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Cosmological Freedom and the Sons of Knowledge

Abstract: The way that Gnosticism is understood and interpreted depends on many factors. In books, encyclopedias, and articles, it is commonly described as a dualistic system that separates body and mind, material and spiritual or knowledge and ignorance. This article offers a brief overview and possible interpretations of two gnostic cosmogonical myths: Sethian, described in the Apocryphon of John, and the Valentinian myth found in Irenaeus's *Adversus Haereses* and Hippolytus's *Refutatio omnium haeresium*. These myths or cosmogonies are used as an example of the secret knowledge that could bring cosmological freedom. Events in the divine pleroma and the actions of Sophia in myths are examined as the basis of a gnostic dogma that the sons of knowledge follow to achieve their freedom.

Keywords: *Gnosticism, Protology, Sophia, Knowledge*

Wolność kosmologiczna i synowie wiedzy

Streszczenie: Zrozumienie, czym jest gnostycyzm i jego interpretacja, zależy od wielu czynników. Powszechnie w wielu książkach, encyklopediach i artykułach jest on często opisywany jako system dualistyczny, który oddziela ciało i umysł, materię i duchowość lub wiedzę i ignorancję. Artykuł ten oferuje krótki przegląd i możliwe interpretacje dwóch gnostyckich mitów kosmogonicznych - mit Setiana opisany w apokryfie Jana i mit Walentyniana znajdujący się w „Adversus haereses” Ireneusza i „Refutatio omnium haeresium” Hipolita. Te mity lub kosmogonie są używane jako przykład wiedzy tajemnej, która może przynieść kosmologiczną wolność. Wydarzenia w boskiej pleromie i działania Sofii w mitach są badane jako podstawa gnostycznego dogmatu, za którym podążają synowie wiedzy, aby osiągnąć swoją wolność.

Słowa kluczowe: Gnostycyzm, protologia, Sophia, wiedza

Introduction

In Gnosticism the material world (and substance) is seen as bad, sinful, or lacking. Usually, the flesh and matter are regarded as evil because of their origin. There is a certain need or necessity to escape the material world since it was forged by a lesser god –

a Demiurge, an “craftsman” and an ignorant deity. (Brakke, *The Gnostics*, 2010, 19; 37; 102)¹ Main protagonist of the most cosmogonical myths is Sophia, the youngest of the emanations or aeons. She is described as the one who wants to imitate the Father in creation or his emanation. Because of incapability to do so, she “suffers” and needs help from other aeons, or even new aeons created for the cause. There are different versions of these events, but the principle is the same. She (or her part left out of divine realm) is subsequently the source of different motions and events in the divine realm that lead up to the creation or molding of material world that all people live in. Usually there is a Demiurge, but Sophia is in behind the curtains.

This cosmological drama leads to the question – what is Gnosticism? One of the first premises that comes to the mind is elitism and a division of people where only a selected handful are saved. Some scholars would say that the definition of Gnosticism is to be chosen or to be saved through knowledge. (Layton, 2021, 544.) When distinguishing what Gnosticism is or was, many questions are raised. Is it a school, a religion, a movement, a sect, a philosophy, a way of life? Therefore, it is necessary to consider a brief overview of the *status questions* of the terms, the scope, and the limitations of Gnosticism. For this purpose, a brief overview of Gnosticism will be given in the first chapter of this paper.²

In general, one could say that there are two major groups of Gnosticism (or Gnostic groups/sects) on moral plain. One who advocate celibacy and others that are against it. First group does not see a point in procreation since it would mean to bring a child into a world under the rule of Demiurge. The second group is not interested in morality and are in fact described as promiscuous by early Christian writers. Especially by Irenaeus, Hippolytus of Rome, Clement of Alexandria, and many others. Epiphanius of Salamis testified to extremely immoral practices and accused Gnostics of consuming an aborted fetus instead of bread during the celebration of the Eucharist. (Epiphanius, 2009, 95; Henrichs, 2019, 23 - 24) From the perspective of those early Christian writers, one might draw a conclusion that the sons of knowledge advocated and practiced contraception, abortion, and infanticide, all of which were common in the ancient world.³

