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BURKE, Tony et LANDAU, Brent (éd.), *New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* (Vol. 1), Grand Rapids, Mich., Eerdmans, 2016, 585 p. ISBN : 978-0-8028-7289

*New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* est une addition bienvenue aux collections récentes d'écrits apocryphes chrétiens. Le volume rassemble plusieurs documents obscurs, dont certains n'ont jamais été traduits en aucune langue moderne. Cependant, l'introduction générale de la collection perpétue deux idées fausses, notamment, que «les écrits apocryphes chrétiens» sont nécessairement néotestamentaires (et, à l'inverse, que les pseudépigraphes de l'Ancien Testament sont essentiellement d'origine juive) et que les écrits apocryphes, en tant que livres non-canoniques, sont des livres rejetés. Les introductions individuelles dessinent une image forte différente : ces écrits étaient très populaires à l'époque, et les autorités ecclésiales et monastiques ont même diffusé les textes dans les ménologes et dans des autres sources hagiographiques. Par conséquent, les écrits apocryphes chrétiens ne sont pas seulement des témoins clés pour l'étude du développement du canon, mais aussi pour l'étude de l'hagiographie.

*New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* is a welcome addition to the recent collections of Christian Apocrypha. The volume collects a number of obscure documents, a few of which have never been translated into any modern language. The general introduction of the collection, however, suffers from the perpetuation of two misconceptions, namely, that "Christian Apocrypha" are necessarily "New Testament Apocrypha" (and, conversely, that "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha" are essentially Jewish) and that Apocrypha, being noncanonical books, are also rejected books. The individual introductions paint a different picture: Many of these works were quite popular and were even disseminated by ecclesial and monastic authorities, especially in menologia and other hagiographical sources. The Christian Apocrypha are therefore not merely key witnesses for the study of the development of the canon but also for the study of hagiography.

*New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* (henceforth *More NTA*) is a welcome addition to the growing number of collections of Christian Apocrypha. It is presented as a supplement to the *New Testament Apocrypha* first published by M.R. James in 1924, which was revised by J.K. Elliott in 1993 (Elliott writes the foreword of the present volume)<sup>1</sup>. The collection, in addition to being a sequel of sorts to the work of James and Elliott, is also a companion to the recently published *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures* (henceforth *More OTP*), which inspired the present volume<sup>2</sup>. Both collections aim to expand the public's conception of the Pseudepigrapha/Apocrypha beyond the boundaries of earlier collections. In this regard, *More NTA* is a success, extending the horizon of Christian Apocrypha with a number of obscure and neglected texts. However, the collection also raises a number of methodological issues regarding the presentation and classification of Christian Apocrypha.

Most of the thirty works included in this volume appear for the first time in English. The exceptions replace much older translations and are based on new manuscript evidence. A few of them have appeared recently in other languages, including *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, Volume 2 (these are marked with \*)<sup>3</sup>. Here is a list of the contents:

<sup>1</sup> M.R. JAMES, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1924; J.K. ELLIOTT, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation*, Oxford, OUP, 1993.

<sup>2</sup> R. BAUCKHAM, J.R. DAVILA and A. PANAYOTOV (eds.), *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: More Noncanonical Scriptures*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 2013.

<sup>3</sup> P. GEOLTRAIN and J.-D. KAESTLI (eds.), *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, Tome II (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 516), Paris, Gallimard, 2005 (reprint 2006; 2013).

