

## Tears of Repentance or Tears of Gratitude? P.Oxy. 4009, the Gospel of Peter and the Western Text of Luke 7.45–49

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In an article published earlier this year (*NTS* 55.1: 104–15), a full reconstruction of the less intelligible side of P.Oxy. 4009 (lines 1–13) was presented, and it was argued that this text belongs to the *Gospel of Peter*. These 13 lines parallel the Lukan pericope of the sinful woman (Luke 7.45–49) and demonstrate that the *Gospel of Peter* used manuscripts that represent the Western text of the earlier Gospels. The most notable Western feature, the omission in P.Oxy. 4009 of Luke 7.47b–48, is no coincidence. There are weighty arguments for the omission of these verses in the Lukan original as well.

**Keywords:** papyri, textual criticism, the *Gospel of Peter*, Luke 7, forgiveness

### 1. The Reconstruction and its Parallel

In a previous article, I have proposed the following reconstruction of P.Oxy. 4009 recto:<sup>1</sup>

P.Oxy. 4009, unknown side	Luke 7.45–50
μύρω ἤ- λειψεν [καὶ οὐ διέλ(ε)ιπεν το]ὺς [πόδας μου φιλοῦσα. σὺ δὲ τὸ] ἔλαιον ἐμοὶ οὐ	(45) φίλημά μοι οὐκ ἔδωκας. αὕτη δὲ ἀφ' ἧς εἰσῆλθον οὐ διέλιπεν καταφιλοῦσά μου τοὺς πόδας. (46) ἐλαίω τὴν κεφαλὴν
5 παρῆσ[χ]ε[ς οὐδὲ εἰσελ- θόντι μ[οι φίλημα ἔδω- κας. διὰ] τοῦτο λέγω σοι ὅτι ἀφε(ί)ω[νται αὐτῇ πολ- λαὶ ἁμαρ]τίαι.	μου οὐκ ἤλειψας. αὕτη δὲ μύρω ἤλειπεν τοὺς πόδας μου. (47) οὐ χάριν, λέγω σοι, ἀφέωνται αἱ ἁμαρτίαι αὐτῆς αἱ πολλαί, ὅτι ἠγάπησεν πολὺ. ᾧ δὲ ὀλίγον ἀφίεται, ὀλίγον ἀγαπᾷ. (48) εἶπεν

<sup>1</sup> The detailed argument for this reconstruction is presented in M. Myllykoski, 'The Sinful Woman in the Gospel of Peter: Reconstructing the Enigmatic Other Side of P.Oxy. 4009', *NTS* 55 (2009) 104–15.

		δὲ αὐτῇ, Ἀφέωνταί σου αἱ εἶπον δὲ ἁμαρτία. (49) καὶ ἤρξαντο
10	<b>αὐτῷ ἐκ</b> [ τῶν συνανακει- <b>μένων</b> · [ Διὰ τί ἐν τῷ ὀ- <b>νόματί</b> [ σου ἁμαρτίας <b>ἄφεῖς, κ(ύρι)ε;</b> [ ]ουθ[	οἱ συνανακεί- μενοι λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, Τίς οὐτός ἐστιν ὃς καὶ ἁμαρτίας ἄφησιν;
15	..]αμαι[ ..]προ.[ ..]πη.[ ..]..ν..[ ..]...αι[	
20	..].....[	(50) εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα, Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέν σε· πορεύου εἰς εἰρήνην.

## Translation:

‘she anointed [...] with ointment and did not stop kissing my feet, but you neither provided me with oil nor gave me a kiss. Therefore I say to you: Her many sins are forgiven her.’ They said from among those who were at the table: ‘Why do you forgive sins in your name, Lord?’

It is necessary to note that some *uncertainties* remain as regards the precise wording of the lost letters in each line. In line 9, εἶπον δέ may have alternatives. In line 11, the words διὰ τί—or διὰ τί σύ—could be replaced with another, corresponding expression like πῶς or πῶς σύ; a reconstruction like μένων αὐτῷ· ἐν τῷ ὀ- is possible, but unlikely.

