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| **Artemis and Thecla. Τhe Meeting of the Ancient Goddess with the Christian Female Apostolic Saint in the First Four Centuries of Christianity (Historical and Comparative Reflections)[[1]](#footnote-1)***Abstract: The paper’s subject is about the interaction between the cult of the goddess Artemis and the cult of St Thecla of Iconium throughout the Eastern Mediterranean in the initial four centuries of Christianity in particular. The phenomenon is investigated regarding the literature, the cities, social groups and personalities mostly associated with the cultural meeting of the free-spirited but fearsome goddess protector of the wilderness, virginity and childhood with the virgin heroe of the Cross and alleged apostolic companion of Paul for spreading the Logos of life to the nations.* |
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| **Introduction**It is really astonishing how quickly the Acts of Thecla (AoTh), a text written in Asia Minor (maybe in Smyrna) about the life and the missionary journeys of St Thecla, the famous female Isapostle (equal to the Apostles) from Iconium, **had already spread across the Mediterranean, as far as Carthago** (Africa Proconsularis) by 200 A.D. The book was probably written around 140 A.D., a period with the charismatic movement still flourishing, and gained both high popularity and canonicity especially among the advocates of a more active, if not equal to men’s, involvement of women in the Church, employing the book as a strong argument favoring female priesthood. This trend is also witnessed by Tertullian in his work ***De Baptismo*** (17.4-5)[[2]](#footnote-2). Despite the removing of his office of the writer of the AoTh, the growing impact of his work remained unaffected. Evidence can be found in **(a)** the number of manuscripts related, (b) the use of the AoTh as the model text for other literature, and (c) the dynamics of the cult of St. Thecla itself, vivid across the major *mare nostrums’* urban centers. In the following lines we will attempt to investigate the causality behind this rapid spread of the AoTh focusing on two main themes: **(Α)** The literary form of the book[[3]](#footnote-3). **(Β)** The fact that the cult of the female Christian saint functioned as a de facto alternative to the worship of the goddess Artemis, a cult quite active in the 1st -2st A.D. Indeed, in 44 B.C., as Winter[[4]](#footnote-4) points out, a new model of womanhood emerges hardly compatible with the traditional type of femineity of the time.  |
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| **A. The literary form and content of the AoTh**We could attribute the text’s vast spread to the following factors:1. The Acts of Thecla use the literary form of the romantic novel (romance) similarly to the romance of Achilles Tatius of Alexandria *The Adventures of Leucippe and Clitopho*n (in Greek *τὰ κατὰ Λευκίππην καὶ Kλειτoφῶντα*). The plot of this ode to purity and virtue is also taking place in the Asia Minor (Ephesus). Although the presbyter-writer of the AoT lost his office, Tatius, according to Suda Lexicon, eventually converted to Christianity and even rose up to become a bishop! The genre of romantic novel was particularly popular among women[[5]](#footnote-5) in an era moved more by the ear and less by the eye. The plot is the following: Leucippe and Clitophon, the protagonists, fall in love. The couple, especially Leucippe, struggles to keep their purity and fidelity despite the grave dangers and threats (like rape and death), many of them made by people in power, and the social negativism that face in their youth. In the end, their love is victorious. Back in our case, Thecla from Iconium dedicates herself to the love of Christ yet in the initial chapters of the AoTh appears almost equally attached to Paul, the Apostle of Nations. However, as the plot goes on, Paul’s various actions (for example, his refusing to baptize her) present him intentionally self-limited to the role of Thecla’s nymphagogus (= the leader of bride) to Christ, which the Apostle appears to claim for himself in 2 Cor. 11, 2 (comp. John 3, 29). In this way he avoids the relationship of dependence between mystagogue and mystes (initiate). Even so, the bride of Christ Thecla in the age of 17-18 (and not 12-14 which was the usual marriage age for women), strengthened by the spiritual guidance of Paul, ultimately stands by Christ following Leucippe’s path of virtue, virginity and courage before fire and beasts[[6]](#footnote-6).2. At the same time, the AoTh could be viewed as a form of addendum to the last work of the Pauline corpus, 2 Tim. which contains the legacy of Paul ultimately facing abandonment and persecution. It should be also noted that hints of the genre of the romantic novel are traced by certain researchers in the trilogy of the Pastoral Epistles[[7]](#footnote-7) being themselves regarded as a supplement to the Evangelist Luce’s two-volume work to Theophilus (Gospel of Luc and the Acts). Within this pastoral trilogy, just like in the Acts of Thecla, Paul operates in places not mentioned by any other text of the NT Canon. Indeed in 2 Tim. Paul stays unharmed from a lion, certain that the Lord will save him while implying that his physical end is at hand (4, 17). Arguably the AoTh not only contribute original information absent in the New Testament Canon, but as also Wallace proves, provide a narrative interpretation of specific Pauline passages (like the 1 Cor, 6, 7)[[8]](#footnote-8), re-constructing them creatively.3. Eventually the AoTh enrich the standard information about the Apostle of Nations retrieved by the NT Canon without evident declining from Orthodoxy**[[9]](#footnote-9)** to Gnosticism, despite clearly favoring ascetic practices already thought prevalent in the Church of 2 A.D. At this point we should note that Thecla does not appear in the Acts as companion of Paul like Helen and Simon the Wizard. Simon chose Helen, a Tyrian prostitute, as his wife following Hosea’s example symbolizing the relation between Yahweh and his chosen people, Israel (compare Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well [John 4]). This way, Helen is saved from captivity and her drama is connected not only with the Proto-history of Genesis but also with the Homeric Helen (Irenaeus 1.23.2-4) [[10]](#footnote-10) playing a leading role in the Iliad, the “Old Testament” of the pagan Greco-Roman Antiquity. Besides, Montanus Phryx was likewise accused by Apollonius ([206 A.D].) Eusebius, *Church History* 5.18.2a) for destroying families and marriages; to whom Tertullian responded that the Phrygian spiritual leader is opposed to second marriage only, not the idea of marital life itself. Now back in the AoTh, Thecla does abandon her pagan fiancé remaining “without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” as also described in the mystery of the Devine Economy in the Ephesians (5, 27) in order however to substantiate the relation between the sexes within marriage. At the same time, apart from ascetism and virginity, **highly favored** **is** in the AoTh the pius familia of Onesiphorus.The aforementioned give rise to the following conclusions concerning the high popularity of the AoTh which would be (1) the literary genre in use, (2) the **indirect-not evident** decline from orthodoxy and (3) the supplementation of the information retrieved by the Acts of the Apostles and 2 Tim (the opening and the final books of the Epistles corpus respectively). Possibly, the Acts could help us identify the origins of the “feminist” inspirator of the AoTh. According to Acts 18, both **Apollos**, a conveyor of the Alexandrian tradition, a tradition not directly at least represented in the NT Canon, and **twelve disciples of John the Baptist** possibly closely associated with the periodic ascetic groups behind the Q Sayings Gospel[[11]](#footnote-11), were operating in Ephesus. In Q a renouncement of all marital pleasures is for salvation to be gained. Moreover, it is quite surprising that this negative attitude (almost ***hate!*** Lk. 14, 20) towards women and marriage is uniquely mentioned by Evangelist Luke who draws in detail the female “diaconia” (service Lk. 8, 2-3) but not the fact that the disciples were accompanied during their periods by their spouses (1 Cor. 9, 5). Notably, despite the catechesis of Apollos to orthodoxy by both ***Priscilla and*** Aquila (Acts 18, 26), Luke’s standard pattern remains that a woman’s appropriate behavior is silence (Martha and Mary Luc 10, 41[[12]](#footnote-12)). Maybe these groups[[13]](#footnote-13)insisted on a) the virginity of John the Baptist, b) the immaculate conception of Christ himself by a virgin, Theotokos, c) the virginity of Jesus himself, d) sayings of Christ in favor of the eunuchs by intention, e) Paul’s sayings pro virginity. It is also interesting that the city of Ephesus has been associated directly with Theotokos herself (see Third Ecumenical Council [431 A.D.]), through legends claiming that the Mother of Jesus resided in Ephesus following a similar course with Jesus’ beloved disciple, John (comp. virgintity-metastasis to heavens]). At this point, it should be noted that in the 2nd A.D. ascetic attitudes prevailed within the Church. This resulted among other reasons the rising opposition to the extreme ethical loose movement of Nicolaites (with the **“Jezebel”** of Thyateira [Rev. 2:20] at the forefront of the movement). They were dealt with in latter books of the NT Canon (Judas // 2 Peter, Rev.) while it is likely that Nicolaites were using Pauline sayings against Judeo-Christians and other Christian heretics, such as the “ascets” mentioned polemically in Col. and 1 Tim. (4, 1. 3). Already in 1 Cor. 6 and Romans 6 Paul seems to face a libertinistic misinterpretation of his antinomistic teaching. Such immoral extremes were definitely threatening all major gatherings of the Church, like the “agapae” feasts, feeding the anti-christian opposition’s allegations about secret orgies and oedipal mixes within the Christian ritual. |
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| **Β. Artemis and Thecla**Another contributing factor regarding the high popularity of the cult of Saint Thecla was that the female Isapostle from Iconium offered to the oppressed female gender an alternative model to the pagan goddess Artemis also known as Diana. The short, dressed goddess with the bow has been a feminine ideal which since already in the Homeric era is identified with Penelope and Nausika[[14]](#footnote-14). Freedom from casual conformity, protection in birth and immortality (often associated with the underworld too, as depictions of her suggest) were some of her charismas to all her followers, especially the female ones. A most characteristic depiction of her figure can be found at the Philippi Acropolis where the deity is portrayed accompanied by nearly forty women who in total contrast to Artemis, are veiled and in conservative dressing carrying traditional elements of the familial household. In the epilogue of the AoTh (Chapt. 44), the protagonist saint is considered by the natives to be a faithful priestess of Artemis with healing and exorcising powers. It should be noted that Thecla did not stay on the “traditional” path of subordination and submission to her mother’s will and the bonds of marriage, although she eventually seems concerned about her house of origin and her widow “ancestor”. She preached and defied secular and ecclesiastical patriarchy and authority. Thecla did not even hesitate to cut her hair and resist to the attempting rapist by tearing his garment apart and removing the chaplet from his head, both symbolic gestures of public humiliation (Chapt. 26). Paul himself appears estranged to Thecla by saying like Abraham in Sarah’s case (Gen. 12,17): ***I do know the woman that you are talking about, she is not mine***. Having started her life as an itinerating foreigner-servant of God, settles down in a cave far away from her hometown where she stays for 72 (!) years. Such places were also very dear to the going round the earth Artemis.In more detail the shared features with respect to Artemis[[15]](#footnote-15), are the following:**- Virginity:** The goddess Artemis, patron deity of the city which later would host the Third Ecumenical Council, where Mariam the mother of Jesus would be dogmatically declared as Theotokos, was particularly associated with virginity (Achilles Tatius 6.21.2) whereas at the same time she was worshiped as the protector of birth (Λεχώ/Λοχεῖα or Σωωδίνα). The cult of the goddess used **the bee**, as a symbol for purity. The priesthood of her Parthenon, **the Essenes** also kept themselves pure from sexual attachments as well as the women venerating her. Furthermore, her female servants were undergoing a purity test involving entering a cave (Achilles Tatius 8 [peak of the plot]). Note that the old lady at this time Thecla, is saved form rape by entering miraculously in a rock. In ***the Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon*** Artemis of Ephesus defends virgin Leucippe been submitted, like Thecla, to several humiliations: “… the goddess Artemis stood before me in a dream and said “Wheep no more; thou shalt not die, ***for I will be thy helper, but thou must remain a virgin***, until I deek thee as bride, and non-other than Clitophon shall be thy spouse” (Achilles Tatius, 4.1.4). And in the work of Xenophon ***The Ephesian Tale of Anthia and Habrocomes***, Artemis guarantees the fidelity of the heroine: «Ἁβροκόμη͵ πεπίστευκας ὅτι ἐὰν ἀπαλλαγῶ σοῦ͵ περὶ ἀνδρὸς ἔτι καὶ γάμου σκέψομαι͵ ἥτις οὐδὲ ζήσομαι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄνευ σοῦ; ***Ὡς ὀμνύω τέ σοι τὴν πάτριον ἡμῖν θεόν͵ τὴν μεγάλην Ἐφεσίων Ἄρτεμιν***͵ καὶ ταύτην ἣν διανύομεν θάλατταν καὶ τὸν ἐπ΄ ἀλλήλοις ἡμᾶς καλῶς ἐκμήναντα θεόν͵ ὡς ἐγὼ καὶ βραχύ τι ἀποσπασθεῖσα σοῦ οὔτε ζήσομαι οὔτε τὸν ἥλιον ὄψομαι» (1.11.5). **- Freedom from social conformity-male “monstrous” dominance**: Artemis, also called Potnia (= Mistress) of the beasts (*Iliad* 21.470) and *Lyco/Λυκώ/Λύκαινα* (a deity that kills the wolves and protects the herds has been compassing the earth), just like Thecla in her early activities as an itinerating charismatic enthusiast. Eventually, as already noted, she settled down in a cave outside the city of Seleucia which (cave) like the desert was regarded to be a place for demons and darkness. On the contrary, there she manages to find refuge away from all urban idolatry. The beasts are already being succumbed by her spiritual personality[[16]](#footnote-16). Due to Thecla defended by a female lion, all women of the city resist against male dominance and authority. In the end, not even the fury bulls send against her having first their genitals annealed (*Metaphor*) would harm her as not only water, but also fire take sides with her. It should be noted that the breasts of the cult statue of Aphrodite Tauropolous (Sophocles, *Ajax* 1257, Euripides. *Iphigenia in Tauris*, 85.1454) could be bull genitals offered in the name of fertility. In addition, we should not cast into oblivion the fact that the goddess of Ephesus, was initially one of the **eastern** chthonian deities of fertility later integrated by the Ionian colonists into their pantheon. The vulgar, with respect to Attic cultural standards, wooden cult statue of Artemis was considered to be a gift from the feminist Amazons[[17]](#footnote-17). Thecla is also associated with the east climates of Asia Minor.**- Healing-Exorcism:** Just like the *Savior sacred Artemis*/ *Σώτειρα, αγία* Άρτεμις who saves form mortal dangers granting eternal life and immortality[[18]](#footnote-18), Thecla ‘s praying becomes for Falkonilla, daughter of Tryphaina, a pathway to eternal life (Chapt. 29) while in the end her praying appears to have healing and exorcising power. As a result, the doctors of Seleucia move against her, just like the Ephesians silver craftsmen in Acts 19 against Paul, inciting the crowds to rape the Isapostle servant of God. At this point, it is worth mentioning that an amulet of Artemis, the *Phosphorus goddess,* kept in a museum at Syracuse, identifies the goddess with the sacred light (also strongly linked with Thecla in the AoTh) and contains the short phrase “*Δαμναμενῆι δέχου θεοαλκέ ἀπαρχήν”* [[19]](#footnote-19)*.* The *θεοαλκέ* means **divine bravery** and alliterates both the name Thecla (< κλέος Θεού) and character of the female protagonist of the AoTh.**- Universality**: The “mystery of piety” regarding Artemis was not limited within her sacred grove-paradise where her acheropoietos (not made by man) palladium was located having gained popularity of global proportions. The Ephesian goddess’ fame was present throughout the Mediterranean urban network: Neapolis, Samareia, Marseille, Rome (Aventine Hill), Augustodonum, France, Hemeroscopio o Dianio, Valencia, Spain, North Africa, the home of Tertullian (comp. Strabo, 4.1.4-8, Pausanias 4.31.8) could be taken as examples. Spreading the cult was achieved also through the transporting of Ephesian virgins to the aforementioned urban centres. We should not overlook the possibility of Thecla herself becoming famous due to the successful conversion to Christianity of several of these female worshipers of Artemis operating all over the Roman *Mare nostrum* network. **Conclusions**My reflections so far lead me to argue that the AoTh, whom the writer is likely to have some in common with the twelve Baptists and Apollos, owe their quick spread in such a short time all across the Mediterranean to the following facts:1. The literary form used, romantic novel/romance captivating particularly the female population.2. The fact that the text fill voids and supplement the Pauline letters corpus and the Acts.3. They provide an excellent alternative to the universally worshiped goddess Artemis. |

“What Does Theology Do, Actually?”

Exegeting Exegesis: Academy – Religious Communities – Society

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## Introductory: The Interpretation of the Bible in the East

The paradox of the New Testament Interpretation is the following: in relation to other disciplines of Theology, it has as its source only one book with 890 pages (Nestle-Aland28). And yet countless Commentaries have been written and many interpretive techniques have been applied to extract its message. There is also a paradox also with us, the Greek Interpreters: we speak to a large extent the language of the New Testament. And yet our presence in the international literature is not as expected[[20]](#footnote-20). In the Greek Orthodox area up to the 60s the interpretation of the New Testament was identified with the accumulation of the citations – comments of the Church Fathers (Catenae). This was probably the reaction of the Eastern Church to the propagandistic use of the Bible by certain evangelical missionaries in the 19th century.

particularly the introduction **of the synchronic approach** alongside the historical-critical method offered to the Eastern interpreters the opportunity for a more meaningful dialogue in the frame of SBL and SNTS[[21]](#footnote-21) with the Western colleagues, who additional appreciate the fact that the *first audiences* of the Gospel were located in the East Mediterranean world. The possibility to approach each book of New Testament as an integrated composition – a *“universe” (text* < textile), but also as part of the Canon (comp. *canonical approach*), in terms of the rhetorical and narrative Criticism, instead of the sterile anatomy of the texts (Form – and Redaction Criticism), was enthusiastically accepted in the East as a *Koine language* of listening to the texts *together with* their Western colleagues. The ongoing studies of the mechanisms of *(i)* the oral Tradition (comp. the meaning of the verb *παραδίδωμι*), *(ii)* the cultural Memory and *(iii)* the textualisation contributed even more positively in this direction, while in the postmodern ages the introduction of the *Space Turn* and the *new Materialism*, allow larger areas of cooperation. Indeed, the main Problem in the biblical ***Hermeneia*** remains the same from the time of the First Church and the establishment of the two *schools* of Interpretation in Antioch and Alexandria: it's about the danger to turn ***Exegesis*** (explanation) into ***Eisegesis*** (projection on the text of a varietz of *subjective views of the reader* or rather the *listeners)[[22]](#footnote-22)*.

And yet we must admit that the *Bible Hermeneutics* in the East has not influenced to the same extent the Orthodoxy itself (i.e., the pastoral service, the Sermon and in general the religiosity of the Modern Greeks). Of course, is still missing in Greece a series of modern Commentaries on the books of N.T. or a special Journal of biblical Exegesis, where those who are interested (pastors, scholars of other fields etc.) can acquire an overview of the *diachrony* and the *synchrony* in the biblical Hermeneia up to date. But I think the problem is deeper and lies in the following points:

(a) The average believer focuses on the second part of the Eucharist, not the *Liturgy / Sacrament of Logos* but the Liturgy of the Gifts, although Father Alexander Smemann**[[23]](#footnote-23)** underlines that the second part without the first, evolves into magic. The emphasis, as it is proven also during this period of Covid19 is located exclusively on Holy Communion of the common cup, not ον the coexistence / koinonia around the same table. We, as Greek Orthodox Church, to a large extent, face also the same Problem with that of I Cor. 11, as already in the first century the Lord's Supper (κυριακόν δεῖπνο) was regarded as a sacred meal and as individual *φάρμακον αθανασίας* (Ignatius to the Ephesians 20:2).

(b) The deficit in the knowledge of the Old Testament is also enormous in the Greek Church, as its texts are neither heard nor preached in the Eucharistic Synaxis, although their message (the *one living God of the Fathers and of Exodus,* the deconstruction of idols and the solidarity to the *holy trinity* of socially insignificant and weak [widows, orphans and converts]) is nowadays as relevant as that of the New Testament. Here we must also note two things: *(i)* Greek Old Testament was also the *Scripture* par excellence of the Early Church, although the Interpretation of its Texts was Christological. *(ii)* Especially in the modern research the Studies on the Theology of the *Greek* Old Testament (Septuaginta) are in full swing.

(c) The sermon in the Orthodox Church usually until today is not the announcement of the Coming Basileia but *the daydreaming* of the glorious (Byzantine) past and / or the interconnection of the Religion with the national identity. This is the exact opposite of Paul's priority of the *faith Christi* against / versus τα *έργα του Νόμου* (as identity markers of an elected nation)

(d) The medium of the communication of the Evangelion in the frame of Synaxis as well in the public Forum is not the “*Koine Greek”* (the usage of *daily moments* as parables / metaphors of the Basileia / Reign of God) but usually a *wooden* (largely standardized) language.

## Exegeting as eastern Interpreter the first Exegesis/ Reception of Pauline Gospel

In this article I will reflex about how Paul's sermon *from the beginning* was transmitted in Greek cities and what should be added *today* to the explanatory methods for those of us who deal with Interpretation to have a more active reception (impact) in the religious communities but in the society also[[24]](#footnote-24). In this publication I rely, among other things, *(a)* on the new archaeological discoveries in Athens after the excavations for the Metro in combination and *(b)* on those in the Asclepieion of Epidaurus which in the near future will be opened to the Public[[25]](#footnote-25).

In Greece but also in the Imperium Romanum generally, especially in the 1st AD, very popular[[26]](#footnote-26) were the deities who offered *healing* which was conceived as a *holistic matter* (as *sotiria / sotirion* = becoming *whole*) and as means to achieve *eudaimonia* (physically and mentally, avoiding among other things the influence of evil spirits). Already after the pandemic of Athens (429 and 427 BC), and in fact on a *private* initiative, the cult of Thessalian *Asclepius* was introduced from Epidaurus in Athens through Piraeus. This particular cult was interrelated both topographically and essentially with the theater of Dionysus, the cradle of ancient tragedy and comedy, but also the seat of the meeting / synaxis of the Ecclesia of the Demos in the Greco-Roman years. Additionally, in honor of Asclepius was dedicated the fourth day (the 17th) of the Eleusinian Mysteries (Epidaureia[[27]](#footnote-27)), where the drama of the abduction of Persephone and her search by Demeter *was revived* not only through the *ritual* (= imitation), but also the *direction of the space* (the architecture of Temenos).