The first section, “Gospels and Related New Testament Traditions”, includes:

- K. Heyden, *The Legend of Aphroditianus*
- B. Landau *The Revelation of the Magi* (summary)
- M.G. Bilby, *The Hospitality of Dysmas*
- T. Burke, *The Infancy Gospel of Thomas (Syriac)*
- \*W. Adler, *On the Priesthood of Jesus*
- B. Landau and S.E. Porter, *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 210* (possible fragment of an apocryphal Gospel)
- R.P. Ponder, *Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 5072* (another possible Gospel fragment)
- \*B.N. Rice, *The Dialogue of the Paralytic with Christ*
- F. Stanley Jones, *Toledot Yeshu (Aramaic Fragment)*
- A. Suciu, *The Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon* (also known as the *Gospel of the Savior*)
- P.C. Dilley, *The Discourse of the Savior and the Dance of the Savior*
- C. Luckritz Marquis, *An Encomium on Mary Magdalene* (including the Coptic version of the *Cave of Treasures*)
- \*P.L. Tite, *An Encomium on John the Baptist*
- A. Bernhard, *The Life and Martyrdom of John the Baptist*
- S. Čéplö, *The Life of John the Baptist by Serapion*
- T. Burke and S. Čéplö, *The Legend of the Thirty Pieces of Silver*
- G.S. Smith, *The Death of Judas according to Papias*

The second section, “Apocryphal Acts and Related Traditions”, includes:

- \*G.E. Snyder, *The Acts of Barnabas*
- T. Burke and W. Witakowski, *The Acts of Cornelius the Centurion*
- R. Brannan, *John and the Robber*
- F. S. Jones, *The History of Simon Cephas, the Chief of the Apostles*
- \*C.W. Concannon, *The Acts of Timothy*
- \*R.I. Pervo, *The Acts of Titus*
- D.L. Eastman, *The Life and Conduct of the Holy Women Xanthippe, Polyxena, and Rebecca*

The third section, “Epistles”, includes:

- \*C.A. Miceli, *The Epistle of Christ from Heaven*
- D.L. Eastman, *The Epistle of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite to Timothy concerning the Deaths of the Apostles Peter and Paul*

The fourth and final section, “Apocalypses”, includes:

- C.D. Wright, *The (Latin) Revelation of John about Antichrist*
- S.J. Shoemaker, *The Apocalypse of the Virgin*
- S.J. Shoemaker, *The Tiburtine Sibyl* (the Latin version)
- A. Suciu with I. Saweros, *The Investiture of Abbaton, the Angel of Death*

The collection is a real potpourri, which is both a strength and a weakness. On the one hand, a wide variety of material appears here. The greatest joy from reading one of these collections is the personal discovery of new material (in the case of the present author, the *Life of John the Baptist by Serapion* and the *Investiture of Abbaton, the Angel of Death*). However, it is disappointing that the *Revelation of the Magi* (an extract from the *Chronicle of Pseudo-Dionysius of Tel-Mahre*) is only summarized, since B. Landau has recently published a translation of the full text<sup>4</sup>. The fragment of *Toledot Yeshu* found here is also not the best entry point for scholars of Christian Apocrypha who are unfamiliar with this work. The Wagenseil or Huldreich versions – or, at the very least, a more complete Aramaic version –

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<sup>4</sup> B. LANDAU, *Revelation of the Magi: The Lost Tale of the Three Wise Men’s Journey to Bethlehem*, New York, HarperOne, 2010.

would have been a better choice<sup>5</sup>. In general, however, the choice of materials is commendable, especially when they represent differing points of view on the same subject, such as the *Legend of Aphroditianus* and the *Revelation of the Magi*, or the three very different works on John the Baptist.

On the other hand, the collection suffers from a lack of coherence. This will become a bigger problem when Volume 2 appears, as there will be no significant distinction to separate the collections. Related works will be scattered across several volumes. For example, *The History of Simon Cephas, the Chief of the Apostles* appears here, while a work called *The Preaching of Simon Cephas in the City of Rome* is scheduled to appear in a later collection (p. xlv-xlvi). Similarly, the Latin *Revelation of John about Antichrist* appears in this volume but not the three Greek *Apocryphal Apocalypses of John*. This is regrettable but necessary in light of publication schedules and the inevitable discovery of new texts.