This reconstruction makes it likely that P.Oxy. 4009 is a fragment of a *Gospel*. Dieter Lührmann has reconstructed, on the basis of comparison with the parallel text 2 Clem 5.2–4, the other side of P.Oxy. 4009 as follows (lines are in brackets, letters visible in fragment are in bold):<sup>2</sup>

(4) ὁ **θερισμός**· (5) γίνου δὲ ἀκέραιος ὡς αἱ πε (6) ριστεροὶ καὶ **φρόνιμος**  
(7) ὡς οἱ ὄφεις. **ἔσεσθε** ὡς (8) ἀρνία ἀνὰ μέσον **λύκων**. (9) εἶπον πρὸς  
αὐτόν. **ἐὰν οὐ** (10) (ν) **σπαραχθῶμεν**; (11) ὁ δὲ ἀποκριθεὶς **λέγει μοι**.  
**οἱ** (12) λύκοι **σπαράξαντες τὸ** (13) ἀρνίον **οὐκέτι αὐτῷ οὐ** (14) δὲν  
δύνανται **ποιῆσαι**. **δι** (15) ὁ ἐγὼ λέγω ὑμῖν. μὴ **φο** (16) βεῖσθε ἀπὸ τῶν  
**ἀποκτεν** (17) νόντων ὑμᾶς **καὶ** μετὰ τὸ (18) ἀποκτεῖναι **μηκέτι** ποι (19)  
ἦσαι **δυναμένων** μηδέεν.

2 Dieter Lührmann, ‘P. Oxy. 4009: Ein neues Fragment des Petrus-evangeliums?’, *NovT* 35 (1993) 390–410, esp. 395–8.

Lührmann's reconstruction is widely accepted, but his conclusion that the fragment is part of the Gospel of Peter has not only been welcomed but also contested.<sup>3</sup> Now, setting aside for a while the identification of the Gospel of the fragment, it is obvious that the author of this Gospel drew not only upon a tradition similar to 2 Clem 5.2–4 but also directly upon the Gospel of Luke. The side reconstructed here must be the recto because the version of the Lukan story must have taken up much space on the previous papyrus page. Between line 14 of the recto and line 4 of the verso reconstructed by Lührmann, we have some 15 lines of unknown content. It is reasonable to assume that the story of the sinful woman ended with a poignant saying of Jesus<sup>4</sup> and that the discourse then soon moved over to the sending out of the disciples known from Matt 10 and Luke 10. There is enough space for such a sequence, and it not necessary to assume that the side reconstructed here was not simply a recto but a previous column in a manuscript that was written in double columns per page.

Some observations on the narrative strategy strengthen the assumption that the side reconstructed here is the recto of a page that possibly once belonged to a papyrus codex. P.Oxy. 4009 verso is less eschatological and much more antagonistic in tone than the accounts in Matthew and Luke. The martyrdom of the disciples becomes the central theme of the discourse. The sayings of Jesus in lines 7–8 and 15–19 are based on Matt 10.16b, 16a (Luke 10.3) and 28 (Luke 12.4); they indicate that the harvest mentioned in line 4 is part of a saying like that of Matt 9.37–38 (Luke 10.2).<sup>5</sup> This arrangement of different pieces of tradition may be partly understood in terms of Luke's interest in introducing the themes of discipleship and mission immediately after the story of the sinful woman (8.1–3; cf. also the parable of the sower in 8.4–10).

On the recto, the story of the sinful woman is turned into a dispute about Jesus' authority to forgive sins; the scene underlines the conflict between Jesus and the Jewish religious authorities. In one way or another, this conflict paves the way for Jesus' discourse on the mission and martyrdom of his disciples.<sup>6</sup> They must also

3 The major critique of Lührmann's view is that of Paul Foster, 'Are there any Early Fragments of the So-Called Gospel of Peter?', *NTS* 52 (2006) 1–28, esp. 17–19. Foster has criticized Lührmann's identification of the fragment with the *Gospel of Peter* because the text reconstructed by Lührmann and the traditions preserved in Matt 10.16b and 2 Clem 5.2–4 cannot be traced back to the same basic forms and because the verbal agreements between these texts are rather slim.

