

The Thought of Norea

— Nag Hammadi IX, 2 —

Father of All, Ennoiaⁱ of the Light, dwelling in the heights above the (regions) below, Light dwelling in the heights, Voice of Truth, upright Nousⁱⁱ, untouchable Logosⁱⁱⁱ, and ineffable Voice, incomprehensible Father!^{iv}

It is Norea^v who cries out to them.^{vi} They heard, (and) they received her into her place forever. They gave it to her in the Father of Nous, Adamas^{vii}, as well as the voice of the Holy Ones, in order that she might rest in the ineffable Epinoia^{viii}, in order that <she> might inherit the first mind^{ix} which <she> had received, and that <she> might rest in the divine Autogenes^x, and that she (too) might generate herself, just as she also has inherited the living Logos^{xi}, and that she might be joined to all of the Imperishable Ones, and speak with the mind of the Father.

^{xii}And she began to speak with the words of Life^{xiii}, and <she> remained in the presence of the Exalted One, possessing that which she had received before the world came into being^{xiv}. She has the great mind of the Invisible One, and she gives glory to <her> Father, and she dwells within those who [...] within the Pleroma^{xv}, and she beholds the Pleroma.

^{xvi}There will be days when she will behold the Pleroma, and she will not be in deficiency^{xvii}, for she has the four holy helpers^{xviii} who intercede on her behalf with the Father of the All, Adamas. He it is who is within all of the Adams^{xix}, possessing the thought of Norea, who speaks concerning the two names which create a single name.

ⁱ**Ennoia** is the Greek word for thought.

ⁱⁱ**Nous** is the Greek word for Mind. In Hermetic and Gnostic writings, Nous often is used as a name or a description of the one true God.

ⁱⁱⁱ**Logos** is the Greek word often translated into English as Word. In the original Greek it is more of a reference to ratio, order, or logic, although language (hence 'word') is also a valid choice. Logos, in Christological writings is usually assumed to refer to Christ. This assumption, however, is drawn into question when one observes the use of the word in the Hermetic and non-Christian Gnostic traditions, as "The Thought of Norea" is an example of. It should be read as the saving logic, or knowledge (gnosis) by which salvation is achieved.

^{iv}This part begins the Thought with an address to higher beings, formed as an invocation. Although Pearson details it as being to the divine Sethian triad of Father, Mother and Son, this does not seem so clear. Clearly more than one being is addressed, as Norea refers to "them" in line 3, and clearly the Son is addressed ("Logos," line 2) and the Father ("Nous," line 2), but presumably the Ennoia and/or the Voice is meant to refer to the divine Mother.

^v**Norea**, under many variations of spelling, is a frequent figure in Gnostic literature (cf. especially The Hypostasis of the Archons), under a great variety of circumstances, from the ark burning wife of Noah to the sister-wife of Seth. In this last capacity, in Sethian Gnosticism, she often appears as a female equivalent of his male savior figure. Here, however, she takes the position of savior alone.

^{vi} Begins the second segment in the Thought, where Norea is taken from this world into the divine world (the Pleroma), being her proper place. It is telling in that the higher powers do not receive her into their place, but into hers. She is brought into the thought of the mind, and there can speak with all the Imperishable Ones, being the higher powers themselves and all the saved. We see that she has inherited the Logos, which a Christian would read as receiving the Spirit of the Word, Christ, and she also becomes Autogenetic. Thus she, so to speak, is taken into the Godhead.

^{vii} Identified as "the Father of the All" and "the Father of Nous" (or mind), Adamas is a name often used to refer to the father of all mankind. One will notice, though, that, unlike the Bringhamite Mormons, this does not imply that a man, Adam, is the father of all, or the father of God (Nous), for Adamas is present in all that Adams (see note, line 20). This is, instead, a transcendent being, a totality of thoughts, by which salvation is achieved, roughly equivalent to the Christian Holy Spirit.

^{viii} **Epinoia**: Although this annotator does not know from what Greek word this is derived, it evidently refers to the Pleroma once again, wherein Norea may find rest.

^{ix} **First mind**: refers once again to the Nous, being the first mind of God. The significance is that it points out once again that she has inherited the very mind of God.

^x **Autogenes** is the Greek word meaning "self-begotten," in that the Creator is self-creating, and needs no external force to bring Him into being. In Hermetic and Gnostic writings it is often used as an alternate name for the one true God. The significance here is that, having been freed from the bonds of this corruptible world, Norea becomes "self-begotten," able to generate herself, showing the immortality of the soul and the fact that the appearance of creation is misleading.

^{xi} **Living Logos**: in Gnostic texts, the term "Living Christ", as opposed to simply "Christ," is used to refer to the secret or spiritual being, as opposed to the earthly or corruptible being. The use here may be construed as to refer to the immortal and spiritual Logos (note 3), as opposed to the Logos that manifests itself in the world which we may perceive. Norea has, thus, inherited the true knowledge of reality, not simply earthly knowledge as can be studied from experiences here on this plane.

^{xii} Part three: She has here received the very mind of God into herself, and simultaneously sees and is the Godhead, or Pleroma.

^{xiii} **Words of Life**: Here, Pearson conjectures that the words of Life refer to the capacity to deliver salvation, and thus shows that Norea achieves the capacity to save mankind by virtue of her salvation.

^{xiv} "that which she had received before the world came into being": refers to the immortality of the soul, and the concept that the soul, although it may believe or perceive itself to be apart from the Pleroma, in reality has received the mind of God (note 12), the living Logos, and the words of Life before this corruptible world came into being.

^{xv} **Pleroma**: The Pleroma is the word referring to the thirty highest Aeons, constituting the one true God, although it also refers to the beings that occupy those Aeons. This is how Norea may simultaneously see and be the Pleroma. Essentially, this word means what is thought of as the Godhead in Eastern culture.

^{xvi}Fourth and final section of the Thought, wherein it speaks of Norea's salvation, and how it is aided.

^{xvii}**Deficiency:** The concept of being in or out of deficiency is a common one in Gnostic writings, and refers to being filled or not filled with the spirit of God (or, among Christian Gnostics, Christ). One who is not filled with the spirit of God is deficient, and thirsts, and is not saved. The Norea perceives the Pleroma and is not deficient demonstrates that being one with the Godhead is salvation, and fills one with the spirit.

^{xviii}**Four holy helpers:** Pearson identifies these helpers with the four "luminaries" of Sethian Gnosticism, Harmozel, Oroiael, Daveithe, and Eleleth. These beings are more detailed in Melchizedek, where it is seen that they are referred to as "commander" or "Commander-in-chief," and seem to fulfill a position somewhat similar to the Archangels in Christianity, although Melchizedek groups the "offspring of the Archons" with the offspring of "all the angels," and so the luminaries may be of a higher type. Here they are seen as entities aiding by intercession in Norea's continual salvation, thus implying that salvation is something that can be lost.

^{xix}**Adams:** Adam being the Hebrew for "man," should be read as meaning the reference here to the Adams as the mass of created humanity. That Adamas is present in all Adams shows that the transcendent totality of thoughts is present in all created mankind.