ARCO DEN HEIJER

Portraits of Paul's Performance in the Book of Acts

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament

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556

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Luke's Apologetic Strategy in the Depiction of Paul as Messenger of God

Mohr Siebeck

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For Philip and Matthias

Preface

The PhD project that has resulted in this book has benefited from conversations with many friends, colleagues and scholars. I express my thanks to the financial support offered by Stichting Jagtspoel Fonds, Stichting De Honderd Gulden Reis, Vicariefonds Ridderlijke Duitsche Orde Balije van Utrecht, and Stichting Greijdanus-Kruithof Fonds, which enabled a stay of four months in Cambridge (UK) to conduct my research in the Library of Tyndale House. The wealth of books available in Cambridge and the interaction with other scholars from around the world have contributed greatly to this thesis. Particularly helpful were conversations about my project with Steve Walton, Loveday Alexander, David Friedman, and Simon Gathercole. Also, I thank George van Kooten for bringing me into contact with them and inviting me to the Cambridge New Testament Research Seminar.

On the Dutch side of the Channel, I benefited much from the NOSTER Seminar for Biblical Studies, taught by Klaas Spronk, Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte, and Jürgen Zangenberg; from the doctoral colloquium of the ETF Leuven; from the helpful advice of Jack Barentsen in the initial stages of my research; from conversations with Christoph Stenschke in Wiedenest, Germany and with John van Eck in the Dutch village of Lexmond; from the reflections of Riemer Faber, during his stay in Kampen in 2016; from participation in the "Lucas-werkplaats" convened by Bart Koet; and from the stimulating feedback of Peter Tomson on my chapter about Paul's performance before Agrippa, which I presented at the NOSTER Spring Conference in 2020.

The academic home of this study is the research group Biblical Exegesis and Systematic Theology (BEST) of the Theological Universities of Apeldoorn and Kampen, closely related institutes for Reformed Theology in the Netherlands. It provided a research environment characterised by friendship, fear of the Lord, and an open mind in the investigation of his Word.

Most of the actual reading and writing for my thesis was done in the attic of the Theological University Kampen, in an office shared first with Chandra Gunawan and later with Surya Harefa. Neighbouring PhD students were Anne, Lisanne, Jasper, Marinus, Byunghoon, Aron, Chul-Kyu, Koos, Jung-Hun, Moses, Chungman, and Eunkyu. In addition, we enjoyed the company of Myriam Klinker-de Klerck, assistant professor of New Testament and a thoughtful

scholar; Marc Janssens, teacher of Greek and Latin; and Siebold Schipper, researcher in church history. Their names represent cheerful company and warm collegiality. Many thanks to them, and to all those working and studying at the University, for making me feel at home in Kampen.

Rob van Houwelingen, professor of New Testament at the Theological University Kampen, supervised the project carefully, with an eye for detail and an encouraging nonchalance regarding established scholarly views, and with much concern for my personal wellbeing. Bart Koet, professor of New Testament at the Tilburg School of Catholic Theology in Utrecht, acted as external supervisor of the project. His continuous insistence on staying close to the actual wording of the text has shaped my exegetical conscience. I thank Rob and Bart for guiding me along the way of writing my thesis.

At the final stage of the project, the manuscript was read carefully by Niels den Hertog and Roelof van IJken, and by Edward Jacobson from Vuurtoren Editing. I thank them very much for their feedback, suggestions and corrections, which improved the readability of the book at numerous points.

I am very grateful to Jörg Frey for the acceptance of this book in the WUNT II series of Mohr Siebeck, and to Elena Müller and Tobias Stäbler for the pleasant cooperation in preparing the manuscript for printing. To my great joy, the book will be made available in Open Access, thanks to the generous funding of Stichting Afbouw Kampen.

Most of all, I am thankful for the support of friends and family, who encouraged me throughout the project and managed to draw me out of my distractedness into the joys of life in the present. That is true especially of Steveline, Philip, and Matthias. I am grateful for what God has given me in you. Steveline, I thank you for your encouragement, companionship and love. Philip and Matthias, it is a great joy to watch you grow up. This book is dedicated to you, in the hope that you will travel your way with gladness, guided by ever new readings of the ancient Biblical text.

Arco den Heijer
Nijmegen, 1 January 2021

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1

Introduction

This study focuses on the portrayal of Paul's performance in five episodes from the book of Acts: Acts 13:4–12 (before Sergius Paulus in Paphos),[1] Acts 13:14–52 (in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch), Acts 14:6–20 (in Lystra), Acts 17:16–34 (in Athens), and Acts 25:23–26:32 (before Agrippa in Caesarea). In this way it contributes to research into the image of Paul in Acts. The concept of 'performance' will provide a heuristic framework for the inquiry and connect it with contemporary interest in performance.

In this introductory chapter, the research question will be situated in the field of scholarship on 'the image of Paul in Acts' (§1.1). Next, the concept of 'performance' will be elucidated (§1.2) and the selection of case studies justified (§1.3). The chapter closes with preliminary remarks about the text used as basis for my research and assumptions about dating and authorship of the book of Acts (§1.4), as well as a brief sketch of the relationship between Romans, Jews and Christians at the end of the first century CE (§1.5).

1.1. Research Field and Question

Since the rise of biblical scholarship over the course of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, a broad field of research has emerged under the title "the image of Paul in Acts", "the Lukan Paul", or "the reception of Paul in Acts". Overviews of the development of this field of research have been given elsewhere.[2] Here, only a concise survey will be given of the various questions that have been posed in this research field as well as the diversity of answers given to them, in order to situate my own research within this field. In view of the topic of my thesis, a short literature survey on the speeches in Acts is also included.

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[1] In the text of Acts, Sergius Paulus's name is spelled with single λ. The correct Latin spelling is with double ll. In this study, I follow the convention in English Bible translations to write the name with single l.

[2] For extensive bibliographical overviews, cf. Mattill, *Bibliography*; Gasque, *History*; Schröter, "Actaforschung", 27–59; Flichy, "Paul"; Baker, "Peter and Paul".

1.1.1. Historical Issues

A key issue has been one with a historical orientation: How does the course of Paul's life as described in Acts relate to what can be deduced from Paul's letters about his life? This question was first investigated by William Paley, who concluded that comparison of both sources shows their historical reliability.[3] Subsequently, some scholars have pointed out contradictions between the account of Acts and the information from Paul's letters and have taken a radically skeptical approach to the historicity of the narrative provided by Acts.[4] Others have sought to demonstrate that Acts provides reliable data that can be harmonised with the information from the letters.[5] Many scholars navigate a course between these extremes.[6] In addition, it is debated what it implies for the authorship of Acts if there are chronological and biographical differences between Acts and Paul's letters. Does it imply that the author of Acts cannot have known Paul personally,[7] or can the differences be explained as part of his freedom in narrating the life of Paul with an eye to his own purposes?[8]

A second historical question concerns the relationship between the content of Paul's proclamation as described in Acts and the theology in Paul's letters. Here, the article of Philipp Vielhauer, written in 1950, is the classic representative of the view that Luke's[9] and Paul's theologies are incompatible.[10] However, both his assessment of Luke's theology and his Lutheran interpretation

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[3] Paley, *Horae Paulinae*. Cf. Gasque, *History*, 17–19. For a recent, cautious comparison of the Paul of Acts and the Paul of the letters, cf. Phillips, *Paul*. Phillips concludes that "in particular, Paul's wealth, citizenships, tutelage under Gamaliel, and commissioning by the high priest – as well as the retainer class social status that Paul probably derived from these advantages – have probably (but not necessarily) been embellished to varying degrees by the author of Acts." Phillips, 124. Cf. also Walton, *Leadership*, who compares the portrait of Paul in Acts and in the letters by focusing on one speech of Acts and one letter of Paul.

[4] Cf. especially Baur, *Paulus*; Knox, *Chapters*; Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte*; Lüdemann, *Paulus*; Pervo, *Profit*; Mount, *Pauline Christianity*; Harrill, *Paul*, 46–50; Campbell, *Framing Paul*.

[5] Cf., e.g., Bruce, "Paul"; van Bruggen, *Paulus*; Carson and Moo, *Introduction*, 354–70.

[6] Cf., e.g., Jewett, *A Chronology of Paul's Life*; Schnelle, *Paulus*, 29–30; Johnson, *Constructing Paul*, 32.

[7] Thus first de Wette, *Lehrbuch*, 2:203–4.

[8] Dibelius, following Von Harnack, already argued that the disagreements can be accounted for by the freedom of the ancient historian. Dibelius, *Aufsätze*, 118–19. Recently, Jens Schröter, Simon Butticaz and Andreas Dettwiler suggest likewise that the we-passages "point to the author's partial companionship of Paul on his journeys", without denying the differences between Acts and the letters. Schröter, Butticaz, and Dettwiler, "Introduction", 6. Cf. further below, §1.4.2.

[9] On the use of "Luke" in this study, see below, §1.4.3.

[10] Vielhauer, "Paulinismus".

of Paul's letters have been questioned.[11] In a bibliographical overview of literature on the reception of Paul in Acts between 1982 and 2003, Jens Schröter concludes that the thesis of a profound diastasis between the Paul of Acts and the Paul of the Letters has given way to a detailed analysis of Pauline traditions in Acts and to the way these have been crafted into a specific portrait of Paul by Luke.[12] Since then, the view that the author of Acts has used Paul's letters for his composition has gained more adherents.[13] This portrait is now appreciated as a creative and original reception of Paul, rather than as a downfall from the heights of Paul into the depths of early Catholicism.[14] Further, coming from a completely different angle than Vielhauer, the *Paul within Judaism* school tends to blame the book of Acts for appropriating Paul as a model Christian convert, whereas Paul appears in his letters as someone who identifies himself as a Jew.[15]

A third topic within the debate on the "Paul of Acts" focuses on how Luke describes Paul's social status, level of education, rhetorical ability, and moral excellence (and how this relates to the image that emerges from his letters).

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[11] For a response to Vielhauer's assessment of Acts, cf. Jervell, "Paul"; Porter, *Paul*, 187–206; Hvalvik, "Paul"; Oliver, "Paul"; Gleich, "Lukanischen Paulusreden". The Lutheran interpretation of Paul's letters that is presupposed by Vielhauer has been questioned in the context of the *New Perspective on Paul* and its more recent successors, the *Radical New Perspective* and the *Paul within Judaism* school. Cf. also De Zwaan, who already argued that the Paul that was seen as being in conflict with the Lukan Paul, was a Paul formed by Western-Protestant or Western-Catholic tradition. De Zwaan, *Inleiding*, 1:163–64. In support of Vielhauer, cf. still Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 313.

[12] Schröter, "Actaforschung", 58. Other scholars approaching the portrait of Paul in Acts as a form of reception history of Paul include de Boer, "Images"; Schenk, "Luke"; Walton, *Leadership*; Schröter, "Kirche"; Marguerat, *Reception*; Koet, "Light"; Butticaz, "Paul".

[13] Cf. the position of Pervo, one of the most influential advocates of a second-century date of Acts. Cf. Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 51–147.

[14] On the use of the label "early Catholicism" by Ernst Käsemann, and its prehistory, cf. recently Alkier, "Forschungsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen".

[15] Cf., e.g., Eisenbaum, *Paul*. Eisenbaum does not engage the book of Acts in depth, but refers to it in passing as among the writings that made Paul into a Christian and have a negative perspective on Jews; ignoring the tendency in current scholarship on Acts to read Luke and Acts as Jewish literature (for this, cf., e.g., Böttrich, "Doppelwerk"; Oliver, *Torah*; Carras, "Sensibilities"). An interesting forerunner of this debate was the Dutch scholar W.C. van Manen (1842–1905), who argued that the Jewish Paul of Acts was closer to the historical Paul than the Paul of the letters, which he considered to be an entirely pseudepigraphical letter collection from the early second century CE. "Acts has erred not in making Paul appear too Jewish, but rather in making him out to be too Gentile, or, perhaps better, too Christian. He was and remained a faithful Jew." Gasque, *History*, 90. Cf. van Manen, *Paulus*; Verhoef, *van Manen*; Gasque, *History*, 86–90.

This question has been addressed most extensively by John Lentz, who concludes that Luke portrays Paul as a model of virtue and a person of high social status – a portrait that Lentz considers historically implausible.[16]

Finally, Paul's view of Torah and his Jewish identity according to the book of Acts have attracted particular attention. Many scholars have pointed out that Paul is fully law-observant in Acts, and that the book emphasises Paul's Jewishness, especially where Paul has to defend himself against the accusation of teaching against the Jewish nation, law and temple.[17] Others have nuanced this view somewhat, by pointing out, for example, that Paul circumcised Timothy not so much because he thought that the law required this, but "because of the Jews", in order to take away potential stumbling blocks for Timothy's proclamation of the Gospel.[18] Bart Koet has argued that the Paul of Acts and of the letters should be compared based on how they interpret the Scriptures rather than on their respective theologies, since that is the most pertinent point of comparison from Paul's Jewish perspective.[19]

1.1.2. Literary Issues

Taking a more literary approach,[20] Luke Macnamara has asked how the reader would construct an image of Paul as a character in the story of Acts (limiting his investigation to Acts 7–15), when he or she would read the book of Acts without prior knowledge about Paul.[21] Likewise, Manfred Lang poses the more specific question about how a Roman reader would read the account of Paul in Acts.[22] Matthew Skinner has drawn attention to the contribution of the location to the narrative characterization of Paul, in his examination of the locations of custody in Acts 21–28.[23]

A key question within the literary approach is how to evaluate the parallels between what Paul does and says in the book of Acts and what Jesus, Peter and Stephen do and say according to the Gospel of Luke and Acts.[24] Moreover,

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[16] Lentz, *Portrait*. Cf. also Hickling, "Portrait"; Neyrey, "Social Location"; Hock, "Problem"; Hess, *Rhetor*.

[17] Jervell, "Paul"; Hvalvik, "Paul"; Marguerat, "Torah"; Carras, "Sensibilities".

[18] Thus Du Toit, "Torah". Cf. also Sandnes, *Paul Perceived*.

[19] Koet, *Studies*; Koet, "Light", 251. Cf. also Hays, "Paulinism".

[20] The tendency to read Acts as a literary narrative (without discussing its historical value), rather than as a composition of edited traditions, was pioneered by Tannehill, *Unity*. Cf. more recently Aletti, *Quand Luc raconte*.

[21] Macnamara, *Instrument*.

[22] Lang, *Kunst*.

[23] Skinner, *Locating Paul*.

[24] Mattill considers H.H. Evans (1884) to have been the first to treat the parallels extensively. Cf. Evans, *Paul*; Radl, *Paulus*; Mattill, "Parallels"; Muhlack, *Parallelen*; Praeder, "Parallelisms"; Moessner, "Christ"; Clark, *Parallel Lives*; Zwiep, "Paul".

some scholars have argued that Paul is depicted in Acts as a prophetic figure.[25] Others have focused on Greco-Roman models for the depiction of Paul in Acts, often pointing especially to Socrates, the prototypical Greek philosopher.[26] Clare Rothschild has recently made a case for a depiction of Paul as Epimenides.[27]

1.1.3. Purpose of Luke's Portrait of Paul

Finally, much debate has focused on why the author of Acts pays so much attention to Paul and describes him the way he describes him. Does Luke intend to defend Paul?[28] If so, against whose accusations? Accusations by Jews, such as those voiced by the high priest and his Sadducee companions in Acts 22–26?[29] Or by Jewish[30] or Judaizing Christians who insisted on the necessity of circumcision for Gentile converts?[31] Critics of the latter two proposals point out that there is little evidence for anti-Paulinism after Paul's death (with the possible exception of the Ebionites),[32] but of course, absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. Or has the author of Acts portrayed Paul like Peter and

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[25] Johnson, *Function*; Denova, *Accomplished*, 178–99; Moessner et al., *Paul*; Toney, "Paul"; Bormann, "Prophecy".