4 However, it is very difficult to fit Luke 7.50 into lines 14–19.

5 Lührmann, *Evangelien*, 79–80. The tiny remains of ink in line 3 do not allow a reconstruction. However, line 4 may have included the words πολλὸς ὁ before θεισμός.

6 It is interesting to see that some versions of the Diatessaron move from Luke 7.36–50 to the sending out of the disciples in Luke 10. *The Papyrusian Gospel Harmony* (ed. Margery Goates; Early English Text Society, Original Series 157; London: Oxford University, 1922) moves directly from Luke 7.36–50 to the sending out of sixty and twelve disciples. The Arabic version (*Diatessaron de Tatién* [ed. A.-S. Marmardji; Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique,

call people to repentance and forgive their sins in the name of their Lord. During their mission, they will be persecuted and killed by their enemies who are foreshadowed by Jesus' host and the other guests who do not acknowledge Jesus' authority to forgive sins.

The reconstruction of the recto of P.Oxy. 4009 strengthens the theory that this fragment is not only a part of a *Gospel* but a part of the Gospel of *Peter*. In addition to the I-narrator pointed out by Dieter Lührmann and the vocative  $\overline{KE}$  in line 13, the author of this Gospel, as in the text known to us through the Akhmîm fragment, has used the Gospel of Luke in a creative way. Furthermore, both here and in the Akhmîm text, Lukan stories are interpreted for anti-Jewish purposes. Herod and Pilate (Luke 23.6–12 and *Gos Pet* 1–5) as well as the repentant evildoer (Luke 23.39–43 and *Gos Pet* 13–14) are both seen through specifically anti-Jewish lenses. Against this background, it is not at all difficult to understand why the story of the sinful woman is interpreted in terms of an authority conflict and located immediately before Jesus' intensive discourse on the mission, persecution and martyrdom of his disciples.

The version that we have in P.Oxy. 4009 obviously included most of the narrative elements of the story in Luke 7.36–43. In lines 1–9, the author quotes Luke's presentation (vv. 45–47a) in a different order. Before that, he has obviously described what Luke says in v. 44. The different presentation of the actions of the host (H) and the sinful woman (W) in P.Oxy. 4009 and Luke 7 reveal some important aspects of the Pseudo-Petrine redaction:

P.Oxy. 4009 recto lines 1–7	Luke 7.44b–46
(W) anoints Jesus	(H) does not give a kiss to Jesus
(W) kisses Jesus' feet	(W) kisses Jesus' feet
(H) provides no oil for Jesus	(H) does not anoint Jesus' head
(H) does not give a kiss to Jesus	(W) anoints Jesus' feet

The author of the *Gospel of Peter* has changed the order of these items in order to sharpen the conflict between Jesus and his host. Correspondingly, the exemplary actions of the sinful woman—which reflect love and faith—no longer appear as a positive contrast to the negligence of the pious host. As already mentioned, Pseudo-Peter does not accept the idea that the host should have anointed Jesus' head; instead, he should only have provided oil for him that he could have done it himself. This clumsy idea distances the host from Jesus more than was necessary in the Lukan story. On the other hand, Pseudo-Peter has also

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1935]) has, after Luke 7.36–50, the order John 2.23–25; Luke 10.1–12; Matt 11.20–24; Luke 10.16–22. *Saint Ephrem's Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron* (trans. Carmel McCarthy; JSSS 2; Oxford: Oxford University, 1993) has the harvest saying of Matt 9.37 (10.11) follow Luke 7.36–50 (10.8–9).

toned down the affectionate side of the woman's actions. He describes how the woman first anoints Jesus' feet and only then starts kissing them; in his presentation, there is no place for the Lukan phrase ἀφ' ἧς εἰσῆλθον. He has also replaced Luke's καταφιλοῦσα with the more sober φιλοῦσα.

