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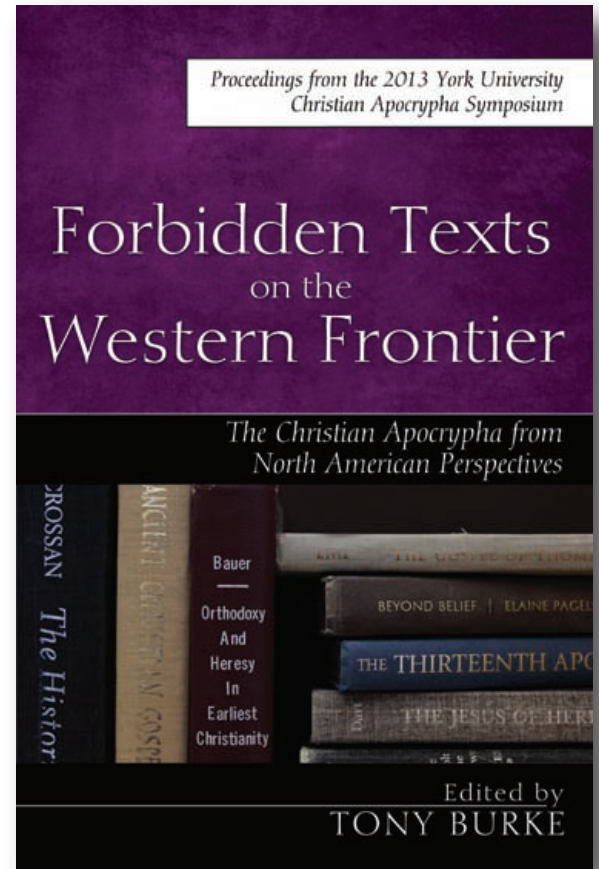
Proceedings from the 2013 York University Christian Apocrypha Symposium

Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier

The Christian Apocrypha from North American Perspectives

Edited by **TONY BURKE**

North American study of the Christian Apocrypha is known principally for its interest in using noncanonical texts to reconstruct the life and teachings of Jesus, and for its support of Walter Bauer's theory on the development of early Christianity. The papers in this volume, presented in September 2013 at York University in Toronto, challenge that simplistic assessment by demonstrating that U.S. and Canadian scholarship on the Christian Apocrypha is rich and diverse. The topics covered in the papers include new developments in the study of canon formation, the interplay of Christian Apocrypha and texts from the Nag Hammadi library, digital humanities resources for reconstructing apocryphal texts, and the value of studying late-antique apocrypha. Among the highlights of the collection are papers from a panel by three celebrated New Testament scholars reassessing the significance of the Christian Apocrypha for the study of the historical Jesus. *Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier* demonstrates the depth and breadth of Christian Apocrypha studies in North America and offers a glimpse at the achievements that lie ahead in the field.



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TONY BURKE is Associate Professor of Early Christianity at York University in Toronto, Ontario. He is the author of *Secret Scriptures Revealed* (2013), and editor of *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery?* (Cascade Books, 2013).

"Studies of the Christian Apocrypha are coming of age in North America, and this volume clearly outlines the contours of such an emergence into adulthood. These essays cover many of the major issues in contemporary apocryphal studies, ranging from debate over definitions to the practicalities of digital editions. The chapters on the distinctive contribution of North American study of the Christian Apocrypha are particularly interesting and provocative."

— STANLEY E. PORTER, President and Dean, Professor of New Testament, Roy A. Hope Chair in Christian Worldview, McMaster Divinity College

"Burke has brought together a fascinating collection of essays that not only sheds light on the writing that forms the Christian Apocrypha but also provides deep meta-level reflections on the forces that influence the way those texts are studied in the North American context. Much that is discussed is richly insightful, and often the reflections on scholarship are probing and controversial. This is essential reading for those interested in the Christian Apocrypha and early Christianity."

— PAUL FOSTER, Professor, New Testament Language, Literature & Theology, School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh

"As this book shows, scholars in North America have much to contribute to the study of Christian Apocrypha. Some contributors reflect critically on the particular circumstances in which they operate, arising from the interplay between faith commitments and historical scholarship in the academy, the church, and in popular culture. Others foreground and advance the discussion of a number of apocryphal texts. Their essays make a significant contribution to the study of early Christian literature."

— ANDREW GREGORY, Chaplain & Pro-Dean for Welfare, University College, Oxford

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CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHA SYMPOSIUM

Edited by
TONY BURKE

Foreword by
CHRISTOPH MARKSCHIES



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FORBIDDEN TEXTS ON THE WESTERN FRONTIER
The Christian Apocrypha in North American Perspectives
Proceedings from the 2013 York University Christian Apocrypha Symposium

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*To François Bovon and Helmut Koester,
two giants upon whose shoulders we stand.*

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Foreword¹

— Christoph Marksches —

THOSE OF US IN Europe who work with Christian apocrypha will appreciate this opportunity to reach for a volume documenting the current state of the question in the United States and Canada. In Europe, research on the apocrypha has been closely tied to the annual meetings of the *Association pour l'étude de la littérature apocryphe chrétienne* (AELAC), which until 2013 took place in Dole (Burgundy). Only few European scholars regularly travel to the great annual meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature in the United States or—as the unforgettable and as-kind-as-he-was-wise François Bovon (1938–2013) did—actually move to North America to teach and conduct research there. The lower intensity of transatlantic scholarly cooperation—at least in comparison to that of European countries—can be explained not only by the significant geographical distance, but also by the fact that European research on apocrypha is often published in French, a language which is not widely studied at a sufficient level everywhere (including, admittedly, Europe). Barely one tenth of the members of AELAC live and work in the U.S. and Canada; consequently, the contents of a volume such as the present one put together by Tony Burke should not only attract the interest of North American scholars, but also provide their counterparts in Europe with an excellent overview of the current research on apocrypha taking place in the United States and Canada.

Papers included in this volume can be roughly divided into four groups: first, there are a number of attempts to describe the characteristics and the history of American research on apocrypha; second, some representative examples of American research are provided, along with; third, American perspectives on European (and German) research on apocrypha; and fourth, papers which—as is to be expected with a subject as complex as

1. I would like to thank Slavomír Čéplö for translating this Foreword into English.

this one—grapple with the term “apocrypha” and its definition. Based on this division of the contents of this volume, I will now proceed with a few remarks on the individual papers.

First, the papers that aim to track the history of Christian apocrypha research in the United States and Canada. Some time ago, Elizabeth A. Clark demonstrated how European and especially German scholars and research paradigms helped promote the concept of Early Church History in nineteenth-century America.² One could continue her narrative of history well into the twentieth century, and I will only need to mention Edgar J. Goodspeed in Chicago who studied with Aldof Harnack in 1898 in Berlin, and later met Theodor Nöldecke in Tübingen.³ It is hardly surprising, therefore, that it was not just the Harvard School that was influenced by German scholars or scholars who spent their formative years in Germany (as Brent Landau shows); the same and yet a fundamentally different story could be written for the Divinity School in Chicago, and several other institutions. However, it must be made clear that the German and Swiss scholars Helmut Koester and François Bovon repeatedly pointed out to what extent their move to America changed the fundamental paradigms of their research (and the same is, incidentally, true of Hans Dieter Betz in Chicago). One must also not underestimate the “strong local influences” of the department tradition in Harvard that Landau describes. This is made clear by, say, a comparison between scholars influenced by Bultmann from both sides of the Atlantic. Koester, as well as his Bonn colleague Wilhelm Schneemelcher,⁴ were influenced by Rudolf Bultmann’s form criticism—Koester obtained his doctorate in Marburg, the last place where Bultmann was academically active,⁵ Schneemelcher was exposed to Bultmann’s most significant works during his studies in 1920s Berlin.⁶ But while Schneemelcher—who was active in the German Protestant Church (for example in its ecumenical dialogue with the Greek Orthodox Church)⁷ all of his life—was influenced by Karl Barth’s idea of church theology and therefore considered apocrypha to be relevant only for the history of Christian piety, but not for the history of Christian theology, Koester (together with James Robinson who

2. Clark, *Founding the Fathers*.

3. Cobb and Jennings, *Biography*, 1–2.

4. For more on Schneemelcher, see below, p. xv.

5. Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung*.

6. Bultmann, *Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*.

7. See the Foreword by the Patriarch of Constantinople Demetrios I (1972–1991), in Damaskinos Papandreou et al., eds., *Oecumenica et Patristica*, 7–9.

was also originally influenced by Karl Barth)⁸ placed emphasis elsewhere. In other words, Koester drifted much further away from the paradigms of his German studies than Schneemelcher ever could. Maybe we could even speak anachronistically of a more conservative and a more radical reception of Rudolf Bultmann's theological as well as historical concerns. It is, after all, well-known that Bultmann himself did not do any work on Christian apocrypha, not even in his book reviews.⁹ Consequently, his students and others he influenced could not follow in his footsteps—for example, when it comes to the question of the so-called historical Jesus. Additionally, as Stephen J. Patterson makes clear in his contribution, certain viewpoints held by classical German scholarly figures could have survived even without direct contact and tight routes of transmission—so, in some parts of the American search for the “historical Jesus,” the idea of a “plain Jesus” was given precedence over any considerations of the age of tradition, which also assumes the central position in the message of the New Testament in Harnack's lectures on “The Essence of Christianity.”¹⁰ Patterson, and F. Stanley Jones with him, shows the effect this has on the reconstruction of the first decades of Christianity when such approaches shaped by the New Testament (or rather by a certain view of Jesus, whether derived from the *Gospel of Thomas* or the Synoptics) are abandoned and all texts are considered worthy and equal. The paper by Pierluigi Piovanelli makes it abundantly clear that for some time now (and perhaps increasingly so), scholars from other European countries than Germany have exercised influence over the debate in the United States and Canada, and the same can be said about the situation in Germany: the influence of research from the United States and Canada is increasing constantly. His enthusiastic defense of *longue durée* and objections to limiting Christian apocrypha research to texts from antiquity show how far has the discussion drifted from its original connection to the study of the New Testament: all versions of apocryphal texts, even the medieval ones, are of interest. Later editors are to be taken seriously and should never be considered mere reworkers of an original text sanctified by virtue of its age. Piovanelli also makes another excellent point by drawing attention to scholars with double qualifications, such as Bovon, who studied both ancient Christianity of the early imperial era as well as Byzantine Christianity and was thus able—just to give one example—to study the growth of the Stephen tradition.¹¹ Without such double qualifications,

8. Robinson, “Theological Autobiography.”

9. Bultmann, *Theologie als Kritik*.

10. Osthöener, “Adolf von Harnack als Systematiker”; Osthöener, “Nachwort.”

11. Bovon, “Dossier on Stephen”; Bovon and Bouvier, “La translation des reliques.”

the study of the complex history of versions of many Christian apocrypha could only have been possible in teams. To the fields listed by Piovanelli, we must, naturally, add the knowledge of the languages of the Christian Orient which are indispensable to those who wish to study the material in its full scope or, alternatively, invoke wider cooperation such as that practiced by the AELAC through the many volumes of the series *Corpus Christianorum*.

