

LIV INGEBORG LIED

Invisible Manuscripts:  
Textual Scholarship and  
the Survival of 2 Baruch

*Studien und Texte zu  
Antike und Christentum*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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Mohr Siebeck

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## Preface and Acknowledgements

This is a volume that has been a long time in the making. The initial idea of writing about the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch was first conceived back in 2005, when I was still a PhD-student at the University of Bergen (Norway) and about to finish my dissertation on the conceptions of the Land of Israel in that book. I was heavily invested then in understanding 2 Baruch in the context of the literary world of early Judaism. To be honest, I had not given the manuscripts that preserve 2 Baruch much thought. I knew the manuscripts as “text witnesses,” of course, but I had neither seen nor otherwise engaged with any of them. I had never thought about the manuscripts as cultural artifacts in their own right: I knew very little about their production or the makeup of the collections of books they contained, who were their stewards, or how had they been used, interpreted and handled over time. Why should I? For my purpose back in 2005, there were perfectly fine text editions, translations and commentaries that helped me to engage with the literary contents of the text of 2 Baruch, and a facsimile edition provided me with adequate access to the main Syriac text witness. I remember being slightly annoyed when one of the professors at my *alma mater* asked me to say something about the manuscript tradition of 2 Baruch at an informal workshop organized by the research seminar that I attended at the time. I also remember very well my initial surprise and the spark of curiosity that my preparations for that small paper eventually ignited. I guess many of us who conduct research and write academic texts for a living know the feeling: that moment of pure and honest intellectual curiosity and that urge to know more – paired with a dash of shame for not knowing already. I was working on a Jewish text, presumably written in Greek or Hebrew, but the manuscripts were in Syriac and apparently Christian. I was writing about late-first or early-second-century CE literary conceptions, but the manuscripts and the texts copied in them were half a millennium younger, sometimes more. I was writing about a non-scriptural, pseudepigraphal misfit – how could it be that all the preserved manuscripts seemed to copy it among books commonly found in Old Testament codices? Why was the academic narrative about 2 Baruch so different from the world that the manuscripts hinted at for this book? Most importantly, why had I not cared to learn anything about the manuscripts until I was gently obliged to do so? Why did it take me so long to understand that manuscripts matter?

I am writing this preface in Oslo in 2020. I am aware that, with the exception

of the latter two (shame-driven) questions, these considerations were still not readily conceived and clear in my mind on that autumn day of 2005. They are retrojections, summarizing some of the main issues that have occupied me while writing this book. The considerations have grown out of my developing work on the manuscripts in various research libraries across Europe and the US, as well as my ongoing attempts to put the outcome of that work into critical dialogue with the perspectives and practices that have been, and still are, shaping textual scholarship in the fields that deal with writings such as 2 Baruch. Over the years, these have led me to work on a much broader set of writings, to crisscross academic borders, and to take on the methodological, theoretical and ethical challenges that accompany a manuscript-oriented approach to textual scholarship. My work on each of these challenges has developed into sub-projects and publications in their own right, but they have all grown out of my interest in the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch. Now, fifteen years later, these intellectual detours and byways are hopefully contributing to making the current book more interesting, more relevant and readable to a larger audience than the one that would otherwise have made a monograph on 2 Baruch a priority. In addition, by being painfully transparent about my own intellectual history here at the outset, I want to make it very clear that when I address “issues” and “gaps” in previous scholarship, I am also addressing the shortcomings of my own research record.

I would never have been able to write this book without the help, support and encouragement of a large academic community. I am forever grateful to Einar Thomassen and Ingvild Sælid Gilhus, my intellectual parents at the University of Bergen, and to Jostein Børtnes, who challenged me to look more closely at the manuscripts, thus setting off the whole undertaking.

I have written most of this volume in my office at the MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society in Oslo. In terms of thanks, there are many people to mention – all my colleagues at MF, really, but particularly these colleagues for their support of the current project: Kristin B. Aavitsland, Iselin Frydenlund, Matthew P. Monger, Brent Nongbri, Blossom Stefaniw, Esther Brownsmith, Victor Ghica, Kristin Joachimsen, Karl Olav Sandnes and Vidar L. Haanes. I also owe a great deal to other friends and colleagues, among them Hugo Lundhaug, Marianne B. Kartzow, Sissel Undheim, Aslak Rostad, Årstein Justnes, Lisbeth Mikaelson, Nils H. Korsvoll and Torleif Elgvin.

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The final revision of this monograph took place while I was a fellow at the Centre for Advanced Study at the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters (CAS) in Oslo. I am grateful to my colleagues in the Books Known Only by Title project and the staff at CAS for their generosity and backing. Thanks also to Brooke Ophoff for her help in the last stage of the editing process and to Kristin S. Eriksson for her assistance with the indices.

