Coptic Apocrypha

Edited by
HUGO LUNDHAUG,
ROXANNE BÉLANGER SARRAZIN,
SAMUEL PETER COOK,
LASSE LØVLUND TOFT,
and FLORIAN GRAZ

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New Frontiers – New Perspectives

Edited by

Hugo Lundhaug, Roxanne Bélanger Sarrazin, Samuel Peter Cook, Lasse Løvlund Toft, and Florian Graz

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Preface

This volume derives directly from work carried out in the ERC-funded research project APOCRYPHA at the University of Oslo, Faculty of Theology, in the period 2020–2026.[1] The project's full name was *Storyworlds in Transition: Coptic Apocrypha in Changing Contexts in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods*, and it set out to create an overview of all Coptic apocrypha directly attested in preserved manuscripts – from the entire period of Coptic literary production (ca. 4th–13th centuries), and to understand the development and functions of this type of literature through the significantly changing socio-religious contexts of Egypt in this period. This book showcases the methods, concepts, and results of the project, with contributions from the research team as well as from some of the project's close external collaborators who generously contributed with their own articles throwing additional light on the history of Coptic apocrypha.

The volume is divided into three parts. Part I: New Approaches to Coptic Apocrypha, comprises seven chapters focusing on a range of new methodological approaches, including an overview of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the APOCRYPHA project co-written by the editors. Part II: New Editions with Commentary, contains three new editions of Coptic texts – one apocryphal text proper, one catena fragment with apocryphal elements, and one polemical text against various apocryphal traditions – all with extensive commentary. Finally, Part III: Contextualizing Coptic Apocrypha, comprises three contributions that shed light on the wider contexts of Coptic apocrypha.

The editors wish, first of all, to thank all the contributors of this volume, for wonderful collaboration throughout the making of this book, and Tuomas Rasimus for indexing it. We would also like to thank Markus Kirchner, Tobias Stäbler; Constanze Braun, and Dominika Zgolik at Mohr Siebeck, who all contributed to making the production and publication process smooth and free of unnecessary frustration. Thanks also to managing editor Jan Dochhorn and the rest of the editorial board of the Parabiblica series, Felix Albrecht, Christfried Böttrich, Nils Arne Pedersen, Jacques van Ruiten, and Tobias Thum.

This book would not have turned out the way it did without the support of the rest of the members of the APOCRYPHA project and the Coptic Texts and Manuscripts research group at the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo, including Lloyd Abercrombie (who also helped with copy-editing), Joanna Hypszer, Sigurd Hanserud, Laura Slaughter, Knut Waagan, Vemund Blomkvist, Håkon Fiane Teigen, and Ivan Miroshnikov. The two deans of the Faculty of Theology, University of Oslo, in this period, Aud Tønnessen and Anders Runesson, as well as the faculty director Tone Vold-Sarnes, deserve many thanks for their constant support of the project, as do senior research adviser Ingunn Gjørva and economic

[1] The APOCRYPHA project received funding through an ERC Consolidator Grant awarded to Hugo Lundhaug (grant agreement no. 865971) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program. All the editors have been members of the project team (Lundhaug as PI; Bélanger Sarrazin, Cook, and Toft as postdocs; and Graz as PhD student).

adviser Renate Salomonsen, who have both been incredibly helpful throughout. The rest of our wonderful colleagues at the faculty also deserve thanks. Their friendly collegiality have contributed a great deal to making the Faculty of Theology the perfect place to carry out a project like this.

All the project-external participants of the workshops and final symposium of the APOCRYPHA project also inspired this work, including Diliana Atanassova, Christian H. Bull, Tony Burke, Dylan Burns, Paola Buzi, Slavomír Čéplö, Jan Dochhorn, Korshi Dosoo, Stephen Emmel, René Falkenberg, Kimberley Fowler, Briana Grenert, Emmanouela Grypeou, Stephanie Hallinger, Lance Jenott, Junia Kattrup, Frederic Krueger, Jos van Lent, Liv Ingeborg Lied, Julia Lindenlaub, Mari Mamyan, Christoph Markschies, Ágnes Tothne Mihálykó, Ivan Miroshnikov, Sarah Parkhouse, Tuomas Rasimus, Gesa Schenke, Petter Spjut, Eugen Stafie, Alin Suciu, Håkon Fiane Teigen, Alexandros Tsakos, Paula Tutty, Jacques van der Vliet, Vincent Walter, Jacquline Wormstädt, and Ewa Zakrzewska. Similarly, we would also like to thank the TiNT project under the leadership of Garrick Allen and the Beyond Canon_ project under the leadership of Tobias Nicklas for fruitful meetings and collaboration.

It has become abundantly clear throughout the APOCRYPHA-project that the production and use of apocrypha was not a marginal phenomenon in Egyptian Christianity in the late antique and early Islamic periods. Indeed, it was practically ubiquitous throughout the entire period of Coptic literary production. It is our hope that the present volume will be an inspiration for many others to conduct new and groundbreaking research on this fascinating material.

Oslo, March 2026

Hugo Lundhaug
Roxanne Bélanger Sarrazin
Samuel Peter Cook
Lasse Løvlund Toft
Florian Graz