[26] Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates"; Hummel, "Factum"; Labahn, "Paulus"; Marguerat, "Socratic Figure"; MacDonald, *Luke and Vergil*; Jantsch, "Areopagrede"; Bilby, Kochenash, and Froelich, *Models*.

[27] Rothschild, *Paul*.

[28] For scholars reading the book of Acts as an apology of Paul, cf. Wasserberg, "Paulusapologie"; Zwiep, "Paul". Zwiep acknowledges that "attempts to reduce the author's purpose to a single motive are misplaced." Zwiep, 164.

[29] J.D. Michaelis argued that the purpose of Acts was to confirm the truth of the Christian religion through a persuasive account of the first miracles and to defend the right of Gentiles to be part of the church of Christ, a right which was contested especially by Jews. Michaelis, *Einleitung*, 2:1304–5. S.G. Frisch argued for a twofold purpose: (1) defending the cause of Paul against opponents and vindicating his authority and (2) persuading Jews and Jewish Christians that Jesus' dignity was greater than that of Moses and that all men should participate in Christian salvation. Frisch, *Commentarium*. Cf. McGiffert, "Criticism", 365–66.

[30] Thus especially H.E.G. Paulus (cf. McGiffert, "Criticism", 366) and later Schneckenburger, *Zweck*; Mattill, "Purpose"; Mattill, "Parallels". More recently, Jacob Jervell argued that Luke defends Paul against Jewish-Christian charges of apostasy from Judaism. Jervell, *Luke*, 17; Jervell, "Paulus – der Lehrer Israels"; Jervell, "Paul"; Jervell, "Paulus in der Apostelgeschichte". In a similar vein, Rebecca Denova has argued that Luke, a Jew, portrays Paul as law-abiding Jew and prophet of Israel in order to convince Jews and Jewish Christians of the legitimacy of the Gentile mission, in view of Isaianic prophecies. Denova, *Accomplished*.

[31] H.H. Evans argued that Luke and Acts were written by Paul to defend his life and actions against Judaisers, Jews, and Roman authorities. Evans, *Paul*, 56–57. Cf. further the positions of J.J. Griesbach and H.E.G. Paulus as described in McGiffert, "Criticism", 364–65.

[32] Cf. Lindemann, *Paulus im ältesten Christentum*; Lindemann, "Paulus"; Konradt, "Antipauliner".

Peter like Paul in order to reconcile a Petrine (Jewish Christian) and a Pauline movement in early Christianity, as F.C. Baur claimed?[33] A different approach to the parallels is taken by Eve-Marie Becker, who has recently suggested that Acts can be read as a *prosopography,* for which she refers to a definition of Lawrence Stone: "the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives".[34] Thus, Luke highlights the common elements of Peter, Paul and other disciples in order to describe the group to which they belong.[35]

Another line of scholarship focuses on the political apologetic in Acts.[36] Again, Luke may have had Jewish Christians in view, as Luke uses his narrative about Paul to argue that the conversion of the Gentiles does not threaten their safety as Jewish inhabitants of the Roman empire.[37] Or he may have had a Gentile audience in view: scholars arguing this consider Theophilus to be a Roman aristocrat, who functions as the addressee of Luke and Acts just as the early Christian *Apologies* are addressed to elite Romans.[38] Alternatively, the emphasis on Paul's defence before Roman governors may have been intended to equip a Christian audience for their life under Roman rule and for their defence strategy in trials.[39] Indeed, the emphasis on Paul's Jewishness and obedience to the law (the "Jewish apologetic") may be part of the political apologetic strategy of arguing that Christianity deserves to be acknowledged as *religio licita* because it is a form of Judaism.[40] Those exegetes who read Acts as written primarily for Christians (and perhaps only in a secondary sense also for outsiders)[41] interpret the apologetic strands in the narrative as intended to

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[33] Cf. Baur, "Ursprung", 142; Zeller, *Apostelgeschichte*, 363. For their contemporary critics, cf. Gasque, *History*, 54–72.

[34] Stone, "Prosopography", 46.

[35] Becker, *Birth*, 79–82.

[36] For a helpful overview, cf. Alexander, "Apologetic Text".

[37] A suggestion of Schneckenburger, taken over by Eduard Zeller. Schneckenburger, *Zweck*, 244–45; Zeller, *Apostelgeschichte*, 368.

[38] Cf. Neumann, "Dissertatio"; Overbeck, "Verhältniss". For Overbeck, this is only a secondary purpose: the primary purpose is to explain why Gentile Christianity had come to be predominant at the beginning of the second century (110-130 CE). On the development of the position of Overbeck through time, cf. Emmelius, *Tendenzkritik*, 112–38. The position of Neumann was substantiated by Cadbury in his detailed commentary on the preface of Luke. Cadbury, "Preface".

[39] Cassidy, *Society*.

[40] Thus Cadbury, *Making*, 308. For critical discussion of the term and concept of a *religio licita,* cf. Hasselhoff and Strothmann, *Religio licita*. More recent versions of Cadbury's argument, which do not employ the concept of *religio licita,* are provided in Backhaus, "Mos Maiorum"; Tomson, "Counsel".

[41] On the possibility of a two-tiered audience, cf. Becker, *Birth*, 46.

provide the audience with assurance amidst rumours about Christians circulating in the Roman world,[42] as a legitimation of their identity.[43]

In the second half of the twentieth century, much scholarship was devoted to reconstructing the theology of Luke, or the *kerygma* of the book of Acts. In that approach, preaching was considered to be the purpose of the book, and Paul, alongside Peter and other protagonists, were viewed as mouthpieces or embodiments of Lukan theology.[44] Even the miracles that Paul performed do not foreground Paul as a person, but demonstrate the power of the Gospel and encourage the readers to have faith in Christ.[45] More recently, Van Eck has read the book of Acts as a testimony to Christ in his lawsuit against the world, highlighting the political aspects of the book within this theological interpretation of the book's programme.[46]

Alternatively, or in addition to political-apologetic and kerygmatic purposes, Luke may have intended to explain why the Christian church of his day consisted predominantly of converted Gentiles in communities all over the Roman empire, whereas Jesus was a Jew from Nazareth in Galilee. In this reading, the figure of Paul functions to explain the transition: a very Jewish Jew called by Jesus to bring the Gospel to Gentiles in the Roman empire.[47] The mainstream view around the middle of the twentieth century was that the book of Acts addresses a church that consists overwhelmingly of Gentiles and has become separated from the synagogue.

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[42] Thus Esler, *Community*; Sterling, *Historiography*; Hess, *Rhetor*. Cf. also Alexander: "Already in the first century, we can see that the Christian presentation of the Gospel has a strongly apologetic shape: that is, the story is told in such a way as to provide an apologetic response to objections raised by earlier hearers." Alexander, "Apologetic Agenda".

[43] Butticaz, "Paul", 412.

[44] This approach was anticipated by Dibelius, although his main focus was on the *Formgeschichte,* the identification of individual units of tradition, and their *Sitz im Leben,* based on genre distinctions. Cf. Dibelius, *Aufsätze*, 116–17. See also the conclusion of Greijdanus, a Dutch reformed theologian (1871–1948): "De Handelingen, hoewel geschiedenis verhalende, d.w.z. feiten, en deze in onderling verband en in zekere ontwikkeling, zijn toch eigenlijk geen geschiedenisboek, en geven zich daar ook niet voor uit, maar zij zijn een boek van Christus–prediking door de apostelen. [The Acts, although narrating history, i.e. facts, and these in their relationship to each other and in a certain development, are nevertheless not properly a history book, and do not claim to be that, but they are a book of Christ-preaching through the apostles.]" Greijdanus, "Doel", 360. The classic essay of Vielhauer on the Paulinism of Acts reflects the tendency of his day to focus on theological content, but Vielhauer (unlike Dibelius and Greijdanus) thought that the purpose of the author of Acts himself had been to inform about history (even if very inaccurately, according to modern standards). Vielhauer, "Paulinismus", 14.

[45] Schreiber, *Paulus*, 152.

[46] van Eck, *Handelingen*, 23–25.

[47] Cf. Overbeck, "Verhältniss"; Dupont, *Salvation*, 7–8; Dupont, "Salut"; Roloff, "Paulus-Darstellung".

This view was strongly criticised by Jacob Jervell, who claimed that Jewish Christians still constituted a "mighty minority" in the eighties CE, and that the book of Acts addresses a crisis within the church caused by Jewish-Christian allegations about Paul.[48] However, Jervell maintained that those Jews who had not come to faith in Christ at the end of the book of Acts, were considered by Luke as excluded from the renewed people of Israel: the mission to the Jews ended with the final word of Paul to the Jewish leaders in Rome.[49] After Jervell, Bart Koet argued that Luke-Acts does not teach a rejection of the Jews in favour of the Gentiles, but the salvation through Christ of the Gentiles and of Israel, based on Isaianic prophecies and stated programmatically in the words of Simeon in Luke 2:29–35.[50]

Today, a more nuanced version of the earlier mainstream view finds many adherents. These exegetes allow for the presence of Jewish Christians in the church envisaged by the author of Acts but still read Luke and Acts as a *Trennungsgeschichte,* an account of the first era (*Erstepoche*) of Christian history, which explains how Christian communities and Jewish synagogues came to be separate entities, even though the Gospel was also, and even primarily, a message of salvation for Jews.[51] The Paul of Acts is widely considered an identity figure who embodies the connection between Judaism and the church.[52] This interpretation of Acts can already be found in a fourth/fifth-century prologue to a lost commentary on Acts, addressed to a certain Eusebius and preserved in a twelfth-century manuscript of Acts along with the Euthalian prologue.[53]

Finally, a number of scholars interpret the portrait of Paul in Acts within the context of the polemics against Marcion and/or Gnostic teachers at the beginning or the middle of the second century. In this approach, Luke does not so much defend Paul's authority, but appropriates it for his views, against Marcion, who also claims Pauline authority for his teaching.[54] The book of Acts

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[48] Jervell, *Luke*. For a recent version of this interpretation, cf. Oliver, *Torah*. For the opposite position, that the church consists or even should consist exclusively of converted Gentiles according to Luke, cf. Sanders, *Jews*. For various positions in this debate, cf. Tyson, *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People*.

[49] Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, 629.

[50] Koet, "Isaiah"; Koet, "Worte".

[51] E.g. Maddox, *Purpose*; Wasserberg, *Mitte*; Wolter, "Doppelwerk"; Butticaz, *Identité*; Butticaz, "Paul"; Backhaus, "Paulus".

[52] Cf. Obermeier, "Gestalt"; Roloff, "Paulus-Darstellung"; Marguerat, "Image"; Flichy, *Figure*; Schröter, "Kirche"; Hoppe and Köhler, *Paulusbild*; Baker, "Peter and Paul". According to Schnelle, "Paulus fungiert als Repräsentant der zweiten Christengeneration, der die lk. Gemeinde ihren Glauben verdankt." Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 349.

[53] Von Dobschütz, "Prologue". On this document, cf. Hemmerdinger, "Auteur", 229; Willard, *Study*, 126–27.

[54] Cf. Klein, *Apostel*; Tyson, *Marcion*. Recently, Nathanael Lüke has argued that Acts, dated to the mid-second century, is intended as introduction to a corpus of Pauline letters

argues against Marcion that Christians should not kiss their Jewish heritage goodbye and emphasises Paul's Jewishness to that purpose.[55] Indeed, Irenaeus (130/140 CE – late second century CE), the first early Christian author who made extensive use of the book of Acts, read it as an affirmation of the harmony between Paul and the Twelve and used this to combat Marcionites and Valentinians.[56] Whether this was also the intention of the author of Acts remains contested.[57]

1.1.4. Scholarship on the Speeches in Acts

This study builds on a body of research into the speeches in Acts. As in the case of the investigation of the image of Paul in Acts, much scholarship has focused on the historical value of the many speeches that Luke has inserted in his narrative. Though few scholars would argue that they present *verbatim* reports of what was said on the occasion, some posit that they do provide adequate summaries and in some cases may even have been based on shorthand transcripts.[58] Other scholars have been more skeptical, regarding the speeches as the product of "historic imagination", composed according to ancient conventions to dramatise a narrative that, as a whole, is not without historical value.[59] Form critics have tended to regard the speeches as traditional material derived from various early Christian practices, which was inserted into the narrative of Acts only secondarily, in scenes composed to provide a setting for these speeches. This form-critical hypothesis inspired a tendency to study the speeches isolated from their context.[60] In contrast, most scholars today agree that context and speech should be studied together as integral parts of one narrative.[61] Much scholarship has been devoted to comparing the Lukan practice

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that guides the readers to an anti-Marcionite interpretation of these letters. Cf. Lüke, *Kohärenz*.

[55] Pervo, *Making*, 151–52.

[56] Especially Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.13.3–3.14.1.

[57] For a recent evaluation of the anti-Marcionite interpretation of the book of Acts, cf. Oliver, "Luke".

[58] Bruce, *Speeches*; Winter, "Proceedings"; Baum, "Paulinismen".

[59] The phrase "historic imagination" is derived from the seminal essay of Cadbury, "Speeches", 426.

[60] Especially Dibelius, "Areopag". Kucicki also isolates the speeches from the surrounding narrative. However, his motivation for doing so is completely different: recognizing that Luke uses three narrative devices, (narratives, speeches, and dialogues), he reads the account first without the speeches, showing that this provides a coherent historical narrative, and then analyses the function of the speeches, which is, in his view, a hermeneutical function: they interpret for the reader what is told in the narrative. Kucicki, *Function*.

[61] Cf. especially Soards, *Speeches*. See also Smith, *The Rhetoric of Interruption*.

with the practices of other ancient authors.[62] Recently, a dissertation by Brandon Wason has argued in detail that the speeches in Acts have been written according to the rhetorical technique of προσωποποιΐα (cf. also below, §1.2.4.3).[63] Finally, Conrad Gempf has argued that the speeches should not be evaluated as transcripts or summaries of what people said, but as records of historical *events*, created with the intention to be appropriate both to the book as a whole and to the alleged speaker and situation.[64] This view aligns well with my interpretation of the speeches as 'performances', as will become clear in §1.2. The focus of my study will be on how to understand Luke's portrayal of Paul in the speeches that Luke assigns to him on various occasions.

1.1.5. Research Question

The survey above shows that the debate on "the Paul of Acts" has many different focal points and ramifications. Not all of the questions discussed in this field are addressed in my investigation. For example, no comparison is made with Paul's letters, and no research is done into whether the picture painted in Acts of Paul's actions is historically plausible. Instead, my research addresses the following main question:

How is Paul's performance portrayed in five episodes of the book of Acts, and what is the function of this depiction?

A number of elements in this question need further clarification. In §1.2, I will first outline what I mean by "performance" and why I use this concept in a study of the portrait of Paul in Acts. In §1.3, I will account for the selection of five episodes as case studies on Luke's depiction of Paul's performance and explain how I intend to investigate the second part of my research question concerning the function or purpose of the depiction of Paul's performance in these episodes.

1.2. Concept of Performance

The notion of performance as a central element in my research question has been chosen on the one hand because it aligns with a contemporary interest in performance, in relation to themes such as authenticity, persuasiveness, and power and in the context of a performative turn in the humanities. On the other hand, the notion has been chosen because it encompasses a number of aspects that can be identified in the description of Paul's deeds and speeches in Acts. I

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[62] E.g. Dibelius, "Reden"; Plümacher, *Schriftsteller*; van Unnik, "Rules"; Plümacher, "Missionsreden"; Pervo, "Direct Speech"; Schell, *Areopagrede*.

[63] Wason, "All Things".

