In this thread of posts I have been reproducing my comments on Gnosticism from the 2nd edition of my anthology, *After the New Testament*. In addition to the Sethians and the Valentinians, scholars talk about the school of Thomas and about yet other Gnostic groups that are not easy to identify with any of the other three or to group together in any meaningful way. Gnosticism was a messy group of religions! Here is what I say in the Introductions to the Thomasines and the Other Gnostic groups in the book.

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**Thomasines**

A number of books from the early Christian tradition are connected with a figure known as Didymus Judas Thomas. The word “Didymus” means “twin” in Greek; so too the name “Thomas” means “twin” in Aramaic. And so this person is Judas, or Jude, the twin. But the twin of whom? In our earliest surviving Gospel, Jesus himself is said to have a brother who is named Jude (for example, Mark 6). And in later traditions, especially from Syria, this Jude was thought to have been a twin of Jesus himself. In fact, in some traditions – including the Acts of Thomas that we have already seen (Chapter 2) – Thomas is Jesus’ identical twin. How Jesus could have a (mortal) twin if he was born of a virgin is something these traditions never explain.

There appears to have been a range of Christians who especially revered Didymus Judas Thomas. And who better to proclaim the truth among Jesus’ earthly associates than his own identical twin brother? Several of these books share important views and concerns, making it appear that these Thomasine Christians may have been their own Christian group, sharing key theological views and accepting various literary texts associated with Thomas.

Among these texts would be …

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