The most popular in the Graeco - Roman World deities (Asclepius[[28]](#footnote-28), Dionysus, Demeter and the imported from East Isis [a sanctuary in her honor exists in Epidaurus]) share the following common characteristics:

 **(a)** they experience passion (*pathos*) and resurrection, which act therapeutically not only for the person(s) who *imitate(s)* the deity (for example through sleep in the abaton), but also for the community (το κοινόν) and the universe (fertility) and its eternal future. According to Pliny the Elder, in the Greco-Roman years *the "path" to the eternal glory of becoming a god was* *to help the man* (Nat. Hist. 2.18).

 **(b)** the *descent* to Hades and *the ascent* to Earth were revived (εν+θυμούμαι / ἀναμιμνήσκω) not only through the rhythmic *recitation* of sacred texts, but (as it is already noticed) principally through the *μέθεξις.* I mentioned also above the stark interconnection in southern slope of Acropolis between the *Sanctuary* of Asclepius and the *theater* (drama) of Dionysus (the god – sponsor of the abundance of wine and joy), whose luxurious *parousia* (arrival) in the *beautiful town* (κλεινόν άστυ) was accomplished through the sea on a ship.[[29]](#footnote-29)

**(c)** Another experience par excellence in Epidaurus, after the sacrifice οn the θυμέλη (< θύω) in the center of the orchestra, was *theoxenia*: the *common sacred meal*, while god was invisibly present. It should be noted that in antiquity deities were not ubiquitous. Indeed Aelius Aristides (2 cent. AD *Ιεροί Λόγοι*, which (title) in fact is translated not only as “Sacred Tales” but also as “Sacred Ceremonies”)[[30]](#footnote-30) proclaims *the identification* of the healing deity with its belover – «suffering servant». This proves the deep interaction between the worship of the rising from the dead deity on the one hand with the healing / catharsis and *revitalisation* – happiness (eudaimonia: υγεία, ευνομία, ειρήνη, έντιμος πλούτος[[31]](#footnote-31)) on the other hand. In this healing, according again to Aristides, important role play the anointment (χρίσμα > Χριστός[[32]](#footnote-32)).

**(d)** Important role in the abovementioned *koinonia* with the risen deity and the process of identity *making / building* of *community (θίασος) of devotees* play the thanksgiving / eucharistic hymns (paeans) – composed and sung by inspired *by the Muses* persons (“theologians”). These singers as a reward taste a special part of the sacrifices. In these hymns, the object of narration and *living remembrance* are the benefits (αρετές, ευεργεσίες, δυνάμεις) of the deity, its course and especially the healings performed for the sake of man[[33]](#footnote-33). This narration - aretalogy by (or before) the cured and the community was escorted by the *suggestive* language of the body (gestures and movements).

the main event of the remembering (re+collection) / revival of the course of the Rising Deity takes usually place in the so-called all-night feast (*pannykhís*). During the imperial years, as A. Haniotis[[34]](#footnote-34) has proved, take place the so-called “domestication” of the Night and its utilization through various opportunities.

The main issue of these above-mentioned ceremonies was Health and Happiness, which as well as the hope of posthumous survival (ηδεία ελπίς) were considered the highest Goods. It should be noted that these events were not connected only with Epidaurus or its subsidiary center in Pergamon, but also with other areas in Greece, such as Doric Megara according to the testimony of Pausanias from the 2nd c. A.D (1.43.6).

\* Based on what I mentioned, I will try to argue that Jesus Christ, as he was proclaimed by Paul in Greece and especially in Athens, he was perceived as a healing deity, sharing with them the following main features:

**(a)** the dual nature (the divine and human),

**(b)** philanthropia

**(c)** the resurrection from the dead after his pathos (passion) for the sake of the humans. These are at as well the common *identity markers* of Asclepius, Dionysus, Dimitra – Isis. Already John Chrysostom claims that peregrinus Paul was led to the Areopagus, to give clarifications about the new *pair* of therapeutical deities (Jesus and the Resurrection) so as to be imported from the East in the Athenian Pantheon (PG 60.267)[[35]](#footnote-35).

**(d)** Likewise, we already know from Paul's letters that the main identity marker of the *Way* (οι της Οδού - the first name of the new community) was the common Supper, in which the Lord was considered invisibly present.

**(e)** In this context, those *who belong to Christ* (οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ]) reMembered not only once per year, but every Sunday (Κυριακή: Dominus-day) the night of his last Pesach (the foundation “myth” of their cult) and indirectly his extremely painful and dishonorable *Crucifixion* (the offering of his blood) in favor of the world, as well as his Resurrection – Ύψωσις (Ascent).

**(f)** From the same texts (the epistles) we know already as well how important for the argumentation of Paul were the hymns, which proclaim his *kenosis* and *his ascension - enthronement* (Phil. 2, 6-11). The Meeting – κυριακόν δείπνον itself was called at the end of the 1 cent. *Eucharist* (Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans 7:1) because *the doxology of God the Abba – Father* was its most prevalent element. Its main feature was the eschatological joy – rejoicing, which is “produced” / generated by the *catharsis* of the fear of the Death and the theosis / christosis through the divine *adoption*.

**(g)** Of course, as it is concluded from the Acts (20, 7-17) but also from Pliny's letter, this *anamnesis* took place on the night of the first day of the week (X.96.7: soliti stato nate lucem convenire). The letter also mentions an oath not to violate specific orders. Of course, the remembering / revival of the Last Supper took place not in a specially designed space, but in the *houses* (domi) of noble Christians (perhaps in the atrium around the impluvium [baptismal? "pool"]).

From the above-mentioned arguments, it follows how important in East Mediterranean World for the hermeneia (which is etymologically connected with the Annunciation of Hermes Trismegistus) is not just the *recitation* */ υπόμνησις* of a narrative, but the *imitation* of its main theme in the frame of a «choir»/κοινόν, which leads to *joy* and purification as well as to the mental - psychosomatic health (psychagogia). This means that an element that must be taken in account seriously by the Exegesis of the biblical message nowdays is the factor of *figuration (παραστατικότητα)* and *perfomativity /επιτελεστικότητα* (in the sense of realization[[36]](#footnote-36)  **- effecting one's purpose).**

In my opinion this is confirmed par excellence in the *Epistle to Galatians* (one of the oldest texts of Christianity) by the *first* argument Paul in his response (refutatio) to the polemic, being waged against him by the so called (by him) “pseudo-apostles”. Even before his *logical* argumentation on the Scriptures, he primarily argues as follows on the base of the *personal-communal experience* of his audience:

3. 1-4  1*Ὦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ᾽ ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; 2τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ᾽ ὑμῶν· ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως; 3οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε, ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε; 4τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῇ; εἴ γε καὶ εἰκῇ. 5ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;*

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? Did you experience so much for nothing? -- if it really was for nothing. (NRS New Revised Standard Version Bible)

I argue that *Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified* not only by the *preaching* of the apostle of the nations (μωρία του κηρύγματος) but also by the language / *mise en scene* (direction) of his body / physiognomy. already with *erotic language*, Paul has expressed his communion / identification with Christ: *and it is no longer I who live,* ***but it is Christ who lives in me****. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God,who loved me and gave himself for me.* Gal 2:20 “theology of the Gift”).

Likewise, his *last word* in the Epilogue of this Letter in order to motivate the pathos of his audience (= Ισραήλ τοῦ Θεοῦ) is the following: *From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body* (Galatians 6:17[[37]](#footnote-37)). Through *his “Christological Physiognomy”* the Galatians received the Spirit of adoption and *also – in fact they suffered themselves*.

In the same way but not with the same polemic style, in II Corinthians, the *messenger of God* (Paul) appeals to the same co-experience with the cross Christi (four catalogues of sufferings) to argue for his apostolic authority[[38]](#footnote-38).

Of course, the question, that it is not answered in the above analysis, is why Paul, while emphasizing the resurrection of Jesus, recalling the Last Supper and reciting the hymns in his honor, does not refer in his texts (but also on the Areopagus hill) to the healings and miracles of Jesus, as it will happen in the Gospels. On the contrast Paul, whose (according to his opponents) *αἱ ἐπιστολαὶ μέν βαρεῖαι καὶ ἰσχυραί, ἡ δὲ παρουσία τοῦ σώματος ἀσθενὴς καὶ ὁ λόγος ἐξουθενημένος* (2Co 10:10: *His letters are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible*), applies the following:

* *Ὥστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἴδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα· εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν.ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά* (2Co 5:16-17).

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view;1 even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view,2 we know him no longer in that way. (2Co 5:16)

* *καὶ εἴρηκέν μοι· ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου, ἡ γὰρ δύναμις ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελεῖται. ἥδιστα οὖν μᾶλλον καυχήσομαι ἐν ταῖς ἀσθενείαις μου, ἵνα ἐπισκηνώσῃ ἐπ᾽ ἐμὲ ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ.* (2Co 12:9)

but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power1 is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. (2Co 12:9 NRS)

## Conclusions[[39]](#footnote-39)

* It has already been pointed out that the contemporary synchronic approach of the interpretation has created **a Koine Language which interconnected** the interpreters of East and West. In the East itself the reception of the explanatory tradition, as it is practiced in academic field, does not influence satisfactorily the life of the Church. This may be due to the fact that audiences in the East over time put place great emphasis on the dramatic representation and revival of a narrative, rather than on the audition of “sacred” texts itself. The biblical passages are considered by modern eastern Theologians as *wedding invitations* or as *byzantine chants*, where the notes don’t have *independent value* but are related to their context / relevance creating a monophonic but also antiphonic melody that is "re+cycled" or it is finished with the reference to the Eternity, concentrated in the phrase NYN και αεί και εισ τους αιωνασ.
* Paul as par excellence messenger and explainer of the message / Gospel in the east Mediterranean World, through his erotic - “psychomatical” relationship with *the Truth* of his “message” (Evangelium), was a *living image* of the Crucified (not yet the Risen Christus comp. Rom. 6), calling others as *father* and *mother / nurturer* to his *imitation*. The letters were written not to be read but to *be listened to* as part of a Gathering that took place in the frame of κυριακόν δείπνο, which revived the last events of Jesus' life and awaited him as Judge and bridegroom.
* nowadays in the context of the new materialism, we experience the turn of Hermeneutics to the senses and emotions, as well as to everyday (private) life. If we (the Interpreters) want to use a *Koine language* (Common Language) to interact not only with each other but also with the authors of the N.T. and at the same time to influence and interact with the personal and *political* experience of our audience, we must activate the factor of *figuration* and *perfomativity.* **This is achieved not by playing as actors (υποκριτές) a role in the frame of a Bible drama, but by rediscovering the *faith* to Jesus Christ and the dynamic of the Synaxis around the same table. (**The abovementioned) Smemann, who argues that the second part of Eucharist without the first, evolves into magic, proclaims also that the Liturgy of Logos, without the second (the Lord's supper) remains *something dry, dead and bony*.
* OI think that for the “sacred science” Hermeneia, after the discovery of the worthiness the *memory* (remembered Jesus instead of historical Jesus),it is kairos (time - chance) to taste as well empirically the psychosomatic *imitation* of the core of the Evangelion (= απόθετον κάλλος) in interaction/κοινωνία with μωρά του κόσμου και εξουθενημένα[[40]](#footnote-40). Maybe it leads to so the longed today mental - psychosomatic metamorphosis (catharsis and *joy)* of polis and Kosmos.

**III.21-22 Anointment at Temple of Hygieia**

 https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/508180520d724b57bc6f03a0651636ea 315.7 τὰ δ΄ ὑπὲρ τὸν τράχηλον καὶ τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν νώτων κατατάσεις καὶ τὸν ἀκριβούμενον ὀπισθότονον ἤδη τόνδε τρόπον ἰάσατο εὐθὺς͵ ἐπειδὴ τὴν δύσπνοιαν ἐξιάσατο. **χρῆμα ἔφη βασιλικὸν εἶναι**· χρῆναι δ΄ αὐτὸ λαβεῖν παρὰ τῆς γυναικός. καί πως ἐκ τούτων ἐφάνη διάκονος τῶν βασιλείων πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Τελεσφόρου νεῷ τε καὶ ἕδει͵ **λευχείμων τε καὶ ἐζωσμένος**͵ καὶ κατὰ τὰς θύρας͵ οὗ ἡ Ἄρτεμις͵ ᾔει ἔξω ὑπὸ κήρυκος͵ φέρων τῷ βασιλεῖ τὸ λοιπὸν τοῦ χρήματος. τὸ μὲν δὴ ὄναρ ὡς ἀμυδρῶς ἀπομνημονεῦσαι τοιοῦτον μάλιστα ἐγένετο. ἐπεὶ δ΄ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν γίγνομαι περιιὼν **κατὰ τὸν Τελεσφόρον͵ ἐπέρχεται ὁ νεωκόρος** ὁ Ἀσκληπιακὸς͵ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν ἑστὼς πρὸς τῷ ἕδει͵ φράζω πρὸς αὐτὸν τὴν ὄψιν τὴν γενομένην μοι͵ καὶ ἠρώτων τί ἂν εἴη τὸ χρῆμα͵ ἢ τίς ἂν χρήσαιτο. καὶ ὃς ἀκούσας καὶ θαυμάσας͵ ὥσπερ εἰώθει͵ Οὐ μακρὰ͵ ἔφη͵ ἡ ζήτησις οὐδ΄ ὁδοῦ πολλῆς͵ ἀλλ΄ ἐνθένδε σοι φέρω· κεῖται γὰρ **παρὰ τοῖς ποσὶ τῆς Ὑγιείας͵ ἀρτίως γε θείσης Τύχης ταύτης͵** ἐπειδὴ τάχιστα ἀνεῴχθη τὸ ἱερόν. ἦν δὲ ἡ Τύχη γυνὴ τῶν ἐπιφανῶν. καὶ παρελθὼν εἰς Ὑγιείας κομίζει τὸ χρῆμα· καὶ χρίομαι ὡς ἔτυχον προσεστώς. ἦν δὲ καὶ τὸ χρῆμα τῆς εὐωδίας θαυμαστὸν οἷον καὶ ἡ δύναμις εὐθὺς ἐπίδηλος. θᾶττον γὰρ ἢ εἴρηκα ἀνείθη ἡ τάσις. ἐρωτήσας δ΄ ὕστερον τὸν 315 νεωκόρον ἔγνων ὅτι εἴη κάθαρσις τριῶν͵ ὀποῦ τε ᾧ χριό μεθα καὶ μύρου ναρδίνου καὶ ἑτέρου μύρου τῶν πολυ τελῶν͵ ἔστι δ΄͵ οἶμαι͵ τοῦ φύλλου ἐπώνυμον. σκευάσας δὲ ἐχρώμην οὕτως τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ πάντα ἐκεῖνα ἐκεχάλαστο. ἐφάνη δὲ καὶ ὁ Τελεσφόρος νύκτωρ͵ χορεύων περὶ τὸν τράχηλόν μου͵ καὶ ἀπέλαμπεν ἐν τῷ καταντικρὺ τοίχῳ σέλας ὥσπερ ἐξ ἡλίου.

Περὶ δὲ τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον ἅμα τοιόνδε ἦν μοι͵ εἴτε ἐμοῦντι τῆς ἑσπέρας ἤδη εἴτε καὶ οὔπω ἦσαν οἱ ἔμε τοι. κάρυον καὶ ἰσχάδα καὶ φοίνικος βάλανον καὶ ἅμα ἄρτου τι πρὸς αὐτοῖς ἐσθίειν ἐδεῖτο ἐξ εὐνῆς. τούτοις δὲ ἐχρώμην τε ἐκ τοῦδε ἐπὶ τῷ χρήματι. στομάχου τε καὶ ὑποχονδρίων καὶ τοῦ περὶ ταῦτα τόπου φάρμακον δίδωσι καταπλαστὸν ἀνωτέρω μοι δοκεῖν τούτων. δίδωσι δὲ τοιαύ την δόξαν παραστήσας· Ἀσκληπιακὸν τὸν ἰατρὸν ἐδόκουν εἰσελθόντα ὡς ἐμὲ καὶ ἐπισκοποῦντα καταπλάττειν͵ διὰ δικτάμνου καλουμένῳ φαρμάκῳ͵ καὶ ἅμα προλέγειν τριά κονθ΄ ἡμέρας χρήσασθαι. ἐχρώμην͵ καὶ ἥ τε δὴ τριακο στὴ νὺξ ἧκε καὶ τὸν Ἀσκληπιακὸν αὖθις ἐδόκουν ἐλθόντα ἀφαιρεῖν τὸ κατάπλασμα. χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον ἐκ τεττάρων τι συνθεὶς ἐπέθηκεν͵ ὧν τὰ μὲν δύο μέμνημαι͵ πίτταν ἐξ οἴνου καὶ οἴσυπον͵ τὼ δύο δὲ͵ εἰ φανείη τὰ ὀνείρατα͵ ἀναπληρώσομεν. καὶ μὴν περί γε τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ φαρ μάκου τοῦ θηρείου τοιόνδε μέμνημαι. ἔτυχον μὲν ἅπας ἐσθίων καὶ πολὺ τῆς ἡμέρας ἀπολιπὼν͵ ὁ δὲ δειπνεῖν τε ἐπέταξε καὶ ἀναστάντα πιεῖν τοῦ φαρμάκου τούτου· καὶ εἰς πέντε ἑξῆς ἡμέρας ἐγένετο͵ οὗ τοὺς ἰατροὺς τἀναντία ᾔδειν κελεύοντας͵ ὁπότε τις μέλλοι πίεσθαι͵ μὴ δειπνεῖν͵ καὶ τέως εἰώθει. αὖθις δὲ ἐκέλευσε πρὸς ἄρτῳ φαγεῖν τοῦ αὐτοῦ τούτου φαρμάκου͵ καὶ ἔφαγον πρὸς τῷ τρίποδι τῷ ἱερῷ͵ ἀφορμήν τινα ταύτην ἀσφαλείας ποιούμενος. Φίλωνος δέ τις ἐστὶν͵ οἶμαι͵ κρᾶσις φάρμακον ἕτερον.

**Didymus Thomas as a model of conversion after the conversion**

# Introduction

It is remarkable that, while in current research the Introductory Hymn has been hermeneutically approached in various ways, the Epilogue of John’s Gospel -which is as important in each text as the Prologue- has not been thoroughly examined. This occurs, although in this text

**a)** there is a significant Confession, of the same importance with the Prologue (ὁ Κύριος καὶ ὁ Θεός // ὁ Λόγος - Θεός μονογενής. ὁ ὤν εἰς τὸν κόλπον τοῦ Πατρὸς). This significance is also evident by the direct dialogue (which also implicates the reader / listener) and the use of the possessive pronoun (*μου*), perhaps by someone who is included in the ἡμεῖς of the Prologue (cf. ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ [1, 14]).

**b)** This “ἡμεῖς” in the prologue of 1 John refers to this particular narrative as a testimony, since it refers to witnesses whose **sense of touch has also been satisfied**: Ὃ ἦν ἀπ᾽ ἀρχῆς, (1) ὃ ἀκηκόαμεν, (2) ὃ ἑωράκαμεν τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς ἡμῶν, (3) ὃ ἐθεασάμεθα καὶ (4) αἱ χεῖρες ἡμῶν ἐψηλάφησαν. περὶ τοῦ Λόγου τῆς ζωῆς (1, 1). Indeed, touch is a strong evidence that the Logos σάρξ (not just body) ἐγένετο, a declaration in which, as evident in the Epilogue of John, the fact He has risen in the flesh is also included.

In this discussion, Thomas will not be examined due to his testimony, but as a character who experiences **conversion after conversion:** while he has believed and is part of the group of the Twelve (representatives of the 12 tribes of Israel), in a way that **it is not attested** in John, he has the need to experience another shocking event to fully embrace his faith. This particular method –***not to become unfaithful but a full believer***– is, however, referred to by the Risen one ***as not ideal***. In the Beatitude, He exalts those who do not require vision / examination to believe[[41]](#footnote-41). The paradox is that

***a)*** while the way of Thomas’ faith is devalued, touch is considered a paramount evidence of testimony in **the prologue of 1 John**, where Thomas is part of the ἡμεῖς of the senders.

 ***b)*** the unique nature of the event is also validated by the following fact: John (of the four evangelists) selects this sign as the required testimony and Scripture ***in the end*** (the culmination) of his Gospel. In this epilogue –diverging from the rest of the Evangelists– he assures that he has chosen to record only those things are absolutely needed in order **(1)** to **believe** in the true identity of historical Jesus as the Son of God, and **(2)** in order for them to **have life**, through faith (as he emphatically repeats) **in His name**. “Name” does not only denote “Son of God”, but also “ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου” found in Thomas’ fierce confession[[42]](#footnote-42).