[64] Gempf, "Public Speaking".

will first survey the contemporary interest in performance and formulate a definition of performance that will be used consistently in my thesis, as well as describe a sociological model of Jeffrey Alexander that distinguishes various aspects of performance. Then, I will look at ancient reflections on performance and the applicability of the concept of "performance" in the analysis of the portrait of Paul in Acts, in order to justify which aspects of performance have been examined in the selected episodes and how this has been done.

1.2.1. Performative Turn

Scholarly books on "performance", in one sense or another, have been written in increasing numbers since the 1970s, both in the social sciences and the humanities.[65] The 1980s witnessed the birth of an interdisciplinary field of "Performance Studies", as a reorientation of traditional theatre studies to include the study of activities outside traditional theatre as performances.[66] Moreover, scholars in other disciplines also observed a "performative turn" at the beginning of the twenty-first century.[67]

The roots of the "performative turn" are generally found in the work of a number of theorists in the 1950s–70s, especially Erving Goffman, John L. Austin, John R. Searle, Clifford Geertz, Victor Turner and Judith Butler.[68] The performative turn itself is to be understood in the larger cultural context of the 1980s and 90s. Peter Burke highlights the rise of postmodernity as a background to this turn, understood as "a more diffuse sense of fragility or fluidity" that "goes with a sense of freedom from social determinism or even social constraints".[69] Other authors emphasise the rise of mass media and the meticulous directing of political speeches and debates as contributing to a general awareness of the power of performance in all aspects of life.[70]

This scholarly interest in "performance" also inspired my research question. However, the work of the theorists mentioned above will not be applied directly to the text of Acts. The answer to the question will be given through exegesis of key episodes in Acts, in which the aspects of performance that are given in the text will be foregrounded more than (post)modern theories of performance. Still, it is important to define "performance", since this is not a term that has an exact equivalent in the text of Acts. What am I looking for when I ask how Luke depicts Paul's performance?

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[65] Cf. Carlson, *Performance*, 1.

[66] Cf. Schechner, "Spectrum"; Schechner, *Performance Studies*.

[67] Wirth, *Performanz*, 53; Burke, "Performing History"; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "Performance Studies", 43–44; Alexander, *Performance and Power*, 24.

[68] Goffman, *Presentation*; Austin, *Things*; Searle, *Speech Acts*; Geertz, "Blurred Genres"; Turner, *Dramas*; Turner, *Anthropology*; Butler, "Performative Acts".

[69] Burke, "Performing History", 38–39.

[70] Gabler, "Life". Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 42–43. Cf. Carlson, *Performance*, 6.

1.2.2. Defining Performance

One of the difficulties in surveying scholarship on performance is that the term itself has a broad semantic range and that even as a scholarly concept it is used in many different ways. In addition, Anglophone scholarship plays with the various meanings of the term in ways that are sometimes difficult to convey in other languages.[71] In a widely acclaimed introduction, Marvin Carlson argues that it is an "essentially contested concept": just like "art" or "democracy", the debate about what it is, is essential to its function in scholarly discourse.[72] The Oxford English Dictionary provides two basic definitions of "performance": either "an act of presenting a play, concert, or other form of entertainment" or "the action or process of performing a task or function".[73] In the scholarly discourse on performance, however, it is often the application of the first meaning ("presenting a play") to phenomena outside recognised art venues that yields new insights. Thus, Erving Goffman defined performance as "all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants".[74] This definition highlights two key aspects of performance: its situational, localised nature ("on a given occasion"),[75] and its rhetorical function ("to influence other participants").

Richard Schechner defined performance as "twice-behaved behavior": on stage, an actor presents what he has prepared and rehearsed, perhaps guided by a script; but everyday life also entails learning and performing "appropriate culturally specific bits of behavior".[76] This highlights another aspect of performance, that it consists of conventional patterns that can be interpreted by others.[77] In a similar vein, Marvin Carlson helpfully distinguishes two concepts of performance, "one involving the display of skills, the other also involving display, but less of particular skills than of a recognised and culturally coded pattern of behavior."[78]

In the second concept, the performed actions have a meaning that they communicate. This signifying function is at the centre of the definition by Jeffrey Alexander, whose sociological theory of performance will be presented below. He defines performances as actions that "are performative insofar as they can be understood as communicating meaning to an audience".[79]

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[71] Cf. Taylor, "Translating".

[72] Carlson, *Performance*, 1.

[73] https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/performance, consulted 21 December 2018.

[74] Goffman, *Presentation*, 15–16.

[75] Cf. Peter Burke, who advocated to label the movement following the performative turn as "occasionalism". Burke, "Performing History".

[76] Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 2006, 28–29.

[77] Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 28–29.

[78] Carlson, *Performance*, 4.

[79] Alexander, *Performance and Power*, 82.

In my study the following definition of performance will be used, based on those of Goffman, Schechner, Carlson and Alexander:

A performance is an action, or set of actions (including actions of speaking), done in a particular situation, in the presence of others, using cultural codes and conventions to communicate meaning to them.

1.2.3. Aspects of Performance

The definition given above contains various elements, which, as will be shown, can also be identified in the episodes of Acts discussed in this study. A useful theoretical elaboration of the various aspects of performance, and how they can cooperate to render a performance persuasive, has been provided by the sociologist Jeffrey Alexander.

He has articulated a sociological theory of performance in close interaction with the field of Performance Studies.[80] In outlining his sociological approach, he begins by distinguishing the elements that constitute social performance. These elements provide a helpful heuristic tool to look at performances, not only in the contemporary world, but also in the past. Alexander distinguishes the following elements: 1) the actor: either individuals, groups, or organizations; 2) collective representations: background structures to the performances that "define the symbolic references for every speech act"[81]; 3) means of symbolic production: a stage, in whatever form may be available, and material objects that function as theatre props; 4) *mise–en–scène*: the movements of the actor in time and space, including "the tone of voice, the direction of the glance, the gestures of the body",[82] and the "verbal gestures", the acts of speaking;[83] 5) social power: the resources and capacities necessary to acquire a stage in public space and to be heard in public debate;[84] and 6) an audience.

As an advocate of the sociological importance of culture and its symbols and values, Alexander emphasises the projection of meaning in the process of performance: social performance is successful when actors project meaning to their audiences by appealing to shared values and ideals, and when audiences perceive this projection as authentic. According to Alexander, this was accomplished in primitive societies through collective rituals, in which the same people were both actors and audience; in more complex societies (starting with classical Athens), the actor is distinguished from the audience. As societies become more complex, it becomes increasingly difficult to achieve through convincing performance the sense of "fusion" which characterised communal

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[80] Cf. Alexander, Giesen, and Mast, *Social Performance*; Alexander, *Civil Sphere*; Alexander, *Performance and Power*; Alexander, *Drama*.

[81] Alexander, *Performance and Power*, 84.

[82] Alexander, 84.

[83] Alexander, 32.

[84] Alexander, 84.

ritual.[85] Alexander applies his theory of performance to current debates on power and authority in democratic societies, where politicians have to convince people that their political decisions are motivated by the values that their audiences regard as sacred.[86]

The notion of script is crucial in Alexander's theory. With "script", he describes the background symbols of collective representation as converted into a foreground narrative model for performances. They are "referential texts": as an example, Alexander adduces the script of the public intellectual, which has the "mythical figures" of Socrates and the Old Testament prophets as its "principal protagonists".[87] These cultural scripts, which are consciously or unconsciously used by actors in social performance, help to render the performance persuasive to the audience.

Alexander's sociological theory provides a lucid distinction of components of performance that can be used as a heuristic framework to look at ancient descriptions of performances. In this study, these components will be related to elements that recur in episodes of Acts describing Paul's performance. Especially the notion of a "cultural script" will be employed to describe how Paul is portrayed in line with cultural model figures such as the prophets of Israel or philosophers like Socrates. Before I proceed with my inquiry into how performance is represented in the narrative of Acts, however, it is necessary to look at the ancient Greco-Roman and Jewish sources to see how performance was conceived in the first-century (or perhaps early second-century) CE context of the book of Acts.

1.2.4. Performance in Antiquity

The *performative turn* has inspired attention to performance not only in twenty-first-century societies, but also throughout history.[88] Given the broad semantic range of performance, these studies look at a wide variety of phenomena, and not all of these studies are equally relevant to the present investigation of the depiction of Paul's performance in the book of Acts. For my purposes, four questions are of primary importance: first, whether Greco-Roman and/or Jewish culture in the first century CE can be regarded as a form of a "performance culture", and what this entails; second, how authority was communicated through performance; third, whether ancient authors considered "performance" as an element of characterization, both in theory and in practice; and fourth, whether an awareness can be found in ancient literature of the phenomenon that Jeffrey Alexander describes by his concept of "cultural script". The first

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[85] Alexander, 85.

[86] Alexander, 103.

[87] Alexander, 198.

[88] An early advocate of this was Peter Burke, cf. Burke, *History*, 49; Burke, "Performing History".

question will be approached through a survey of the scholarly discussion following the work of Goldhill and Osborne which coined the term "performance culture" for the fifth-century BCE Greek polis. The second question will be approached through a reading of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* on the performance of speeches. The third and fourth questions will be approached through recent scholarly literature on characterization in ancient narratives and an exploration of rhetorical *progymnasmata* (ancient composition exercises).

a) The Ancient Mediterranean World as 'Performance Culture'?

In 1999, classicists Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne responded to the work of Goffman, Turner, Schechner and other contemporary theorists of performance by hosting a conference on classical Athenian culture as a "performance culture". In their introduction to the conference volume, they explain that speaking in the assembly, exercising in the gymnasium, singing at a symposium or courting a boy are all "part of the exercise of citizenship", and that "performance" is a "useful heuristic category" to explore the connections between these activities and their contributions to the "culture of Athenian democracy".[89] Proceeding from four Greek terms that express the idea of "performance", (ἀγών, contest; ἐπίδειξις, display; σχῆμα, "the physical appearance presented to the gaze of the citizens"; and θεωρία, sight and spectacle), they describe a culture of highly competitive display as the context for the emergence of democracy.[90] In their view, the notion of "performance culture", informed by the theoretical work of Performance Studies, helps to explain "the constitution of the citizen as a political subject across and through a range of particular social practices and discourses".[91]

Goldhill and Osborne did not convince everyone of the usefulness of "performance" as heuristic category. In a review article, David Konstan remarks that although the introductory article posits a unique status for fifth-century Athens as "performance culture", as well as a link between this performance culture and Athenian democracy, the other articles do not support this claim.[92]

Indeed, the term "performance culture" should not be used to distinguish between cultures that qualify as "performance cultures" and those that do not. Goldhill and Osborne do not claim that Mediterranean cultures other than fifth-century Athens were not "performance cultures". However, they rightly insist on the "historicity of the category of performance":[93] how people present themselves in public and how this relates to their sense of self is culturally condi-

[89] Goldhill and Osborne, *Performance Culture*, 1.
[90] Goldhill and Osborne, 8–10.
[91] Goldhill and Osborne, 10.
[92] Konstan, "Review", 151.
[93] Goldhill and Osborne, *Performance Culture*, 10.

tioned: performance in classical Athens may assume forms different from performance in the lavish courts of the Persian empire, for example. Most importantly, scholars should be aware of the danger of anachronism in applying insights of Performance Studies and the sociology of performance to ancient societies.

Notwithstanding Konstan's criticism, the label "performance culture" has stuck in classical scholarship. Richard Martin labels both fifth-century Athens and second- to first-century BCE Rome as performance cultures, defining these as "groupings where being seen to act – whether in assembly, senate, military, the forum or the agora – was a key component of social identity for members of certain classes".[94] The sociohistorical condition for this kind of performance culture is the Mediterranean climate, where people live "outdoors and at close quarters", and where "what might seem to us histrionic becomes the norm for social behaviour".[95] This does not mean that the performance culture of classical Greece is identical to that of first-century CE Rome: the Roman culture differs from the Athenian in terms of the forms of public spectacle (gladiator shows, *triumphus* processions), political context (Roman empire instead of Athenian democracy) and the position of rhetorical education, which had an even more prominent position in public life than it had in classical Greece.[96] Alberto Quiroga Puertas has studied narrations of rhetorical performances in Late Antiquity and affirms the manifestation of the ancient Greek notion of competition in a late antique performance culture.[97] He emphasises that the differences in the cultural, political and religious conditions of Late Antiquity, compared to those of classical Athens and first-century Rome, mean that the dynamics and implications of the rhetorical performances cannot be assumed to be the same in Late Antiquity.[98] He defines these performances as referring "to the act of delivering a speech in front of an audience", whether these speeches be epideictic speeches, rhetorical school exercises or homilies in churches.[99]

As a matter of fact, Quintilian, the late first-century teacher of rhetoric who will be used in this study as primary source for the theory and practice of public speaking in the time of Paul and Luke, constantly warns that pupils in rhetoric should not be taught to perform like the Greeks. Greek-style performances connote effeminacy and lack of aristocratic dignity. Although this is more a rhe-

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[94] Martin, "Theatre", 34.

[95] Martin, 34. Cf. also the remark of Peter Burke quoted above, Burke, *History*, 49.

[96] Martin, "Theatre", 52.

[97] Quiroga Puertas, *Dynamics*, 2.

[98] Quiroga Puertas, 3.

[99] Quiroga Puertas, 5. Cf. also Serafim, *Attic Oratory and Performance*; Papaioannou, Serafim, and Da Vela, *Theatre*.

torical contrast than an actual reflection of differences between Greek and Roman performance cultures,[100] it does suggest that his instructions on the performance of speeches were meant to construct a specifically Roman, male identity.[101]

In view of Paul's Jewish ethnicity, and the Jewish orbit of early Christianity in general, it is worth asking about the cultural specifics of Jewish performance. This question has been investigated in detail by Catherine Hezser in a study titled *Rabbinic Body Language*. She concludes that Jews participated in the same Mediterranean sociohistorical context as Romans and Greeks, but their performance assumed particular forms and was guided by specific conventions as they presented themselves as Jews. "A rabbi had to comport himself in public like an intellectual, but an intellectual with a Jewish religious twist."[102]

Hezser's study is mainly concerned with the rabbis in Late Antiquity and based on rabbinic literature from the late second to sixth century CE (and later). However, earlier sources also confirm that Jews, both in Judea and the diaspora, were part of the general Mediterranean "performance culture", displaying a particularly Jewish identity in their performances. According to Philo of Alexandria, Moses wanted his disciples (that is, the Jews) to display their wisdom in public.

> Let them go by day through the middle of the marketplace, so that they will meet with populous crowds and let their own way of life shine in the bright sunlight. Through the most dominant senses they will benefit the assembled people, when, on the one hand, they see sights both pleasant and most astonishing, and, on the other hand, hear and feast on refreshing speeches, such as usually delight the minds of those not too uneducated.[103]

From a more polemical perspective, the New Testament Gospels also highlight the performative aspect of Jewish society. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus famously decries the "hypocrites" (ὑποκριταί, literally "actors", "pretenders") who have their almsgiving proclaimed in synagogues and streets, who pray standing on street corners and disfigure their faces when they fast, in order to be seen and praised by the people (Matt 6:1–18). However, the same Sermon on the Mount also teaches the disciples to display their good works so that people will praise God (Matt 5:14–16). The Matthean Jesus does not take issue with display and performance as such. Good works should be displayed and be

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[100] Cf. especially Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity*.

[101] Cf. also Martin, "Theatre", 47.

[102] Hezser, *Body Language*, 252.

[103] Philo, *Spec.* 1.321–322. μεθ' ἡμέραν διὰ μέσης ἴτωσαν ἀγορᾶς ἐντευξόμενοι πολυανθρώποις ὁμίλοις, ἡλίῳ καθαρῷ τὸν ἴδιον βίον ἀνταυγάσοντες καὶ διὰ τῶν κυριωτάτων αἰσθήσεων τοὺς συλλόγους ὀνήσοντες, ὁρῶντας μὲν ἡδίστας ὁμοῦ καὶ καταπληκτικωτάτας ὄψεις, ἀκούοντας δὲ καὶ ἐστιωμένους λόγων ποτίμων, οἳ τὰς διανοίας τῶν μὴ σφόδρα ἀμούσων εἰώθασιν εὐφραίνειν.

seen by people; however, the intention should be that they glorify God and not the performer.