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Abbreviations

ACC	Alcuin Club Collections
ACO	Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum
AELAC	L'Association pour l'étude de la littérature apocryphe chrétienne
Aeth	*Aethiopica*
AJEC	Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
AJSL	*American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature*
AKG	Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte
AM	Apocryphal Manuscript (unique identifier from the APOCRYPHA database)
AnBoll	*Analecta Bollandiana*
AnOx.S	Anecdota Oxoniensia, Semitic Series
ANS	Ancient Narrative Supplement
ANTF	Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung
AOL	*Archives de l'Orient latin*
APB	*Acta Patristica et Byzantina*
APF.B	Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete, Beiheft
ARG	*Archiv für Religionsgeschichte*
ASKÄ	Arbeiten zum spätantiken und koptischen Ägypten
ASEs	*Annali di storia dell'esegesi*
AT	Apocryphal Text (unique identifier from the APOCRYPHA database)
ATT	Ancient Texts in Translation
Aug	*Augustinianum*
AW	Apocryphal Work (unique identifier from the APOCRYPHA database)
BASP	*Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists*
BASSP	*Bulletin de l'Académie impériale des sciences de St.-Pétersbourg*
BBA	Berliner byzantinische Arbeiten
BBI	Bullentin of the Byzantine Institute
BBS	*Behavioral and Brain Sciences*
BCLC	Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture
BCNH.C	Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section "Concordances"
BCNH.É	Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section "Études"
BCNH.T	Bibliothèque copte de Nag Hammadi, Section "Textes"
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BibAnC	Bible in Ancient Christianity
BibIntS	Biblical Interpretation Series
Biblio	Bibliologia
BIFAO	*Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*
BIG	Bibliothèque de l'information grammaticale

BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*
BkP	Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie
BLCO	Brepols Library of Christian Sources. Patristic and Medieval Texts with English Translations
BOO	Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident
BPC	Bohairic Patristic Catena
BSAC	*Bulletin de la Société d'archéologie copte*
BSOR	*Bulletin for the Study of Religion*
BT	Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana
BW	Bible and Women
ByzZ	*Byzantinische Zeitschrift*
CAe	Clavis Aethiopica
CahOr	Cahiers d'orientalisme
CAIEF	*Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études française*
Camb. Class. J.	*Cambridge Classical Journal*
CANT	Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti
CAS	Complex Adaptive System
CBCo	Cahiers de la Bibliothèque Copte
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
cc	Clavis Coptica (unique work identifier from the CMCL and PAThs databases)
CChr	Corpus Christianorum
CChr.A	Corpus Christianorum: Series apocryphorum
CCL	California Classical Library
CCM	*Cahiers de civilisation médiévale*
CCO	*Collectanea Christiana Orientalia*
CCSG	Corpus Christianorum: Series graeca
CEFR	Collection de l'École française de Rome
CEPM	Cambridge Elements: Elements in the Philosophy of Mind
CFMAM	Corpus Fontium Manichaeorum. Analecta Manichaica
CH	*Church History*
ChrEg	*Chronique d'Egypte*
CistSS	Cistercian Studies Series
CIT	*Current Issues in Tourism*
CLA	Christianity in Late Antiquity
CLM	Coptic Literary Manuscript (unique manuscript identifier from the PAThs database)
CMCL	Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari
CNA	Content Network Analysis
CoptR	*The Coptic Rock: A Journal of Coptic Studies*
CP	Clavis Pansophiae. Eine Bibliothek der Universalwissenschaften in Renaissance und Barock
CPG	Clavis Patrum Graecorum
CREJ	Collection de la Revue des études juives
CRMH	*Cahiers de rechérches médiévales et humanistes*
CS	Cistercian Studies
CSCO	Corpus scriptorum Christianorum orientalium

CSCO.C	Corpus scriptorum Christianorum orientalium, Scriptores Coptici
CSCO.S	Corpus scriptorum Christianorum orientalium, Scriptores Syri
CSCO.Sub	Corpus scriptorum Christianorum orientalium, Subsidia
CSM	Culture et société médiévales
CSML	Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature
CSR	*Cognitive Systems Research*
CUASEC	Catholic University of America Studies in Early Christianity
DH	Digital Humanities
DOP	Dakhleh Oasis Project
DOP	*Dumbarton Oaks Papers*
DRAH	Digital Research in the Arts and Humanities
DTT	*Dansk teologisk tidsskrift*
EALT	Empirical Approaches to Language Typology
Early Am. Lit.	*Early American Literature*
EC	*Early Christianity*
ECCA	e-clavis: Christian Apocrypha
ECCA	Early Christianity in the Context of Antiquity
ECS	Eastern Christian Studies
EDSS	*Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. Edited by Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000
ER	Études et recherches
ERC	European Research Council
ETR	*Études théologiques et religieuses*
EvT	*Evangelische Theologie*
FC	The Fathers of the Church. A New Translation.
FiKl	Filologia Klasyczna
Flor	*Florilegium*
FoN	Frontiers of Narrative
FR-BN	France, Bibliothèque nationale
FrontPsy	*Frontiers in Psychology*
GB-BL	Great Britain, British Library
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
GCSNF	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte. Neue Folge
GECS	Gorgias Eastern Christian Studies
GMis	*Göttinger Miszellen*
GRBS	*Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*
Greg	*Gregorianum*
HagLog	Hagiologia: Études sur la Sainteté en Occident
HCMR	History of Christian-Muslim Relations
Hen	*Henoch*
HNR	Historical Network Research
HSem	Horae semiticae
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
Hyp	Hypomnemata
IP	Instrumenta Patristica

JAOC	Judaïsme ancien et origines du christianisme
JCH	*Journal of Cognitive Historiography*
JCoptS	*Journal of Coptic Studies*
JCSSS	*Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies*
JCT	Jewish and Christian Texts
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JECS	*Journal of Early Christian Studies*
JHNR	*Journal of Historical Network Research*
JHSex	*Journal of the History of Sexuality*
JJP	*Journal of Juristic Papyrology*
JJPSup	Supplements to the Journal of Juristic Papyrology
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods*
JSJSup	Journal for the Study of Judaism Supplement Series
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JSRC	Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture
JTF	Jerusalemer Theologisches Forum
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
JudAnc	*Judaïsme Ancien*
KR	*Kentucky Review*
KoptS	Koptische Studien
Lang	*Language*
LangSci	*Language Sciences*
LASM	Lingua Aegyptia Studia Monographica
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LC.S	Letteratura Copta, Serie Studi
LDAB	Leiden Database of Ancient Books
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LWQS	Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen
M&S	*Music & Science*
ManBib	Manuscripta Biblica
ME	*Medieval Encounters: Jewish, Christian and Muslim Culture in Confluence and Dialogue*
MedPsy	*Media Psychology*
MIFAO	Mémoires Publiés par les Membres de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale du Caire
MLST	Mittellateinische Studien und Texte
Mn	Mnemosyne
MnS	Mnemosyne Supplement
MRW	*Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*
MSt	Millennium-Studien zu Kultur und Geschichte des ersten Jahrtausends n. Chr.
Mus	*Le Muséon: Revue d'Études Orientales*
Narr	Narratio
NarrInq	*Narrative Inquiry*