A number of papers address the notoriously complicated issue of defining what “apocrypha” are and how to tell them apart from hagiographic or the so-called gnostic writings. Even a cursory look at the history of such attempts reveals¹² that there is no logically precise delineation of this material written down somewhere in the Platonic realm of ideas that waits to be correctly read. Any and all attempts at definition are based on conventions and pragmatic compromises and therefore must be tested in scholarly practice. The debate of the recent decades has only succeeded in showing that some of these attempts lead nowhere, as is the case with, say, those older definitions which presuppose such an early existence of a Christian biblical canon and that the term “apocrypha” is merely a label for those noncanonical writings that aspired to become a part of the canon, but were not accepted as such by the majority (or “orthodox”) church. This definition of “apocrypha” which seeks to establish a dialectical relationship of such writings to the biblical canon (and which has become quite commonplace) is especially useless when extending the definition of the term to writings beyond antiquity and recognizing that many relevant textual traditions are only extant in medieval recensions (as Pierluigi Piovanelli rightly points out). But even the classic sociological delineation of apocrypha as mere witnesses to “popular piety” employed as a matter of course by Schneemelcher (who, in turn, follows Lietzmann)¹³ can only be applied to a fraction of the material. Nicola Denzey Lewis is right to point to the oft-cited origin of the so-called apocryphal or gnostic literature in an anti-intellectual (or at least only partially educated) milieu or even as a part of folk religion, where in fact such an assessment is more likely to be a later legacy of a heresiologically-determined prejudice against both textual contexts. In fact, the vast majority of the so-called Christian gnostic texts (including, but not limited to, those found in Nag Hammadi) belong *per definitionem* to collections of Christian apocrypha. Often there are only pragmatic reasons—of ostensibly economic nature—that motivate publishers and booksellers to exclude Nag Hammadi texts from editions of Christian apocrypha. Additionally, Denzey Lewis has shown elsewhere that the unity of the Nag Hammadi texts, appar-

12. Markschies, “Haupteinleitung,” 104–14.

13. *Ibid.*, 75–80.

ently constructed on the basis of their relationship as a single archeological artifact, is not as solid as it would seem upon first glance.¹⁴ And with that, any reason to treat and edit this corpus separately disappears.

For a European scholar working with Christian apocrypha, seeing European research traditions through the (critical) eye of an American-based colleague is naturally particularly interesting and the paper by Jean-Michel Roessli offers a number of fascinating insights. Roessli wonders why the field is so strongly focused on the two thick volumes assembled by a Hamburg secondary school teacher¹⁵ named Johann Albert Fabricius. The reason for that is most likely the wide dissemination of these volumes which can be easily found in used books stores even today.¹⁶ Roessli cites this focus on a baroque anthology as a mere example of how heavily the conflicts of the past three centuries weigh on European research. And so he also wonders why, when compiling collections of translations of early Christian apocrypha, Wilhelm Schneemelcher followed Edgar Hennecke and Christoph Marschies followed Wilhelm Schneemelcher. The truth in these cases, however, is slightly more complicated: one might say that the editors felt bound to follow in the tradition of their predecessors and did so also because their predecessors left them the *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* (first published in 1904¹⁷) as a sort of inheritance. Inheritance binds. However, it does not bind the inheritors to slavishly continue the work of their predecessors. Consider the latest edition which came out in 2012 where the break with tradition is more than obvious: the title of the collection is *Antike christliche Apokryphen* (“Ancient Christian Apocrypha”) because a large number of texts emerged at a time when there did not exist (at least in some areas under the influence of the “orthodox” church) any generally-recognized New Testament canon and so calling such writings “New Testament Apocrypha” would be absurd. The new title also serves to indicate agreement with certain common basic principles of the AELAC, which were expressed also in the critical review of one of Schneemelcher’s editions by Éric Junod.¹⁸ To put it bluntly: the new title of the new Schneemelcher edition recognizes that Junod is right and Schneemelcher wrong. The only, but seemingly decisive, point where Marschies maintained the classic architec-

14. Denzey Lewis and Blount, “Rethinking the Origins.”

15. Though, in fact, the “secondary school” was something between a secondary school of our times and a university: a *Gymnasium illustre*.

16. Marschies, “Haupteinleitung,” 11.

17. Hennecke, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*.

18. Junod, “Apocryphes du Nouveau Testament: Une appellation erronée et une collection artificielle”; see also “Apocryphes du Nouveau Testament ou apocryphes chrétiens anciens?”

ture of Hennecke's and Schneemelcher's work is the form-critical structure based on the canonical New Testament writings: gospels, acts, epistles, and apocalypses. This is, incidentally, also the structure employed by Fabricius, who, however, organized his volume on Old Testament Pseudepigrapha strictly alphabetically by biblical figures. The approach adopted by Christoph Marschies and Jens Schröter in *Antike christliche Apokryphen* where apocryphal writings are ordered by form or genre should be understood in the same pragmatic terms. While Wilhelm Schneemelcher defended this arrangement of texts with a statement of research principles arguing that this form-critical structure is the crucial insight of German New Testament scholarship in the twentieth century,¹⁹ the motivation for holding on to this arrangement until today is now purely pragmatic: a chronological arrangement of the texts would be extremely speculative since their dating is either controversial or it is, considering the fluidity of the repeatedly reworked material, outright impossible. The alternative, an alphabetical arrangement, would mix modern literary titles, manuscript abbreviations, and other titles often haphazardly selected from a host of titles extant in manuscript witnesses in a motley ensemble which would perhaps be appropriate for a loose series titled "Some More Apocrypha," but certainly does not seem fitting for a selection of the most important ancient and late antique texts comprising several thousand pages. The same applies here: there is nothing hiding behind the arrangement (any more) except for practical considerations which are in any case set aside in the planned subsequent volumes on biographical tradition and also in other places. After all, unlike "New Testament Apocrypha," the label "Ancient Christian Apocrypha" includes not only the apocryphal acts, but also various other forms of biographical tradition, such as *vitae* or testaments. Jean-Michel Roessli is naturally perfectly right when he says that the history of research on Christian apocrypha before Fabricius has been examined only cursorily²⁰ and that European scholarship [is] burdened by the past, at least in the sense that what is perceived as revolutionary in recent scholarship still runs within established tracks that are connected to certain normative traditions. Interestingly, when one looks at the work of American or Canadian scholars, it is obvious that research on Christian apocrypha is still too tied to the canonical writings, as clearly seen in the paper by Stephen J. Patterson. Even if it is true that for at least some apocryphal writings the relationship to the canonical writings or figures or

19. As said in a conversation on the occasion of the transfer of publishing responsibilities to Marschies, summer 1994 in Bad Honnef near Bonn.

20. So for example Marschies, "Hauptleitung," 91–95, including more detailed comments on Michael Neander.

genres is their primary *raison d'être*, apocryphal writings as such must be treated and studied separately from canonical writings.

And finally, a number of papers in this volume focus on individual apocryphal writings and by doing so demonstrate the vigor of American and Canadian research. It is somewhat surprising, however, that most of these studies chose to employ a comparatively classic approach to the material. More often than not, new research paradigms can barely be seen on the horizon rather than applied to apocryphal texts. Lee Martin McDonald goes beyond summarizing his work on the formation of the biblical canon by extending it to the study of the material aspect of modes of transmission. As such, exploration of the material culture of the antique world and its relationship to the history of the formation of its scripture canon is a fascinating and promising avenue of research²¹ that I would like to see discussed in much more detail in the future. Surprisingly, there is only one paper (by Kristian S. Heal) on the subject of Digital Humanities, which can be found at the end of the volume and focuses on a single (but admittedly characteristic) example. It is, after all, immediately obvious that this is an area where much needs to be done for the so-called apocryphal literature: the existing corpora, such as the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, contain texts drawn from the now-obsolete nineteenth-century compilations edited by Tischendorf, Lipsius/Bonnet and others. Heal's paper describes an edition of the *Syriac History of Joseph* prepared for the Oxford-BYU Syriac Digital Corpus using the Classical Text Editor developed by the Wiener Akademie der Wissenschaften. But it is perhaps a common task of American and European apocrypha research (and not just a challenge related to certain specific texts) to shift their focus away from books to the digital presentation of the fruits of their work. This applies especially to critical editions, since newly-discovered manuscripts can be easily converted to a digital edition and digitalized photographs of the manuscript can be linked with the edition or transliteration. Hardcopy publications can even be linked to digital editions, as is the case with Peter Schäfer's latest edition of the *Toledot Yeshu*.²² It is desirable to engage with leading experts in the field of Digital Humanities in a discussion about whether a digital corpus of apocryphal literature (with appropriate links to other corpora) could and should be built. This fluid literature, which mostly exists in various translations and editions and thus constitutes a perfect example of "living literature,"²³ is especially

21. I myself have attempted to draw conclusions about the *Sitz im Leben* of the so-called apocryphal gospels from their material aspect, in Markschies, "Was wissen wir über den *Sitz im Leben*?"

22. Meerson and Schäfer, eds., *Toledot Yeshu*.

23. Markschies, "Haupteinleitung," 9–10.

amenable to digital presentation: with a push of a button, one can focus on a single version in a synoptic presentation, but one can also step back and see the text in the multitude of its recensions and editions. The digital medium helps to avoid especially the type of pseudocanonization typical of the nineteenth-century editions, which artificially filtered out certain texts from a rich and varied current of transmission. They thus created compiled texts, texts which had never been attested, texts that are the product of the philological fantasy of a modern editor or rather their desperate attempt to control a nearly unmanageable abundance of witnesses and versions—a problem that modern technology may be better equipped to handle.²⁴

But this introduction should certainly not end with a note of this excellent volume's shortcomings, even if those shortcomings are in fact a roadmap to a mighty task. I hope that these lines are but an opening salvo of a renewed and close transatlantic cooperation in the field of Christian apocrypha research which seeks to build on the work begun in the twentieth-century by European scholars such as Helmut Koester and François Bovon, as well as Bultmann's student James M. Robinson, but also to critically evaluate and transform it for the needs of a changed research landscape. The papers in this volume which critically reflect upon American research are—or at least will be, once European scholars undergo such self-reflection—an excellent point from which to start anew and work together. In that sense, Tony Burke and Brent Landau should be congratulated and thanked for their efforts to organize the York Christian Apocrypha Symposium and publish the expanded proceedings in this volume.

24. Some fundamental observations can be found as early as Ritter, *Stemmatierungsversuche zum Corpus Dionysiacum Areopagiticum*.

Preface

THE PAPERS IN THIS volume were presented at the York Christian Apocrypha Symposium, “Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier: The Christian Apocrypha in North American Perspectives,” held from September 24–25, 2013 at York University in Toronto, Canada. The Symposia Series began in 2011 with the goal of strengthening the field of Christian Apocrypha Studies in North America through fostering collaboration between scholars and raising awareness of the results of their investigations. The 2011 Symposium gathered together experts on the controversial *Secret Gospel of Mark*, a text that many scholars consider a modern forgery. The papers from that event were published by Cascade Books in early 2013 as *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery? The Secret Gospel of Mark in Debate*.

The 2013 Symposium, organized by Tony Burke and Brent Landau, examined the past, present, and future of Christian Apocrypha Studies in North America—looking back at the defining moments and voices in scholarship, looking around at what makes our approaches unique and what has come to define us on the world stage, and looking forward at new methodologies and new opportunities for collaboration. The gathering was made possible by a generous grant from the Social Sciences Humanities Research Council of Canada and by contributions from several funding bodies within York University. We wish to thank Martin Lockshin and Savitri Ramjattan in the Department of the Humanities, the Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation, the Faculty of Graduate Studies, and the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies. Particular thanks go to Janet Friskney, Research Officer for the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, who patiently guided us through the grant-writing process.

