

**PREPRINT – A.Y. Reed, “‘Jewish-Christian’ Apocrypha and the History of Jewish/Christian Relations,” forthcoming in *Christian Apocryphal Texts for the New Millennium: Achievements, Prospects, and Challenges*, ed. P. Piovanelli.**

Recent Anglo-American scholarship on early and late antique Christianity has been marked by concerted efforts to supplement, enrich, and interrogate the Eusebian account of church history that dominated past research.<sup>1</sup> Earlier work largely progressed from the framework laid out in Eusebius’ *Historia ecclesiastica*,<sup>2</sup> telling the history of Christianity’s first four centuries in terms of a series of authors retrospectively deemed “Church Fathers.” Having purportedly shed the influence of Judaism, authors such as Clement, Ignatius, Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian are said to have fought to maintain authentic apostolic traditions in the face of the manifold challenges posed by “heresy,” on the one hand, and “paganism,” on the other. Their story, moreover, was often treated as teleological: from the struggle with “heresy,” they set Christian theology on the path to Nicaea; from the struggle with “paganism,” their vision of Christianity emerged victor, rising from a persecuted sect to the triumphant religion of the Roman Empire.

This familiar “master narrative” was long reflected and reinforced by the dominant disciplinary contexts of research and teaching on early and late antique Christianity in North America. Until the 1970s, early and late antique Christianity was studied under the twin rubrics of Patristics and ecclesiastical history in relative isolation from the study of Second Temple and Rabbinic Judaism, late antique history and society, comparative religion, Classics, and even – to some degree – New Testament studies. Accordingly, past research on the Christian literature of this period was largely limited to the doctrines of Church Fathers writing in Greek and Latin. Attention focused, almost wholly, on developments within the Roman Empire.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> By no means do I mean to suggest that such corrective concerns are unique to Anglo-American scholarship! Rather, I am here concerned with a specific trajectory of research reflected in English-language studies since the mid-1960s; although obviously related to its continental counterparts in many meaningful ways, Anglo-American scholarship has progressed at a different pace and with different points of focus (note, e.g., the relative lack of attention granted to the creation of scholarly editions of Christian apocrypha compared to German- and French-language scholarship; the North American context, in particular, may be characterized by more suspicion towards text- and source-critical approaches, more concern for socio-cultural issues, and a more pointed interest in experimenting with sociological and anthropological models).

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius’ role in shaping the dominant scholarly understanding of early church history was noted already by Walter Bauer, whose alternative account was founded on a highly suspicious reading of *H.E.* as a selective and apologetic account with many purposive omissions; see e.g. *Rechtgläubigkeit und ketzerei im ältesten Christentum* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1934; rev. ed. by G. Strecker, 1964), 135-49. See also A. J. Droge, “The Apologetic Dimensions of the Ecclesiastical History” and G. F. Chesnut, “Eusebius, Augustine, Orosius, and the Late Patristic and Medieval Church Historians,” in *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* (ed. H. W. Attridge and G. Hata; Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1992), 492-509, 687-713.

<sup>3</sup> Eusebius, for instance, is largely blamed for the neglect of Syriac Christian literature by S. Brock, “Eusebius and Syriac Christianity,” in *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism*, 212, and A. H. Becker, “Beyond the Spatial and Temporal Limes: Questioning the ‘Parting of the Ways’ Outside the Roman Empire,” in *The Ways that Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (ed. A. H. Becker and A. Y. Reed; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 373-74.

The recent move towards more integrative, interdisciplinary, and expansive perspectives responds to a variety of factors. Precipitants include the discovery of the Nag Hammadi codices,<sup>4</sup> the discussion sparked by Walter Bauer's *Rechtgläubigkeit und ketzerei im ältesten Christentum*,<sup>5</sup> and the emergence of Late Antiquity as a vibrant subfield of History.<sup>6</sup> New perspectives may have also been facilitated by the diversification in the backgrounds and institutional settings of research and graduate training in early and late antique Christianity.<sup>7</sup> This, in turn, has encouraged a remarkable openness towards experimentation with methodologies from fields such as sociology, anthropology, literary criticism, gender studies, and cultural studies.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps above all, however, the shift away from Eusebian models may reflect the broader growth of interest in non-canonical materials – including newly discovered texts (e.g. Dead Sea Scrolls, Nag Hammadi literature) but also familiar texts too long dismissed as irrelevant to “mainstream” religious history (e.g. Old Testament pseudepigrapha, Christian apocrypha, Hekhalot corpus, Greco-Roman magical materials).

What happens when we tell the history of early and late antique Christianity apart from the traditional focus on Church Fathers, doctrinal concerns, and retrospectively normative meta-narratives? For the forging of new perspectives on

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<sup>4</sup> See J. D. Turner and A. MacGuire, eds., *The Nag Hammadi Library after Fifty Years* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) and review by K. Rudolph (trans. D. D. Walker) in *Journal of Religion* 79 (1999): 452-57.

<sup>5</sup> Although first published in 1934, the importance of the book was not widely recognized until the 1960s, with the publication of the second German edition (1964) and the discussion of Bauer's findings in H. Koester's seminal article “ΓΝΩΜΑΙ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΟΙ: The Origin and Nature of Diversification in the History of Early Christianity,” *HTR* 58 (1964) 279-318. In Anglo-American scholarship, full engagement with Bauer's work awaited its English translation (*Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* [trans. and ed. by R. A. Kraft and G. Kroedel with a team from the PSCO; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971]). On the reception of Bauer's work, see pp. 286-316, and D. J. Harrington, “The Reception of Walter Bauer's *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* during the Last Decade,” *HTR* 73 (1980): 289-98.

<sup>6</sup> In particular, the work of Peter Brown helped to spark the new interest in the “post-classical” era within historical scholarship; see esp. “The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity,” *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 80-101; *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1978). For recent reflections on the study of “Late Antiquity” in the last thirty years, see P. R. L. Brown, “The Study of Elites in Late Antiquity,” *Arethusa* 33.3 (2000): 321-346; J. J. O'Donnell, “Late Antiquity: Before and After,” *Transactions of the APA* 134.2 (2004): 203-13; and the articles collected in *J ECS* 6.3 (1998).

<sup>7</sup> The recovery of the “post-classical” period from scholarly neglect (see note above) has facilitated the study of late antique Christianity in departments of History and Classics. Since the 1960s, in North America in particular, the study of early and late antique Christianity in Divinity Schools and departments of Theology has also been increasingly supplemented by its study in departments of Religious Studies in secular universities. For the institutional history of Religious Studies in North America, see e.g. C. Welch, “Identity Crisis in the Study of Religion? A First Report from the ACLS Study,” *JAAR* 39 (1971): esp. 3-7; also D. G. Hart, “The Troubled Soul of the Academy: American Learning and the Problem of Religious Studies,” *Religion and American Culture* 2 (1992): 41-77.

<sup>8</sup> Recent discussions of the profits and pitfalls of such approaches include E. A. Castelli, “Gender, Theory, and the Rise of Christianity: A Response to Rodney Stark,” *J ECS* 6.2 (1998): 227-257; E. A. Clark, “Holy Women, Holy Words: Early Christian Women, Social History, and the ‘Linguistic Turn,’” *J ECS* 6.3 (1998): 413-30; eadem, *History, Theory, Text: Historians and the Linguistic Turn* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 2004). Note also the application of the theories of Pierre Bourdieu in N. Kelley's recent and important book *Knowledge and Religious Authority in the Pseudo-Clementines: Situating the Recognitions in Fourth-century Syria* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

the beliefs, practices, and experiences of early and late antique Christians (including the Church Fathers), the evidence of Christian apocrypha has been critical.<sup>9</sup> Apocryphal gospels and acts have been pivotal for efforts to reach a richer understanding of the continuities and discontinuities between apostolic and post-apostolic times.<sup>10</sup> Such sources have also contributed to fresh attempts to interrogate the elite, educated, literary, and male perspectives expressed by the Church Fathers.<sup>11</sup> Whereas doctrinal (esp. Christological) concerns dominate in Patristic literature and its traditional study, the study of Christian apocrypha has brought new evidence and attention to social realities. Apocryphal acts, for instance, have proven to be rich sources for research on gender, sex, marriage, female leadership, and images of women.<sup>12</sup> Likewise, apocryphal apocalypses and martyrologies have opened a window onto a wealth of eschatological, cosmological, demonological, astrological, “magical,” and mystical speculations that are largely absent from the writings of the Church Fathers (and often ignored when present).<sup>13</sup> Whereas traditional scholarship tended to frame the Christian encounter with Greco-Roman culture in terms of the dangers of persecution, the rejection of polytheism, and the cautious embrace of philosophy, research on Christian apocrypha has exposed the complex cultural interactions evident in the adoption and subversion of popular “pagan” literary tropes, including the erotic narrative, the romance of recognitions, and even the epic.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, inasmuch as work in Christian apocrypha often entails engagement with sources in Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Arabic, etc., scholars

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<sup>9</sup> I here use the term “Christian apocrypha” in a very broad sense to refer to the para-apostolic literature of early and late antique Christianity, as characterized by apostolic/sub-apostolic pseudepigraphy (e.g., Paul, James, Peter, Thomas, the twelve apostles, Clement of Rome) and/or the fluid use of literary forms also found in the NT literature (e.g., gospels, acts, apocalypses)—hence, this literature is doubly distinct from the theological treatises, apologies, dialogues, heresiologies, homilies, etc., penned by authors of the same time in their own names (e.g., Church Fathers).

<sup>10</sup> See esp. H. Koester, “Apocryphal and Canonical Gospels,” *HTR* 73 (1980): 105-130; F. Bovon, “Canonical and Apocryphal Acts of Apostles,” *JECS* 11.2 (2003): 165-94.

<sup>11</sup> The contrast is perhaps most poignantly drawn in D. R. MacDonald, *The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983).

<sup>12</sup> See e.g. V. Burrus, *Chastity as Autonomy: Women in the Stories of the Apocryphal Acts* (New York: Edwin Mellen, 1987); K. Cooper, *The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1996); A. S. Jacobs, “A Family Affair: Marriage, Class, and Ethics in the Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles,” *JECS* 7.1 (1999): 105-38.

<sup>13</sup> This wealth is evident, e.g., in the cross-section of materials treated by J. Bremmer, K. Copeland, and F. Graf in *Heavenly Realms and Earthly Realities in Late Antique Religions* (ed. R. S. Boustian and A. Y. Reed; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004).