1. **Two kind of conversions after conversion in John**

Regarding the conversion after conversion of the disciples through their progression into faith, the following remarks should be made:

1. In the heart of the introductory Hymn, which, guides the listener to the content of Joh., special emphasis is placed on those who ***(παρ) ἔλαβον αὐτὸν*** (i.e., the true light) in active voice and aorist[[43]](#footnote-43). Those who “received” Jesus, have also received grace / power to become “children of God”, because ***ἐκ θεοῦ ἐγεννήθησαν*** (and not in a supernatural way, which is not always portrayed positively, but negative in order to be juxtaposed to the other births, and especially that of Isaac, son of Abraham. This rebirth is connected with the emphatic “*πιστεύουσιν* εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ”. Therefore, those who received Him, displayed in direct contradiction to “ιδίους or the world”, are constantly believing (Present continuous: πιστεύουσιν), although the verb is surrounded by verbs in aorist: ἔλαβον - ἐγεννήθησαν. Since those who believe are mentioned, rather than those who believed -as it is evident from the main corpus of the Gospel, we can deduce that faith is not something fixed[[44]](#footnote-44).
2. Moreover, Thomas followed the Logos incarnate without being part of the “schismatics” of chapter 6 (which constitutes the core of Logos’ public action). That is, he did not follow πολλούς ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ, οι οποίοι ἀπῆλθον εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω καὶ οὐκέτι μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ περιεπάτουν (6:6), because they were scandalized (σκανδαλίστηκαν), as they considered «σκληρά» (apparently “cannibalism” -cf. “Θυέστεια δεῖπνα”) His words in the Synagogue of Capernaum, regarding the true manna, i.e. the true eating of the flesh (not of the body) and drinking of His blood (as Son of Man), as prerequisites in obtaining ***ζωήν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς / εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. (ἀνάσταση τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ).***
3. Furthermore, at the beginning of this specific section, which describes the first schism in the audience (the Johannine community), Jesus replies to the challenge / invitation -during the Passover period- for a sign as potent as the one Moses performed, ***ἵνα ἴδωμεν καὶ πιστεύσωμεν*** (6:30-31). However, the following answer is heard: ***καὶ ἕωράκατέ με καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε*** (6:35). Then (when the schism took place), the Twelve were asked if they want to ὑπάγουν. It should be noted that the aforementioned verse is the first in Joh. where the group of the Twelve is mentioned. In their name (and, hence, Thomas’) Peter responded: «Κύριε, πρὸς τίνα ἀπελευσόμεθα; ῥήματα ζωῆς αἰωνίου ἔχεις. ***Καὶ ἡμεῖς πεπιστεύκαμεν καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Ἅγιος τοῦ Θεοῦ*** (6, 68-69). It should be noted that the enthusiastic Simon will betray the Lord during the most important time of the Crucifixion. He is the one who ***a)*** answers that they have believed (***πεπιστεύκαμεν*** = the temporal aspect denotes a duration spanning from the past to the present) on the basis of ***ῥήματα ζωῆς αἰωνίου*** of the Logos incarnate and, surely, he confesses that ***b)*** He is the Holy of God (instead of “Christ” Mk 8:28, the Son of the living God Mt. 16:16, as attested in the Synoptics). He will need a second “call” in ch. 21 to shepherd the sheep! Hence, the faith of the Twelve is not perfect, although at the end of Chapter 6 there is a discreet mention that the Twelve took the the discipleship from the Father as granted: καὶ ἔλεγεν· διὰ τοῦτο εἴρηκα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρός με ἐὰν μὴ ᾖ δεδομένον αὐτῷ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρός (6, 65). The problem of the possibility of conversion to faith after the initial conversion is implicitly evidenced from the first epilogue of John, where, as already mentioned, the following is found:

30Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν **ὁ Ἰησοῦς** ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν [αὐτοῦ],

ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ·

31ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται (A) ἵνα ***πιστεύ[σ]ητε* ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ χριστὸς - ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ**,

καὶ (B) ἵνα πιστεύοντες **ζωὴν** ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ. (20, 30-31)

The Gospel of John is authored so as the listeners, who are probably already believers, after the signs of the meeting of the Risen One with **the (double) turn of Mary Magdalene** in a garden in the morning and Thomas in a house with «τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων»,

***a)*** believe that (the historical) Jesus is (1) the one who the Law of the Prophets and the Greeks expected as Christ the Messiah, (2) He is the Son of God (cf. the Confession: [creator] Lord and [judge] God [the only Son of God] who came in the flesh (Christology) and

***b) through faith, the listeners can have life (eternal) in His Name[[45]](#footnote-45).*** It should be noted that the “ἵνα πιστεύ[Σ]ητε” is unclear, as textual criticism cannot definitely provide a *lectio difficilior potior*. The fact that the listeners of John’s Gospel were possibly believers is proved by their assumed knowledge of narratives found in the Synoptics, such as the existance and function of the circle of the Twelve, or Mary Magdalene who is found abruptly, without any explanation, in the Epilogue of John[[46]](#footnote-46). 1 John is concluded with the following sentence: Ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅτι ζωὴν ἔχετε αἰώνιον, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ Ὄνομα τοῦ Υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ (5, 13).

A final implicit mention of John in regards to the possibility of conversion after the conversion, but towards the “opposite direction”: According to Ratzinger, in the Last Supper, John added a new dimension in the prophecy which Jesus referred to in regards to His path as following: instead of the lexeme used by the Septuagint (ὁ ἐσθίων ἄρτους μου), the evangelist choses the term τρώγειν, a term used by Jesus in the Sermon on the bread; the eating of flesh and blood, and, hence, the communion of the mystery of the Eucharist (John 6:54-58). Thus, the psalmic quote foreshadows the Church of the time of John and of all the eras that the Church celebrates the Eucharist […] καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς εἰρήνης μου ἐφ᾽ ὃν ἤλπισα, ὁ ἐσθίων ἄρτους μου, ἐμεγάλυνεν ἐπ᾽ ἐμὲ πτερνισμόν (Ψ. 40 [41]:10; Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me – KJV). The shuttering of friendship enters the community of the Church, when -through the course of time- people receive His bread and then betray Him. As Blaise Pascal has noted on the basis of similar experiences (see *Pensées* VII 553), the passion of Jesus, His fight with death, endures until the end of the world. Conversely, we can claim that: Jesus, at that time, placed on His shoulders the betrayal of all ages, the diachronic passion of becoming the object of betrayal, by sustaining the ultimate need of History until its very bottom. Besides, it is clear from 1 John, that the Johannine community faces a traumatic schism in its core, due to Christology and the Ethics of certain members who are accused as “antichrists”.

Therefore, in John, there is the possibility that every believing disciple, who, having obeyed a specific call, has been baptized – regenerated by water and Spirit, can turn his back on the Logos incarnate. Hence, faith definitively requires “rebaptism”. Let us observer the stages of “conversion after the conversion”. Let us focus on Thomas.

# Thomas the twin

* Didymus Thomas appears in the narrative foreground, **in the second half of the Gospel**, when John describes the pivotal fact of the Crucifixion of the Lamb / Jesus and its ascendance to Heaven. It is intertwined with the final phase of Jesus Christ’s life, during which, knowledge / experience is of high importance to faith in Jesus as Christ and Son of God. Thomas’ call has not been recorded, contrary to the five that participate in the first sign of Cana, which is accompanied by the replacement of the Temple. Essentially, Thomas is presented after the last mention of a key witness of John’s Gospel, John the Baptist, who did not perform signs but served as a credible Voice to the Logos – a Lamp of Light – Νυμφαγωγός. He (Thomas) **does not provide testimony, but doubt;** he appears in the narrative foreground during the winter of 30 C.E., in the context of the Festival of Lights / Rededication of the Temple **(Hanukkah).** He is presented for a short period, just after the spring of the same year, when he participates in the Last **(pre-Passover) Supper** and he reappears, in a closed space, **eight days after the Crucifixion**, as a witness to Christ’s presence. His appearance is mentioned in John, during the two of the three last weeks that the Gospel elaborates in its narration. His first appearance is on the third day of the second week, while Jesus stays in Perea, his second is on the fifth day of the third week in a house in Jerusalem (the evening in which the dinner and the washing takes place), while his third is on the “eighth day”, the Sunday after the Resurrection, again in a house in Jerusalem.
* It is in the same section acts also **the “beloved disciple”** -a person whose origin, like Thomas’, is unknown. We probably know about the call of the former, as he is identified as the anonymous person that, along with Andrew, followed the Lamb of God as Shepherd, obeying the testimony of John the Baptist, when they spent the night with Him (1:40). Although he is not directly contrasted to the beloved disciple, Thomas has several characteristics which are antithetical to the former. It should be mentioned that both are protagonists of the second half of John, but they are displayed on antithetical parallelism.
1. While the beloved disciple remains anonymous, Thomas’s name is explained, without him being a companion / complementary to “Matthew, the tax collector”, as happens at the synoptic tradition (Mk 3:18, Mt 10:3, Lk 6:15; an exception is Acts 1:13 “Philip and Thomas”). Moreover, in contrast to Simon, who was afterwards named Cephas – Peter (1:42), his given birth name is explained more than once: twice (and a third time in Ch. 21, which is considered as an epilogue, although it is not attested in all manuscripts). Naturally, the repetition of Thomas’ etymology in conjunction with the narrative regarding the character constitutes a paradox and a surprise to the listener, who focuses on him. Someone probably would expect Didymus Thomas to be the beloved disciple, and not the potential unbeliever. However, in John the brothers of the Lord are ignorant to His identity, although they seem to walk with Him (2:12, 7:3). In the final dialogue, from the beginning it is mentioned that he is one of the Twelve (20:24), he is constantly referred by the Evangelist with his name (3 times), while a pronoun (“he”) could be used. However, it should be noted that the Good Shepherd never addresses him by name**.**

**2)** Thomas always speaks in the first person when conversing with the other disciples or the Lord, while his stance is not discussed by the narrator – witness and his community. Jesus himself remarks to him: “καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός”. Only before the resurrection does the narrator note the ignorance of the disciples for specific words of the Lord (2:22); this is attributed to their lack of the Spirit, a situation which he comments and clarifies (7:39).

**3)** While the beloved is in the court of the High Priest and under the Cross, receiving the woman / mother of the crucified Jesus “εἰς τὰ ἴδια”, as someone familiar, a relative of the archetypical Man – High Priest – King, Thomas is absent, even at the first appearance of the resurrected Jesus. It should also be noted that the beloved student is the first eyewitness to the empty tomb, along with Simon Peter.

**4)** While the beloved provides emphatic testimony of the flow of blood and water from the side of the new Adam, and receives His mother “εἰς τὰ ἴδια”, Thomas -although “Didymus”, does not wish to limit himself to seeing the marks of the nails, but to touch; specifically, the side of Jesus. He is not content with vision, but wishes to use the powerful sense of touch, thus casting doubt on the testimony of the beloved. Nonetheless, he remains with the rest of the disciples and is not completely detached. 5) Essentially, the beloved student provides testimony and records, apart from others, Thomas’ lack of faith in his books: The Gospel of John and 1 John. He does not, however, criticize Thomas, as he is also part of the “ἡμεῖς” in the Prologue of 1 John. He mentions the sign as a pivotal proof of faith to Jesus as Son of God; this sign, along with vision, strengthens the proclamation of the eyewitnesses!

In all three times, Thomas does not comply with the proclamations of the Lord in regard to His glory, nor with His answers in questions posed by the Twelve or “named” members of the Group (e.g., Simon Peter). In the first scene, the others have already reminded the Lord that He returns there where they wished His death. In the second scene, Simon Peter has already asked where the Lord is headed to. In the third scene, the other disciples have already confirmed that they have seen the Lord, like Magdalene, while Simon and *the other* have informed them about the empty tomb. Thomas emphatically dismisses the testimony of the rest of the eyewitnesses and distances himself with “ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω”.

Although Thomas is contrasted to the ideal disciple, Thomas **is connected to two of the three scenes with very important proclamations,** which someone would think that their recipient would be the beloved student. The first time is the Lord, who characterizes Himself as ἡ οδός καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή, while the second time is the confession (ὁ Κύριός μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου) that comes from Thomas, without being clear if he employs the sense of touch. The confession is probably connected to the fact that the Risen Christ is the Creator of the Universe, and the Judge of the World.

Thomas is closely intertwined **with the way – “progression”.** In the first scene, he is seen with the Twelve and Jesus, beyond Jordan, where they have found refuge during the winter (Feast of the rededication of the Temple – Hanukkah), after the attempted stoning (10:31) and arrest of the Lord (10:41) in Jerusalem. There, John the Baptist paved the way of the Lord. Thomas also notes “ἄγωμεν ἵνα συναποθάνωμεν”, as he is not convinced by the words of the Logos incarnate that the resurrection (obviously from Hades) of His friend Lazarus is imminent. In the second scene, in the night of the eve of Passover during the parting speeches of the Lord, he casts doubt on the destination of His “exit”, and thus on the way to reach Him. The Lords answers him that “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but **by me** (KJV)”. In the third scene, eight days after the first day of the week, it is Jesus, who travels miraculously (behind closed doors) to him (Thomas), so as to have a personal meeting and a revelation. Thomas, however, does not receive any authorization to “go out” – missionary work. Moreover, the invitation to touch Jesus is in contrast (antithetic parallelism) to the “Touch me not” uttered to Mary Magdalene, who was the first to venture into the tomb. Furthermore, there is her confession, that Jesus will be the Judge on the ultimate day: Ναὶ Κύριε, ἐγὼ πεπίστευκα ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἐρχόμενος (11. 27).

Thomas has been characterized by modern researchers as pragmatist (realist) and sarcastic. Nevertheless, he is not a flat character. It has already been emphasized that the contrast between the name “Didymus” and his character, as presented in John, intrigues the listeners, even causing them to identify with him.

## Scene 1 (11:13-17)

* This the first appearance of Thomas in the narrative scene, in the context of one week, the second in John, and -more specifically- the third day since the announcement of Lazarus’ illness by heralds from his sisters. It is identified with the day of the death of the “friend”. The fact that the scene takes place in Bethany, beyond the river Jordan, immediately recalls the valid (as emphasized by the believers in that place) testimony of John about the Lamb “του αίροντος την αμαρτίαν του κόσμου / πνευματοφόρου Υιού του Θεού”, although it was not accompanied by signs. Indirectly, it nods towards the following / conversion of the first five disciples. They had initially turned towards the Baptist, who acted in the desert, so as to validate the “εὐθύνατε τὴν ὁδὸν Κυρίου, καθὼς εἶπεν Ἠσαΐας ὁ προφήτης”. Their second conversion was due to the testimony of the Baptist and it was inaugurated with their question towards Jesus: “where do you reside?” Therefore, for the listener of John, the conversion is combined with a progression behind the Lamb as a Shepherd and co-habitation, since the way has been straightened by another teacher, Pro-*dromus*. It should be noted that the first scene of conversions had been completed in Galilee with the proclamation -in direct speech- of the “unknown” to the Synoptics “άδολου Ισραηλίτη” Nathaniel, who paradoxically disappears from the narrative: “Σὺ εἶ ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ (1, 49).” In the answer of the omniscient Jesus, who was already by his side at the fig tree, the Son of Man is identified with Jacob’s Ladder which now connects the upper to the lower world, instead of the temple. The signs of “re-creation / law-giving” follow in the marginal Cana, as well as the substitution of the Temple (which, as the navel of the earth, unites heaven and earth) by Christ (and by His resurrected body) and the fact that many persons in Jerusalem (especially on Easter day) believed in Him “θεωροῦντες αὐτοῦ τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίει.” Conversely, He did not believe in them “διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν γινώσκειν πάντας”.
* In the beginning of ch. 11, Jesus, in direct speech, calls to the disciples to “ἄγωμεν εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν πάλιν”; they address Him as “Rabbi” and they assess that, by returning to Judaea, He places Himself in mortal danger, because He had **just** committed blasphemy: “ῥαββί, νῦν ἐζήτουν σε λιθάσαι οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, καὶ πάλιν ὑπάγεις ἐκεῖ;” He progressively explains to them that the initial “ἄγωμεν” does not refer to Judaea in general, but specifically to him (Lazarus, “our friend”). While the “Good Shepherd” has already a) declared the arrival of His glory (without foretelling the mockeries, as recorded by the Synoptics), b) remarked that He is glad for the disciples, because they will believe, as he was not there and yet he knew death. At his point Thomas appears in the narrative, addressing his fellow disciples and acting as a “prophet of sufferings”. It is the only time that the term “συμμαθητής (fellow disciple)” is found in John, and the only time that a disciple addresses the whole group of the Twelve in the first plural person. Of course, it should be noted that Thomas still follows the group behind Jeus, although, in his view, the Master is heading towards death – Hades.
* Naturally, we must recognize that a careful listener of John would not consider Thomas’ words as utopian, although they may initially seem so. Of course, this specific course is concluded with the Resurrection of Lazarus, who was dead for four days, and the glory of the Logos incarnate, who raises him solely by the power of His Word. However, in the end, as it is evident from the narrative, this Resurrection becomes the excuse on which the verdict of His conviction to death is delivered by the Council of the High Priests and the Pharisees, on the basis of the prophetic (according to John!) word of the High Priest of that year: “οὐδὲ λογίζεσθε ὅτι συμφέρει ὑμῖν ἵνα εἷς ἄνθρωπος ἀποθάνῃ ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ μὴ ὅλον τὸ ἔθνος ἀπόληται”.
* In a second re-reading of the text, the listener perceives the following irony: a) Thomas, who is typically seen on his course to die (with Jesus), disappears after the arrest of Jesus, who presents Himself to the mixed (Roman and Judaean) military unit with “I am”, while b) the Lord has already cared so that no one from those given to Him from the Father is harmed: “ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς· Εἶπον ὑμῖν ὅτι «ἐγώ εἰμι». Εἰ οὖν ἐμὲ ζητεῖτε, ἄφετε τούτους ὑπάγειν· ἵνα πληρωθῇ ὁ λόγος ὃν εἶπεν ὅτι «οὓς δέδωκάς μοι οὐκ ἀπώλεσα ἐξ αὐτῶν οὐδένα» (18, 8-9)”. There is a nod to the words of Jesus Himself, as they were heard in High Priest Prayer (17:12). To Jesus, the phrase “ὀστοῦν οὐ συντριβήσεται” in the ritual of the Hebrew Passover referred to the integrity of Israel’s community c) Thomas, who should be a de facto believer, since he witnessed the Resurrection of Lazarus, who was a personal friend of the disciples (therefore, his friend as well) and dead for four days, and the subversion of his own words, is still an “unfaithful” regarding the Resurrection of the Lord. In any case, Thomas walks along Jesus on His way to Hades, by exhibiting love towards Him, rather than faith in the wisdom of His proclamations.
* By examining the narrative, we can conclude that, to the listener of John, the Lord walks towards any friend of His who is “sleeping” to awake him with a powerful word, but He also delays His arrival if He so chooses. The following passage includes the female protagonists Martha and Maria and the shocking declaration: “I am the resurrection”. In the witnessing of the resurrection, there are several factors involved: the powerful word of the Lord (who has previously offered light through clay to a blind from birth man), smell (“ἤδη ὄζει”), and touch (freeing the dead man from the gauzes applied to the dead). It should be noted that, afterwards, the resurrected friend of Jesus and the disciples does not thank them but remains in apathy. The protagonists are still his sisters. This passage, which is connected to the winter festival of Lights (Hanukkah), is concluded with Jesus retreating again to Ephraim: “Ὁ οὖν Ἰησοῦς οὐκέτι παρρησίᾳ περιεπάτει ἐν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, ἀλλὰ ἀπῆλθεν ἐκεῖθεν εἰς τὴν χώραν ἐγγὺς τῆς ἐρήμου, εἰς Ἐφραὶμ λεγομένην πόλιν, κἀκεῖ ἔμεινεν μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν” (therefore including Thomas).
* The ultimate Easter exodus of Jesus is the next point in the Johannine narrative; the third and final week is inaugurated: Ο οὖν Ἰησοῦς πρὸ ἓξ ἡμερῶν τοῦ Πάσχα ἦλθεν εἰς Βηθανίαν, ὅπου ἦν Λάζαρος, ὃν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν Ἰησοῦς (12, 1). Many persons wait for Him at the shrine; they “ἀνέβησαν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἐκ τῆς χώρας πρὸ τοῦ Πάσχα ἵνα ἁγνίσωσιν ἑαυτούς”. The disciples are not included amongst those.