Additional thanks go to our panelists who contributed their time and expertise to the Symposium, and to the students who assisted in the administration of the conference: Robert Loughton, Joe Oryshak, and Sarah Veale, and to Jason Chartrand for helping compile the indices. We are grateful also

xx Preface

to all those who attended the Symposium and participated in the discussions that arose. Special appreciation goes to Christoph Marksches who brings an international voice to the project with his foreword, to Slavomír Čéplö for last-minute translation assistance, to Pierluigi Piovanelli, Timothy Pettipiece, and John Kloppenborg for their feedback on the introduction, and to K. C. Hanson and Matthew Wimer at Wipf and Stock Publishers for their continued support of the Symposium. Finally, my personal thanks go to Brent Landau for his invaluable assistance planning the symposium; unfortunately, work and family responsibilities prevented him from serving as co-editor of this collection.

For information on future symposia in the York Christian Apocrypha Symposium Series, look for announcements on the Apocryphicity blog (<http://www.apocryphicity.ca>) or visit the Symposium's web page (www.apocryphicity.ca/york-christian-apocrypha-symposium-series/).

April 2015
Tony Burke

Abbreviations

ANCIENT

<i>1 Clem.</i>	<i>1 Clement</i>
<i>2 Clem.</i>	<i>2 Clement</i>
<i>Acts Pet. Paul</i>	<i>Acts of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul</i>
<i>Acts John</i>	<i>Acts of John</i>
<i>Acts Paul</i>	<i>Acts of Paul</i>
<i>Acts Pet.</i>	<i>Acts of Peter</i>
<i>Acts Pet. 12 Apos.</i>	<i>Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles</i>
<i>Acts Thom.</i>	<i>Acts of Thomas</i>
<i>Apoc. Elijah</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Elijah</i>
<i>Apoc. Ps.-Meth.</i>	<i>Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius</i>

Aphrahat

Dem. *Demonstrations*

Arm. Gos. Inf. *Armenian Gospel of the Infancy*

Aristotle

Rhet. *Rhetorica*

Augustine

Conf. *Confessions*

Doctr. chr. *De doctrina christiana*

xxii Abbreviations

Clement of Alexandria

Exc. *Excerpta ex Theodoto*

Ep. Apos. *Epistle of the Apostles*

Epiphanius

De mens. et pond. *De mensuris et ponderibus (On Weights and Measures)*

Pan. *Panarion*

Eusebius

Dem. ev. *Demonstratio evangelica*

Hist. eccl. *Historia ecclesiastica*

Gos. Phil. *Gospel of Philip*

Gos. Thom. *Gospel of Thomas*

Herm. Mand. *Shepherd of Hermas, Mandate(s)*

Hippolytus

Haer. *Refutatio omnium haeresium*

Hist. Virg. *History of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

Inf. Gos. Thom. *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*

Irenaeus

Haer. *Adversus haereses*

Isidore of Seville

Orig. *Origenes*

Jerome

Epist. *Epistulae*

Vir. ill. *De viris illustribus*

Josephus

Ag. Ap. *Against Apion*
Ant. *Jewish Antiquities*
J.W. *Jewish War*

Jos. Asen. *Joseph and Aseneth*
Jub. *Jubilees*

Justin

1 Apol. *1 Apology*
Dial. *Dialogue with Trypho*

Mart. Pet. *Pseudo-Linus, Martyrdom of Blessed Peter the Apostle*
Pass. Holy *Passion of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul*

Origen

Princ. *De principis*

Philo

Congr. *De congressu eruditionis gratia (On the Preliminary Studies)*
Legat. *Legatio ad Gaium (On the Embassy to Gaius)*

Prudentius

Perist. *Peristephanon*

Pseudo-Clementines

Ps.-Clem. *Pseudo-Clementines*
Hom. (KH) *Homilies (Klementia)*
Rec. (R) *Recognitions (Recognition)*

xxiv Abbreviations

Rufinus

Orig. Hom. Jon. *Origenis in Jonam homiliae*

Orig. Hom. Num. *Origenis in Numeros homiliae*

Socrates Scholasticus

Hist. eccl. *Historia ecclesiastica*

Sozomen

Hist. eccl. *Historia ecclesiastica*

Tertullian

Marc. *Adversus Marcionem*

Praescr. *De praescriptione haereticorum*

Theodoret

Hist. eccl. *Historia ecclesiastica*

Tib. Sib.

Tiburtine Sibyl

MODERN

ABD *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. Edited by David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992

AH *Art History*

AHR *American Historical Review*

AnBoll *Analecta Bollandiana*

ANRW *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*

ASSR *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*

Aug *Augustiniana*

BAR *Biblical Archaeology Review*

BASP *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists*

BETL *Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum
lovaniensium*

BGBE *Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese*

BRev *Bible Review*

<i>ByzZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology
CCSA	Corpus Christianorum: Series Apocryphorum
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum: Series Latina
<i>CP</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
EHPR	Études d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses
<i>ETR</i>	<i>Études théologiques et religieuses</i>
GCS	Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte
HDR	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
<i>HR</i>	<i>History of Religions</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>J ECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JEH</i>	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
<i>JRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplements
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LSJ	Henry George Liddel, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9th ed. with revised supplement. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
<i>LTP</i>	<i>Laval théologique et philosophique</i>
<i>Mus</i>	<i>Muséon: Revue d'études orientales</i>
NAWG	Nachrichten (von) der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen

xxvi Abbreviations

<i>NedTT</i>	<i>Nederlands theologisch tijdschrift</i>
NHS	Nag Hammadi Studies
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichean Studies
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OECT	Oxford Early Christian Texts
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
<i>OLP</i>	<i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica</i>
<i>Or</i>	<i>Orientalia</i>
<i>OrChr</i>	<i>Oriens Christianus</i>
OrChrAn	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
P. Oxy.	<i>The Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> . Edited by B. P. Grenfell et al. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1898–
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
<i>PRSt</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>RBL</i>	<i>Review of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RTAM</i>	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale</i>
<i>RTP</i>	<i>Revue de théologie et de philosophie</i>
SAC	Studies in Antiquity and Christianity
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLHBS	Society of Biblical Literature History of Biblical Studies
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SBLTT	Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SC	Sources chrétiennes
<i>SecCent</i>	<i>Second Century</i>
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions (supplements to Numen).
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series

SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
SR	<i>Studies in Religion</i>
StOR	Studies in Oriental Religions
StPatr	Studia patristica
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigraphica
TENTS	Texts and Editions for New Testament Study
<i>ThTo</i>	<i>Theology Today</i>
<i>TJT</i>	<i>Toronto Journal of Theology</i>
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VCSup	Supplements to <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
WGRW	Writings from the Greco-Roman World
WGRWSup	Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

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Introduction

— Tony Burke —

THE YORK CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHA Symposium Series was created in 2011 as a forum to showcase the work of North American scholars who study the Christian Apocrypha (CA). For the second symposium, titled “Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier: The Christian Apocrypha in North American Perspectives,” we decided to take that mandate seriously and look directly at ourselves, to consider what makes CA Studies in the U.S. and Canada unique, to celebrate our strengths, and reflect on our weaknesses.

North America has no shortage of accomplished scholars in the field, but it has lacked the visibility and prestige enjoyed by our European colleagues, due in part to their highly-regarded publishing initiatives and the collaborative synergy that made these initiatives possible. Since 1904, German scholars have worked together to produce the celebrated *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung* volumes, currently being updated by the editorial team of Christoph Marksches and Jens Schröter.¹ The French and Swiss scholars who established the Association pour l'étude de la littérature apocryphe chrétienne (AELAC) have produced their own collection, the two-volume *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*,² as well as a number of critical editions in the Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum, the

1. Marksches and Schröter, eds., *Antike christliche Apokryphen*.

2. Bovon, Geoltrain, and Kaestli, eds., *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*.

2 Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier

journal *Apocrypha*, and a series of pocketbook editions of individual texts (La collection de poche Apocryphes); they also meet regularly at an annual summer réunion and smaller meetings during the winter months. Readers looking for texts in English translation have been served with a number of collections by individual scholars, including J. K. Elliott's *The Apocryphal New Testament* (an update of the collection of M. R. James from 1924), and several compendia assembled by Bart Ehrman. But none of these are collaborative projects on the scale of the French and German collections. It must be acknowledged that membership in the AELAC has become increasingly international over the past decade and North American scholars have assembled with their European colleagues at the group's meetings and have contributed to their publishing endeavors—notably, Tony Burke, Kristian Heal, F. Stanley Jones, Brent Landau, Pierluigi Piovaneli, Jean-Michel Roessli, and Stephen Shoemaker are all members of the group and have published in their series' and/or the *Apocrypha* journal. Similarly, the first volume of the Marksches-Schröter collection includes work by three scholars based in Canada: Wolf-Peter Funk, Stanley Porter, and Wendy Porter. Nevertheless, North American scholarship can profit from gatherings that take place closer to home and from collaborating on scholarly endeavors that address the interests of North American readers.

Efforts have been made to satisfy these needs. U.S. and Canadian (and some international) CA scholars have met at annual meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature for decades, contributing papers to the Christian Apocrypha Section, as well as the Nag Hammadi and Gnosticism Section, and various sessions on such topics as ancient fiction, pseudepigraphy, and second-century Christianity. The North American Patristics Society is also a venue for work on CA texts. The first formal North American gathering focused entirely on CA scholarship took place at the University of Ottawa in 2006 at a workshop organized by Pierluigi Piovaneli entitled "Christian Apocryphal Texts for the New Millennium: Achievements, Prospects, and Challenges."³ The papers presented at the workshop covered a variety of texts and topics, thus demonstrating the vibrancy and diversity of the field in North America. The workshop concluded with a discussion of collaborative projects and the possibility of forming an academic association, but after a failed attempt to mount a second workshop in 2007, the momentum begun in 2006 was temporarily lost.

Nearly ten years later, much has changed. The first York Christian Apocrypha Symposium, convened in 2011 by Tony Burke with assistance

3. Many of the papers presented at the workshop have been published in Piovaneli, Burke, and Pettipiece, eds., *Rediscovering the Apocryphal Continent*.

from Phil Harland, continued the efforts of the Ottawa workshop to bring together CA scholars from across the continent. This initial gathering had rather humble goals. Nine U.S. and Canadian scholars assembled for one day of discussion of a single text, one that has captured the attention of North American scholars and the wider public: the *Secret Gospel of Mark*.⁴ Shortly after, Burke and Brent Landau began work on *New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, a collection of texts in translation with contributions primarily from North American scholars. The project, a sister to *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* compiled by Richard Bauckham, James Davila, and Alexander Panayotov, aims to supplement Elliott's *The Apocryphal New Testament* with new and neglected texts that have never-before appeared in English CA collections. Then, in 2013 Burke joined forces with Landau once again to mount this second York Symposium, this time on a much larger scale. They decided to construct a "state-of-the-art" for CA Studies in North America, with invited presenters looking at the past, present, and future of the field on the continent. Part of that future is the creation, at last, of a North American academic association devoted to the study of the CA. The objectives of collaboration and organization are on their way to being achieved but they are made possible only by the efforts of the many scholars working in the field today and by the perspectives that have shaped and continue to inform their work.

CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHA STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES

CA Studies in the U.S. is characterized, chiefly by its critics, as having two propensities: the integration of noncanonical texts into the quest for the historical Jesus and the support of Walter Bauer's theory on the development of early Christianity. Both of these characteristics are said to be hallmarks of the so-called "Harvard School,"⁵ but they infuse also the work of the controversial Jesus Seminar as well other scholars working throughout North America.