<sup>14</sup> These connections were established already by R. Söder, *Die apokryphen Apostelgeschichten und die romanhafte Literatur der Antike* (Stuttgart, 1932). The significance of the redeployment of “pagan” novelistic tropes in apocryphal acts, however, has been an issue of renewed concern; see e.g., by Cooper, *Virgin and the Bride*; D. Konstan, “Acts of Love: A Narrative Pattern in the Apocryphal Acts,” *JECS* 6.1 (1998): 15-36; V. Burrus, “Mimicking Virgins: Colonial Ambivalence and the Ancient Romance,” *Arethusa* 38.1 (2005): 49-88; C. M. Thomas, *The Acts of Peter, Gospel Literature, and the Ancient Novel: Rewriting the Past* (New York/Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003). Epic echoes have been noted by D. R. MacDonald; see e.g. *Christianizing Homer: The Odyssey, Plato, and the Acts of Andrew* (New York/Oxford: Oxford UP, 1994). The plentiful literature on the Pseudo-Clementines as novel is surveyed and assessed in F. S. Jones, “Eros and Astrology in the *Periodoi Petrou*: The Sense of the Pseudo-Clementine Novel,” *Apocrypha* 12 (2001): 53-78.

in this subfield have also helped to correct the traditional privileging of Greek- and Latin-speaking cultural spheres, stressing the regional and cultural diversity of Christianity within and beyond the Roman Empire.

Nevertheless, a different situation still prevails with respect to the place of Judaism and “Jewish Christianity” in Christian identity. On this topic, research on Christian apocrypha is still largely pursued within the confines of the framework and concerns defined by Patristic heresiologies and historiographies. A handful of Christian apocrypha have been labeled “Jewish-Christian.”<sup>15</sup> Yet the meaning and significance of this identification are most often interpreted in terms of Eusebius’ account of the progressive decline of the Jerusalem church of James and Peter<sup>16</sup> and Epiphanius’ description of Ebionites and Nazarenes as marginalized “heresies” with little influence on the church at large.<sup>17</sup> Most analyses of “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha fit these sources into the framework of a traditional scholarly narrative about the first four centuries of Christian history that sees the process of Christianity’s triumph in/over the Roman Empire, as concurrent with the process of its separation from Judaism and the demise of “Jewish Christianity.”<sup>18</sup>

In my view, “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha may, in fact, have much more to tell us about the evolving place of Jews and Judaism in early and late antique Christian

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<sup>15</sup> Most frequently: the Pseudo-Clementines and their hypothetical sources. Notable too are the *Apocalypse of Peter*, *Protevangelium of James*, *Gospel of the Hebrews*, *Gospel of the Nazarenes*, and *Gospel of the Ebionites*, on which see below. One might also argue for the heuristic inclusion of the *Didascalia apostolorum* and/or *Apostolic Constitutions* on the grounds of their apostolic/sub-apostolic pseudepigraphy and their status as relatively overlooked sources in research on Patristics.

<sup>16</sup> So too A. Segal, “Jewish Christianity,” in *Eusebius, Judaism, and Christianity*, 326. Note esp. *H.E.* 3.5.3 on the so-called “flight to Pella”—a tradition whose historicity has been questioned by G. Lüdemann, “The Successors of Pre-70 Jerusalem Christianity: A Critical Evaluation of the Pella Tradition,” in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, vol. 1 (ed. E. P. Sanders; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 161–73; J. Verheyden, “The Flight of Christians to Pella,” *Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses* 66 (1990): 368–84; J. Munck, “Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic Times,” *NTS* 6 (1959): 103–4.

<sup>17</sup> Esp. *Pan.* 29.1.1-9, 30.1.1-33. The undue influence of Epiphanius on scholarship on the Pseudo-Clementines, for instance, is noted by F. S. Jones, *An Ancient Jewish Christian Source on the History of Christianity: Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions 1.27–71* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 35–37.

<sup>18</sup> For an examination of the ways in which these traditional scholarly narratives have shaped research on the Pseudo-Clementines, see my “Jewish Christianity after the Parting of the Ways: Approaches to Historiography and Self-Definition in the Pseudo-Clementines,” in *Ways that Never Parted*, 189-232. It is also interesting to note the lack of attention to other Christian apocrypha in recent research on “Jewish Christianity.” This tendency is evidenced in two otherwise spectacular volumes on the topic: *Le Judéo-Christianisme dans tous ses états* (ed. S. Mimouni in collaboration with F. S. Jones; Paris: Cerf, 2001), and *The Image of the Judeo-Christians in Ancient Jewish and Christian Literature* (ed. P. J. Tomson and D. Lambers-Petry; Tübingen: Mohr, 2003). Of the twenty-two articles in the former, only four deal in any concerted fashion with Christian apocrypha; three discuss the Pseudo-Clementines (Geoltrain, Gianotto, Pouderon, pp. 31-40, 231-56) while the other considers some apocrypha when discussing “Jewish Christianity” in Antioch (Jeffords, pp. 147-67). Of the sixteen in the latter volume, only two focus on apocrypha (Lambers-Petry, in the context of literature associate with James [pp. 32-52]; Bauckham in the context of a survey of our evidence for Ebionites [pp. 162-181]). Notably, despite an overall focus on the NT and Church Fathers, these volumes do succeed in bringing a broad range of sources to bear on “Jewish Christianity,” including archaeological evidence (Pixner in *Judéo-Christianisme*, 289-316; Safrai in *Image*, 245-66) and Rabbinic sources (Visotzky and Verhelst in *Judéo-Christianisme*, 335-49, 367-82; Bohak and Horbury in *Image*, 267-86).

identity—that is, if we choose to listen to what these sources tell us about the diversity of Christian approaches to Jews and Judaism, Torah-observance, ritual purity, and the chosenness of Israel without dismissing them as merely marginal and/or simply assimilating them to perspectives espoused or described in Patristic literature.<sup>19</sup> As in other areas of research on early and late antique Christianity (e.g., women, eschatology, ritual practice, oral tradition, literary production), research on Jewish/Christian relations may benefit from more attention to apocryphal literature. “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha, in particular, may help to expose the shortcomings and oversights of common scholarly accounts of early Jewish/Christian relations, both old and new, which have been created on the basis of evidence from the Church Fathers and classical Rabbinic literature.<sup>20</sup>

This essay will explore some of these potentialities by bringing recent research on specific “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha into dialogue with recent discussions of Jewish/Christian relations from the fields of Patristics and Rabbinics. I will ask what a history of Jewish/Christian relations might look like if written from the perspective of sources like the *Apocalypse of Peter*, *Protevangelium of James*, *Didascalia apostolorum*, Pseudo-Clementines, and *Book of the Cock*. My aim is not to impose any single, external definition of “Jewish Christianity” on all of these sources.<sup>21</sup> Rather, as a focus for considering their significance for Jewish/Christian relations, I will reflect upon the specific (and different) reasons that some scholars have found it helpful to label them “Jewish-Christian” as opposed to simply “Christian” or “Jewish.”<sup>22</sup> In the process, I hope to show how the vexed category of

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<sup>19</sup> In a recent article (“Rabbis, Jewish Christians and Other Late Antique Jews: Reflections on the Fate of Judaism(s) after 70 CE” in *The Changing Face of Judaism, Christianity and Other Greco-Roman Religions in Antiquity* [ed. I. Henderson and G. Oegama [Gutersloh: Gutersloher Verlagshaus, 2005], 323-46), I attempt to sketch the other side of this picture, asking what “Jewish Christian” literature may tell us about the Jewish history of the same period. See also L. Cirillo, “L’Apocalypse d’Elkhasai: Son rôle et son importance pour l’histoire du Judaïsme,” *Apocrypha* 1 (1990): 167-179.

<sup>20</sup> For an eloquent argument for the importance of integrating these perspectives into our accounts of “mainstream” religious history, see J. G. Gager, “Jews, Christians, and the Dangerous Ones in Between,” in *Interpretation in Religion* (ed. S. Biderman and B. Scharfstein; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 249–57.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion of attempts at definition, see J. Carleton Paget, “Jewish Christianity,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. 3, *The Early Roman Period* (ed. W. Horbury, W. D. Davies, and John Sturdy; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 733–42.

<sup>22</sup> In other words, I here apply the adjective “Jewish-Christian” to those texts and figures that do fit modern ideas about what constitutes “Jewish” identity and what constitutes “Christian” identity—nor common modern assumptions about the two as mutually exclusive. This definition, like the term “Jewish Christianity,” is a modern invention—albeit a pointedly self-conscious one, aimed at interrogating some of the other modern concepts and categories that we take for granted.

There are good arguments, of course, for limiting ourselves only to ancient categories (e.g., “Ebionite,” “Nazarene,” “Judaizer”). Yet, if we limit our understanding of the fluidity and hybridity of self-definition only to cases where an ancient witness sees and comments on someone else’s identity (e.g., deeming a group too “Jewish” to be “Christian” [Ignatius, *Magnesiensians* 10] or too “Jewish” and “Christian” to be either [Jerome, *Epistle* 112.13]), we would simply predetermine the conclusion that all fluidity and hybridity is heterodox, and our perspective on the diversity of biblically-based modes of self-definition would remain limited to the perspectives of specific “orthodox” observers (esp. those, like the heresiologists, who are most eager to categorize others). It is important, too, to recall that “Jewish” and “Christian” identities are themselves taking form in this period (D. Boyarin, *Borderlines: The Partition of Judeo-Christianity* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004]), such that different ancient

“Jewish Christianity,” freshly conceived, might serve as an heuristic focus for further exploration of the construction and negotiation of biblically-based religious identities in different geographical and cultural spheres in Late Antiquity.

