In 418 A.D. the Spanish virgo Egeria visited Edessa after her pilgrimage to the Holy Land. At that time the bishop of this city was the famous

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1 She left us an itinerary; the best edition is that by Aet. Franceschini and R. Weber in the series Corpus Christianorum (Turnhout 1958). The text with a French translation is found in H. Pétré, Sources Chrétiennes 21 (Paris 1964). Because Egeria does not mention her name in this writing, various attempts have been made to identify her. Dom Férotin (Rev. des Questions hist. 74 [1903] 367-397) succeeded in making this identification. Further research by especially Dom Lambert (Rev. Mabillon 26 [1936] 71-94; 27 [1937] 1-42; 28 [1938] 49-69) confirmed the view that this itinerary was written by a Spanish virgo named Egeria. In view of Lambert's investigations it appears to be incorrect to call her Aetheria or to hold that she hailed from the South of Gaul. The date of this pilgrimage is highly controversial. Here the dating by Lambert (Rev. Mab. 28 [1938] 49-69) is followed, whose work was perfected by Dom Dekkers (Sacris Erudiri 1 [1948] 181-205). J. G. Davies made objections (Vig. Chr. 8 [1954] 93-100), but they had been already met by Dekkers (o.c.); it seems that Davies did not read the Dutch version of Dekkers's article. The date given by P. Devos (Anal. Boll. 85 [1967] 165-194), anew based on the title confessor used by Egeria (384 A.D.) is not convincing. A title of honour of this kind is not a sound base for an argumentation. Moreover, bishop Rabbula of Edessa was fully entitled to it, as in vain he sought martyrdom in Baalbek. Dom Le Court Maison and Dom Billet (Rech. S. R. 48 [1960] 460-465) base their date on John Chrysostomos's description of Job's dunghill, venerated at Carneas, compared with Egeria's portrayal of the same. But they do not take into account oriental imagination sufficiently. The sermon of Chrysostomos should not be taken that literally and therefore their date is to be rejected. The only convincing date seems to be 418 A.D. In particular the connection which Lambert (Rev. Mab. 27 [1937] 1-42) sees between Egeria and Priscillian should be noted. The parallels, adduced by him, cannot all be considered to be accidental. Objections appear to be motivated more by apologetical than by historical arguments.

2 Egeria's report is found in chapter 17 and 19. Re: Edessa, cf. R. Duval, Histoire ... d'Edesse (Paris 1892) [he dates Egeria wrongly in the sixth century]; E. Kirsten, art. Edessa, RAC IV (1959) col. 552-597 (his date is 386 A.D., but in col. 578 proof is furnished that Egeria must have been in Edessa in or after 394 A.D.); J. B. Segal, Edessa (Oxford 1970) [he dates "to the middle of the fifth century", based on the church mentioned in 19,3, which he identifies as the Church of the Twelve Apostles, built after 436]. Concerning the religious situation of this city, cf. also H. J. W. Drijvers, Vig. Chr. 24 (1970) 4-33.
Rabbula (412–436). Egeria stayed there for three days before journeying on to Constantinople. Her first deed was to see the large (Thomas) church, where the bones of the apostle were venerated after having been brought there in 394 A.D. She continued her itinerary: *Itaque ergo iuxta consuetudinem factis orationibus et cetera, quae consuetudo erat fieri in locis sanctis, nec non etiam et aliquanta ipsius sancti Thomae ibi legimus* (19,2). In this essay various possible interpretations of the term *aliquanta ipsius sancti Thomae* will be explored.

A number of writings are linked to the name of the apostle Thomas but only two of these are pertinent to our subject: the *Acts of Thomas* and the *Gospel according to Thomas* (referred to below as *A. Th.* and *G. Th.*).

Usually these *aliquanta* are simply identified with the *A. Th.* The latter were written in Edessa around 225 A.D. in Syriac. Various manuscripts and translations of them are extant, for they were rather popular, e.g. among the Priscillians too. The theology of the *A. Th.* is that of the ancient Syrian Church. Thus it is quite possible that this writing was still valued in Edessa in Rabbula’s time. Moreover, the extant version in Syriac appears to have been somewhat adapted to later theological insight, so that it could have been used for the liturgy without too many objections. It ought to be stressed that the *A. Th.* do not convey a Gnostic message originally, but contain conceptions that are partly Jewish-Christian, partly Encratitic. It is an arresting fact that even Rabbula, the champion of Orthodoxy, clearly shared conceptions of this kind as shown in his life and work. Besides, the Song of the Pearl in the *A. Th.* was

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5 See G. Quispel, *Makarius . . .* (Leiden 1967) for a non-gnostic interpretation of this gospel.

6 Cf. Klijn, *o.c.*, 1ff.

7 Noted by Turibus Asturiensis (PL 54,693–695).

8 For instance, after his conversion Rabbula breaks with his family and gives up home and possessions in order to seek seclusion in the desert, cf. “Thomas”’s portrayal of the true Christian. Furthermore, in his “Commandments and exhortations to the priests and sons of the convenant living in the country” certain rules are found, reminiscent of Encratism: in rule 2 and 9 marriage and trade are rejected and in rule 22 the enjoyment of wine and meat. Also Jewish-(Christian) influences are noticeable: rule 11, concerning fasting, prayers and alms; rule 16, against soothsayers and magicians; rule 20, prohibition to pronounce God’s name; rule 31, prohibition to keep profane and cultic vessels at one place (translation of these rules in F. C. Burkitt, *Urchristentum im Orient* [Tübingen 1907] 98ff.). Egeria’s description of the dedication of one of Edessa’s gates has features strongly reminescent of *Leviticus* (22,3; 21,10 and 11).