Brent Landau's essay in this volume traces the history of the Harvard School to Helmut Koester, who joined the faculty of Harvard Divinity

4. The papers were published in early 2013 as Burke, ed., *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery?*

5. Darrell Bock, one of the chief critics of U.S. Christian Apocrypha scholarship, also uses the term "new school" for those who champion these two perspectives, though this group is not limited to scholars from Harvard. See *Missing Gospels*, esp. 44–55; for a response to Bock's category, see Burke, "Entering the Mainstream," 22–24.

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School in 1958. Koester's approach to the CA is marked by his reluctance to favour one category of texts, canonical or noncanonical, over another; all are representatives of early Christian literature, and all have the potential to provide insights into the origins of Christianity.⁶ This perspective has led Koester to propose theories of the development of New Testament literature that incorporate apocryphal texts at an early stage in the process. Koester's legacy is observable in the work of his doctoral students—including Ron Cameron, Julian Hills, Bentley Layton, Elaine Pagels, and Richard Valantasis—but perhaps his impact is most observable in the work of the Jesus Seminar. The Seminar was formed in 1985 by Robert Funk, who assembled around 200 scholars, primarily North American, as well as non-scholars with academic training, with the twin goals of arriving at a consensus about the life and teaching of Jesus and then presenting these findings to a wide audience. The Seminar's methodological principles entailed examining all Christian texts composed before 300 CE, including noncanonical texts, as possible repositories of authentic Jesus traditions. Seminar member John Dominic Crossan, the author of several best-selling studies of the historical Jesus,⁷ is particularly well-known for his early dating of noncanonical texts and became, for many people, the public face of the Seminar and thus the target of much of the criticism levelled against it.⁸ Other Seminar members include Charles Hedrick, F. Stanley Jones, John Kloppenborg, and Stephen Patterson. The approach of the Seminar is reflected in the group's collection of texts, *The Complete Gospels*,⁹ which places new translations of the canonical gospels side-by-side with select CA texts; the book is the closest North American scholarship has come before now to producing a multi-author CA collection. The Seminar has also published, through its imprint Polebridge Press, a number of CA texts in translation in the series *Early Christian Apocrypha* edited by Julian Hills.¹⁰

6. See particularly Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*.

7. Crossan, *Historical Jesus*, 427–66 carefully lays out his methodological approach to the sources; Crossan, *Cross That Spoke*, is somewhat notorious for its claim that the *Gospel of Peter* is a witness to a “Cross Gospel” that forms the basis for the Passion Narrative of the canonical Gospels.

8. For a survey of early responses to the work of the Seminar see Miller, *Jesus Seminar and Its Critics*.

9. Miller, ed., *Complete Gospels*. Contributors on the apocryphal texts include Crossan, Funk, Koester, Kloppenborg, and Patterson, along with Harold Attridge, Ron Cameron, Jon B. Daniels, Arthur J. Dewey, Julian V. Hills, Ronald F. Hock, Karen L. King, Marvin Meyer, Donald Rappé, and Philip Sellew.

10. A list of the books in the series that have appeared to date, as well as other CA-related books published by the Seminar, is provided in Burke, “Entering the Mainstream,” 23.

Of course Helmut Koester is not the only scholar at Harvard who has contributed significantly to the study of the CA. François Bovon joined the school in 1993 from the University of Geneva, bringing with him European CA scholarship's interest in examining late apocryphal texts and its emphasis on conducting manuscript research. Bovon trained a number of young CA scholars, including Ann Graham Brock, Nicole Kelley, Brent Landau, Catharine Playoust, and Glenn Snyder. Harvard also is home to Karen L. King who joined the faculty in 1997. King works primarily with Coptic apocrypha and is best known for her work on the *Gospel of Mary* and for her challenge to the scholarly construct of "Gnosticism" in her monograph *What Is Gnosticism?*¹¹ Her students include Benjamin Dunning and AnneMarie Luijendijk. Both Bovon and King brought to Harvard Divinity School new approaches to the study of the CA. As influential as Koester has been to the field, it would be wrong to characterize the "Harvard School," indeed all study of the CA in the U.S., solely by Koester's developmental theories of early Christian literature.

Prominent also in CA Studies is Claremont Graduate University in California. There James M. Robinson established the Coptic Gnostic Library Project at the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity in 1966. The project initiated the publication of a facsimile edition of the Nag Hammadi codices, the first English translation of the library in 1977 (revised in 1988),¹² and a series of critical editions published by Brill as The Coptic Gnostic Library. Among the scholars who worked on the project were Charles Hedrick, who narrates some of his activities at Claremont in his scholarly autobiography in this volume, John D. Turner, Elaine Pagels, and Marvin Meyer. Meyer also was chief editor of the update to Robinson's collection in 2008 and published a series of popular-market books on individual Nag Hammadi and related texts;¹³ in addition, he became well-known as a voice arguing for the authenticity of the *Secret Gospel of Mark*.¹⁴ More recently, Claremont has been home to Dennis R. MacDonald, who joined the faculty in 1998 and became director of the Institute for Antiquity and Christianity in 2000. MacDonald is known for *The Legend and the Apostle*, a study of second-century Pauline traditions,¹⁵ and for his interest in allusions to Greek literature in Christian texts, particularly the *Acts of Andrew*.¹⁶ Other

11. King, *What Is Gnosticism?*; King, *Gospel of Mary of Magdala*.

12. Robinson, *Nag Hammadi Library*.

13. Meyer et al., eds., *Nag Hammadi Scriptures*.

14. See particularly Meyer, *Secret Gospel*.

15. MacDonald, *Legend and the Apostle*.

16. MacDonald, *Christianizing Homer*.

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CA scholars who have led projects at the Institute include F. Stanley Jones (Jewish Christianity A. The Pseudo-Clementines) and Ronald F. Hock (The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric and Education Project).

Two other U.S. institutions have become centres for the study of the CA. Princeton University is home to Elaine Pagels, whose participation in the Coptic Gnostic Library Project led to the writing of her best-selling examination of the texts, *The Gnostic Gospels*, in 1979. Pagels has remained active in the study of the texts and has worked in various capacities with a number of CA scholars, including Geoffrey Smith, Nicola Denzey Lewis, and Annette Yoshiko Reed. Bart Ehrman, another graduate of Princeton (though working under Bruce Metzger), also has done much to bring the CA to public attention, mostly due to his appearances in a rash of documentaries—including the *Secret Lives of Jesus* (National Geographic, 2006), *Bible Secrets Revealed* (The History Channel, 2014), and the series *Banned From the Bible* (The History Channel, 2003, 2007, and 2012)—created to capitalize on the curiosity about the texts occasioned by Dan Brown’s popular novel *The Da Vinci Code*. Though most well-known for his work on textual criticism of the New Testament, Ehrman has contributed to CA scholarship through the editing of several collections of texts: *Lost Scriptures* (a companion to his study of early heretical groups, *Lost Christianities*), *The Apocryphal Gospels* (texts and translations, in collaboration with Zlatko Pleše), and *The Other Gospels* (a republishing of *The Apocryphal Gospels* without the texts in the original languages). He also was involved in the publication of the *Gospel of Judas*, contributing an essay to the National Geographic Society’s popular-market translation of the text¹⁷ and appearing in their 2006 documentary about the discovery. At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he holds the James A. Gray Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies, Ehrman has supervised the work of a number of students who have published in the field, including Chris Frilingos, Catherine Burris, and Diane Lipsett.

Tying together scholars from all four of these schools, and indeed from various institutions throughout North America, is a fascination with the Bauer Hypothesis, named for Walter Bauer, author of *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*, published in 1934 but not translated into English until 1971, under the leadership of Robert Kraft.¹⁸ Bauer challenged the classical articulation of the history of the early church, as set out by Eusebius of Caesarea and others, that Christianity spread out from Jerusalem,

17. Ehrman, “Christianity Turned on Its Head”; Ehrman later also wrote *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot*, a popular-market book on the text.

18. English translation: Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*.

transforming no belief into correct belief (orthodoxy), imparted by Jesus to the apostles and then to the apostles' successors; that initial unity soon was compromised with the introduction of wrong belief (heresy), which the church, principally through the writings of the heresiologists, worked hard to eradicate. Against this view, Bauer argued that in some locations in the ancient world, heretical forms of Christianity, such as Marcionism, were established first and these were replaced later by orthodoxy. Bauer's position received mixed reviews in Germany, but it found a sympathetic hearing by Rudolf Bultmann and his students, particularly Helmut Koester, who took up a challenge issued by Bultmann to carry Bauer's hypothesis from the second century into the first,¹⁹ and thus influenced a new generation of scholars in the U.S. to support and refine Bauer's ideas. Many of the details of Bauer's study have been proven wrong with the discovery of new primary sources, particularly the Nag Hammadi codices, but the essential arguments—that Christianity began in variety not unity and that what is orthodoxy lies in the eye of the beholder—continue to shape scholarship on the CA, so much that Bauer's supporters are often the target of attack for apologetic writers, who continue to advocate the pre-Bauer model of Christian origins, in their efforts to discourage interest in apocryphal texts. This interest is due, at least in part, to the popularity of Bart Ehrman's discussions of the material—some critics even refer now to Bauer's hypothesis as the “Bauer-Ehrman thesis.”²⁰

If critics of American approaches to the study of the CA are to be believed, then U.S. scholarship focuses on privileging noncanonical texts over the canonical and on demonstrating that orthodox Christianity has no claim to being the one, true, legitimate form of Christianity. Certainly, this characterization is accurate for some U.S. scholars, but it fails to take into account the European perspective, exemplified by Bovon's students at Harvard, that encourages the study of late, not early, apocrypha and thus skirts the issue of what can be learned from the texts about the historical Jesus and early Christianity. As the contributions of these scholars become more widely known, U.S. CA Studies will be less the target of caricature and future assessments will reflect its considerable variety.

19. Koester, “GNOMAI DIAPHORAI.” On the support of Bauer by Bultmann and Koester see the appendix (“The Reception of the Book”) in Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 306–10.

20. See, for example, Köstenberger and Kruger, *Heresy of Orthodoxy*. For an extended discussion of apologetic responses to U.S. scholarship on the Christian Apocrypha see Burke, “Heresy Hunting.”

CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHA STUDIES IN CANADA

Any conversation, on any topic, about Canada and the U.S. makes apparent the greater strength of the southern nation over its neighbour to the north. Canada's national inferiority complex is an integral part of its identity. Certainly the number of Canadian scholars working in the CA is fewer than in the U.S. and their work is less well-known internationally. That said, Canadians have made a number of significant contributions to the field.

The one major centre for CA Studies in Canada is Université Laval in Quebec, home to the series Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi (BCNH). Begun in 1974 by Jacques É. Ménard of the Université des Sciences humaines de Strasbourg, and Hervé Gagné and Michel Roberge of Université Laval, the BCNH produces critical editions, as well as concordances and studies, of the Nag Hammadi library and related texts for francophone readers—think of it as the French counterpart to The Coptic Gnostic Library at Claremont. The team published also in 2007 the first of a two-volume collection of translations of the entire corpus for Gallimard's Bibliothèque de la Pléiade;²¹ this model of producing scholarly editions and a Pléiade collection for a wider audience is the same used by the AELAC (Association pour l'étude de la littérature apocryphe chrétienne), whose endeavours are discussed in detail in Jean-Michel Roessli's paper in this volume. The BCNH is currently under the direction of Louis Painchaud, Wolf-Peter Funk, and Paul-Hubert Poirier. Each of these scholars works also on texts beyond the Nag Hammadi corpus; Painchaud has published on the *Gospel of Judas*,²² Funk is editing the Berlin portion of the Coptic Manichaean texts from Medinet Madi,²³ and Poirier has worked extensively on the *Acts of Thomas* and recently waded into the debate over defining "Christian Apocrypha."²⁴ Students of Laval who have made important contributions to CA Studies include Michael Kaler, Timothy Pettipiece, Tuomas Rasimus, and Alin Suciuc.