Another topic in Gnosticism that needs to be addressed is the division between the male and the female.⁴ In a way, male is seemed as superior, and emale is often despised and ignored. One could say that Gnostics did not see humans as dimorphic (male and female),

¹ There are numerous scholars that write on the topic: Hans Jonas, Gershom Scholem, Walter Bauer, Rudolf Bultmann, Kurt Rudolph, Elaine Pagels, Bart D. Ehrman, Karen L. King, April D. DeConick, Marvin Meyer, Nicola Denzey Lewis, John D. Turner, Birger A. Pearson, James M. Robinson, and many others.

² There have been numerous attempts to determine the status and nature of Gnosticism. For the intent of this paper, only a brief, specific presentation will be given.

³ Christians were also accused of cannibalism and infanticide for that matter. For more detailed perspective there is a paper published by Bart Wagemakers in 2010.

⁴ Extensive study on the topic can be found in a book edited by Karen King, *Images of feminine in Gnosticism* (2000), especially in articles of Williams *Variety in Gnostic Perspectives on Gender* (2 – 23) and Buckley *The holy spirit is a Double Name* (211 – 227)

but as androgynous with the male form being the primary form. The issues of the male and the female nature should be viewed from the point of Gnostic cosmogony, especially considering Sophia's cosmic abortion, mentioned above. (Brakke, 2010, 58) Sophia is the female principle that acts on her own and is subsequently responsible for the eruption of emotions, as well as for the rapture in the divine realm. (Goehring, 1981, 17) She needs a male aeon, or a companion, a counterpart to restore order in her and to restore order to the divine realm. In this paper, a small portion of Sethian and Valentinian cosmogonic myths will be presented. Each of them describes a slightly different interpretation of Sophia's actions and provides a different point of reference. One can argue that those differences made key "dogmas" on one's beliefs. The aim of this paper is to present key features of cosmological events in Sethian and Valentinian cosmogonies and the need of knowing them in one's salvation. This presentation is short and will provide only the basic information on cosmologies and protologies, since every and each of the section of the cosmogonical myths can be, and is in fact discussed in large details by many scholars.⁵ This paper can be an introduction to the problem of cosmological mythology since it points in the direction of the topic. In the conclusion all those points will be wrapped together, and a new perspective on the problem of cosmic freedom and the sons of knowledge will be given.

1. The Relevance of Gnosticism

The relevance of Gnosticism and the attempts to understand the essence of it, as well as the spread and its influence increased with the discovery of Nag Hammadi texts. Many scholars thought that texts from the library will provide answers to ancient questions and open new horizons for understanding "traditional" religions, primarily Judaism and Christianity, as well as bring in new outlook on religion itself. It ultimately did bring new views on the influence of religions and religious practices from the ancient world. Mainly Zoroastrianism, Sumerian and Egyptian religions and their agitation with Greek philosophy that further divided material (physical) and spiritual (astral, transcendental) realms. (Robertson, 2022, 48) Scholars were hoping to find universal answers to specific problems of cosmogony and human origin, as well as some mystical knowledge that would revitalize religion and religious experience. The public was made aware of the existence of the *Gospel of Thomas* (Leloup, 2005) and, even more prominently, the *Gospel of Judas* (Gathercole, 2007).

Until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when researching Gnosticism, scholars like Bauer, Sagnard, Quispell, Jonas, depended on the anti-Gnostic polemics preserved in the works of early Christian theologians (Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Epiphanius,

⁵ For Sethian Cosmogonies: John D. Turner, Harold W. Attridge, John G. Gager, Stephen Hoeller, Martha Lee Turner; for Valentinian Cosmogonies: Jean Doresse, Émile Amélineau, Hans-Joachim Schulz, David Brakke, Richard Valantasis, Einar Thomassen, etc.