Another, more serious problem with the collection is the editors' understanding of the Christian Apocrypha. Despite the title of the volume, the editors seem to prefer this nomenclature and use it throughout the introduction. They use "Christian Apocrypha" and "New Testament Apocrypha" interchangeably, as if they are synonyms. They are not. Their definition of "Christian Apocrypha" (p. xxiii: "non-biblical Christian literature that features tales of Jesus, his family and his immediate followers") is the definition of New Testament Apocrypha. "Christian Apocrypha" is a broader category and includes works about characters from the Old Testament, which is why *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens* contains the *Ascension of Isaiah* and the *Lives of the Prophets*, works that, in English collections, are classed as Pseudepigrapha.

The editors do not seem aware of this nuance and occasionally refer to the Pseudepigrapha as if these writings were intrinsically Jewish. For example, the editors refer to "Jewish Pseudepigrapha" (p. xxxiv), alluding to the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, a Christian composition. On p. xxxvii and p. xl, they refer to "Christian-authored Pseudepigrapha" suggesting that Pseudepigrapha are not typically "Christian-authored". Finally, on p. xli, they refer to "Christian-authored Jewish Pseudepigrapha"! The full title of the Pseudepigrapha is not "Jewish Pseudepigrapha" but "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha". The Christian bias is intentional. Strictly speaking, there are no Jewish Pseudepigrapha: the "canon by consensus" that emerges from the modern Pseudepigrapha collections consists of works preserved in manuscripts of Christian provenance. For example, all of the Pseudepigrapha in the French *Écrits intertestamentaires* are translated from Christian manuscripts<sup>6</sup>. Even Pseudepigrapha of Jewish origin are still, contextually, Christian. The Ethiopic *Book of Enoch* – a canonical book of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church – is Christian in a way that the Aramaic Enoch booklets from Qumran are not<sup>7</sup>.

The "Old Testament Pseudepigrapha" and the "New Testament Apocrypha" are both branches of Christian Apocrypha. This is the strength of "Christian Apocrypha" over the older taxonomy: it relies on an objective criterion (the provenance of the manuscripts) rather than the thematic organization of *More NTA* and *More OTP*. While "Old Testament" and "New Testament" seem like objective categories for classifying apocryphal writings, there are patent

<sup>5</sup> For texts and translations of the major versions, see M. MEERSON and P. SCHÄFER (eds.), *Toledot Yeshu: The Life Story of Jesus: Two Volumes and Database*, (Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism 159), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> A. DUPONT-SOMMER and M. PHILONENKO (eds.), *La Bible. Écrits intertestamentaires* (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade), Paris, Gallimard, 1987.

<sup>7</sup> *More OTP*, however, includes a number of Hebrew and Aramaic texts which are unquestionably of Jewish origin. This is an innovation of this particular volume, although it has some precedent in earlier volumes (e.g., the inclusion of *3 Enoch* in James Charlesworth's *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*). The Jewish texts are typically classed separately from the Pseudepigrapha. I will have cause to comment on this again at the end of this article.

ambiguities. For example, if a work depicts Jesus recounting to the Apostles how the angel of death aided God in the creation of Adam, as in the *Investiture of Abbaton*, does that work belong to the “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha” or the “New Testament Apocrypha”?

This problem is illustrated by the occasional overlap between *More OTP* and *More NTA*. The Syriac version of the *Cave of Treasures* appears in *More OTP*, but the Coptic fragments of the same work appear in *More NTA* as part of the *Encomium on Mary Magdalene*. *More OTP* features an *Apocryphon of Seth*, which is a summary of the same story that one finds in the *Revelation of the Magi*. Finally, the Greek version of the *Tiburtine Sibyl* appears in *More OTP*, while the Latin version appears in *More NTA*. The Sibyl appears in *More OTP* because earlier (Pseudo-) Sibylline Oracles are Jewish; however, the *Tiburtine Sibyl* prophesizes the coming of Christ and presents a thoroughly Christian conception of the *eschaton*. The *Sibyl*, in particular, demonstrates how arbitrary such a thematic division can be. She is not found in either Testament, yet few would deny her oracle a place within the Christian Apocrypha.