Thus far, the affinities of the P.Oxy. 4009 recto with the Western text are dependent on the reconstruction that fills in the lost lines of the fragment. However, in line 9, the fragment does not follow the text of Luke attested by most witnesses and accepted as original by NA 27. It is precisely here that the above-suggested similarities between P.Oxy. 4009 and the Western text become essential for the understanding of this fragment. As A. F. J. Klijn has demonstrated, the *Gospel of Peter* known through the Akhmîm fragment is clearly drawing upon the Western text of the canonical Gospels.<sup>7</sup> In P.Oxy. 4009 line 9, the author of the *Gospel of Peter* offers neither Jesus' reasons for his claim that the woman's sins are forgiven (Luke 7:47bc) nor his formal declaration of forgiveness (v. 48). Jesus' words, ἀφε(ί)ω[νται αὐτῇ πολ]λαὶ ἁμα[ρτίαι, are immediately followed by the response from among the guests. Pseudo-Peter formulates this response in a way that allows him to develop a brief but sharply focused dialogue on the authority of Jesus. This brings his redaction of the Lukan scene much closer to the charge of blasphemy known from Mark 2.7 parr. The missing Lukan verses are these:

- v. 47b ὅτι ἠγάπησεν πολύ.  
 v. 47c ᾧ δὲ ὀλίγον ἀφίεται, ὀλίγον ἀγαπᾷ.  
 v. 48 εἶπεν δὲ αὐτῇ, Ἀφέωνταί σου αἱ ἁμαρτίαι.

Did the pseudo-Petrine author know these verses from the manuscript which he used and simply discard them? Let us take this possibility seriously. In theory, it is possible that Pseudo-Peter knew these sentences and used them partly in lines 14–20. The only instance in which this seems to be possible is line 17 in which the letters πη may indicate the sentence ὅτι ἠγάπησεν πολύ. However, if this option is followed, the other lines are still very difficult to reconstruct. On the other hand, some expressions in v. 47bc may be seen as support for such a conclusion. Pseudo-Peter would not want the reader to understand that Jesus' host loves 'little' but that he does not love at all. In addition, he is not interested in the love motif, but in the authority of Jesus and the conflict it raises. However, v. 48 points in the opposite direction. Pseudo-Peter would hardly have discarded v. 48, which emphasizes Jesus' status as the one who has the authority to forgive sins. Therefore it is easiest to assume that the author of the *Gospel of Peter* simply did not know these verses.

7 A. F. J. Klijn, 'Het evangelie von Petrus en de Westerse Text', in *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* 16 (1961) 264–70. See also J. Denker, *Die theologieggeschichtliche Stellung des Petrus-evangeliums. Ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte des Doketismus* (EHS.T 36, Frankfurt a.M.: Lang, 1975) 26–9.

It is much more striking that parts of vv. 47b–48 are missing from independent witnesses of the Western text. In the light of the evidence that will be presented below, it seems likely that Pseudo-Peter, writing in the second third of the second century, did not have these verses in the manuscript of Luke he used. The list of missing parts in the deviant manuscripts is brief but calls for explanation:

Codex Bezae (D)	v. 47bc
Old Latin manuscript e	v. 47c
Diatessaron of Ephraim	v. 47c
Venetian Diatessaron	v. 47c–48 <sup>8</sup>

The Venetian Diatessaron has been regarded by some scholars as a late and spurious version of the harmony tradition going back to Tatian.<sup>9</sup> However, taken together, these witnesses point at readings which can be traced back to the second or third century. The earliest witness for vv. 47b–48 as an integral part of the Lukan story is the third-century papyrus P75 (Papyrus Bodmer XIV/XV). If P.Oxy. 4009 now proves that the author of the *Gospel of Peter* used a text of Luke which did not include vv. 47b–48, it is very difficult to dismiss the deviant Western readings as various secondary omissions. Furthermore, it is difficult to explain the origins of such omissions if vv. 47b–48 are considered a well-attested part of the original text of Luke.

The trouble with Luke 7.47b–48 does not end with explanations of simple textual variations, but goes much deeper than that. The interpreters have seen the key problem of the story in the stance of the sinful woman: Was she already forgiven or does Jesus proclaim her sins forgiven only in the house of the Pharisee? There are three basic problems related to this question: (1) there is a tension between v. 47 and vv. 41–42; (2) the proclamation of forgiveness is repeated after Jesus' words to the sinful woman (v. 47) in v. 48; and (3) love is the ground of forgiveness in v. 47, while according to Jesus' words in v. 50 the sins of the woman are forgiven because of her faith.<sup>10</sup> Scholars have offered

8 For a survey of Luke 7.47 in the Diatessaron tradition, see Tjitze Baarda, '“Non-canonical Version” of Luke 7.42b? The Reading τίνα [αὐτῶν] πλεῖον ἠγάπησεν Ascribed to the Diatessaron', *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis* (FS J. Delobel; ed. A. Denaux; BETL 161; Leuven: Leuven University, 2002) 97–129, esp. 121–7.