Finally, the understanding of the performance of Jewish identity in the Roman world can benefit from a postcolonial perspective. John Barclay has shown the potential of postcolonial theory in understanding Josephus' self-representation which "both accepts and unsettles the authority of the Greek (and Roman) tradition."[104] A postcolonial approach has made scholars of ancient Judaism and early Christianity sensitive to the possibility that when Jews behave according to Roman norms, this could involve subtle subversion or ironic comment in the performance of these norms.[105] This has inspired an anti-Imperialist interpretation of many New Testament texts, searching for such forms of subversion or irony, for "hidden transcripts" between the lines.[106] However, critics have pointed out that an anti-Imperialist stance has to be established from the text, and cannot be postulated as hidden behind the text.[107]

b) Quintilian on Performance

One of the most extensive discussions of 'performance' in the ancient world is the long section in book 11 of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* on the performance (*actio,* ὑπόκρισις) of speeches, published in the early 90s CE.[108] Although it is primarily a detailed guide on the use of voice and gestures in delivering a speech, its significance for the study of performance is wider. First of all, the performance of a speech should appear as spontaneous, authentic speaking, which implies that the gestures described are not an artificial set of signs specifically designed for rhetoric, but are supposed to reflect the gestures used in everyday life.[109] Second, the introduction and conclusion of the section make it clear that Quintilian is not only concerned with the technical side of giving a persuasive presentation, but also (and perhaps more so) about how to present oneself as an authoritative, male Roman aristocrat. The *Institutio Oratoria* as a whole provides a comprehensive view of the ideal Roman education, which forms the children of the Roman elite into adults who embody *Romanitas*, in a social context where others display their Greek or Jewish education.[110] Thus, book 11.3 of Quintilian's work is not only about the performance of speeches,

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[104] Barclay and Josephus, *Against Apion*, lxxi. Cf. further Barclay, "Empire".

[105] On performance in relation to the concept of mimicry as articulated by feminist theorists (Elin Diamond) and postcolonial theorists (Homi Bhabha), cf. Carlson, *Performance*, 220–22.

[106] For an overview cf. Diehl, "Rhetoric".

[107] For a methodological assessment of both sides of the debate on anti-Imperialist readings of Paul, cf., e.g., Heilig, *Hidden Criticism?*

[108] Cf. Nadeau, "Delivery"; Zicari, *Quintiliano*; Fantham, "Quintilian"; Maier-Eichhorn, *Gestikulation*; Hall, "Hand Gestures"; Fögen, "Sermo Corporis".

[109] Cf. Aldrete, *Gestures*.

[110] Cf. Too, "Education", 314.

but also about the performance of authority, gender, ethnicity and status through the performance of the speech.[111]

Quintilian's handbook is not the first to discuss performance,[112] but it is the most extensive treatment of the subject and the one that is chronologically closest to the book of Acts. Quintilian arrived in Rome in 68 in the retinue of Vespasian and taught rhetoric and practiced as an advocate for twenty years, receiving a salary from the emperor.[113] His most prestigious case was a defence on behalf of queen Berenice (Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.19; cf. Acts 25:23), where the queen herself, remarkably, was also the presiding judge. Under Domitian, he was made tutor of the two children of Flavius Clemens, Domitian's designated heirs,[114] and he probably completed the *Institutio* before Flavius Clemens was executed on the charge of atheism in 95 CE.[115] Robert Morgenthaler suggested that Luke may even have known Quintilian, if he wrote the book of Acts in Rome somewhere in this period, since Quintilian was one of the most influential public figures at the time.[116] Regardless of whether Luke might have read the *Institutio* before writing the book of Acts, the work is relevant to my investigation as a contemporary source detailing how gestures and voice were used in public speaking and as evidence that contemporaries of Luke were aware of the importance of persuasive performance.

Quintilian arrives at his discussion of "delivery" or "performance" as the last of the five traditional branches of rhetoric.[117] He observes that delivery (*pronuntiatio*) and performance (*actio*) are equivalent terms for a branch of rhetoric that can be divided in voice (*vox*) and gesture (*gestus*). It is a crucial part of oratory: proofs will only convince the judge when they are presented with force, kindling the emotions into flame "by voice, face, and the bearing of virtually the whole body".[118] To support this claim, he refers first of all to stage actors (*scaenici actores*) and then to a famous legend about Demosthenes, who accorded the first, second, and third prize to delivery when he was asked what the most important part of oratory is,[119] noting that Demosthenes studied

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[111] On this, especially the performance of gender, cf. Gunderson, *Staging Masculinity*; Connolly, "Virile Tongues"; Tonger-Erk, *Actio*.

[112] For overviews, cf. Olbricht, "Delivery"; Wöhrle, "Actio"; Nadeau, "Delivery"; Johnstone, "Communicating"; Stengl, "Actio".

[113] Quintilian, *Inst.* 1. Pr. 1; Suetonius, *Vesp.* 18. Cf. Too, "Education", 315.

[114] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4. Pr. 1.

[115] For concise introductions to the life of Quintilian, cf. Russell, *Quintilian*, 1:1–4; López, "Quintilian".

[116] Cf. Morgenthaler, *Lukas*.

[117] After *inventio, dispositio, elocutio* and *memoria.*

[118] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.3 (Russell, LCL). *nisi voce, vultu, totius prope habitu corporis*.

[119] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.4–6 (Russell, LCL). Philosophers, such as the Epicurean Philodemus, criticised this emphasis on delivery. Bruce Winter has argued that Paul concurs with Philodemus in this regard, in response to those who reproached him for being unable to

under Andronicus, an actor. Thus, the close relationship between acting on stage and acting as an orator is immediately made clear. Throughout his discussion, Quintilian will insist on many points that the orator should *not* act like the actors on stage, but it is the close affinity beween these two forms of performance that prompts Quintilian's concern.[120]

In his detailed treatment, Quintilian first examines the use of the voice (*Inst.* 11.3.14–65) and then gesture or body language, moving from head to feet as in an *ecphrasis* of the orator's body while he discusses the various bodily movements (*Inst.* 11.3.66–136), with an appendix on the use of the toga in speaking (*Inst.* 11.3.137–149). Fitting gestures and facial expressions are important because they establish authority (*auctoritas*) and credibility (*fides*),[121] produce seemliness (*decor*)[122] and convey meaning (*significatio*).[123]

Having grasped the effects of voice and gesture, however, the orator is not yet done. Performance is always situated in a specific context and should be geared towards that: the orator should reflect on his own person as performer, on the court before which he performs, and on the people who will be present at his performance.[124]

Furthermore, the delivery should take into account differences in subject and intended effect. As for the various effects, Quintilian uses the classification of oratory as a whole, the three *officia oratoris* – to conciliate, persuade, and move – with giving pleasure as a natural corollary of these.[125] Interestingly, he notes that conciliation is achieved in part by the commendability of (moral) character (*commendatione morum*), which "shines through in voice and performance"

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provide a good performance when preaching the Gospel in Corinth. If so, it did not hinder Luke from portraying Paul as a skilled public speaker. Winter, "Philodemus". Cf. also Winter, *Sophists*. The difference may be one of perspective: Paul employs the well-known trope of contrasting the wisdom preached by him with that of the sophists, which only aimed at gaining popularity and financial profit; while Luke employs the equally widespread strategy of highlighting the rhetorical qualities of his protagonists in order to present them as authoritative teachers of a convincing message. As Alberto Quiroga Puertas points out, "Greek and Roman authors were not very keen on giving accounts of their own oratorical performances. Rather they seemed to enjoy describing how rivals and antagonists failed while delivering a speech." Quiroga Puertas, *Dynamics*, 33.

[120] Cf. Dutsch, "Theory", 431.

[121] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.67.

[122] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.68. Cf. also 11.3.177: *praecipue in actione spectetur decorum.* Extensive discussion of *decor* (τὸ πρέπον) is the subject of 11.1.

[123] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.68.

[124] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.150: *quis, apud quos, quibus praesentibus sit acturus.* Cf. also Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 2.19.1–4. For a good impression of the different courts and audiences in Rome, cf. Bablitz, *Actors and Audience*.

[125] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.153. Cf. the note in Russell, *Quintilian*, 2002, 5:164.

(*ex voce etiam atque actione perlucent*),[126] an important notion that will be addressed in the next paragraph.

In his conclusion, Quintilian again compares the orator to the actor on stage: "I do not want my pupil to be a comic actor, but an orator."[127] Therefore, "moderation rules"[128] and the artificial extravagance of the actor should be avoided. He sets Cicero as an example, as throughout his handbook, but concedes that times have changed:

> Nowadays, however, a somewhat more agitated style of Delivery is regarded as acceptable, and is indeed appropriate in some contexts; but it needs to be under control, lest, in our eagerness to pursue the elegance of the performer (*actoris elegantiam*), we lose the authority of the good and grave man (*viri boni et gravis auctoritatem*).[129]

A modern reader should not be misled by this statement, however: the moderation in delivery that Quintilian proposes does not rule out straining the voice to maximum volume, casting flaming looks at the audience, raising both arms high in the air, and, in the conclusion (*peroratio*) of a speech, even crying, tearing one's clothes, or presenting the children of the victim to arouse pity: the performance of the orator would be regarded as histrionic by the standards of today. Cultural conventions determine what counts as a moderate, authoritative performance, and this should also be taken into account when watching the performance of Paul in the book of Acts.[130]

The "authority of the good and grave man" with which Quintilian concludes his discussion of performance shows what is at stake in the delivery of speeches and provides a bridge to the next book of the *Institutio*. There, Quintilian describes the ideal of the consummate orator: the *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, "the good man skilled in speaking", as Cato had defined him.[131] The moral quality of the orator is crucial to Quintilian: "no one can be an orator unless he is a good man."[132] This insistence makes clear that for Quintilian, rhetorical performance is not about pretending something, but about displaying the moral character that motivates one to engage in political and legal offices. At the same time, it involves the careful orchestration of pose, voice inflections and emotional display that will be most effective in persuading the audience. As the unknown author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* asserted before Quintilian, "good delivery ensures that what the orator is saying seems to come from his

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[126] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.154.

[127] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.181 (Russell, LCL). *non enim comoedum esse, sed oratorem volo.*

[128] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.181: *regnare maxime modum*. Russell, *Quintilian*, 2002, 5:180.

[129] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.184 (Russell, LCL).

[130] Cf. also Johnson, "Slander".

[131] Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.1.1. Cf. Cicero, *De Or.* 2.85; Seneca the Elder, *Contr.* 1 Pr. 9.

[132] Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.1.3 (Russell, LCL): *ne futurum quidem oratorem nisi virum bonum.*

heart",[133] but this feigned spontaneity should be used to good cause, a tension of which rhetoricians in antiquity were well aware and which philosophers were keen to point out.

As I conclude this cursory reading of Quintilian, it is important to keep in mind that for him, voice and body language function to convey authority, credibility, *decorum* and meaning; that they display moral character; and that performances are always situated in a particular context, at a particular place and before a particular audience.

c) Performance as Component of Characterization

Rhetorical education in the ancient world not only taught its students how to perform speeches in public; it also taught them how to compose narratives and how to construct characters in narrative. It has often been noted that the ancient world did not have a separate theory of writing historiographical and/or biographical works; it was rhetorical theory that formed the terminological framework for discussions about the composition of such works.[134] Because the definitions and conceptualizations provided by ancient rhetorical theory are roughly contemporary with the book of Acts, they can be especially helpful in understanding how Luke characterises Paul through his performances.

In my reading of Quintilian, I already observed that the orator should display his good *mores* (the Latin equivalent of the Greek ἦθος) in the performance of his speech in order to gain authority and credibility among his audience.[135] In line with this, authors used speeches in narratives to display the ἦθος of the protagonists. Constructing a speech for a narrative was a composition exercise in the preparatory education for a rhetorical training (the progymnasmata, which began in secondary education and were continued in the instruction of the rhetorician), called προσωποποιΐα (literally, "making a person") by the first-century author Aelius Theon.[136] Later accounts of the progymnasmata distinguish between ἠθοποιΐα and προσωποποιΐα, restricting the latter term for speeches assigned to personified abstractions (because the speech turns the abstract concept into a person) and using the former for speeches attributed to

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[133] Rhet. Her. 3.27, the concluding line of the section on delivery.

[134] For a collection of translated source texts with an up-to-date introduction, cf. Marincola, *Writing History*.

[135] Cf. above, §1.2.4 sub b.

[136] Sean Adams has argued that Luke received secondary education, including the more basic forms of the *progymnasmata,* but no tertiary education with a rhetor, since he shows no familiarity with more advanced *progymnasmata* such as the thesis. Adams, "Progymnasmata".

real people (because the speech constructs the ἦθος of an already existing person).[137] Theon does not yet make this distinction, but it is clear that his conception of προσωποποιΐα is likewise focused on the construction of ἦθος. Students are encouraged to imagine speeches (or, indeed, written letters)[138] that take into account a number of elements: "what kind of person the speaker is, to whom the speech is addressed, the [speaker's] age at the time of speaking, and the occasion, and the place, and the fortune [of the speaker], and the subject matter, about which the speeches will speak."[139] Students should be careful to use appropriate diction, vocabulary and style.[140] In discussing the benefits of this exercise, Theon notes that "prosopopoeia [...] is not only a historical exercise, but applicable also to oratory and dialogue and poetry, and is most advantageous in everyday life and in our conversations with each other, and (understanding of it) is most useful in the study of prose writings."[141] Thus, while applicable to many areas, it is primarily a historical exercise, and scholars today widely accept that speeches in historiographical works are indeed compositions of the author, composed to fit the person speaking and the situation in which it was spoken, and not transcripts of actually delivered speeches.[142] They function, together with the protagonist's actions,[143] to display his ἦθος (character), which, if evaluated positively, commends his authority and credibility.

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[137] E.g., Ps.-Hermogenes, *Progymnasmata*, 9.20: "Ethopoeia (*êthopoiia*) is an imitation of the character of a person supposed to be speaking; for example, what words Andromache might say to Hector. It is called personification (*prosôpopoiia*) when we personify a thing, like Elenchus (Disproof) in Menander and as in Aristeides' speech where 'The Sea' addresses the Athenians. The difference is clear: in ethopoeia we imagine words for a real person, in prosopopoeia we imagine a non-existing person." Translation Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 84.

[138] Theon subsumes "consolations, exhortation and letter writing" as species of *prosopopoeia, Prog.* 8.115. ὑπὸ δὲ τοῦτο τὸ γένος τῆς γυμνασίας πίπτει καὶ τὸ τῶν πανηγυρικῶν λόγων εἶδος, καὶ τὸ τῶν προτρεπτικῶν, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐπιστολικῶν. Kennedy, 47.

[139] Theon, *Prog.* 8.115. πρῶτον μὲν τοίνυν ἁπάντων ἐνθυμηθῆναι δεῖ τό τε τοῦ λέγοντος πρόσωπον ὁποῖόν ἐστι, καὶ τὸ πρὸς ὃν ὁ λόγος, τήν τε παροῦσαν ἡλικίαν, καὶ τὸν καιρόν, καὶ τὸν τόπον, καὶ τὴν τύχην, καὶ τὴν ὑποκειμένην ὕλην, περὶ ἧς οἱ μέλλοντες λόγοι ῥηθήσονται. Cf. Quintilian's injunction that orators should take into account *quis, apud quos, quibus praesentibus sit acturus*. Cf. above, §1.2.4 sub b.

[140] Theon, *Prog.* 8.115–117.