Now that I have addressed the title of the work, I would like to turn to the subtitle, “More Noncanonical Scriptures”, which is common to both *More NTA* and *More OTP*. The introductions of both works begin with lengthy discussions of the biblical canon and its formation. *More NTA*, in particular, understands the Apocrypha as those works which were condemned and, consequently, fall outside the canon. This definition might apply to the Nag Hammadi codices and related works, but it does not seem to be the best model for understanding the Christian Apocrypha in this collection, most of which do not seem to have played any part in the “canon debate”. Except for the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, none of the works in this collection, to my knowledge, appear in any list of proscribed books.

The understanding of the Christian Apocrypha as “Noncanonical Scriptures” is undermined by the constant references to menologia, relics, feast days, homilies, the liturgy, and the Bollandists, which leads one to believe that the Christian Apocrypha are actually a species of hagiography<sup>8</sup>. In other words, while noncanonical, these works were not rejected or suppressed. On the contrary, they were encouraged and widely disseminated. Here is a sample of comments covering most of the works in the collection<sup>9</sup>:

In the foreword, J.K. Elliott writes: “It is often said that the Christian apocrypha began life with the filling-in of perceived gaps in the biblical narratives because human curiosity quite naturally wanted fuller accounts of what the founders of the faith had done and said. More complete biographies were demanded of all its heroes. Thus deeds and deaths, typically martyrdoms of the eponymous heroes, were written. Likewise, parallel tales about a church’s or a region’s founding fathers were concocted; later, hagiographies followed similar lines” (p. xv).

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<sup>8</sup> This observation is not novel, although the implications are not fully appreciated. The introduction to W. SCHNEEMELCHER, *New Testament Apocrypha*, Rev. ed., 2 vols., translated by R.M. WILSON, Cambridge, J. Clarke & Co., 1991, p. 58-65, acknowledges that hagiography emerged from the apocrypha but goes to great lengths to distinguish the two, criticizing in particular the views espoused by É. JUNOD, « Apocryphes du Nouveau Testament ou apocryphes chrétiens anciens ? Remarques sur la désignation d’un corpus et indications bibliographiques sur instruments de travail récents », *Études théologiques et religieuses*, 58 (1983), p. 408–421. The distinction is arbitrary, however. W. Schneemelcher admits that the date when “Apocrypha” becomes “Hagiography” cannot be precisely determined (p. 54), and he cites medieval art as evidence for the influence of the survival of the apocrypha (p. 65), even though the model for such art would have surely been “later” hagiography and not the “early” apocrypha. A response to W. Schneemelcher appears in É JUNOD, « « Apocryphes du Nouveau Testament » : une appellation erronée et une collection artificielle ; discussion de la nouvelle définition proposée par W. Schneemelcher », *Apocrypha* 3 (1992), p. 17–46. The thought of the present author is indebted to this particular article.

<sup>9</sup> I have not commented on the two Oxyrhynchus papyri, *Toledot Yeshu*, the *Death of Judas according to Papias*, or the *Revelation of John about Antichrist*. The papyri are too fragmentary. The other three works could be considered anti-hagiographies, descriptions of villainous characters.

In the introduction, T. Burke and B. Landau write: “Perhaps all of these esteemed early texts could be considered part of another middle category between canonical and noncanonical – something akin to hagiography – or perhaps they demonstrate the boundary between scripture and apocrypha was more porous than the creators of the various canon lists suggest” (p. xxix).

K. Heyden writes of *The Legend of Aphroditianus*: “In the Slavic cultures, especially in medieval Russia, [it] was a popular text that was read during the Christmas liturgy” (p. 3). The work was also incorporated into a homily on the Nativity by John of Damascus (p. 4). The text is an elaboration of the story of the Magi, written by someone who knew nothing about Persian culture: The Magi have Greek names and worship Hera and Dionysus. It is a fine example of the “Mages hellénisés,” the Greek appropriation of oriental wisdom (of Zoroaster, Hystaspes, and others) as a literary *topos*<sup>10</sup>.