etc.) and Neoplatonic authors (especially Plotinus) for their studies. The discovery of Nag Hammadi brought forward new texts, but unfortunately it did not solve the riddle of Gnosticism. As the most noteworthy modern view of Gnosticism, we must highlight the view of Ismo Dunderberg, who considers Gnosticism to be a philosophical school, rather than a religion, a religious movement, or a sect. (Dunderberg, 2008, 3) Nevertheless, there are certain ideas that are commonly ascribed to Gnosticism. One of them is certainly dualism between material and spiritual world, as well as the separation of body and soul. Material world is bad, incomplete, vague image of perfect and therefore corrupted. It was created or constructed by Demuirge, an ineffable being that is the root of all deficiencies since he himself is lacking. Other ideas include radical pessimism, alienation, elitist anthropology and so forth. (King, 2003, 97)

The Gnostic narrative presented and described in this way is very strict and it does not give the justice to Gnosticism that it deserves. Yet it is the most common explanation of Gnosticism itself in most books and encyclopedias.

2. Two Types of Gnosticism

At the *Colloquio di Messina* (April 13–18 1966), scholars tried to give an answer to the nature of Gnosticism but did not come to a coherent, unified conclusion. (Turner, 2001, X- XII) Layton and other scholars tried it again a few years later at the conference held at Yale University (*Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, 1981) and ended up “dividing” Gnosticism into two major groups, Sethian and Valentinian Gnosticism. As the name suggests, one comes from Seth, other from Valentinian (Valentinus). This fictional separation was possible because of the similarities and differences in the cosmogonical narrative. Sethian cosmogonical myths found in the *Apocryphon of John* (NHC II, 1; III, 1; IV, 1)⁶, *On the Origin of the World* (NHC II,5; XIII,2), and *Hypostasis of the Archons* (NHC II, 4) are considered by many scholars to be older than the ones found in Valentinian cosmological mythmaking. In ways they are simpler in form, therefore, scholars perceived them as earlier versions of the myth. Since then, some progress has been made in understanding Gnosticism, as well as its different schools and its branches. In terms of understanding what Gnosticism is, there were some attempts given by Williams (*Rethinking “Gnosticism”*, 1996) and King (*What is Gnosticism*, 2003). Other scholars focused on examining individuals, ideas, and schools, rather than Gnosticism itself. Therefore, the “division” of Gnosticism that scholars at Yale came up with, separating Gnosticism into two different schools cannot be applied today. Today, through the prism of Valentinianism we can observe at least three distinct individuals.⁷ Similar can

⁶ Citations of the *Nag Hammadi Library* for this paper are from Mayer (ed.) *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures* (2008) and follows its citation and numeration of the texts.

⁷ Valentinus, Ptolemy, and Marcus

be applied to Sethian Gnosticism. For this research, we will not focus on how and why those myth was created, nor what was their original purpose. Instead, it is important to have two versions of the cosmogonical myth since it represents two different stages of human actions and emotions when read in an allegorical way.

Both myths give an answer to one of the fundamental human questions – *unde malum*. This argument is in line with Dundenberg's view, since if we look at Gnosticism and other religions and philosophical schools of the time, it was only Gnosticism that had all the answers for the weary traveler, since it innately represented the synthesis of all knowledge, as well as religions. It was truly a haven for the one seeking knowledge, since it gave all the answers.

2.1. Sethian Cosmogony

*Apocryphon of John*⁸ is said to give further answers for new converts who just read the prologue of *Gospel of John* but were still curious about how and why. It also helps to explain the events that occurred in the Godhead, in the divine realm before the incarnation and the creation of this foul material world. It also explains the nature of this world and why there is suffering and malice. It explains and presents this world as corrupted and incomplete.