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Finally, thanks are due to my husband Eystein for his never-ending support, and to my sons Henning and Jørgen for sharing their childhood and adolescence with André Baruk,<sup>1</sup> that third son of mine.

MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion  
and Society, Oslo, 26 November 2020

Liv Ingeborg Lied

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<sup>1</sup> In Norwegian, “2 Baruch” reads “Andre Baruk.”



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## Abbreviations

<i>AbrN</i>	<i>Abr-Nahrain</i>
<i>AJSR</i>	<i>Association for Jewish Studies Review</i>
<i>AS</i>	<i>Aramaic Studies</i>
<i>ATA</i>	<i>Alttestamentliche Abhandlungen</i>
<i>BETL</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</i>
<i>BIFAO</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale</i>
<i>BJS</i>	<i>Brown Judaic Studies</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CRINT</i>	<i>Compendium Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum</i>
<i>CSCO</i>	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium</i>
<i>DOP</i>	<i>Dumbarton Oaks Papers</i>
<i>DSD</i>	<i>Dead Sea Discoveries</i>
<i>EJL</i>	<i>Early Judaism and Its Literature</i>
<i>GBS</i>	<i>Guides to Biblical Scholarship</i>
<i>GCS</i>	<i>Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>FRLANT</i>	<i>Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments</i>
<i>HS</i>	<i>Hebrew Studies</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCSCS</i>	<i>Journal of the Canadian Society for Coptic Studies</i>
<i>JCSSS</i>	<i>Journal of the Canadian Society for Syriac Studies</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JEastCS</i>	<i>Journal of Eastern Christian Studies</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
<i>JSHRZ-St</i>	<i>Studien zu den jüdischen Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSJSup</i>	<i>Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSP</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>JSPSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha Supplement Series</i>
<i>JSQ</i>	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>LSAWS</i>	<i>Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic</i>

LSTS	Library of Second Temple Studies
MPI	Monographs of the Peshitta Institute Leiden
<i>NedTT</i>	<i>Nederlands theologisch tijdschrift</i>
OIS	Oriental Institute Seminars
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OrChrAn	Orientalia Christiana Analecta
<i>ParOr</i>	<i>Parole de l'Orient</i>
PBA	Proceedings of the British Academy
RechBib	Recherches bibliques
<i>RevQ</i>	<i>Revue de Qumran</i>
SAC	Studies in Antiquity and Christianity
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSP	Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers
SC	Sources chrétiennes
STAC	Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum
STDJ	Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah
SVTP	Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum/Texts and Studies in Ancient Judaism
<i>TSK</i>	<i>Theologische Studien und Kritiken</i>
TUGAL	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum, Supplements
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAC</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

## *General Introduction*

### The Invisibility of Manuscripts: Tracing the Transmission of 2 Baruch – Challenging Textual Scholarship

Have you ever seen a manuscript? If you have not, I do not blame you. Although major research libraries worldwide have large collections of manuscripts in their keeping, these manuscripts have been functionally invisible in textual scholarship. For a long time, the manuscripts mattered to textual scholars primarily if they managed to make themselves transparent, efficiently guiding the scholarly gaze to a text behind and beyond them.

The current volume deals with one of the most striking omissions in the research history of 2 Baruch: *the general inattention paid to manuscripts as cultural artifacts*. Their material constitution and their production, circulation and presence in time and place, as well as their relationships with their historical stewards, remain generally untouched by textual scholars. This is an omission that research on 2 Baruch shares with scholarship on many other early Jewish books in Christian transmission. The manuscripts that preserve the extant texts of these books have certainly played a crucial role in as far as they have served as witnesses to the early text, but other aspects of their existence have generally not attracted the attention that they deserve.

In this volume, I will argue that in the case of 2 Baruch, the consequences of this inattention are far reaching. One point is that there are obvious gaps and glitches in our<sup>1</sup> knowledge about the constitution of the manuscripts that we apply as our source materials. These gaps and glitches represent important methodological challenges to the work we have already undertaken. Manuscripts are arguably much more than the text history distilled from the copies that embody it. However, since we have not studied other dimensions of the manuscripts, we do not really know what is hiding in the cracks. Another, equally important issue is that we are systematically missing out on the fas-

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<sup>1</sup> I use the pronoun “we” in this volume to refer to “we, the textual scholars.” Occasionally the context will qualify it further as “we, the textual scholars working on 2 Baruch.” I apply the term “textual scholar” to refer to a trained academic expert specializing in texts transmitted in a manuscript culture (that is, a culture in which the reproduction and multiplication of texts require manual copying). I use the term generously in the sense that I include both scholars who (mostly) produce (critical) editions and translations of texts and scholars who (mostly) identify as interpreters/exegetes of those texts.

cinating worlds of the manuscripts themselves, the communities that treasured them and the continuing life of the copies of 2 Baruch among the manuscripts' stewards. Third and finally, we have been unable to see that our research depends thoroughly on manuscripts that essentially belong to someone else. The manuscripts were produced, engaged with and owned by other communities than the ones to which scholars have typically ascribed ownership of the literary work. In the case of 2 Baruch, these communities were Christian minority communities in the Middle East, primarily Syriac Christians. It is due to their efforts that textual scholars can access 2 Baruch at all, but for more than hundred and fifty years of research history, all of this has been hidden from sight.

