

## THE COHERENCE OF "GNOSTICISM"

An event of the long-term Academy Project "The Late Antique Biblical Exegesis of Alexandria and Antioch" of the Research Centre for Primary Sources of the Ancient World at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities and of the Faculty of Theology of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

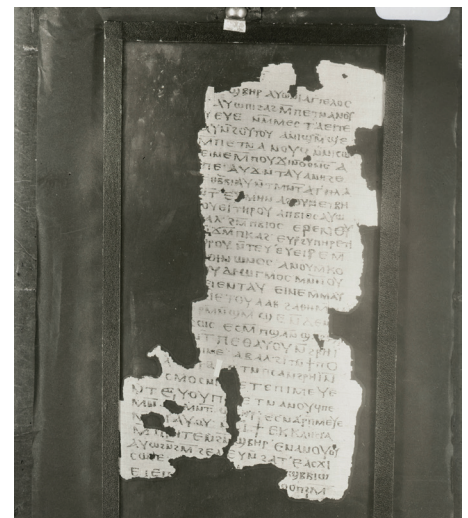
**Friday, 23rd November 2018 / 6pm**

Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities  
Einstein Hall, Jägerstraße 22/23, 10117 Berlin

Please register until 16.11.2018 at: [www.bbaw.de/HLV-18](http://www.bbaw.de/HLV-18)

In recent research, the concept of "Gnosticism" has been heavily criticized. It is said to have originated as a label invented by ancient Christian heresiologists to denounce alternative interpretations of Christianity. The concept therefore reflects a normative theological bias, invites stereotypical generalizations, and does not give justice to the diversity of the historical evidence. As a result of this criticism, however, the common characteristics of the phenomenon have received less attention, and new attempts at synthesis are now desirable. In particular, the lecture will try to reconstruct a logic of development for two themes that both had constitutive importance for the "gnostic" movement: (1) the idea of a pre-existent Human Being which is prominent in the earliest sources, but also an important, though often unrecognized, element in the later Valentinian systems; and (2) the story of Sophia, a basic feature of "gnostic" mythmaking whose historical alterations across the various sources have nevertheless been insufficiently studied.

**Einar Thomassen** was trained as a historian of religions specializing in Nag Hammadi studies in Bergen, Paris, and St. Andrews. After previous appointments at Uppsala and Oslo he has been Professor of Religion at the University of Bergen since 1993. He is currently President of the European Association for the Study of Religions.



Codex I, Papyrus, Page 135, Claremont Colleges Digital Library

**Introduction**  
**Christoph Marksches**  
Academy Member  
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

**The Coherence of "Gnosticism"**  
**Einar Thomassen**  
University of Bergen

Admission free.  
Registration is required.



DE GRUYTER



### Further Information:

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[www.bbaw.de](http://www.bbaw.de)

### How to get there:

S-Bahn: Friedrichstraße / U2: Hausvogteiplatz  
or Stadtmittel / U6: Französische Straße or  
Stadtmittel