Cosmogonical narrative starts with the ineffable one, the Father, surrounded by the light. This Father or the beginning is illimitable, unfathomable, immeasurable, invisible, eternal, unutterable and unnamable, just to name a few attributes given in the *Apocryphon*. (ApJ 2, 25-4, 19)

This Father saw himself in the light surrounding him and reflected on his image which brought forward a first thought in his mind named *Forethought (Barbelo)* that later became the Mother of all and the universal womb. From her all the rest of the divine pleroma or the divine realm was born. (ApJ 4, 19 – 6, 10) One thing that is important to point out here is the male-female interaction already mentioned and noted before. In the myth, at this point, there is a lot of mutual respect and responsibilities. There are no hasty actions or overpowering of the other. There is no greed or lust. Yet, Barbelo, before conceiving the rest of the aeons and the divine realm, asks of the ineffable to give her a few traits so that they can be on the same level. Those are Foreknowledge, Incorruptibility, Life Eternal, and Truth. Those five, counting Barbelo, form androgynous aeons of the Father. (ApJ 6, 9) They are all the same as the Father in their emanation, even though he remains uncreated and unique. This part of the cosmogonical myth could be used in modern terms while discussing androgyny and posthumanism, but a little more on that later. As the cosmogonical myth unravels, we find out there are other actors, including the four luminaries, who are at the same time angels overlooking the four realms. (ApJ 6, 10 – 7, 30) Cosmogony at this point

⁸ Further on abbreviated as *ApJ*.

is very difficult and rather complicated to follow since every little detail reveals some part of the information or is linked with few other facts. In luminaries and their further emanations, we find a prototype of Adam, Seth, as well as Sophia. For the sake of the scope of this paper, we will jump to *Sophia*, last of the aeons of the last of the four luminaries. Her fall from fullness, the fall from divine realm is described in *ApJ* 9, 25–10, 19. There we read:

“She wanted to bring forth something like herself, without the consent of the Spirit, who had not given approval, without her partner and without his consideration. The male did not give approval. She did not find her partner, and she considered this without the Spirit’s consent and without the knowledge of her partner. Nonetheless, she gave birth. And because of the invincible power within her, her thought was not an idle thought. Something came out of her that was imperfect and different in appearance from her, for she had produced it without her partner. It did not resemble its mother and was misshapen.”

From this fragment of the text, we can deduce a few key points. Sophia is trying to imitate Barbelo and the Father, the ineffable. While Barbelo did her (its) work in conjunction and union with the ineffable and all the rest of the divine order, Sophia is trying to do something of her own accord. (*ApJ* 9, 25) Here we find a twofold problem. It is said that she tried all of this without a partner, a male figure, and it is also stated that her thought was not ideal. In other words, she, on her own, could not have a perfect thought (emanation) since she was just one of the emanations, and not the ineffable (most superior) one. Her thought was clouded by emotions and therefore imperfect. Clouds, mist, and fog are often used as synonyms to represent or describe ignorance and the lack of knowledge in gnostic mythmaking, as well as in the sons of knowledge. Yet, she still gave birth without “permission”, without a partner. (*ApJ* 10, 2) That birth set in motion our reality. This was the point that they used to explain the evil and suffering of this world.

One could conclude that these lines were to keep ancient gnostic women “in their place”, yet another idea comes to mind. It seems that the focus of the idea might be on the community in general, implying that it is necessary to have harmony to function. Otherwise, consequences of egoistical aspirations might lead to misery and suffering like the world we inhabit. It gives a new perspective on the accusations that Gnostics were selfish and could do whatever they wanted. It shines a new light onto Gnosticism and their thought and way of life. Returning to *Sophia*, in the Sethian myth, her actions and her egoism brought forward a being they refer to as *Yaldabaoth* who in turn was selfish and ignorant and is referred to as the creator of this realm, we call Earth. (*ApJ* 10, 19 – 13, 13) To conceal it from other immortals, *Sophia* shrouded him in a bright cloud. Once again, the symbol of the cloud is used, the purpose of which is twofold. One purpose is to hide her disfigured creature, and the other one is a reference to Yahve from Old Testament who also, for some sects, dwells in ignorance. After some time, Sophia repented. The rest of the myth corresponds with the story of Genesis, where it is *Yalabaoth* who created earth and heaven, as well as a man,

Adam, whose creation is described to the smallest detail. Yet, since the imperfected – that was created by the imperfect (*Yalabaoth* from *Sophia*) – created a man together with his angels, the creature lacked life and just stood there until it received a breath of life through *Yalabaoth*, but man in fact originated from *Sophia*'s divine origins.