### The Academic Narrative of 2 Baruch

The research history of 2 Baruch starts in the 1860s when Antonio M. Ceriani identified the only known copy of the book in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan.<sup>2</sup> This first phase of the history of research of 2 Baruch coincides with a decisive period in textual scholarship. This is the period that saw the consolidation of historical-critical approaches to ancient writings and their contexts.<sup>3</sup> It is a period that promotes scientific ideals and a notion of professional practices. It sees the budding specialization of academic fields, still recognizable to us today, and its resulting division of labor.<sup>4</sup> The scholars who first published editions, translations and exegetical studies of 2 Baruch were European scholars, typically theologians and biblical scholars with Protestant or Catholic backgrounds, many of them with a pronounced scholarly interest in the Jewish context of the New

<sup>2</sup> Antonio M. Ceriani published a Latin translation of 2 Baruch in 1866 ("Apocalypsis Baruch, olim de graeco in syriacum, et nunc de syriaco in latinum translata," in *Monumenta sacra et profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae* 1.2 [Milan: Bibliotheca Ambrosianae Mediolani, 1866], 73–98). 1866 is the formal year of publication. The part containing 2 Baruch was initially published in 1865. It was rebound and republished in a larger volume containing formerly published pieces from the period 1864 to 1866.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., e.g., James Turner, *Philology: The Forgotten Origins of the Modern Humanities* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 234, 357–68; James S. Timpanaro, *The Genesis of Lachmann's Thought*, trans. and ed. Glenn W. Most (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), and Glenn Most's foreword in particular. Cf., Matthew J. Driscoll, "Words on the Page: Thoughts on Philology Old and New," in *Creating the Medieval Saga: Versions, Variability, and Editorial Interpretations of Old Norse Saga Literature*, ed. Judy Quinn and Emily Lethbridge (Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2010), 87–104 at 88–90; Jennifer Knust and Tommy Wasserman, *To Cast the First Stone: The Transmission of a Gospel Story* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 24–32; Gregory L. Cuéllar, *Empire, the British Museum, and the Making of the Biblical Scholar in the Nineteenth Century: Archival Criticism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 8, 95–103.

<sup>4</sup> Turner, *Philology*, 232–33; Lorenzo DiTommaso, "The 'Old Testament Pseudepigrapha' as Category and Corpus," in *A Guide to Early Jewish Texts and Traditions in Christian Transmission*, ed. Alexander Kulik et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 254–79 at 259–60.

Testament and Christian origins.<sup>5</sup> Their scholarship in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries benefitted greatly from the arrival in Europe of manuscripts originating from the Middle East.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the early modern and modern periods, substantial amounts of manuscripts reached European shores and provided scholars with access to the extant texts of books so far unknown or known only by title from late antique and medieval book lists and literature.<sup>7</sup> The scholars who first lay hands on the surviving copies of 2 Baruch were children of a print culture and carried its notions of authorship, text production and text transmission.<sup>8</sup> They were educated in a modernist academic culture with a general suspicion of materiality and gave priority to immaterial ideas.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the publications that they have left us hint at the influence of the

<sup>5</sup> Cf., e. g., Robert H. Charles, who in his 1896 edition of 2 Baruch states that “The Apocalypse of Baruch belongs to the first century of our era. [It is thus] contemporaneous with the chief New Testament writings. It is this fact that constitutes the chief value of the work” (*The Apocalypse of Baruch, Translated from the Syriac, Chapters I–LXXVII from the Sixth Cent. MS in the Ambrosian Library of Milan, and Chapters LXXVIII–LXXXVII – the Epistle of Baruch – from a New and Critical Text Based on Ten MSS and Published Herewith. Edited, with Introduction, Notes, and Indices* (London: Black, 1896), xvii, cf., also, vii, xi). Cf., also his *Religious Development between the Old and New Testament* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1914), 9.

<sup>6</sup> See Cuéllar, *Empire*, 6, 19–20, 124–26.