[141] Theon, *Prog.* 1.60. καὶ ἡ προσωποποιΐα δὲ οὐ μόνον ἱστορικὸν γύμνασμά ἐστιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ῥητορικὸν καὶ διαλογικὸν καὶ ποιητικόν, κἂν τῷ καθ' ἡμέραν βίῳ, κἂν ταῖς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὁμιλίαις πολυωφελέστατον, καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἐντεύξεις τῶν συγγραμμάτων χρησιμώτατον. Translation Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 4.

[142] Cf., e.g., Thucydides 1.22.1–4; Lucian, *Hist.* 58; Polybius 36.1.1–7. Gempf, "Public Speaking"; Baum, "Funktion"; De Temmerman, "Biography", 14; Marincola, *Writing History*, lviii–lx.

[143] Cf. already Xenophon, Agesilaus 1.6: "on the basis of his deeds, I believe that his character (τοὺς τρόπους αὐτοῦ) too will be most manifest." Konstan and Walsh argue that

In historiographical works, speeches are embedded in narratives.[144] Writing a narrative or narration (διήγημα or διήγησις) was another preliminary exercise, and considered by Theon to be the basic form of historical writing, which was, after all, a σύστημα διηγήσεως.[145] Theon lists six elements (στοιχεῖα) of narration: "the person (πρόσωπον), whether that be one or many; and the action done by the person; and the place where the action was done; and the time at which it was done; and the manner of the action; and sixth, the cause of these things."[146] As this list makes clear, narrative episodes are essentially contextualised action. Both in the composition of speeches (προσωποποιΐα) and in the description of actions in a διήγημα, the spatial setting is an important element.

Above, I have defined performance as "an action, or set of actions (including actions of speaking), done in a particular situation, in the presence of others, using cultural codes and conventions to communicate a message to them." It can now be concluded that ancient rhetorical theory is in line with this notion of situational action as a means of displaying character and authority.

d) Ancient Notions of Script

A key element from Jeffrey Alexander's sociological theory of performance is the notion of cultural script. Performances may be consciously "scripted", as in the case of a presidential candidate who is filmed as he talks to people in a local neighbourhood, so as to be broadcasted to the nation as the approachable statesman who cares for his people; or performances may adhere more unconsciously to cultural models and types, as in the case of a university professor who may be only half conscious of how he enacts the role of the intellectual in his gestures, clothes and style of speaking. Whether conscious or unconscious, the enactment of cultural scripts is crucial to gaining credibility and authority.

Xenophon's Agesilaus marks the beginning of a biographical tradition that has as fundamental feature "the exhibition of character by way of actions". Konstan and Walsh, "Civic and subversive biography in antiquity", 32.

[144] On narrations of rhetorical performances in Late Antiquity, cf. Quiroga Puertas, *Dynamics*. He argues that "failure or success in the political, religious and cultural arena are frequently represented as the result of either a proficient or an incompentent rhetorical delivery that foregrounds both the linguistic and extralinguistic techniques designed to persuade and mesmerize late antique audiences." Quiroga Puertas, 2.

[145] Theon, *Prog.* 1.60. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἄλλο τί ἐστιν ἱστορία ἢ σύστημα διηγήσεως; Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 4. Cf. Luke 1:1: Ἐπειδήπερ πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι διήγησιν […] ("Since many have now set themselves to put a narrative in order […].").

[146] Theon, *Prog.* 5.78. στοιχεῖα δὲ τῆς διηγήσεώς εἰσιν ἕξ, τό τε πρόσωπον, εἴτε ἓν εἴη εἴτε πλείω, καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα τὸ πραχθὲν ὑπὸ τοῦ προσώπου, καὶ ὁ τόπος ἐν ᾧ ἡ πρᾶξις, καὶ ὁ χρόνος καθ' ὃν ἡ πρᾶξις, καὶ ὁ τρόπος τῆς πράξεως, καὶ ἕκτον ἡ τούτων αἰτία. Kennedy, 28.

This notion of "script" is a metaphor taken from theatre performances, and the term does not have a direct equivalent in ancient rhetorical theory. However, it has to be noted that the idea expressed by this metaphor is present in antiquity. In fact, Quintilian's detailed prescriptions on how to act as an orator provide a script for the dignified Roman public speaker, which is set up in contrast with the script of the comic actor. This script is not only expressed in the detailed instructions concerning the gestures and words that are to be used; it is also expressed in the concept of *imitatio* (μίμησις): the orator should memorise the famous orations of the past (as well as a wide selection of literature more generally) in order to imitate them and thus acquire the proper diction and style.[147] Moreover, he should meditate on the sayings and actions of those in the past who were of outstanding virtue in order to become the *vir bonus dicendi peritus* that the orator should be.[148] As Quintilian puts it, contrasting the orator with the philosopher who retreats from public office to philosophical discussions in school rooms, "all the same, I should like the orator I am training to be a sort of Roman Wise Man, able to display himself as (*exhibeat*) the real statesman not in private seminars but in the experience and activity of real life."[149]

Moreover, the classicists studying characterization in antiquity have pointed out that the emphasis on a moral evaluation of character results in less concern to provide characters with an individual profile, and a greater tendency to conform characters to stereotypes, even though this does not mean that there is no attention to individual personality traits at all.[150] In this regard, Koen De Temmerman and Evert van Emde Boas observe that "such subsumption of individual character to categories of typical and recognizable behaviour is often realised by conforming characters to pre-existing literary, mythological, historical or socially recognizable (and often morally significant) types."[151]

These types, then, in many ways resemble what is labelled a "cultural script" by Jeffrey Alexander. De Temmerman and Van Emde Boas include the alignment of characters with types in their category of "metaphorical characterization", where a person is characterised through comparison (hence "metaphorical") with another person or model; they distinguish helpfully between intertextual metaphorical characterization (where a character is presented as comparable to a figure in a particular intertext), internarrative metaphorical characterization (where a character is presented as comparable to a more general model taken from broader narrative or mythological cycles), and intratextual

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[147] Quintilian, *Inst.* 10.1–2.

[148] Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.2.29–31.

[149] Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.2.7 (Russell, LCL, modified). *Atque ego illum quem instituo Romanum quondam velim esse sapientem, qui non secretis disputationibus sed rerum experimentis atque operibus vere civilem virum exhibeat.*

[150] De Temmerman and van Emde Boas, "Character", 8–9. Cf. also Bennema, *Character*.

[151] De Temmerman and van Emde Boas, "Character", 9.

metaphorical characterization (where a character is presented as comparable to another character in the same work).[152] In addition, a distinction can be made between intertextual modelling by the narrator, which signals to the reader (or hearer: whenever I speak of readers, this includes those who heard the narrative as it was read to them) a degree of fictionalization, and instances in which the narrator describes the character as modelling himself on particular paradigms, as in the case of Lucian's *Demonax,* where Demonax is said to have modelled himself after Socrates.[153]

Another example of the use of scripts in performance is the tendency among orators to adopt a persona in their speech. Cécile Bost-Pouderon has argued that Dion of Prusa, a younger contemporary of Luke, evokes both Socrates and Odysseus in his speeches as part of his persona.[154]

In conclusion, ancient authors were aware of the importance of conventional patterns of behaviour and the imitation of exemplary figures of the past, even though this was not labeled as "script". Not only were orators trained to imitate classical examples in their performance, writers also tended to model their protagonists on such examples and on more general types in order to express their character.[155]

1.2.5. Representation of Performance in Acts

Having seen how performance came to be a central term in scholarly discourse today and how performative practices and reflection on performance were also present in antiquity, I turn finally to the question of how performance is represented in the book of Acts. Which aspects of Paul's performance can be found in the text of Acts?

In Acts, Paul's performance is described in a chain of episodes, narrative tableaus that are connected by summary statements and travel notices.[156] These episodes provide evocative images of Paul's actions and speeches, conforming with the ancient ideal of "vividness" (ἐνάργεια) that was appreciated in historiography, and in line with the vivid stories of the historiography of the Jewish Scriptures.[157]

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[152] De Temmerman and van Emde Boas, 23.

[153] De Temmerman, "Biography", 22; Beck, "Demonax".

[154] Bost-Pouderon, *Dion Chrysostome*, 2:311.

[155] In biography and historiography, such modelling raises questions of fictionalization. On these questions, cf. De Temmerman, "Biography", 22–25.

[156] The metaphor of a chain is used also in Lucian, *Hist.* 55.

[157] Cf. de Zwaan, who speaks of "a generally recognized picturesqueness and dramatic power", "pathetic effects and an episodic composition, meant to give a dramatic movement to the whole." De Zwaan sees a similarity with Vergil in this style. De Zwaan, "Greek", 64–65. With reference to de Zwaan, Ernst Haenchen coined the term *dramatische Episodenstil,* which he uses alongside *dramatische Szenentechnik* (Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte*, 117).

In the structure of the episodes, a pattern can be discerned. Although this pattern is not a rigid scheme and allows for variations, the consistency is remarkable. The following description is based on an analysis of the episodes selected for the present study: the episodes that portray Paul's performances in Paphos, Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Athens and Caesarea (see further below, §1.3).

First, the surrounding narrative situates the episode in a particular location. In this location, one or more "scenes" describe how Paul (sometimes together with others) performs a number of actions, which are often situated in a specific setting within the town or region. Temporal indications (notably the Sabbath) add to the situatedness of the action. Together, these aspects may be labelled the "spatial and temporal situation of the performance", or, in the terminology of the theatre, the "stage". The mentioning of these stages in the narrative may evoke their status and the cultural connotations that add to the meaning of the performance (e.g., the Athenian agora) and invites comparison with those who performed in these venues before (e.g., Socrates). The setting is further described by references to Paul's activity in this location in imperfect verbs, which denote background activities (e.g., "he was proclaiming the Gospel", εὐηγγελίζετο) in contrast to the foreground actions that are narrated in the aorist tense.

Second, additional characters are introduced who interact with the actions of Paul and his companions. The reader of the book of Acts views the performance of Paul as it is geared towards these characters, and is encouraged to compare and contrast the performance of Paul with the performance of his interlocutors. Short characterizations of these people ("a prudent man", 13:7; "the Areopagite", 17:34) add significance to their response to Paul's performance.

Third, the foreground actions of Paul (including actions of speaking) are narrated using aorist verbs (e.g., "he said", εἶπεν). It is noteworthy that the foreground action is always performed in reaction to actions of the other characters, and is usually followed by actions of the other characters as well, as they respond to Paul's performance. Thus, the foreground actions are marked as the central performance(s) of the episode, in a sandwich structure of actions of others. These central performances typically consist of a combination of gestures (in a broad sense, including looks and postures) and direct speech. Structure, style and content of the speeches all contribute to the overall impression of Paul's performance on the reader of Acts.

Plümacher studied this particular style extensively and notes a similar style and compositional technique in Josephus and Hellenistic historians, and especially in Livy (Plümacher, *Schriftsteller*, 80–136). Cf. also Alexander, *Ancient Literary Context*, 144–45. On the ideal of ἐναργεία in ancient historiography, cf. further Marincola, *Writing History*, lv–lvii; Wolter, "Doppelwerk", 262; Backhaus, "Spielräume", 8–10.

Fourth, as noted, the other characters not only trigger Paul's performance, but also respond to it. In most cases, the performance of Paul creates a division among the audience between those who oppose Paul's words (by slandering, mocking, or contradicting) and those who believe and/or follow Paul.

In addition, the episodes may include the parenthetic remarks of the narrator, or a short narrative that connects the central performances with each other. Further, the episode may close with a final performance of Paul that is not followed by a response of other characters (as in Acts 13:51; 14:20).

Together, these elements convey an image of Paul's performance as situational action performed in the presence of others. The elements will be used to structure my analysis of the selected episodes. In addition, the script(s) of the performance will be examined. Above, I have pointed out that ancient authors characterised their narrative heroes in relation to exemplary figures or paradigmatic types or explicitly presented characters as self-modelling their actions on such types. I suggested that such imitation resembles what is called "script" in modern performance theory.[158] In my survey of previous research, I noted that earlier scholarship has observed a modelling of Paul after Jesus, Peter and Stephen ("intratextual metaphorical characterization"), as well as the prophets of Israel, Socrates, or Epimenides ("intertextual" or "internarrative metaphorical characterization").[159] In inquiring after the script of Paul's performance, these proposals will be evaluated, with a particular focus on whether the modelling of Paul on these types enhances his credibility both in the specific context of the performance and for the intended audience of the book of Acts.

1.3. Selection of Case Studies and Research Design

Five specific episodes were chosen as case studies for this investigation: Paul's performances in Paphos (Acts 13:4–12), in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14–52), in Lystra (Acts 14:6–20), in Athens (Acts 17:16–34), and his last performance in Caesarea (Acts 25:23–26:32). The choice is based on the placement of these episodes in prominent positions in the structure of the book of Acts, and with a view to a balanced distribution of performances for a Jewish and a non-Jewish audience. In order to justify the selection, some remarks are necessary on the structure of the book of Acts.

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[158] Cf. §1.2.4 sub d. Gowler also speaks of 'cultural scripts' in his analysis of the characterization of the Pharisees in Luke-Acts. His understanding of cultural script differs from mine, however: he understands the cultural scripts as "part of the repertoire of the social matrix in which these narratives are imbedded" and lists as examples of first-century cultural scripts: "Honor/Shame; Patron–Client Contract/Limited Good; Purity Rules; and Kinship/οἶκος". Gowler, *Host*, 15.

[159] Cf. above, §1.1.2.

1.3.1. Structural Markers in Acts

There are various elements that structure the narrative of Acts. Scholarly proposals for the structure differ because they give more weight to some of these elements than to others.

First, a geographical programme is laid out in Acts 1:8, where it is said of the apostles that they will be witnesses to Jesus "in Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria and until the end of the earth".[160] Subsequently, Acts 1–5:42 speaks about the testimony of the disciples in Jerusalem, Acts 6:1–9:31 narrates how the word spreads over all Israel (9:31: Judea, Galilee and Samaria), and then, the Gospel is taken to Caesarea (on the boundary of Israel),[161] and beyond. In bringing the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles outside Israel, Paul's proclamation has a crucial role: he is a[162] chosen instrument (or vessel, jar)[163] of the Lord (Jesus) to carry his name "before nations and kings, and sons of Israel" (Acts 9:15), which is a programmatic text for Paul's ministry in Acts 13–28, although the triad "nations, kings, and sons of Israel" does not indicate a structural sequence.[164] Through Paul as messenger and directed by the Spirit, the Gospel crosses a number of geographical boundaries: from Antioch via Cyprus to Asia Minor (Acts 13–14) and from Troas in Asia to Philippi in Europe (Acts 16:6–10). Finally, Paul also has to testify in Rome (Acts 19:21; 23:11; 27–28), although the Gospel may have reached Rome before Paul.[165]

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[160] Cf. Luke 24:47–48, "beginning from Jerusalem, you will be witnesses of these things". Van Unnik has argued that the "end of the earth" is to be read against the background of Isaiah 49:6 (van Unnik, "Ausdruck"). The alternative translation is "to the end of the land [of Israel]", which would fit with the specific function of the apostles as witnesses in Jerusalem for the people of Israel (cf. Acts 8:1; 13:31). Peter travels as far as Caesarea, which is on the boundary of the land of Israel. Cf. Schwartz, "End".

[161] For the rabbinic discussion whether or not Caesarea belongs to the land of Israel (which has important halachic implications), cf. Habas, "Caesarea".

[162] Not "the chosen instrument": the Greek does not have an article and Peter was also chosen by God, as the one from whose mouth the nations would hear the Gospel in the early days (Acts 15:7).

[163] On the discussion about the meaning of σκεύη, cf. most recently Backhaus, "Paulus", 314. Backhaus favours "instrument", in contrast to, e.g., van Eck, *Handelingen*, 222.