B. Landau notes that the *Revelation of the Magi* is related to a short Latin summary of the same story in the *Opus Imperfectum in Matthaëum*, which became the basis of standard hagiographical accounts of the Magi. The story, for example, is incorporated into Jacob of Voragine’s *Legenda Aurea* (p. 27). The work provides a striking contrast with the *Legend of Aphroditianus*. In the *Revelation of the Magi*, the twelve (!) Magi have authentic Middle Persian and Babylonian names.

The *Hospitality of Dysmas* is an interpolation into the *Acts of Pilate* (p. 39). The *Acts of Pilate* is the earliest source to name Dysmas (or Dismas), the penitent thief in the *Legenda Aurea* and other hagiographical sources. The *Hospitality* is the earliest source to record a kind act that the thief showed to the Holy Family during the flight to Egypt.

T. Burke notes that the Syriac version of the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* is incorporated in whole or in part into Syriac compilations on the life of Mary, the East Syrian *History of the Virgin* (p. 54-55) and the West Syrian *Life of Mary* (p. 56). Burke claims that the Syriac version attests a more primitive version of this troubling gospel, which presents the child Jesus terrorizing his neighbors with his divine power.

W. Adler notes that *On the Priesthood of Jesus* prefaces some versions of the *History of the Patriarchs of Alexandria*, an ecclesiastical history that doubles as hagiography (p. 70). *On the Priesthood of Jesus* explains that Jesus, in addition to being a priest according to order of Melchizedek, was also enrolled in the register of Levitical priests. It is thus a fitting introduction to a history of patriarchs, who derive their priesthood from Jesus.

In *The Dialogue of the Paralytic with Christ*, the resurrected Jesus puts the faith of a paralytic to the test before he reveals his identity and heals the man. B. N. Rice writes, “The popularity of the dialogue in the Caucasus and Anatolian plateau eventually led to its inclusion in some early recensions of the Armenian menologion, and it is this form of *Dial. Par.* that became most widespread” (p. 140).

A. Suciú classes *The Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon* with the “Pseudo-Apostolic Memoirs”, a series of Coptic homilies which take the form of firsthand accounts of the Apostles that were subsequently rediscovered by the Church Fathers. The homilies typically begin with an explanation of how a Church Father (e.g. Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom) found the book before assuming the Apostle’s point of view (p. 169-171). The homilies are also associated with particular feast days. The Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon, however, is fragmentary, and its meaning is rather opaque. Clearer examples of the Pseudo-Apostolic Memoir appear elsewhere in the volume.

According to P. C. Dilley, *The Discourse of the Savoir* and the *Dance of the Savior* are both related to *The Berlin-Strasbourg Apocryphon*. It follows that these two works, in which

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<sup>10</sup> The term comes from J. BIDEZ and F. CUMONT, *Les mages hellénisés: Zoroastre, Ostanès et Hystaspe d’après la tradition grecque*, 2 vols., Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1938-1939.

Jesus instructs the Apostles regarding the veneration of the cross, are related to the Pseudo-Apostolic Memoirs.

C. Luckritz Marquis notes that the *Encomium on Mary Magdalene* is one of the Pseudo-Apostolic Memoirs (p. 201; cf. Suci, p. 170). The work is attributed to Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), who allegedly found Mary's memoirs in a library in Jerusalem. The end of the work adds a third layer of literary fiction: It contains a Coptic version of the *Cave of Treasures*, which the angel Gabriel recounts to Mary's servant Theophilus.