## 4. Scene 2 (14:3-6)

* The second scene where Thomas intervenes takes place at night, after the washing. It is part of the second section of the farewell speeches, which commences with the following words of the Lord, after the descend of Judas into darkness. In particular, the following can be discerned: a) the immediate ascertainment of His majestic glory as the son of Man by God (the lexeme “δοξ\*” is repeated four or five times in this phrase), b) the search for Him and its lack of results by the “τεκνία” and c) the delivery to the students of the new command on love inside the community as an identifying trait of “Christianity”. Only in this second section of the Lord’s “farewell” is he interrupted by four disciples. They are: a) Peter, b) Thomas, c) Philip and d) Jude. Essentially, these four questions, that do not coincide with those posed on the night of Easter by the sons towards the father, create a chiasmus. While at the beginning there is a mention on the Lord’s course towards a place that the disciples cannot follow Him, in the last question of Jude there is a mention to the arrival of the Lord and the Father in the heart of every disciple: “Λέγει αὐτῷ Ἰούδας, οὐχ ὁ Ἰσκαριώτης· Κύριε, [καὶ] τί γέγονεν ὅτι ἡμῖν μέλλεις ἐμφανίζειν σεαυτὸν καὶ οὐχὶ τῷ κόσμῳ; Ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Ἐάν τις ἀγαπᾷ με τὸν λόγον μου τηρήσει, καὶ ὁ Πατήρ μου ἀγαπήσει αὐτὸν καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐλευσόμεθα καὶ μονὴν παρ᾽ αὐτῷ ποιησόμεθα”. Possibly, Jude, having a worldly view of the Messiah, asks the Lord to reveal Himself not only to His circle but also to the world. In the conlusion of this section we find “Έγείρεσθε, ἄγωμεν ἐντεῦθεν”.
* In the third section of the farewell speeches, the predominant question is the destination of Jesus’ exodus. In the last part (after the vine and the words on the *Paracletus / Holy Spirit*), we hear the paradoxical complaint of the Lord (two other questions have been already posed by the disciples in ch. 14) “Νῦν δὲ ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν πέμψαντά με, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἐρωτᾷ με· «Ποῦ ὑπάγεις»; ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἡ λύπη πεπλήρωκεν ὑμῶν τὴν καρδίαν (16, 5-6)”. In this section, He clarifies to His friends that He is headed towards the Father: “ἐξῆλθον παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον· πάλιν ἀφίημι τὸν κόσμον καὶ πορεύομαι πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα. Λέγουσιν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· «ἴδε νῦν ἐν παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖς καὶ παροιμίαν οὐδεμίαν λέγεις» (16, 28-29).” At his point it is clarified that Jesus has previously (hence, in this scene as well) spoken in similes and proverbs.
* In any case, it is proven that in the farewell speeches of the Lord in John the main theme is where is the direction of Jesus’ exodus and ascendance. To the listener, these speeches seem like a continuation of the call / conversion of the disciples in the desert, where the initial question of Andrew and the other disciple towards the Lamb / Shepherd was “ποῦ μένεις;”. Then, it was dusk (the tenth hour), while now it is night. Then, the Word -who is constantly in the Father’s bosom- became real flesh, showed them a (temporary) refuge, where they spent the night with Him, experiencing the first phase of the rebirth, which will probably be concluded with their own pains, according to ch. 16. That scene, as it has already been mentioned, has been sealed with the appearance of Jesus; initially to Nathaniel (who then disappears from the narrative) as Bethel – Temple – Ladder which connects the lower to the upper. In this scene, Thomas was not an eyewitness, as the circle of the Twelve had not been formed. Maybe the listener of John rightfully presumes that Thomas has been informed of these facts by the first five disciples. Thomas was certainly present when the Good Shepherd mentioned that He was the gate through which the sheep receive abundance of life. From this section of the farewell speeches (ch. 14-16) it is proven that, to complete the conversion, the knowledge of the place of the Lord’s ultimate exodus is necessary; so is following Him to the end.
* We focus on Thomas’ words. As we have already mentioned, in the examination of the section of Ch. 14, first comes the question of Simon Peter, which is about the direction / exodus of the Lord. He, as the Son of Man, has simply declared that he will be “ευθύς” glorified by God (the word “Father” is not used), and that his “τεκνία” will seek Him but they will not find Him. Essentially, in this context two courses are purposefully “confused”: a) the horizontal course towards the Passion and / or Glory (to the Greeks?) and b) the vertical course toward heaven – ascendance. It should be noted that in 7:33-34, 8:21 to which the Lord refers to in 14:33 the place of escape (?) is implied to be the diaspora of the Greeks and Hades. Peter probably understands -at least initially- point (a). Hence, he rushes to emphasize that he will follow Him immediately and that he will sacrifice his soul for Him. The nighttime scenery predisposes the listener negatively, as he already knows that “he who walks at night stumbles”. Of course, this the night before Easter, when the remembrance of Exodus is revived and gives birth to expectations for a course a new Promised Land.
* The Lord responds to Peter by using probably an exclamation rather than a question mark: Τὴν ψυχήν σου ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ θήσεις (!). Afterwards, having prophesized the triple negation of Simon at 3:00, He mentions the following: 1) the place which only He will prepare, 2) the return in order to receive the Twelve / Eleven in Himself and be inseparably together, 3) the house of the Father as the destination, which is exceptionally spacious: it has many dwellings (μονές) to accommodate all of them. The location of this magnificent house is undetermined (Judaea? Greece? Heaven?). At the core of this extensive speech there is the subtext of turbulence as a reaction from the disciples (something that the listener perceives as intuition: exodus is only possible through passion), while serving as a remedy is the faith to the Father and the Son.
* This time Thomas addresses Jesus. It is the only time that his name is not explained. He repeats Simon’s question and doubts the words of the Logos incarnate that specify they know exactly the Way to the place He is headed to. This time, Thomas does not reiterate the first opinion he had expressed in ch. 11, that the Son is headed towards Hades; in this context he seems to be vindicated in the invitation “let us walk with Him in order to die with Him”. The following take place: a) Jesus addresses Thomas with the well-known speech -marked with the use of conjunctives- that He is the way, and the truth, and the life. Afterwards b) He excludes every other way to the Father, c) finally, he reassures them: “Εἰ ἐγνώκατέ με, καὶ τὸν Πατέρα μου (“μου” for the first time in the farewell speech) γνώσεσθε. Καὶ ἀπ᾽ ἄρτι γινώσκετε Αὐτὸν καὶ ἑωράκατε Αὐτόν.” To the Greek audience, there could be a connection of these words with the final words of Socrates, who was condemned by the leaders of the people, especially as attested in Phaidon. Socrates was talking about knowing yourself (not about a Father) and the liberation of the soul from its tomb, the body, so as to ascend, along with the mind, to heavenly spheres and especially the sun.
* From Jesus’ answer, which is typically to Thomas but is essentially addressed to all of the disciples, as the second plural person is used, we could conclude that, in their view, the destination was the Temple; Jesus cleansed it, near the time of Easter, when He was commencing His public action and declared that He would substitute it as the House of His Father, for Whom He was full of zeal. This zeal (= love) will eventually consume Him. Besides, the way towards which the Baptist directed in the desert by inviting people to convert, according to John, was recalling of Isaiah (ch. 40) and the liberation of Zion, and especially of the Temple. This liberation, as way or method, required the full conformation to the Torah. Apparently, in the mind of Thomas and the rest of the disciples the 617 mitzvot (commandments) were deeply carved; they were the ways which metaphorically led to the Temple and meeting with God. It should also be noted that on the night of Passover, when the exodus to Sinai was revived, a Psalm to conclude the others (a Hallelujah) was sung. This psalm is known to the Greek Orthodox worship as the “άμωμος”, the most extensive of the Psalms. It is Psalm 118, according to the Septuagint, which places emphasis on the exercises, the commandments and the truth that the Torah offers, as well as the life. When the cleansing of the Temple takes place, the narrator / commentator remarks that even the disciples could not comprehend that Jesus was talking about His body, which would be resurrected after three days. In strategic points of the farewell speech, Jesus also talks about the Spirit, which will not only function as the *Paracletus* of the students and Prosecutor of the world, filling the void He was to leave behind Him, but would also lead the students into all the truth, that is to Him. Possibly, the Spirit is the abundant grace that was mentioned in the Prologue – a term that does not appear in any other place.
* After the dialog with Thomas, there is another one in regard to the highest wish of Moses and all of the personalities of the Old Testament; the appearance of the Father (unveiling???). Philip, “ἐκ Βηθσαϊδά τῆς Γαλιλαίας”, a well-known character from the call in Ch. 1 and his mediation to the Greeks, asks: “Κύριε, δεῖξον ἡμῖν τὸν Πατέρα, καὶ ἀρκεῖ ἡμῖν! Λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· Τοσούτῳ χρόνῳ μεθ᾽ ὑμῶν εἰμι καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωκάς με, Φίλιππε; ὁ ἑωρακὼς ἐμὲ ἑώρακεν τὸν Πατέρα· πῶς σὺ λέγεις· «δεῖξον ἡμῖν τὸν Πατέρα;» Οὐ πιστεύεις ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ καὶ ὁ Πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοί ἐστιν; Τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λέγω ὑμῖν ἀπ᾽ ἐμαυτοῦ οὐ λαλῶ, ὁ δὲ Πατὴρ ἐν ἐμοὶ μένων ποιεῖ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ ”.
* In the conclusion of the farewell speeches, as it has already been mentioned, the disciples (hence, Thomas as well) no longer double that He is headed towards the Father from who he came. They only ask themselves for the short term between His arrival and their new meeting. Moreover, they now think that they comprehend more fully His words (and, hence, Jesus’ words to Thomas), “17 Εἶπαν οὖν ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ πρὸς ἀλλήλους· Τί ἐστιν τοῦτο ὃ λέγει ἡμῖν· «Μικρὸν καὶ οὐ θεωρεῖτέ με, καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με;» καί· ὅτι «ὑπάγω πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα;» 18 ἔλεγον οὖν· τί ἐστιν τοῦτο [ὃ λέγει] «τὸ μικρόν»; οὐκ οἴδαμεν τί λαλεῖ. 19 Ἔγνω [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς ὅτι ἤθελον αὐτὸν ἐρωτᾶν, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· περὶ τούτου ζητεῖτε μετ᾽ ἀλλήλων ὅτι εἶπον· μικρὸν καὶ οὐ θεωρεῖτέ με, καὶ πάλιν μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με; (16, 17-19) […] 28 ἐξῆλθον παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ ἐλήλυθα εἰς τὸν κόσμον· πάλιν ἀφίημι τὸν κόσμον καὶ πορεύομαι πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα. 29Λέγουσιν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ· ἴδε νῦν ἐν παρρησίᾳ λαλεῖς καὶ παροιμίαν οὐδεμίαν λέγεις. 30 νῦν οἴδαμεν ὅτι οἶδας πάντα καὶ οὐ χρείαν ἔχεις ἵνα τίς σε ἐρωτᾷ· ἐν τούτῳ πιστεύομεν ὅτι ἀπὸ Θεοῦ ἐξῆλθες. 31ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς Ἰησοῦς· ἄρτι πιστεύετε; 32 ἰδοὺ ἔρχεται ὥρα καὶ ἐλήλυθεν ἵνα σκορπισθῆτε ἕκαστος εἰς τὰ ἴδια κἀμὲ μόνον ἀφῆτε· καὶ οὐκ εἰμὶ μόνος, ὅτι ὁ πατὴρ μετ᾽ ἐμοῦ ἐστιν. (16, 29-32). Για τον Ιησού βεβαίως ο λόγος με παρρησία είναι ο μεταπασχάλιος: Ταῦτα ἐν παροιμίαις λελάληκα ὑμῖν· ἔρχεται ὥρα ὅτε οὐκέτι ἐν παροιμίαις λαλήσω ὑμῖν, ἀλλὰ παρρησίᾳ περὶ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἀπαγγελῶ ὑμῖν (16, 25).

## 5. Scene 3 (20:24-31)

* It is the most characteristic scene that involves Thomas and is of uttermost importance as the conclusion of the Gospel. It is a trilogy: a) appearance of the Risen Christ εἰς τὸ μέσον of the disciples οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τῇ μιᾷ σαββάτων in a space they had resorted to διά τον φόβον των Ιουδαίων, b) proclamation of the disciples to Thomas, c) appearance of the Risen Christ to Thomas. Two events have preceded it: a) viewing the empty tomb (and the paradox of the εντετυλιγμένου σουδαρίου) by Mary Magdalene, Simon Peter and the beloved student, who εἶδε καὶ ἐπίστευσε (20:8), b) the revelation of the Risen Christ to the weeping Mary, a revelation accompanied by the command to proclaim (intertwined with the verb “αναβαίνω”: «Μή μου ἅπτου, οὔπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα· πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἰπὲ αὐτοῖς· ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα μου καὶ Πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ Θεόν μου καὶ Θεὸν ὑμῶν». ἔρχεται Μαριὰμ ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἀγγέλλουσα τοῖς μαθηταῖς ὅτι «ἑώρακα τὸν Κύριον», καὶ ταῦτα εἶπεν αὐτῇ. (20:18).
* In this scene a) after the miraculous entrance in the middle of the disciples (as miraculous as the exit from the tomb) we have a demonstration of the hands and the side, as well as the joy of the disciples who witnessed the Lord in their midst. He, maintaining the marks of the nails, as well as the sign of the spear on His risen body – something not compatible with the Jewish beliefs on the risen body– blesses them twice by mentioning “peace” recalling His prophecies after the farewell speech regarding his own Pax (14:27. cf. μικρὸν καὶ ὄψεσθέ με [16:16-19]). After the first blessing, he shows His hands and His side (not the feet – Lk 24:39-40) so as to cause joy (as already prophesized; 16:20) which contradicts the fear of the Judaeans and the pains they had endured. After the second blessing, He imbues them with the Holy Spirit, effectively creating a new mankind (Gen 2:7, Ez 37). After the Pentecost, they are sent forth (apparently to the Greek diaspora), like the Father had sent Him forth. The Pentecost is not about speaking in tongues, but it is in regard to forgiveness of sins (cf. Christ = He who lifts the sin of the world – cf. 1 John 1:7). It should be noted that the absence of Thomas does not automatically mean that he does not partake of this grace (a grace necessary for each disciple, so as to know every truth; in a related event (Nu 11:17, 26) the gift of the spirit to the 70 elders is also given to the absent elders Eldad and Medad.
* In this scene b) it is stressed in the imperfect (ἔλεγον) and the present perfect (ἑωράκαμεν) the fact of viewing the Lord and Thomas’ answer with the negatives “μη”. Essentially, Thomas rejects for the third time, as the preaching of the disciples (which completes their sending) is preceded by the testimony of the empty tomb from the two witnesses and the proclamation of Mary Magdalene to her “brothers” in regard to where He rises: ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα μου καὶ Πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ Θεόν μου καὶ Θεὸν ὑμῶν» as well as the «ἑώρακα τὸν Κύριον».
* The scene (c) is inititiated as the first one, something that proves that fear is not completely expelled. The 8th day is a foretaste of eternity, while it is suggested that it is one of the Saturdays, when the first Community remembered the Resurrection. After the Peace blessing, there are no gifts from the Holy Spirit to Thomas (nor a personal invitation to him), who repeats his own words. In this specific scene -apart from the fact that the Lord enters through the gate- it is proven that He is omniscient, as He repeats verbatim what Thomas said to his fellow disciples. It should also be noted that He only addresses Thomas, as if he has come towards Him, while his infidelity is not connected to the lack of providing of Holy Spirit (the sperm of God – the Anointment). While in scene (a) the disciples rejoiced, in (c) there is not record of emotion, but awe, as Thomas is not explicitly mentioned as touching the sides of the Human, King, High Priest. The alternation of “me” and “you”, as uttered by the Lord, is impressive. In Thomas’ confession, the Risen Christ is projected as his own Lord and God, as he personally came to reveal Himself to him, without hesitating to accept Thomas’ clay hand touching the wound on the side of the new Adam – a wound that initially shed blood and (then) water, the elements out of which the new Eve / Church is built with. Thomas bursts into a confession, that suggests that Jesus in the Creator and Judge, and especially (and personally) of the one that is unfaithful. It should be noted that “my [God]” is prominent in speeches of biblical figures that receive special calling and especially in the words of Mary Magdalene (my Lord – my Rabbi). The last speech of the Incarnate Logos follows. There is the beatitude for those who believe without word / examination. Apparently, “ἰδόντες” includes touch.
* In the final comment of the beloved student (who has withdrawn “εις τα ίδια” with His mother) and his community in regard to the many signs He performed before His disciples, this specific event is to be evaluated as a sign, and hence, it ends the cycle that begun in Cana: “Ταύτην ἐποίησεν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἐφανέρωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ (2:11).” The book, however, with the aforementioned epilogue, was written with the following purpose: Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς (as He is called after His Resurrection) ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν [αὐτοῦ], ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ· ταῦτα (hence the appearance to the hesitant / unfaithful Thomas) δὲ γέγραπται (A) ἵνα πιστεύ[Σ]ητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ (β) ἵνα πιστεύοντες (a double reference to faith) ζωὴν ἔχητε ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ. (20:30-31). The name which becomes the object of faith in Johannine works is “Son of God”, while Lord and God (Creator and Judge?) are connected to every person, and especially those who demonstrate lack of faith. It should also be noted that the Gospel according to John still emphatically names the Risen One “Jesus”, even after His Resurrection, while there is no mention of His assumption (in contrast to Luke, who mentions it twice). Hence, Jesus is still present.
* Of course, this specific scene is in antithetic parallelism to the first appearance of the Risen One, initially as a gardener to Mary Magdalene. That scene takes place in the morning, in an open space (a garden nonetheless). There is the description of Mary moving to the tomb and then a double turn, an address with her name, and a deterring from touch with the phrase: “μή μου ἅπτου, οὔπω γὰρ ἀναβέβηκα πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· πορεύου δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφούς μου καὶ εἰπὲ αὐτοῖς· ἀναβαίνω πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα μου καὶ Πατέρα ὑμῶν καὶ Θεόν μου καὶ Θεὸν ὑμῶν.18ἔρχεται Μαριὰμ ἡ Μαγδαληνὴ ἀγγέλλουσα τοῖς μαθηταῖς ὅτι ἑώρακα τὸν κύριον, καὶ ταῦτα εἶπεν αὐτῇ.”

## Conclusion

In the conversion after conversion of Thomas, we have made the following observations:

In regard to Thomas’ conversion, every aspect of the conversions of Isis in the Hellenic / Roman world can be applied: hard, vertical, moral, and mystical (the emotional aspects probably deriving from the latter). It includes all of these elements, as Christ Himself has blocked every other road to salvation for Thomas – those roads were “marketed” at the philosophical schools and at the theatres / spectacles of the mystics. Eternal life and joy, grace and truth (which were ideals both in the Greek and the Jewish world) are offered in abundance only when in exclusive communion with Christ, who is, of course, connected to the Father and the Paracletus. Maybe, if we wanted to borrow the terms, for John faith is the turn from adhesion to conversion. This whole process, in order to be complete, requires many turns, as witness by the revelation of the Risen One to Mary Magdalene, who is -for the first time- found in the narrative front at its very end.

Naturally, the conversion of Thomas is initially connected to faith – dedication to a historical person, Jesus, the son of Joseph from the notorious Nazareth, who is identified with Logos (not the impersonal one proclaimed by Heracletus and the Stoics), but with a person that did not attempt to climb the ladder of cursus honorum as heroes and sons of god did. This specific Human / High Priest acquired flesh (not just body) and died forsaken by the disciples (a scandalous fact in the ancient world), with a painful and disgraceful death (by the standards of that time), convicted by the Jewish and the Roman authorities. In the process of conversion, it is emphasized this continuation by employing the marks of the nails that the Risen One bears on His glorious, risen body, as well as by maintaining the name “Jesus” in the narrative.

The conversion of Thomas is not connected to the authority of the student who witnessed, but, rather, with the community that produces the Johannine literature and verifies in 1 John that a communion with that community is a prerequisite to salvation, as the Messiah / the Logos of Life was witnessed and touched by its members. Thus, Thomas’ conversion, although understated by the Lord, is invaluable to the aforementioned community, because it verifies the testimony of the other disciples to Him for seven days, as well as Mary Magdalene’s.

The conversion of Thomas, although important to the “we” of the community, also bears a personal character. It proves that adopting faith is not something practiced by hysterical women (as claimed by Celsus) and beloved students. It is also pertinent to characters that doubted the words of the Logos, without that being a schism from the circle of the Twelve and although that would mean the risk of crucifixion. Conversion is not solely about emotion, but it involves logic – it requires evidence, not just signs.

Perhaps, indirectly, the conversion of Thomas turns the interest of the converted to the side which bears the mark of the spear, as well as the elements that shed out of the wound; these are of paramount importance to the Johannine community and could be characterized as the “authentic Cana”. Blood, especially, which flows from that wound and precedes water is connected to the true Manna that is provided by the new Adam; it provides -like His flesh- true life.

## General Conclusions

Thomas belongs to the circle of the Twelve, having been accepted through “rebirth” – call, like the first five. While he casts doubt on the words of Jesus, he is does not withdraw from the community he belonged after his conversion, although his absences during the first appearance of the Risen One could evoke such a suspicion. His presence, eight days after, inside closed gates proves that he shares the fear that the ten other disciples feel. Thomas does not insist on his unfaithfulness – unlike those that love the glory of the world than the one of God.

The Risen One is personally coming towards him, knowing Thomas’ words in detail, proving that He is not only the way to Heaven, but also to the Hades of infidelity. Through an appearance of Christ, Thomas is led to a fulfilled / complete faith and proclaims / recognizes Jesus as his Lord and God. Thomas belongs to the “we” of “εθεασάμεθα”, as well as those who bear witness to the Logos of life, who received flesh. The phrase “ο Λόγος σαρξ εγένετο” does not only pertain to the incarnation, but -most importantly- to the Resurrection. Conversely, Jesus is the Son of God, especially as He is Risen. It should be noted that early on, many gnostic texts were attributed to Thomas, which some contemporary researchers regard as valid as the Gospels.

This specific conversion does not occur in an instant: Καὶ τίνος ἕνεκεν οὐκ εὐθέως αὐτῷ φαίνεται, ἀλλὰ μετὰ (35) ἡμέρας ὀκτώ; Ὥστε μεταξὺ κατηχούμενον αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν μαθητῶν, καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀκούοντα, καὶ εἰς πλείονα τῶν μαθητῶν, καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀκούοντα, καὶ εἰς πλείονα ἐκκαῆναι πόθον, καὶ πιστότερον πρὸς τὸ μέλλον γενέσθαι. Πόθεν δὲ ᾔδει ὅτι καὶ ἡ πλευρὰ ἠνεῴχθη; Παρὰ τῶν μαθητῶν ἀκούσας. Πῶς οὖν τὸ μὲν ἐπίστευσε, τὸ (40) δὲ οὐκ ἐπίστευσεν; Ὅτι τοῦτο πολὺ

παράδοξον καὶ θαυμαστὸν ἦν .(Chrystostomus).

This conversion also contributes to a more complete intergration to a community, as the pivotal and unique moment of conversion after the conversion -which probably causes awe to the person- is used as an evidence, both for truth and for the identity of the “we” of the community, to those who may doubt it. Thus, the scene of Thomas’ conversion was included by the most important witness; it is a powerful evidence and potent enough to lead other “Thomas”, who are part of the Johannine community, to faith. These may doubt the confession / testimony of the rest of the disciples and of Mary Magdalene. In this perfect conversion, the final seal is not that of hearing (as emphasized by established Protestant commentators to John), but, also, the taste of blood that was shed from the wound on the side of Jesus. That wound which Thomas was called to explore but was not detached after having heard the relevant words of Jesus in John 6. That side still provides true life. Faith is a constant struggle.

40 Καὶ ἀπῆλθεν πάλιν **πέραν τοῦ Ἰορδάνου εἰς τὸν τόπον ὅπου ἦν Ἰωάννης τὸ πρῶτον βαπτίζων καὶ ἔμεινεν ἐκεῖ**.