To the west of Quebec City, Montreal's Concordia University features three scholars working in the CA: Lorenzo DiTommaso, André Gagné, and Jean-Michel Roessli. DiTommaso's research focuses on the Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, but he has published particularly on Christian-authored Daniel apocrypha.²⁵ Gagné works on the *Gospel of Thomas* and co-ordinates

21. Mahé and Poirier, eds., *Écrits gnostiques*.

22. Including Painchaud, "À Propos de la (re)découverte de l'Évangile de Judas," an important early critical appraisal of the reconstruction and interpretation of the text in the *editio princeps* in Kasser and Wurst, eds., *Gospel of Judas*.

23. Funk, *Kephalaia (I)*.

24. Poirier, "Vers une redéfinition."

25. DiTommaso, *Book of Daniel*.

the Nag Hammadi Seminar, a gathering of graduate and undergraduate students, sometimes featuring guest speakers from other Canadian universities. And Roessli, who was trained in Europe and moved to Canada in 2007, works on the Christian *Sybilline Oracles* and, as a member of the editorial team of the AELAC, is a friendly bridge between North American CA scholars and their European colleagues.

Farther west lies the University of Ottawa, home of Pierluigi Piovanelli, another European-trained scholar who has done much to advance the study of the CA in Canada. He organized the Ottawa workshop in 2006, has chaired the Christian Apocrypha Section of the Society of Biblical Literature, presented at the 2011 and 2013 York Christian Apocrypha symposia, and is a contributor to both series of More Canonical Scriptures (Old Testament Pseudepigrapha and New Testament Apocrypha). Also, as a longtime member of the AELAC, he has helped introduce North American scholars to the group and thereby increase its international profile. Like Bovon at Harvard, Piovanelli has brought European approaches to the study of the CA to North America, but, as Jean-Michel Roessli remarks, he has also exposed European scholars to a burgeoning North American interest in modern apocryphal texts. Piovanelli's specific research areas are the *Apocalypse of Paul* and Ethiopic texts, such as the *Book of the Rooster*, which he translated for *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*.²⁶ Piovanelli is joined at the University of Ottawa by Dominique Côté, a former student of Paul-Hubert Poirier. Côté has worked extensively on the *Pseudo-Clementines*.²⁷

The University of Toronto in Ontario is alma mater to Scott Brown, Tony Burke, and Mary Dzon. Brown is one of the principal voices in the debate over the authenticity of the *Secret Gospel of Mark*;²⁸ Burke and Dzon, working under Robert Sinkewicz in the Department of Medieval Studies/Department for the Study of Religion, both wrote their dissertations on apocryphal infancy traditions. Burke's dissertation, critical edition and commentary on the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*,²⁹ was the first North American contribution to the Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum, thus further forging links between European and North American scholarship. The European perspective guiding the Series Apocryphorum is reflected also in the late antique and medieval texts featured in Burke's *New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* collection (co-edited with

26. Piovanelli, "Livres du coq."

27. See, for example, his monograph Côté, *Le thème de l'opposition*.

28. See Brown, *Mark's Other Gospel*, and his contributions to Burke, ed., *Ancient Gospel*.

29. Burke, *De infantia Iesu*.

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Brent Landau) and in the breadth of texts discussed in his popular-market introduction to the CA, *Secret Scriptures Revealed*. Burke also is founder of the York Christian Apocrypha Symposium and co-ordinates a session on the CA at the annual meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies (in conjunction with Timothy Pettipiece for the Canadian Society of Patristic Studies). Though few other graduates of the University of Toronto work in the CA field, there are currently a number of doctoral students working with John Kloppenborg on CA texts, including Ian Brown, Callie Callon, and Anna Cwikla, all regular contributors to the CSBS/CSPS session.

Our cross-Canada survey ends in the Prairies at the University of Winnipeg with Zbigniew Izydorczyk. A lone voice in the wilderness, Izydorczyk has been working for decades on the manuscript tradition of the *Gospel of Nicodemus* and related texts and is known internationally as a prominent scholar of this material. Along with his own work, surveyed in Jean-Michel Roessli's essay, Izydorczyk has collaborated with Rémi Gounelle on bibliographical resources for the *Acts of Pilate*,³⁰ co-authored the entry on the *Vengeance of the Savior* for *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*,³¹ and contributed to a volume of the Instrumenta of the Series Apocryphorum.³² In addition, Izydorczyk organized a workshop on the Pilate Cycle in October 2010 entitled "Editing the *Acts of Pilate* in Early Christian Languages: Theory and Practice," which included presentations by international (including Albert Frey, Rémi Gounelle, and Jean-Daniel Dubois) and Canadian scholars (including Burke, Poirier, and Roessli).³³

To some extent, Canadian contributions to the study of the CA are obscured by the fact that a number of Canadian-born or Canadian-trained scholars—including Philip Tite, Nicola Denzey Lewis, and Mary Dzon—work in the U.S. This situation only underscores the international nature of CA Studies in North America, where some of the major developments in the field were made by European émigrés and where many of the scholars have made significant contributions to European publishing projects. It is hoped that the collaboration amongst North American CA scholars occasioned and encouraged by the York Christian Apocrypha Symposium Series will enhance awareness of our strengths and capabilities and lead to additional opportunities for international collaboration.

30. Izydorczyk and Gounelle, "Thematic Bibliography of the *Acts of Pilate*"; and Izydorczyk and Gounelle, "Thematic Bibliography of the *Acts of Pilate*. Addenda et corrigenda."

31. Bisson, Brossard-Dandré, and Izydorczyk, "Vengeance du Sauveur."

32. Izydorczyk and Wydra, eds., *Gospel of Nicodemus*.

33. Most of the papers from the workshop were published in *Apocrypha* 21 (2010).

THE 2013 SYMPOSIUM

“Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier: The Christian Apocrypha in North American Perspectives” gathered together 19 CA scholars from the U.S. and Canada for two days of presentations, exchanging of ideas, and discussion of future collaborations.

The work of the Symposium began the morning of September 25 with our first session, “Christian Apocrypha in the 21st Century.” The goal of the session was to present an overview of North American contributions to the field and to describe the research trajectories of North American CA scholarship. Jean-Michel Roessli (Concordia University) was asked to examine “North American Approaches to the Study of the Christian Apocrypha on the World Stage.” His presentation included an account of the origins and scholarship of the AELAC, an organization with which many of the scholars participating in the Symposium are involved, and the impact of the group’s work on North American scholarship, particularly via François Bovon and Pierluigi Piovanelli. Roessli took a bit of a detour at the end of his presentation, urging North American scholars to examine the origins of the study of the CA during the Enlightenment. This began a discussion of the “apocryphal canon” (that is, the decisions behind why certain apocryphal texts are selected for inclusion into scholarly collections) that many of the Symposium participants touched upon over the course of the weekend. Pierluigi Piovanelli (University of Ottawa) followed with “Trajectories through Early Christianity and Late Antiquity: The *longue durée* of Christian Memorial Traditions in American Scholarship,” an informal discussion on approaches to the study of late antique and medieval apocrypha. The interest in understanding such material in the context of its time and place of composition is considered the hallmark of the European perspective brought to North America by Bovon and Piovanelli. Piovanelli used the example of his work on the *Book of the Rooster* (wisely renamed from its former title, the “Book of the Cock,” an announcement that elicited giggles from the audience), to show how scholars can examine a late text with consideration of the possibility that it drew on earlier sources, but that the precise nature of these sources are impossible to recover. Piovanelli then surprised everyone with the announcement of a new apocryphal text in Ethiopic, the *Story of the Passion of Christ*, which entails a brief summary of a vision of the flogging and crucifixion of Jesus seen by the three women at the tomb. As it turns out, however, the text is actually a medieval devotional text which originally featured three medieval female saints as the visionaries. Though the *Story of the Passion of Christ* did not begin as an apocryphon, it was transformed into one by a later scribe. In his completed paper, Piovanelli ponders what

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this example may mean for the study of other CA texts that similarly appear to have reused and repurposed earlier sources. The discovery of new texts can be exciting, Piovanelli says, and though scholars often hope that they contain ancient materials, “in some cases manuscript hunters end up with unexpected surprises that can have, perhaps, the same relevance for the study of epochs and cultural areas other than the origins of Christianity” (p. 108).

The other two presentations in the session focused on two of the major centres for the study of the CA: Harvard University and Claremont Graduate University. The presenters delivered first-hand accounts of their own time spent at these institutions. First, Brent Landau (University of Texas at Austin) discussed “The ‘Harvard School’ of the Christian Apocrypha,” which has become well-known (and much-criticized) due to Helmut Koester’s arguments that certain noncanonical texts reveal much about stages in the development of the composition of the canonical Gospels. Landau drew attention also to the contributions to scholarship made by François Bovon and Karen King, and mentioned some important events in the Harvard school’s prehistory: an 1838 address by Ralph Waldo Emerson and a collection of apocrypha made by James Hardy Ropes in 1896. Landau noted the impact of the Harvard school on the field in North America, particularly through those who, like himself, graduated from the program. But he lamented also that the future of the school is uncertain—Koester is still teaching (in his 57th year at Harvard!), but Bovon and King, he said at the time, have suffered from very serious illnesses in recent years and none of the present junior faculty list the CA as a chief research interest. Landau was right to be concerned; Bovon succumbed to cancer a month after the Symposium. The second of the two presentations on centres for CA research was Charles Hedrick’s (Missouri State University) scholarly autobiography, “Excavating Museums: From Bible Thumping to Fishing in the Stream of Western Civilization.” Hedrick’s long and accomplished career intersected with several major discoveries of the last century, including the publishing of the Nag Hammadi library (as a member of The Coptic Gnostic Library Project at Claremont), the *Gospel of the Savior*, and the *Gospel of Judas*. Hedrick mentions in his completed paper the conflict he had studying apocryphal texts while still being much involved in the Southern Baptist Church (he even served as pastor at several points in his early professional career). As a graduate student he came to the conclusion that, “in historical scholarship it is not possible to be a servant of the church and the discipline at the same time” particularly because “noncanonical literature presents a threat to the church” (p. 82). Not everyone in attendance at the Symposium agreed that a decision has to be made between church and scholarly study, but even today

there have been some nightmare stories out of the U.S. of biblical scholars losing their positions because their work conflicts with the mandate of their institutions. The interplay between faith and historical investigation was another topic of discussion over the course of the Symposium.