NAPSPatMS	North American Patristic Society. Patristic Monograph Series
NASSCAL	North American Society for the Study of Christian Apocryphal Literature
NASSR	New Approaches to the Scientific Study of Religion
NEDTT	*Nederlands theologisch tijdschrift*
NEMBN	*Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque nationale et autres bibliothèques*
NGWG.PH	*Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse*
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codex
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
NHS	Nag Hammadi Studies
NkZ	*Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift*
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NTOA	Novum Testamentum et Orbis Antiquus
NuDo	Nubia: Dongola
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
OCP	*Orientalia christiana periodica*
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLP	*Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica*
Or	*Orientalia*
OrBC	Orientalia Biblica et Christiana
OrChr	*Oriens Christianus*
OrChrAn	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
OrChrP	*Orientalia Christiana Periodica*
OrNov	*Orientalia. Nova Series*
OrSuec	*Orientalia Suecana*
ORA	Orientalische Religionen in der Antike
PAe	Probleme der Ägyptologie
PAGO	Palgrave Gothic Series
PAMMS	Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean Monograph Series
PAMSup	Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean Supplement Series
ParOr	*Parole de l'Orient*
PAST	PAST – Percorsi, Strumenti e Temi di Archeologia
PBib	Parabiblica
PCAC	Patrimonio Culturale Arabo Cristiano
PCM	Papyri Copticae Magicae
PCS	*Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*
PFLUS	Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de Strasbourg
PG	Patrologia graeca (Migne)
PHR	*Public Health Reports*
PISSCAL	Proceedings of the International Summer School on Christian Apocryhal Literature
PLO	Porta Linguarum Orientalium
PLO.NS	Porta Linguarum Orientalium. Neue Serie

PMNIA	Papers and Monographs from the Norwegian Institute at Athens
PO	Patrologia Orientalis
POC	Proche-Orient chrétien
PT	*Poetics Today*
QR	*Quarterly Review*
QVO	*Quaderni de Vicino Oriente*
RAC	*Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*
RB	*Revue biblique*
RdL	La république des lettres
RE	Paulys *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*
REA	*Revue des études anciennes*
REg	*Revue égyptologique*
RevGP	*Review of General Psychology*
Revis	Revisionen: Grundbegriffe der Literaturtheorie
RGRW	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
RhMNF	*Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Neue Folge*
RHPR	*Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*
RLC	Routledge Literature Companions
ROC	*Revue de l'Orient Chrétien*
RQ	*Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und für Kirchengeschichte*
RQum	*Revue du Qumrân*
RRALMSF	*Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*
RRE	*Religion in the Roman Empire*
RSECW	Routledge Studies in the Early Christian World
RSEt	*Rassegna di studi etiopici*
RTL	*Revue théologique de Louvain*
SA	Studia anselmiana
SAC	Studies in Antiquity and Christianity
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBLSCS	Society of Biblical Literature Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SCL	Sather Classical Lectures
SDHH	Studies in Digital History and Hermeneutics
SEAug	Studia Ephemeridis Augustinianum
SESI.II	Studies in Emotion and Social Interaction: Second Series
SESJ	Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society
SGRR	Studies in Greek and Roman Religion
SHR	Studies in the History of Religions (Supplements to Numen)
SHAR	Studies in the History and Anthropology of Religion
SHG	Subsidia hagiographica
SNTIW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World

SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SOC.C	*Studia Orientalia Christiana. Collectanea*
Spec	*Speculum*
SpicFri	Spicilegium Friburgense
SPPK	Studien zur Palaeographie und Papyruskunde
SQL	Structured Query Language
SSCC	Sussex Studies in Culture and Communication
ST	*Studia Theologica*
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
StAnC	Studi di antichità cristiana
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
StJS	Studia Judaeoslavica
StMusEg	Studi del Museo Egizio
StPatr	*Studia Patristica*
StPB	Studia post-biblica
STT	Studia Traditionis Theologiae
StT	Studi e Testi
StTrT	Studia Traditionis Theologiae
STusc	Sammlung Tusculum
SuAr	*Sudhoffs Archiv*
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SyBU	Symbolae Biblicae Upsaliensis, Supplementhäften till Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok
TCH	Transformation of the Classical Heritage
TDSA	Testi e documenti per lo studio dell'antichità
TDSA.C	Testi e documenti per lo studio dell'antichità, serie copta
TEB	Traité d'études byzantines
TECC	Textos y Estudios "Cardenal Cisneros" de la Biblia Políglota Matritense
TENTS	Texts and Editions for New Testament Study
ThH	Théologie historique
ThInq	Theological Inquiries
ThJb	*Theologische Jahrbücher*
TIN	Theory and Interpretation of Narrative
TLG	Thesaurus Linguae Graecae
TLL	*Travaux de linguistique et de littérature*
TLZ	*Theologische Literaturzeitung*
TM	Trismegistos
Tr	*Traditio*
TrM	Transmedia: Participatory Culture and Media Convergence
TRSR	Testi e ricerche di scienze religiose
TS	Texts and Studies
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum
TTH	Translated Texts for Historians
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
TWC	*Transformative Works and Cultures*
UCS	Understanding Complex Systems

VA-V	Vatican City, Vatican Library
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*
VCSup	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae
VHPS.NF	Veröffentlichungen aus der Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung Neue Folge
VikCol	Viking Collection
WBMLU	Wissenschaftliche Beiträge der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg
WGRW	Writings from the Greco-Roman World
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 1. Reihe
$WUNT^2$	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe
ZDP	*Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie*
ZNW	*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

A New Approach to Coptic Apocrypha: Categories, Methods, and Achievements of the APOCRYPHA Research Project*

Hugo Lundhaug, Roxanne Bélanger Sarrazin, Samuel Peter Cook, Lasse Løvlund Toft, and Florian Graz

The present volume is a result of work carried out by the ERC-funded research project *Storyworlds in Transition: Coptic Apocrypha in Changing Contexts in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods* (APOCRYPHA) at the University of Oslo. The project has studied the production, use, and transmission of apocryphal literature in Coptic, taking into account the entire period in which this was a living literary language, with a focus on those texts for which we have material evidence. The chronological span has thus been from the fourth to the fourteenth century – and in some cases beyond. This chapter will describe the central concepts, methods, and topics of the APOCRYPHA project, as well as some of its main results.