41 Καὶ πολλοὶ ἦλθον πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ἔλεγον ὅτι

**Ἰωάννης μὲν σημεῖον ἐποίησεν οὐδέν, πάντα δὲ ὅσα εἶπεν Ἰωάννης περὶ τούτου ἀληθῆ ἦν**.

 42 καὶ *πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν* εἰς αὐτὸν ἐκεῖ. […]

4 Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν·

**αὕτη ἡ ἀσθένεια οὐκ ἔστιν πρὸς θάνατον ἀλλ᾽ ὑπὲρ τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ,**

**ἵνα δοξασθῇ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ δι᾽ αὐτῆς.**

 5 ἠγάπα δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὴν Μάρθαν καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν αὐτῆς καὶ τὸν Λάζαρον.

 6 ὡς οὖν ἤκουσεν ὅτι ἀσθενεῖ, τότε μὲν ἔμεινεν **ἐν ᾧ ἦν τόπῳ δύο ἡμέρας,**

7 Ἔπειτα μετὰ τοῦτο λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς·

**Ἄγωμεν εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν πάλιν.**

8 Λέγουσιν αὐτῷ οἱ μαθηταί·

**Ῥαββί, νῦν ἐζήτουν σε λιθάσαι οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, καὶ πάλιν ὑπάγεις ἐκεῖ;**

 9 Ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς·

**Οὐχὶ δώδεκα ὧραί εἰσιν τῆς ἡμέρας;**

**ἐάν τις περιπατῇ ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, οὐ προσκόπτει, ὅτι τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου τούτου βλέπει·**

**10 ἐὰν δέ τις περιπατῇ ἐν τῇ νυκτί, προσκόπτει, ὅτι τὸ φῶς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν αὐτῷ.**

 11 Ταῦτα εἶπεν, καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο λέγει αὐτοῖς·

**Λάζαρος ὁ φίλος ἡμῶν κεκοίμηται· ἀλλὰ πορεύομαι ἵνα ἐξυπνίσω αὐτόν.**

12 εἶπαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτῷ·

**κύριε, εἰ κεκοίμηται σωθήσεται.**

13 εἰρήκει δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς περὶ τοῦ θανάτου αὐτοῦ,

ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ἔδοξαν ὅτι περὶ τῆς κοιμήσεως τοῦ ὕπνου λέγει.

 14 τότε οὖν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς παρρησίᾳ·

***Λάζαρος ἀπέθανεν,***

***15 καὶ χαίρω δι᾽ ὑμᾶς ἵνα πιστεύσητε, ὅτι οὐκ ἤμην ἐκεῖ·***

***Ἀλλὰ ἄγωμεν πρὸς αὐτόν.***

16 Εἶπεν οὖν **Θωμᾶς ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος** τοῖς συμμαθηταῖς·

***Ἄγωμεν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἵνα ἀποθάνωμεν μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ.***

17 Ἐλθὼν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εὗρεν αὐτὸν τέσσαρας ἤδη ἡμέρας ἔχοντα ἐν τῷ μνημείῳ.

18 ἦν δὲ **ἡ Βηθανία ἐγγὺς τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων** ὡς ἀπὸ σταδίων δεκαπέντε.

 19 πολλοὶ δὲ ἐκ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐληλύθεισαν πρὸς τὴν Μάρθαν καὶ Μαριὰμ

ἵνα παραμυθήσωνται αὐτὰς περὶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ.

31 Ὅτε οὖν ἐξῆλθεν (ὁ Ἰούδας τὴ *νύχτα*), λέγει Ἰησοῦς·

νῦν ἐδοξάσθη ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Ἀνθρώπου καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐ**δοξ**άσθη ἐν αὐτῷ·

32 [εἰ ὁ Θεὸς ἐδοξάσθη ἐν αὐτῷ,] καὶ ὁ θεὸς δοξάσει αὐτὸν ἐν αὐτῷ, **καὶ εὐθὺς** δοξάσει αὐτόν.

33 **τεκνία**, ἔτι μικρὸν μεθ᾽ ὑμῶν εἰμι·

**Ζητήσετέ με,**

καὶ καθὼς εἶπον τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι «ὅπου ἐγὼ ὑπάγω ὑμεῖς οὐ δύνασθε ἐλθεῖν»,

καὶ ὑμῖν λέγω ἄρτι.

4 Ἐντολὴν καινὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν, ἵνα ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους,

καθὼς ἠγάπησα ὑμᾶς **ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀγαπᾶτε ἀλλήλους.**

35 ἐν τούτῳ γνώσονται πάντες ὅτι ἐμοὶ μαθηταί ἐστε, ἐὰν ἀγάπην ἔχητε ἐν ἀλλήλοις.

36 Λέγει αὐτῷ Σίμων Πέτρος·

**κύριε, ποῦ ὑπάγεις;**

Ἀπεκρίθη [αὐτῷ] Ἰησοῦς·

**Ὅπου ὑπάγω οὐ δύνασαί μοι νῦν ἀκολουθῆσαι.**

**Ἀκολουθήσεις δὲ ὕστερον.**

 37 λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Πέτρος·

**Κύριε, διὰ τί οὐ δύναμαί σοι ἀκολουθῆσαι *ἄρτι*;**

**τὴν ψυχήν μου ὑπὲρ σοῦ θήσω.**

 38 Ἀποκρίνεται Ἰησοῦς·

**τὴν ψυχήν σου ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ θήσεις (!)**

**Ἀμὴν Ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, οὐ μὴ ἀλέκτωρ φωνήσῃ, ἕως οὗ ἀρνήσῃ με τρίς.**

***3* Α. *καὶ ἐὰν πορευθῶ καὶ ἑτοιμάσω τόπον ὑμῖν,***

***πάλιν ἔρχομαι καὶ παραλήμψομαι ὑμᾶς πρὸς ἐμαυτόν,***

***ἵνα ὅπου εἰμὶ ἐγὼ καὶ ὑμεῖς ἦτε.***

**4 Β. καὶ ὅπου [ἐγὼ] ὑπάγω *οἴδατε τὴν ὁδόν*.**

**14, 1 Μὴ ταρασσέσθω ὑμῶν ἡ καρδία·**

**πιστεύετε εἰς τὸν θεὸν καὶ εἰς ἐμὲ πιστεύετε.**

***2* Α’. *Ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ τοῦ Πατρός μου μοναὶ πολλαί εἰσιν·***

***εἰ δὲ μή, εἶπον ἂν ὑμῖν ὅτι πορεύομαι ἑτοιμάσαι τόπον ὑμῖν;***

*5 Λέγει αὐτῷ Θωμᾶς·*

***κύριε, οὐκ οἴδαμεν ποῦ ὑπάγεις·***

***Πῶς δυνάμεθα τὴν ὁδὸν εἰδέναι;***

 *6 λέγει αὐτῷ [ὁ] Ἰησοῦς·*

**Α. *Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή·***

**Β. *οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι᾽ ἐμοῦ.***

***7 Εἰ ἐγνώκατέ με, καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου γνώσεσθε.***

**Α’. *Καὶ ἀπ᾽ ἄρτι γινώσκετε αὐτὸν καὶ ἑωράκατε αὐτόν.***

*19 Οὔσης οὖν ὀψίας τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ τῇ μιᾷ σαββάτων*

*καὶ τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων* ***ὅπου ἦσαν οἱ μαθηταὶ διὰ τὸν φόβον τῶν Ἰουδαίων****,*

*ἦλθεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς·*

*εἰρήνη ὑμῖν.*

*20 καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἔδειξεν τὰς χεῖρας καὶ τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῖς.*

***ἐχάρησαν οὖν οἱ μαθηταὶ ἰδόντες τὸν κύριον.***

*21 εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς [ὁ Ἰησοῦς] πάλιν·*

***εἰρήνη ὑμῖν·***

***καθὼς ἀπέσταλκέν με ὁ πατήρ, κἀγὼ πέμπω ὑμᾶς.***

***22 καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς· λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον·***

***23 ἄν τινων ἀφῆτε τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἀφέωνται αὐτοῖς, ἄν τινων κρατῆτε κεκράτηνται.***

*24 Θωμᾶς δὲ εἷς ἐκ τῶν δώδεκα, ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος, οὐκ ἦν μετ᾽ αὐτῶν ὅτε ἦλθεν Ἰησοῦς.*

 *25 ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί·*

***ἑωράκαμεν τὸν κύριον.***

*ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·*

***ἐὰν μὴ ἴδω ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτοῦ τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων***

***καὶ βάλω τὸν δάκτυλόν μου εἰς τὸν τύπον τῶν ἥλων***

***καὶ βάλω μου τὴν χεῖρα εἰς τὴν πλευρὰν αὐτοῦ, οὐ μὴ πιστεύσω.***

*26 Καὶ μεθ᾽ ἡμέρας ὀκτὼ πάλιν ἦσαν ἔσω οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ Θωμᾶς μετ᾽ αὐτῶν.*

*ἔρχεται ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων καὶ ἔστη εἰς τὸ μέσον καὶ εἶπεν·*

***εἰρήνη ὑμῖν.***

 *27 εἶτα λέγει τῷ Θωμᾷ·*

***φέρε τὸν δάκτυλόν σου ὧδε καὶ ἴδε τὰς χεῖράς μου***

***καὶ φέρε τὴν χεῖρά σου***

***καὶ βάλε εἰς τὴν πλευράν μου,***

***καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός.***

 *28 ἀπεκρίθη Θωμᾶς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ·*

***ὁ κύριός μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου.***

*29 λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς·*

***ὅτι ἑώρακάς με πεπίστευκας;***

***μακάριοι οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες.***

***30 Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα*** *ἐποίησεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν [αὐτοῦ],*

*ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν γεγραμμένα ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ·*

 *31 ταῦτα δὲ γέγραπται*

*ἵνα πιστεύ[σ]ητε ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστιν ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ,*