### 1. “Jewish Christian” apocrypha from the second and third centuries

One of the most important recent applications of research on “Jewish Christianity” to the study of Christian apocrypha is Richard Bauckham’s work on the *Apocalypse of Peter*.<sup>23</sup> Bauckham points to the need for this and other apocrypha to be “rescued as significant evidence of the early development of Christianity.”<sup>24</sup> In his reading, the *Apocalypse of Peter* emerges as a “rare example of an extant work deriving from a Palestinian Jewish Christianity” of the second century.<sup>25</sup>

Bauckham highlights its concerns about false messiahs and its preoccupation with martyrdom.<sup>26</sup> Specifically, he points its intriguing allusions to many martyrs from the “house of Israel” (2:4, 7), among whom are believers and non-believers.<sup>27</sup> He reads these allusions with reference to the Bar Kokhba revolt (132-135 CE), both in light of the probable messianic claims of Shimon bar Kosiba and in light of his followers’ violence against those Jews who did not support the revolt.<sup>28</sup> Correlating our evidence for this situation with Justin Martyr’s claims that Christians were the victims of Jewish persecution during the revolt (*1 Apol.* 31.6), he suggests that the *Apocalypse of Peter* was penned as a response by ethnically Jewish Christ-believers.<sup>29</sup> In his view, the Bar Kokhba revolt posed a special challenge to Christ-

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observers hold different views (e.g., Epiphanius cites materials related to the Ps.-Clem. *Recognitions* 1 as part of his treatment of the Ebionites as “heretical,” but Rufinus sees fit to translate the *Recognitions*, even though he does not hesitate, e.g., to call Jerome as a Judaizer!). In light of these complexities, the search for more first-hand evidence may be all the more important; in my view, it warrants the application of an etic category like “Jewish Christianity” for heuristic aims (i.e., as opposed to essentialist or reductionist purposes). That there are some Jesus-followers in Late Antiquity who are being condemned by others for beliefs and worships perceived to be too close to Judaism seems to hint at the existence of a broader continuum of identities and perspectives than is usually allowed; although much of this continuum may be lost to us, it is worthwhile, in my view, culling our known sources for potentially relevant examples.

<sup>23</sup> R. Bauckham, “The *Apocalypse of Peter*: A Jewish Christian Apocalypse from the Time of Bar Kokhba,” *Apocrypha* 5 (1994): 7-111; idem, “Jews and Jewish Christians in the land of Israel at the time of the Bar Kochba war, with special reference to the *Apocalypse of Peter*,” in *Tolerance and Intolerance in Early Judaism and Christianity* (ed. G. N. Stanton and G. G. Strousma; Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 228-38.

<sup>24</sup> Bauckham, “Apocalypse of Peter,” 7.

<sup>25</sup> Bauckham, “Apocalypse of Peter,” 8, see also 24-25.

<sup>26</sup> E.g., *ApPet* 1:4-5, 2:7-12; 9:1-4; 16:5.

<sup>27</sup> R. Bauckham, “The Two Fig Tree Parables in the *Apocalypse of Peter*,” *JBL* 104.2 (1985): 279. If Bauckham is correct about its understanding of martyrdom as a shared experience by Jewish and Christian/“Jewish Christian” Bar Kokhba-resisters, the *Apocalypse of Peter* is an especially important addition to our evidence for the dialogue between Jewish and Christian narratives about martyrdom, speaking further to martyrology’s place as a shared discourse and competitive domain among Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity. See esp. G. Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life: Folklore and Midrash in Rabbinic Literature*, trans. B. Stein (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000) 114-125; Boyarin, *Dying for God*, 93-125; also Boustan, *From Martyr to Mystic*.

<sup>28</sup> Bauckham, “Apocalypse of Peter,” 26-43.

<sup>29</sup> Bauckham, “Apocalypse of Peter,” 37.

believing Jews; by virtue of their belief in Jesus as messiah, they numbered among those unwilling to accept bar Kosiba and, as a result, were viewed as traitors by those Jews who rallied to his cause of freeing Israel from Roman domination.

In support of the Jewish ethnicity of the author(s) of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, Bauckham also cites its hopes for the salvation of Israel and its use of Jewish apocalyptic traditions.<sup>30</sup> From this standpoint, he suggests, the *Apocalypse of Peter* is an important bridge between pre-/non-Christian Jewish apocalypses and non-Jewish Christian apocalypses. Emerging from a “Jewish-Christian” community that cultivated Jewish apocalyptic traditions as well as a belief in Jesus as messiah, this apocalypse helps to show some of the process by which Jewish apocalyptic traditions came to be adopted and transformed in Christian circles.<sup>31</sup>

James Davila has recently questioned Bauckham’s hypothesis on the basis of the relatively scant internal evidence for a Jewish identity.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, I do not share Bauckham’s confidence that the evidence supports an identification of the *Apocalypse of Peter* with Christians of Jewish ethnicity.<sup>33</sup> It is possible, for instance, that “the house of Israel” could be here conceived as including Jews as well as Gentiles who are – in their own eyes at least – counted within the bounds of the

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<sup>30</sup> Bauckham, “Two Fig Tree Parables,” esp. 282-83. Central to Bauckham’s reading are the versions of the parables of the budding fig tree and the barren fig tree in *Apocalypse of Peter* 2 [Ethiopic]. In the first parable, Christians are likened to shoots that sprout from Israel and bear fruit through their conversion and/or martyrdom; the latter suggests that the tree will be uprooted and replaced if it does not sprout—in this context, Bauckham argues, expresses hope for this sprouting. One could go even further, in fact, reading the *Apocalypse of Peter*’s redeployment of these parables as an assertion of special role of “Jewish Christians” in the salvation of Israel.

<sup>31</sup> Bauckham, “Apocalypse of Peter,” 8, 16-19.

<sup>32</sup> In his view, it seems significant that references to halakhic infractions are missing from the lists of sins damned; J. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or Other?* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 44. See also Davila’s impressive summary of our evidence for fluidity and hybridity of ancient identities; his summary makes clear the problems in assuming that our texts emerge from a religious landscape characterized only by those who are clearly Jewish, Christian, or “pagan” (pp. 23-63).

<sup>33</sup> Much of this element of his argument rests on a problematic reading of our evidence for the *birkat ha-minim*. Bauckham reads *ApPet*’s assertion of the place of Christians in the book of life as a response. To support this assertion, Bauckham depends heavily on the traditional reading of the *birkat ha-minim* in NT scholarship as a curse against “heretics” instituted in synagogues by second-century Rabbis seeking to “exclude Jewish Christians from the religious community of Israel” (“Apocalypse of Peter,” 90, see further 87-91). The emergence of the *birkat ha-minim* in the second century, however, is hardly certain; indeed, the interpretation on which Bauckham depends has recently been critiqued on many grounds—not least because of the problems with assuming that Rabbis held sway over synagogues and had such power to exclude, already in the mid-second century (cf. Lee Levine, *Ancient Synagogue: The First Thousand Years* [New Haven: Yale UP, 2000], 440-70). This reading depends on the assumption that the Talmudic attestations to this tradition (y. *Berakhot* 4:3; b. *Berakhot* 28b-29a) accurately reflect second-century realities and that this tradition is what Justin means when he writes of Jews cursing Christians in *Dial.* 16; 96 (cf. R. Kimelman, “Birkat Ha-Minim and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Prayer,” in *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, vol. 2, 226-44). Notably, Bauckham tries to nuance the traditional reading to acknowledge recent insights into the gradual establishment of Rabbinic power and influence over other Jews (“Apocalypse of Peter,” 88). Nevertheless, his argument hinges on some degree of Rabbinic dominance in the time of the Bar Kokhba revolt. His proposed connections, moreover, are often vague: he sees a reference to the *birkat ha-minim*, for instance, in the *Apocalypse of Peter*’s condemnation of “those who blasphemed the way of righteousness” (*ApPet* 7.2).

chosen nation by virtue of their Christ-devotion and/or by virtue of their sharing in the suffering of persecution.<sup>34</sup>

What is important, in my view, is not the ethnicity of the author(s) but the fact of the identification with Jewish identity and the understanding of Christ-devotion in continuity with Judaism.<sup>35</sup> Seen from this perspective, Bauckham's characterization of the Jewish apocalyptic matrix of the *Apocalypse of Peter* fits well with David Frankfurter's recent suggestions about *Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*, *Ascension of Isaiah*, *5 Ezra*, and *6 Ezra*. Frankfurter suggests that these texts may reflect the literary activities of "continuous communities" that absorbed elements of Christ-devotion as part of an evolving sectarian Jewish identity centered in prophetic, priestly, and scribal models.<sup>36</sup> Scholars have hotly debated whether pseudepigrapha like the *Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*, *Ascension of Isaiah*, *5 Ezra*, and *6 Ezra* are re-worked Christian versions of Second Temple Jewish texts or works of Christian authorship that draw on earlier Jewish traditions.<sup>37</sup> Following the work of R. A. Kraft and M. de Jonge,<sup>38</sup> Frankfurter suggests that such pseudepigrapha may "reflect a type of Christ-devotion that is Jewish enough in frame of reference... that calling it 'Christian' or 'Jewish' in a *mutually exclusive* sense will not suffice."<sup>39</sup>

With reference to the *Ascension of Isaiah*, *5 Ezra*, and *6 Ezra*, Frankfurter points to their interests in purity in particular. Although concerns with ritual purity are missing from the *Apocalypse of Peter*, it does share with these texts a sharp concern for sexual purity. The *Apocalypse of Peter* also shares with the *Testament of 12 Patriarchs* a common geographical origin (i.e. Roman Palestine) and a shared hope in the salvation of Israel as well as the close connection to the apocalyptic literature of Second Temple Judaism. Writing of the *Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*, *Ascension of Isaiah*, *5 Ezra*, and *6 Ezra* Frankfurter observes that "none of these texts rail against non-Christ-believing outsider-Jews but only against those who persecute them."<sup>40</sup> The same can be said of the *Apocalypse of Peter*.

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<sup>34</sup> Compare, e.g., Justin's expansion of the category of "Christian" to include pre-Christian figures who suffered for their faith (*1 Apol.* 46).

<sup>35</sup> E.g., describing Christians as sprouts on the tree of Israel.

<sup>36</sup> D. Frankfurter, "Beyond 'Jewish-Christianity': Continuing Religious Sub-Cultures of the Second and Third Centuries," in *Ways that Never Parted*, 134-35. See also M. de Jonge, "The Future of Israel in the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," *JSJ* 17 (1986): 196-211 and M. Himmelfarb, "The Parting of the Ways Reconsidered: Diversity in Judaism and Jewish Christian Relations in the Roman Empire: 'A Jewish Perspective'," *Interwoven Destinies: Jews and Christians Through the Ages* (ed. E.J. Fisher; New York: Paulist, 1993), 55-57, on *3 Baruch* and *5 Ezra*.

<sup>37</sup> See Davila, *Provenance*, for an incisive discussion of the methodological problems and pitfalls.

