

LILY C. VUONG

Gender and Purity
in the Protevangelium
of James

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

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Mohr Siebeck

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For James and Olivia

Preface

This book is a revised version of my 2010 doctoral dissertation from McMaster University, under the supervision of Annette Yoshiko Reed. I first encountered the *Protevangelium of James* as an undergraduate student in a class devoted to early Christian literature. I read the text and thought it was a magically entertaining story about Mary's everlasting virginity, but then pondered little else about it. It was not until I was a graduate student under the tutelage of Professor Reed that my interest in apocryphal literature was rekindled. Questions concerning Jewish and Christian identity and self-definition, Jewish-Christian relations, and representations of women were my primary interests in the ancient world. Upon encountering the *Protevangelium of James* again, but with these newfound interests, the text appeared utterly fascinating and worth my full attention.

This work would not have been possible without the support and guidance of Professor Annette Reed, whose unparalleled expertise in the field taught me how to ask the right questions and whose persistent help never let me lose my way and instead pushed me to become a better writer and thinker. She exemplifies what it means to be a scholar and has inspired me to strive for new levels of excellence in all my work. I am greatly privileged to have been mentored by her and continue to draw upon her example daily in my own scholarship and teaching.

I am also extremely thankful for the helpful suggestions and important critiques I received from those who read the manuscript during its various stages, especially Professors Anders Runesson, Eileen Schuller, who were members of my doctoral committee, and Professors Tobias Nicklas and Pierluigi Piovanelli who offer critical insights and feedback as I was preparing my manuscript for revision. A number of discussions have been vastly expanded and arguments significantly tightened as a result of their comments and careful attention to detail. I am responsible for any errors that still remain.

Much of the writing of this book took place while I was a visiting scholar at Claremont Graduate University. I greatly benefitted from my involvement with the School of Religion, Institute for Antiquity and Christianity, and the program for Women's Studies in Religion and am most grateful to Professor Karen Torjesen for her encouragement, mentorship, and sound advice during my stay. I am also thankful to Kevin McGinnis at CGU for reading and

commenting on the work in its early stage and for being a sounding board to my various ideas and thoughts.

I must also mention Professors John Marshall, Stephen Shoemaker, and Andrew Jacobs for challenging my ideas and for their helpful feedback on various sections and arguments. Professors Ra‘anan Boustan and Mary Foskett are also deserving of my thanks for their mentoring and encouragement of my work and career in the field. In addition, I appreciate my department colleagues and friends at VSU whose personal and professional support encouraged my research.

I would like to thank my family and friends, especially my sisters Amy, Lisa, and Stephanie, for their love and support. Many thanks especially to Dr. Eileen Jankowski who read too many drafts to count and listened much too patiently as I fussed over interpreting difficult ideas and texts – she deserves my utmost gratitude. I am grateful to Jörg Frey and Henning Ziebritzki for their interest in my work. To Nadine Schwemmreiter-Vetter and the staff at Mohr Siebeck for their corrections and helpful suggestions during the final production. And to Colin Law for his help on the index and other copy-editing issues, I offer much appreciation.

Finally, I thank my loving husband, James, who was there in the beginning and whose constant support, patience, and encouragement gave me the confidence to see this project through to the end. I could not imagine a better partner in life. Our daughter Olivia was born in the middle of my preparation of the book. I excitedly anticipate sharing these important texts with her and hope she enjoys them as much as I do.

Georgia, October 2013

Lily C. Vuong

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List of Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
ABRL	Anchor Bible Reference Library
AC	<i>Ami di Clergé</i>
AELAC	<i>Association pour l'étude de la Littérature Apocryphe Chrétienne</i>
AJS	<i>Review Association for Jewish Studies Review</i>
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
AnBoll	Analecta Bollandiana
AnCI	<i>L'antiquité classique</i>
ANRW	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt</i>
ANT	Apocrypha Novi Testamenti
<i>Apocrypha</i>	<i>Apocrypha</i>
B.	Babylonian Talmud
BAC	The Bible in Ancient Christianity
BAFCS	The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
<i>BMC Review</i>	<i>Bryn Mawr Classical Review</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CA	Christianismes Antiques
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CCR	<i>Coptic Church Review</i>
CQS	Companion to the Qumran Scrolls
CCSA	Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum
CRINT	Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DJD	Discoveries in the Judean Desert
<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
<i>EM</i>	<i>Ephemerides Mariologicae</i>
<i>Eranos</i>	<i>Eranos Jahrbuch</i>
ESEC	Emory Studies in Early Christianity
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GCS NF	Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte (Neue Folge)
<i>Gesta</i>	<i>Gesta</i>
GP	Greek and Philosophy

<i>HAR</i>	<i>Hebrew Annual Review</i>
<i>HB</i>	Hebrew Bible
<i>HDB</i>	<i>Harvard Divinity Bulletin</i>
<i>HO</i>	Handbuch der Orientalistik
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HTS</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Studies</i>
<i>Hugoye</i>	<i>Hugoye: Journal of Syriac Studies</i>
<i>ICC</i>	International Critical Commentary
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCSSS</i>	<i>Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JFSR</i>	<i>Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
<i>JRH</i>	<i>Journal of Religious History</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSJSup</i>	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Old Testament</i>
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSPSup</i>	Journal for the Study of Pseudepigrapha: Supplement Series
<i>JSQ</i>	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>KEK</i>	Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar
<i>KFA</i>	Kommentar zu frühchristlichen Apologeten
<i>Koroth</i>	<i>Koroth</i>
<i>LCL</i>	Loeb Classical Library
<i>LD</i>	<i>Lectio Difficilior</i>
<i>LHR</i>	Lectures on the History of Religions
<i>LNTS</i>	Library of New Testament Studies
<i>LXX</i>	Septuagint
<i>M.</i>	Mishnah
<i>MS(S)</i>	Manuscript(s)
<i>NA</i>	Neutestamentliche Apokryphen
<i>NCBC</i>	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
<i>NIDB</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of the Bible</i>
<i>NIGTC</i>	New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NOMO</i>	Der Nahe Osten und der Mittlere Osten
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>NovTSup</i>	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
<i>NRSV</i>	New Revised Standard Version
<i>NT</i>	New Testament
<i>NTR</i>	New Testament Readings
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>