<sup>7</sup> Many of the manuscripts were acquired from monasteries in the Middle East. Others were unearthed in (archaeological) digs, many of them in Egypt. See, William Wright, “Preface,” in *Catalogue of the Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum, Part III* (London: British Museum, 1872), i–xxxiv; William Cureton, *The Festal Letters of Athanasius, Discovered in an Ancient Syriac Version* (London: Society for the Publication of Oriental Texts, 1848), i–xxxii; Bernhard P. Grenfell, “Oxyrhynchus and Its Papyri,” *Egypt Exploration Fund Archaeological Report* (1896–97): 1–12; Hugh G. Evelyn-White, *The History of the Monasteries of Nitiria and of Scetis*, part II of *The Monasteries of Wâdi 'n Natrûn* (New York: Arno Press, 1973), Columba Stewart, *Yours, Mine, or Theirs? Historical Observations on the Use, Collection and Sharing of Manuscripts in Western Europe and the Christian Orient*, *Analecta Gorgiana* 126 (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2009); David C. Parker, *Codex Sinaiticus: The Story of the World's Oldest Bible* (Peabody: Hendricksen, 2010); Janet Soskice, *The Sisters of Sinai: How Two Lady Adventurers Discovered the Hidden Gospels* (New York: Vintage, 2010); Brent Nongbri, *God's Library: The Archaeology of the Earliest Christian Manuscripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018). For an example of a travel account with particular relevance for the present volume, not the least as a case for Victorian orientalism, see Robert Curzon Jr., *Visits to Monasteries in the Levant* (London: J. Murray, 1849).

<sup>8</sup> See, e. g., the description of the inspired author who pens his book in Bruno Violet, *Die Apokalypsen des Esra und des Baruch in deutscher Gestalt*, GCS (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1924), xc. Cf., Joseph A. Dane, *The Myth of Print Culture: Essays on Evidence, Textuality, and Bibliographical Method* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); John Bryant, *The Fluid Text: A Theory of Revision and Editing for Book and Screen* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2002).

<sup>9</sup> Cf., Andreas Reckwitz, “The Status of the ‘Material’ in Theories of Culture: From ‘Social Structure’ to ‘Artefacts,’” *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 32/2 (2002): 195–217; Peter Pels, “The Modern Fear of Matter: Reflections on the Protestantism of Victorian Science,” *Material Religion* 4/3 (2008): 264–83; James W. Watts, “The Three Dimensions of Scriptures,” in *Iconic Books and Texts*, ed. James E. Watts (Sheffield: Equinox, 2013), 9–32.

colonial narratives of their day with a clear distrust in the ability of manuscripts to survive in “oriental libraries” and among their Middle Eastern guardians.<sup>10</sup>

The main features of the lingering academic narrative of 2 Baruch were established under these historical conditions. From the very beginning, and with very few exceptions along the way,<sup>11</sup> scholars have represented 2 Baruch as a Jewish book, written in Palestine and dating to the first centuries of the common era.<sup>12</sup> A source-critical approach to 2 Baruch, first proposed by Richard Kabisch, soon gave way to a conception of the book as a complex, but still discrete, unified and consistent literary work.<sup>13</sup> Already at an early stage, scholars approached the book as the product of a single, autonomous author, alternatively of an author–redactor, who shaped and finished the composition based on materials previously known to him.<sup>14</sup> Scholars understood 2 Baruch as a literary reaction to the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem by the Romans (70 CE). As such, scholars read 2 Baruch, often in tandem with 4 Ezra, as a source to Jewish thought in the period between the destruction of the second temple and the Bar Kokhba revolt (132–35 CE). The representation of 2 Baruch as “apocryphal” had already occurred on its initial publication, in Ceriani’s editions.<sup>15</sup> Other scholars approached it as “pseudepigraphal.”<sup>16</sup> Regardless of the exact nomen-

<sup>10</sup> See, e. g., Todd M. Hickey and James G. Keenan, “At the Creation: Seven Letters from Grenfell, 1897,” *Analecta Papyrologia* 28 (2016): 351–82 at 369; Hugh G. Evelyn-White, *The History of the Monasteries of Nitria and of Scetis*, part III of *The Architecture and Archaeology* (New York: Arno Press, 1973 (reprint)), 176. Cf., Stewart, *Yours, Mine, or Theirs*, 622–27 and Cuéllar, *Empire*.

<sup>11</sup> Cf., the discussion of Theodore Zahn and Rivka Nir’s position in chapter 7.

<sup>12</sup> Ferdinand Rosenthal, *Vier apokryphische Bücher aus der Zeit und Schule R. Akiba’s* (Leipzig: Otto Schulze, 1885); Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, vii–vii; Violet, *Apokalypsen*, xci–ii.