<sup>38</sup> See e.g. R. A. Kraft, "The Multifarious Jewish Heritage of Early Christianity," in *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith* (ed. J. Neusner; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 3.174-199; idem, "The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity," *Tracing the Threads: Studies in the Vitality of Jewish Pseudepigrapha* (ed. J. C. Reeves; SBLJL 6; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1994), 55-86; idem, "Setting the Stage and Framing Some Central Questions," *JSJ* 32 (2001), 371-95. M. de Jonge has summarized much of his work in this area in his recent *Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament as Part of Christian Literature: The Case of the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs and the Greek Life of Adam and Eve* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

<sup>39</sup> Frankfurter, "Beyond Jewish Christianity," 137.

<sup>40</sup> Frankfurter, "Beyond Jewish Christianity," 140

In short, even if we do not accept a direct and limited association between “Jewish Christianity” and Jewish ethnicity, we may be able to draw on the *Apocalypse of Peter* as supplementary evidence for “continuous communities” in second-century Palestine.<sup>41</sup> If the examples cited by Frankfurter show how some adopted an “allegiance to Christ... [as] a devotional orientation *within* a world of Torah observance and Jewish identity,”<sup>42</sup> the *Apocalypse of Peter* may provide an example of a combination of Christ-devotion and Jewish identity shaped by the experience of martyrdom, by beliefs in the Eschaton’s immanence, and by assumptions about the centrality of Israel in eschatological events.

When we characterize the Christian response to the Bar Kokhba revolt merely from Patristic evidence, this event emerges as a key moment in the evolution of Christian anti-Judaism. Justin Martyr, for instance, sees the failure of the revolt as a sign of God’s abandonment of Israel and as a punishment for the Jewish rejection of Jesus.<sup>43</sup> Writing in the wake of the revolt, Justin condemns Jews as a wicked people singled out by God for punishment and allied with demons;<sup>44</sup> he discusses those Jews who accepted Christ only in passing and treats them as an exception to the general rule of Christ’s abolition of Torah-observance.<sup>45</sup> By contrast, the author(s) of the *Apocalypse of Peter* acknowledge the shared Jewish and Christian experience of martyrdom. Here, Christ-belief and Jewish identity seem to be a natural connection, breached only by wicked persecutors misled by a false messiah.

In a 2004 article, Timothy Horner similarly seeks to establish the value of the *Protevangelium of James* for our understanding of the fluidity and interactions between biblically-based religious identities in the second century.<sup>46</sup> He suggests that traditional assumptions about the “Parting of the Ways” have foreclosed important lines of inquiry into this text’s possible connections with Judaism. On the basis of its relative lack of resonance with Second Temple Jewish traditions, the text has been deemed to lack significant Jewish features.<sup>47</sup> Drawing on a broader knowledge of early Judaism, rooted in recent research on the early Rabbinic movement, Horner highlights its intriguing intersections with traditions preserved in the Mishnah. He thus re-reads this source as “a document that uses Jewish imagery to address the concerns and criticisms that might have been important to people who understood Christianity within a predominantly Jewish matrix or those who were attempting to reinterpret the Jewish matrix in the light of Christian doctrine.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Frankfurter, “Beyond Jewish Christianity,” 132.

<sup>42</sup> Frankfurter, “Beyond Jewish Christianity,” 135.

<sup>43</sup> E.g., *Dial.* 25-26; 103; *I Apol.* 35; 38; 40.

<sup>44</sup> E.g., *Dial.* 11; 18-20; 23; 27; 43-46; 73; 92; 133.

<sup>45</sup> *Dial.* 46-47. See further J. Siker, *Disinheriting the Jews: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991), 163-84; J. Lieu, *Image and Reality: The Jews in the World of the Christians in the Second Century* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 177-82.

<sup>46</sup> T. Horner, “Jewish Aspects of the *Protevangelium of James*,” *J ECS* 12.3 (2004): 313-35; contrast M. Mach, “Are there Jewish Elements in the *Protoevangelium of Jacobi*?” *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 1986), 215-22.

<sup>47</sup> Horner, “Jewish Aspects,” 312-16.

<sup>48</sup> Horner, “Jewish Aspects,” 314. Horner avoids the term “Jewish-Christian,” noting that “as a provisional conclusion I would place *Prot. Jas.*’s initial author and audience within the milieu of Christian Judaism. This is a term that is loosely defined as those Christians who maintained that Jesus was the

Specifically, Horner situates the *Protevangelium of James*' concern to assert the purity and virginity of Mary with reference to Jewish critiques of traditions about Jesus' virgin birth.<sup>49</sup> He argues that Mary's purity and virginity are here defended in terms that are most comprehensible when read alongside the ample materials about female purity preserved in the Mishnah – which shares the *Protevangelium of James*' obsession with testing virginity as well as attesting a range of specific similar traditions.<sup>50</sup> Inasmuch as mishnaic traditions may help to explain otherwise unparalleled details in this text, he suggests that “*Prot. Jas.* would have been best understood – perhaps only fully understood – within a community that was familiar with concerns and images of contemporary Judaism.”<sup>51</sup>

Horner's article opens the way for further exploration of the text's resonance with early Rabbinic traditions. For instance, his assessment of the *Protevangelium of James* is confirmed by the dissertation research of Lily Vuong, who is examining the text's understanding of Mary and menstrual purity.<sup>52</sup> If this text does respond to Jewish concerns, then it may also shed light on the ultimate background of Rabbinic traditions about Jesus' birth in a shared discourse about purity, virginity, and the mother of the messiah. Church Fathers since Justin attest Jewish/Christian debates over the interpretation of Isa 7:14,<sup>53</sup> and the classical Rabbinic literature preserves traditions about Jesus as the illegitimate *ben niddah* Yeshu ben Pandera.<sup>54</sup> Yet the evidence of the *Protevangelium of James* may show how debates over the virgin birth may have been more complex than a matter of exegetical polemics. If the *Protevangelium of James* does indeed evince some “Jewish-Christian” engagement with proto-Rabbinic purity *halakha* in defense of Mary's virginity, then it may also help us to understand some of the broader background behind the surprising engagement with Christian ideas about Mary in later Jewish traditions about the mother of the false messiah.<sup>55</sup>

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prophetic Messiah but also saw no reason to reinterpret the Torah and its incumbent practices” (p. 333); he is wary of the term “Jewish-Christian” because of its polemical associations and its specific association with Ebionites, typically thought to reject the virgin birth (Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.* 1.26.2, 3.21.1, 5.1.3).

<sup>49</sup> E.g., Origen *Cels.* 1.32; *b. Sanhedrin* 67a. Horner, “Jewish Aspects,” 330.

<sup>50</sup> Horner, “Jewish Aspects,” 318-29.

<sup>51</sup> Horner, “Jewish Aspects,” 317.

<sup>52</sup> Lily Vuong, “Assessing the Virgin: Mary and Menstrual Purity in the *Protevangelium of James*,” McMaster University, in progress.

<sup>53</sup> E.g., Justin, *Dial.* 43.8; Origen, *Cels.*, 1.43.

<sup>54</sup> E.g., *b. Shabbat* 104b; *b. Sanhedrin* 67a.

<sup>55</sup> E.g., *y. Berakhot* 4.2; *Ekha Rabbah* 1.16. On these traditions see Hasan-Rokem, *Web of Life*, 152-60; M. Himmelfarb, “The Mother of the Messiah in the Talmud Yerushalmi and Sefer Zerubbabel,” in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Graeco-Roman Culture*, vol. 3 (ed. Peter Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 369-89; eadem, “Sefer Zerubbabel,” in *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature*, ed. D. Stern and M. J. Mirsky (New Haven: Yale UP, 1998), 67-90. On the broader place of Mary in Jewish/Christian interactions see also S. J. Shoemaker, “‘Let Us Go and Burn Her Body’: The Image of the Jews in the Early Dormition Traditions,” *Church History* 68.4 (1999): 775-823; P. Schäfer, *Mirror of His Beauty* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002), 209-16; idem, *Jesus in the Talmud* (Princeton: Princeton UP, forthcoming 2007).

With regard to the similarities between Rabbinic traditions about the birth of the messiah and his mother (esp. *Ekha Rabbah* 1.16) and NT infancy traditions (i.e., Matt 1-2; Luke 2), Rokem proposes that “These similarities, in details apparently lacking in any theological significance, suggest that these are

For our purposes, the *Protevangelium of James*' relative lack of engagement with Second Temple traditions is no less significant than its possible engagement with proto-Rabbinic Judaism. Texts like the *Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*, *Ascension of Isaiah*, *5 Ezra*, *6 Ezra*, and *Apocalypse of Peter* can be called "Jewish-Christian" in the sense of standing in a radical continuity with Second Temple Jewish traditions that the usual language of "adoption" and "appropriation" do not suffice to explain. Yet, if Horner is correct, the author(s) of the *Protevangelium of James* might accept and engage the halakhic discourse of nascent Rabbinic Judaism.

A similar engagement with early Rabbinic traditions can be found in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, a third-century Syrian work that could arguably be included in our category "Jewish Christian apocrypha," due to its apostolic pseudepigraphy. Charlotte Fonrobert has recently discussed the relevance of this text for forging a new understanding of "Jewish Christianity" that reflects the full complexity of "Jewish" as well as "Christian" identity formation.<sup>56</sup> Building on the insights of Marcel Simon, George Strecker, and others,<sup>57</sup> she reads the *Didascalia Apostolorum* as attesting two kinds of "Jewish Christianity." On the one hand, its authors use the narrative setting of the so-called Apostolic Council (Acts 15; *DA* 1; 24) to polemicize against those in their community who practice kashrut, menstrual purity, vegetarianism, asceticism, and regular ritual ablutions with water (*DA* 23-24).<sup>58</sup> It shows a pointed concern to counter adherence to the "second legislation" (*deuterosis*), a term which Fonrobert reads in terms of the emergent Oral Torah of early Rabbis. Those critiqued for such practices clearly include Christians of Jewish birth (*DA* 26) but do not seem to be limited to them.<sup>59</sup>

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neither polemics nor imitations but parallels typical of folk literature. Folk traditions were shared by those Jews who belonged to the majority and by others belonging to a minority group, who believed in Jesus as the Messiah" (*Web of Life*, 154). If Rokem is correct in reading these connections as reflections of a shared Jewish/Christian folklore in Syro-Palestine, then the *Protevangelium of James* may further enrich this picture.

<sup>56</sup> C. Fonrobert, "The *Didascalia Apostolorum*: A Mishnah for the Disciples of Jesus," *J ECS* 9 (2001): 483-509, esp. 484-87 on "Jewish Christianity." The *Didascalia* is also the focus of the sixth chapter of her book *Menstrual Purity: Rabbinic and Christian Reconstructions of Biblical Gender* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000), the rest of which focuses on Rabbinic *halakhot* about menstrual purity.