As an overview, here are the appearances of Thomas the disbeliever organized in a table:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Χαρακτήρας | Αφηγηματικές Σκηνές στο *Κατά Ιωάννη*  | Αναφορές | Διαδράσεις με άλλα πρόσωπα | Παρατηρήσεις |
| Θωμάς ο λεγόμενος **Δίδυμος**(ο μόνος που ερμηνεύεται το όνομά του) | **11, 13-17** (Βηθανία, χειμώνας, ημέρα, εορτή Εγκαινίων - Φώτων). **14, 3-6** (Ιερουσαλήμ, άνοιξη, νύχτα, Πάσχα). **20, 24-31**(Επίλογος – Φινάλε, Ιερουσαλήμ [οίκος])Παντού άμεσος λόγος |  | **Θωμᾶς ὁ λεγόμενος Δίδυμος****Συμμαθητές****Ι. Χριστός – *Κύριος****οἱ ἄλλοι μαθηταί**ὁ Ἰησοῦς τῶν θυρῶν κεκλεισμένων* *όχι μόνον όραση + αφή (σε αντίθεση προς τη Μαγδαληνή)* | Παρών κατά την Ανάσταση του Λαζάρου (!)*καὶ μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ* ***πιστός******παράδειγμα προς αποφυγή*** |
|  |  | 1. Πρόλογος
 |  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Άρτεμις και Θέκλα. H συνάντηση της Αρχαίας Θεάς με την Ισαπόστολο Αγία κατά τους τέσσερις πρώτους μεταχριστιανικούς αιώνες (ιστορική και συγκριτική προσέγγιση)***Περίληψη: Η εισήγηση έχει ως θέμα την σχέση μεταξύ της λατρείας της θεάς Άρτεμης και της τιμής της Αγίας Θέκλας του Ικονίου στην Ανατολική Μεσόγειο κατά τους τέσσερις πρώτους μεταχριστιανικούς αιώνες. Η ιστορικοσυγκριτική μελέτη του πολιτισμικού διαλόγου μεταξύ των δύο γυναικείων προσωπικοτήτων επικεντρώνεται στη γραμματεία, τις πόλεις και τις κοινωνικές ομάδες στις οποίες εντοπίζεται κυρίως η συνάντηση της ανέμελης και ορμητικής όσο και φοβερής θεάς του κυνηγιού και των δασών, αλλά και προστάτιδας της παρθενίας και της παιδικής ηλικίας, με την ηρωΐδα της Πίστης και την συνέκδημο του Παύλου για την οικουμενική διάδοση του χριστιανικού μηνύματος στα έθνη.* | **Artemis and Thecla. Τhe Meeting of the Ancient Goddess with the Christian Female Apostolic Saint in the First Four Centuries of Christianity (Historical and Comparative Reflections)***Abstract: The paper’s subject is about the interaction between the cult of the goddess Artemis and the cult of St Thecla of Iconium throughout the Eastern Mediterranean in the initial four centuries of Christianity in particular. The phenomenon is investigated with regard to the literature, the cities, social groups and personalities mostly associated with the cultural meeting of the free-spirited but fearsome goddess protector o f the wilderness, virginity and childhood with the virgin heroe of the Cross and alleged apostolic companion of Paul for spreading the Logos of life to the nations.* |
|  |  |
| **Εισαγωγή**Εκπλήσσει το γεγονός ότι οι *Πράξεις Θέκλας* (ΠΘ), οι οποίες συγγράφηκαν στη Μικρά Ασία (Σμύρνη;) με πρωταγωνίστρια τη γνωστή μέχρι σήμερα «ισαπόστολο» του Ικονίου είχαν διαδοθεί μέχρι την Καρθαγένη (Africa Proconsularis) το 200 μ.Χ.. Μάλιστα το συγκεκριμένο έργο που μάλλον συγγράφηκε περί το 140 μ.Χ. (όταν και γνώριζαν ακόμη ακμή οι περιοδεύοντες χαρισματούχοι) είχε αποκτήσει και κύρος/κανονικότητα αφού συνιστούσε επιχείρημα υπέρ εκείνων των απόψεων που ήθελαν και τις γυναίκες να βαπτίζουν. Πρόκειται για τη γνωστή αναφορά του Τερτυλλιανού ([160/ 170-220 μ.X. *Περί Βαπτίσματος* 17.4-5)[[47]](#footnote-47). Ο πρεσβύτερος, ο οποίος στο όνομα του αγαπητού σε αυτόν Π. έγραψε το συγκεκριμένο αφήγημα, τελικά αποσχηματίστηκε. Τη διάδοση, όμως, του έργου του μαρτυρούν (α) τα χειρόγραφα, (β) το γεγονός ότι οι ΠΘ αποτέλεσαν πρότυπο (μοντέλο) για άλλα κείμενα αλλά και (γ) η τιμή προς την αγ. Θέκλα (< κλέος Θεού) σε αρκετά κέντρα της Μεσογείου. Κατωτέρω θα προσπαθήσουμε να εξιχνιάσουμε τις αιτίες που συνέβαλαν στο να διαδοθεί τόσο γρήγορα το συγκεκριμένο κείμενο[[48]](#footnote-48). Τις εντοπίζουμε στο φιλολογικό είδος/γένοςαλλά και στο γεγονός ότι η πρωταγωνίστρια υποκατέστησε τη δημοφιλή ιδίως τον 1ο αι. μ.Χ. φεμινίστρια θεά Αρτέμιδα. Όπως επισημαίνει o Winterήδη το 44 π.Χ. αναδύεται το μοντέλο της ***νέας-μοντέρνας συζύγου***, το οποίο δεν συμβαδίζει με το γνωστό συντηρητικό τύπο γυναίκας. | **Introduction**It is really astonishing how quickly the Acts of Thecla (AoTh), a text written in Asia Minor (maybe in Smyrna) about the life and the missionary journeys of St Thecla, the famous female Isapostle (equal to the Apostles) from Iconium, **had already spread across the Mediterranean, as far as Carthago** (Africa Proconsularis) by 200 A.D. The book was probably written around 140 A.D., a period with the charismatic movement still flourishing, and gained both high popularity and canonicity especially among the advocates of a more active, if not equal to men’s, involvement of women in the Church, employing the book as a strong argument favoring female priesthood. This trend is also witnessed by Tertullian in his work ***De Baptismo*** (17.4-5)[[49]](#footnote-49). Despite the removing of his office of the writer of the AoTh, the growing impact of his work remained unaffected. Evidence can be found in **(a)** the number of manuscripts related, (b) the use of the AoTh as the model text for other literature, and (c) the dynamics of the cult of St. Thecla itself vivid all across the major *mare nostrums’s* urban centres. In the following lines we will attempt to investigate the causality behind this rapid spread of the AoTh focusing on two main themes: **(Α)** The literary form of the book[[50]](#footnote-50). **(Β)** The fact that the cult of the female Christian saint functioned as a de facto alternative to the worship of the goddess Artemis, a cult quite active in the 1st -2 st A.D. Indeed, in 44 B.C., as Winter[[51]](#footnote-51) points out, a new model of womanhood emerges hardly compatible with the traditional type of feminity of the time.  |
|  |  |
| **Α. Το φιλολογικό είδος και περιεχόμενο των ΠΘ**Θα μπορούσε κάποιος να αποδώσει την ανωτέρω διάδοση στους εξής λόγους:1. Οι ΠΘ ακολουθούν το **φιλολογικό είδος του ρομαντικού μυθιστορήματος**, όπως αυτό του αλεξανδρινού Αχιλλέως Τάτιου, που εκτυλίσσεται στην Έφεσο. Πρόκειται για τον *πανηγυρικό της αγνότητας*: *Λευκίππη και Κλειτοφών (*4.1.4. 7.13.2-4). Μάλιστα σε αντίθεση προς τον πρεσβύτερο-συγγραφέα (σ.) των ΠΘ που αποσχηματίστηκε, ο «ερωτικός» σ. (Αχιλλεύς Τάτιος) σύμφωνα με μαρτυρία του Σουίδα έγινε χριστιανός και μάλιστα επίσκοπος! Αυτό το γένος ήταν πολύ αγαπητό ιδίως στις γυναίκες σε μια εποχή η οποία δεν ζούσε τόσο από το θέαμα όσο από το ακρόαμα. Ο πρωταγωνιστής παρά τον προηγούμενο «δεσμό» του ερωτεύεται. Τo ζεύγος παραμένει πιστό τηρώντας ιδίως η γυναίκα την παρθενία παρά τους θανάσιμους κινδύνους (όπως την απειλή του βιασμού και μάλιστα από «δυνατούς») και το όνειδος που αντιμετωπίζει σε νεαρή ηλικία. Στο τέλος επιτυγχάνεται ο γάμος. Εν προκειμένω η Θέκλα από το Ικόνιο ερωτεύεται τον Χριστό αν και στα πρώτα κεφ. φαίνεται ότι προσκολλάται στον κήρυκα απόστολο των εθνών. Προοδευτικά, όμως, καθίσταται σαφές ότι ο Π., ο οποίος αρνείται να τη βαπτίσει (προκειμένου εκτός των άλλων να αποφύγει τη σχέση-εξάρτηση μεταξύ μυσταγωγού και μυσταγωγούμενου [πρβλ. Α’Κορ. 3]), διαδραματίζει το ρόλο του νυμφαγωγού, τον οποίο ο ίδιος αξιώνει για τον εαυτό του στο Β’ Κορ. 11 (πρβλ. Ιω. 3 [Βαπτιστής]). Η «νύμφη του Χριστού» στην ηλικία των 17-18 (και όχι των 12-14 όταν και παντρεύονταν συνήθως οι γυναίκες) παραμένει πιστή παρά το πυρ στην α’ ενότητα (πρβλ. τρεις παίδες [Δαν. 3] Μαρτύριο Πολυκάρπου) και τα θηρία (Ιγνάτιος) στη β’ και παρότι δεν λαμβάνει άμεσα στο βάπτισμα από τον Π.2. Οι ΠΘ αποτελούν ένα είδος επίμετρου στο έσχατο βιβλίο του παύλειου επιστολικού Σώματος, τη Β’ Τιμ. Πρόκειται για Διαθήκη του Π., καθώς αυτός πλέον αντιμετωπίζει την εγκατάλειψη και το διωγμό . Σημειωτέον ότι ίχνη ρομάντζου ανακαλύπτουν σήμερα κάποιοι ερευνητές και στην τριλογία των Ποιμαντικών (ΠΕ) οι οποίες με τη σειρά τους από άλλους θεωρούνται ως το συμπλήρωμα του δίτομου Προς Θεόφιλον έργου του Λουκά (Λκ.+Πρ.). Σε αυτές τις επιστολές επίσης ο Π. κινείται σε μέρη που δεν είναι γνωστά από τα άλλα βιβλία της ΚΔ., όπως συμβαίνει και στις ΠΘ (αν και σε αυτές κινείται στην Ασία). Τελικά και στη Β’ Τιμ. αφενός γλυτώνει (;) από το στόμα του λέοντος με τη βεβαιότητα ότι τελικά ο Κύριος θα τον σώσει ενώ ταυτόχρονα αφήνει στον ακροατή του την αίσθηση ότι το τέλος του επίκειται (4, 7). Ίσως μάλιστα οι ΠΘ δεν συμπληρώνουν μόνον πληροφορίες που λείπουν από τα κανονικά βιβλία αλλά και προσφέρουν μια αφηγηματική ερμηνεία συγκεκριμένων παύλειων περικοπών (όπως Α’Κορ. 6-7) «διορθώνοντας» κάποια σημεία των ΠΕ.3. Τελικά οι ΠΘ συμπληρώνουν πληροφορίες για τη ζωή του αποστόλου των εθνών και μάλιστα χωρίς να παρεκκλίνουν εμφανώς **από την ορθοδοξία** στο γνωστικισμό παρά τον σαφή προσανατολισμό τους στην παρθενία και την εγκράτεια στοιχεία τα οποία όμως είχαν επικρατήσει στην εκκλησία του 2ου αι. μ.Χ.. Σημειωτέον ότι η Θέκλα δεν γίνεται ***συνοδός*** του Π. όπως συνέβη με τον ιδρυτή της Γνώσης τον Σίμωνα τον Μάγο. Από ένα πορνείο της Τύρου έλαβε ως γυναίκα την Ελένη μιμούμενος μάλλον τον Ωσηέ που λαμβάνει σύζυγο μια μοιχαλίδα για να εκφράσει τη σχέση Γιαχβέ και Ισραήλ (πρβλ. Ιω. 4 [συνάντηση Ιησού και Σαμαρίτισσας]). Έτσι η Ελένη λυτρώθηκε από μια σειρά αιχμαλωσιών ενώ το δράμα της δεν συνδέθηκε μόνον με τη γενεαλογία της Πρωτοϊστορίας αλλά και με την Ιλιάδα, την ελληνική «ΠΔ των ελληνορωμαϊκών χρόνων» όπου περιγράφεται η απαγωγή μιας άλλης Ελένης (Ειρηναίος 1.23.2-4). Και η φήμη του Σίμωνα φτάνει μέχρι τη Ρώμη[[52]](#footnote-52). Άλλωστε και ο Μοντανός κατηγορήθηκε από τον Απολλώνιο ([206 μ.Χ.] Ευσέβιος, *ΕΙ* 5.18.2α) ότι διαλύει γάμους για να του απαντήσει ο Τερτυλλιανός ότι ο Φρυξ αποτρέπει τον *δεύτερο* γάμο (*Haer.* 1.26)[[53]](#footnote-53). Στην περίπτωση των ΠΘ όντως η Θέκλα εγκαταλείπει τον εθνικό μνηστήρα της. Παραμένει «αμόλυντος, χωρίς σπίλο» όπως περιγράφεται και το μέγα μυστήριο της οικονομίας στην *Προς Εφεσίους* (5, 27) για να τεκμηριώσει, όμως, τις σχέσεις των δύο φύλων στο γάμο. Ταυτόχρονα, όμως, εκτός της παρθενίας εξαίρεται ο συγκροτημένος οίκος (familia) του Ονησιφόρου ενώ και ο Π. ενώ προσεύχεται για τη σωτηρία της Θέκλας (3.23) όταν αυτή απειλείται καθ’ οδόν προς την Αντιόχεια επιδεικνύει αδιαφορία ενώ αρνείται να τη βαπτίσει ο ίδιος. Από τα ανωτέρω συμπεραίνονται τα εξής: (1) το φιλολογικό είδος, (2) η μη εμφανής παρέκκλιση στην αίρεση αλλά και (3) η συμπλήρωση των πληροφοριών που παρέχουν οι Πρ. και η Β’ Τιμ. (το εισαγωγικό και το επιλογικό βιβλίο του σώματος των επιστολών). Ίσως θα μπορούσαμε επί τη βάσει των πληροφοριών των Πρ. να εντοπίσουμε από ποιους κύκλους προερχόταν ο “φεμινιστής” εμπνευστής των ΠΘ. Σύμφωνα με το Πρ. 18 στην Έφεσο έχουμε την παρουσία του Απολλώ, φορέα της αλεξανδρινής παράδοσης (η οποία δεν εκπροσωπείται με κάποιο βιβλίο της Κ.Δ.)[[54]](#footnote-54) και δώδεκα μαθητών του Βαπτιστή που δεν αποκλείεται να συνδέονται με τους περιοδεύοντες ασκητικούς κύκλους από τους οποίους προέρχεται η Πηγή των Λογίων (Q)[[55]](#footnote-55). Σε αυτήν (Q) την εκπροσωπείται η πλήρης εγκατάλειψη των πάντων και του συζύγου (Λκ. 14, 20 [νεόνυμφοι!]. 26). Μάλιστα εκπλήσσει ότι την αρνητική στάση (και δη το ***μίσος***!) απέναντι στη γυναίκα διασώζει μόνον εκείνος ο ευαγγελιστής (ο Λουκάς) που περιγράφει λεπτομερώς τη διακονία των γυναικών (αντίθετα Μκ. 10, 37. Μτ. 10, 23. [πρβλ. και *Ευαγ. Θωμά* 55])[[56]](#footnote-56) αλλά όχι και το γεγονός ότι οι μαθητές κατά τις περιοδείες του συνοδεύονταν από τις συζύγους τους (Α’ Κορ. 9, 5)[[57]](#footnote-57). Σημειωτέον ότι παρότι στο Πρ. 18, 26 όντως κατηχείται ο απολλώ στην ορθοδοξία από την Πρίσκιλλα και τον Ακύλα[[58]](#footnote-58), γενικότερα στο δίτομο έργο του Λουκά το ιδανικό για τη γυναίκα είναι η ησυχία/σιωπή (Μάρθα και Μαρία Λκ. 10, 41. πρβλ. όμως Πρ. 21, 9 [παρθένες θυγατέρες Φιλίππου προφητεύουσες]). Ίσως αυτοί οι κύκλοιεπικαλούνταν (α) την παρθενία του Βαπτιστή, (β) την άμωμη-παρθενική σύλληψη του ίδιου του Χριστού, (γ) το γεγονός ότι ο Ιησούς παρέμεινε παρθένος, (δ) λόγια του Χ. υπέρ των εκούσια ευνούχων, (ε) λόγια του Π. υπέρ της παρθενίας. Σημειωτέον ότι η Έφεσος συνδέθηκε και με το πρόσωπο της Θεοτόκου (πρβλ. Γ’ οικουμενική Σύνοδο [431 μ.Χ.] και τους θρύλους ότι κοιμήθηκε εκεί διαγράφοντας κοινή πορεία με τον «αγαπημένο» Ιωάννη [παρθενία-μετάσταση]). Εν προκειμένω πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι τον 2ο αι. επικράτησαν οι εγκρατιστικές τάσεις στην ορθοδοξία ένεκα και της αντίδρασης προς το «ελευθεριάζον» κίνημα των Νικολαϊτών (όπου πρωταγωνιστικό ρόλο διαδραμάτισε και η προφήτισσα Ιεζάβελ των Θυατείρων [Αποκ. 2, 20]). Οι τελευταίοι αντιμετωπίζονται σε ύστερα βιβλία της Κ.Δ. (Ιούδα// Β’ Πέ.. Αποκ.) ενώ δεν αποκλείεται να χρησιμοποιούσαν παύλειες διατυπώσεις εναντίον των ιουδαιοχριστιανών αλλά και άλλων αιρετικών όπως αυτοί στις Κολ. και το Α’ Τιμ. (4, 1-3). Ήδη στα Α’ Κορ. 6 και Ρωμ. 6 ο απόστολος των εθνών αντιμετωπίζει μια τέτοια παρερμηνεία του αντινομι(κιστι)κού αγώνα του. Τέτοιες ελευθεριάζουσες απόψεις, οι οποίες μετέτρεπαν τις αγάπες σε σπιλάδες (Ιούδα 12), ίσως «έδιναν τροφή» και στην κατασυκοφάντηση των συνάξεων ως οιδιπόδειων μίξεων[[59]](#footnote-59). | **A. The literary form and content of the AoTh**We could attribute the text’s vast spread to the following factors:1. The Acts of Thecla use the literary form of the romantic novel (romance) similarly to the romance of Achilles Tatius of Alexandria *The Adventures of Leucippe and Clitopho*n (in Greek *τὰ κατὰ Λευκίππην καὶ Kλειτoφῶντα*). The plot of this ode to purity and virtue is also taking place in the Asia Minor (Ephesus). Although the presbyter-writer of the AoT lost his office, Tatius, according to Lexicon of Suda, eventually converted to Christianity and even rose up to become a bishop! The genre of romantic novel was particularly popular among women[[60]](#footnote-60) in an era moved more by the ear and less by the eye. Leucippe and Clitophon, the protagonists, fall in love. The couple, especially Leucippe, struggles to keep their purity and fidelity despite the grave dangers and threats (like rape and death), many of them made by people in power, and the social negativism that face in their youth. In the end, their love is victorious. Back in our case, Thecla from Iconium dedicates herself to the love of Christ yet in the initial chapters of the AoTh appears almost equally attached to Paul, the Apostle of Nations. However, as the plot goes on, Paul’s various actions (for example, his refusing to baptize her) present him intentionally self-limited to the role of Thecla’s nymphagogus to Christ, which the Apostle appears to claim for himself in 2 Cor. 11 (, 1-2). In this way he avoids the relationship of dependence between mystagogue and mystes (initiate).Even so, the bride of Christ Thecla in the age of 17-18 (and not 12-14 which was the usual marriage age for women), strengthened by the spiritual guidance of Paul, ultimately stands by Christ following Leucippe’s path of virtue, virginity and courage before fire[[61]](#footnote-61) and beasts[[62]](#footnote-62).2. At the same time, the AoTh could be viewed as a form of epimetron to the last work of the Pauline corpus, 2 Tim. which contains the legacy of Paul ultimately facing abandonment and persecution. It should be also noted that hints of the genre of the romantic novel are traced by certain researchers in the trilogy of the Pastoral Epistles being themselves regarded as a supplement to the Evangelist Luce’s two-volume work to Theophilus (Gospel of Luc and the Acts). Within this pastoral trilogy, just like in the Acts of Thecla, Paul operates in places not mentioned by any other text of the NT Canon. Indeed in 2 Tim. Paul stays unharmed (?) from a lion, certain that the Lord will save him while implying that his physical end is at hand (4,17). Arguably the AoTh not only contribute original information absent in the New Testament Canon, but as also Wallace proves, provide a narrative interpretation of specific Pauline passages (like the 1 Cor, 6, 7)[[63]](#footnote-63), re-constructing them creatively.3. Eventually the AoTh enrich the standard information about the Apostle of Nations retrieved by the NT Canon **without evident declining from** Orthodoxy**[[64]](#footnote-64)** to Gnosticism, despite clearly favoring ascetic practices already thought prevalent in the Church of 2 A.D. At this point we should note that Thecla does not appear in the Acts as companion of Paul like Helen and Simon the Wizard. Simon chose Helen, a Tyrian prostitute, as his wife following Hosea’s example symbolizing the relation between Yahweh and his chosen people, Israel (compare Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well [John 4]). This way, Helen is saved from captivity and her drama is connected not only with the Proto-history of Genesis but also wit the Homeric Helen (Irenaeus 1.23.2-4) [[65]](#footnote-65) protagonizing in the Iliad, the “Old Testament” of the pagan Greco-Roman Antiquity. Besides, Montanus Phryx was likewise accused by Apollonius ([206 A.D].) Eusebius, *Church History* 5.18.2α) for destroying families and marriages; to whom Tertullian responded that the Phrygian spiritual leader is opposed to second marriage only, not the idea of marital life itself. Now back in the AoTh, Thecla does abandon her pagan fiancé remaining “without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless” as also described in the mystery of the Devine Economy in the Ephesians (5, 27) in order however to substantiate the relation between the sexes within marriage. At the same time, apart from ascetism and virginity, **highly favored** **is** in the AoTh the pius familia of Onesiphorus.The aforementioned give rise to the following conclusions concerning the high popularity of the AoTh which would be (1) the literary genre in use, (2) the **indirect-not evident** decline from orthodoxy and (3) the supplementation of the information retrieved by the Acts of the Apostles and 2 Tim (the opening and the final books of the Epistles corpus respectively). Possibly, the Acts could help us identify the origins of the “feminist” inspirator of the AoTh. According to Acts 18 both **Apollos**, a conveyor of the Alexandrian tradition, a tradition not directly at least represented in the NT Canon, and **twelve disciples of John the Baptist** possibly closely associated with the periodic ascetic groups behind the Q Sayings Gospel[[66]](#footnote-66), were operating in Ephesus. In Q a renouncement of all marital pleasures is in order for salvation to be gained. Moreover, it is quite surprising that this negative attitude (almost ***hate!*** Lk. 14, 20) towards women and marriage is uniquely mentioned by Evangelist Luke who draws in detail the female “diaconia” (service Lk. 8, 2-3) but not the fact that the disciples were accompanied during their periods by their spouses (1 Cor. 9, 5). Notably, despite the catechesis of Apollos to orthodoxy by both ***Priscilla and*** Aquila (Acts 18:26), Luke’s standard pattern remains that a woman’s appropriate behavior is silence (Martha and Mary Luc 10, 41[[67]](#footnote-67)). Maybe these groups[[68]](#footnote-68) insisted on a) the virginity of John the Baptist, b) the immaculate conception of Christ himself by a virgin, Theotokos, c) the virginity of Jesus himself, d) sayings of Christ in favor of the eunuchs by intention, e) Paul’s sayings pro virginity. It is also interesting that the city of Ephesus has been associated directly with Theotokos herself (see Third Ecumenical Council [431 A.D.]), through legends claiming that the Mother of Jesus resided in Ephesus following a similar course with Jesus’ beloved disciple, John (comp. virgintity-metastasis to heavens]). At this point, it should be noted that in the 2nd A.D. ascetic attitudes prevailed within the Church. This resulted among other reasons the rising opposition to the extreme ethical loose movement of Nicolaites (with the **“Jezebel”** of Thyateira [Rev. 2:20] at the forefront of the movement). They were dealt with in latter books of the NT Canon (Judas // 2 Peter, Rev.) while it is likely that Nicolaites were using Pauline sayings against Judeo-Christians and other Christian heretics, such as the “ascets” mentioned polemically in Col. and 1 Tim. (4, 1. 3). Already in 1 Cor. 6 and Romans 6 Paul seems to face a libertinistic misinterpretation of his antinomistic teaching. Such immoral extremes were definitely threatening all major gatherings of the Church, like the “agapae” feasts, feeding the anti-christian opposition’s allegations about secret orgies and oedipal mixes within the Christian ritual. |
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| **Β. Άρτεμις και Θέκλα**Ένας άλλος λόγος εξάπλωσης της τιμής προς την ισαπόστολο Θέκλα ήταν το γεγονός ότι η συγκεκριμένη πρόσφερε στο καταπιεσμένο γυναικείο στοιχείο ένα πρότυπο εναλλακτικό το οποίο στον εθνικό κόσμο πρόσφερε η Άρτεμις. Η γνωστή στο λατινικό κόσμο και ως Diana (πρβλ. τη θρακική Βενδίς) με την κοντή «καταστολή», το τόξο και με τη συνοδεία σκύλου και ελαφιού ήταν η ιδανική γυναίκα, η οποία ήδη στον Όμηρο ταυτίζεται με γυναίκες όπως η Έλενα, η Πηνελόπη, η Ναυσικά. Ελευθερία από τις κοινωνικές συμβατότητες, προστασία από τις ωδίνες και αθανασία (καθώς συνδεόταν και με τον κόσμο των νεκρών αφού απεικονιζόταν με κλάδο) ήταν τα δώρα που κόμιζε ιδίως στο γυναικείο πληθυσμό. Είναι χαρακτηριστική η απεικόνισή της στην ακρόπολη των Φιλίππων μαζί με 40 γυναίκες οι οποίες, όμως, σε απόλυτη αντίθεση προς την Αρτέμιδα φέρουν πέπλο είναι ενδεδυμένες με καταστολή και φέρουν παραδοσιακά στοιχεία του νοικοκυριού (όπως π.χ. μαλλί). Στον επίλογο των ΠΘ (κεφ. 44) η πρωταγωνίστρια η οποία αν και ξεκίνησε την ζωή της ως περιοδεύουσα ξένη-δούλη του Θεού, εγκαταστάθηκε και αυτή επί 72 (!) χρόνια μακριά από την πόλη σε σπηλιά τρώγοντας χόρτα και πίνοντας νερό, εκλαμβάνεται ως *πιστή ιέρεια της Αρτέμιδος* που έχει και τη δυνατότητα να θεραπεύει και να εξορκίζει. Σημειωτέον ότι η Θέκλα δεν ακολούθησε την «παραδοσιακή» οδό της υποταγής στο θέλημα της μητέρας και της ανάληψης των δεσμών του γάμου παρότι στο τέλος ενδιαφέρεται για τον οίκο της και τη χήρα «πρόγονό» της. Επίσης κήρυξε και δεν υποτάχθηκε ούτε στις ορέξεις των ηγεμόνων αλλά ούτε και στα πατριαρχικά πρέπει εντός της Εκκλησίας. Δεν δίστασε να κόψει τα μαλλιά της (κεφ. 25) αλλά και να αντισταθεί ενεργά στον επίδοξο βιαστή της σχίζοντας τη χλαμύδα του και αφαιρώντας του το στεφάνι, γεγονός που σήμαινε δημόσιο ευτελισμό του (κεφ. 26). Ο ίδιος ο Π. έχει ήδη αποστασιοποιηθεί λέγοντας όπως ο Αβραάμ στην περίπτωση της Σάρρας (Γέν. 12, 17): *Δεν γνωρίζω τη γυναίκα για την οποία μιλάς. Δεν είναι δική μου*. Τα κοινά στοιχεία που παρουσιάζει η Άρτεμις[[69]](#footnote-69) (< ἄρταμος = σφαγέας, ή < ἄρκτος) ή Άρτιμους στα λυδικά, κόρη της Λητώ και αδελφή του Απόλλωνα [[70]](#footnote-70) με τη Θέκλα είναι τα εξής:**- Παρθενία**: η Άρτεμις, η προστάτις της πόλεως όπου αργότερα με την Γ’ Οικουμενική Σύνοδο θα χαρακτηριστεί η Μαριάμ ως Θεοτόκος, συνδεόταν με την παρθενία (Αχιλλεύς Τάτιος 6.21.2). Αυτό συνέβαινε παρότι ήταν προστάτης των τοκετών (Λεχώ/Λοχεῖα ή Σωωδίνα) και παρότι το ξόανο αυτής ήταν πολύμαστον. Οι ιερείς του Παρθενώνα της θεάς που ως σύμβολό της είχε τη μέλισσα (σύμβολο της αγνότητας), οι Εσσηνοί, απείχαν από τις σεξουαλικές σχέσεις, αλλά και οι γυναίκες που συμμετείχαν στη λατρεία της έπρεπε να είναι αμόλυντες. Διέρχονταν μάλιστα και μια δοκιμασία μέσω της εισόδου σε σπήλαιο (Αχιλλεύς Τάτιος 8 [αποκορύφωση της αφήγησης]). Σημειωτέον ότι τελικά και η γερόντισσα πλέον τελικά Θέκλα σώζεται από το βιασμό διά της εισόδου της σε βράχο. Στον αλεξανδρινό Αχιλλέα Τάτιο (4.1.4) η Άρτεμις της Εφέσου υπερασπίζεται την παρθενία της πρωταγωνίστριας Λευκίππης, η οποία διέρχεται όπως και η Θέκλα σε ευτελισμούς: *ἡ γάρ μοι θεὸς Ἄρτεμις ἐπιστᾶσα πρῴην κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους͵ ὅτε ἔκλαιον μέλλουσα σφαγήσεσθαι͵ «Μὴ νῦν͵ ἔφη͵ κλαῖε· οὐ γὰρ τεθνήξῃ·* ***βοηθὸς γὰρ ἐγώ σοι παρέσομαι****,* ***μενεῖς δὲ παρθένος****͵ ἔστ΄ ἄν σε νυμφοστολήσω· ἄξεται δέ σε ἄλλος οὐδεὶς ἢ Κλειτοφῶν*». Και στα Εφεσιακά του Ξενοφώντα η Άρτεμις εγγυάται **την πιστότητα**: «Ἁβροκόμη͵ πεπίστευκας ὅτι ἐὰν ἀπαλλαγῶ σοῦ͵ περὶ ἀνδρὸς ἔτι καὶ γάμου σκέψομαι͵ ἥτις οὐδὲ ζήσομαι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄνευ σοῦ; ***Ὡς ὀμνύω τέ σοι τὴν πάτριον ἡμῖν θεόν͵ τὴν μεγάλην Ἐφεσίων Ἄρτεμιν***͵ καὶ ταύτην ἣν διανύομεν θάλατταν καὶ τὸν ἐπ΄ ἀλλήλοις ἡμᾶς καλῶς ἐκμήναντα θεόν͵ ὡς ἐγὼ καὶ βραχύ τι ἀποσπασθεῖσα σοῦ οὔτε ζήσομαι οὔτε τὸν ἥλιον ὄψομαι» (1.11.5).- **Ελευθερία από τις κοινωνικές συμβατικότητες-κυριαρχία στα αρσενικά «θηρία»:** Η Άρτεμις, επονομαζόμενη και ως πότνια (= κυρία) θηρών (*Ιλιάδα* 21. 470), ήταν περιφερόμενη, όπως περιοδεύουσα χαρισματούχος χρημάτισε αρχικά και η Θέκλα. Τελικά, όπως ήδη σημειώθηκε, εγκαταστάθηκε εκτός πόλης (Σελεύκειας) σε σπηλιά η οποία όπως και η έρημος θεωρούνταν από τις μάζες τόπος κατοικίας δαιμόνων. Αυτή αντιστρόφως βρίσκει σε αυτό το χώρο καταφύγιο αφού τα είδωλα-δαιμόνια λατρεύονται εντός της πόλης. Ήδη τα θηρία έχουν καθυποταχθεί από αυτήν (κεφ. 33-34: φώκιες [υγρό στοιχείο]). Με αφορμή τη Θέκλα, την οποία υπερασπίζεται μια θηλυκή λέαινα, όλες οι γυναίκες της πόλης αντιστέκονται εν χορώ στη βούληση-αυθαιρεσία του αρσενικού στοιχείου. Τελικά ούτε οι ταύροι με τα πυρακτωμένα γεννητικά τους όργανα (*μεταφορά*) τη βλάπτουν καθώς όχι μόνο το υδάτινο αλλά και το πύρινο στοιχείο την υπερασπίζονται. Σημειωτέον ότι οι μαστοί της εφέσιας *ταυροπόλου-ταυρίκης* Αφροδίτης (Σοφοκλής, *Αίας* 1457. Ευρυπίδης, *Ιφιγ. εν Ταύροις* 85. 1454) πιθανόν ταυτίζονται με όρχεις ταύρων που θυσιάζονταν χάριν της γονιμότητας. Επίσης δεν πρέπει να λησμονείται ότι η *Λυκώ/Λύκαινα* (αυτή που σκοτώνει τους λύκους προστατεύοντας το ποίμνιο ή συνδέεται με τη Λυκεία ή/και με τη λύκη [= το πρωινό ημίφως]) ή *Φωσφόρος* θεά αρχικά ήταν μία από τις χθόνιες ανατολικές θεές γονιμότητας. Ενσωματώθηκε όμως από τους Ίωνες άποικους στο πάνθεό τους. Το ακαλαίσθητο για τα αττικά δεδομένα ξύλινο ξόανο της Αρτέμιδος θεωρούνταν ως αρχέγονο δώρο των επίσης φεμινιστριών Αμαζόνων. Kαι η Θέκλα συνδέεται με τα κλίματα της Ανατολής.**Θεραπεία-Εξορκισμός:**Όπως η *Σώτειρα, αγία* Άρτεμις απαλλάσσει από θανάσιμους κινδύνους και εγγυάται και αιώνια ζωή-αθανασία, έτσι και η Θέκλα με την προσευχή γίνεται αφορμή η κόρη της Τρύφαινας, η Φαλκονίλλα, να ζήσει αιώνια (κεφ. 29) αλλά και στο τέλος λειτουργεί θεραπευτικά και εξορκιστικά. Το αποτέλεσμα είναι, όπως οι εφέσιοι αργυροκόποι των Πράξεων (κεφ. 19), έτσι και οι ιατροί της Σελεύκειας να αντιδράσουν υποκινώντας το βιασμό της δούλης του Θεού. Αξιοσημείωτο είναι το γεγονός ότι σε ένα φυλακτό της Αρτέμιδος που υπάρχει σε μουσείο των Συρακουσών η Άρτεμις ταυτίζεται με το φως το ιερόν (το οποίο συνδέεται ιδιαίτερα με τη Θέκλα στις ΠΘ) και κατακλείεται με τη φράση *Δαμναμενῆι δέχου θεοαλκέ ἀπαρχήν*. Το θεοαλκέ σημαίνει την θεϊκή ανδρεία και παρηχεί το όνομα αλλά και τον χαρακτήρα της πρωταγωνίστριας των ΠΘ. **- Παγκοσμιότητα**: Το «μυστήριο της ευσεβείας» της Αρτέμιδος δεν περιοριζόταν στο άλσος-τον παράδεισο όπου εντοπιζόταν το «αχειροποίητο» ξόανο αλλά είχε αποκτήσει παγκόσμιες διαστάσεις . Η εφέσια θεά λατρευόταν σε όλη τη Μεσόγειο: στη Νεάπολη της Σαμάρειας, τη Μασσαλία, τη Ρώμη (το λόφο Αβεντίνη), το Augustodonum της Γαλλίας ακόμη και στο Ημεροσκοπείον της Ισπανίας στα νότια της Βαλεντίας (Valencia) αλλά και την Κυρήνη στη Βόρεια Αφρική όπου έζησε ο Τερτυλλιανός (πρβλ. Στράβων, 4.1.4-8. Παυσανίας 4.31.8) . Η μεταφορά της λατρείας της γινόταν και μέσω της μεταφοράς παρθένων από την Έφεσο στα προαναφερθέντα κέντρα. Δεν αποκλείεται και η Θέκλα να έγινε τελικά διάσημη μέσω της μεταστροφής γυναικών που λάτρευαν την Αρτέμιδα και μετακινούνταν σε ένα δίκτυο της Μεσογείου.**Συμπεράσματα**Από τα ανωτέρω θεωρώ ότι οι ΠΘ, των οποίων ο συγγραφέας δεν αποκλείεται να έχει κοινά με τους δώδεκα βαπτιστές και τον Απολλώ, οφείλουν τη σύντομη διάδοσή τους σε όλη τη Μεσόγειο στους εξής παράγοντες:1. το φιλολογικό είδος του μυθιστορήματος/ρομάντζου που γοητεύει κυρίως το γυναικείο στοιχείο2. το γεγονός ότι καλύπτουν κενά και συμπληρώνουν το σώμα των παύλειων επιστολών και τις Πράξεις 3. προβάλλουν ένα άριστο υποκατάστατο στην παγκοσμίως λατρευομένη Αρτέμιδα. | **Β. Artemis and Thecla**Another contributing factor regarding the high popularity of the cult of Saint Thecla was that the female Isapostle from Iconium offered to the oppressed female gender an alternative model to the pagan goddess Artemis also known as Diana. The short, dressed goddess with the bow has been a feminine ideal which since already in the Homeric era is identified with Penelope and Nausika[[71]](#footnote-71). Freedom from casual conformity, protection in birth and immortality (often associated with the underworld too, as depictions of her suggest) were some of her charismas to all her followers, especially the female ones. A most characteristic depiction of her figure can be found at the Philippi Acropolis where the deity is portrayed accompanied by nearly forty women who in total contrast to Artemis, are veiled and in conservative dressing carrying elements traditional elements of the familial household.In the epilogue of the AoTh (Chapt. 44), the protagonist saint is considered by the natives to be a faithful priestess of Artemis with healing and exorcising powers. It should be noted that Thecla did not stay on the “traditional” path of subordination and submission to her mother’s will and bonds of marriage, although she eventually seems concerned about her house of origin and her widow “ancestor”. She preached and defied secular and ecclesiastical patriarchy and authority. Thecla did not even hesitate to cut her hair and resist to the attempting rapist by tearing his garment apart and removing the chaplet from his head, both symbolic gestures of public humiliation (Chapt. 26). Paul himself appears estranged to Thecla by saying like Abraham in Sarah’s case (Gen. 12,17): ***I do know the woman that you are talking about, she is not mine***. Having started her life as a itinerating foreigner-servant of God, settles down in a cave far away from her home-town where she stays for 72 (!) years. Such places were also very dear to the going round the earth Artemis.In more detail the shared features with respect to Artemis[[72]](#footnote-72), are the following:**- Virginity:** The goddess Artemis, patron deity of the city which later would host the Third Ecumenical Council, where Mariam the mother of Jesus would be dogmatically declared as Theotokos, was particularly associated with virginity (Achilles Tatius 6.21.2) whereas at the same time she was worshiped as the protector of birth[[73]](#footnote-73). The cult of the goddess used **the bee**, as a symbol for purity. The priesthood of her Parthenon, **the Essenes** also kept themselves pure from sexual attachments as well as the women venerating her. Furthermore her female servants were undergoing a purity test involving entering a cave (Achilles Tatius 8 [peak of the plot]). Note that the old lady at this time Thecla, is saved form rape by entering miraculously in a rock. In ***the Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon*** Artemis of Ephesus defends virgin Leucippe been submitted, like Thecla, to several humiliations: “… the goddess Artemis stood before me in a dream and said “Wheep no more; thou shalt not die, ***for I will be thy helper, but thou must remain a virgin***, until I deek thee as bride, and non other than Clitophon shall be thy spouse” (Achilles Tatius, 4.1.4). And in the work of Xenophon ***The Ephesian Tale of Anthia and Habrocomes***, Artemis guarantees the fidelity of the heroine: «Ἁβροκόμη͵ πεπίστευκας ὅτι ἐὰν ἀπαλλαγῶ σοῦ͵ περὶ ἀνδρὸς ἔτι καὶ γάμου σκέψομαι͵ ἥτις οὐδὲ ζήσομαι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἄνευ σοῦ; ***Ὡς ὀμνύω τέ σοι τὴν πάτριον ἡμῖν θεόν͵ τὴν μεγάλην Ἐφεσίων Ἄρτεμιν***͵ καὶ ταύτην ἣν διανύομεν θάλατταν καὶ τὸν ἐπ΄ ἀλλήλοις ἡμᾶς καλῶς ἐκμήναντα θεόν͵ ὡς ἐγὼ καὶ βραχύ τι ἀποσπασθεῖσα σοῦ οὔτε ζήσομαι οὔτε τὸν ἥλιον ὄψομαι» (1.11.5). **- Freedom from social conformity-male “monstrous” dominance**: Artemis, also called Potnia (=Mistress) of the beasts (*Iliad* 21.470) and *Lyco/Λυκώ/Λύκαινα* (a deity that kills the wolves and protects the herds has been compassing the earth), just like Thecla in her early activities as an itinerating charismatic enthusiast. Eventually, as already noted, she settled down in a cave outside the city of Seleucia which (cave) like the desert was regarded to be a place for demons and darkness. On the contrary, there she manages to find refuge away from all urban idolatry. The beasts are already being succumbed by her spiritual personality[[74]](#footnote-74). Due to Thecla defended by a female lion, all women of the city resist against male dominance and authority. In the end, not even the fury bulls send against her having first their genitals annealed (*Metaphor*) would harm her as not only water, but also fire take sides with her. It should be noted that the breasts of the cult statue of Aphrodite Tauropolous (Sophocles, *Ajax* 1257, Euripides. *Iphigenia in Tauris*, 85.1454) could be bull genitals offered in the name of fertility. In addition, we should not cast into oblivion the fact that the goddess of Ephesus, was initially one of the **eastern** chthonian deities of fertility later integrated by the Ionian colonists into their pantheon. The vulgar, with respect to Attic cultural standards, wooden cult statue of Artemis was considered to be a gift from the feminist Amazons[[75]](#footnote-75). Thecla is also associated with the east climates of Asia Minor.**- Healing-Exorcism:** Just like the *Saviour sacred Artemis*/ *Σώτειρα, αγία* Άρτεμις who saves form mortal dangers granting eternal life and immortality[[76]](#footnote-76), Thecla ‘s praying becomes for Falkonilla, daughter of Tryphaina, a pathway to eternal life (Chapt. 29) while in the end her praying appears to have healing and exorcising power. As a result, the doctors of Seleucia move against her, just like the Ephesians silver craftsmen in Acts 19 against Paul, inciting the crowds to rape the Isapostle servant of God. At this point, it is worth mentioning that an amulet of Artemis, the *Phosphorus goddess,* kept in a museum at Syracuse, identifies the goddess with the sacred light (also strongly linked with Thecla in the AoTh) and contains the short phrase “*Δαμναμενῆι δέχου θεοαλκέ ἀπαρχήν” [[77]](#footnote-77).* The *θεοαλκέ* means **divine bravery** and alliterates both the name Thecla (< κλέος Θεού) and character of the female protagonist of the AoTh.**- Universality**: The “mystery of piety” regarding Artemis was not limited within her sacred grove-paradise where her acheropoietos (not made by man) palladium was located having gained popularity of global proportions. The Ephesian goddess’ fame was present throughout the Mediterranean urban network: Neapolis, Samareia, Marseille, Rome (Aventine Hill), Augustodonum, France, Hemeroscopio o Dianio, Valencia, Spain, North Africa, the home of Tertullian (comp. Strabo, 4.1.4-8, Pausanias 4.31.8) could be taken as examples. Spreading the cult was achieved also through the transporting of Ephesian virgins to the aforementioned urban centres. We should not overlook the possibility of Thecla herself becoming famous due to the successful conversion to Christianity of several of these female worshipers of Artemis operating all over the Roman *Mare nostrum* network. **Conclusions**My reflections so far lead me to argue that the AoTh, whom the writer is likely to have some in common with the twelve Baptists and Apollos, owe their quick spread in such a short time all across the Mediterranean to the following facts:1. The literary form used, romantic novel/romance captivating particularly the female population.2. The fact that the text fill voids and supplement the Pauline letters corpus and the Acts.3. They provide an excellent alternative to the universally worshiped goddess Artemis. |