“The Mother’s power went out of Yaldabaoth and into the psychical body that had been made to be like the one who is from the beginning. The body moved and became powerful. And it was enlightened.” (ApJ, 19)

This cosmic story forms an integral part of Sethian Gnostic cosmogony, protology and anthropology. It begins in the Godhead, explains the divine realm, its emanations, the fall of Sophia, birth of Yaldabaoth, and then focuses on the Genesis story incorporating it into its own narrative. It was important to briefly present this cosmogony with its terms, protagonist, and the ideas because they form a major part of the Valentinian cosmogony.

2.2. Valentinian Cosmogony

Just like with the Sethian Gnosticism, there has been a significant number of books, articles and studies that examine Valentinian Gnosticism on different levels and through various aspects. Some scholars are more interested in the school, or a movement, while others are more interested in the more mystical elements and components that can be traced back to one of the teachers.⁹ As far as the Valentinian Bridal chamber goes, some scholars attribute it to the special form of baptism, or a new form of baptisms, while others connect it to sexual mischief. Valentinian Gnosticism, just like Gnosticism itself cannot be narrowed down to one individual or one system. Irenaeus himself, who lived at the time when it was most prominent, in his *Adversus haeresis* (AH) describes seven different variations of their protological and cosmological myths. Valentinians were the original reason why he even wrote his tremendous work. There is a significant debate surrounding the reports of Church Fathers concerning Gnostics and their teachings. In the case of Irenaeus, one might say that he in *AH* starts at the end and goes backwards since the first Valentinian cosmology described in *AH* I, 1, 1–8, 5, belongs to Ptolemy and his school, which is much later than Valentinus himself. (Gilles, 1996, 327) At the same time, some scholars do not even consider Ptolemy to be a true Valentinian Gnostic, but a teacher at a school that had some Valentinian influences.¹⁰ Still, in those cosmogonies described by Irenaeus there are some overlapping theories of cosmogonical narrative. Some elements are very similar to the cosmological system of the Sethians, presented in *ApJ*, while there are also some new elements and there is a stronger emphasis on certain moments, most prominent in all those interpretations in the role

⁹ Maybe one of the most prominent is April D. Deconic, *Holy Misogyny* (2011); *The Gnostic New Age* (2016)

¹⁰ There are diverse interpretations on the Valentinian systems. Most recent are by Thomassen, *The spiritual seed* (2008), already mentioned Dunderberg (2008) and Chiapparini, *Il divino senza veli* (2015).

of Sophia. There is much more emphasis on her feelings, especially those traumatic ones, like sadness, grief, and sorrow. We might say that those feelings do not have any place in the divine realm of pleroma and therefore they need to be separated from her so that she can be restored. To clarify; Sophia's emotions play a major part in the mythmaking. They are the source and origin of Demiurge and subsequently this world and mankind. For Sophia to return to the divine realm, she must forfeit her emotions, which are left outside of the pleroma. Also, there is a plea of all other aeons to the Father to act and to restore *Sophia* to her formal place in the pleroma. Father therefore emanates, bringing forward two new aeons; Christ and Holy Spirit. (AH I, 2, 5) It is Christ, who separates bad, unwanted emotions from Sophia and restores her to the divine pleroma. It is noteworthy to see that Christ gives back the form to Sophia, as well as to her emotions. Here it is important to underline that Christ, as a male principle, restores the form of a female Sophia, as well as her emotions, giving to them form they were lacking. At the same time, those emanations, or feelings of Sophia are presumed to be male, especially Demiurge.¹¹ After Sophia's restoration, a limit is set, named Horos, who keeps the divine realm in order and separated from the rest of the universe and existence. (AH I, 2, 2; I, 11, 1) Demiurge is therefore born from Sophia's negative emotions and goes on to create the material world.

This is just a short presentation of the most common features of the Valentinian cosmogonic myths. In them we can see a certain shift from the Sethian version of the myth. For the sake of the intent of this paper, we will not go deeper into the details of the systems presented in the writings of Irenaeus, but rather we will present another system of the narrative – the one found in the writings of Hippolytus of Rome.