1. Conceptualizing Apocrypha

What do we study when we study apocrypha? Much ink has been spilled arguing over the correct understanding of the category itself, from the relationship between the original meaning and use of the Greek term ἀπόκρυφον in late antiquity and the proper use of the term in scholarship, to the supposed essence of apocrypha as a category of literature. We agree with Tobias Nicklas that "Sicherlich ist eine für alle Zeiten gültige Definition des Begriffs christlicher Apokryphen kaum möglich."[1] Consequently, it has not been the goal of the APOCRYPHA project to come up with an all-purpose definition. Yet, since no previously formulated definition was deemed completely fit for our purposes, we have come up with our own working definition of apocrypha to suit the needs of the specific

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[1] Tobias Nicklas, "Semiotik – Intertextualität – Apokryphität: Eine Annäherung an den Begriff 'Christlicher Apokryphen'," *Apocrypha* 17 (2006): 55.

research topics and questions of this particular project. As Christoph Markschies has rightly pointed out, "Any and all attempts at a definition are based on conventions and pragmatic compromises and therefore must be tested in scholarly practice."[2] Our definition is grounded in needs dictated by our research questions and has been tested in our analyses.

While there has been much attention in scholarship to the relationship between individual apocryphal texts and the biblical canon, and the history of its canonization, less attention has been paid to how the apocrypha functioned *together with* the canonical biblical texts, and the nature of the *creative processes* leading to the elaboration of the stories and the world evoked by the biblical texts. In order to catch the gist of the processes and functions of both the production and reception of apocrypha, the APOCRYPHA project has therefore come up with a deliberately simple and broad working definition of apocrypha as *texts and traditions that elaborate or expand upon characters or events of the biblical storyworld*. This definition is based on a number of deliberate methodological choices that will be outlined below.

The basic meaning of the Greek term "apocryphon" (ἀπόκρυφον) as something that is hidden or secret, is not a particularly useful starting point for our purposes, since we are not using the category in this narrow sense to single out specifically "secret books." This does not mean, of course, that the notion of secret books or the dissemination of secret knowledge is not important in many of the works we define as apocrypha,[3] but already in early Christian discourse the term soon took on the expanded, and at the same time rather different, meaning of a "noncanonical," rather than "secret," literary work, thus coming to refer to unauthorized and even heretical pseudo-biblical books in general. However, while definitions like the Encyclopedia Britannica's "any writings of dubious authority" certainly have roots in ancient usage, following condemnations of apocrypha by churchmen such as Athanasius in the fourth century,[4] it does not capture the most salient aspects of the phenomenon as it has been approached in the APOCRYPHA project. It is also misleading with regard to Coptic apocrypha, since the majority of these works seem likely to have been treated as authoritative by at least some Egyptian Christians at some point in time, and since authority itself is a question of reception that could vary significantly over time and from place to place, making it unusable as a criterion of selection.

[2] Christoph Markschies, "Foreword," in *Forbidden Texts on the Western Frontier: The Christian Apocrypha in North American Perspectives: Proceedings from the 2013 York University Christian Apocrypha Symposium* (ed. Tony Burke; Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015), xiv.

[3] See, e.g., the discussion in Hugo Lundhaug, "The Dissemination of Religious Knowledge Through Apocrypha in Egyptian Monasteries," in *The Use and Dissemination of Religious Knowledge in Antiquity* (ed. Catherine Hezser and Diana V. Edelman; Sheffield: Equinox, 2021), 213–18.

[4] On Athanasius' 39th *Festal Letter* and its treatment of apocrypha, see, e.g., Alberto Camplani, *Atanasio di Alessandria: Lettere Festali* (Milan: Paoline, 2003); David Brakke, "Canon Formation and Social Conflict in Fourth-Century Egypt: Athanasius of Alexandria's Thirty-Ninth *Festal Letter*," *HTR* 87.4 (1994): 395–419; Brakke, "A New Fragment of Athanasius' Thirty-Ninth *Festal Letter*: Heresy, Apocrypha, and the Canon," *HTR* 103.1 (2010): 47–66; Nils Arne Pedersen and Lasse Løvlund Toft, "Athanasios af Alexandrias *39. Påskebrev* fra påsken 367: Introduktion og oversættelse til dansk," *DTT* 83 (2020): 120–52.