9 The value of the Western medieval harmonies and the existence of an old Latin version of the Diatessaron have been disputed by Ulrich B. Schmid, 'In Search of Tatian's Diatessaron in the West', *VigChr* 57 (2003) 176–99. For the traditional view on the role of Western harmonies in Diatessaron research, see the discussion of William L. Petersen, *Tatian's Diatessaron: Its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship* (VigChrSup 25; Leiden: Brill, 1994) 301–9.

10 On the literary and source-critical problems of the story, see particularly J. Delobel, 'Lk 7.47 in its Context: An Old Crux Revisited', *The Four Gospels 1992*, vol. 2 (FS F. Neirynck; BETL 100-B; Leuven: Leuven University, 1992) 1581–90, esp. 1581–3.

various explanations of these problems. Particularly in previous scholarship, many interpreters have thought that the forgiveness shown to the woman is the result of her love.<sup>11</sup> Nowadays most scholars rather assume that the woman was forgiven before she entered Simon's house. Some of them, defending the historicity of the story, assume that Jesus, out of pastoral concern, directed his personal word to the sinful woman in v. 48.<sup>12</sup> Some others suggest that the tensions in the text are due to the final verses composed by Luke, who has integrated the parable in vv. 41–43 with the narrative.<sup>13</sup> Some interpreters think that only Luke has taken the woman's act of love as the basis for Jesus' declaration of forgiveness.<sup>14</sup> All these theories must presuppose that Luke did not quite master the story he was working on.

This brief survey shows that the presence of vv. 47b–48 in the text is directly involved precisely with the key problem of the pericope. Up to v. 47bc, the Pharisee has treated the woman as a notorious sinner, while Jesus already knows that she is no longer a sinner and that her sins are forgiven. Only on the basis of v. 47bc does the act of the sinful woman become an act of repentance, to which Jesus responds in v. 48 by declaring to her that her sins are forgiven. Once vv. 47b–48 are removed, this tension disappears, and we can see that Luke was a master of his narrative. The actions of the woman must be seen as a sign of love and gratitude, not repentance.

Furthermore, the double formulation of the forgiveness in vv. 47a and 48 speaks for the secondary character of vv. 47b–48. The reading of Codex Bezae reveals the development of the tradition. The clumsy repetition of Jesus' forgiving words after his direct address to the woman had the advantage of clearly pointing out that the woman was still a sinner when she came into the house of the

11 See, e.g., Julius Holtzmann, *Die Synoptiker* (HCNT I.1; Tübingen/Leipzig: Mohr 1901) 348.

12 Thus, e.g., I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978) 314, and John J. Kilgallen, 'Forgiveness of Sins (Luke 7:36–50)', *NovT* 40 (1998) 105–16, esp. 110–11. Jürgen Roloff, *Das Kerygma und der irdische Jesus: Historische Motive in den Jesus-Erzählungen der Evangelien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2nd ed. 1973) 161–3, finds the story historically reliable but suggests that vv. 44–46 and 50 were added later.

13 Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I–IX* (New York: Doubleday, 1981) 686–7, excludes vv. 47c–50 as a Lukan redaction which served to combine the apophthegma (vv. 36–40, 44–47ab) and the parable (vv. 41–43). Fitzmyer also mentions Church fathers and modern scholars who read the story in these terms.

14 For example, Ernst Haenchen, *Der Weg Jesu: Eine Erklärung des Markus-Evangeliums und der kanonischen Parallelen* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2nd ed. 1968) 471, finds an original connection between v. 44a and v. 50 and proposes a simple traditional ending: 'Jesus said to the woman: "Go in peace."' The whole speech of Jesus in vv. 44b–49, in turn, is a Lukan addition that introduces the declaration of forgiveness. According to Delobel ('Lk 7,47', 1589), precisely the declaration of Jesus in v. 47a is added by Luke. He suggests that the Markan parallel in Mark 14.3–9 provided the basic setting of the story—anointing of Jesus by a woman at a meal—while the story of the sinful woman, including the parable, stemmed from the oral tradition.