The presentations in the first afternoon session, “New Frontiers in Christian Apocrypha Studies,” looked at bridging gaps between CA and related disciplines. In “Jesus at School among Christians, Jews, and Muslims,” Cornelia Horn (Catholic University of America) continued her work on Christian and Muslim use of Jesus and Mary infancy traditions. This time her discussion featured the story of Jesus in school from the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* and looked at its transformations in the *Armenian Infancy Gospel*, the *Toledot Yeshu*, and the story of the Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir in *Umm al-kitāb* (an eighth-century Shi’ite text). The new frontier opened up here, then, is the sharing of apocryphal traditions across the dividing lines of religions. In the conclusion of her presentation, Horn asked us to consider the status of texts like *Umm al-kitāb*—does its connection to apocryphal Jesus stories make it a Christian apocryphal text, or an Islamic apocryphal text, or something else? Nicola Denzey Lewis (Brown University) followed with a dynamic presentation entitled, “Nag Hammadi, Gnosticism, Apocrypha: Bridging Disciplinary Divides.” The completed paper points out how scholars have segregated gnostic texts from other apocrypha—she writes, “the Christian apocrypha and our so-called gnostic texts have become the ugly, wicked stepsisters in the fairy tale of New Testament Studies—one silly, the other dangerous” (p. 132). The divide between the two bodies of texts is most apparent at conferences like the SBL Annual Meeting, which separates Nag Hammadi or Gnostic Studies from Christian Apocrypha, despite the fact that some Nag Hammadi texts are not gnostic (e.g., the *Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*) and some gnostic texts are not from Nag Hammadi (e.g., the *Pistis Sophia*, the *Gospel of Mary*); one text in particular, the *Gospel of Thomas*, seems to transcend all of these boundaries. Denzey Lewis echoes the call by other scholars to redraw these boundaries, to classify all the texts as “early Christian literature” and then focus on sub-genres such as apocalypse, romance, or gospel. The final paper of the session was “Debating Canon Formation: Why and Where Scholars Disagree” by Lee Martin McDonald (Institute for Biblical Research). McDonald has written extensively on the canon, and seems to show no signs of slowing down; but his work has not been effectively brought into discussions of the CA, despite the fact that canon is very important for studying *noncanonical* texts, particularly since the various forms that the canon has taken over time and space has bearing on whether or not a text is declared noncanonical. McDonald’s paper touches on several aspects of his previous work on canon that CA scholars

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should take into account, including his position that the Muratorian Canon is a product of the early fourth, not second, century, and his view of the development of the Western canon (it clearly was not settled in the fourth-century). He states (rightly) also, that a fixed text of the New Testament was never physically possible until “the invention of moveable text and the printing press” (p. 163), and makes the provocative point that, thanks to electronic media, we are living in a time much like the first few centuries when we can pick and choose the texts we value, and without any sense of having to limit a corpus to the mechanics of book production. The session concluded with a response by Lorenzo DiTommaso (Concordia University) to the two papers available in draft form (by Denzey Lewis and McDonald). In an early stage of the planning process, DiTommaso was invited to present on Christian Old Testament Pseudepigrapha—another category of texts rarely discussed in connection with the CA. Jim Davila, a Harvard graduate working at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, has done much to open up this new frontier with his work on re-evaluating the authorship of the Pseudepigrapha,³⁴ thereby encouraging North American CA scholars to follow the path of their European colleagues in bringing Christian-authored Pseudepigrapha into CA scholarship. Unfortunately, DiTommaso’s schedule did not allow him time to write a paper, but we were pleased to have him attend the Symposium and offer his thoughts on the other papers of the session.

The afternoon of the first day of the Symposium began with a session focused specifically on North American scholarship’s interest in the CA for studying the historical Jesus. Stephen Patterson (Willamette University), who has worked extensively with the *Gospel of Thomas* and is known for his position on the text being an early repository of teachings of Jesus, provided a re-evaluation of work in this area, including his own previously-stated arguments. His presentation opened on a surprisingly skeptical note with the declaration that “the apocryphal gospels have had virtually no impact on the historical study of Jesus in North America,” and adding later, “or on any other continent for that matter” (p. 176 in the completed paper). The Synoptic Jesus, he said, is still the focus of historical Jesus work. Nevertheless, Patterson spent the rest of his time making a case for a cluster of sayings of Jesus from the *Gospel of Thomas* that were not accepted by the Jesus Seminar: the sayings about primordial androgyny (e.g., log. 22, “When you make the two one. . .”). He remarked that scholars tend to dismiss the apocryphal gospels as “more speculative, mystical, ascetical, enigmatic, or just downright confusing” and asks “should this necessarily disqualify them completely from

34. See Davila, *Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha*.

the discussion?” (p. 178). In the end, Patterson advocated casting our nets wide when examining the historical Jesus, stating, “The question is not, after all, which of the gospels best represents the historical Jesus. The question for critical scholarship is how to imagine an historical figure from which could emanate all of the various traditions and interpretations that appear in the first century or so of nascent Christian development” (p. 185). Patterson’s paper was followed by two responses (included in this volume), one from John Kloppenborg (University of Toronto), known particularly for his work on Q, and Mark Goodacre (Duke University), who has recently joined CA scholarship with his book *Thomas and the Gospels: The Case for Thomas’s Familiarity with the Synoptics*.

Day one came to a close with a keynote address from Annette Yoshiko Reed (University of Pennsylvania). She titled her presentation, “The Afterlives of Christian Apocrypha.” It touched on a range of topics, spanning from early scholarship on the texts to modern use of CA imagery in popular culture, particularly Manga (with examples from *Neon Genesis Evangelion* and others). Reed noted that the creators of Manga know little about Christianity and simply pluck from it whatever ideas they think useful for their stories. Only when Western distributors take issue with the content do the creators realize that they are using controversial apocryphal imagery. Reed’s address, intended as an oral and visual presentation, is not included in this volume.

On day two of the Symposium we looked to the future. The first session featured several presentations by contributors to the anthology *New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, examining some little-known or under-appreciated texts and traditions. In the first presentation, F. Stanley Jones (California State University) investigated “The Distinctive Sayings of Jesus Shared by Justin and the Pseudo-Clementines.” Jones contributed two pieces to the first *MNTA* volume: the Syriac epitome of the *Acts of Peter* and an Aramaic fragment of the *Toledot Yesu*, neither of which had appeared earlier in English translation. The goal for the second volume is to include a translation of the entire *Pseudo-Clementines* corpus, since the currently-available English translation is now almost 150 years old. As for Jones’s paper, it presents an argument against the view that the shared sayings derive from a gospel harmony; instead, Jones argues, the Basic Writer of the *Pseudo-Clementines* seems to have pulled them from Justin’s lost work *Syntagma*, which Justin wrote to refute Marcion. The sayings thus have a distinct Marcionite or anti-Marcionite flavour. Jones was followed by Stephen Shoemaker (University of Oregon), presenting on “The *Tiburtine Sibyl*, the Last Emperor, and the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition.” Shoemaker’s paper draws on his translation of the *Tiburtine Sibyl* prepared

for *MNTA*; he also has contributed a new translation of the *Apocalypse of the Virgin* to the volume. For many people in the room, Shoemaker's paper was their first exposure to this text, though it was widely popular in the Middle Ages and deeply influenced medieval culture (Shoemaker says it was "more influential on medieval eschatology than the canonical Apocalypse," p. 221). Nevertheless, the *Tiburtine Sibyl* is rarely included in CA collections (Erbetta's expansive collection is the exception), chiefly because it is a relatively recent composition (late fourth century). Shoemaker thus called the text, in his presentation, an example of "noncanonical apocrypha," and cautioned listeners to his presentation to be careful of allowing the CA collections to limit study to the standard texts. An important feature of the *Tiburtine Sibyl* is its description of the Last Emperor, a figure identified with Constantine who, the Sibyl says, will "devastate all the islands and cities of the pagans and destroy all the temples of idols" (*Tib. Sib.* 10). Shoemaker argues that the Sibyl's description of this figure may have influenced early Islamic eschatology.

The final two papers of the session were "Backstories of the Bandits: The Emergence, Submersion and Re-emergence of the Cult of Dysmas" by Mark Bilby (University of San Diego) and David Eastman's (Ohio Wesleyan University) "Confused Traditions? Peter and Paul in the Apocryphal Acts." Bilby, like Shoemaker, brought attention to a little-studied apocryphon, though this one is not a complete text but an "orphan story" with versions appearing in a variety of sources, including manuscripts of the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew* and the *Gospel of Nicodemus*. Orphan stories tend to be neglected because they are considered late additions to the texts; sometimes these additions appear in notes to editions or translations, but are otherwise rarely given much attention (though this may change with Bilby's contribution on the traditions to *MNTA*). Bilby demonstrated how widespread were these stories of the Good Thief and how important they are to medieval piety. Unfortunately, Bilby's paper could not be finished in time for inclusion in the volume. For his presentation, Eastman similarly juggled a wide assortment of texts to show how depictions of Peter and Paul tend to blend in later apocryphal acts, as well as in the *Toledot Yesu* and iconography. Eastman is working on his own collection of these later acts, none of which have been translated into English. For *MNTA*, Eastman has contributed a new translation of the *Epistle of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite to Timothy*, which features a story of Peter and Paul's martyrdoms, and a new translation of the *Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena*. Among the interesting features of the blended stories of Paul and Peter is the tendency to place words of Paul in Peter's mouth; curiously, Eastman finds no case in the apocryphal texts of Peter where Peter quotes 1 or 2 Peter.

The afternoon session of day two considered new approaches to studying apocryphal texts. Kristian Heal (Brigham Young University) guided the audience through new research tools used in his efforts to create a critical edition and translation of the Syriac *History of Joseph*. His presentation, “Digital Humanities and the Textual Critic: Resources, Prospects and Problems,” focused on tools for studying Syriac texts, but his handout (included here as an appendix to the completed paper) included a wider list of resources. The completed paper presents these resources in a text-editing travelogue similar to François Bovon’s article “Editing the Apocryphal Acts,” which details his efforts to find and edit Greek manuscripts of the *Acts of Philip*. Heal was followed by Mary Dzon (University of Tennessee) who discussed *incunabula* for her paper “All the (Good) News That’s Fit to Print? Early Printings of Apocryphal Texts.” *Incunabula* are rarely brought into research on the transmission of CA, yet several important texts (including the *Protevangelium of James* and the *Gospel of Nicodemus*) were first published as *incunabula* and, in some cases, these early printed books drew upon manuscripts that are no longer available. Dzon focused on early printings of the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*, some of which contain stories of Jesus’ childhood that have not previously appeared in scholarship. Unfortunately, Dzon’s paper could not be finished in time for inclusion in the volume.

Glenn Snyder’s (Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis) presentation, “The Conversion of Paul: The Production of a Model,” reconsidered the direction of dependence of the *Acts of Paul* and the canonical Acts by focusing on one specific tradition: Paul’s conversion. The *Acts of Paul* is particularly suited for such an approach as it is much debated whether an “*Acts of Paul*” ever truly existed as a complete text rather than as several separate stories. The audience raised objections to some of Snyder’s conclusions, however; and there was an audible gasp when Snyder declared Galatians un-Pauline. The completed paper allows for a more careful evaluation of Snyder’s detailed form-critical work; it is eye-opening to read the conversion stories this way, particularly if one considers Acts 9:10b–11, 17–18a (the story of Ananias) as a story separate from Acts 9:1–10a, as it brings attention to some of the episode’s curious features, such as the house of Judas on Straight Street and the construction of Paul’s name, translated by Snyder as “a stumbling man by the name Tarseus” (p. 293). Finally, the session came to a close with “Ordinary or Extraordinary? The Reception of the *Protevangelium of James* in the *History of the Blessed Virgin Mary*” by Lily Vuong (Valdosta State University). What makes this paper a “new approach” is Vuong’s interest in the *History of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, a late reworking of the *Protevangelium of James* and other infancy traditions in Syriac known more widely in its further translation into the *Arabic Infancy*

Gospel. To her surprise (and everyone else's) Vuong found that *Hist. Virg.* tends to diminish Mary's special qualities, not enhance them as one might expect. Audience reaction to Vuong's paper was mixed; there was praise for bringing this development in Marian piety to our attention, but concerns were raised over her early dating of *Hist. Virg.* (fourth century, but eighth century is more likely) and her understanding of the complexities of the manuscript evidence. Vuong decided to continue working on the project, but it was not completed in time for inclusion in the volume.