<i>Numen</i>	<i>Numen: International Review for the History of Religions</i>
ODCC	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church</i>
ONS	Origini Nuova Serie
PACE	Project on Ancient Cultural Engagement
PETSE	Papers of the Estonian Theological Society in Exile
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PHC	A People's History of Christianity
<i>Prooftexts</i>	<i>Prooftexts</i>
PS	<i>Patriologia Syriaca</i>
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
REA	<i>Revue des Études Anciennes</i>
RESAA	<i>RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics</i>
RFCC	Religion in the First Christian Centuries
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLABib	Society of Biblical Literature Academia Biblica
SBLCA	Society of Biblical Literature Centennial Addresses
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLEJL	Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and Its Literature
SBSBS	Society of Biblical Literature Sources for Biblical Study
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SCHT	Studies in Christian History and Thought
SCSCO	Secrétariat du Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
<i>SE</i>	<i>Studia Evangelica</i>
<i>SecCent</i>	<i>Second Century</i>
<i>Semeia</i>	<i>Semeia</i>
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica
<i>Signs</i>	<i>Signs</i>
SJLA	Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and its World
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
<i>Spec</i>	<i>Speculum</i>
SS	Studia Sinaitica
StBL	Studies in Biblical Literature
StBP	Studia Post-biblica
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
STTS	Semitic Texts and Translation Series
T.	Tosefta
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TBN	Themes in Biblical Narrative
TENTS	Texts and Editions for New Testament Study
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TSA	Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
TSB	The Scholars Bible
<i>TSK</i>	<i>Theologische Studien und Kritiken</i>
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Altchristlichen Literatur

VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VCSup	Supplements to <i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAC	<i>Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum</i>
ZKG	<i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i>
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

Introduction

Second only to her son Jesus, Mary easily stands as one of the most popular figures in Christian tradition. Despite the scant information provided about her in the Gospels of Matthew (Matt 1–2) and Luke (Luke 1–2),¹ Mary has been the subject of much scholarship, especially in relation to claims about her paradoxical status as ever-virgin and mother of the messiah. Likewise, a great number of studies have explored the history of Mary's characterization in Christian literature, art, and music from Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages.² Much less attention, however, has been

¹ See further, e.g., Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 25–26; idem, ed., *Mary in the New Testament* (New York: Fortress, 1978); Bertrand Buby, *Mary of Galilee: Mary in the New Testament* (New York: Alba House, 1994); C.T. Davis, "The Fulfillment of Creation: A Study of Matthew's Genealogy," *JAAR* 41 (1973): 520–35; M.D. Johnson, *The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies with Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus* (SNTSMS 8; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969); X. Léon-Dufour, *Etudes d'évangile* (Paris: Seuil, 1965), esp. chapter entitled "L'Annonce à Joseph," 65–81; K. Stendahl, "Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Mt 1–2," in *Judentum Urchristentum, Kirche: Festschrift für J. Jeremias* (ed. W. Eltester; BZNW 26; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1964), 94–105; G. Graystone, *Virgin of all Virgins: The Interpretation of Luke 1:34* (Rome: Pio X, 1968); P.S. Minear, "Luke's Use of the Birth Stories," in *Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays Presented in Honor of Paul Schubert* (ed. L.E. Keck and J.L. Martyn; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 111–30; S. Lyonnet, "Le récit de l'annonciation et la maternité divine de la Sainte Vierge," *AC* 66 (1956): 33–48.

² E.g., Jaroslav Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries: Her Place in the History of Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 2–3; Hilda C. Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (2 vols.; New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963, 1965); Thomas Livius, *The Blessed Virgin in the Fathers of the First Six Centuries* (London: Burns and Oates, 1893); Rudolph Yanney, "Saint Mary and Eve in the Church Fathers," *CCR* 25.4 (2004): 116–17; Robert B. Eno, "Mary and her Role in Patristic Theology," in *The One Mediator, the Saint, and Mary* (ed. H.G. Anderson; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1992), 159–76. For an introduction to the Virgin in art see G. Schiller's *Iconography of Christian Art*, vol. 1 (trans. J. Seligman; New York: New York Graphic Society, 1971), 13, 94–114; A. Grabar, *Christian Iconography: A Study of its Origins* (Bollingen Art Series 35.10; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 13. Mary's popularity in music and art is, arguably, unmatched by any other single figure in Western history. In art, the Vir-

given to narratives about Mary in the so-called “New Testament apocrypha.”³ Despite the influence of early “apocryphal” narratives on later literary and artistic representations of Mary, such texts have been relatively neglected until very recently. However, recent scholarship has seen a rise in the value of apocryphal literature for not only providing a more reliable picture of Mary, but also serving as an important window into the formative periods of early Christianity and its relationship to Judaism.⁴

