

# CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR PAPERS

North American Society for the Study of Christian Apocryphal Literature



## The Material of Christian Apocrypha

University of Virginia  
November 2018

Confirmed speakers: Mary Cunningham (Nottingham), Maria Evangelatou (University of Southern California), Derek Krueger (UNC Greensboro), and Robin Jensen (Notre Dame)

We invite abstracts for a conference on the “Material of Christian Apocrypha,” hosted by the University of Virginia’s Department of Religious Studies and McIntire Department of Art, under the auspices of the North American Society for the Study of Christian Apocryphal Literature. We hope to assemble a group of participants who will address two interrelated yet distinct topics: 1) the physicality of our apocryphal texts (i.e. various aspects of the manuscripts or papyri themselves), and 2) the representation of apocryphal narratives in other forms of material culture (e.g. frescos, mosaics, sculptures, icons, pilgrimage objects, reliquaries, etc.). By drawing our collective attention to the material aspects of the literary and the literary aspects of the material, we hope to spark a fruitful and enduring exchange between scholars and students rooted in both areas. Questions to be posed include: What do the physical aspects of manuscripts and papyri tell us about the use and value of the apocryphal texts they contain? Which apocryphal traditions attain such a level of scriptural authority that they appear in art, iconography, church decoration, and biblical manuscript illuminations? What do discussions of images within apocryphal texts, such as the portrait of John the Apostle described in the *Acts of John*, or the “mandylion” (that is, the miraculous image of Jesus) described in the *Doctrine of Addai* tell us about the importance of images in Christian piety? Given the ongoing composition, adaptation, and development of apocryphal narratives throughout late antiquity and the medieval period, what interplay between text and image can be observed? Note: we are eager to be surprised—to receive paper proposals that approach the topic in ways that have not occurred to us.

We welcome proposals from both established scholars and graduate students. Presenters must be prepared to circulate drafts of their papers to registered conference participants two weeks prior to the event. Pending the success of our funding applications, we plan to provide food and lodging to all participants. The conference will take place in late October or early November; the exact dates will be determined in February.

The conference will feature also the general meeting of NASSCAL, during which a new board of directors and executive will be selected by the members. For more information about the society, visit [www.nasscal.com](http://www.nasscal.com).

**Email abstracts for papers or panel proposals to Janet Spittler ([jes9cu@virginia.edu](mailto:jes9cu@virginia.edu)) or Fotini Kondyli ([fk8u@virginia.edu](mailto:fk8u@virginia.edu)) by March 1, 2018. Abstracts for papers should be approximately 300 words.**