<sup>13</sup> Richard Kabisch, “Die Quellen der Apokalypse Baruchs,” *Jahrbücher für Protestantische Theologie* 18 (1892): 66–107; Eugène de Faye, *Les apocalypses juives: essai de critique littéraire et théologique*. Thèse présentée à la Faculté de Théologie protestante de Paris (Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1892), 25–28; Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, ix–x, xxii–xxx. The source-critical approach was criticised already by Carl Clemen (“Die Zusammensetzung des Buches Henoch, der Apokalypse des Baruch und des vierten Buches Esra,” *TSK* 11 [1898]: 211–46).

<sup>14</sup> See, Heinrich Ewald, “Stück 43,” *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* (1867): 1705–20 at 1706–7. Cf., Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxxiv, xc.

<sup>15</sup> Ceriani, “Apocalypsis Baruch,” i–ii; idem, “Apocalypsis Baruch Syriacae,” in *Monumenta sacra et profana ex codicibus praesertim Bibliothecae Ambrosianae* 5.2 (Milan: Bibliotheca Ambrosiana Mediolani, 1868), 113–80 at 113 (Note the confusion of dates of Ceriani’s volumes, both in the editions themselves and in the research literature. Fascicle 5.2 is not dated in the volume, Fascicle 5.1 is dated 1868. The catalogue in the Ambrosian Library has 1868, but the publication of the volume in its present form may well have been in 1871). The assessment and nomenclature were taken over immediately, for instance by Ewald in 1867 (“Stück 43,” 1706).

<sup>16</sup> William J. Dean, *Pseudepigrapha: An Account of Certain Apocryphal Sacred Writings of the Jews and Early Christians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1891), 1, 130; Robert H. Charles, “Preface,” in *Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2 of *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English with Introduction and Critical and Explanatory Notes to the Several Books*, ed. Robert H. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), i–ii.

clature, 2 Baruch has always remained safely contained and categorized as “non-canonical.”

Scholarship on 2 Baruch has certainly developed since its early years. New contributors working under other historical and cultural circumstances have brought new, sometimes field-changing, insights and approaches to the study of the book.<sup>17</sup> Students of 2 Baruch have also benefitted from ongoing discussions in the broader field of Early Jewish Studies, for instance debates about text production, authorship and pseudepigraphy and key discussions about canon and categorizations of books, as well as the important nuancing that scholarship has brought to the academic constructions of “Judaism” in the ancient world.<sup>18</sup> In addition, although traditional editorial procedures generally prevail, debates about the methods and epistemologies of textual scholarship in the broader sphere of early Jewish and Christian literatures have slowly started to inform the study of 2 Baruch.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Major, and/or much debated, lengthy contributions since the 1960s include: Wolfgang Harnisch, *Verhängnis und Verheissung der Geschichte: Untersuchungen zum Zeit- und Geschichtsverständnis im 4. Buch Esra und in der syr. Baruchapokalypse*, FRLANT 97 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969); Pierre-M. Bogaert, *L'Apocalypse syriaque de Baruch: Introduction, traduction du syriaque et commentaire*, 2 vols, SC 144–45 (Paris: Cerf, 1969); Anitra B. Kolenkow, “An Introduction to 2 Baruch 53, 56–74: Structure and Substance” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1971); Sven Dederig, “Apocalypse of Baruch,” part IV, fascicle 3, *The Old Testament in Syriac According to the Peshitta Version* (Leiden: Brill, 1973), i–iv, 1–50; Gwendolyn B. Saylor, *Have the Promises Failed? A Literary Analysis of 2 Baruch*, SBLDS 72 (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984); Frederick J. Murphy, *The Structure and Meaning of Second Baruch*, SBLDS 78 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985); Adriana Drint, “The Mount Sinai Arabic Version of IV Ezra: Text, Translation and Introduction” (PhD diss., Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 1995); Mark F. Whitters, *The Epistle of Second Baruch: A Study in Form and Message*, JSPSup 42 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003); Rivka Nir, *The Destruction of Jerusalem and the Idea of Redemption in the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch*, EJT 20 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003); Liv Ingeborg Lied, *The Other Lands of Israel: Imaginations of the Land in 2 Baruch*, JSPSup 129 (Leiden: Brill, 2008); Matthias Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading 2 Baruch in Context*, TSAJ 142 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011). Cf., also, the two edited volumes, Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, with Jason M. Zurawski, eds., *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Gabriele Boccaccini and Jason M. Zurawski, *Interpreting 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: International Studies*, LSTS 87 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014); Lydia Gore-Jones, *When Judaism Lost the Temple: Crisis and Response in 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch*, *Studia Antiqua Australiensia* 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020). I return to other major text editions and translations in chapters 1 and 5.