gin is often portrayed holding the Christ Child; the earliest representation of the Madonna and child may be the second century painting in the Catacomb of Priscilla, Rome. Other important representations include Cimabue’s thirteenth century painting entitled *Maesta of Santa Trinita Madonna* in Florence, Giotto’s ca. 1310 painting, *Ognissanti or Enthroned Madonna* in Florence, and Duccio’s early fourteenth century painting entitled *Maesta*. Among the most popular of Marian art is the collection of mosaics found in the church in Chora in Istanbul, at which the entire narrative of the *Protevangelium of James* is visually presented. In medieval Europe, the development of the typology of Eve, the disobedient and sinful mother of Cain, and Mary, the obedient and chaste mother of Christ, was also enthusiastically explored not only in literature, but also within art. One of the most popular motifs, which became well known in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, is of Mary treading on the head of the serpent and reversing the sin of Eve. On the iconographic motif of Mary trampling the heads of snakes, dragons, and other like creatures, see Henry Kraus, “Eve and Mary: Conflicting Images of Medieval Women,” in *Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany* (ed. Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard; Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1982), 79–100; Nicholas Perry and Loreto Echeverria, *Under the Heel of Mary* (New York: Routledge, 1988); Annette Y. Reed, “Blessing the Serpent and Treading on Its Head: Marian Typology in the S. Marco Creation Cupola,” *Gesta* 46.1 (2008): 41–58. With respect to Mary’s popularity in music, Giuseppe Verdi’s composition of *Ave Maria* in 1889 and *Stabat Mater* in 1897, Johann Sebastian Bach’s *Magnificat* in 1723, and Claudio Monteverdi’s *Vespro Della Beata Vergine* (Vespers of the Blessed Virgin) in 1610, are but a few examples of the vast array of music devoted to the Virgin.

³ For discussions of the use of the term “apocrypha” for a category of writings and the problems that it raises, see Wilhelm Schneemelcher ed., *New Testament Apocrypha: Gospels and Related Writings*, vol. 1 (London: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 9–15; E. Junod, “La littérature apocryphe chrétienne constitue-t-elle un objet d’études?,” *REA* 93 (1991): 397–414; idem, “Apocryphes du Nouveau Testament: Une appellation erronée et une collection artificielle,” *Apocrypha* 3 (1992): 17–46; P. Piovanelli, “Qu’est-ce qu’un ‘écrit apocryphe chrétien,’ et comment ça marche? Quelques suggestions pour une herméneutique apocryphe,” in *Pierre Geoltrain ou comment “faire l’histoire” des religions: Le chantier des “origines,” les méthodes du doute, et la conversation contemporaine entre disciplines* (ed. S.C. Mimouni and I. Ullern-Weité; Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 173–87.

⁴ E.g., Stephen Shoemaker, *The Ancient Traditions of the Virgin Mary’s Dormition and Assumption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); idem “The Virgin Mary in the Ministry of Jesus and the Early Church according to the Earliest Life of the Virgin,” *HTR* 98.4 (2005): 441–67; see also idem, “Between Scripture and Tradition: The Marian Apocrypha of Early Christianity,” in *The Reception and Interpretation of the Bible in Late Antiquity. Proceedings of the Montréal Colloquium in Honour of Charles Kannen-*

In accordance with the view that “apocryphal” texts can offer much in the way of helping modern scholars piece together a more accurate understanding of the Jewish environment of early Christian thought in general, and a better understanding of Mary in particular, this study offers an analysis of the depiction of Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the apocryphal *Protevangelium of James*. The *Protevangelium of James* dates from the second or third century CE⁵ and is arguably the most ancient surviving source that exhibits profound and concentrated interest in the character of Mary for her own sake. She is, in fact, the text’s protagonist, and the narrative provides an extensive account of her life, including the events surrounding her conception and birth (*Prot. Jas.* 1–5).⁶ Although the *Protevangelium of James* is often cited as influential for later Christian reflection about Mary, gender, and virginity,⁷ it has rarely been studied for its own sake. Specialist studies of the *Protevangelium of James*, moreover, have tended to focus on its complex textual-history and/or on the debated questions of its theological function and date.⁸ What has been lacking, however, is a sustained analysis of its narrative and literary features, particularly as they contribute to its portrait of Mary.

giesser, 11–13 October 2006 (ed. Lorenzo DiTommaso and Lucian Turcescu; BAC 6; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 491–510 and Enrico Norelli’s important survey on Marian Apocrypha; *Marie des Apocryphes: Enquête sur la mère de Jésus dans le christianisme antique* (CA 1; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2009). Cornelia Horn’s studies on the reception history of the *Protevangelium of James* (“Intersections: The Reception History of the Protevangelium of James in Sources from the Christian East and in the Qur’ān,” *Apocrypha* 17 [2006]: 113–50) also examine the various aspects of Marian apocrypha.

⁵ See Chapter One for a detailed discussion of the debates about its date.

⁶ As noted below, all citations of the *Protevangelium of James*, unless otherwise indicated, reflect the chapter and verse divisions in Ronald F. Hock, *The Infancy Gospels of James and Thomas* (TSB 2; Santa Rosa, Calif.: Polebridge, 1995), 32–77.

⁷ E.g., Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (LHR 13; New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 273–74; Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries*, 74; Beverly R. Gaventa, *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 100–125; Mary F. Foskett, *A Virgin Conceived: Mary and Classical Representations of Virginity* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2002), 141–64.

⁸ E.g., Oscar Cullmann, “The Protevangelium of James,” in *New Testament Apocrypha: Gospels and Related Writings*, vol. 1, 421 on date, 423–24 on provenance; Hock, *Infancy Gospel of James*, 11 on date, 12 on provenance; Émile de Strycker, “Le Protévangile de Jacques: Problèmes, Critiques et Exégétiques,” in *Studia Evangelica III* (ed. F. Cross; TUGAL 88; Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1964), 418; E. Cothenet, “Le Protévangile de Jacques: Origine, Genre et Signification d’un Premier Midrash Chrétien sur la Nativité de Marie,” *ANRW* 2.25.6 (1998), 4257 on date, 4267 on provenance; and Ron Cameron, *The Other Gospels: Non-Canonical Texts* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1982), 108.