We were thus in need of a definition that is not reliant on any value-judgement regarding the contents of this material. Wilhelm Schneemelcher's influential definition of New Testament apocrypha as "Schriften, die in irgendeiner Weise, sei es ihrer Form oder ihrem Inhalt nach, mit den Schriften des Neuen Testaments in Beziehung stehen,"[5] captures the relationship of the apocrypha with the New Testament biblical canon without any judgement regarding the value of their contents. However, the term "New Testament apocrypha" not only gives the New Testament a privileged position relative to the Old Testament, which in recent scholarship has rightly been challenged (leading to its substitution by the alternative term "Christian Apocrypha"),[6] but it may also suggest a closer textual or historical affinity between the apocrypha and the canonical New Testament texts than is warranted.[7] Especially for the later period under scrutiny this may not necessarily be helpful when we wish to understand the functions of apocrypha in Egyptian Christian communities. Yet, a close relationship with the canonization of the New Testament is still often posited when defining the category. This is for instance the case with Tony Burke's definition of Christian Apocrypha:

> The term "Christian Apocrypha" designates non-biblical Christian literature that features tales of Jesus, his family and his immediate followers. They are similar in content and genre to texts included in the New Testament; the essential difference is that they were not selected for inclusion in the Bible, either because those who decided on the Bible's contents did not approve of them, or because they were composed after the time of this selection process.[8]

This definition usefully highlights the narrative aspects of the relationship between the apocrypha and the Bible: They are stories about biblical characters. As such, it provides a good description of the contents of many of the texts in our corpus, and a good starting-point for a definition, but the focus on canonical aspirations, typically the result of scholarly preoccupation with the earliest apocryphal works and traditions, has often led to a focus on the question why these texts were not "included in" the canon in the first place. The answer has usually been found in various perceived deficiencies of the apocrypha in

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[5] Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher, eds., *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung* (6th ed.; 2 vols.; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1990–1997), 1:41.

[6] See, e.g., the most recent iteration of the long-running German collection of *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, originally edited by Edgar Hennecke, and thereafter by Wilhelm Schneemelcher, which under the leadership of its most recent editors Christoph Markschies and Jens Schröter has changed its name to *Antike christliche Apokryphen*. See Christoph Markschies and Jens Schröter, *Antike christliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung. I. Band: Evangelien und Verwandtes* (2 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012). On the history of this German collection, see Christoph Markschies, "'Neutestamentliche Apokryphen': Bemerkungen zu Geschichte und Zukunft einer von Edgar Hennecke im Jahr 1904 begründeten Quellensammlung," *Apocrypha* 9 (1998): 97–132.

[7] Cf. Péter Tóth, "Way Out of the Tunnel? Three Hundred Years of Research on the Apocrypha: A Preliminary Approach," in *Retelling the Bible: Literary, Historical, and Social Contexts* (ed. Lucie Dolezalova and Tamas Visy; Bern: Peter Lang, 2011), 45: "According to the most common scholarly opinion the apocrypha are texts with the ambition of belonging to the biblical writings but without being included into the canon."

[8] Tony Burke, *Secret Scriptures Revealed: A New Introduction to the Christian Apocrypha* (London: SPCK, 2013), 6.

relation to the canonical texts, ranging from a perceived lack of orthodoxy, dubious historicity (including pseudepigraphy), a lack of popularity, or a late date of composition.

Moreover, while so-called New Testament Apocrypha have often been categorized and arranged along the lines of the specific genres of the New Testament, similarities in contents and genre with the canonical texts should not be exaggerated. As Stephen Shoemaker has pointed out, early Christian apocrypha "do not always (as is often maintained) correspond to the literary genres of the New Testament; nor are they even restricted to 'New Testament' themes."[9] However, as Shoemaker also notes, there has been a trend in scholarship in recent years "to remove the early Christian apocrypha from the shadow of the New Testament writings and to free them from the biblical concepts and categories that have heretofore dominated their study and interpretation."[10] Shoemaker refers to how apocrypha often tended to be gathered together by scholars in collections mirroring the Bible, being divided in accordance with the Christian Bible into Old and New Testament apocrypha, and grouped together following its genre-divisions into gospels, acts, letters, and apocalypses.[11] An unfortunate consequence of this has been a notion of the apocrypha as constituting some kind of counter-canon or shadow-bible in opposition to the "real" Bible.[12]

Due to a focus on the process of biblical, and especially New Testament, canonization there has also been a corresponding tendency among some scholars to limit the chronological scope of the category of apocrypha to those works that might conceivably have been available for inclusion in the canon, i.e., to the very earliest Christian centuries.[13] However, once we extend our chronological scope past the time of the canonization of the New Testament, and rather focus on elaboration of the biblical storyworld as a phenomenon in its own right, the canonical selection process, and canonical aspirations, become irrelevant as a criterion of definition.[14] Indeed, the APOCRYPHA project includes the

[9] Stephen J. Shoemaker, "Early Christian Apocryphal Literature," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (ed. Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 521.

[10] Shoemaker, "Early Christian Apocryphal Literature," 521.

[11] See, e.g., such collections of apocrypha as Edgar Hennecke and Wilhelm Schneemelcher, eds. *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung* (4th ed.; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1968–1971); Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament: Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses with Other Narratives and Fragments* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924); James Keith Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation based on M. R. James* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Tony Burke, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha: More Noncanonical Scriptures: Volume 3* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2023).

[12] See the discussion in Els Rose, *Ritual Memory: The Apocryphal Acts and Liturgical Commemoration in the Early Medieval West (c. 500–1215)* (MLST 40; Leiden: Brill, 2009), 30–35, esp. 31.

[13] Edgar Hennecke, for instance, in the first edition of his *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*, chose to treat only literature prior to Origen as apocrypha (Edgar Hennecke, ed., *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung und mit Einleitungen* [Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1904], 5).

[14] Indeed, as Tobias Nicklas, "The 'Beyond Canon' Project: Questions, Topics, and Results," in *The Canon and Beyond: Collected Essays on the History and Hermeneutics of Biblical and Parabiblical Traditions* (WUNT 525; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2024), 1, rightly notes, "Even after the emergence

entire period in which Coptic was in use as a living literary language, which extends far beyond the time of the closure of the Christian biblical canon.[15]

While we could thus have decided to scrap the term "apocrypha" entirely, as has been suggested by some,[16] we instead chose to keep the term while defining the phenomenon in a broader and more generally applicable way, expanding the category to include a wider selection of literary works.[17] We thus came to a similar solution as the AELAC-group of apocrypha scholars, represented by, among others, Éric Junod, who in an influential article defined Christian apocrypha as

> textes anonymes ou pseudépigraphes d'origine chrétienne qui entretiennent un rapport avec les livres du Nouveau Testament et aussi de l'Ancien Testament parce qu'ils sont consacrés à des événements racontés ou évoqués dans ces livres ou parce qu'ils sont consacrés à des événements qui se situent dans le prolongement d'événements racontés ou évoqués dans ces livres; parce qu'ils sont centrés sur des personnages apparaissant dans ces livres, parce que leur genre littéraire s'apparente à ceux d'écrits bibliques.[18]

In line with Junod's definition, the APOCRYPHA project has thus followed the lead of those who do not place any chronological or generic limits on the definition of apocrypha

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and the completion of the canon, especially the New Testament canon, neither the production nor the use of parabiblical – or apocryphal – traditions come to an end. On the contrary, it seems to explode."