1. I would like to thank de profundis Dimitrios Alexopoulos MA for the translation in English. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *But if the writings which wrongly go under Paul's name, claim Thecla's example as a licence for women's teaching and baptizing, let them know that, in Asia, the presbyter who composed that writing,*[*176*](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn116.htm#P11699_3289824) *as if he were augmenting Paul's fame from his own store, after being convicted, and confessing that he had done it from love of Paul, was removed*[*177*](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn117.htm#P11700_3290146) *from his office. For how credible would it seem, that he who has not permitted a woman*[*178*](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn117.htm#P11701_3290252) *even to learn with over-boldness, should give a female*[*179*](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn117.htm#P11702_3290323) *the power of teaching and of baptizing! "Let them be silent," he says, "and at home consult their own husbands."* [*http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03-49.htm#P11686\_3287159*](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03-49.htm#P11686_3287159) *[Translated by the Rev. S. Thelwall.]* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Jeremy W. Barrier The Acts of Paul and Thecla: A Critical Introduction and Commentary. Edited by Jörg Frey. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 270. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009, 15-28. Ο συγκεκριμένος υπομνηματιστής αποδίδει τη διάδοση των ΠΘ και στο γεγονός ότι στην αφήγηση περιέχονται θηριομαχίες που ήταν εξαιρετικά δημοφιλείς ακόμη και ως απεικονίσεις στις οικίες των ελληνορωμαϊκών χρόνων. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Bruce W. [Winter, The ‘new’ Roman wife and 1 Timothy 2:9-15: The search for a Sitz im Leben.](http://www.tyndalehouse.com/TynBul/Library/TynBull_2000_51_2_05_Winter_NewRomanWife1Tim2.pdf) Tyndale Bulletin 51.2 (2000) 285-294. του ιδίου *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*: *The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities*, [Michigan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Rapids%2C_Michigan): Eerdmans 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Stephen J*.* Davis*,* The cult of Saint Thecla: *a tradition of women's piety in late antiquity*, Oxford: University Press 2008 (ixoyc.net/data/fathers/520.pdf‎) 2-13. 15 κε. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Compare the Three Holy Children [Dan. 3] and the martyrdom of St. Polycarpus and St Ignatius of Antioch. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Richard I. Pervo, The Pastoral Epistles and The Epistolary Novel. *JHC* 1 (Fall 1994), 25-47. <https://depts.drew.edu/jhc/pervope.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. ##  P. Wallace Dunn, [The charistmatic gifts in the Acts of Paul: second century trends](http://actapauli.wordpress.com/2009/02/09/the-charistmatic-gifts-in-the-acts-of-paul-second-century-trends-by-p-w-dunn/), 2 <http://actapauli.wordpress.com/tag/> charismatic-gifts/ (27.3.2014). Στην ίδια ιστοσελίδα απαντά αρχείο με πλήρη βιβλιογραφική ενημέρωση για τις ΠΘ. Βλ. του ιδίου “[The influence of 1 Corinthians on the Acts of Paul](http://actapauli.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/influence-of-1-cor-on-acts-of-paul.pdf)“, Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers (Atlanta: Scholars Press), 438-454, with minor corrections. http://petrostelos.wordpress.com/vanity-page-of-peter-w-dunn/.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. P. Wallace Dunn, *The Acts of Paul and the Pauline Legacy in the second century*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge 1996 actapauli.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/pwdunn1996.pdf *‎.* [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. G. Theissen, *Die Religion der ersten Christen*, Gütersloh: Kaiser 32003, 319-320. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Luc 14,20 [newlyweds!]. 26. 18, 29 opp. Mark 10, 29, Mathew 19, 29 [comp. Gospel of Thomas 55]) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. But comp. Acts 21, 9 [virgin prophetesses, daughters of Phillip] [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Rüdiger Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede - müssen wir unsere Ansichten über die Pastoralbriefe revidieren?* Bibelwissenschaftliche Monographien. Brockhaus, Wuppertal 2003, 8 footnote 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Winfried Elliger, *Paulus in Griechenland*, SBS 92/93, Stuttgart 1978, 60. 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. < ἄρταμος (artamos)=slaughter, or < ἄρκτος> (arktos)=bear or Artimous in Lydian, daughter of Leto and sister of Apollo. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Comp. Chapt. 33-34: seals [beasts from the liquid element] [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Παυσανίας 4.31.8.9*: Ἐφεσίαν δὲ Ἄρτεμιν πόλεις τε νομίζουσιν αἱ πᾶσαι καὶ ἄνδρες ἰδίᾳ θεῶν μάλιστα ἄγουσιν ἐν τιμῇ· τὰ δὲ αἴτια ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν ἐστὶν Ἀμαζόνων τε κλέος͵ αἳ φήμην τὸ ἄγαλμα ἔχουσιν ἱδρύσασθαι͵ καὶ ὅτι ἐκ παλαιοτάτου τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦτο ἐποιήθη. τρία δὲ ἄλλα ἐπὶ τούτοις συνετέλεσεν ἐς δόξαν͵ μέγεθός τε τοῦ ναοῦ τὰ παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις κατασκευάσματα ὑπερηρκότος καὶ Ἐφεσίων τῆς πόλεως ἡ ἀκμὴ καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τὸ ἐπιφανὲς τῆς θεοῦ.* Το πρωταρχικό όνομα της θεάς ήταν *Ώπις*/*Ούπις* (Καλλίμαχος, *Ύμνος Αρτ.* 240. Μακρόβιος *Sat.* 5.22.4-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Η Άρτεμις συνδεόταν με τη μαγεία αφού ταυτιζόταν με την Εκάτη (Τατιανός *Κατά Ελλήνων* 8.2: *Άρτεμις μάγος*). Περίφημα ήταν στη λεκάνη της Μεσογείου τα *Φυλακτά/ οι Επιστολές της Εφέσου* που αρχικά ήταν έξι μαγικοί όροι (πνεύματα κατά τη λαϊκή αντίληψη) με δύναμη να εξορκίζουν τον δαίμονα (Κλήμης, *Στρωματείς* 1.15. 5.8). Ο όρος *Εφέσιος* ίσως όμως προέρχεται από το *ἐφίημι* (= αποστέλλω εναντίον). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. [Maureen E. Duffy, The Riot of the Silversmiths at Ephesus (Acts 19:23-40): A Synchronic Study Using Rhetorical and Semiotic Methods of Analysis.](http://hdl.handle.net/10393/6613) Phd diss. St Paul University, 1994, 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Das Evangelium als Hörgeschehen, *Orthodoxes Forum* 20(2006) 181-193. Doxologische Ethik im 1. Timotheusbrief. eine orthodoxe Perspektive Metapher – Narratio – Mimesis – Doxologie Begründungsformen frühchristlicher und antiker Ethik Kontexte und Normen neutestamentlicher Ethik / Contexts and Norms of New Testament Ethics Band VII Herausgegeben von Ulrich Volp, Friedrich W. Horn und Ruben Zimmermann Tübingen 2016; 355-374 Die himmlische Liturgie (Apk. 4-5) in ihrem Kontext und die Interaktion mit der irdischen Liturgie *"Poetik und Intertextualität in der Apokalypse / Poetics and Intertextuality in the Book of Revelation*" (WUNT I; Mohr Siebeck; ed. by Tobias Nicklas, Stefan Alkier & Thomas Hieke). 437-457. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Especially in Greece, women colleagues were emerged in the field of Interpretation with an alternative look at the texts. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. as the biblical Texts were written to be the object of *listening* in the frame of a *Synaxis / commune*) [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. *Η Λατρευτική Αναγέννηση και η Ορθόδοξη Εκκλησία*, Larnaka: Simatoros 1989, 110. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. We now live in a World where Christianity (a) is viewed by the political Government as one of the many religious Communities. (b) It is again a conscious choice in a multicultural environment, in which everyone becomes the "director" of their identity. Thus, the attitude of the protagonists of N.T. towards (i) the globalized environment of the Universe, (ii) the "public space" - the market (the forum) of the City and (iii) the prefecture / management of the House, I think it can be used as a model for which can is the functionality of the course of the Orthodox Religious in the public space and especially the School. Ultimately, the discovery of the New Testament and the Bible in general can actively help the theological world to articulate a "political" discourse of real hope. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. #  Vasilios Lambrinoudakis, Το Ασκληπιείο της Επιδαύρου: Τόπος φροντίδας σώματος και ψυχής. <https://www.blod.gr/lectures/to-asklipieio-tis-epidayrou-topos-frontidas-somatos-kai-psyhis/>

 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Pnyx, the seat of the church of the municipality, in the Greco-Roman years, had been transformed into a place of worship of the God of the Most High. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleusinian_Mysteries#cite_note-Clinton-48> On the 17th, the participants began the *Epidauria*, a festival for [Asklepios](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asclepius%22%20%5Co%20%22Asclepius) named after his main sanctuary at [Epidauros](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epidaurus%22%20%5Co%20%22Epidaurus). This "festival within a festival" celebrated the healer's arrival at Athens with his daughter [Hygieia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hygieia%22%20%5Co%20%22Hygieia), and consisted of a procession leading to the Eleusinion, during which the mystai apparently stayed at home, a great sacrifice, and an all-night feast (*pannykhís*). Clinton, Kevin. "The Epidauria and the Arrival of Asclepius in Athens", in *Ancient Greek Cult Practice from the Epigraphical Evidence*, edited by R. Hägg. Stockholm, 1994 [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The cult of Asclepius is introduced in Rom on an island of Tiber following the example of Dionysus in Athens. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. It was revived either by a boat moving on wheels or by a cruiser. When Marcus Antonius visited Athens, he was transformed into the specific deity and sealed his visit through a “marriage”. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. 277.26: *ἡ κωμῳδία γε τὸ λοιπόν ἐστιν͵ ἔλεγον δὲ ἀναφέρων εἰς τοὺς Τελμισσέας τοῦ Ἀριστοφάνους ὡς ἐκεῖ λόγῳ τις ἠγωνίζετο͵ ἔργῳ δὲ οὔ. ἐνάτῃ δὲ ἐδόκουν ὡς ἐν Σμύρνῃ περὶ ἑσπέραν προσιέναι τῷ ἱερῷ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ τοῦ ἐν τῷ γυμνασίῳ͵ προσιέναι δὲ μετὰ Ζήνωνος͵ καὶ εἶναι τὸν νεὼν μείζω τε καὶ ἐπειληφότα τῆς στοᾶς ὅσον ἐστὶ τὸ ἐστρωμένον. ἅμα δὲ καὶ ὡς περὶ προνάου τούτου διενοούμην. προσευχομένου δέ μου καὶ ἀνακαλοῦντος τὸν θεὸν, ὁ Ζήνων οὐδὲν ἔφη προσηνέστερον͵ λέγων δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς τὸν θεὸν͵ καταφυγήν τε καὶ τοιαῦτα ὠνόμαζε. περιεσκόπουν δὲ͵ ὡς ἐν τῷ προνάῳ δὴ τούτῳ͵ ἀνδριάντα ἐμαυτοῦ· καὶ τότε μέν γε ὡς ἐμαυτοῦ ὄντα ἑώρων͵ πάλιν δὲ ἐδόκει μοι εἶναι αὐτοῦ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ μέγας τις καὶ καλός. ταῦτα καὶ ὡς ὄναρ μοι φανθέντα αὖθις διηγεῖσθαι πρὸς αὐτὸν τὸν Ζήνωνα· καὶ ἐδόκει σφόδρα ἔντιμον τὸ τοῦ ἀνδριάντος εἶναι. αὖθις δὲ αὖ τὸν ἀνδριάντα ἑώρων͵ ὡς ἐν τῇ στοᾷ τῇ προμήκει τοῦ γυμνασίου. περὶ δὲ βαλανείου τοιάδε ἔδοξα*. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. ###  These are the components of the Happiness according to the popular orphic hymn to Demeter and many Inscriptions. See <https://www.theoi.com/Text/OrphicHymns1.html> [hymn 39 TO CERES [DEMETER ELEUSINIA]