P.L. Tite draws attention to the "monastic contexts" of the *Encomium on John the Baptist*, which was written for the saint's feast day (p. 217). A surviving manuscript was originally copied as a gift for the Monastery of St. Mercurius and intended for the edification of the monks there. It is also a homily in the Pseudo-Apostolic Memoir tradition (cf. Suci, p. 171). This particular homily is attributed to John Chrysostom. It is also the basis of the chapter on John the Baptist in the *Legenda Aurea* (p. 219).

A. Bernhard describes *The Life and Martyrdom of John the Baptist* as a monastic composition (p. 253-255). The work ends with a note on the relics of the Baptist and the date of his death. This suggests that the work was intended as a homily for his feast day. It is a fairly straightforward summary of the life of the Baptist.

Similarly, S. Čéplö characterizes the genre *The Life of John the Baptist by Serapion* as "narrative elements within the framework of a sermon read on the saint's feast day" (p. 270). The work is far more colorful than the preceding two entries and contains an episode in which the severed head of the Baptist reanimates in order to wreak vengeance on those responsible for his death. This episode is also found in Muslim literature.

T. Burke and S. Čéplö write that *The Legend of the Thirty Pieces of Silver*, found in a number of diverse sources, was the basis for the "Judas penny" relics in the Middle Ages (p. 294). The legend explains how coins originally belonging to Terah, the father of Abraham, became the thirty pieces paid to Judas. The legend of the travelling relic is similar to stories about the wood of the cross.

G.E. Snyder refers to the *Acts of Barnabas* as a text used for legitimizing the cult of this saint on Cyprus (p. 323-324). The text recounts Barnabas' voyage to the island and his eventual martyrdom there. The work ends with a short notice on the translation of his relics.

T. Burke and W. Witkowski write that summaries of the *Acts of Cornelius the Centurion* are available in Greek, Ethiopic, and Coptic synaxaria (p. 337). The Greek text of this work comes from the hagiographical collection of Symeon Metaphrastes (p. 338). The Ethiopic text comes from a manuscript of the acts of saints and martyrs (p. 339). The *Acts* recount the life of Cornelius, the first Gentile Christian, after his conversion, including his miracles, his natural death, and the providential discovery and translation of his relics.

According to R. Brannan, the story of *John and the Robber* comes from the end of a homily by Clement of Alexandria and reused by later homilists (p. 362-363). The story purports to be a true account of how the apostle John saved a young man, a former acquaintance, from a life of banditry.

F.S. Jones writes that *The History of Simon Cephas, the Chief of the Apostles* "is largely an epitome of earlier accounts of Peter that the author compiled for the church's lectionary to be read at the yearly celebration of Peter's martyrdom" (p. 371). The work is a Syriac variant of the *Acts of Peter*, recounting the confrontation between Simon Peter and Simon Magus in Rome.

C.W. Concannon notes that *The Acts of Timothy* was initially edited by the Bollandists (p. 395-396). The text represents "one way in which the diversity of early Christian hagiography could be synthesized to maximize its civic value" (p. 400). The work recounts Timothy's martyrdom in Ephesus during the Katagogia, a festival honoring Dionysus.

R.L. Pervo describes *The Acts of Titus* as “a hagiographical biography with an ecclesiological interest, much like the *Acts of Barnabas*” (p. 406). The work is found in menologia (p. 407). It recounts the travels, ministry, and eventual death on the island of Crete, where his tomb became a healing shrine.

D.L. Eastman classifies *The Life and Conduct of the Holy Women Xanthippe, Polyxena, and Rebecca* as a mixture of apocryphal acts, ancient romance novels, and hagiography (p. 416). Their story appears in the tenth-century menologion of Basil II, and their feast day is September 23 (p. 427). In the style of a Late Antique romance, the work recounts the travels and travails of the sisters Xanthippe and Polyxena, who encounter several of the Apostles as they attempt to return to their hometown in Spain.

C.A. Miceli writes that *The Epistle of Christ from Heaven* was condemned at the Lateran synod of 745 CE. However, bishop Vincent of Ibiza, who believed the authenticity of the letter, read it liturgically (p. 457). This epistle, essentially a chain letter, defends Sunday worship and warns of the dire consequences of failing to observe Sunday as a holy day.