<sup>57</sup> M. Simon, *Verus Israel: A Study in the Relations between Christians and Jews in the Roman Empire (AD 135-425)* (trans. H. McKeating; London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1986), esp. 88-90, 94, 310-18, 324-25; G. Strecker, "Appendix 1: On the Problem of Jewish Christianity," in *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, 244-57.

<sup>58</sup> The occasion of the letter is that some are "observing holiness," "abstaining from flesh and from wine, and some from swine," and "keeping (something) of all the bonds which are in the second legislation" (*DA* 24); by means of the twelve apostles, the text encourages its readers to "keep from vain bonds; purifications, and sprinklings and baptisms, and distinction of meats" (*DA* 26). As a possible parallel for the practices not paralleled in biblical and Rabbinic *halakhot*, Fonrobert points to *t. Sotah* 15.11 (as paralleled and expanded in *b. Baba Batra* 60b), which counters Jews who refrained from meat and wine after the destruction of the Temple. See Fonrobert, "Didascalia," 491-502. For a different reading of the *Didascalia*'s heresiology, see C. Metheun, "Widows, Bishops, and the Struggle for Authority in the *Didascalia Apostolorum*," *J EH* 46 (1995): 204.

<sup>59</sup> Notably, Fonrobert resists the limitation of "Jewish Christianity" to ethnic Jewish converts to Christianity. She thus eschews scholarly attempts to distinguish between "Jewish Christians" and "Judaizing Christians" as the projection of modern concerns about ethnicity onto our ancient sources. Fonrobert, "Didascalia," 499-501; cf. Strecker, "On the Problem," 354.

On the other hand, Fonrobert highlights the authors' own knowledge about, and engagement with, third-century Jewish traditions. Discursive and hermeneutical parallels with traditions found in contemporaneous Rabbinic sources (esp. Mishnah, Tosefta) suggest that their own ideas about Christian identity have been significantly shaped with contacts with the Judaism of their time.<sup>60</sup> The enemies of the authors seem to see piety in terms of halakhic observance and thus mirror some of the most salient concerns of the nascent Rabbinic movement. But the authors themselves also share much with their Rabbinic contemporaries; not only do they stress orthopraxy over orthodoxy, but their concern for Scripture and authority seems to be articulated in a "discursive space" shared with Rabbinic midrash; to express their message, they use many of the same hermeneutical assumptions and techniques.

The different articulations of Christian/"Jewish-Christian" identities in the sources surveyed so far may also shed a new perspective on the most celebrated "Jewish-Christian apocrypha" from the second and third centuries, namely, the hypothetical sources of the Pseudo-Clementines.<sup>61</sup> Portions of *Recognitions* 1, for instance, have long been associated with "Jewish Christianity" due to their resonance with Epiphanius' description of the Ebionites in *Panarion* 30. Most cited in this regard are anti-Pauline traditions, polemics against animal sacrifice, and the account of the martyrdom of James, the latter of which bears similarities to the non-extant Ebionite *Anabathmoi Jakobou* mentioned by Epiphanius (*Pan.* 30.16.6-9).<sup>62</sup>

Questioning the centrality of Epiphanius in the modern search for the Pseudo-Clementine's sources, F. Stanley Jones has opened the way for a new understanding of the scope and character of this source as well as for further attention to the self-definition and concerns internal to it. Proceeding from an analysis of internal criteria, for instance, he suggests that *Rec.* 1.27–71 preserves a "Jewish Christian" source written in Palestine around 200 CE.<sup>63</sup> In a related article, he shows how its depictions of Paul, Peter, James, and apostolic history are articulated in direct contrast to the NT Acts of Apostles.<sup>64</sup> In effect, then, this source offers an alternative account of Christianity as emerging as a movement within Judaism. Jesus is here the prophet who comes after Moses to abolish the temporary measure of Temple sacrifice and to institute baptism in its place (esp. *Rec.* 1.36.2, 1.39.2, 1.40.4–41.1, 1.59.1–3). Jesus is, moreover, the messiah awaited by the Jews and

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<sup>60</sup> Fonrobert, "Didascalia," 501-8.

<sup>61</sup> For a thorough-going reading of the Pseudo-Clementines as reflecting the beliefs of the Ebionites more specifically see H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1949) and *Jewish Christianity: Factional Disputes in the Early Church*, trans. D. Hare (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969; revised English version of *Judenchristentums* [Bern: Francke Verlag, 1964]).

<sup>62</sup> Portions of *Rec.* 1 have been identified with this text by Bousset, Schoeps, Strecker, Lüdemann, and Van Voorst; for a summary of these approaches see Jones, *Ancient Jewish-Christian Source*, 4–33.

<sup>63</sup> See Jones, *Ancient Jewish-Christian Source*, 157–68.

<sup>64</sup> F. S. Jones in "An Ancient Jewish Christian Rejoinder to Luke's Acts of the Apostles: Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* 1.27–71" in *Semeia 80: The Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles in Intertextual Perspectives* (ed. R. Stoops; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), esp. 239–44. Whether or not the Pseudo-Clementine tradition stand in direct continuity with the Jerusalem church of Peter and James, it is significant in my view that its authors see themselves as heir to this tradition and imagine themselves as preserving this heritage against challenges by Pauline Christians; cf. Munck, "Jewish Christianity."

sent to save his people, and Gentiles only fill the numbers left by those Jews who reject him (partly due, in fact, to the pernicious influence of Paul; cf. *Rec.* 1.42, 1.50, 1.69–70).

The “Jewish-Christian” traditions in *Recognitions* 1.27–71 are much discussed and need not be reiterated here.<sup>65</sup> It will suffice to note their differences with other “Jewish Christian” apocrypha. In contrast to the sources examined above, for instance, we might note what seem to be self-conscious attempts to depict the followers of Jesus as part of Judaism. Peter, for instance, asserts his Jewish ethnicity (*Rec.* 1.32.1), Hebrew is celebrated as the divinely-given original language of humankind (*Rec.* 1.30.5), and positive reference is made to circumcision as the “proof and sign of purity” (*Rec.* 1.33.5). Moreover, followers of Jesus are depicted in discussion with other sectarian Jews (esp. Pharisees, Sadducees, followers of John the Baptist; *Rec.* 1.60), and there is an explicit assertion that the only difference between followers of Jesus and other Jews is their belief in Jesus as messiah (*Rec.* 1.43.2; 1.50.3).

Moreover, the Pharisees are here depicted as the group that falls closest to the Jesus movement; R. Gamaliel is even described as a secret sympathizer (*Rec.* 1.65.2–68.2). This surprisingly positive approach to the Pharisees may also point, as Al Baumgarten has suggested, to an interest and sympathy towards Rabbinic Jews. Pharisees are here said to possess “the word of truth received from Moses’ tradition”; they may be critiqued for hiding this key, as in Matt 23:13, but the assertion of their possession of extra-scriptural Mosaic tradition nevertheless suggests the author(s)’ acceptance of emergent Rabbinic claims about the Oral Torah.<sup>66</sup> Like the *Protevangelium of James* and *Didascalia*, this source may thus reflect some engagement with the traditions and concerns of the early Rabbinic movement. Whereas the *Protevangelium of James* seems to use such traditions towards polemic aims and whereas the *Didascalia* seems to counter them with Christian versions, this source seems to accept this Rabbinic claim to authority and to attempt to integrate this belief into its understanding of Jesus’ teachings.

For our sketch of “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha, some mention must also be made of the Pseudo-Clementine *Grundschrift* (i.e., the hypothetical source posited to account for the ample parallels between the *Homilies* and *Recognitions*).<sup>67</sup> It is

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<sup>65</sup> Esp. G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen* (TU 70<sup>2</sup>; Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981), 221–54; Jones, *Ancient Jewish Christian Source*, 157–68. One matter of debate is whether this source sees to need for Gentile followers of Jesus to undergo circumcision. Strecker tentatively posits a positive answer with appeal to the positive reference to *Rec.* 1.33.5 (*Judenchristentum*, 251). Jones, however, identifies *Rec.* 1.33.5 as part of the *Grundschrift*’s later additions to this source (*Ancient Jewish Christian Source*, 160); in his view, “the very notion of calling the nations to complete the number shown to Abraham (*Rec.* 1.42; compare *Rec.* 1.63.2, 64.2) contradicts the view that these Gentiles should first have to convert to Judaism (e.g., submission to circumcision) before entering Christianity” (p. 164). I would tend to side with Strecker, not least because the assertion of the commonality between Jesus’ followers and other Jews in *Rec.* 1.43.2 and 1.50.3 implies a commonality of practice. Perhaps most intriguing, however, is the text’s own lack of concern with this question.

<sup>66</sup> A. Baumgarten, “Literary Evidence for Jewish Christianity in the Galilee,” in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (ed. L. Levine; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992), 42–43.

<sup>67</sup> Most studies have considered the parallel material relevant to “Jewish Christianity” in terms of a hypothetical source of the *Grundschrift*, namely the *Kerygmata Petrou*; esp. Strecker, *Judenchristentum*. I

impossible to know the precise contents of the *Grundschrift*, which is typically dated to the third century. Although its significance for the history of “Jewish Christianity” is widely acknowledged, the reconstruction of the precise nature of its relevance proves tricky; assumptions about Judaism, Christianity, and “Jewish Christianity” have inevitably shaped scholarly decisions about the antiquity of individual traditions in the *Homilies* and *Recognitions*.