Towards this goal, my study will investigate the *Protevangelium of James*' characterization of Mary by means of a focus on the theme of purity. A number of scholars have noticed the significance of this theme in the text.⁹ Peter Brown, for instance, observes that the "narrative already presented Mary as a human creature totally enclosed in sacred space."¹⁰ Likewise, Beverly R. Gaventa notes that the "story itself abounds with the language of purity," adopting the phrase "sacred purity" to describe the manner in which the *Protevangelium of James* portrays Mary.¹¹

Although many scholars have thus pointed to the text's special interest in Mary's purity, few inquiries into this theme have gone beyond the motif of virginity. Even less has been done to investigate how the theme of purity operates in the narrative as a whole. In this study I suggest that purity is a unifying theme throughout the *Protevangelium of James*, not limited simply to the events immediately surrounding Jesus' birth; rather, the idea of purity dominates the entire narrative and is central to its structure. The *Protevangelium of James* explores a variety of ideas concerning Mary's purity, from both ontological and situational perspectives. From the homemade sanctuary created for Mary by her mother Anna (*Prot. Jas.* 6:4–5) to the sanctuary of the Jerusalem Temple (*Prot. Jas.* 7:4–6), Mary's living spaces and arenas of social interaction are depicted as free from the common and unclean, and they are said to be maintained in this manner throughout her life. According to the *Protevangelium of James*, her status as a virgin also remains constant. In the text, Mary's virginity is questioned three times and is twice tested publicly (*Prot. Jas.* 15:9–13; 20:1–4), and she proves that she is a virgin before, during, and after the birth of Jesus (*Prot. Jas.* 11:5; 12–19; 20:1–4). The treatment of Mary's pre- and post-partum virginity in the *Protevangelium of James* greatly influenced later Christian tradition, and this element of the text has been widely noted in modern scholarship.¹² I will propose, however, that the assertion of Mary's virginity is just one aspect of the text's broader attempt to celebrate Mary by depicting her as pure.

⁹ See e.g., Hock, *Infancy Gospel of James*, 16; Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 425; H.R. Smid, *Protevangelium Jacobi: A Commentary* (ANT 1; Assen: Van Gorcum, 1965), 174; Foskett, *Virgin Conceived*, 141–64; and discussion below.

¹⁰ Brown, *Body and Society*, 273.

¹¹ Gaventa, *Mary*, 109–10.

¹² See, e.g., Pelikan, *Mary Through the Centuries*, 113–22, and the essays in Amy-Jill Levine and Maria Mayo Robbins, eds., *The Feminist Companion to Mariology* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2005), especially John Dominic Crossan, "Virgin Mother or Bastard Child?," 37–55; Pieter W. van der Horst, "Sex, Birth, Purity and Asceticism in the *Protevangelium Jacobi*," 56–66; Foskett, "Virginity as Purity in the *Protevangelium of James*," 67–76; and George Themelis Zervos, "Christmas with Salome," 77–98.

At the same time, I focus on the place of purity in the *Protevangelium of James* in order to shed fresh perspective on debates about the date and provenance of the text, and on the discussion of its relationships to other Jewish and Christian traditions. To expound upon Mary's purity, the *Protevangelium of James* draws multiple motifs and models from traditions about women, childbirth, and the Temple in the LXX, on the one hand, and from descriptions of Mary in Gospel traditions (esp., Matthew, Luke, and/or an early harmony combining them), on the other. Attention to such intertextual connections may help illuminate the text's portrayal of Mary and its characterization of female purity and sexuality, as well as the cultural contexts and literary conventions that may have informed them. In addition, a focus on the theme of purity may open the way for investigating the *Protevangelium of James* in relation to the Judaism of its own time (i.e., second to third century CE). Just as Mary's connection to Judaism is explored in the text primarily by means of the theme of ritual purity and in relation to the Temple, so an analysis of the narrative depiction of this connection may shed new light on the aims and context of the *Protevangelium of James* itself. In particular, such an approach may allow for a fresh perspective on the text's relationship to early rabbinic Judaism and Syrian Christianity,¹³ which may in turn shed new light on long-standing debates about the narrative's date and provenance as well as its so-called "Jewish-Christian" character.

By exploring such connections, my goal is to contribute not only to research on the *Protevangelium of James*, early Jewish/Christian relations, and the history of biblical interpretation, but also to research on the development of Mariology and the range of early Jewish and Christian attitudes towards gender, the body, purity, family, and sexuality. I propose, in particular, that the theme of purity may be pivotal for the text's presentation of Mary as a paradigm for other (Christ-believing)¹⁴ women to follow. In the *Protevangelium of James*, Mary seems to be depicted as exempt from all impurities except for one; the text, as we shall see, appears to imply that

¹³ I have chosen to use the term "Syria" and "Syrian" to cover a broad geographical and cultural area extending beyond the boundaries of the Roman province of Syria in accordance with Kevin Butcher who writes, "Syria is an ill-defined, impure geographical notion which accords well with the complex and ill-defined social and religious identities..." which I consider in this study. In doing so, references to Syriac Christianity specifically reference those sources or writings that were written in Syriac, all of which are a subset of Syrian Christianity. See Kevin Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), 10 ff.

¹⁴ Particularly by virtue of the fluidity in the nature and range of biblically-based religious identities in the second and third centuries, it may be misleading to apply the term "Christian" to this text; see further discussion of the *Protevangelium of James* and Judaism in Chapter One and my note on terminology below.

she menstruates (*Prot. Jas.* 8:3–5). Even as the assertion of Mary’s extreme purity functions to set her apart as unique, this allusion to her menstruation may function as a way to allow her reconnection with, and accessibility to, other women. The text’s concern for menstrual impurity, moreover, may help to shed light on the cultural context in which the text took form – pointing, in particular, to a Syrian Christian context with some cultural proximity to Jewish groups for whom issues of women’s ritual purity were significant.

