenance of the blessing of the poor in Th 54. Theoretically, one cannot rule out the possibility that this logion of Thomas came from an imaginary independent source. However, the attempts to relate it either to Q or a related source or to a Jewish-Christian source failed. Even, if one applied the sound methodology of Crossan it turns out that the ultimate decision to assume an independent source was prompted by preconceived ideas. In fact, the application of that methodology might lead to a different conclusion: Luke 6:20 could have been the direct or indirect source of the blessing of the poor in Th 54. Of course, much depends on the dating of the Gospel of Thomas. Since I share the view that this Gospel was composed after the middle of the second century, I prefer the dependence of Th 54, either directly or indirectly through second orality, on the text of Luke 6:20, until conclusive evidence to the contrary is provided.

Appendix

The Forms of the Blessing of the Poor in Matthew and Luke⁷⁰

I. *The Forms of the Blessing in Matthew*

Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι,
ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

This text is presented in all editions. The only variant in Greek: D – τῷ. (D^c add.)

The versions agree with the Greek text. VL-Vg: “Beati pauperes spiritu, quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum”; Sy^{s.c} Diatessaron: “Blessed are the poor in their spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”; Sy^{p.h.}: “Blessed are the poor in (the) spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”; Sah.-Boh.: “Blessed are the poor in the spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”; Mt: Sy^{pal}: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Ms. C – for); Arm.: “Blessing <is> for the poor in the spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”; Geo: “Blessed <are> the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

II. *The Original Form of the Blessing in Luke*

Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί,

ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

π⁷⁵ Ν* B D E K L M R U V Y G D L P Ψ Ω 047 0139 2 5 6 7 21 22
28 60 66 83 123 158 161* 229 230 262 267 343 349 372 399 443
461 472 475 478 480 565 577 669 700 726 827 892 1010 1012
1077 1079 1080 1187 1192 1194 1195 1203 1210 1215 1220 1223
1229 1242 1247 1295 1313 1319 1338 1347 1351 1352 1355 1365
1392 1443 1452 1510 1630 1685 1691 2096 2322 2399 2766 Lect.
32 48 69 80 150 184 292 333 513 852 853 859 867 991 995 1084
1231 1599 1642 1750 1761.

The following versions agree with the Greek text: VL aur b l q, Vg: “Beati pauperes quia vestrum est regnum dei” (Vg Ms.E-P: -est); VL d: “Beati pauperes quoniam vestrum est regnum dei”; VL e: “Beati egeni quia vestrum est regnum dei”; Sy^p, cf. Sy^h: “Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God”; Boh (mss., Ed.): “Blessed are you, the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”

III. *Deviant Forms of the Blessing in Luke influenced by Matthew*

1. Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι,

ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ

Ν² Q S X^c Θ (– οἱ / ἡμετέρα) 028 0211 1 7 13 16 33 71 115 124 131
161c 174 185 213 267 346 348 477 543 579 659 713 716 788 826
827 828 945 983 990 1005 1009 1071 1082 1216 1223 1391 1402
1458 1542 (ἡμετέρα) 1579 1582 1604 1606 1657 2191 2372 2542
2613 2643 Lect. 76 524 547 950.

The following versions share this variant: VL a r¹: "Beati pauperes spiritu quoniam vestrum est regnum dei"; Arm.: "Blessing <is> for the poor in the spirit, for yours is the kingdom of God"; Geo (Ad., Tb.): "Blessed are you poor of spirit, for yours is the kingdom of God"; Boh. 3 mss., 1 ms^{mg}: "Blessed are you, poor in the spirit, for yours is the kingdom of God"; Wessex: "Blessed are you, the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of God is yours."

2. Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί,

ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

157 179 489 1200 1219 1241 1342 1424c 1582* 1654 2487 2757
Lect. 12 70 253 299 854 1519 1634.

This variant is shared by Boh. (2 mss.): "Blessed are you, the poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven," and by 'Thomas', Logion 54.

3. Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι,

ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

X* 69 118 205 209 349 517 544 954 1375 1555 1675 2757 Lect.
10 56 211 890 1016 1056 1127 1424* 1627 1663.