[164] Contra van Eck, who thinks that Paul first witnesses before nations (Acts 13-19) and then before kings (Acts 22-26), leaving the witness before the sons of Israel still in the future. Van Eck, *Handelingen*, 35. He overlooks the importance of Paul's performance before Sergius Paulus, an authority of higher status than Felix and Festus (cf. below, chapter 2). Sons of Israel are adressed by Paul throughout Acts 13-28, beginning immediately after his vision of Jesus (Acts 9:20).

[165] This depends on the interpretation of "brothers" in Acts 28:11. They could be fellow-Jews (as in Acts 28:17 and 21) rather than fellow-disciples of Jesus. In either case, Paul is the one who teaches the prominent Jews about the kingdom of God and about Jesus; the only thing they have heard about the Nazarene αἵρεσις is that it is everywhere spoken against (Acts 28:22–23).

Another structural marker is provided by the appearance and disappearance of characters from the narrative stage. In Acts 1–15, Peter has an important role that culminates in his words before the apostles and elders in Jerusalem (Acts 15:7–11), where he recalls how God had chosen him as the one from whose mouth the nations heard the message of the Gospel "from the early days among you" (15:7), a reference to his Pentecost speech that provides an *inclusio* around the first half of Acts.[166] Paul, although introduced as the young man Saul already in Acts 7:58 and proclaiming the Gospel together with the older 'mentor' Barnabas in Acts 13–14, only begins to preach independently after the apostolic council in Jerusalem. He is the central character in Acts 16–28, when Peter and the other apostles, as well as Barnabas, have left the stage. Instead, the narrator suddenly appears on stage as someone who occasionally accompanied Paul, in the so-called "we-passages", the first of which is begins in Acts 16:10.[167] These changes in the characters, as well as the central position of the gathering of apostles, elders and the assembly of Jerusalem in Acts 15, suggest a division of the book of Acts in two halves, the first of which concludes with the summary statement of Acts 16:5, whereas the second begins with Paul's departure in Acts 15:36 (the boundaries between the narrative units of Acts often have a roof tile structure, with overlapping seams).[168]

This division is confirmed by the use of the term ἀρχαῖος (related to ἀρχή, "beginning" and ἄρχομαι, "to begin") in Acts: Peter mentions in his last speech in the book of Acts that "from the early days among you, God chose me as the one through whose mouth the nations would hear the word of the good message and believe" (Acts 15:7). In Acts 21:7, the we-group is accompanied by a certain Cypriote named Mnason, "an ancient disciple" (ἀρχαίῳ μαθητῇ), i.e., a disciple from the early days.[169] Thus, the book of Acts demarcates a period of the early days, during which the narrator does not claim his own presence in the events narrated, from the period where he does claim his participation in some of the narrated journeys. This distinction gives further support to a structural division of the narrative in two halves, roughly Acts 1–15 and 16–28.[170]

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[166] Peter's Pentecost speech was delivered to Jews from every nation under heaven (2:5), including both Jews and proselytes (2:11).

[167] Except for the we-passage in Acts 11:28 in Codex Bezae and some Latin manuscripts (cohering with the tradition that Luke hailed from Antioch).

[168] Cf. Pervo, *Acts*, 20–21.

[169] Cf. also Luke 1:2, οἱ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται, "those who were eye-witnesses from the beginning", and Acts 1:1, "all the things that Jesus began (ἤρξατο) both to do and to teach".

[170] This is argued here in contrast to those proposals that distinguish between Acts 1–12 and Acts 13–28 as the two halves of Acts, e.g., Keener, *Acts*, 2012, 1:576. In support of a division after Acts 15, cf., e.g., Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, 53; Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 127–28.

1.3.2. Sections, Episodes, and Scenes

Although most scholars use "episode" and "scene" interchangeably, Nico Riemersma (following Jean-Noel Aletti)[171] has proposed to distinguish between the scene, as smallest unit that often alternates with *summaria,* and the episode, a narrative unity that comprises a number of subsequent scenes with a demonstrable coherence. Above the levels of scene and episode, he adds the levels of "sequence" (a number of connected episodes) and "part" (a number of connected sequences). His terminological proposal, though developed for Luke's Gospel, is also useful to describe the structure of Acts. For example, the episode of Paul's and Barnabas' activity in Pisidian Antioch comprises three scenes with connecting narratives. It is part of the larger sequence of Acts 13–14, and that sequence constitutes a part of the first half of the book (Acts 1–15).[172] Alongside "sequence", "section" is also used in this study to describe these larger units of the narrative.

1.3.3. Distribution of Case Studies

The two halves of the book of Acts can thus be subdivided in various sequences or sections, based on geographical and thematic coherence and mostly demarcated by summary statements. I distinguish the following sections (the ones in italics contain episodes examined in this study):[173]

Acts 1:1–16:15

Acts 1:1–5:42	Apostolic teaching in Jerusalem
Acts 6:1–9:31	From Jerusalem to all Judea and Samaria
Acts 9:1–11:18	Gift of Conversion to Gentiles
Acts 11:19–13:1	The ministry of the disciples in Antioch to the brothers in Judea
Acts 13:1–14:28	*God opens the door of faith for the Gentiles*
Acts 14:27–16:5	Council of apostles and elders in Jerusalem

Acts 15:36–28:31

Acts 15:36–19:40	*Paul's proclamation in Macedonia, Achaia and Ephesus*
Acts 19:21–21:19	Journey to Jerusalem
Acts 21:19–26:32	*Defence of Paul in Jerusalem and Caesarea*
Acts 27:1–28:16	Journey to Rome
Acts 28:17–31	Paul's teaching in Rome

[171] Aletti, *Quand Luc raconte*, 280.

[172] Cf. Riemersma, *Lucasevangelie*, 15–16.

[173] Scholarly proposals for the demarcation of these sections vary somewhat; the proposal given here mostly corresponds to that of Betori, "Strutturazione". For the sections that form the narrative context of the episodes chosen for analysis, justification for the demarcation is provided in the respective chapters of my study.

The first three episodes to be examined in this study are part of the section of Acts 13:1–14:28. They have been chosen because they represent the beginning of Paul's performances as messenger of God while he was still accompanied by Barnabas.

1. Paul's performance before Sergius Paulus, Acts 13:6–12: The first episode in which a performance of Saul/Paul is central.
2. Paul's performance in Pisidian Antioch, Acts 13:14–52: The longest, and therefore central, episode of Acts 13–14.
3. Paul's performance in Lystra, Acts 14:6–20: Paul's first performance in front of an entirely Gentile audience.

In addition, two episodes have been selected from the second half of Acts.

4. Paul's performance in Athens, Acts 17:16–34: The episode with one of the two longer speeches in the whole of Acts 16–21, and thus an important episode in the section 16:6–19:40.
5. Paul's performance before Agrippa, Acts 25:23–26:24: Paul's last defence speech in Acts 22–26 and the climax of this section.

Thus, the five episodes selected provide a sample that is taken from various parts of Acts, in which Paul speaks both before Jews and Gentiles and both before groups and individuals. The conclusions reached on the basis of these case studies can be considered representative of the portrait of Paul in Acts, although they do not provide a complete picture.

1.3.4. Research Design

In each of these five episodes, the previously mentioned aspects of Paul's performance are charted. The *setting in a place* and *in relation to persons* is explored, on the one hand, by looking at how this place and these persons are described and characterised in Acts, and on the other hand, by using other sources to get a picture of the reputation of this place or these persons as can be assumed to be known by the intended audience of Acts.[174]

In the *description of the action itself*, the meaning of the gestures, gazes, and poses mentioned in the text is clarified using Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (cf. above, §1.2.4.2). This work was chosen as the starting point because it is chronologically closest to Acts and best reflects the rhetorical ideals and practices of the time in which Acts was written and first read.

Regarding Paul's speeches, the inquiry consists of a study of the words Paul uses to indicate his own performance in the speech, and of an analysis of rhetorical aspects of the speech: the structure, the line of argument, and the style of the speech. Here, too, Quintilian's handbook has been used as the main source of comparative material.

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[174] For a methodological defence of using such extratextual information, both from literary sources and from archeology, cf. Zangenberg, "Lazarus".

The *script* is examined by looking at intertextual relations (quotations, allusions, echoes) from which could be deduced that Paul is described in Acts as acting in the footsteps of important model figures, either from Scripture or from Greco-Roman literature. In practice, the proposals from existing secondary literature take the lead for this. These proposals are evaluated based on the plausibility that textual cues would induce ancient readers to compare Paul's appearance with such model figures.[175]

Each chapter concludes with some observations about the *function* of the portrait of Paul's performance in the relevant episode for the message of the whole book. These observations are based both on the results of the analysis of Paul's performance in the above-mentioned aspects and on the embedding of the episode in the broader storyline of Acts. This embedding is discussed at the beginning of each chapter.

In the concluding chapter, the results are summarised by comparing the description of Paul's performance in the five episodes per aspect. On this basis, the first part of the research question can be answered: How is Paul's performance portrayed in five episodes of Acts? Subsequently, on the basis of the conclusions about the function of the depiction in the individual episodes, a suggestion will be made for the purpose that the description of Paul's performance served for the first readers of the book.

Table 1: Aspects of Performance

Jeffrey Alexander	Quintilian	Luke
The actor	The orator: A good man skilled in speaking	Biographical details about Paul
Collective representations: cultural scripts and symbols	Mimesis of classical orators	Modelling Paul on the prophets and on famous figures from Greco-Roman *paideia*
Means of symbolic production	Attention to variety in courts	Spatial and temporal setting of Paul's performance
Mise-en-scène: gestures of the body and verbal gestures	The speech of the body (*sermo corporis)* and the structure, argument and style of the speech	Gestures, actions and speeches
Social power	Preserving the dignity of the Roman aristocrat	Indications of the social status of Paul and of other characters in the episode

[175] This includes both production-oriented and reception-oriented intertextuality, in the definition of Stefan Alkier: cf. Alkier, "Intertextualität".

An audience	Attention to variety in audiences	Setting of the performance in relation to other characters; attention to audience response

1.4. Some Preliminary Remarks

1.4.1. Editions Used

This study is based on the text of the Editio Critica Maior (ECM) of Acts.[176] Variant readings (including the so-called "Western" variants) are mentioned when they are significant for the depiction of Paul's performance in the episode.

Other ancient texts are taken from the digital Loeb Classical Library (www.loebclassics.com), with my own translations, unless otherwise stated.

1.4.2. Assumptions about Dating and Authorship

As indicated earlier, the research into Paul's performance also takes into account the reputation of the places where and the persons for whom he performs, as well as the cultural scripts that can be assumed to have been known by the first readers. To establish this reputation and these scripts, it would be desirable to know where the first audience (Theophilus and the readers whom the author hoped to reach through him)[177] can be situated in time and place. Unfortunately, the text of Acts offers few solid points of departure for this line of inquiry and the opinions in contemporary scholarship therefore vary widely. The dating varies between shortly after 62 and about 150 CE, when the first indisputable references to Acts are found in other texts.[178] For the location one can think of Asia Minor, Macedonia, Achaia or Rome.[179] In line with a main stream of contemporary research, this study assumes a dating around the end of the first century, under Nerva or in the early years of Trajan.[180] An earlier date seems less

[176] Strutwolf et al., *Apostelgeschichte*, vol. 1.1 and 1.2.

[177] As stated earlier (in §1.2.4.4), when I speak of readers, this includes those who heard the book as it is was read to them.

[178] For a comprehensive overview of the current state of the question, cf. Backhaus, "Datierung". The last event mentioned in Acts (Paul's two-year teaching in Rome) is to be dated in 62. The *terminus ad quem* is somewhere mid-second century CE, with probable literary dependence on Acts in the *Epistula Apostolorum* (mid-second century?) and in Justin's *Apology* (delivered 154 CE; cf. den Dulk, *Jews*, 145–54; Holladay, *Introduction*, 380.); Acts is first quoted and used extensively by Irenaeus around 180/185 CE.

[179] Cf. the survey in Keener, *Acts*, 2012, 1:429–34.

[180] In support of this date, but without attribution to a companion of Paul, cf. Jülicher, *Einleitung*, 344–46; Enslin, "Luke", 253; Schenke, Fischer, and Bethge, *Einleitung*, 2:162; Roloff, *Apostelgeschichte*, 5–6; Sterling, *Historiography*, 329–30; Shellard, *Light*, 17–36;

plausible because of a certain sense of distance: e.g., there is little attempt to incur the favour of Agrippa or Berenice in the description of them, which would be expected if these highly influential figures in Flavian Rome were still alive.[181] Another argument against an early date is that the prologue to the Gospel ("since many have now undertaken to put a narrative in order [...] it seemed good to me that I also should write") presupposes that Luke is aware of a number of recent books about "the events that have been handed down to us" (Luke 1:2).[182] This urge to write down the traditions about Jesus and the apostles can also be found in Papias (writing sometime between 110–140 CE),[183] who recorded traditions of elders who had known the apostles and was aware of the existence of books (βίβλια). Among these books were a writing of Mark about things "done and said by the Lord / by Christ",[184] based on Peter's preaching in Rome, and a collection of sayings written in Hebrew by Matthew and translated by people in various ways. Papias relies on the living voice of people "who had followed the elders" (παρηκολουθηκώς τις τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις; note the perfect tense which focuses on the present prestige of these followers based on their acquaintance with elders in the past).[185]

The author of the Third Gospel identifies himself as such a παρηκολουθηκώς, "someone who has been a follower of them all (or: of all [these] things)

Broer, *Einleitung*, 169; Witetschek, *Ephesische Enthüllungen*, 245–55; Meiser, "Standort", 101–11; Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 335; Tomson, "Josephus". De Zwaan argued that the work was written by Luke, companion of Paul, around 75-80, but was published around 110 under Trajan. De Zwaan, *Handelingen*, 13–14. For a dating "not earlier than the reign of Nerva", with authorship by Luke, who accompanied Paul in his twenties, cf. Burkitt, *Gospel*, 122. For Burkitt, dependence of Acts on book Twenty of Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities* (dated in 93/94 CE) constitutes an important argument. Indeed, the connection of not only Judas the Galilean, but also Theudas, with the census (Acts 5:36–37), can be plausibly explained as an inaccurate recall of Josephus, *A.J.* 20.97–103, but other explanations have also been advanced (cf. the nuanced evaluation in Gregory, "Acts", 106–8).

[181] Cf. Backhaus, "Datierung", 253–56. on "Perspektivische Distanz" and also Bruce, *Book*, 12.

[182] In Acts 1:1, Luke refers to his first book as about "the things that Jesus began to do and to teach".

[183] Cf. Ehrman, *Apostolic Fathers*, 2:87. Eusebius situates Papias in the reign of Trajan (98–117 CE), and Papias, frg. 3.4 suggests that two disciples of the Lord, namely Aristion and 'the elder John' had still been alive at the time when Papias received "those who had followed the elders", who supplied him with the stories that he recorded in his five books, while according to frg. 13.2, Papias had written about John's death.

[184] Papias, frg. 3.15: τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου [B, D, M, Lat, Syr; Χριστοῦ A T E R] ἢ λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα.