A. Textual History and Witnesses

Despite its exclusion from the NT canon, the *Protevangelium of James* survives in a large number of manuscripts and versions. In his 1956 dissertation, for instance, Boyd Lee Daniels describes the *Protevangelium of James* as one of “the oldest and most influential writings... [that] was more popular than most of the apocrypha.”¹⁵ The text survives in multiple languages, including Greek, Syriac, Georgian, Latin, Armenian, Arabic, Coptic, Ethiopic, and Slavonic.¹⁶ In addition, Oscar Cullmann proposes that the *Protevangelium of James* may have been integrated into early liturgical collections.¹⁷ Even as the wealth of textual witnesses attests the popularity of the *Protevangelium of James* in pre-modern times, it also poses a challenge for current scholarly attempts at literary analysis. There is, as Hans-Josef Klauck notes, much textual variation and fluidity among the witnesses: “we find abbreviations, expansions and paraphrases, and even the oldest textual witness, PBodmer V, displays traces of considerable interventions.”¹⁸ Scholars generally accept that the *Protevangelium of James* was originally composed in Greek.¹⁹ C. Tischendorf’s 1876 edition

¹⁵ Boyd Lee Daniels, “The Greek Manuscript Tradition of the Protevangelium of Jacobi” (2 vols.; PhD Diss., Duke University, 1956), 32.

¹⁶ Cullmann, “Protevangelium of James,” 421–38. For a list of the most important manuscripts, versions, and translations, in both ancient and modern languages, see J.K. Elliott’s *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 52–57. Note that Elliott’s translation there is based on Tischendorf’s reconstruction of the Greek text.

¹⁷ Cullmann, “Protevangelium of James,” 421–38.

¹⁸ Hans-Josef Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels: An Introduction* (trans. Brian McNeil; New York: T&T Clark Intl., 2003), 65.

¹⁹ Notably, two German scholars writing independently of one another at the end of the nineteenth century challenged this view. Ludwig Conrady (“Das Protevangelium Jacobi in neuer Beleuchtung,” *TSK* 62 [1889]: 728–84) and Alfred Resch (*Das Kindheitsevangelium nach Lucas und Mattheus* [TU 10. Band, Heft 5; Leipzig: Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung, 1897]) argued in favour of a Hebrew original instead. Resch went so far

was based on the fifty Greek manuscripts of the text known at the time.²⁰ Since then, approximately 90 additional Greek manuscripts have been identified.²¹ Of the numerous manuscripts that have been unearthed, Bodmer Papyrus V is the earliest, dating to the fourth century; this manuscript is, accordingly, the most important for the study of the original Greek text.²²

Before the discovery of this papyrus in 1952,²³ Tischendorf's critical edition of the text had been accepted as the standard edition.²⁴ In 1958, M. Testuz first published the text of this newly-discovered papyrus in *Papyrus Bodmer V: Nativité de Marie*. In 1961, Émile de Strycker integrated the evidence of Bodmer Papyrus V into a new critical edition (*La forme la plus ancienne du Protévangile de Jacques. Recherches sur le Papyrus Bodmer 5 avec une édition critique du texte et une traduction annotée*), in a provisional attempt to reconstruct the most ancient recoverable form of

to claim that a Hebrew original was used, not only by the author of the *Protevangeliium of James*, but also by NT gospel writers like Luke. This theory, however, has not gained much credence.

²⁰ Daniels, "Greek Manuscript Tradition," 4.

²¹ In his study of the Greek manuscripts of the *Protevangeliium of James*, Daniels provides a systematic list of MSS by number and location; "Greek Manuscript Tradition," 40–52. See also de Strycker, "Die Griechischen Handschriften des Protevangeliium Iacobi," in *Griechische Kodikologie und Textüberlieferung* (ed. D. Harlfinger; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1980), 577–612. In this study, de Strycker investigates the Greek manuscript tradition and categorizes the various MSS into five families; on this see esp. 588–607.

²² M. Testuz dates the Bodmer Papyrus V to the third century CE, in contrast to Cullmann and Klauck, who date it to the fourth century. See Testuz, ed. and trans., *Papyrus Bodmer V: Nativité de Marie* (Cologne-Geneva: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1958), 23–26; Cullmann, "Protevangeliium of James," 421–38; Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 65. On the entire Bodmer Papyrus V and the relationship between the *Protevangeliium of James* to the other writings found in this manuscript, see Tobias Nicklas and Tommy Wasserman, "Theologische Linien im Codex Bodmer Miscellani," in *New Testament Manuscripts: Their Texts and Their World* (ed. Thomas J. Kraus and Tobias Nicklas; TENTS 2; Leiden: Brill, 2006). On their discussion of the *Protevangeliium of James*, see esp. 171–73.

²³ The Papyrus Bodmer V is one of the twenty-two papyri found at Pabau near Dishna, Egypt in 1952. Interestingly, these papyri vary in content ranging from the Hebrew Bible and New Testament and early Christian literature to Homer's *Iliad* and Meander's comedies. All but two papyri are located at the Bibliotheca Bodmeriana in Cologne, Switzerland (near Geneva; P74 and P75 are at the Vatican Library). For an introduction to the Bodmer discovery, see Albert Pietersma, "Bodmer Papyri," *ABD* 1:766–77; James M. Robinson, *The Story of the Bodmer Papyri, the First Christian Monastic* (Nashville: Cascade, 1987, 2007).