<sup>18</sup> Among the most influential publications are: Hindy Najman, *Seconding Sinai: The Development of Mosaic Discourse in Second Temple Judaism*, JSJSup 77 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Robert A. Kraft, “Para-mania: Before, beside and beyond Biblical Studies,” *JBL* 126 (2007): 5–27; Annette Yoshiko Reed, “The Modern Invention of ‘Old Testament Pseudepigrapha’,” *JTS* 60 (2009): 403–36; Michael E. Stone, *Ancient Judaism: New Visions and Views* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011); Eva Mroczek, *The Literary Imagination in Jewish Antiquity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

<sup>19</sup> Some influential publications are David C. Parker, *The Living Text of the Gospels* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Eldon Epp, “The Multivalence of the Term ‘Original



Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the academic narrative of 2 Baruch has proven surprisingly robust.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, I have myself reiterated it on several occasions in my scholarship during the last decades.<sup>21</sup> As this volume will show, it remains a possibility that the hypotheses of this dominant academic narrative are correct. However, it is crucial to be aware that the academic narrative that scholars of 2 Baruch have inherited is rooted in the epistemologies, professional practices, priorities and matters of concern of European scholars working in the early modern and modern periods. The risk is that, while the narrative about 2 Baruch continues to circulate, we forget that the various features that constitute it depend heavily on the approaches that enabled it.

### *The Weight of the Historical-Critical Inheritance*

As suggested by the above reiteration of the academic narrative, the approach to 2 Baruch has been overwhelmingly historical-critical. Scholars have aimed to reconstruct and to study the earliest possible, or original, form of the text of 2 Baruch in its early, or original, historical and literary contexts. To this aim, the manuscripts that preserve copies of 2 Baruch have played a dedicated role as witnesses to the early text. They have been used as evidence of the text that lies behind them. This means that the interest in the manuscripts has primarily been text-critical. Text editions of 2 Baruch display detailed attention to the text copied into the columns of manuscript pages in so far as it provides ac-

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Text' in New Testament Textual Criticism," *HTR* 92 (1999): 245–81; Carol Bakhos, ed., *Current Trends in the Study of Midrash*, JSJSup 106 (Leiden: Brill, 2006); Peter Schäfer and Chaim Milikowsky, "Current Views on Editing of Rabbinic Texts of Late Antiquity: Reflections on a Debate after Twenty Years," in *Rabbinic Texts and the History of Late-Roman Palestine*, ed. Martin Goodman and Philip S. Alexander, PBA 165 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 79–88; Hindy Najman and Eibert Tigchelaar, eds., *Composition, Rewriting and Reception of the Book of Jubilees* (Special issue; *RevQ* 104/26 [2014]); Brennan W. Breed, *Nomadic Text: A Theory of Biblical Reception History*, Indiana Series in Biblical Literature (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2014); Hugo Lundhaug and Lance Jennott, *The Monastic Origins of the Nag Hammadi Codices*, STAC 97 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2015); Liv Ingeborg Lied and Hugo Lundhaug, eds., *Snapshots of Evolving Traditions: Jewish and Christian Manuscript Culture, Textual Fluidity, and New Philology*, TUGAL 175 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017); Matthew D.C. Larsen, *Gospels Before the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019); Frank Feder and Matthias Henze, eds., *Deuterocanonical Scriptures*, vol. 2 of *Textual History of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2019).

<sup>20</sup> Cf., among many others, Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:21–32; Murphy, *Structure and Meaning*, 1–2; Whitters, *Epistle of Second Baruch*, 33–34; Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 9–10; Matthias Henze, "4 Ezra and 2 Baruch: The Status Quaestionis," in *Fourth Ezra and Second Baruch: Reconstruction after the Fall*, ed. Matthias Henze and Gabriele Boccaccini, with Jason M. Zurawski, JSJSup 164 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 3–27; Gore-Jones, *When Judaism Lost the Temple*, 3–35. Cf., further, DiTommaso, "OTP as Category and Corpus," 268–69 for the broader trends.

<sup>21</sup> See, e.g., Lied, *Other Lands*, 1–2.

cess to the textual history of the book and ideally to the earliest possible text of 2 Baruch. However, the historical-critical approach rests in the assumption that the early text is indeed accessible through text-critical procedures. It also takes for granted that the early text and its context are the most interesting text and context and, it presumes that the feature of the manuscripts that really matters to the endeavor of studying 2 Baruch is the text in the columns. In so doing, it brackets the text from the rest of the manuscript and treats it as immaterial. Other features of the manuscript and its history are not considered equally relevant.