[185] Cf. also the use of ἀκολουθέω in the fragment of Clement of Alexandria cited in Eusebius, *H.E.* 6.14.6.

from the beginning".[186] πᾶσιν refers either to "the eyewitnesses from the beginning and who became servants of the message", or, if it is a neuter form, in a general sense to everything pertaining to the message (λόγος). Moreover, the we-passages in Acts suggest that the author accompanied Paul on some of the journeys narrated in Acts 16–28.[187] He may well be exaggerating his authority as παρηκολουθηκώς in Luke 1:2, but the claim seems to be too modest to be pseudepigraphic or fictional: after all, the author concedes that he was not an eyewitness to the events described in the Gospel and in Acts 1–15.[188] On these grounds, I am inclined to date Luke and Acts shortly before Papias, probably not in the tumultuous final years of Domitian's reign,[189] but under Nerva or during the early reign of Trajan. At an old age (tradition has it that Luke died at the age of 74, 84 or 89),[190] the author, as someone who had known many

[186] Most Bible translations translate the word as if it were an aorist, "after I had done research into all things from the beginning", but the perfect denotes the author's status as a παρηκολουθηκώς at the time when it appeared good to him to compose a narrative as well. Cadbury notes that the perfect tense excludes the meaning of research conducted specifically for the writing of the book ("the acquaintance with the subject [...] was something already in his possession", Cadbury, "Preface", 502) but rules out the meaning of "following" without much argumentation and despite noting the frequency of that usage in early Christian literature. Cadbury, 501–3. Loveday Alexander discusses four possibilities and considers "being thoroughly familiar with the whole affair" as the most plausible interpretation, Alexander, *Preface*, 128–30. See also Baum, *Lukas*, 119–25.

[187] In Codex Bezae and some Latin manuscripts, a we-passage is provided already in Acts 11:28 (in line with the tradition that Luke hailed from Antioch). And Irenaeus reads a we-passage in Acts 16:8 that is not present in any existing Greek manuscript (*Adv. Haer.* 3.14.1.6). Strutwolf argues that Irenaeus adapts the text of Acts here for his own purposes, Strutwolf, "Text", 170–71. On the interpretation of the we-passages, cf. further Thornton, *Zeuge*; Wedderburn, "The 'We'-Passages in Acts"; Rothschild, *Rhetoric*, 264–67; Plümacher, "Wirklichkeitserfahrung"; Campbell, *"We" Passages*; Backhaus, "Maler"; Schröter, Butticaz, and Dettwiler, "Introduction", 6.

[188] Contrast, e.g., the clear case of pseudepigraphy in the *Protevangelium Jacobi* 24. Chris Keith describes a trajectory of increasingly bold authorship claims from Mark to Matthew, Luke, John and Thomas, arguing for a "competitive textualization" of the Jesus tradition, in part Two of his recent book, Keith, *Gospel*.

[189] On the silence of many Greek and Roman authors during these years, cf. Asiedu, *Josephus*.

[190] Monarchian prologue (late fourth/early fifth century CE): 74; some manuscripts read 84. Cf. Lietzmann, *Fragment*, 14. Anti-Marcionite prologue (fourth century CE): 84, according to the Greek text; the Latin versions read either 74 or 89. The texts are conveniently available at textexcavation.com/latinprologues.html. For the critical text of the prologues, see Regul, *Evangelienprologe*, 16; 29–35. For a parallel of someone writing at this age, cf. Plutarch (45–ca. 120 CE), who wrote his *On Isis and Osiris* probably in 115 CE, 70 years old (cf. Jones, "Chronology", 73). Critical is Jülicher: "Lücken des Wissens [...] lassen bei Act die Herkunft von einem Apostelschüler nicht zu, wenn er auch alt genug geworden sein konnte, um ca. 100 noch ein Buch zu schreiben. Aber eignen sich für NTliche Bücher zu Verfassern nur Greise mit schlechten Gedächtnis?" Jülicher, *Einleitung*, 345. "Bad memory"

early disciples, decided to write down his version of the events in order to provide Theophilus with certainty (ἀσφαλεία) now that so many (different) accounts were starting to appear.

These arguments are not conclusive; good arguments for both earlier and later dates can also be made. Most of my research results do not depend on the exact dating of Acts, although the associations that the first readers would have had with particular sites and figures would change; for example, Athens was greatly enhanced by Hadrian (who reigned 117–138 CE), who also provided salaried posts for the teaching of philosophy in various schools there, while the reputation of Jews in the Roman world was impacted by the diaspora uprising in 115–117 and the Bar-Kokhba War of 132–135 CE.[191] In the case of an earlier dating of the book, people such as Sergius Paulus, Agrippa and Berenice would still be alive and able to confirm or object to what Luke wrote about them.

1.4.3. Use of 'Luke' in This Study

Finally, following tradition,[192] I will call the author of Acts Luke, and assume that this author also wrote the Gospel according to Luke, the book about Jesus addressed to Theophilus to which he refers in Acts 1:1.[193] Whether or not this author was indeed identical with (one of) the Lukes mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:11, Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 1:24 has no consequences for the results of my research.[194]

1.5. Romans, Jews, and Christians around 100 CE

In the course of my research, I have encountered several indications that support an apologetic interpretation of the book of Acts.[195] In the concluding chapter, the purpose of the representation of Paul's performances in the various episodes examined will be discussed more extensively. At this point, I will

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is not the only way to account for the differences, however; the social construction of memory might be a better approach, cf. Butticaz, "Paul".

[191] Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 476–91.

[192] Cf. most extensively Thornton, *Zeuge*.

[193] Against the authorial unity, cf. most recently Walters, *Unity*. For a critical engagement with Walters' argument, see Parsons and Gorman, "Unity".

[194] The remarks about date and authorship in §1.4.2 would imply that the author was still relatively young (not older than circa 20) when he accompanied Paul. There is no way to prove it, but the fact that Luke is always mentioned last (or second-last to Demas) in the list and not worthy of much comment, would cohere with a relatively young co-worker.

[195] Cf. further e.g. Sterling, *Historiography*; Alexander, "Apologetic Text"; Alexander, "Apologetic Agenda"; Butticaz, "Paul"; Tomson, "Josephus".

state the general lines of how I read the book of Acts and sketch the historical context relevant to this understanding, focusing on a few key texts.

In my view, the book of Acts provides a narrative about the identity of the disciples of Jesus, who are known among outsiders as Christians (Acts 11:26). It is a book written to Theophilus, someone familiar with and sympathetic to the Gospel (without further explanation referred to as "the λόγος" already in Luke 1:2). At least two considerations support assuming Theophilus' familiarity with the Gospel. First, Luke makes use of unexplained insider language, referring, for example, to "the disciples", when he refers to the disciples of the "in-group", the disciples of the Lord, of Jesus.[196] Second, the prologue to Luke's Gospel lacks an extensive *captatio benevolentiae*.[197] Loveday Alexander argues from the lack of clear information about the contents of the book in the preface of Luke's Gospel, that Theophilus is more likely to have had at least basic instruction in the subject matter about which he now receives a written account.[198]

Theophilus seems to have had a position of some standing, being addressed as a patron to whom the work is dedicated. Luke and Acts are not letters written to congregations, such as the letters of Paul or even the Apocalypse of John, but a literary work addressed to an individual, who will have had it read in his house and may have contributed to the costs of copying it for people in his social network, according to the customs of ancient book publication. These people may be "insiders", but could also include "outsiders" as a second-tier audience, who may even act as referees, as Eve-Marie Becker points out.[199]

There is considerable plausibility to the view that situates Theophilus in Rome, although other locations cannot be ruled out entirely. In any event, having a position of some social standing, Theophilus will have had various narratives circulating in his network about who the Christians are. As I will show in this study, the narrative counters at various points the view that Christians are adherents of a new *superstitio*, a view attested in Roman authors of the early second century. It also addresses at length the view that this 'school of

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[196] The Lord is used in the narrative of Luke and Acts in conscious ambiguity to refer both to Jesus and to the God of Israel, cf. Rowe, *Christology*.

[197] In contrast to, e.g. the letter *Ad Diognetum.* Less clear is what kind of instruction or information Luke refers to in 1:4: instruction in the Scriptures? Rumours about Jesus? Instruction about Jesus and his teaching? The last option is most likely in view of the kind of "certainty" given in the book: it presupposes, rather than argues for, the authority and reliability of Moses and the Prophets, and focuses on the identity of Jesus as the Christ who had to suffer, rather than on the accuracy of the account of his life.

[198] Alexander, *Preface*, 136–37, 141–42.

[199] "Strands of Mark and Luke-Acts target [...] a second-tier readership made up of anyone from Palestinan Jews to Roman provincial governors. [...] if it was indeed the intention of Mark and Luke to provide an account whose historical accuracy could withstand scrutiny, they must have conceptualized a core of external, non-Christian readers." Becker, *Birth*, 46.

thought' (αἵρεσις) is directed against the Jewish nation, law and temple. Rather, these "Christians" are disciples of the Saviour promised by Israel's ancient prophets, of whom the Scriptures testify that he would be a light both for Jews and for Gentiles.

The double front of this apologetic is in my view to be interpreted within the triangular relationship between Romans, Jews and Christians at the end of the first century. Substantial Jewish communities existed in all major urban centres of the Roman empire, where they were allowed to live according to their customs – customs ridiculed by some Romans and adopted by others. Concerning the Roman outlook on Christians, the earliest source material is in the works of Pliny the Younger and his friend Tacitus, both writing under Trajan, although there is no reason to suppose that elite Romans looked differently upon *Christiani* under the Flavians.

Tacitus provides us with his narrative about the identity of the Christians in his *Annales* (ca. 115–120 CE), after mentioning the rumour that Nero had incended the fire of Rome in 64 CE himself.

> Therefore, because the rumour had to be stopped, Nero forged as culprits and inflicted with most extraordinary punishments those hated because of their shameful deeds whom the people called Chrestians. Their eponymous founder, Christus, was inflicted with punishment under the reign of Tiberius by the procurator Pontius Pilate; and being repressed at the time, the destructive *superstitio* erupted again, not only throughout Judea, the origin of this evil, but also throughout the city to which all that is atrocious and shameful flows together from everywhere and is celebrated.[200]

This narrative traces the origin of the name *Chrestiani* to the *auctor nomini eius* Christus, punished under Tiberius by procurator Pontius Pilate. His crime is not mentioned, but the reader presupposes that he was punished for the same non-descript "shameful deeds" (*flagitia*) for which his followers were hated.[201] Pilate's intervention repressed this *superstitio,* but it erupted again and spread from Judea to Rome. Luke, in contrast, narrates how Jesus was crucified after Pontius Pilate had testified to his innocence; his disciples were first called *Christiani* years after Jesus' crucifixion, in Antioch (Acts 11:26); his teaching spread from Jerusalem to Rome, not as a destructive *superstitio* but as a sound teaching that exhorts people to fear God and practice righteousness.

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[200] Tacitus, *Ann.* 15.44.2–3: *ergo abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos et quaesitissimis poenis adfecit, quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Chrestianos appellabat. auctor nominis eius Christus Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio adfectus erat; repressaque in praesens exitiabilis superstitio rursum erumpebat, non modo per Iudaeam, originem eius mali, sed per urbem etiam, quo cuncta undique atrocia aut pudenda confluunt celebranturque*. Latin text of Heubner, *Annales*, consulted online at www.brepolis.net.

[201] Lucian, *Peregr.* 11 (after 165 CE), is more explicit, referring to Jesus as "the man who was crucified in Palestine because he brought this new cult into the world" (Harmon, LCL). τὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸν ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ ἀνασκολοπισθέντα, ὅτι καινὴν ταύτην τελετὴν εἰσῆγεν ἐς [sic] τὸν βίον.

A few years prior to the publication of Tacitus' *Annales*, Pliny wrote a letter to Trajan (*Epistula* 10.96, ca. 110 CE) asking for instruction about the treatment of Christians. Since he had never been present at judicial examinations (*cognitionibus*) of Christians, he claims not to know how and to what extent it is customary to punish them or to conduct an investigation about them.[202] This provides him with the opportunity to showcase his effective administration that he has devised on his own in the meantime (*interim*),[203] which consists in punishing those who obstinately refuse to speak ill of Christ and sacrifice to the gods and the images of Trajan.[204] Due to his government, the superstition has been repressed: whereas "the infection of this *superstitio* had spread throughout towns, villages and fields", it now "appears that it can be stopped and cured", as the deserted temples again attract visitors.[205] Pliny concludes that "the throng of humans (*turba hominum*) can be improved (*emendari*), if there is a place for repentance (*locus paenitentiae*)".[206] Thus, he foregrounds the effectiveness of his merciful government in curing superstition and restoring the traditional worship of the gods in his province. Indeed, his own investigation of two servants has established that they did not practice any crimes; they were only the victims of an immoderate *superstitio*. Apparently, they need treatment rather than punishment. They only have to be punished if they obstinately resist correction.[207]

The rhetoric of Pliny's letter hides a reality in which people were brought to the governor on the charge of being a Christian, and in which it was standing practice that those who refused to renounce this name would be executed or (in the case of Roman citizens) sent to Rome.

The book of Acts confirms the impression from Pliny that Christians were brought before provincial governors, either because their teaching endangered Roman customs (Philippi, Acts 16:20–21), Jewish customs (Corinth, Acts 18:12–13; Jerusalem/Caesarea, Acts 21:21, 28; 24:7–8), or the traditional worship of Greek deities (Ephesus, Acts 19:25–27).

As for the relation between Christians and Jews in the triangle Romans – Jews – Christians, a passage from the Tosephta (t. Hullin 2:24) suggests that the rabbis in the land of Israel, under the leadership of Gamaliel II, distanced themselves from disciples of Jesus and could bring them before the Roman governor on the charge of *minut*, teaching directed against the Jewish customs. It is plausible that their distancing from disciples of Jesus reflects the Roman

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[202] Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96.1: *quid et quatenus aut puniri soleat aut quaeri*.
[203] Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96.2.
[204] Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96.5.
[205] Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96.9–10.
[206] Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96.10.
[207] Cf. Sherwin-White, "Early Christians"; Moss, *Myth*, 72–73.

view of the Christians as *superstitio,* and is to be interpreted as part of the Romanization of the rabbinic movement, as Peter Tomson has argued.[208] The Tosephta passage also shows that these attempts were met with resistance from other Jews who continued to interact with disciples of Jesus.

Finally, Josephus, as a Jew writing in Rome during the late first century, conversant with elite Romans as well as with Agrippa II, condemns Sadducaic violence against James, the brother of Jesus, and does not write negatively about the Christians. The Roman outlook on Christians as *superstitio* may have induced him to remain almost entirely silent about them. Being associated with *superstitio* in the final years of Domitian's reign, when Josephus wrote his *Jewish Antiquities,* could lead to banishment and execution without proper judicial inquiry, as part of Domitian's attempts to enlarge his financial resources by laying hold of the possessions of his opponents among the Roman elite.[209] However, the two (much disputed) passages in which Josephus does refer to Jesus reflect a measure of sympathy rather than opposition.

It is within this triangle of diverse relationships between Romans, Jews and Christians, where border lines are drawn *and* crossed[210] (and, indeed, may have been non-existent especially at lower social levels),[211] that my study seeks to interpret the depiction of Paul's performance in five episodes of the book of Acts.

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[208] Cf. Tomson, "Gospel", 632–35, 656–61.

[209] On Josephus' silence concerning the Christians, cf. Asiedu, *Josephus*. The severe attitude of Domitian in collecting the Jewish tax was probably motivated by financial concerns and is not evidence of an anti-Jewish attitude that went beyond general anti-Jewish sentiments among the Roman elite (cf. Heemstra, "Fiscus"; Weikert, "Tempelzerstörung").

[210] Cf. Boyarin, *Border Lines*. The diversity of relations between Jews and Christians is also emphasized in Nicklas, *Jews and Christians?*

[211] Cf. Becker and Reed, *Ways*.

Chapter 2

Performance in Paphos (Acts 13:6–12)

The first episode that depicts Paul's performance as messenger of the Gospel is an encounter with a Jewish "pseudoprophet" before the Roman governor Sergius Paulus. In this chapter, this episode will be analysed according to the various aspects of performance outlined in the Introduction (§1.3.3), preceded by a section on the narrative context and structure of this episode in order to delineate the text and show its significance in the narrative of Acts.