[15] Cf. the discussion in Rose, *Ritual Memory*, 35–42, for different views on the chronological cut-off time for the category of apocrypha.

[16] See, e.g. Tóth, "Way Out of the Tunnel"; Nicklas, "The 'Beyond Canon' Project"; Jan Dochhorn, "Überlegungen zu der neuen Reihe 'Parabiblica'," in *Editionen und Studien zum* Testamentum Salomonis (ed. Felix Albrecht; PBib 1; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2023), 1–17, who all prefer the term "parabiblical" to "apocryphal."

[17] As Tony Burke, "Entering the Mainstream: Twenty-five Years of Research on the Christian Apocrypha," in *Rediscovering the Apocryphal Continent: New Perspectives on Early Christian and Late Antique Apocryphal Texts and Traditions* (ed. Pierluigi Piovanelli and Tony Burke; WUNT 349; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015), 19, states: "Among the significant developments of recent years are to be counted the broadening of criteria for the selection of texts in (Christian Apocrypha) collections." The APOCRYPHA project's approach can thus be seen as part of this trend.

[18] Éric Junod, "Apocryphes du NT ou apocryphes chrétiens anciens? Remarques sur la désignation d'un corpus et indications bibliographiques sur les instruments de travail récents," *ETR* 58 (1983): 412. Junod's definition has not only been followed in francophone scholarship. See, e.g., Christoph Markschies "Haupteinleitung," in *Antike christliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung. I. Band: Evangelien und Verwandtes* (ed. Christoph Markschies and Jens Schröter; 2 Vols. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 1:1–180, which formulates a definition that is in its essence much closer to that of Junod than to Hennecke and Schneemelcher: "'Apokryphen' sind jüdische und christliche Texte, die die Form kanonisch gewordener biblischer Schriften aufweisen oder Geschichten über Figuren kanonisch gewordener biblischer Schriften erzählen oder Worte solcher Figuren überliefern oder von einer biblischen Figur verfaßt sein wollen. Sie sind nicht kanonisch geworden, sollten dies aber teilweise auch gar nicht. Teilweise waren sie auch ein genuiner Ausdruck mehrheitskirchlichen religiösen Lebens und haben oft Theologie wie bildende Kunst tief beeinflußt" (ibid., 114). As Stephen J. Shoemaker, "Christian Apocrypha," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Biblical Interpretation* (ed. Paul M. Blowers and Peter W. Martens; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 285, remarks, "Among AELAC's most significant collective achievements is a redefinition of the contours of Christian apocryphal literature to encompass a corpus of texts much larger than previously imagined."

and who also do not use canonical aspirations as a criterion.[19] Furthermore, also in line with Junod, we make no distinction between apocrypha based on the Old or New Testaments. Indeed, with what we define as Coptic apocrypha such a distinction would be highly problematic, as these works more often than not combine Old and New Testament materials both through exegetical typology and in various other creative and often unexpected ways. Yet, while Junod was correct in stating that apocrypha are usually of unknown authorship,[20] the focus of the APOCRYPHA project's definition of apocrypha does not use authorship as a criterion. Our focus is on reception rather than authorship, and the original authorship of the apocrypha under scrutiny is irrelevant for the project's understanding of the function and development of apocryphal texts and traditions. Moreover, while pseudepigraphical author-attributions are certainly of interest in terms of their effects, this phenomenon is not a useful selection criterion.[21]

The APOCRYPHA project also follows the AELAC approach by regarding apocryphal works as important in themselves and not simply as a shadow or counter-canon. However, it is important to note that we do not treat the apocrypha as works existing entirely independently from the canon either. Our conceptualization of apocrypha takes as its starting point insights from cognitive narratology and media studies into how people process *multiple narratives set in a common storyworld*. We thus regard apocrypha as additional building blocks for the construction of the *biblical storyworld* – together with the canonical biblical texts. From one perspective, the apocrypha can thus be regarded as supplements to the Bible. However, in terms of their contribution to individual readers' understanding of the biblical storyworld as a whole, such supplements are not necessarily of less importance than the canonical texts themselves.

Following David Herman, we understand storyworlds as "worlds evoked by stories,"[22] comprising such elements as "configurations of participants, objects, and places and sequences of states, events, and actions."[23] These worlds are evoked in people's minds – the

[19] E.g., Junod, "Apocryphes du NT ou apocryphes chrétiens anciens"; Junod, "La littérature apocryphe chrétienne constitue-t-elle un objet d'études?" *REA* 93 (1991): 397–414; Junod, "Apocryphes du Nouveau Testament: Une appellation erronée et une collection artificielle. Discussion de la nouvelle définition proposée par W. Schneemelcher," *Apocrypha* 3 (1992): 17–46; Jean-Claude Picard, *Le continent apocryphe: Essai sur les littératures apocryphes juive et chrétienne* (IP 36; Turnhout: Brepols, 1999); Pierluigi Piovanelli, "What Is a Christian Apocryphal Text and How Does It Work? Some Observations on Apocryphal Hermeneutics," *NedTT* 59 (2005): 31–40; cf. also the discussion in Shoemaker, "Early Christian Apocryphal Literature," 531.