This variant is found in the following versions: VL c. f, Vg D: "Beati pauperes spiritu quia vestrum est regnum caelorum" (Vg D: caeli); Syp^{al}, Mss. A C: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for yours is the kingdom of heaven"; Boh. 2 mss.: "Blessed are you, the poor in spirit, for yours is the kingdom of heaven"; Geo (Op.): "Blessed are you poor of spirit, for yours is the kingdom of heaven."

4. Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί,

ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ.

W; cf. Polycarpus, Phil. I, 2.3. (prob.)

This variant is found in Marcion (Harnack, Zahn 1/2): "Blessed for the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of God"; VL ff2: "Beati pauperes quoniam ipsorum est regnum dei"; Boh. (1 Ms.): "Blessed are you poor, for theirs is the kingdom of God."

5. [Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί,

ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.]

This variant reading is presented for the following witnesses: Marcion (Zahn 1/2): "Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"; Sys: "Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"; Sah.: "Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

6. Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι,
ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

Luke: 903 2487

This variant is attested in: Sy^{pal} Ms. B: “Blessed are the poor of spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”.

Notes

1. *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 52; A. Guillaumont, H.-Ch. Puech, G. Quispel, W. Till, Yassah ‘Abd al Masih, *The Gospel according to Thomas* (Leiden: Brill, 1959), 30; B. Layton, ed., *Nag Hammadi Codex II*, 2–7 (NHS XX; Leiden: Brill, 1989), 52–128, esp. 73.

2. J. Doresse, *L’Évangile selon Thomas, Les paroles de Jésus* (59; Paris: Plon, 1959), 177.

3. R.M. Grant, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus according to the Gospel of Thomas* (London: Fontana, 1960), 154; cf. R. Schippers, *Het Evangelie van Thomas* (Kampen: Kok, 1960), 109; R. Kasser, *L’Évangile selon Thomas* (Neuchatel: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1971), 81f.

4. Surprisingly, H. Koester writes about logion 54: “Heil den Armen” in der “Mt”-Form, aber ohne Zusatz “im Geist,” cf. “GNOMAI DIAPHOROI: Ursprung und Wesen der Mannigfaltigkeit in der Geschichte des frühen Christentums” in H. Koester and J. M. Robinson, *Entwicklungslinien durch die Welt des frühen Christentums* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1971), 131, n.72. A similar suggestion was made by H. E. W. Turner (“The Gospel of Thomas: its History, Transmission and Sources,” in H. E. W. Turner, H. Montefiore, *Thomas and the Evangelists* [London: SCM, 1962], 34, n.3): “54 (Matt. 5.3, a tendentious revision).”

5. Cf. e.g. F. F. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 134–35.

6. Cf. e.g. W. Schrage, *Das Verhältnis des Thomas-Evangeliums zur synoptischen Tradition und zu den koptischen Evangelienübersetzungen* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964), 118f.; it is not strange that M. Fieger (*Das Thomasevangelium* [Münster: Aschendorff, 1991], 164f.), agrees with Schrage, since his work often copies the monography of Schrage.

7. R. McL. Wilson, *Studies in the Gospel of Thomas* (London: Mowbray, 1960), 55f., 147.

8. Wilson, *Studies*, 55 (“Thomas . . . habitually avoids the name of God”), 56 (“deliberate alteration of Luke by Thomas, or the transmission of the saying from Luke to Thomas through a Jewish-Christian milieu in which the change (sc. God > heaven) was made”).