The symposium finished with a session entitled "Christian Apocrypha in North America: Where Do We Go From Here?" The goal of this session was to consider new collaborative endeavours, including outreach projects, future gatherings, and publishing ventures. The most dramatic outcome of the session was the decision to form a new academic association dedicated to the study of the CA—a North American counterpart, of sorts, to the AELAC. After the conclusion of the Symposium, a board of directors was formed and a meeting took place in November 2014 to consider the group's mandate and to give the group a name: the North American Society for the Study of Christian Apocryphal Literature (NASSCAL). For news and information on the group visit its web site at NASSCAL.com.

It would appear from the success of the 2013 Symposium that the state of North American CA Studies is strong. There is much more variety in our scholarship than critics' assessments and popular culture representations indicate; its debt to the Bauer Hypothesis and its pursuit of the historical Jesus cannot be denied, but it also has more affinities with European approaches than has been acknowledged and this European connection continues to gain strength. The traditional centers for CA Studies—Harvard, Claremont, and Laval—remain vital but new ones are emerging, including the University of Texas in Austin, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Ottawa, the University of Toronto, and York University. North America is also growing as a center for Digital Humanities research with such projects as the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library, and Coptic Scriptorium, created by Carolin Schroeder (University of the Pacific) and Amir Zeldes (Georgetown University). And new opportunities for collaboration are emerging through the *More New Testament Apocrypha* volumes, the York Christian Apocrypha Symposium, and NASSCAL. North American CA Studies is no one-trick pony. The 2013 York Christian Apocrypha Symposium Proceedings is a celebration of our accomplishments and an indicator of greater things ahead.

— 2 —

North American Approaches to the Study of the Christian Apocrypha on the World Stage

— Jean-Michel Roessli¹ —

TONY BURKE AND BRENT LANDAU kindly invited me to express my views on the North American approaches to the study of the Christian Apocrypha on the world stage, a challenging task that I imprudently accepted, even though I am not an expert on American scholarship and rather new in North America, having arrived in Canada, through Sudbury, Northern Ontario, only in August 2007. Moreover, I am not a member of the SBL Christian Apocrypha Section or of any North American Association of that type—at least not yet. Thus, I do not feel fully qualified to address this topic as an insider or a practitioner; what I can do, however, is offer an informed outsider's perspective on the recent trends in North American scholarship. In so doing, I will indicate some of the strengths and weaknesses of North American approaches and make a few suggestions about possible avenues and topics for further research.

1. I wish to thank warmly Dr. Tony Burke and Dr. Brent Landau for inviting me to this Symposium. My gratitude also goes to Dr. Tony Burke, Dr. Zbigniew Izydorczyk, and Hereward Senior for correcting and greatly improving the English of this text, and to Matthew Anderson, Anne-Catherine Baudoin, Alain Desreumaux, Jean-Daniel Dubois, Alain Le Boulluec, and Pierluigi Piovanelli for their generous comments on earlier drafts of this paper. All errors that may remain are mine.

TENDENCIES IN NORTH AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP ON CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHA

In North America, as in Europe, interest in apocryphal literature is not new. It has enjoyed a considerable revival in North America since at least the first decades of the twentieth century. However, too often this interest has expressed itself through a strong tendency to read apocryphal literature through a biblical lens. To put it differently, North American scholarship has been frequently motivated by a desire to compare apocryphal with the canonical writings, assuming a necessary dependence of the noncanonical upon the canonical and trying to establish points of contact between them. The more-or-less conscious presupposition has been that noncanonical texts derived from the biblical ones, and this assumption can be seen in the continued use of phrases like “Apocrypha of the New Testament” or “Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament,” terms that were coined by Johann Albert Fabricius (1668–1736) in the early eighteenth century.² Although still occasionally employed today, these labels have now been seriously challenged and alternative terms have been proposed, such as “Christian Apocrypha,” or “Jewish Pseudepigrapha,” or simply “Christian and Jewish Apocrypha.” I will come back to this terminology below. In North America, especially in the United States, the assumption that apocryphal texts depend on the canonical is reflected in a long-standing restrictive focus on those apocryphal writings—mainly some apocryphal gospels—that were perceived as valid sources for recovering the historical Jesus. This is the case with the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Gospel of Thomas*, and a few other early writings of that kind.³

Although this biblical perspective was widespread in Europe as well as in North America for decades and even centuries, “a growing conviction” has emerged in more recent years “that this literature should not simply be set aside as secondary and derivative documents, wholly dependent on the canonical writings for any tradition or data they may contain.”⁴ Without

2. For a biography of Fabricius, see Petersen, *Intellectum liberare*; Petersen, “Learned Communication”; and Reed, “Modern Invention.”

3. E.g., the *Dialogue of the Savior*, the *Apocryphon of James*, the *Gospel of Truth*. John Dominic Crossan, for example, believes some Christian Apocrypha to be invaluable in reconstructing the life and teachings of Jesus (see, e.g., Crossan, *Historical Jesus*) whereas John Paul Meier (*Marginal Jew*) judges that they are worthless in Jesus research. Recently, Robert E. Van Voorst, in his *Jesus Outside the New Testament*, deliberately discusses noncanonical sources about Jesus, but he does so in order to corroborate some of the NT traditions about Jesus. We could multiply examples of scholars who follow the same approach. See, however, Aune, *Jesus*, 182–206; cf. Baudoin, Review of Aune, *Jesus*.

4. Smith, “John and the Apocryphal Gospels,” 156. Interestingly, Smith goes so far

pretending to trace the full history of North American scholarship on Christian Apocrypha, I would like to point out that as far back as the 1920s, Percival Gardner-Smith (1888–1985; a Biblical scholar somewhat forgotten today), “who was to espouse the cause of the independence of the Gospel of John, argued, for example, that the *Gospel of Peter* was not dependent on, or derivative from, the canonical Gospels.”⁵ More recently, in his *Introduction to the New Testament*—the English translation of *Einführung in das Neue Testament im Rahmen der Religionsgeschichte und Kulturgeschichte der hellenistischen und römischen Zeit*—Helmut Koester has shown no inclination to regard canonical gospels as antecedent to, or as the source of, the apocryphal ones. Indeed, to him, the opposite seems to be the case, especially as far as such documents as the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Gospel of Peter* are concerned.⁶ For his part, John Dominic Crossan, in D. Moody Smith’s words, “has argued that the *Gospel of Thomas*, Egerton Papyrus 2, the *Secret Gospel of Mark*, and the *Gospel of Peter* are independent witnesses to the forms of early Christianity they represent, not to be explained on the basis of the canonical Gospels, as if they were derivative from them.”⁷ Thus, certain experts interested in this literature have worked hard to free the apocryphal writings from the “biblical concepts and categories that have heretofore dominated their study and interpretation.”⁸ It must be stressed, however, that trying to understand the relationship between the canonical and the apocryphal writings is perfectly legitimate, and there is nothing wrong with such an enterprise. We can certainly learn much from a comparative study of these texts. It is rather the tendency to dismiss the value of the apocryphal literature just because of its noncanonical status that is a problem, at least

as to suggest that “the Gospel of John may be labeled the ‘first apocryphal gospel’ in the sense that it intermittently preserves Jesus traditions independent of the Synoptics, in a way similar to the apocryphal gospels” (as summarized in Charlesworth, *Authentic Apocrypha*, 31).

5. Smith, “John and the Apocryphal Gospels,” 156. For a comprehensive and recent study of the latter gospel, see Foster, *Gospel of Peter*; note that the name of the series in which the volume appears (*Texts and Editions for New Testament Study*) shows once again the direct connection to studies of the canonical Bible.

6. In the same year (1980), Koester published his article “Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels.” See also the magisterial survey of canonical and early apocryphal texts by the same author, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, and Koester, “Epilogue.”

7. Smith, “John and the Apocryphal Gospels,” 156. On these various texts, see also Marguerat, Norelli, and Poffet, eds., *Jésus de Nazareth*. For English introductions to the field of apocryphal literature in general, see Foster, *Apocryphal Gospels*; Klauck (a German scholar teaching at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago), *Die apokryphe Bibel*; Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*; Klauck, *Apocryphal Acts*; and, of course, Burke, *Secret Scriptures Revealed*.

8. Shoemaker, “Early Christian Apocryphal Literature,” 521.

on a scholarly level, in the same way that it would be problematic to overrate Christian Apocrypha with regard to the study of the canonical Bible just because of their outcast status.⁹ In terms of literary history, all texts found inside the Bible as well as all those falling outside of it belong to the Christian tradition and are parts of the history of Christian literature; they should be treated in the same manner, differentiated only by their supposed date of composition, when it can be approximated. Their theological status is only secondary and belongs to their reception history. In this respect, the reactions that followed the publication of Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code*, and the responses from scholars of the Bible and of early Christianity to the work,¹⁰ demonstrate that too much time and ink has been wasted in fierce polemics between those open to the study of Christian Apocrypha and those who apologetically deny their usefulness and/or sometimes even denounce them as dangerous to believers. Even though disagreements and controversies are part of the academic debate and may help to clarify each position, they may also prevent scholarly debates from moving forward, as the parties involved in the discussion remain entrenched and do not really listen to the arguments of the opposing sides. Although this tendency is not absent from the European stage, it is much more widespread in North America, and particularly in the United States, probably because more experts in the disciplines of Theological and Religious Studies are themselves so committed to their own faith and denomination that they are not willing or able to assume a critical distance from their religious or anti-religious commitments and are, therefore, deeply biased in their approaches to canonical and noncanonical writings.

Consequently, although it is legitimate and tempting to scrutinize the relationship between canonical and noncanonical writings, it seems also important to study the apocryphal writings for themselves and understand them in their own way as texts produced and/or used by people or communities who sincerely believed they were relevant. In this respect, this literature probably teaches us more about those who produced it than about the historical Jesus or the Jesus movement itself.

9. Although his distinction between "false and genuine Christian Apocrypha" in his *Authentic Apocrypha* is disputable, in my view James H. Charlesworth is right when he writes: "It is inconsistent of New Testament specialists to relegate the New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha to the status of discarded books because they are shaped by legends and myths, and then at the same time revere Matthew's use of legends and myths in his Infancy Gospel" (xi); and "It is a pity that the New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha do not receive the attention they deserve in theological and academic circles and in theological and university curricular offerings" (29). See further comments below.

10. See the excellent survey offered by Burke, "Heresy Hunting."

Having said this, I must confess that I, too, in a paper on the Passion Narrative in the *Sibylline Oracles*,¹¹ deliberately engaged in comparing the way Jesus' Passion is recounted in these third-century apocryphal texts with the canonical Gospels, as well as with some other noncanonical writings (mostly the *Gospel of Peter*). Yet, even though I made this comparison with the assumption—in this case fully legitimate—that the Passion Narrative in the *Sibylline Oracles* relies heavily on the canonical Passion Narrative, I also tried to identify what is specific to the authors of the *Sibylline Oracles* and what makes them unique in our understanding of early Christian beliefs about the Passion of Jesus. Even the 2014 collection of essays I edited with Tobias Nicklas betrays in its very title—*Christian Apocrypha: Receptions of the New Testament in Ancient Christian Apocrypha*¹²—this tendency to look at the Christian Apocrypha through a biblical lens; however, this approach is only one among many possible approaches to adopt in the scholarship, and we do hope that readers will also find there texts that are both interesting and instructive.