On the first glance, the report of Hippolytus is very similar to the one written by Irenaeus. Main difference is in Sophia's motivations for her actions, as well as the position of the Father and his first companions. She wants to act or do without a partner, to be just like the Father. These motives resemble the ones described in the *ApJ*. Also, there is a more prominent emphasis on gender than in Irenaeus's reports. Perception of gender is visible and noticeable from the start of the Hippolytus report, when he is describing Father, but it reaches its culmination in the description of *Sophia's* acts and subsequently in her restoration. In *Refutatio omnium haeresium* (Ref), IV, 30, 7–8 we read:

“She wanted to imitate the father and generate by herself apart from her consort, in order to produce a work in no way inferior to the father. She did not know that the father – since he is unborn, the source of the universe and its Root, Depth, and Abyss – has the power to generate alone, whereas Wisdom, generated and arising after many others, did not wield the power of the unborn. In the unborn, he says, are all things together, whereas among generated beings, the female is what emanates substance, and the male gives form to the substance emanated by the female.”

¹¹ There is a whole new plethora of problems in understanding the correct relationship between created, emanated and that which is given form.

Sophia's acts on her own to imitate Father and to be like him. The last passage of this citation is a foreshadowing of the event that will occur during the process of the restoration. It will be a male aeon, in this case substance, that will give the ultimate form to the female aeon. From *Sophia's* action an unformed and disordered substance is born. Her actions in this report bring ignorance to the pleroma and to the divine realm. It also brings corruption and imperfect state amongst aeons and it leads them to plead *Father* to help *Sophia* attain peace and harmony over the abortion and miscarriage she had. (Ref. IV, 31, 1–2)

Term used in the text is the Greek word ἔκτρωμα, which is often translated as “abortion”. In modern English, it usually signifies an artificially terminated pregnancy, not the natural expulsion of the unformed child (a miscarriage), that is probably the true meaning of the term in the text. Unlike in the *ApJ* report, from *Sophia's* will and intent a miscarriage is born. Her intent was to imitate father, but she did not know that without male consort, she would not be able to give form to her child.

There are other events described that lead to the “formation” of the Demiurge. Most important of those are the gratefulness of all the aeons to the Father for restoring the harmony in the pleroma, which in turn results in a new emanation, a perfect fruit – Jesus (Ref. VI, 32, 1–4), the descentance of this emanation to *Sophia* outside the pleroma (Ref. VI, 32, 5–6) and his forming of the Demiurge from *Sophia's* fear (Ref. VI, 32, 7–9). Matter and everything material, in this cosmogonical myth is attributed to the Demiurge. At the same time, he has a fiery substance in him. The soul is described as mortal because it can adhere to matter or fiery substance, that is, there is a possibility to adhere to the Ogdoad. The fiery nature itself is twofold and offers within itself the possibility of division or selection. According to this description, the soul is thus mortal because there is no choice as to which side it will join.

It is in this Gnostic cosmic myth, as well as in others that we can notice overemphasized individuality, or even arbitrariness that in one way or another leads to breakage and collapse. That is most notable in the acts of *Sophia*, but also in later stages in the acts of Demiurge. All those consequences affected the entire universe. After *Sophia* has emanated the unformed and disordered matter, emotions took over the rest of the Aeons. More precisely, concern arose for one's own descendants and emanations. (Ref. VI, 31,1) We can see that there was a shift in the order since her actions brought disorder. One might say that even in the modern world the actions that are considered and perceived as individual, still affect the community or the population. *Sofia* has emotions, primarily grief over the miscarriage. That is, grief and shame over her own failure. She also grieves for the love of the Father and of the things that have passed, that is her place in the pleroma. We could say that in her actions, once again, we can see an outline of the modern world, which manifests itself through loneliness, hopelessness, loss of meaning, spiritual lostness and a materialistic view of the world. As well as longing for understanding and a caring family and friends. All of this is visible in *Sofia's* behavior, but it should be noted that it is her surroundings that help her to return to order. Even if she repeats the same actions numerous times. In this description, she first produces