D.L. Eastman writes that the *Epistle of Pseudo-Dionysius to Timothy concerning the Deaths of the Apostles Peter and Paul* anticipates the shared feast day of the Apostles (June 29). He further writes, “The general story of Peter’s crucifixion and Paul’s beheading could come from any number of late-antique martyrdom narratives or patristic sources” (p. 472). The work, which takes the form of a consolatory letter written to Timothy, ends with an account of the rediscovery of Paul’s head, an event commemorated on February 25 according to the sixth-century *Martyrology of Jerome* (p. 470).

According to S.J. Shoemaker, *The Apocalypse of the Virgin*, an account of Mary’s visit to hell related to the *Apocalypse of Paul*, developed from similar apocalypses found in Dormition narratives. The Dormition, a major feast in medieval Christianity, is well-known from hagiographical literature, including the *Legenda Aurea* (p. 495-497).

The person of the *Tiburine Sibyl*, who describes, for the first time, the legend of the Last World Emperor, is enshrined in the Latin liturgy via the hymn *Dies irae*, which claims that David and the Sibyl both predicted the “Day of Wrath” (p. 515).

Finally, A. Suciú and I. Saweros classify *The Investiture of Abbaton, the Angel of Death* among the Pseudo-Apostolic Memoirs (p. 529). Like the other memoirs, it has an overt liturgical context. The text takes the form of a homily attributed to one Timothy of Alexandria based on the writings of the Apostles. It was read on Hathor 13, the feast of the angel Abbaton (p. 526; cf. Suciú, p. 171). The text describes how the angel Muriel, by retrieving clay from an uncooperative earth, helped participate in the creation of Adam. Muriel subsequently became Abbaton, the angel of death. The story has parallels in Muslim literature (p. 531).

The portrait that emerges is a collection of works which were either intended as hagiographies (especially the Pseudo-Apostolic Memoirs and the various Acts) or else works which could be readily adopted for that purpose. After encountering so many references of this type, one begins to wonder: What is the difference between Christian Apocrypha and hagiography? Frankly, I do not think there is a difference. Even adaptations of earlier, allegedly “heretical” Christian Apocrypha such as the *Acts of Thomas* and the *Pseudo-Clementines* have a place in “orthodox” lives of saints like the *Legenda Aurea*<sup>11</sup>. The one distinction is that the Christian Apocrypha focus on biblical figures, especially (but not exclusively) figures from the New Testament, while hagiography as a whole is much broader.

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, R. GOUNELLE, « Sens et usage d’apocryphus dans la Légende dorée », *Apocrypha* 5 (1994), p. 189–210. Jacob of Voragine, however, does express some reservations about apocryphal literature (which never stops him from including it in his work).



The notion of Christian Apocrypha as hagiography would go a long way to resolving critical methodological issues in the study of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha<sup>12</sup>. First, it would dispel the myth that a monolithic Church suppressed the Christian Apocrypha, with the sword in one hand and Athanasius' Festal Letter 39 in the other. Most Christian Apocrypha were not hidden away in the desert or fortuitously rediscovered in remote locations. Rather, they were continuously transmitted, both in writing and in the visual arts. While not canonical, they formed the backbone of medieval popular culture and shaped the way that Christians read and understood the Sacred Scriptures – which, in a way, gives them authority over the canon. J.K. Elliott draws attention to this in the foreword, but the editors backslide a little by characterizing the Christian Apocrypha as “not just the ramblings of heretics” and by claiming they survived “despite calls to destroy early apocrypha” (p. xlvi). For this collection especially, orthodoxy and ecclesial approval seems to be the rule rather than the exception.