We can, however, note some of the more strikingly “Jewish-Christian” features of the material paralleled in the *Homilies* and *Recognitions*. Like the *Apocalypse of Peter* and *Testament of 12 Patriarchs*, this material depicts the fate of the Jews in more complex, irenic, and hopeful terms than other third-century Christians (cf. Tertullian, *Answer to the Jews* 3, 6, 8, 12-3); like the *Testament of the 12 Patriarchs*, it may even have outlined a two-path soteriology that allowed for Jewish salvation through Moses and Gentile salvation through Jesus.<sup>68</sup> Also notable in this regard are its prescriptions for proper ritual practice, which encompasses dietary restrictions, ritual ablutions with water, and menstrual purity<sup>69</sup>—i.e., a number of the same practices that the *Didascalia* denounces. Inasmuch as these prescriptions seem to be tailored for Gentile followers of Jesus, we may be able to situate its pointed concerns for the impurities caused by contact with blood, semen, and idols with reference to contemporary Rabbinic discussions about Gentile impurity.<sup>70</sup>

In a broader sense, we may be able to locate the *Grundschrift* in a range of discussions about ritual purity, which includes the early Rabbinic traditions about female and Gentile impurity in the Mishnah and Tosefta, the redeployment of related proto-Rabbinic traditions in the *Protevangelium of James*, and the *Didascalia*’s Christian critique of such traditions from a Jewish cultural matrix. Seen from this perspective, moreover, the *Grundschrift* falls closer to the Rabbinic movement than earlier “Jewish-Christian” sources. Whether this reflects the increased consolidation of the Rabbinic movement and the spread of its influence and/or a concurrent shift away from Second Temple models of authority in geographically and culturally proximate “Jewish Christian” circles, it attests how some “Jewish-Christian” identities were articulated in interaction with evolving (Rabbinic) Jewish identities.<sup>71</sup>

### 3. “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha from the fourth and fifth centuries

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am less than confident in our ability to reconstruct a non-extant source of the non-extant *Grundschrift*, esp. as internal literary evidence is here hardly univalent (as attested, e.g., by nearly a century of scholarly debates). I concur with Jones about the need for research on the Pseudo-Clementines’ sources to turn its focus on the *Grundschrift* itself. For his tentative outline of its scope and contents, see “Eros and Astrology,” 53-61.

<sup>68</sup> See *Rec.* 4.5 and *Hom.* 8.5–7 and my discussion in “Jewish Christianity,” 218-24.

<sup>69</sup> *Ps.-Clem.*, *Recognitions* 2.71–72; 6.9–11; 7.29, 34; 8.68; *Homilies* 7.8; 11:28–30; 13:4, 9, 19.

<sup>70</sup> On the Rabbinic discourse as it relates to biblical and Second Temple traditions, see C. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Inter-marriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), 107-92.

<sup>71</sup> For a tentative attempt to correlate “Jewish-Christian” sources with what we know about the gradual consolidation and spread of Rabbinic power, see Reed, “Rabbis, Jewish Christians,” esp. 339-41.

In studies of the Pseudo-Clementines, the significance of “Jewish Christianity” has typically been limited to the early stages in its redactional formation.<sup>72</sup> In my own work, I have questioned the degree to which this tendency is predicated on an outmoded understanding of early Jewish/Christian relations as defined by a single and simple “Parting of the Ways” between Judaism and Christianity.<sup>73</sup> Focusing on the fourth-century form of the *Homilies*, I have attempted to situate this version of the novel within its late antique Jewish as well as late antique Christian (and “pagan”) contexts. It is clear that the *Homilies* contains more Jewish and “Jewish-Christian” elements than the *Recognitions* and that it reworks their shared material in a manner more irenic towards Judaism. This, in my view, raises the possibility that the redactors of the *Homilies* attest the survival—and, indeed, flourishing—of “Jewish-Christian” forms of belief and practice into the fourth century CE.

If we look beyond the *Homilies*’ preservation of earlier “Jewish Christian” traditions to investigate the redactional choices that shaped its final form, two significant features emerge. First is the resonance with midrashic and halakhic traditions found in fourth-/fifth-century Rabbinic sources from Palestine (esp. *Bereshit Rabbah*). The *Homilies* focus more concertedly on issues of ritual purity and do so in a manner that resonates even more sharply with Rabbinic discourse about Gentile purity.<sup>74</sup> Knowledge of the Rabbinic doctrine of Oral Torah is even more expansive than in earlier sources, consistent with the full articulation of this Rabbinic doctrine in this period.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, its account of the disputes between Peter and Simon Magus echo, in both form and content, Rabbinic tales about disputes between Sages and *minim* (“heretics”).<sup>76</sup> Central to both is the defense of the singularity and goodness of God against the beliefs of *minim* as well as the musing of philosophers.<sup>77</sup> Strikingly, even the *Homilies*’ adoption, subversion, and rejection of elements from “pagan” culture—such as rhetoric, *paideia*, and the Greco-Roman novel—find parallels in Rabbinic sources redacted around the same time.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> For the history of scholarship, see Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, 1–34; F. S. Jones, “The Pseudo-Clementines: A History of Research,” *Second Century* 2 (1982): 84–96, esp. 86.

<sup>73</sup> Esp. Reed, “Jewish Christianity.”

<sup>74</sup> A. Y. Reed, “Fire, Blood, and Water: Demonology and Halakha in the Pseudo-Clementine *Homilies*,” paper presented at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Europe and the Mediterranean in Late Antiquity Group, November 23, 2003.

<sup>75</sup> A. Y. Reed, “The True Prophet in the Pseudo-Clementines: Prophethood, Apostolic Succession, and the Transmission of Truth,” paper presented at the Institute for Advanced Study, June 2, 2004; “Fourth-Century Rabbinic Judaism and the Redaction of the *Homilies*,” paper presented at the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Christian Apocrypha Section, November 2005.

<sup>76</sup> A. Y. Reed, “Heresiology and the (Jewish-)Christian Novel: Narrativized Polemics in the Pseudo-Clementines,” in *Heresy and Self-Definition in Late Antiquity* (ed. H. Zellentin and E. Iricinschi; Tübingen: Mohr, forthcoming 2007). On the Rabbinic sub-genre of dispute tales, see e.g. R. Kalmin, “Christians and Heretics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity,” *HTR* 87 (1994): 155–69.

<sup>77</sup> See further Reed, “Heresiology,” esp. on the striking parallels with *Genesis Rabbah* 1.7, 8.8–9.

<sup>78</sup> See, e.g., M. Jaffee, “The Oral-Cultural Context of the Talmud Yerushalmi: Greco-Roman rhetorical *paideia*, discipleship, and the concept of the Oral Torah,” and C. Heszer, “Interfaces between Rabbinic Literature and Graeco-Roman Philosophy,” in *The Talmud Yerushalmi and Greco-Roman Culture*, vol. 1 (ed. P. Schäfer; Tübingen: Mohr, 1998), 27–62, 161–87; D. Stern, “The Captive Woman:

Second is the representation of the relationship between Jews and followers of Jesus. Whereas some earlier “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha seem cognizant of proto-Rabbinic/Rabbinic claims to possess and preserve an oral tradition going back to Moses, the doctrine of the Oral Torah is surprisingly central to the *Homilies*’ understanding of epistemology and salvation-history. By virtue of its distinctive approach to the idea of Jesus as True Prophet (esp. *Hom.* 1.19, 2.5–12, 3.11–28) and its unique doctrine of the Law of Syzygies (esp. *Hom.* 2.15–18; 3.59; cf. *Rec.* 4.59, 61),<sup>79</sup> the *Homilies* presents all of human history as shaped by the activity of a series of prophets (e.g., Moses, Jesus) who are sent by God to proclaim the same message of truth and who are countered by a series of false prophets (e.g., Aaron, John the Baptist) sent to contest them. In depicting the faithful transmission of prophetic knowledge from Jesus to Peter and his followers, the *Homilies* appeal to the faithful transmission of Moses’ teaching by the Pharisees (*Hom.* 3.18–19). For this, the oral tradition is central. The Written Torah alone does not suffice, since falsehoods were added to it during the course of its writing and written transmission.<sup>80</sup> Moses, however, “gave the Law with the explanations to certain chosen men, some seventy in number” (*Hom.* 2.38; cf. Num 11:16), and his prophetic knowledge remains among the Pharisees who “sit in Moses’ seat [*kathedra*]” (*Hom.* 3.18; cf. Matt 23.2); hence, Christians can look to Jews as a model for the maintenance of monotheism and other true beliefs and practices (e.g., *Hom.* 4.13, 7.4, 9.16, 11.28, 16.14). Inasmuch as Moses was sent as a teacher for the Jews, Moses’ prophetic knowledge is kept among them, whereas Jesus was sent to spread the same message to the Gentiles (*Hom.* 3.19; 8.6–7). Just as Moses’ teachings are kept by the Pharisees who sit on his seat (*kathedra*; *Hom.* 11.29), so Jesus’ teachings are faithfully kept by Peter, who passes his knowledge and authority onto the bishops who sit on his seat (*kathedra*; *Hom.* 3.70).<sup>81</sup>

In other words, apostolic succession is here outlined in a manner that not only appeals to the Rabbinic doctrine of the Oral Torah but also allows for the Pharasaic/Rabbinic succession from Moses (cf. *m. Avot* 1–5) as a parallel line for the transmission of true prophetic teaching.<sup>82</sup> There are, as we have seen, precedents for the *Homilies*’ attempts to articulate a Christian identity that retains the chosenness of Israel and the salvation of the Jews. Here, however, the argument is more

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Hellenization, Greco-Roman Erotic Narrative, and Rabbinic Literature,” *Poetics Today* 19.1 (1998): 91–127; J. Levinson, “The Tragedy of Romance: A Case of Literary Exile,” *HTR* 89 (1996): 227–44.

<sup>79</sup> On the True Prophet, see Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, 145–53; L. Cerfaux, “Le vrai prophète des Clémentines,” *Recherches de science religieuse* 18 (1928): 143–63; H. J. W. Drijvers, “Adam and the True Prophet in the Pseudo-Clementines,” in *Loyalitätskonflikte in der Religionsgeschichte: Festschrift für Carsten Colpe* (eds. C. Elsas and H. G. Kippenberg; Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1990), 314–23; A. Gieschen, “The seven pillars of the world: Ideal figure lists in the True Prophet Christology of the Pseudo-Clementines,” *Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha* 12 (1994): 47–82.

<sup>80</sup> I.e., the doctrine of the false pericopes, on which see Strecker, *Judenchristentum*, 166–86. On possible Rabbinic awareness of this idea, see Schoeps, *Theologie*, 176–79, esp. on *Sifre Deut.* 26 (cf. *Lev.R.* 31.4; *Deut.R.* 2.6).

<sup>81</sup> This is a highly compressed form of the argument that I make in “True Prophet” and “Heresiology.”

<sup>82</sup> On the shared pre-history of Christian and Jewish succession lists, see A. Tropper, “Tractate *Avot* and Early Christian Succession Lists,” in *The Ways that Never Parted*, 159–88, which contains a helpful summary of scholarly opinions about their possible connections.

developed and forms a more central part of the defense of authentic apostolic teaching against “heretics” and “pagans.”