a miscarriage and affects the whole divine realm, then she is left outside to be overwhelmed with emotions and, in a way, she falls in love again and in some of the cosmic myths still acts on behalf of the demiurge later. Yet, she still needs some a consort and comfort. Valentinians would say she needs a male form, which in today's world might seem chauvinistic. This was just a snippet of Valentinian myths, and it briefly described Sophia's actions, her intent, and the formation of Demiurge. Cosmogonical myths themselves are much more complex and require precise reading. Actors of the myths differ between versions, but in summary, Sophia is the main protagonist and then her offspring, an aborted fetus that became Demiurge. This part of the myth was chosen to represent a possible new outlook on the topic of gnostic cosmic dogma that sons of knowledge thought and reflected on. Sethian mythmaking seemed to be more in line with the Old Testament, while the Valentinian version resembles modern psychology and sociology, especially if we pay more attention to Sophia's emotions and her coping with them. In those emotions we can spot a need for another, a need for redemption and a need for liberation.

Conclusion

Mankind is in a constant quest for knowledge that would lead us to be like (a) God. At the same time, modern world is on the verge of eliminating God from the equation as soon as it overcomes death or discovers the elixir of life.

In Gnosticism, Sophia is the one who in the end gives breath that animates, revives. She is ultimately the divine spark in each human. She is the source of cosmological freedom. Depending on the myth, she is engulfed with emotions, but at the same time free, or at least a part of her is. The narrative of Sophia might be the emotional struggle that each person faces. Gnosticism, or more precisely, gnostic cosmic myths give another perspective on the religion, faith, cosmology and ultimately eschatology. It discusses (teaches) on the origin of the world, on the things in Godhead and the difference between male and female principle. One could wonder if all of this is to better mankind. Apart from Sophia, in the cosmogonies, Demiurge acts on his own or with his angels, not having the faintest idea of the pleroma and creates the material world and humans. But when he created a man, it is also lacking, it could not stand. It is unfinished being, a lacking creation. It lacks a spiritual component which is in the end received from Sophia. Themes of knowledge, emotions, and everything else that makes us human run together and intertwine with one another.

Returning to Gnosticism, some will say that Sofia's ideas, passions, expulsion of them and returning to pleroma are the ultimate victory over matter. The freedom we all strive for, while others will see something akin to Plato's ideas described in *Cratylus* where the body is the tomb (sēma) of the soul, or the parable of the cave.

The central thesis of Gnosticism is that everyone possesses a personal spiritual knowledge called “gnosis” (in other words, “my truth”) and that the goal of one’s life is to pursue this personal truth to free one’s soul from the oppressive material world, which is not God’s good and true creation, but an evil mistake, or a tomb.

These cosmogonies that were presented are considered by most scholars to be merely stories, or mythologies. One might not think much of them, yet we can find in them issues that are still present in our society if we study them more carefully. Others might argue that in Gnosticism we can find ideas of feminism, transhumanism, or postmodernism. In a sense, we can. From this article, we might see that Sophia longs for a partner and wants to be like God. She wants to take control of her life. Because of other aeons and her mischief, she is outcasted from the divine realm, while others celebrate and rejoice. Still, they produce another being that in turn comes to Sophia and helps her with her emotions. Upon returning to the pleroma, Sophia’s abortion, a Demiurge creates another world, a bad one, a material one. If someone reads only these few passages extracted from this article, they might conclude that it is some sort of a movie plot or that someone is telling a story of a single mother. We might need to presume that this cosmic story had a twofold purpose for Valentinians, Sethians and other Gnostics. One was to explain the nature of this world and its protology, while the other might have been a moral one, to show repercussions of one’s actions. Therefore, these cosmogonies and protologies do in fact represent a gnostic dogma and are in correlation with the cosmic abortion of Sophia’s emotions that materialized and formed this world.

Gnostic knowledge, freedom and morality is a hard theme to fully elaborate and follow. There is much more space and research needed to elaborate on the topic of male – female components in Gnosticism, that would give more explicit results. There is also need for an extensive study of protological myths and their comparison with each other to further develop this argument. Since it also depends on the outlook and perspective; philosophical, historical, sociological or religious.

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