²⁴ C. Tischendorf, ed., *Evangelia Apocrypha* (Leipzig: Avenarius and Mendelssohn, 1876), 1–50.

the text.²⁵ In 1995, Ronald F. Hock published a translation of the *Protevangeliem of James*, based mainly on de Strycker's edition, albeit with some departures.²⁶ Most notably, Hock was able to make use of Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 3524, a sixth century Greek fragment discovered in 1896–7 that covers a portion of Chapter 25 of the *Protevangeliem of James*.²⁷

The literary analysis in the present study is based on Hock's edition of the Greek. Hock essentially uses de Strycker's text based on the Bodmer Papyrus V,²⁸ which he admits is provisional, but still the standard edition. Rather than use Hock's English translation, however, I provide my own renderings from his edition with reference to others where relevant. Hock's translation is aimed at accessibility for a contemporary non-specialist audience. Although it is very readable, his translation is – as J.K. Elliott notes – “not always close to the Greek”; for example, “Biblicisms... [and] verbs of saying are sometimes avoided in the interest of raciness.”²⁹ For the purposes of this study, however, a more literal translation is apt, as literary analysis cannot be pursued apart from attention to the specific word choices in the Greek itself.

For this reason, I quote from the Greek and include English translations of the relevant passages. For both, I also consult Hock's extensive textual notes, particularly when he departs from de Strycker's determination of the earliest recoverable reading. In my citations of the *Protevangeliem of James*, I follow Hock's system of splitting the text by chapter and verse,³⁰ rather than de Strycker's use of the page and line numbers of the Bodmer papyrus.³¹ Throughout this study, variants between major manuscript tradi-

²⁵ See the introduction of de Strycker's critical edition of the Greek *Protevangeliem of James* in *La Forme la Plus Ancienne du Protévangile de Jacques* (SH 33; Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1961), 13–63, and Cullmann, “Protevangeliem of James,” 421–22.

²⁶ Hock, *Infancy Gospel of James*, 28–30.

²⁷ A.K. Bowman, et al, trans. and eds., “Papyri Oxyrhynchus. 3524: Protevangeliem of James 25:1,” in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 50 (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1983), 8–12.

²⁸ For readings unique to the Bodmer Papyrus V, I have based my consideration on Testuz's edition and translation.

²⁹ E.g., “behold” is variously translated as “there it was,” “right then,” “suddenly,” “abruptly”; while “woe” at 20:3 is translated as “I'll be damned.” See Elliott's review in *NovT* 39.3 (2006): 299–300. Note that the English version in Schneemelcher's *New Testament Apocrypha* is an English translation of Cullmann's German translation (i.e., rather than a direct translation from Greek to English).

³⁰ Hock has retained Tischendorf's chapter divisions but the numbering system there is his own.

³¹ Hock's division of the text differs slightly from that used in Cullmann's translation published in Schneemelcher's *New Testament Apocrypha*.

tions will be noted only in cases where they affect the meaning of key passages pertaining to the theme of purity.

Next to the Greek original, the surviving fragments of the Syriac translation are among the oldest and most important witnesses to the text. The Syriac survives in four manuscripts, commonly referred to as Syr^a, Syr^b, Syr^c, and Syr^d.³² The earliest of these, Syr^a, dates to the fifth century.³³ The Syriac translation first came to the attention of scholars in 1865, when William Wright published a sixth century fragment from the British Museum (Add. 14484) that contains portions of the second half of the *Protevangelium of James* (i.e., ch. 17 to end).³⁴ Wright suggested that this Syriac fragment, now known as Syr^b, formed an important witness to the original Greek text.³⁵ The manuscript fragment British Museum Add. 14484 was reprinted by E. Wallis Budge in 1899.³⁶

In 1895, Agnes Smith Lewis purchased a collection of texts found on vellum palimpsest in Suez, which she would publish in 1902. On the surface of this particular manuscript lay a collection of writings on the works of Church Fathers (e.g., Athanasius, John Chrysostom) in Arabic script dating from the ninth or tenth century. Preserved underneath were sections from a Syriac version of the *Protevangelium of James* and the *Transitus Mariae*,³⁷ the latter treating the life of Mary with specific focus on the As-

³² Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 422–23.

³³ De Strycker has argued that all four manuscripts (however fragmented) are from a single version, based on the fact that they all can be easily arranged in their proper sequence (*La Forme la Plus Ancienne*, 353). In Agnes Smith Lewis' manuscript, Syr^a is used as the base, with Syr^b cited for its variants. P. Quecke has done the same work for Syr^c and Syr^d, respectively. See de Strycker, *La Forme la Plus Ancienne*, 35, 353–55, for specific details on each of the four Syriac manuscripts and n. 37 below on Smith Lewis' work.

³⁴ William Wright collected, edited, and translated Syriac manuscripts from the British Museum in *Contributions to the Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1865).

³⁵ Wright dated this Syriac fragment to the second half of the sixth century; see *Contributions to Apocryphal Literature*, 6 of preface. See pages 1–5 of the main text for his translation of this Syriac fragment.

³⁶ E. Wallis Budge, *The History of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the History of the Likeness of Christ* (London, 1899), reprinted as *History of the Blessed Virgin in English and Syriac* (STTS 4–5; New York: AMS, 1976).