In his most recent comprehensive monograph on 2 Baruch, *Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading 2 Baruch in Context* (2011), Matthias Henze writes:

Judged on its reception history, *2Bar* and the apocalyptic program it advocates must be considered a failure. Shortly after its composition the work suffered a fate every writer dreads, the cruellest curse of them all – the apocalypse was condemned to *damnatio memoriae*. The religious authorities refrained from referring to it, instructors banned it from their curricula, scribes ceased to copy it, and, as a result, *2Bar* soon sank into oblivion. Not a single Jewish manuscript of the text survives, and there are no undisputed references to or quotations of it in the literature of antiquity. As a result, *2Bar* was entirely forgotten for almost two millennia – until it was rediscovered in the nineteenth century in a single oriental Christian biblical manuscript. The author of *2Bar* can justifiably be called a “historical loser,” a creative author whose ingenious work faded from view soon after it was composed and hence failed to make the impact for which it was intended.<sup>22</sup>

I choose to quote this paragraph in full – not because it stands out but precisely because it displays a widely shared approach in scholarship and thus illustrates one of the crucial challenges of the academic narrative of 2 Baruch. In this paragraph, Henze argues that the author is a “historical loser” and his work a failure.<sup>23</sup> Compared with many other writings surviving from antiquity, 2 Baruch has obviously not been the world’s most popular book. In this regard, Henze’s conclusion is correct. The interesting aspect of this quote, though, is not its conclusion but how Henze argues it. He asserts that ancient communities stopped using 2 Baruch, that no Jewish manuscripts or quotations in other literature survive<sup>24</sup> and that the book does not appear on the historical scene again until the

<sup>22</sup> Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 8.

<sup>23</sup> Cf., Violet (*Apokalypsen*, xciii): “Die Ap. Baruch selber ist kein Stück der Weltliteratur geworden; [...]” and Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:458–59.

<sup>24</sup> I agree with Henze that no certain quotations of 2 Baruch survive in late antique literature. Previous scholars have held that the Epistle of Barnabas 11:9 and 16:6 and Cyprian, *Testimonia ad Quirinum* 3.29 and (sometimes) Irenaeus, *Adversus Haeresis* 5.33, contain quotations from 2 Baruch (Cf., Charles, *Apocalypse of Baruch*, xix–xx; Violet, *Apokalypsen*, lxvi, xciii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:55–56, 272–80). It remains possible that these passages allude to or share some literary contents with the writing we today would recognize as “2 Baruch,” but un-

mid-nineteenth century when a Christian manuscript was rediscovered in Milan. In this line of argumentation, manuscripts live a curious half-life. They exist as material artifacts in the sense that a manuscript can be retrieved from a European library but they are invisible as historically situated cultural artifacts. Although copies of 2 Baruch survive in manuscripts from the fourth century onward, the manuscript transmission does not count as reception. Thus, vital parts of the embodied life and circulation of 2 Baruch among the late antique and medieval communities that produced and engaged the manuscripts vanishes from sight in the two-millennia gap.

It is in many ways remarkable that our only traceable sources on the existence of 2 Baruch are allowed no place in the academic narrative about this book. It is even more remarkable that this is the dominant view on manuscripts in textual scholarship. In line with the historical-critical approach, the manuscripts exist in so far as they serve as witnesses to an early text beyond themselves, but they are invisible beyond this specific function ascribed to them by modern scholars. This says something about the explanatory power – and the blind spots – that widely shared epistemologies and practices<sup>25</sup> may produce. They force some things to be “source” (the text in the columns) and other things to be “non-source” (most other aspects of the manuscripts). The manuscripts become invisible in plain sight.

At the current moment in 2 Baruch’s research history, it is hard to discern whether, how and the extent to which the dominant representation of the book is basically the product of a durable academic narrative and the epistemologies and practices that initially molded and continue to uphold it. To find out, the manuscript transmission of 2 Baruch *qua* reception history deserves more attention, and the academic narrative of 2 Baruch would benefit from critical engagement. What changes if we free the manuscripts from their translucent existence and admit that they cast a shadow? What happens if we allow the cultural artifact to count as source?

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less the text of the passages in question have changed in transmission, I do not see that any of them qualify as “quotes from 2 Baruch.” (In chapter 6 of the current volume, I argue that 2 Baruch has indeed changed in transmission. However, we have no positive evidence of the transformation of the passages in focus here). Note that Daniel M. Gurtner refers to the passage in Cyprian as a Latin “excerpt” of 2 Baruch (Daniel M. Gurtner, *Second Baruch: A Critical Edition of the Syriac Text. With Greek and Latin Fragments, English Translation, Introduction, and Concordance*, Jewish and Christian Texts Series [Edinburg: T&T Clark, 2011], title and 7). This is a misleading (although traditional) use of the term “excerpt” and the claim that the passage in *Testimonia ad Quirinum* is a quote from 2 Bar 48 is problematic. I return to Dionysius bar Salibi’s quote of 2 Bar 85:3/1 Ep. Bar. 8:3 in chapter 5 of the present volume.