Second, it would help reintegrate the “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha” into the fold of Christian Apocrypha. The Pseudepigrapha of disputed provenance frequently read like the *Vitae* of Old Testament Saints: the *Life of Adam and Eve*, *2 Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the *Testament of Abraham*, the *Testament of Job*, *Joseph and Aseneth*, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, the *Rest of the Words of Jeremiah (4 Baruch)*, and the *Lives of the Prophets*. These works are only *debatably* Jewish, but they are *certainly* Christian, both in their present form and in their influence on Christian culture in the Middle Ages. It would be interesting to know how often they turn up in menologia and other hagiographical contexts.

Finally, the model of Christian Apocrypha as hagiography provides some guidelines for the organization of future collections. The *Tendenz* of *More OTP* and *More NTA* is to avoid such limitations, but the coherence of these collections suffers as a result. Treating the Christian Apocrypha as a branch of hagiography would impose some degree of temporal limitation: the study of hagiography typically focuses on (Late) Antiquity and the Middle Ages, which is the center of interest for most researchers of the Christian Apocrypha. The editors of *More NTA* express interest in including “modern apocrypha” such as the *Archko Volume* or the *Letter of Benan* in future volumes (p. xxxviii). This is an interesting subject of research in itself. The modern apocrypha should definitely be *studied* in conjunction with older Christian Apocrypha, but they should probably be *printed* separately.

More critically, the hagiography model would limit the contents of such collections to works coming from manuscripts of Christian provenance. The separation of Jewish and Christian material is crucial, first, for avoiding coinages such as “Christian-authored Jewish Pseudepigrapha” and dismantling the idea that “Old Testament Pseudepigrapha” automatically means “Jewish”. Furthermore, it allows for the study of the Hebrew and Aramaic material for its own sake. The *Toledot Yeshu*, the only Jewish work in *More NTA*, shares something with the Hebrew and Aramaic works from *More OTP*, (e.g. the *Book of Noah*, *Midrash Vayissa ‘u*, *Sefer Zerubbabel*). That is, they all previously appeared in Adolph Jellinek's *Bet ha-Midrash* (1853-1878), a collection of “minor midrashim”<sup>13</sup>. The only translation in any language, August Wünsche's *Aus Israels Lehrhallen* (1907-1910), is even older than *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* of R.H. Charles (1913)<sup>14</sup>. A translation or update of Jellinek is a serious *desideratum* which, in addition to

<sup>12</sup> For example, Els Rose recently led a project entitled *The Dynamics of Apocryphal Traditions in Medieval Religious Culture*, to which an earlier volume of *Apocrypha* (Vol. 23, 2012), was dedicated. The focus of the project was the *Virtutes apostolorum* of Pseudo-Abdias, which became a major conduit for the reception of apocryphal traditions about the Apostles in the Latin West. It is an ideal example of a work that blurs the distinction between apocrypha and hagiography.

<sup>13</sup> A. JELLINEK, *Bet ha-Midrash: Sammlung kleiner Midraschim und vermischler Abhandlungen aus der ältern jüdischen Literatur*, 6 vols., Leipzig, Druck und Verlag von Friedrich Nies, 1853-1878.

<sup>14</sup> A. WÜNSCHE, *Aus Israels Lehrhallen, kleine Midraschim zur spätern legendarischen Literatur des Alten Testaments*, 5 vols., Leipzig, Verlag von Eduard Pfeiffer, 1907-1910.

being an important contribution to scholarship, would help distinguish Jewish material from Christian writings about Old Testament figures.

The greatest benefit of *More NTA* is the texts themselves. The introductions and the translations are of inestimable value. The presentation of the material, especially the general introduction, leaves something to be desired. The organization of collections of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha is not an indifferent matter. The general public will continue to read the translations of these collections long after scholars have abandoned the presuppositions behind their organization. On the one hand, some aspects of the present collection will create methodological difficulties that future scholars will have to untangle. On the other hand, the constant references to hagiography lead the way to a better understanding of the Christian Apocrypha than the current “Noncanonical” model.

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