³⁷ Smith Lewis, *Apocrypha Syriaca. The Protevangelium Jacobi and Transitus Mariae with Texts from the Septuagint, the Corân, the Peschitta, and from a Syriac Hymn in a Syro-Arabic Palimpsest of the Fifth and Other Centuries, and an Appendix of Palestinian Syriac Texts from the Taylor-Schechter Collection* (SS 11; London: C.J. Clay and Sons, Cambridge University Press, 1902), xviii. This collection of writings also includes portions of an Arabic text of the Qur'an, which can be dated between the late seventh and the middle of the eighth centuries.

sumption and Dormition.³⁸ This Syriac version of the *Protevangelium of James* was soon found to predate the fragment published by Wright; Smith Lewis dated it “possibly to the latter half of the fifth century; or at the latest to the beginning of the sixth.”³⁹ In her translation of the manuscript, which is now known as Syr^a, Smith Lewis provides the variants of Syr^b in her footnotes. With respect to her translation, however, de Strycker noted already that “n’est pas toujours entièrement exacte.”⁴⁰

The third Syriac manuscript, known as Syr^c, consists of two unconnected leaflets published by Eduard Sachau in 1899.⁴¹ Though Sachau does not indicate the date, E. Nestle was able to provide more information on its content with notes on the Greek in a 1902 article.⁴² The fourth and last manuscript, now called Syr^d, is a Syriac fragment that is inserted in Budge’s *Vie Syriacque de la Bienheureuse Vierge Marie*⁴³ and contains sections from 43:8 to 49:1, according to de Strycker’s numbering system.⁴⁴

Modern studies of the Syriac text have been limited, particularly in comparison to the attention given to the Greek text. Recently, however, Cornelia Horn has investigated its development and reception history.⁴⁵ Although Horn examines the transmission of the *Protevangelium of James* in order to illuminate other Marian apocrypha (e.g., *Lives of Mary/The Life of the Virgin*), her work confirms the significance of the Syriac version, both for our understanding of the earliest recoverable text of the *Protevangelium of James* and for our knowledge of its rich reception-history.

³⁸ See esp. Cornelia Horn, “From Model Virgin to Maternal Intercessor: Mary, Children, and Family Problems in Late Antique Infancy Gospel Traditions and their Medieval Trajectories,” in *Christian Apocryphal Texts for the New Millennium: Achievements, Prospects, and Challenges. Proceedings of the International Workshop Held in Ottawa, September 30th – October 1st, 2006* (ed. Pierluigi Piovanelli; Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha; Leuven: Peeters, forthcoming). For further studies on the *Transitus Mariae* literature, see also Shoemaker, *Mary’s Dormition and Assumption*, 49–51, for an introduction to earliest Dormition Traditions.

³⁹ Smith Lewis, *Apocrypha Syriaca*, x. See also Horn’s study on the history of transmission and the connection between the *Protevangelium of James* and the *Transitus Mariae* in respect to “recycled apocrypha.” Horn posits four stages of transmission for the History of the Virgin Mary and addresses questions concerning the manuscript history surrounding the sources for the tradition of the Lives of Mary; see her “Model Virgin,” 1–44.

⁴⁰ De Strycker, *La Forme La Plus Ancienne*, 35–36; Émile Amann, *Le Protévangile de Jacques et Ses Remaniements Latins* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1910), 65–67.

⁴¹ Eduard Sachau, *Verzeichniss der Syrischen Handschriften der kgl. Bibliothek zu Berlin*, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1899), 676.

⁴² E. Nestle, “Ein Syrisches Bruchstück aus dem Protevangelium Jacobi,” *ZNW* 3 (1902): 86–87.

⁴³ Budge, *Vie Syriacque de la Bienheureuse Vierge Marie* (London, 1899).

⁴⁴ De Strycker, *La Forme La Plus Ancienne*, 35–36.

⁴⁵ Horn, “Intersections,” 113–50.

The many surviving manuscripts and numerous translations of the *Protevangelium of James* confirm that its textual form was never wholly fixed. The rich evidence of its redaction-history and reception-history, however, also points to its continued popularity, particularly among Christians in the Eastern Church. Traditions from the *Protevangelium of James* were so well-known among eastern Christian communities that when the text was rediscovered and made accessible to the West by the French Humanist Guillaume Postel in the middle of the sixteenth century, he assumed that it was canonical in eastern orthodox churches.⁴⁶ Its early acceptance in the East is also suggested by its adoption into the liturgical year. Already by the fifth century CE, December 8th was widely celebrated as the Feast of the Nativity of Mary; by the eighth century, this holy day seems to have been almost universally observed.⁴⁷ On such occasions, portions of the *Protevangelium of James* seem to have been read and incorporated into sermons.⁴⁸

By contrast, the *Protevangelium of James*' transmission in western Christendom is more complex. There is only one extant Latin manuscript, which dates to the ninth century.⁴⁹ In the Latin West, the influence of the text seems to have been indirect, mostly mediated by other Marian apocrypha, like Pseudo-Matthew.⁵⁰ There are a number of possible reasons for the relative lack of popularity of the *Protevangelium of James* in the Latin West. During the fourth and fifth centuries, Jerome criticized the text because of its interpretation of the Gospels' references to the "brothers and

⁴⁶ On Guillaume Postel and his discovery of the *Protevangelium of James*, see Irena Backus, "Guillaume Postel, Théodore Bibliander et le 'Protévangile de Jacques,'" *Apocrypha* 6 (1995): 7–65; Daniels, "Greek Manuscript Tradition," 1–4; W.J. Bouwsma, *Concordia Mundi: The Career and Thought of Guillaume Postel 1510–1581* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), 16.

⁴⁷ Daniels, "Greek Manuscript Tradition," 12.

⁴⁸ Daniels posits that the popularity of this text was so great that it influenced other sacred observance days, including the Feast of Joachim and Anna (celebrated on the 9th of September) and the Feast of the Presentation of the Mary in the Temple (on the 21st of November); "Greek Manuscript Tradition," 11–13.

⁴⁹ De Strycker, "Une Ancienne Version Latine du Protévangile de Jacques avec des extraits de la Vulgate de Matthieu 1–2 et Luc 1–2," *AnBoll* 83 (1965): 365–402. On the Latin reception of the *Protevangelium of James*, see Jean-Daniel Kaestli, "Le *Protévangile de Jacques* latin dans l'homélie *Inquirendum est* pour la fête de la Nativité de Marie," *Apocrypha* 12 (2001): 99–153.