Just as the third-century author(s) of *Rec.* 1.27–71 seem to counter the image of apostolic history in the NT Acts of the Apostles, so the fourth-century Syrian redactors of the *Homilies* may respond to the heresiologies and historiographies of emergent “orthodoxy.” Most striking are the parallels with Eusebius. Penning his *Historia ecclesiastica* in nearby Palestine around the same time that the *Homilies* were being redacted (ca. 300-320), Eusebius was also drawing on a variety of Hellenistic Jewish and earlier Christian sources to defend his particular understanding of apostolic succession. Whereas Eusebius presents the rise of Christianity as counterpoint to the decline of Judaism, the *Homilies* offers a very different image of Christianity’s origins and spread: its authors/redactors posit a radical continuity with Judaism while sharply critiquing Greek philosophy and *paideia*. And, whereas Eusebius stresses the dispersal of the original “Jewish-Christians” and dismisses post-apostolic “Jewish Christianity” as a heterodox phenomenon, the *Homilies* claims to preserve the true teachings of James and Peter.

It may not be coincidental, in my view, that so much of our second-hand evidence for “Jewish Christianity” comes from the fourth and fifth centuries. Scholars have tended to mine the descriptions of Ebionites and Nazarenes by Eusebius, Epiphanius, Jerome, and others for hints about possibly continuities with apostolic traditions; this evidence for “Jewish Christianity” has been culled for possible hints about the second and third centuries. It is widely assumed, for instance, that the comments about the Ebionites by Epiphanius, et al., pertain to the singular and same group discussed by Irenaeus. Especially insofar as we have no first-hand evidence for groups calling themselves “Ebionites” and inasmuch as our earliest references to Nazarenes come from the fourth century (i.e., Epiphanius, *Pan.* 29), it is worth considering whether Epiphanius and others are using the traditional heresiological rubric of “Ebionism” to encompass a range of different groups who combined Jewish identity and Christ-devotion in ways that jarred with their own understanding of “Christianity.”<sup>83</sup> If we limit the production and transmission of Pseudo-Clementine traditions to a single, purported marginalized sect like the Ebionites, for instance, we would be hard pressed to explain our ample evidence for the broad circulation of the Pseudo-Clementine novels in a variety of forms and languages.

Pierluigi Piovanelli’s recent work on the *Book of the Cock* may point the way towards a more nuanced understanding of “Jewish Christianity” in Late Antiquity.<sup>84</sup> In the *Book of the Cock*, Piovanelli recovers another first-hand source for late antique “Jewish Christianity.” He has proposed that this Ethiopic apocryphon preserves a “Jewish-Christian” source in its account of Saul/Paul’s role in the arrest

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<sup>83</sup> Boyarin suggests that “The purpose of Epiphanius’ discourse on the Ebionites and Nazarenes is to participate in the imperial project of control of (in this case) Palestine by ‘identifying and reifying... the religious.’... The ascription of existence to the ‘hybrids’ assumes (and thus assures) the existence of nonhybrid ‘pure’ religions (i.e., Judaism and Christianity)”; *Borderlines*, 207-8.

<sup>84</sup> P. Piovanelli, “The *Book of the Cock* and the Rediscovery of Ancient Jewish-Christian traditions in Fifth-Century Palestine,” in *Changing Face*, 308-322; idem, “Exploring the Ethiopic *Book of the Cock*, an Apocryphal Passion Gospel from Late Antiquity,” *HTR* 96 (2003): 427-54.

of Jesus. He suggests, more specifically, an Ebionite provenance, and he proposes that the anti-Jewish traditions within the text may reflect “inner controversies” between Jews and “Jewish-Christians” over the Passion.<sup>85</sup> Whereas anti-Pauline elements appear to have been downplayed during the course of the redaction of the Pseudo-Clementines, we here find an expanded polemic against Paul, concurrent with the expression of less positive views towards non-Christian Jews.

Equally significant is Piovanelli’s interpretation of the importance of the *Book of the Cock* for our understanding of Christian history more broadly. He points to the need to situate Patristic quotations from “Jewish-Christian” gospels and heresiological statements about Ebionites and Nazarenes in the context of the fourth-century Christianization of Palestine.<sup>86</sup> In his view, “the irruption into the region of a new wave of non-native pilgrims, clergymen, and monks... broke the delicate balance existing between different local communities.”<sup>87</sup> Some forms of “Jewish Christianity” native to that area seem to have been absorbed by the “orthodoxies,” both Christian and Rabbinic, which were solidifying their power at the time. The encounter with a variety of local Palestinian groups that approached Christ-devotion from a Jewish cultural matrix, however, did leave its traces on emergent Christian “orthodoxy”—and perhaps also Rabbinic Judaism: “Jewish Christian communities were able to transmit a part of their religious heritage to the Great Church and to the equally great synagogue that were reabsorbing them.”<sup>88</sup>

Piovanelli’s insights push us towards a new perspective on the importance of the Pseudo-Clementine *Recognitions* for our understanding of the history of “Jewish Christianity.” Comparison with the *Homilies* suggests this version of the Pseudo-Clementine novel was shaped by more “orthodox” perspectives. Nevertheless, by virtue of Rufinus’ Latin translation, the *Recognitions* became a vehicle for the widespread circulation of much “Jewish-Christian” material. Although less “Jewish-Christian” than the *Homilies*, it includes *Rec.* 1.27-71 as well as some of the materials about ritual purity and Torah-observance that seem to have been in the *Grundschrift*. Also significant in this regard is the *Apostolic Constitutions*, a collection which similarly circulated under the name of Clement and which is marked by the integration of earlier Hellenistic Jewish and “Jewish-Christian” materials.<sup>89</sup>

With the Christianization of the Roman Empire came imperially-backed efforts to standardize Christian belief and worship, thereby intensifying efforts to collect, select, and translate earlier sources as well as catalyzing fresh reflection on the apostolic past and its meaning for the imperial church. If this process of standardization did indeed lead to the increased marginalization or absorption of Palestinian “Jewish Christian” groups, it also—ironically—resulted in the broader circulation of writings voicing earlier “Jewish-Christian” approaches to Judaism and

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<sup>85</sup> Piovanelli, “Book of the Cock,” 312; “Exploring,” 445-46. If so, this source would be temporally and culturally proximate with Epiphanius (b. 310 in Palestine).

<sup>86</sup> Piovanelli, “The *Book of the Cock*,” 308. See also Boyarin, *Borderlines*, 202-214; Jacobs, *Remains of the Jews*.

<sup>87</sup> Piovanelli, “*Book of the Cock*,” 318.

<sup>88</sup> Piovanelli, “*Book of the Cock*,” 319.

<sup>89</sup> E.g., so-called Hellenistic synagogal hymns, *Didascalia apostolorum*.

Christian praxis; although forged in the interactions between Jews and followers of Jesus in specific local settings, elements of these approaches remain embedded in documents such as the *Recognitions*, *Apostolic Constitutions*, and Patristic commentaries that quote “Jewish-Christian” gospels. Furthermore, the canonizing efforts of Athanasius, Eusebius, and others do not seem to have affected the popularity of other “Jewish-Christian” apocrypha—particularly outside the Empire and on its margins, where a diversity of approaches to Christian and Jewish identities continued to flourish.<sup>90</sup>

## 5. Revisiting the “Problem of Jewish Christianity”

Although the notion of “Jewish Christianity” originated in research on the NT,<sup>91</sup> a number of scholars have deemed the term irrelevant for describing the religious landscape of the first century. With more attention to the Jesus movement’s origins within Judaism has come less certainty about the heuristic of any simple contrast between “Gentile Christianity” and “Jewish Christianity”; as Helmut Koester has noted, “everyone in the first generation of Christianity was Jewish-Christian” in some sense or another.<sup>92</sup> Likewise, one might ask whether such a simple contrast applies to the second and third centuries, or even the fourth and fifth?

For the second century and following, the label “Jewish-Christian” has been used in various senses, mostly tied to the modern desire to discover what unique beliefs, practices, and outlooks may have been held by Christ-followers of Jewish ethnicity. Some senses of the term follow from the older use of this label in NT studies à la F. C. Baur; for instance, “Jewish-Christian” is often applied to [1] the direct heirs to the Jerusalem church of James and Peter and/or to [2] ethnically Jewish Christ-followers who “retained” those elements of Torah-observance attested but deemed unnecessary in the NT, especially in the Pauline epistles and Book of Acts (e.g., circumcision, kashrut).<sup>93</sup> Tacit in many of these approaches is the assumption that “Jewish Christianity” is a relic of Christianity’s Jewish origins. In a sense, then, these approaches echo the treatment of ethnically Jewish Christians by Justin Martyr (*Dial.* 46-47). Justin accepts their combination of Christian belief with Jewish practice as an authentic expression of Christianity but also limits its significance. For Justin and most Church Fathers after him, the Jewish rejection of Jesus is central to an understanding of salvation history as culminating with Christianity’s emergence as a Gentile religion; to this narrative, the existence of

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<sup>90</sup> See Klijn, “Study”; Becker, “Beyond”; J. G. Gager, “Did Jewish-Christians See the Rise of Islam,” in *Ways that Never Parted*, 361-72.

<sup>91</sup> See S. C. Mimouni, “Le Judéo-Christianisme ancien dans l’historiographie du XIX<sup>ème</sup> et du XX<sup>ème</sup> siècle,” *REJ* 151 (1992): 419–28.

<sup>92</sup> Koester, “ΓΝΩΜΑΙ ΔΙΑΦΟΡΟΙ,” 380. These senses are charted in R. Brown, “Not Jewish Christianity and Gentile Christianity but Types of Jewish/Gentile Christianity,” *CBQ* 45 (1983): 74–79. Some scholars, such as Simon Claude Mimouni, thus reserve the term “Jewish Christian” for groups after 135 CE (see, most recently, his monumental *Le Judéo-christianisme ancien: Essais historiques* [Paris: Cerf, 1998]).