Pharisee and that she needed to have Jesus' explicit absolution on the basis of her acts of repentance and love.

What about v. 47bc? In a stimulating and learned study from 1968, Walter Henss has—with reference to the work of Johann Christian Zahn in 1816—argued that the original text of the Diatessaron had the question of Jesus in v. 42b in another form than in the most manuscripts: τίνα [αὐτῶν] πλεῖον ἠγάπησεν ('Which one [of them] did he love more?'). Henss tries to demonstrate that this is the original reading and that it was influential in radical Pauline and Gnostic circles which stressed that Christ loved the 'elect ones' more than others. Accordingly, the canonical form is a correction of the text against the 'elect ones'. Henss further assumes that v. 47bc is also a later addition which was meant to rebut such a misinterpretation. He demonstrates that behind v. 47c, there is a positively formulated agraphon: *Cui enim plus dimittitur, plus diligit* ('For the one who is forgiven more, will love more'). This agraphon appears in some texts of the Western fathers (Irenaeus *Adv. haer.* 3.20.2; Origen *Hom. in Ps.* 38.9; Cyprian *Test.* 3.116); Henss thinks that the agraphon was added to these texts later. He finds the earliest indisputable quotation only in John Chrysostom's *Hom. in Acta Apost.* 30: Ὡς γὰρ πλεῖον ἀφέθη, πλεῖον ἀγαπήσει. He draws the conclusion that the agraphon becomes more widely attested only around 400.<sup>15</sup> According to him, the original text of Luke demonstrated the repentance and love of the sinful woman; v. 47bc is merely a secondary ecclesiastical explanation which glorifies her act of love. However, the textual basis of this theory is poor; Tjitze Baarda has convincingly demonstrated that all relevant versions of the Diatessaron read Luke 7.42 like the majority of the witnesses: τίς αὐτῶν πλεῖον ἀγαπήσει αὐτόν.<sup>16</sup>

In spite of the problems in his interpretation of v. 42, Henss draws deserved attention to the separate character of v. 47bc and the presence of the gnomic saying in v. 47c. In the light of his findings, it is possible to explain how this saying was attached to the text with the help of v. 47b. The addition of these sentences separates the two similar vv. 47a and 48 from each other and seeks to adapt the new understanding of the story as well as possible to the parable in vv. 41–42: the acts of love seen under the roof of the Pharisee clearly demonstrate why her many sins are declared forgiven.

Once vv. 47b–48 are dropped from the original text of Luke, there is no need for complicated literary reconstructions of a pre-Lukan story. Without these verses Luke's presentation is quite coherent. He counts the sinful woman among the tax collectors and sinners, friends of Jesus (Luke 7.34), who have received the good news, repented and changed their lives. In the ensuing story, she becomes a

15 W. Henss, *Das Verhältnis zwischen Diatessaron, christliche Gnosis und 'western Text'* (BZNW 33; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967) 24–31.

16 Baarda, 'Non-canonical Version', 99–119.



living example of such a new life. The parable of the two debtors justifies Jesus' proclamation of forgiveness and love; the woman, who was once a sinner, loves Jesus—and God—more than does his host, the Pharisee who has not sinned nearly as much as she. This makes the Pharisee a counter-character who cannot recognize Jesus as someone who has the authority to forgive sins. Jesus says to the Pharisee what the sinful woman already knows, and the woman, with her extremely loving and grateful act, makes a confession to Jesus: he is the one who has the divine authority to forgive sins, and he includes all repentant sinners in the realm of his good news. Finally, in v. 50, Jesus turns to her and says what she already knows: it is not her repentance or even her love that saves her, but her faith in Jesus as the one whom God has authorized to forgive sins.