9. Wilson, *Studies*, 55 (147).
10. T. Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren im Thomasevangelium* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 42.
11. Zöckler, *Jesu Lehren*, 251: "In dieser Untersuchung ist von einer doppelten Voraussetzung ausgegangen worden: einmal, daß im EvThom eine in ihrem Ursprung von den kanonischen Evangelien unabhängige Überlieferung vorliegt. . ."
12. Cf. T. Baarda, "'Chose' or 'Collected': Concerning an Aramaism in Logion 8 of the Gospel of Thomas and the Question of Independence" *HTR* 84 (1991): 373–97, esp. 373f. (repr. Tjitze Baarda, *Essays on the Diatessaron* [Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994], 241–62, esp. 241f.).
13. M. Meyer and H. Bloom, *The Gospel of Thomas, The Hidden Sayings of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992), 91.
14. J.S. Kloppenborg, M.W. Meyer, S.J. Patterson, M.G. Steinhauser, *Q Thomas Reader* (Sonoma CA: Polebridge, 1990), 159, Q-Thomas Parallels, nr. 25: Q 6:20 Thomas 54, cf. p. 38.
15. S.J. Patterson (*The Gospel of Thomas and Jesus* [Sonoma, Polebridge, 1993], 42–44) strongly denies any dependence on 'Q', but assumes that Th 54 was derived "from an independent tradition, in which it still circulated as a solitary, independent saying."
16. G. Quispel, "The Gospel of Thomas revisited," in B. Barc, ed., *Colloque international sur les textes de Nag Hammadi* (Québec: Louvain, Université Laval & Peeters, 1981), 265.
17. Quispel, "Gospel of Thomas revisited," 541–542.
18. G. Quispel, "The Gospel of Thomas and the New Testament," (1957), repr. *Gnostic Studies II* (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archeologisch Institute, 1975), 3–16, esp. p. 4; idem, "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les Clementines" (1958), repr. *Gnostic Studies II*, 17–30, esp. 25; idem, "The Gospel of Thomas and the Western Text, A Reappraisal," *Gnostic Studies II*, 56–69, esp. 64–65.
19. G. Quispel, "L'Évangile selon Thomas et les origines de l'ascèse chrétienne" (1964), repr. *Gnostic Studies II*, 98–112, esp. 103; cf. idem, "The Discussion of Judaic Christianity" (1968), Repr. *Gnostic Studies II*, 146–58, esp. 153–54.
20. G. Quispel, *Makarius, Das Thomasevangelium und das Lied von der Perle* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 75, 78, esp. 96.
21. He finds this text in Marcion, Old Latin c f, the Arabic Diatessaron, the Old Syriac Sinaitic Gospel, the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary, some Greek manuscripts, a Bohairic manuscript, and in the *Pseudo-Clementine* literature, cf. Quispel, "Thomas and Western Text," 64–65. The case is more complicated

than Quispel suggested, as can be seen from the following remarks on these texts (cf. also the Appendix).

22. J. van Amersfoort, *Het Evangelie van Thomas en de Pseudo-Clementinen* (Thesis: Utrecht, 1984), 220; cf. *ibid.* 98–105, esp. 105.

23. B. Rehm (– F. Paschke), *Die Pseudoklementinen I, Homilien* (XV.10.4; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1969), 217:8–9; B. Rehm (– F. Paschke), *Die Pseudoklementinen II Rekognitionen in Rufins Übersetzung* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1965) 43:2–3 (I.61.2); 68:24 (II.28.3); W. Frankenberg, *Die syrische Clementinen mit griechischem Paralleltext* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1937), 66:17 (I.61.2); 108:34–110:1 (II.28.3).

24. Cf. the survey in Van Amersfoort, *Evangelie van Thomas*, 101.

25. Van Amersfoort, *Evangelie van Thomas*, 101–2.

26. Van Amersfoort, *Evangelie van Thomas*, 102.

27. Van Amersfoort, *Evangelie van Thomas*, 104 (“Er kan echter niet uitgesloten worden, dat deze interpretatie de tekst van Mattheüs veronderstelt”).

28. So Hilgenfeld, cf. H. M. van Nes, *Het Nieuwe Testament in de Clementinen* (Amsterdam: De Roever Kröber-Bakels, 1887), 22. Van Nes himself asks whether the form in *Ps.-Clem.* suggests a special source.

29. Note the fact that in I.61.1–2, the texts quoted are in agreement with Matthew, Matt 5:5, 5:6, not with Luke; in II.28 we find besides the poor (Matt 5:3), the hungry and thirsty (Matt 5:6, diff. Luke), the pure of heart (Matt 5:8, absent from Luke).

30. Cf. H.-Ch. Puech, *En quête de la Gnose II, Sur l'Évangile selon Thomas* (Paris: Gallimard, 1978), 81 (cf. pp. 80, 95, 105); Puech finds two strands in Thomas, a Jewish-Christian and a Gnostic origin.