## [https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%94%CE%AE%CE%BC%CE%B7%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1\_(%CE%BC%CF%85%CE%B8%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%AF%CE%B1)](https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%94%CE%AE%CE%BC%CE%B7%CF%84%CF%81%CE%B1_%28%CE%BC%CF%85%CE%B8%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%AF%CE%B1%29)

 [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. 315.7*: τὰ δ΄ ὑπὲρ τὸν τράχηλον καὶ τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν νώτων κατατάσεις καὶ τὸν ἀκριβούμενον ὀπισθότονον ἤδη τόνδε τρόπον ἰάσατο εὐθὺς͵ ἐπειδὴ τὴν δύσπνοιαν ἐξιάσατο. χρῆμα ἔφη βασιλικὸν εἶναι· χρῆναι δ΄ αὐτὸ λαβεῖν παρὰ τῆς γυναικός. καί πως ἐκ τούτων ἐφάνη διάκονος τῶν βασιλείων πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Τελεσφόρου νεῷ τε καὶ ἕδει͵ λευχείμων τε καὶ ἐζωσμένος͵ καὶ κατὰ τὰς θύρας͵ οὗ ἡ Ἄρτεμις͵ ᾔει ἔξω ὑπὸ κήρυκος͵ φέρων τῷ βασιλεῖ τὸ λοιπὸν τοῦ χρήματος. τὸ μὲν δὴ ὄναρ ὡς ἀμυδρῶς ἀπομνημονεῦσαι τοιοῦτον μάλιστα ἐγένετο. ἐπεὶ δ΄ ἐλθὼν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν γίγνομαι περιιὼν κατὰ τὸν Τελεσφόρον͵ ἐπέρχεται ὁ νεωκόρος ὁ Ἀσκληπιακὸς͵ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν ἑστὼς πρὸς τῷ ἕδει͵ φράζω πρὸς αὐτὸν τὴν ὄψιν τὴν γενομένην μοι͵ καὶ ἠρώτων τί ἂν εἴη τὸ χρῆμα͵ ἢ τίς ἂν χρήσαιτο. καὶ ὃς ἀκούσας καὶ θαυμάσας͵ ὥσπερ εἰώθει͵ Οὐ μακρὰ͵ ἔφη͵ ἡ ζήτησις οὐδ΄ ὁδοῦ πολλῆς͵ ἀλλ΄ ἐνθένδε σοι φέρω· κεῖται γὰρ παρὰ τοῖς ποσὶ τῆς Ὑγιείας͵ ἀρτίως γε θείσης Τύχης ταύτης͵ ἐπειδὴ τάχιστα ἀνεῴχθη τὸ ἱερόν. ἦν δὲ ἡ Τύχη γυνὴ τῶν ἐπιφανῶν. καὶ παρελθὼν εἰς Ὑγιείας κομίζει τὸ χρῆμα· καὶ χρίομαι ὡς ἔτυχον προσεστώς. ἦν δὲ καὶ τὸ χρῆμα τῆς εὐωδίας θαυμαστὸν οἷον καὶ ἡ δύναμις εὐθὺς ἐπίδηλος. θᾶττον γὰρ ἢ εἴρηκα ἀνείθη ἡ τάσις. ἐρωτήσας δ΄ ὕστερον τὸν 315 νεωκόρον ἔγνων ὅτι εἴη κάθαρσις τριῶν͵ ὀποῦ τε ᾧ χριό μεθα καὶ μύρου ναρδίνου καὶ ἑτέρου μύρου τῶν πολυ τελῶν͵ ἔστι δ΄͵ οἶμαι͵ τοῦ φύλλου ἐπώνυμον. σκευάσας δὲ ἐχρώμην οὕτως τὸ λοιπὸν καὶ πάντα ἐκεῖνα ἐκεχάλαστο. ἐφάνη δὲ καὶ ὁ Τελεσφόρος νύκτωρ͵ χορεύων περὶ τὸν τράχηλόν μου͵ καὶ ἀπέλαμπεν ἐν τῷ καταντικρὺ τοίχῳ σέλας ὥσπερ ἐξ ἡλίου*. **See also III.21-22 Anointment at Temple of Hygieia** https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/508180520d724b57bc6f03a0651636ea 315.7 [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Well known is the παιαν of Sophocles who received Asclepius in his home. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. #  Aggelos Chaniotis, Dionisia Daskalou. Το ημέρωμα της νύχτας: Η αρχαία Ελλάδα μετά το ηλιοβασίλεμα <https://www.blod.gr/lectures/to-imeroma-tis-nyhtas-i-arhaia-ellada-meta-to-iliobasilema/>

 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. 60.267.61*: Καὶ γὰρ τὴν ἀνάστασιν Θεόν τινα εἶναι ἐνόμιζον͵ ἅτε εἰωθότες καὶ θηλείας σέβειν*. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. *Performativity is an interdisciplinary term often used to name the capacity of speech, as a production of the "speaking body" (Felman 1980/2003), as well as other non-verbal forms of expressive action, to perform a type of constructed identity. It is the construction of identity and the reality that surrounds and conditions it through (mostly verbalized) social interaction. The defining performative act is typically performed by entire groups: it is not enough to perform oneself as something (as straight or gay, for example). The audience contributes more than mere ratification of an individual's performance; it conditions and channels that performance, and so makes its results not only meaningful but real (-seeming) (Robinson (2003, 2006).* <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Performativity> [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See also 6:11: *ἴδετε πηλίκοις ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἐμῇ χειρί.* See what large letters I make when I am writing in my own hand! [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. We must take in account that one of the main methods to receive and to memorize a text / narrative was to transform the words in pictures / imagery. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. June F. Dickie, *The power of performing biblical text today: For trauma-healing, evangelism, discipleship and for supporting careful biblical study/translation* verbumetecclesia 2021; 202 <https://verbumetecclesia.org.za/index.php/ve/article/view/2233/4770>. Larry W. Hurtado, “Oral Fixation and New Testament Studies? ‘Orality’, ‘Performance’ and Reading Texts in Early Christianity,” New Testament Studies 60 (2014): 321-40. About the discussion, which was provoked by this article see https://larryhurtado.wordpress.com/2016/03/01/performance-and-reading-in-early-christianity/

Anna Krauß, Jonas Leipziger and Friederike Schücking-Jungblut, [*Material Aspects of Reading in Ancient and Medieval Cultures Materiality, Presence and Performance.*](https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110639247/html) Materiale Textulturen 26. De Gruyter 2020 <https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110639247/html> [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong (1Co 1:27 NRS) [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. I do not assume that this only refers to those who believe by listening to the testimony of the first eye witnesses, as claimed by the majority of interpreters. In the heart of the public action of the Logos incarnate (Ch. 6) the eating of the flesh and the drinking of His blood is exalted, as the unique method of acquiring life. Moreover, the requirement for γέννηση ἄνωθεν ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ Πνεύματος has already been outlined. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. The Gospel itself verifies, with the first epilogue, that **this particular appearance is the ultimate sign**, which the Lord ἐποίησε ἐνώπιον τῶν μαθητῶν αύτοῦ. Obviously, this completes the circle of those signs that served as an introduction to the public action of the Logos incarnate in chapter 2. Perhaps, it is the most detailed dialogue of the Risen Christ with a disciple, across all Gospels. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. It should be noted that in John there is call to Jesus from the disciples and not the reverse, although in 15:16 it is emphasized by the Lord that: οὐχ ὑμεῖς με ἐξελέξασθε, ἀλλ᾽ ἐγὼ ἐξελεξάμην ὑμᾶς. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Nonetheless, Thomas became part of the Twelve -in a manner not described by John- by receiving Jesus. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. This life replaces the Kingdom (of the Synoptics), is equal to Joy and is symbolized with the copious provision (χάριν instead of χάριτος) of the following “material” elements: light, wine / blood, water / Spirit (= grace?), bread / body. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. In the East, John is read as a means of delving further into the faith during the time of the Roses – the Pentecostarion after the Catechism and the trial of the Holy and Great Lent, which culminated in the Baptism of the Holy Saturday. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Το κείμενο είναι το εξής: *Αλλά η αναίδεια μιας γυναίκας που τολμά να διδάσκει, δεν έπεται πως θα της δώσει και το δικαίωμα να βαπτίζει: εκτός αν εμφανιστεί πάλι κάποιο τέρας όπως την αρχαία εποχή, κι όπως εκείνο κατάργησε την Βάπτιση, το νέο τέ­ρας να την εκτελεί. Κι όσοι επικαλούνται έργο που ψευδώς φέρει το όνομα του Παύλου– εννοώ με το παράδειγμα της Θέκλας – για να υποστηρίζουν το δικαίωμα των γυναικών να διδάσκουν και να βαπτίζουν, ας πληροφορηθούν* ***ότι το έγραψε πρεσβύτερος εκκλησίας της Ασίας με δικό του υλικό, χρησιμοποιώντας το όνομα του Παύλου.*** *`Όταν τον ανακάλυψαν ομολόγησε ότι το έκανε από αγάπη για τον Παύλο και βέβαια παραιτή­θηκε. Πόσο ασυνεπής με την πίστη θα ήταν αν έδινε στην γυναίκα το δικαίωμα να κηρύττει και να βαπτίζει, εκείνος που δεν της επιτρέπει ούτε καν να διδάσκει! «Οι γυναίκες να σιωπούν», λέει «*και να ρωτούν τους άνδρες τους στο σπίτι*» (Α’ Κορ. 14, 34-35).* Μτφρ. Α. Ελευθεριάδης, *Μεταποστολικοί Πατέρες, Τόμος Β’* Τερτυλλιανός (155-235 μ.Χ.), Αθήνα: Όρος 2008. Marco Frenschkowski: Erkannte Pseudepigraphie? Ein Essay über Fiktionalität, Antike und Christentum, *Pseudepigraphie und Verfasserfiktion in frühchristlichen Briefen Pseudepigraphy and Author Fiction in Early Christian Letters* (Hrsg. v. Jörg Frey, Jens Herzer, Martina Janßen u. Clare K. Rothschild, u. Mitarb. v. Michaela Engelmann), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2009 181-232, εδώ 194-195. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Stephen J. Davis, The Cult of Saint Thecla: *A Tradition of Women's Piety in Late Antiquity*. Oxford*:* Oxford University Press 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. But if the writings which wrongly go under Paul's name, claim Thecla's example as a licence for women's teaching and baptizing, let them know that, in Asia, the presbyter who composed that writing,[176](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn116.htm#P11699_3289824) as if he were augmenting Paul's fame from his own store, after being convicted, and confessing that he had done it from love of Paul, was removed[177](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn117.htm#P11700_3290146) from his office. For how credible would it seem, that he who has not permitted a *woman*[178](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn117.htm#P11701_3290252) even to *learn* with over-boldness, should give a *female*[179](http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/footnote/fn117.htm#P11702_3290323) the power of *teaching* and of *baptizing*! "Let them be silent," he says, "and at home consult their own husbands." <http://www.tertullian.org/anf/anf03/anf03-49.htm#P11686_3287159> [Translated by the Rev. S. Thelwall.] [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Jeremy W. Barrier The Acts of Paul and Thecla: A Critical Introduction and Commentary. Edited by Jörg Frey. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe 270. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009, 15-28. Ο συγκεκριμένος υπομνηματιστής αποδίδει τη διάδοση των ΠΘ και στο γεγονός ότι στην αφήγηση περιέχονται θηριομαχίες που ήταν εξαιρετικά δημοφιλείς ακόμη και ως απεικονίσεις στις οικίες των ελληνορωμαϊκών χρόνων. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Bruce W. [Winter, The ‘new’ Roman wife and 1 Timothy 2:9-15: The search for a Sitz im Leben.](http://www.tyndalehouse.com/TynBul/Library/TynBull_2000_51_2_05_Winter_NewRomanWife1Tim2.pdf) Tyndale Bulletin 51.2 (2000) 285-294. του ιδίου *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*: *The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities*, [Michigan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Rapids%2C_Michigan): Eerdmans 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Κ. Σιαμάκης, Εισαγωγή εις την Αποκάλυψη http://www.philologus.gr/4/68-2010-01-01-01-22-30/76--i: *ὁ ᾿Ιουστῖνος πάλι ἔβλεπε στὴ ῾Ρώμη εἴδωλα τοῦ ῥωμαϊκοῦ ἀγροτικοῦ καὶ πριαπικοῦ θεοῦ Semo Sancus (Σήμων Σάγκος), ποὺ τέτοια ἀνευρίσκονται ἀνασκαφικῶς καὶ σήμερα μὲ τὴν ἴδια ἐπιγραφὴ (᾿Επιγρ. Λατιν. 2458, CIL 14,240), καὶ διάβαζε Simon sanctus (= ἅγιος Σίμων) καὶ συμπέραινε (᾿Απολ. Α΄ 26,2· 56,2· καὶ στὸν Εὐσέβιο ποὺ τὸ πιστεύει, ᾿Εκ. ἱστ. 2,13,3) ὅτι οἱ ῾Ρωμαῖοι λάτρευαν ὡς θεὸ τὸ Σίμωνα τὸ μάγο (Πρξ 8,9-24)· κι ἔκανε ἔτσι ἔναρξι τῆς ἀρρωστημένης ἐκείνης μυθολογίας γιὰ διαγωνισμοὺς θαυματοποιίας στὴ ῾Ρώμη ἐνώπιον τοῦ Νέρωνος μεταξὺ ἀποστόλου Πέτρου καὶ Σίμωνος μάγου, ποὺ τροφοδοτοῦσε τὰ γραώδη ἀπόκρυφα ἐπὶ αἰῶνες*. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Ο William Tabbernee, The Appearance of the New Jerusalem in Montanist Interpretation and the Revelation of John, *Die Johannesapokalypse, Kontexte-Konzepte –Wirkungen Hrsg. v. Jörg Frey, James A. Kelhoffer u. Franz Tóth [The Revelation of John. Contexts – Concepts – Impacts]* WUNT 287, Tübingen 2012, 651-682, στηρίζεται στον Τερτυλλιανό (*Αιρ.* 1.26. *Μαρκίων* 1.29.4. 3.24.4. Ευσέβιος, *ΕΙ* 5.18.2α: *ἀλλὰ τίς ἐστιν οὗτος ὁ πρόσφατος διδάσκαλος͵ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ διδασκαλία δείκνυσιν. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ διδάξας λύσεις γάμων͵ ὁ νηστείας νομοθετήσας͵ ὁ Πέπουζαν καὶ Τύμιον Ἱερουσαλὴμ ὀνομάσας (πόλεις δ΄ εἰσὶν αὗται μικραὶ τῆς Φρυγίας)͵ τοὺς πανταχόθεν ἐκεῖ συναγαγεῖν ἐθέλων͵* ***ὁ πρακτῆρας χρημάτων*** *καταστήσας͵ ὁ ἐπ΄ ὀνόματι προσφορῶν τὴν* ***δωροληψίαν*** *ἐπιτεχνώμενος͵* ***ὁ σαλάρια*** *χορηγῶν τοῖς κηρύσσουσιν αὐτοῦ τὸν λόγον͵ ἵνα διὰ τῆς γαστριμαργίας ἡ διδασκαλία τοῦ λόγου κρατύνηται)*. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Σε αυτήν δεν ανήκει μόνο η αλληγορία (Φίλων, Ωριγένης) αλλά και οι εγκρατιστικές τάσεις (Κλήμης Αλ. Ωριγένης). [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Π. Βασιλειάδη, Πρ. 18, 24-19, 7 και Πηγή των Λογίων. Επανεξέταση του προβλήματος του τόπου, χρόνου και συγγραφέα της, *Βιβλικές Ερμηνευτικές Μελέτες* , Θεσσαλονίκη: Πουρναρά 1988 282-298. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. M. Wolter, *Das Lukasevangelium,* Tübingen: Siebeck 516. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Cook John Granger, 1 Cor 9,5: The Women of the Apostles *Biblica* 89 (2008) 352-368. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Bλ. Μ. Κόνια, *Ο Ακύλας και η Πρίσκιλλα, συνεργάτες του απ. Παύλου*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1991. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Πρβλ. Αθηναγόρα, *Πρεσβ. Χριστ.* 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Stephen J*.* Davis*,* The cult of Saint Thecla: *a tradition of women's piety in late antiquity*, Oxford: University Press 2008 (ixoyc.net/data/fathers/520.pdf‎) 2-13. 15 κε. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. compare with the Three Holy Children [Dan. 3] and the martyrdom of Polycarpus [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. (compare with the martyrdom of St Ignatius of Antioch [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. ##  P. Wallace Dunn, [The charistmatic gifts in the Acts of Paul: second century trends](http://actapauli.wordpress.com/2009/02/09/the-charistmatic-gifts-in-the-acts-of-paul-second-century-trends-by-p-w-dunn/), 2 <http://actapauli.wordpress.com/tag/> charismatic-gifts/ (ημερομ. Ανάκτησης 27.3.2014). Στην ίδια ιστοσελίδα απαντά αρχείο με πλήρη βιβλιογραφική ενημέρωση για τις ΠΘ. Βλ. του ιδίου “[The influence of 1 Corinthians on the Acts of Paul](http://actapauli.files.wordpress.com/2009/03/influence-of-1-cor-on-acts-of-paul.pdf)“, Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers (Atlanta: Scholars Press), 438-454, with minor corrections. http://petrostelos.wordpress.com/vanity-page-of-peter-w-dunn/.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. P. Wallace Dunn, *The Acts of Paul and the Pauline Legacy in the second century*, unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge 1996 actapauli.files.wordpress.com/2009/01/pwdunn1996.pdf*‎.* [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. G. Theissen, *Die Religion der ersten Christen*, Gütersloh: Kaiser 32003, 319-320. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Luc 14,20 [newlyweds!]. 26. 18, 29 opp. Mark 10, 29, Mathew 19, 29 [comp. Gospel of Thomas 55]) [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. but comp. Acts 21:9 [virgin prophetesses daughters of Phillip] [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Rüdiger Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede - müssen wir unsere Ansichten über die Pastoralbriefe revidieren?* Bibelwissenschaftliche Monographien. Brockhaus, Wuppertal 2003, 8 υποσ 18. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Άκρως κατατοπιστικό για τα ονόματα και τις ιδιότητες της θεάς είναι το άρθρο G. Mussies, Άρτεμις *DDD* 91-97. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Στράβων, Γεωγρ. 14.1.23: *Οι εύνοῦχοι ἱερεῖς Μεγάβυζοι συνιεράσθαι ἐχρῆν.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Winfried Elliger, *Paulus in Griechenland*, SBS 92/93, Stuttgart 1978, 60. 64. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. <ἄρταμος (artamos)=slaughter, or < ἄρκτος> (arktos)=bear or Artimous in Lydian, daughter of Leto and sister of Apollo. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. (Λεχώ/Λοχεῖα or Σωωδίνα) [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Comp. Chapt. 33-34: seals [beasts from the liquid element] [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Παυσανίας 4.31.8.9*: Ἐφεσίαν δὲ Ἄρτεμιν πόλεις τε νομίζουσιν αἱ πᾶσαι καὶ ἄνδρες ἰδίᾳ θεῶν μάλιστα ἄγουσιν ἐν τιμῇ· τὰ δὲ αἴτια ἐμοὶ δοκεῖν ἐστὶν Ἀμαζόνων τε κλέος͵ αἳ φήμην τὸ ἄγαλμα ἔχουσιν ἱδρύσασθαι͵ καὶ ὅτι ἐκ παλαιοτάτου τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦτο ἐποιήθη. τρία δὲ ἄλλα ἐπὶ τούτοις συνετέλεσεν ἐς δόξαν͵ μέγεθός τε τοῦ ναοῦ τὰ παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις κατασκευάσματα ὑπερηρκότος καὶ Ἐφεσίων τῆς πόλεως ἡ ἀκμὴ καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ τὸ ἐπιφανὲς τῆς θεοῦ.* Το πρωταρχικό όνομα της θεάς ήταν *Ώπις*/*Ούπις* (Καλλίμαχος, *Ύμνος Αρτ.* 240. Μακρόβιος *Sat.* 5.22.4-6). [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Η Άρτεμις συνδεόταν με τη μαγεία αφού ταυτιζόταν με την Εκάτη (Τατιανός *Κατά Ελλήνων* 8.2: *Άρτεμις μάγος*). Περίφημα ήταν στη λεκάνη της Μεσογείου τα *Φυλακτά/ οι Επιστολές της Εφέσου* που αρχικά ήταν έξι μαγικοί όροι (πνεύματα κατά τη λαϊκή αντίληψη) με δύναμη να εξορκίζουν τον δαίμονα (Κλήμης, *Στρωματείς* 1.15. 5.8). Ο όρος *Εφέσιος* ίσως όμως προέρχεται από το *ἐφίημι* (= αποστέλλω εναντίον). [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. [Maureen E. Duffy, The Riot of the Silversmiths at Ephesus (Acts 19:23-40): A Synchronic Study Using Rhetorical and Semiotic Methods of Analysis.](http://hdl.handle.net/10393/6613) Phd diss. St Paul University, 1994, 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)