<sup>93</sup> Other NT texts may well presume other halakhic perspectives, including interests in ritual purity; see, e.g., D. Frankfurter, “Jews or not? Reconstructing the ‘Other’ in Rev 2:9 and 3:9,” *HTR* 94 (2001): 403-27.

ethnically Jewish Christians is a footnote at best and, at worst, a challenge. Similarly, many modern scholars stress the significance of Gentile conversion to Christianity and treat ethnic Jewish adherence to Christianity as a limited phenomenon with little relevance for church history.<sup>94</sup>

Other modern definitions of “Jewish Christianity” draw more heavily from later heresiological comments about Ebionites and Nazarenes. Thus, in some scholarly accounts, characteristically “Jewish Christian” features also include [3] the rejection of supersessionist approaches to Judaism, particularly as emblemized by the figure of Paul, [4] the adoption of a low Christology (esp. the acceptance of Jesus as prophet but not messiah), [5] the privileging of the Gospel of Matthew, [6] anti-sacrificial polemics, and/or [7] practices such as vegetarianism and ritual purification through water. Often, these various categories are assumed to be overlapping, frequently due to assumptions that Torah observance, low Christology, etc., might naturally follow from Jewish ethnicity.<sup>95</sup> As such, these approaches follow Epiphanius in reading “Jewishness” as a mark of deviance from a firmly established norm of Christian belief and practice (i.e. “Jewish Christianity” as a form of “heresy” or “heterodoxy”).

The term “Jewish Christianity” has been increasingly questioned for its dependence on traditional assumptions about Jewish ethnicity, on the one hand, and assumptions about Christian “orthodoxy,” on the other, stressing that neither was yet so clear-cut in Late Antiquity.<sup>96</sup> Research on late antique Judaism has shown that Jewish identity was itself fluid and contested even in the first centuries of the Common Era.<sup>97</sup> Likewise, research on late antique Christianity has suggested that, even in the fourth and fifth centuries, “orthodoxy” was in the process of being constructed. With the changing views of Christian diversity, particularly in the wake of the Nag Hammadi discoveries, has also come an increasing awareness of the dangers of depending solely on Church Fathers for our understanding of the religious landscape of early and late antique Christianity; to do so is to stand at risk of falsely imposing a particular set of views of “Christianity” and “Judaism” (as well as “paganism,” “Gnosticism,” “orthodoxy,” etc.) uniformly upon all of our sources.

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<sup>94</sup> Note, e.g., the view of A. Harnack, who accepted that “Jewish Christianity” flourished in both apostolic and post-apostolic times, but saw this stream of tradition as having no influence whatsoever on the “Great Church” (see, e.g., *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* [Tübingen: Mohr, 1909; repr. Darmstadt, 1965], 317). On the persistence of such views, see discussion in A. F. J. Klijn, “The Study of Jewish-Christianity,” *NTS* (1973–74): 419–31, esp. 421–25.

<sup>95</sup> Of course, Paul himself stands as a clear challenge to this assumption. For an incisive discussion of the problems with this assumption, see Fonrobert, “*Didascalia Apostolorum*,” 499–502.

<sup>96</sup> This is perhaps most eloquently put by Fonrobert, who asserts that “Our understanding of the formation of Jewish and Christian collective identities as separate identities depends on developing an intelligible way of discussing the phenomenon called ‘Jewish Christianity,’ one that is not marred by Christian theological prejudices, nor by unexamined assumptions about either ‘Jewish’ identity formation or its ‘Christian’ counterpart” (“*Didascalia Apostolorum*,” 484).

<sup>97</sup> S. J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

Concurrent with recent questions about whether and when (and where and if) Christianity “parted ways” from Judaism in Late Antiquity,<sup>98</sup> some scholars have abandoned the term “Jewish Christianity” altogether, questioning the traditional limitation of such hybridity to a single movement and critiquing the underlying assumption that “Judaism” and “Christianity” were, already in this early period, firm identities separated by a single middle ground.<sup>99</sup> Yet others—myself included—retain the term as heuristic for unsettling modern scholarly assumptions about the mutual exclusivity of “Jewish” and “Christian” identities in Late Antiquity. Used in this sense, “Jewish Christianity” can be applied to sources [8] which exhibit more and different “Jewish” features than we typically associate with early and late antique Christianity, [9] which were shaped, in meaningful ways, by direct contact with post-Christian Judaism (esp. Rabbinic Judaism), and/or [10] which self-consciously adopt a Jewish identity and/or self-consciously seek to recover elements of Christianity’s Jewish heritage that other sectors of the church rejected. This approach can integrate many of the features outlined above, but it attempts to avoid the imposition of any single image of “Jewish Christianity” on all of our sources as well as the problematic equation of Jewish ethnicity with specific proclivities.

A flexible definition also has the benefit of opening our understanding of “Jewish Christianity” to include more first-hand sources for fluidities and hybridities between nascent Jewish and Christian identities.<sup>100</sup> Past research on “Jewish Christianity” has depended heavily on Patristic sources largely because of perceived necessity. Equipped with a narrow understanding of “Jewish Christianity” as a single phenomenon—the middle ground between two clear defined religious entities—scholars sought “Jewish Christianity” only in those sources that closely corresponded to NT traditions about ethnically Jewish members of the Jesus Movement or to Patristic comments about the Ebionites and Nazarenes. As a result, first-hand evidence for “Jewish Christianity” was largely limited to the Pseudo-Clementine literary tradition and tended to be read in terms of an understanding of early Jewish/Christian relations based on the Church Fathers and classical Rabbinic literature.<sup>101</sup>

In my view, it is important to try to recover a broader—and geographically more diverse—base of first-hand evidence for studying the relationships between “Jewish” and “Christian” identities in Late Antiquity. From our survey above, I hope to have shown some of the value of approaching apocryphal writings from this perspective and bringing these sources into the broader conversation about Christian

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<sup>98</sup> For a summary of the traditional scholarly account and emergent alternatives, see e.g. *Ways that Never Parted*, 1-34.

<sup>99</sup> E.g., J. Taylor, “The Phenomenon of Early Jewish-Christianity: Reality or Scholarly Invention?” *VigChr* 44 (1990): 313–34; Frankfurter, “Beyond ‘Jewish-Christianity,’” 131-44. See also the critique of past research on “Jewish Christianity” in Klijn, “Study of Jewish-Christianity”; R. A. Kraft, “In Search of ‘Jewish Christianity’ and its ‘Theology’: Problems of Definition and Methodology,” *Recherches de Sciences Religieuses* 60 (1972): 81–96.

<sup>100</sup> The inclusion of a broader range of sources may also help to attenuate the traditional tendency to insist upon the limited regional scope of “Jewish-Christianity”; see Klijn, “Study,” esp. 421–25.

<sup>101</sup> I expand this point in Reed, “Jewish Christianity.”

and Jewish self-definition. To the texts surveyed above might readily be added others, such as the Pseudo-Clementine epistles, *Gospel of the Hebrews*, *Gospel of the Nazarenes*, *Gospel of the Ebionites*, and the final Christian forms of OT pseudepigrapha such as the *Testament of Abraham* and *Testament of Job*.

In what ways, then, might this understudied first-hand evidence for “Jewish Christianity” shed new light on the history of Jewish/Christian relations? Although firm conclusions must await further study, I would like to conclude with some reflections on what more integrated research on “Jewish Christian” apocrypha might bring to research about early Jewish/Christian relations.

Perhaps most notable is the focus on purity and practice.<sup>102</sup> Treatments of early Jewish/Christian relations based largely in Patristic materials often replicate their focus on doctrine. If earlier scholarship focused too myopically on elements such as Christology, recent scholarship may stand at risk of becoming too entranced with the power of elite rhetoric to shape social realities. Discursive acts of definition and differentiation by literate elites surely contributed to the articulation of “Judaism” and “Christianity” as communal identities.<sup>103</sup> To imply that such literary acts were determinative for religious self-definition, however, is to replicate the traditional privileging of Patristic and Rabbinic voices. One risks, moreover, foreclosing the arduous and methodologically challenging – yet, in my view, important – task of trying to reconstruct, bit by bit, even small slivers of the daily and mundane negotiations of identity boundaries and shared cultural spaces “on the ground.”<sup>104</sup>

The privileging of Patristic voices, in particular, also results in a geographical myopia that attention to apocryphal literature may help to correct. Such sources might help to rectify the focus on the Roman Empire in accounts of the history of Jewish/Christian relations, both old and new. Above, we surveyed mainly sources from Syro-Palestine. It is intriguing that West Syrian sources seem to be so rich in evidence for contact with early Palestinian Rabbinic Jews.<sup>105</sup> Further attention could be given to Egypt, Ethiopia, and Asia Minor.

The evidence of “Jewish Christian” apocrypha also permits us to locate the rise of Christian anti-Judaism in a more diverse religious landscape that included other voices – from the second and third centuries and even the fourth – who stressed the continuity and/or complementarity of Judaism and Christianity. Church Fathers since Justin may speak with relative unanimity about the church replacing Israel as the chosen people of God, but other sources preserve other perspectives. Whereas Justin reads the persecution of Christians by Jews at the time of the Bar Kokhba revolt as a sign of the alliance between the demons and the Jews, the author of the *Apocalypse of Peter* refrains, even in the midst of such persecution, from damning

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<sup>102</sup> So rarely have questions about ritual purity been asked of Patristic sources that one might ask whether this apparently “Jewish-Christian” feature is actually just an understudied aspect of Christian culture more broadly. Hayes charts a bit of this terrain in *Gentile Impurities*, 92-105, but there is much more to do in this regard.

<sup>103</sup> D. Boyarin, “Justin Martyr Invents Judaism,” *Church History* 70 (2001): 427-61; see also his “Semantic Differences; or, ‘Judaism’/‘Christianity’” in *Ways that Never Parted*, 65-86.

<sup>104</sup> See V. Burrus’ review of Clark’s *History, Theory, Text* in *J ECS* and R. S. Boustian’s review of Boyarin’s *Borderlines* in *JQR*.

<sup>105</sup> East Syrian sources, of course, have many connections with Babylonian Rabbinic Judaism.

all Jews together with these persecutors. The source in *Recognitions* 1 denigrates Paul while celebrating R. Gamaliel as a secret Christian. And, around the same time that Eusebius is re-reading all of Christian history in terms of his view of the Christianization of the Roman Empire as an emblem of Christianity's supersession of Judaism and "paganism," the redactors of the *Homilies* were drawing on earlier Hellenistic Jewish and "Jewish-Christian" sources to articulate an alternative account of salvation history, whereby truth and salvation are still possessed by Jew and Christian alike. That the *Book of the Cock* contains both anti-Pauline and anti-Jewish perspectives, interwoven together in its redacted form, serves a poignant embodiment of the diversity of earlier opinions—as well as a pointed reminder of the fact that the voices of early "Jewish Christians" did remain, embedded within a number of popular apocrypha and read widely in multiple languages, even where and when supersessionist perspectives on Judaism became generally accepted as an integral part of Christian identity.