[20] Cf. also Rémi Gounelle, "Christian Apocryphal Literature: An Overview," in *The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles in Latin Christianity: Proceedings of the First Insternational Summer School on Christian Apocryphal Literature (ISCAL), Strasbourg, 24–27 June 2012* (ed. Els Rose; PISSCAL 1; Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 9.

[21] We are here in agreement with Shoemaker, who finds it unclear why pseudepigraphy or anonymous authorship should be a criterion ("Christian Apocrypha," 286). On the significance and functions of pseudepigraphical attribution of Coptic apocrypha, see Hugo Lundhaug, "Pseudepigraphy and Coptic Apocrypha: Authority, Authenticity, and Worldbuilding," *EC* 14.4 (2023): 512–28.

[22] David Herman, *Basic Elements of Narrative* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 106.

[23] David Herman, "Narrative Theory and the Cognitive Sciences," *NarrInq* 11.1 (2001): 28. As Marie-Laure Ryan, *A New Anatomy of Storyworlds: What is, What if, As if* (TIN; Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2022), 6, has recently noted, "Though storyworld has been used earlier by other crit-

construction and understanding of storyworlds involve mental simulation.[24] Of particular importance for our conceptualization of apocrypha, however, is how they can be regarded as *additional pieces of a larger system* made up of multiple texts, which all contribute to the construction of a common biblical storyworld. The biblical storyworld is thus a transnarrative (a.k.a. transfictional) world constructed on the basis of more than one narrative,[25] and the apocrypha are regarded as parts of the broader system of stories through which the biblical storyworld is created.[26] This understanding of the role of apocrypha in relation to the biblical storyworld is also compatible with Tobias Nicklas' definition of apocrypha as non-canonical texts that have the biblical canon (or other apocrypha) as their privileged hypotext.[27] In contrast to Nicklas, however, the APOCRYPHA-project's definition of apocrypha, which is formulated from the perspective of Cognitive narratology, emphasizes the *contributions* made by the apocrypha to the biblical storyworld *as a whole*. Our definition is connected to the concept of the biblical *storyworld* rather than to the biblical *canon*.

Our concept of apocrypha is thus very close to what Jan Dochhorn has recently formulated as the definition of "Parabiblica," in his introduction to the first volume in the Parabiblica series:

> Unter *Parabiblica* sollen hier Literaturwerke verstanden werden, die eine bereits vollständig oder mindestens überwiegend bestehende biblische Erzählwelt besiedeln, wie sie sich für uns in den je nach Kirche verschiedenen *Corpora* des Alten Testaments bzw. im Tenakh oder aber im Neuen Testament findet: Der Begriff setzt nicht notwendigerweise einen Kanon voraus, wohl aber eine autoritativ verstandene erzählerische Referenzenwelt.[28]

While it is not based explicitly on cognitive literary theory, Dochhorn's understanding of Parabiblica, just like our concept of apocrypha, is based broadly on the connection to the biblical storyworld, a connection that can sometimes be very close and in other cases rather

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ics, its current prominence is largely due to David Herman's attempt to define the concept and to situate it within a cognitive framework."

[24] On the mental simulation of the biblical storyworld, see the chapter by Lundhaug in the present volume as well as Lundhaug, "Total Devotion to the Storyworld: The Role of Apocrypha in Egyptian Monasteries," in *Technologies of Total Devotion: Emotionality, Narrativity, and Competition in Ancient Radical Religion* (ed. Jan N. Bremmer and Laura Feldt; SHAR; Leuven: Peeters), forthcoming.

[25] On transnarrativity/transfictionality, see, e.g., Richard Saint-Gelais, "Transfictionality," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory* (ed. David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan; London: Routledge, 2005), 612–13; Saint-Gelais, *Fictions transfuges: La transfictionalité et ses enjeux* (Paris: Seuil, 2011); Marie-Laure Ryan, "Transmedial Storytelling and Transfictionality," *PT* 34.3 (2013): 361–88. It follows from this that the biblical storyworld is obviously also transauthorial, i.e., based on the work of multiple authors. On the transauthorial nature of such imaginary worlds, see Mark J. P. Wolf, *Building Imaginary Worlds: The Theory and History of Subcreation* (New York: Routledge, 2012), chapter 7.

[26] On the biblical storyworld as a complex adaptive system, see the chapter by Lundhaug in the present volume.

[27] Nicklas, "Semiotik – Intertextualität – Apokryphität," esp. 74–75. The concept of hypotext used by Nicklas is based on Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky; Stages 8; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

[28] Dochhorn, "Überlegungen," 1.

loose.[29]And like our definition of apocrypha, Dochhorn's Parabiblica do not include canonical aspirations as a criterion, and also has no chronological boundaries. The main difference between our understanding of apocrypha and Dochhorn's description of Parabiblica, is thus the label itself. For most intents and purposes, our understanding of apocrypha align with Dochhorn's understanding of Parabiblica.[30]

Finally, while the focus of the APOCRYPHA project has been primarily on the textual representation of apocrypha in manuscripts, it should be noted that the narratives that are connected to, and give rise to, the biblical storyworld are not just represented by written texts in manuscripts, but also by other media such as pictorial representations, ritual enactment, and oral storytelling. The biblical storyworld was – and is – transmedial.[31]

2. A Digital Approach to Material Philology

In our understanding, Coptic apocrypha include all apocrypha preserved in the Coptic language, regardless of the various possible languages of original authorship. They constitute as such a relatively large corpus of works attested in a sizable number of manuscripts. The task of analyzing this corpus is thus of such magnitude that it would hardly have been possible to carry it out adequately without the use of a digital database as a major research tool. The APOCRYPHA project has therefore established a relational database, based on the PostgreSQL platform,[32] consisting of a number of interlinked tables containing the information necessary for the multifaceted work of the project. This is shown in figure 1, illustrating the intricacy of the database's infrastructure. In the following, we will describe the main types of information contained in the most important tables, as well as the principles and concepts behind them.

[29] See Dochhorn, "Überlegungen," 2.