<sup>25</sup> When I talk about “practices” in the present volume, I refer to “patterns of action.” I will use the term to talk about historical patterns of action discernible in the source material as well as patterns of action in contemporary textual scholarship. In the latter case, I refer to professional practices in terms of systemic, path-dependent patterns of action.

## Early Jewish Writings in Christian Transmission

A substantial number of the books that scholars commonly identify as Jewish writings of the Hellenistic and early Roman periods<sup>26</sup> survive as extant texts in later Christian manuscripts only. In fact, with the exception of the writings that appeared in the fragmentary remains of manuscripts ascribed to the caves close to the Dead Sea or found in the Cairo Genizah, this is the case for a majority of early Jewish writings.<sup>27</sup> This means that these writings are accessible to scholars today because they were copied into manuscripts that were Christian productions, intended for and engaged with by late antique or medieval Christian readers.

### *A Longstanding Methodological Discussion*

The Christian manuscript transmission of early Jewish texts has been noted and recognized as a methodological challenge to the study of Jewish antiquity for a long time.<sup>28</sup> Louis Ginzberg commented on the situation in the first decade of the twentieth century in his *Legends of the Jews*.<sup>29</sup> Since the early-1970s, it has been repeatedly pointed out as an important methodological challenge, most prominently by Marinus de Jonge, Robert A. Kraft and Michael E. Stone.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>26</sup> The term “early Jewish” is certainly imprecise (and it comes with a long history that I will not reiterate here). Still, it is in frequent use. In this volume, I will use the term to refer to a period in Jewish literary history, “the Hellenistic and early Roman periods,” that is, roughly, the time between 323 BCE and 200 CE. I do not apply the term “Second Temple Period” primarily because the assumed initial writing of 2 Baruch took place in the late-first or early-second century CE, that is, after the fall of the temple. I acknowledge that many of the writings that later became “biblical” were also growing and changing in this period but these writings are most often excluded when scholars refer to writings of the Hellenistic and early Roman period.

<sup>27</sup> There are certainly some important exceptions to this rule: the writings found among the Dead Sea Scrolls and in the Cairo Genizah (e.g., Jubilees, writings ascribed to Enoch, the Testament of Levi, the Testament of Naphtali, etc.). These manuscripts, most of them surviving only in fragments, point to a Jewish transmission of these writings. Cf., Stone, *Ancient Judaism*, 16–25, 182–94; Liv Ingeborg Lied and Loren T. Stuckenbruck, “Pseudepigrapha and Their Manuscripts,” in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Fifty Years of the Pseudepigrapha Section at the SBL*, ed. Matthias Henze and Liv Ingeborg Lied, EJL 50 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2019), 203–29 at 205–11 for a presentation of the issue and an overview of the debate.

<sup>28</sup> Charles is among the early contributors to the study of 2 Baruch that are well aware of the Christian transmission of 2 Baruch but who do not address it as a methodological problem (*Apocalypse of Baruch*, viii–ix). Cf., furthermore, Violet, *Apokalypsen*, xciii; Bogaert, *Apocalypse de Baruch*, 1:458–59.

<sup>29</sup> Louis Ginzberg, “Preface,” in *From Creation to Jakob*, vol. 1 of *The Legends of the Jews*, trans. Henrietta Szold (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1909), xxi–xxix at xxvi–ii.

<sup>30</sup> Cf., in particular, Marinus de Jonge’s foreword in *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Study of Their Text, Composition and Origin*, 2nd rev. ed. (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1975). This monograph was first published in 1953, but the explicit reflection appears in the foreword of the second edition. Cf., Robert A. Kraft, “The Multiform Jewish Heritage of Early

They stressed the risks involved in the use of Christian manuscript materials for distilling information about early Jewish texts without first exploring the significance of the manuscripts as sources to Christian interests and activities. Following the lead of de Jonge, Kraft and Stone, scholars such as David Satran, Martha Himmelfarb, John C. Reeves and William Adler produced highly valuable studies, beginning in the 1990s.<sup>31</sup> James R. Davila discussed the provenance of pseudepigraphical writings in 2005.<sup>32</sup> The discussion in the field is an

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Christianity,” in *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults: Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty. Part Three: Judaism Before 70*, ed. Jacob Neusner, SJLA 12 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 174–99; idem, “The Pseudepigrapha in Christianity” (paper presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the SNTS, Duke University, Durham, NC); Michael E. Stone, “Categorization and Classification of Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,” *AbrN* 24 (1986): 167–77.

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