31. Cf. M.L. Peel and J. Zandee, “The Teaching of Silvanus (NH VII: 4),” in *The Nag Hammadi Library in English*, ed. J.M. Robinson (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 392 (110:27–29).

32. B. Gärtner, *The Theology of the Gospel of Thomas* (London: Collins, 1961), 44f.

33. H. von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt II* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913), 266, 2nd apparatus.

34. Tertullian adds in a parenthesis: “sic enim exigit interpretatio vocabuli quod in Graeco est,” which seems to imply that he found in the Greek text πτωχοί, lit. ‘beggars’.

35. This is the text presented by Kenji Tsutsui, “Das Evangelium Marcions. Ein neuer Versuch der Textrekonstruktion,” *Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute* XVIII (Tokyo, 1992), 67–132, 82: “Beati [mendici], quoniam illorum est regnum dei.”

36. This reading was also found in some editions in the first quotation. This is the reason for Zahn's ambivalence.
37. T. Zahn, "Marcions Neues Testament", in idem, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons* II:2 (Erlangen-Leipzig: Deichert, 1892), 409–529, esp. 400.
38. A. von Harnack, *Marcion, Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott*, (Leipzig: Hinrichs 1924), 191*.
39. A.-S. Marmardji, *Diatessaron de Tatien* (Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1935), 72 (ch. VIII:27).
40. T. Zahn, *Tatian's Diatessaron* (FGNK I; Erlangen: Deichert, 1881), 131–32 (§ 16).
41. J.H. Hill, *A Dissertation on the Gospel Commentary of S. Ephraem the Syrian* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1896), 83 (ch. 8:27).
42. L. Leloir, *Le Témoignage d'Éphrem sur le Diatessaron* (CSCO 227, Subs. 19; Louvain: CSCO, 1962), 22 (cf. p. 121).
43. L. Leloir, *Saint Éphrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, Version armenienne* (Louvain: Durbecq, 1953), 71:12–13; 73:1.
44. L. Leloir, *Saint Éphrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, Texte Syriaque (Manuscrit Chester Beatty 709), Folios Additionnels* (Leuven: Peeters, 1990), 56:2–3 (ch. VI:1a); cf. p. 58:14.
45. Leloir, *Commentaire* (Syr. 1990), 58:23–24 (ch. VI:2). Zahn (*Diatessaron*, 139, n.1) already referred to this exegesis.
46. Aphrahat, *Dem.* XX:17, J. Parisot, *Aphraatis Sapientis Persae Demonstrationes* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1894), col. 921:13–15; *Dem.* XXII:24 (ibid., col.1037:1-2); cf. *Dem.* II:19 (ibid. col.89:6-7). The reconstruction of I. Ortiz de Urbina (*Vetus Evangelium Syrorum et exinde excerptum Diatessaron Tatiani* [Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, 1967], 219) is based on Aphrahat (cf. ibid., p. 31: nr. 390).
47. J. Slavenburg, *Een ander Testament* (Deventer: Ankh-Hermes, 1993), 70f. (cf. 49, 151, n.1).
48. A correct translation of Thomas 54 is offered by J. Slavenburg and W.G. Glaudemans, *Nag Hammadi geschriften*, I (Deventer: Ankh Hermes, 1995), 146.
49. J. Duhaime, "War Scroll," in J. Charlesworth, ed., *The Dead Sea Scrolls II* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1995), 80–203, esp. 124.
50. For a broader discussion, cf. T. Baarda, "Drs. J. Slavenburg en de 'Zaligspreking van de armen'," *GTT* 97 (1997): 28–32.

51. J.D. Crossan, *Four Other Gospels* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 35–37 ('Independence').

52. Crossan, *Four Other Gospels*, 37; I have discussed Crossan's thesis more broadly in "Zalig de armen. . . ' John Dominic Crossan over Logion 54 van 'Thomas'," *GTT* 97 (1997): 127–32.

53. J.D. Crossan, *Sayings Parallels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 22 (nr. 36); I will not dwell on this fault; one should compare the criticism of the reasoning of Chilton's argumentation in Patterson, *Gospel of Thomas*, 42, n. 128.