THE PLACE OF NORTH AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP IN THE HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON CHRISTIAN APOCRYPHA

In a 1988 paper titled “Research on the New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha” and revised ten years later as *Authentic Apocrypha: False and Genuine Christian Apocrypha*,¹³ James H. Charlesworth provides a short overview of previous research in the field and proposes to distinguish four phases of interest in the history of scholarship in what he calls New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

In Charlesworth's opinion, the first of these phases began sometime in the Middle Ages and culminated in the publication of Johann Fabricius's monumental *Codex Apocryphus Novi Testamenti* (published in three volumes between 1703 and 1719). Without going into much detail here, we can say that research on the early modern reception of Christian Apocrypha

11. Roessli, “Passion Narrative.”

12. Roessli and Nicklas, eds., *Christian Apocrypha*, with contributions by Tony Burke, André Gagné, et al.

13. Charlesworth, “Research,” revised in Charlesworth, *Authentic Apocrypha*. The bibliography included in “Research” is a condensed version of the one published the year before (together with James R. Mueller), *New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*; for an assessment, see Elliott, Review of Charlesworth and Mueller, *New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*.

conducted by Irena Backus,¹⁴ Anthony Grafton,¹⁵ and Jean-Louis Quantin,¹⁶ among others, as well as my own still ongoing and, therefore, still unpublished research on the reception of the *Sibyline Oracles*,¹⁷ prove the situation to have been much more complicated. A variety of sub-phases in and motivations for the interest in Christian and Jewish apocrypha can be distinguished during the first phase identified by Charlesworth, not to mention the unacknowledged complexity of approaches to apocryphal texts during the Middle Ages.¹⁸

Charlesworth's second phase basically encompasses the nineteenth century, a time characterized "by the rise of rationalism, the pervasive critique of traditions, and the search for knowledge according to post-Enlightenment and post-Kantian mood [. . .]; hence faith in the reliability of apocryphal writings declined."¹⁹ Among the numerous hallmarks of that period, Charlesworth rightly singles out as most significant: Jacques-Paul Migne's *Dictionnaire des Apocryphes, ou Collection de tous les livres apocryphes* (1856–1858), Constantin Tischendorf's *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* (1851), *Evangelia Apocrypha* (1853), and *Apocalypses Apocryphae* (1866); as well as Alfred Resch's four-volume *Aussercanonische Paralleltexzte zu den Evangelien* (1893–1896), to which could be added also Resch's *Agrapha: Aussercanonische Schriftfragmente* (1906).²⁰

The third phase of interest in apocryphal writings began, in Charlesworth's view, toward the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century with the discovery of the Oxyrhynchus papyri, which reawakened "a keen interest in the lost gospels and 'forgotten' sayings of Jesus,"²¹ an interest made popular by several scholars, especially Joachim

14. Backus, "Renaissance Attitudes"; Backus, "Les apocryphes néo-testamentaires"; Backus, *Historical Method*; "Early Christianity"; Backus, "Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples."

15. See, for example, Grafton, "Higher Criticism."

16. See, for example, Quantin, "Dodwell, Mill, Grabe."

17. For a short presentation of my project, see http://www.frqsc.gouv.qc.ca/upload/editeur/resume_Roessli.pdf.

18. On the Christian Apocrypha in the Middle Ages, see Gounelle, "Sens et usage d'apocryphus"; Rose, "Medieval Memories"; and Rose, *Ritual Memory*, esp. 42–78.

19. Charlesworth, *Authentic Apocrypha*, 38.

20. On this, see now Pesce, *Le parole dimenticate di Gesù*.

21. Charlesworth, *Authentic Apocrypha*, 39. In endnote 58, Charlesworth adds that "the new tendency, foreshadowed in Resch's books, breaks into the open in four publications by B. P. Grenfell and A.S. Hunt, namely *Sayings of Our Lord from an Early Greek Papyrus* (London, 1897), *New Sayings of Jesus and Fragment of a Lost Gospel from Oxyrhynchus* (with L.W. Drexel, London, 1897, repr. 1904), *Fragment of an Uncanonical Gospel from Oxyrhynchus* (Oxford, 1908), and *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (6 vols., London, 1908)."

Jeremias in his *Unbekannte Jesusworte*, printed at least three times in a quarter of a century (from 1948 to 1963) and translated into English in 1957.²²

Without giving much explanation, Charlesworth places the beginning of the last and fourth phase of interest in the Christian Apocrypha in 1965. This date approximately coincides with the completion of the third edition of Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher's *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* in two volumes (1959 and 1964) and, above all, with their English translation in 1963–1965.²³ In Charlesworth's view, this phase "is marked by a tendency to evaluate the texts critically as evidence (alongside the canonical gospels) for early forms of Christianity."²⁴ Yet, as Tony Burke rightly states,

Charlesworth's identification of the fourth, and arguably still ongoing, phase of CA [i.e., Christian Apocrypha] research is undisputedly generalized—not all scholars view the CA as valuable texts for the study of early Christianity. The past few years in particular have seen a backlash from conservative scholars over the efficacy of using these texts to reconstruct early Christian history, particularly for recovering the life and teachings of Jesus.²⁵

Moreover, as already emphasized above, Christian Apocrypha should not be read and used only "for recovering the life and teachings of Jesus." They deserve a better treatment, along with other products of early Christianity, whatever their canonical status. One of the major problems in Charlesworth's approach is his distinction between what he calls "authentic Apocrypha" and "forgeries," such as the *Letter of Lentulus* (or the *Secret Gospel of Mark*). I do not see how such a distinction can be defended. I do not see why the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, to take another example, could be considered as an authentic apocryphon and the *Letter of Lentulus* not. Outside of their content, the only difference between the latter, regarded as false, and the former, deemed genuine, is temporal, as Piovanelli and Burke have pointed out.²⁶ The only reason why Charlesworth takes the *Letter of Lentulus* for a

22. On this, see also Bauckham, "Study of Gospel Traditions."

23. Hennecke and Schneemelcher, eds., *New Testament Apocrypha*. It must be added that a fifth edition of *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, published this time under only the name of Wilhelm Schneemelcher, also was translated into English, after a sixth revised edition, in 1991–1992.

24. As summarized in Burke, "Entering the Mainstream," 19.

25. *Ibid.*, 20.

26. On all this, I concur with Burke, "Entering the Mainstream," 21–22, citing also Piovanelli, "What Is a Christian Apocryphal Text?," 33–34; Piovanelli, "Qu'est-ce qu'un 'écrit apocryphe chrétien?'" 179–81.

false apocryphon is its late date of composition (the late Middle Ages), but this is not a valid argument, as the production of apocryphal texts never really came to an end. The most we are entitled to is to distinguish between ancient, medieval, modern, and even contemporary apocrypha. And should we deem that the *Secret Gospel of Mark* is a scholarly forgery by Morton Smith or an early modern humanist,²⁷ it could not be equated with the *Letter of Lentulus*, since the purpose of these two texts was completely different.

Recently, Paul-Hubert Poirier came back to the topic in a paper entitled “Vers une redéfinition du champ apocryphe: Aperçus de la recherche récente consacrée aux apocryphes,” delivered at a conference of the ACÉBAC (Association catholique pour l'étude de la Bible au Canada)—the French-speaking counterpart of the CSBS (Canadian Society of Biblical Studies)—that was held in 2008 at Châteauguay, near Montreal, and published four years later.²⁸ Unlike Charlesworth, the Quebec scholar focuses mostly on the twentieth century and distinguishes two main phases in the study of apocryphal literature: prior to the 1970s and thereafter. According to Poirier, a kind of “Copernician” revolution occurred in the late 70s with the foundation of the AELAC (Association pour l'étude de la littérature apocryphe chrétienne)²⁹ and the renewed debate among scholars about this literature, the ways to define it, and the kinds of materials it is supposed to encompass.

So even though the revival of interest in Christian Apocrypha in North America is not new, it is obvious that for a few decades now this revival has taken on a much stronger tone than it had in the twentieth century. This is largely due to the passion and efforts of a handful of young active scholars in Early Judaism and Early Christianity, who chose to dedicate their doctoral research to early Christian texts not included in the biblical canon and who then continued to work on this literature once their PhDs were submitted. This is the case of our colleagues Tony Burke and Brent Landau, who organized this symposium and are possibly launching a new and promising trend in our field in North America. Burke is not only the author of the now-standard scholarly work on the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*,³⁰ but he has also been very active in stimulating and disseminating discussions about

27. On this apocryphon, see the proceedings of the 2011 York Christian Apocrypha Symposium by Tony Burke, *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery?*; cf. Burnet, Review of Burke, *Ancient Gospel or Modern Forgery?*; and Miceli, “Account.”

28. Poirier, “Vers une redéfinition.”

29. See the brief historical account of the AELAC attached to this paper. Readers may also find updated information about the projects of this association on its website: www.aelac.org.

30. Burke, *De infantia Iesu*; cf. Andrist, Review of Burke, *De infantia Iesu*.

the Christian Apocrypha with his blog Apocryphicity, in organizing the York Symposium Series, as well as in providing English-speaking readers with an introduction to apocryphal literature: *Secret Scriptures Revealed. A New Introduction to the Christian Apocrypha* (2013). Landau, for his part, wrote his dissertation on a fascinating but little-known text: the *Revelation of the Magi*.³¹ He published a book on the same text aimed at a broader audience in 2010,³² and also contributed articles on other topics related to apocryphal literature.

Addressing North American scholarship on Christian Apocrypha, one must not forget the research of North American scholars in the field of Gnostic Studies. Most important in this respect are the contributions of the Claremont School of Theology, as well as the ongoing publication of the Coptic Library of Nag Hammadi (Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, BCNH), founded by a team of French Quebec scholars at Laval University.³³ In contrast to what some people think, the border between the study of gnostic and apocryphal texts is not clear, mostly because what these words refer to also is not clear, and, though not all apocryphal texts pertain to the “gnostic mindset or worldview,” gnostic literature as a whole is certainly to be counted as part of the apocryphal “continent.”³⁴ Therefore, the two areas of research should not be as sharply differentiated as they often are today. Fortunately, some scholars try to build bridges between these two fields of expertise: Jean-Daniel Dubois in France with his *Jésus apocryphe*,³⁵ Christoph Marksches and Jens Schröter in the seventh and latest edition of Hennecke-Schneemelcher³⁶ in Germany, or Nicola Denzey Lewis³⁷ and Philip Tite³⁸ in North America, to name just a few prominent scholars. But too many other scholars still tend to keep the two fields separate and do not encourage collaboration or dialogue.

31. Landau, “Sages and the Star-Child.” The same year Landau published an article in *Apocrypha* based on his doctoral work, “Revelation of the Magi.” More recently, he published “One Drop of Salvation.”

32. Landau, *Revelation of the Magi*. See also the reviews by Evans, Heal, and Reed.

33. See <http://www.naghammadi.org/>.

34. Expression borrowed from Picard, *Le continent apocryphe*.

35. Dubois, *Jésus apocryphe*.

36. Marksches and Schröter, eds., *Antike christliche Apokryphen*; cf. reviews by Böttrich, Heath, and Elliott, “The ‘New’ Hennecke.”

37. See her paper in this volume and also Denzey Lewis, *Introduction to “Gnosticism”*; cf. van den Kerchove, Review of Denzey Lewis, *Introduction to “Gnosticism.”*

38. See, in particular, Tite, *Valentinian Ethics*; and Tite, *Apocryphal Epistle to the Laodiceans*.