⁵⁰ De Strycker, "Ancienne Version Latine," 365–402; Amann, *Jacques et ses Remaniements Latins* for an introduction to, translation of, and commentary on the Latin version of the *Protevangelium of James*. Cf. also J. Gijssels, "Het Protevangelium Jacobi in het Latijn," *AnCl* 50 (1981): 351–66.

sisters” of Jesus (*Helv.* 11–16).⁵¹ The *Protevangelium of James* refers to Jesus’ “brothers” as the sons of Joseph from a previous marriage – an interpretation that was also widely accepted by eastern Christians.⁵² Jerome, by contrast, insisted that all early references to Jesus’ “brothers and sisters” should be interpreted as his cousins.⁵³ Convinced by Jerome’s assessment, Popes Damascus and Innocent condemned the *Protevangelium of James* in the fourth and fifth centuries.⁵⁴ Likewise, the so-called *Gelasian Decree* lists the book among *de libris... non recipiendis* (“books... not to be admitted”), along with other infancy gospels.⁵⁵ Continued attempts to suppress such traditions are suggested also by Pope Pius V’s removal of the office of St. Joachim from the Roman books of daily prayer and readings in the sixteenth century as well as by the suppression of the text of the Presentation of Mary.⁵⁶

Despite such attempts to control the *Protevangelium of James* and related infancy gospels, apocryphal reflections on Mary’s life remained popular. Although the *Protevangelium of James* does not seem to have circulated widely in Latin translation, traditions from this work were integrated into Latin infancy narratives such as the Latin Pseudo-Matthew and the *Gospel of the Nativity*. By the sixteenth century, when Postel “rediscovered” the *Protevangelium of James* and reintroduced the text into Europe, elements of the text were already familiar from Christian art and

⁵¹ Early references to Jesus’ “brothers and sisters” have been debated for centuries. As early as the fourth century CE, three distinct views emerged as possible explanations of such references. The Helvidian view held that Jesus’ brothers and sisters were in fact Mary’s and Joseph’s children (e.g., countered by Jerome in *Helv.* 11–17; cf. Matt 15:55–56; Mark 6:3); the third century North African Christian Tertullian, as well as a number of modern scholars, supports this thesis (*Carn. Chr.* 3). The second view was initially proposed first by the late fourth century heresiologist Epiphanius of Salamis, namely, that they were the children of Joseph from a previous marriage (*Pan.* 78.8.1; 78.9.6). Finally, the fifth century Jerome held that the brothers and sisters of Jesus were not Jesus’ siblings but rather his cousins; the children belonged to Mary, the wife of Alphaeus, and sister-in-law of the Virgin Mary. For a discussion on these three views, see John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 316–32; Richard Bauckham, “The Brother and Sisters of Jesus: An Epiphanian Response to John P. Meier,” *CBQ* 56 (1994): 686–700.

⁵² Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 65.

⁵³ See Jerome, *Helv.* 11–16; also Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 65.

⁵⁴ Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 65; also Cullmann, “Protevangelium of James,” 423.

⁵⁵ Klauck, *Apocryphal Gospels*, 65. The irony, of course, is that the so-called Gelasian Decree is a sixth century forgery (perhaps composed in Gaul) that claims to have been penned by Gelasius, bishop of Rome in 492–96 CE. In other words, this text that condemns apocrypha is itself apocryphal.

⁵⁶ Cullmann, “Protevangelium of James,” 418.

literature.⁵⁷ Even Pius V's removal of St. Joachim's office and the Presentation of Mary from the breviary in the sixteenth century was eventually overturned and the prayers restored.⁵⁸

B. The Protevangelium of James in Modern Scholarship

Despite its apparent popularity in pre-modern times, the *Protevangelium of James* has not garnered extensive scholarly interest until relatively recently. In comparison to NT literature and Patristic writings, for instance, very little has been written about the *Protevangelium of James*. Moreover, as noted above, past research focused primarily on issues such as its transmission, versions, date, authorship, and provenance.⁵⁹

Concurrent with the growth of scholarly interest in Christian apocrypha in the decades after the discovery of the Nag Hammadi codices in 1945, a new concern for the literary aspects of the *Protevangelium of James* has arisen.⁶⁰ Studies have explored the narrative's themes and unique features as well as its use of literary techniques. François Bovon, for instance, has examined the literary trope of "suspension of time" in *Protevangelium of James* 18 as well as argued that its overall narrative structure conveys a coherent meaning.⁶¹ Likewise, John L. Allen discusses questions about its literary genre challenging the traditional categorization of the text as an "infancy gospel" and suggesting *historia* may be a less anachronistic classification.⁶²

Another area of recent research has been the text's intertextual relationships. Scholars have long noted that the vocabulary found in the *Protevangelium of James* consists mainly of terms also found in the LXX.⁶³ In his

⁵⁷ For the influence of the *Protevangelium of James* on Christian art and literature, see n. 2 above.

⁵⁸ Cullmann, "Protevangelium of James," 418.

⁵⁹ This research will be surveyed in Chapter One below.

⁶⁰ 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 *JR* 79 (1999): 452–57.

⁶¹ François Bovon, "The Suspension of Time in Chapter 18 of Protevangelium Jacobi," in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honour of Helmut Koester* (ed. B. Pearson; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 393–405.

⁶² John L. Allen, "The 'Protevangelium of James' as an 'Historia': The Insufficiency of the 'Infancy Gospel' Category," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers* (ed. E. Lovering; Atlanta: Scholars, 1991), 508–17.

⁶³ Smid, *Protevangelium Jacobi*, 9–12; See also, Amann, *Jacques et ses Remanements Latins*, 62, 129, 180, 185, 229, 271; P. van Stempvoort, "The Protevangelium Jacobi: The Sources of its Theme and Style and Their Bearing on its Date," in *Studia*