54. It is not my intention to claim that it is redactional, but in the research on the macarisms there are many scholars who actually find here a redactional touch.

55. Cf. S. C. E. Legg, *Nouum Testamentum Graece, II. Euangelium secundum Matthaeum* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1940), i.l.; Legg lists the omission of τῷ in Ms. D*, and the idiomatic variant "in their spirit" in the Sinaitic Syriac and the Peshitta. One might, however, also refer to Polycarp *To the Philippians* 2:3, where we read: . . . καὶ ὅτι μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ καὶ οἱ διωκόμενοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (Matt 5:3.10). It is most likely that Polycarp had in mind Matthew (cf. H. Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den Apostolischen Vätern* [Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957], 118), but still quoted the saying without the Matthaean "in spirit" and with the Lukan "of God," either by adaptation to Luke, or because he quoted from memory.

56. Cf. *The New Testament in Greek, The Gospel according to St. Luke I* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 122. The apparatus mentions also Aphrahat here, but it is highly probable that this author used the Diatessaron text, which followed Matthew (cf. § III)

57. *The New Testament in Greek I*, 122, counts 50 mss. and 12 lectionaries, apart from the versional evidence.

58. Clement, *Protrepticus* X, 99, 4; cf. O. Stählin, *Clemens Alexandrinus I* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1936), 72:12.

59. Cf. M. Barnard, *Clement of Alexandria's Biblical Text* (Cambridge: University Press, 1899), 39. Barnard thinks that Clement confused the Lukan text with that of Matthew, but acknowledges that there is some evidence for the reading in Greek manuscripts. M. Mees (*Die Zitate aus dem Neuen Testament bei Clemens von Alexandrien* [Bari: University Press, 1970], II, 69: nr. 243), lists μακαρίζει τοὺς πένητας (*Strom.* II,22.4; Stählin, o.c., II, p. 124:15) for Luke, but adduces the text mentioned above for Matthew (*Zitate*, II, p.3: nr. 14).

60. Logia 3, 21, 22 (3x), 27, 46, 49, 82, 107, 109, and 113.

61. Logia 57, 76, 96, 97, 98, and 113.

62. Logia 20, 54, and 114.

63. Cf. Gärtner, *Theology*, p. 44: “A possible explanation . . . may have been an unwillingness to use the expression ‘the kingdom of God’.”
64. For example, Michelsen, Fitzmyer, Attridge; for a description of the various reconstructions, cf. A.A.M. Luijendijk, *The Reconstruction of Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 654, A Greek Fragment of the Gospel of Thomas* (Paper submitted for the Doctorandus examination in Theology: Augustus, 1996), 71–72.
65. For example, Kasser, cf. Luijendijk, *Reconstruction*, 72.
66. For example, Grenfell, Heinrichi, Evelyn White, Hofius, Marcovich, cf. Luijendijk, *Reconstruction*, 71–72.
67. Cf. Luijendijk, *Reconstruction*, p. 73.
68. Cf. R. Uro, “Thomas and oral gospel tradition”, in idem, ed., *Thomas at the Crossroads* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1998), 8–32, esp. 10 (and n.11), 15ff., 19ff. 31f.
69. The suggestion of Gärtner (*Theology*, 212) that deviations (such as in our logion) were deliberately made by the author to claim “independent” traditions, can hardly be taken earnestly. At least in our logion hardly anybody would have discovered the deviation, because the saying of Luke had suffered so many harmonizations with Matthew in the textual tradition.
70. This survey of Greek texts is made on the basis of various editions: C. Tischendorf, *Novum Testamentum Graece*, I (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1872), 16 (Matt), 483f. (Luke); H. von Soden, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments II. Text mit Apparat* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1913), 9 (Matt), 266 (Luke); S. C. E. Legg, *Nouum Testamentum Graece* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1940), in loco; *The New Testament in Greek, The Gospel according to St. Luke* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 121f.; R. Swanson, *New Testament Manuscripts, Part 1, Matthew* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1995), 32; Part 3. *Luke* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1995), 100.