In the early history of interpretation, the Lukan story was received as an important text concerning the forgiveness of sins. Irenaeus, the earliest witness to the pericope among the Church Fathers, simply quotes the beginning of the story in his survey of the Gospel of Luke. He mentions that because of the woman, Jesus 'spoke to Simon about the two debtors' (*Adv. haer.* 3.14.3).<sup>17</sup> The second witness for the Lukan story supports the theory presented in this article. The exegesis of Clement of Alexandria reveals that, in the latter half of the second century, there was a strong need to use the woman in Luke 7.36–50 as a model of the repentant sinner. In his spiritual and allegorical interpretation, Clement quotes the actions of the woman and the words of Jesus in v. 47a (ἀφέωνται αὐτῆς αἱ ἁμαρτίαι), but not vv. 47b–50 (*Paed.* 2.8.61). However, he presents 'tears of repentance' (μετανοίας δάκρυα) as the basis of forgiveness. When this woman took with her the oil—the most expensive thing she had—she had not yet received the word and was still a sinner.<sup>18</sup>

The author of the *Gospel of Peter*, ignorant of Luke 7.47b–48, has preserved the original reading here. Correspondingly, his interpretation of the story is independent of the canonical text and the later interpretation. In lines 9–13 he changes the astonished reaction of the guests in Luke 7.49 into a direct question to Jesus about his authority. The theme of forgiveness is subordinated to the disputation about

17 ...et quoniam apud Pharisaeum, recumbente eo, peccatrix mulier osculabatur pedes eius et unguebat unguento, et quaecumque propter eam dixit ad Symonem Dominus de duobus debitoribus;...

18 *Paed.* 2.8.61.2: Ἄλλ' ἢ μὲν γυνὴ γυνή μὴδέπω τοῦ λόγου μεταλαβοῦσα — ἔτι γὰρ ἦν ἁμαρτωλός—, ὅπερ ἠγγεῖτο τὸ κάλλιστον εἶναι παρ' αὐτῆ, τὸ μύρον, τούτῳ τετίμηκε τὸν δεσπότην. Cf. also Origen *Comm. in Matth.* 12.4: ἐλθοῦσα παρὰ τοὺς τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πόδας καὶ βρέχουσα αὐτοὺς τοῖς τῆς μετανοίας δάκρυσι. According to Tertullian *Adv. Marc.* 4.18, the woman won her pardon by repentance, which the Creator preferred to sacrifice. The natural social exchange of Jesus with sinners as portrayed by Luke is changed by Clement into the respectful approach of a sinner who strives for her salvation. Other Fathers of the Church offer similar interpretations (Pseudo-Cyprian *Ad Novatianum* 11; Jerome *Comm. in Hos.* Prol.; Ambrose *Exp. In Luc.* 6.12–19; see further C. Spicq, *Agapé dans le Nouveau Testament: Analyse des textes I* [Paris: Gabalda, 1958] 129–30 n. 3).

divine authority. The reconstruction of Jesus' answer in the following lines may remain impossible. In any case, the conflict with the guests leads to a situation in which Jesus sends his disciples on their mission—and to martyrdom.

## 2. Conclusions

On the basis of the one side of P.Oxy. 4009 reconstructed by Dieter Lührmann, it was still uncertain whether this fragment could be taken as a witness for an extended gospel text. The reconstruction presented here makes a strong case for Lührmann's conclusion: P.Oxy. 4009 is a gospel fragment and indeed a fragment of the *Gospel of Peter*. The sequence of the two stories, the sinful woman in the house of the Pharisee and Jesus' discourse on sending out his disciples, belong to the plot of this Gospel, which here and there presents Peter as the I-narrator and Jesus as κύριος—even in the speech of his opponents. The sequence of the two stories reveals the specifically anti-Jewish bias known from the Akhmîm fragment. The reconstruction of the P.Oxy. 4009 recto reveals notable affinities with the Western text and confirms, like the Akhmîm fragment, that the author of the *Gospel of Peter* knew the four gospels through the textual tradition which we are accustomed to call the Western text. In some cases, the Western readings challenge the traditional conception of the original text of the so-called canonical Gospels. P.Oxy. 4009 offers at least one notable instance in which it is reasonable to assume that the Western text provides clues to the reconstruction of the original text of Luke. In any case, the P.Oxy. 4009 recto is the earliest material and textual witness to the text of Luke 7.45–49.