[30] See Dochhorn, "Überlegungen," 1–17.

[31] See, e.g., Marta Boni, ed., *World Building: Transmedia, Fans, Industries* (TrM; Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2017). On the transmedia aspects of the biblical storyworld, see Lundhaug in the present volume. The insight that we need to take into account multiple media in the study of biblical and apocryphal traditions has recently been expressed also by Tobias Nicklas and the "Beyond Canon" project. See Nicklas, "The 'Beyond Canon' Project," 1. Rather than using the concept of "transmedia storyworlds," Nicklas prefers the term "entangled traditions," which he credits to Stephanie Hallinger, another member of the "Beyond Canon" project. Furthermore, the North American Society for the Study of Christian Apocryphal Literature (NASSCAL) website often includes art and iconographical witnesses in their entries for individual apocrypha and has separate virtual collections for "Manuscripta apocryphorum" and "Materiae apocryphorum" (see www.nasscal.com).

[32] https://www.postgresql.org/.

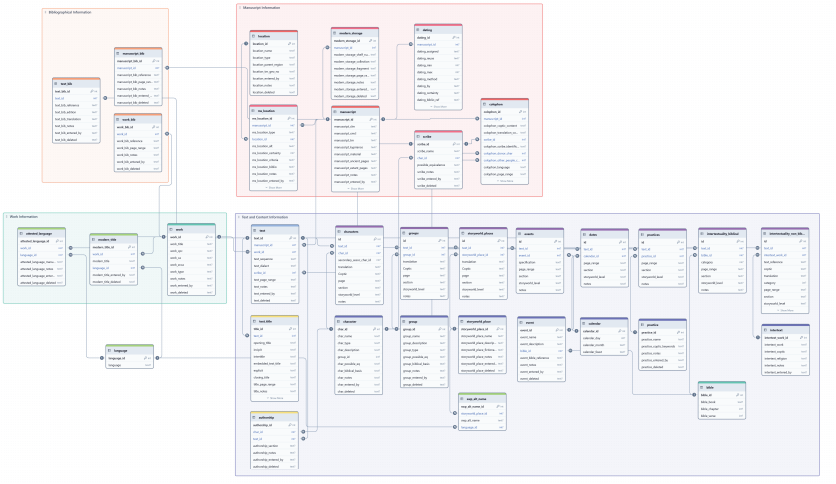


Figure 1. Data model of the APOCRYPHA database. Blue box: tables on texts and contents; red box: tables on manuscripts; green box: tables on works; orange box: bibliographical tables.

Importantly, the data model of the APOCRYPHA database is firmly based on a distinction between works, texts, and manuscripts, a tripartite division that is based on the foundational work of Paul Zumthor.[33] Due to the fluidity inherent in the textual transmission of literature in a manuscript culture,[34] Zumthor pointed out that the *work* as such only exists as an abstraction based on multiple, often quite different, concrete *texts* that instantiate it in materially attested *manuscripts*.[35] Moreover, following the principles of Material Philology (a.k.a. New Philology),[36] all apocryphal works in the APOCRYPHA database are

[33] Paul Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale* (Paris: Seuil, 1972); translated into English as *Toward a Medieval Poetics* (trans. Philip Bennett; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992).

[34] On textual fluidity see Hugo Lundhaug, "An Illusion of Textual Stability: Textual Fluidity, New Philology, and the Nag Hammadi Codices," in *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology* (ed. Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug; TUGAL 175; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2017), 20–54; Lundhaug, "The Fluid Transmission of Apocrypha in Egyptian Monasteries," in *Coptic Literature in Context (4th–13th cent.): Cultural Landscape, Literary Production and Manuscript Archaeology* (ed. Paola Buzi; PaST Percorsi di Archeologia 5; Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2020), 213–27; Stephen G. Nichols, "Mutable Stability, a Medieval Paradox," *Queeste* 23.2 (2016): 71–103. See also the chapters by Miroshnikov and Jenott in the present volume.

[35] Zumthor, *Essai de poétique médiévale*, 71–75. In our APOCRYPHA database, each work (AW=Apocryphal Work), text (AT=Apocrypal Text), and manuscript (AM=Apocryphal Manuscript) has its own unique identifier, and we will refer to these throughout this book. See the concordance-lists at the end of the book for cross-references to every work and manuscript referred to throughout the volume.

[36] See, e.g., Bernard Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante: Histoire critique de la philologie* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), translated into English as *In Praise of the Variant: A Critical History of Philology* (trans. Betsy Wing; Parallax: Re-Visions of Culture and Society; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Stephen G. Nichols, "The New Philology: Introduction: Philology in a Manuscript Culture,"

directly connected to the manuscripts in which they are attested and all information on their contents, both textual and paratextual, is gathered on the basis of each materially attested text (rather than on the basis of critical editions). The distinction between works, texts, and manuscripts is central to the APOCRYPHA database's data model. The central purpose of the database is to trace the *production and use* of apocrypha in the context of the preserved manuscripts.

2.1 Manuscripts and Materiality

The *Manuscripts* part of the database consists of a set of tables with information regarding the manuscripts that Coptic apocrypha are found in. This includes, firstly, general details regarding the physical appearance of the manuscripts, such as their material, size, number of pages, etc. Secondly, the tables contain metadata regarding the place of production, use, and discovery of each manuscript, as well as their dating and modern storage locations. To make the database interoperable, it also includes cross-references to the manuscripts' unique identifiers in other major catalogs and databases, namely the Corpus dei Manoscritti Copti Letterari (CMCL) database maintained by Tito Orlandi,[37] the Archaeological Atlas of Coptic Literature developed by Paola Buzi's PAThs project,[38] the Trismegistos Database,[39] and the Kyprianos Database of Ancient Ritual Texts.[40]

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[37] https://www.cmcl.it/.

[38] https://atlas.paths-erc.eu/.

[39] www.trismegistos.org.

[40] www.coptic-magic.phil.uni-wuerzburg.de.

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