

Did Early Christians Believe in Their Miracle Stories? The Case of Speaking Animals in the Apocryphal Acts of Apostles

From the cognitive psychological perspective, miracle stories are characterized by containing concepts violating intuitive expectations from folk physics, biology and psychology. In this sense, these concepts are represented as constraintuitive. It is useful to distinguish different attitudes to these concepts, especially simple mental representing and believing in them. With this kind differentiations, the paper wants (a) to analyze the form and to model original reception of few miracle stories involved in some biographical narratives about apostles and (b) to explain a limited marginalization of these biographical narratives in later official church tradition on the basis of this analysis.