2.1. Narrative Context and Structure

Paul's encounter with Bar-Jesus is part of a larger sequence of the book of Acts that comprises chapter 13 and 14. At the start of chapter 13, the Holy Spirit has told the prophets and teachers in (Syrian) Antioch to set Barnabas and Saul apart for the work (τὸ ἔργον) to which he had called them (Acts 13:1–3). Acts 13–14 present the journey of Paul and Barnabas via Cyprus (13:4–12) to Perge in Pamphylia (13:13), Antioch in Pisidia (13:14–50), Iconium (13:51–14:5) and Lystra and Derbe in Lycaonia (14:6–20). From Derbe, they retrace their steps via Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, Perge and Attalia to (Syrian) Antioch (14:21–26). At this point, the narrator recalls their commissioning in Antioch and describes the work as fulfilled (τὸ ἔργον ὅ ἐπλήρωσαν, Acts 14:26),[1] providing a clear structural demarcation around chapters 13–14. Back in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas report "what God had done with them and that he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" (14:27).

In these chapters, most space is devoted to Paul's performance in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch, which will be discussed in the next chapter of this book. Preceding Paul's performance in Pisidian Antioch, however, is his activity in Cyprus (13:4–12), where Luke describes in more detail a scene at the residence of proconsul Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:6–12; on the setting, cf. below, §2.2). This short passage has structural significance in the narrative as it presents the first performance of Paul after his departure from Antioch and the first encounter with a Gentile who is not labelled in the narrative as a proselyte

[1] Cf. Rom 15:19.

or someone who fears God. The scene is bracketed by references to the "word of God" (13:7) and the "teaching of the Lord" (13:12), two equivalent designations of the message brought by Paul. The scene itself does not describe the content of this teaching, but narrates a confrontation with a Jewish μάγος and false prophet who opposes Paul's teaching (13:8). Paul responds fiercely, declaring God's punishment for his opposition in the form of blindness, which indeed falls on him immediately (13:9–11). The proconsul is deeply impressed and believes (13:12).

Paul's performance is presented in the text according to the structure outlined in §1.2.5 and will be examined accordingly. First, a spatial setting is indicated: "Having traversed the entire island until Paphos" (13:6, §2.2). In Paphos, Paul and Barnabas encounter other characters: "a certain man, a charlatan, a false prophet, a Jew named Bar-Jesus, who was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, a prudent man" (13:6–7). Both characters engage in action (§2.3). This sets the stage for the performance of "Saul, who is also Paul", (13:9) which consists of a glance and a saying (§2.4). Paul's performance is followed by instant execution of the divine punishment and by belief of the proconsul (13:11–12; §2.5). A structural outline of verse 6–12 shows how Saul's performance is marked as the central part of the episode.

Acts 13:6–12: Text

(6) Διελθόντες δὲ ὅλην τὴν νῆσον ἄχρι Πάφου [spatial setting]

εὗρον ἄνδρα τινὰ μάγον ψευδοπροφήτην Ἰουδαῖον ᾧ ὄνομα Βαριησοῦ (7) ὃς ἦν σὺν τῷ ἀνθυπάτῳ Σεργίῳ Παύλῳ, ἀνδρὶ συνετῷ. οὗτος προσκαλεσάμενος Βαρναβᾶν καὶ Σαῦλον ἐπεζήτησεν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ. (8) ἀνθίστατο δὲ αὐτοῖς Ἐλύμας ὁ μάγος, οὕτως γὰρ μεθερμηνεύεται τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, ζητῶν διαστρέψαι τὸν ἀνθύπατον ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως. [introduction of other characters]

(9) Σαῦλος δέ, ὁ καὶ Παῦλος, πλησθεὶς πνεύματος ἁγίου ἀτενίσας εἰς αὐτὸν (10) εἶπεν• ὦ πλήρης […] (11) καιροῦ. [central performance]

παραχρῆμά τε ἐπέπεσεν ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἀχλὺς καὶ σκότος καὶ περιάγων ἐζήτει χειραγωγούς. [performance effect]

(12) τότε ἰδὼν ὁ ἀνθύπατος τὸ γεγονὸς ἐπίστευσεν ἐκπλησσόμενος ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ κυρίου. [audience response]

Situated before the extensive narrative of Paul's performance in Pisidian Antioch, the scene also anticipates this narrative. It is noteworthy that Saul and Barnabas do not take the initiative to address Gentile audiences on Cyprus: they preach in synagogues (13:5), and encounter the Jew Bar-Jesus (13:6). It is because Bar-Jesus was with Sergius Paulus that Barnabas and Paul also encounter this Gentile proconsul. The Jewish μάγος opposes Barnabas and Saul (13:8) but the proconsul believes (13:12). Likewise, in Pisidian Antioch, Paul

speaks in the synagogue, after which the Gentiles show interest in his teaching ("almost the entire city", 13:44); the Jews speak against his words (13:45), but the Gentiles believe (13:48). Through this narrative, Luke shows that Paul did not take the Gospel to the Gentiles of his own initiative. God himself "opened the door of faith to Gentiles" (14:27).[2]

The structural significance of this episode, as the first one to depict a performance of Paul as messenger of God, is underscored in the change of names for Paul. Israel's patriarchs received a different name at critical points in their lives.[3] Luke does not present "Paul" as a new name given to Saul at this point, but he does start using this other (Latin) name of Saul from this point in the narrative onwards, subsequently using the name "Saul" only in passages that look back to the vision of Jesus on the way to Damascus. Thus, in the narrative, it is a name change; one that does not occur at Saul's calling, but at the first instance of his performance before a Roman proconsul.

2.2. Setting: Place and Location

Acts 13:4–6a provide the background setting for Paul's performance. It is situated on Cyprus, more specifically in Paphos, at the endpoint of the traversal of the island by Barnabas and Saul.[4] As they traversed Cyprus, they have been engaged in "proclaiming the word of God in the synagogues/gatherings of the Jews",[5] continuing Saul's earlier activity in Damascus and Jerusalem, which

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[2] The same pattern is found in the Cornelius narrative (Acts 10–11).

[3] Cf. Gen 17:5, 15; 35:10.

[4] The text mentions Salamis and Paphos as cities on Cyprus. The reference to these cities signifies that Paul and Barnabas crossed the entire island, Salamis and Paphos (Nea Pafos) being the port cities on the east and west coast of the island.

[5] The reference to the proclamation in the synagogues is situated after their arrival on the island in Salamis (γενόμενοι ἐν Σαλαμῖνι, the aorist participle implying chronological priority) and contemporaneous with their traversal of the island: the imperfect κατήγγελον implies a durative or iterative action that continues until they find Bar-Jesus, "having crossed the entire island until Paphos" (verse 6); thus, they preach in synagogues as they cross the island, probably following the southern coast via Citium, Amathus and Curium (cf. Gill, "Cyprus"). Thus also Barrett, *Acts*, 1:612. There is very little evidence for synagogue buildings on Cyprus in the first century CE, but the term can denote "gatherings" in a domestic setting (Claussen, *Versammlung*, 150, 208). Kapera mentions epigraphic evidence for the existence of a synagogue in the second century BCE, but the inscription is too fragmentary to rely on (Kapera, "Jewish Presence", 33, referring to *RDAC* 1968, 77, no. 8, available online at https://epigraphy.packhum.org/text/319145?&bookid=839&location=1634). In 115–117 CE, Jews across the diaspora, including Cyprus, engaged in violent uprisings, which were suppressed with brutal force by Trajan. Afterwards, Jews were banned from the island, according to Cassius Dio 68.32.3. Cf. Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 475–80. As explained in §1.4.2, my study proceeds from a dating of Acts before this disastrous moment.

was likewise aimed at (Greek-speaking) Jews (Acts 9:22; 28–29). This "proclamation", which functions as a background to Paul's encounter with Bar-Jesus before Sergius Paulus, is expressed by the verb καταγγέλλω, a compound of ἀγγέλλω ("to send a message") and the intensifying preposition κάτα.[6] The verb is used in Acts for the prophets who announced "these days" (Acts 3:24), for the apostles who announce that the resurrection has begun "in Jesus" (Acts 4:2), and mainly for Paul, who proclaims the word of God (i.e., delivers God's message, 13:5; 15:36; 17:13), remission of sins (13:38) and Jesus as the Anointed One (17:3). Others perceive him (correctly) as "proclaiming a way of salvation" (16:17) and (incorrectly) "proclaiming customs that Romans are not allowed to practice" (16:21). The verb is closely related to κηρύσσω, as both verbs denote the activity of a herald (κήρυξ or καταγγελεύς).[7] Elsewhere in Acts, it becomes clear that delivering God's message in the synagogues involves the interpretation of Scripture.[8]

The significance of this background is that it situates Barnabas and Saul in a fully Jewish context. This is not only indicated by the reference to the synagogues, but also confirmed by the use of Paul's Jewish name, Saul, and by other references to Cyprus in Acts. In the book of Acts, Cyprus is first mentioned as the birthplace of Barnabas (Acts 4:36). Paul and Barnabas are not the first who proclaim the Gospel in Cyprus: those who were dispersed after the death of Stephen went to "Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antiochia" but spoke the word to no one except to Jews (11:19). Cypriots were among the disciples who began to announce Jesus as Lord to the Greeks when they came to Antioch (11:20). One of them may have been Mnason, a Cypriot who is referred to later in Acts as a "disciple from the early days" (ἀρχαίος μαθήτης, 21:16), and at whose house Paul and his travel companions were to stay in Jerusalem.

Thus, Cypriot Jews play an important role in the spread of the Gospel, but Paul visits Cyprus only once. After a conflict between Paul and Barnabas about whether or not they should take John Mark with them, Barnabas and Mark sail to Cyprus (15:39), which is the last reference to Barnabas in the book of Acts. After that, Paul sails twice past Cyprus (21:3; 27:4), but never lands there. The overview shows that in Acts Cyprus is associated with the presence of many Jews.[9] The only non-Jew on Cyprus mentioned in Acts is the proconsul Sergius

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[6] The verb does not occur in the Septuagint except for 2 Maccabees 8:36 and 9:17, and is used in the New Testament, apart from Acts, only in the Pauline corpus (Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 2:1; 9:14; 11:26; Phil 1:17; 18; Col 1:28).

[7] LSJ s.v. καταγγελεύς. Cf. Acts 17:18 with the comments in §5.4.1.

[8] Cf. below, §3.2.

[9] Other sources confirm the existence of a large Jewish community on Cyprus: Philo lists Cyprus among islands that are "full of Jewish colonies", (Philo, *Legat.* 282: μεσταὶ τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν ἀποικιῶν), and Josephus mentions a Jewish charlatan (μάγος) from Cyprus, named Atomos, as a friend of Felix (Josephus, *A.J.* 20.142. Some Latin manuscripts read

Paulus. Later in Acts, Paul will always address both Jews and non-Jews in the synagogues. Luke does not mention this with regard to Saul's activity in Cyprus, underlining that Paul is focused on proclaiming the Gospel to Jews before God shows him that he should also address Gentiles.

On Cyprus, Paul's performance before the proconsul is located more specifically in Paphos. This is the port for westbound traffic from Cyprus, where traffic from Rome entered the island. It had become the capital and administrative city of the island under Ptolemaic rule and became the capital of the Roman senatorial province in 22 BCE.[10] In the geography of Acts, this is the fitting site for a meeting with the proconsul,[11] which corresponds in its narrative function to the port city and Roman administrative centre of Caesarea, the residence of Cornelius, Felix and Festus.[12]

In the ancient world, Paphos was also famous for its Aphrodite cult (at "old Paphos", twelve kilometers from new Paphos, which was the capital of the Roman province). This cult does not play a role in the account of Acts.

2.3. Setting: Persons

In Paphos, Barnabas and Saul "found a certain man, a charlatan, a false prophet, a Jew, named Bar-Jesus, who was with the proconsul Sergius Paulus, a prudent man" (Acts 13:6–7). Paul's performance in this episode is a response to their actions. Luke first notes that the proconsul "summoned (προσκαλεσάμενος) Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God" (Acts 13:7). The word προσκαλεσάμενος suggests that the governor summoned them to come his residence, connecting the scene with later passages in Acts that take place at the residential palace of Roman governors, the conversations with Felix, Festus and Agrippa at the praetorium in Caesarea. Moreover, it recalls the Cornelius narrative, in which another Roman official (though of lower rank) sent servants to summon (μετακάλεσαι, Acts 10:32) Peter to come to his house, because he wanted to "hear all that is ordered to you by the Lord".[13]

Simon, probably in order to identify him with the Simon Magus of Acts 8:9–25 and early Christian heresiologies). Cf. further Kapera, "Jewish Presence".

[10] Cf. Kapera, "Administration".

[11] Archaeological excavations in Paphos have revealed several large villas with beautiful mosaics and sculptures. Because of its size, a Latin inscription and a statue of an armed Aphrodite, the Villa of Theseus was identified by the Polish excavators as the residence of the Roman governor. This identification is uncertain, however: the current excavation director Henryk Meyza has recently argued that the villa may have been the house of a member of the local aristocracy. Cf. Panayides, "Villa", 228–29.

[12] For the function of Caesarea in Acts as transit city that "performs Rome", cf. Taylor, "Caesarea".

[13] Acts 10:33.

In the next sentence, the focus returns to the character introduced first. While the proconsul "was seeking to hear the word of the Lord", "there was opposing them Elymas the μάγος, for thus his name is translated, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith."[14] In both cases, the imperfect tense is used to indicate a durative action as a background for Paul's performance.

Thus, the two characters are introduced in relation to whom Paul's performance is presented. Bar-Jesus, as Jew, provides the narrative connection between Barnabas' and Paul's activity among Jews in Cyprus and the encounter with the Roman proconsul. A close parallel to his function at the residence of Sergius Paulus can be found in the work of Josephus, who mentions a Cypriot Jew named Atomos as one of the "friends" (a conventional way to speak about clients)[15] of Felix (*A.J.* 20.141), who "pretended to be a μάγος". Further, Diodorus Siculus speaks about "a certain Syrian slave, belonging to Antigenes of Enna; he was an Apamean by birth, a μάγος and miracle–worker of sorts. He claimed to foretell the future, by divine command, through dreams, and because of his talent along these lines deceived many."[16] A μάγος, in these accounts, is someone who has skills to predict the future on the basis of dreams and visions: in this respect, he resembles a prophet (cf. Num 12:6).[17] Both Josephus and Diodorus, however, doubt their claim to divine revelations. In fact, in many contexts, the word can be translated as "charlatan" to convey the connotation of pretense.[18] In Acts 8, the verbal cognate of μάγος is used for Simon. A contrast between Simon and Bar-Jesus is, however, that Simon practices his μαγεία among the people, whereas the text relates Bar-Jesus to the governor.[19]

Bar-Jesus is also labelled a ψευδοπροφήτης, which likewise characterises him as a pretender who does not truly communicate the word of God. Klauck has interpreted the figure of Bar-Jesus as a syncretist,[20] but it is more likely that both μάγος and ψευδοπροφήτης are depreciatory labels for a person who

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[14] Acts 13:8.

[15] Cf. Konstan, "Friendship".

[16] Diodorus Siculus 34+35.5 (Oldfather, LCL, modified). ἦν δέ τις οἰκέτης Ἀντιγένους Ἐνναίου, Σύρος τὸ γένος ἐκ τῆς Ἀπαμείας, ἄνθρωπος μάγος καὶ τερατουργὸς τὸν τρόπον. οὗτος προσεποιεῖτο θεῶν ἐπιτάγμασι καθ' ὕπνον προλέγειν τὰ μέλλοντα, καὶ πολλοὺς διὰ τὴν εἰς τοῦτο τὸ μέρος εὐφυΐαν ἐξηπάτα.

[17] Cf. also the connection of μάγοι with dream interpretation in Daniel 1–5. Daniel is the only book of the Septuagint that refers to μάγοι, especially in the Theodotion version (LXX: Dan 2:2,10; Theodotion: Dan 1:20; 2:2, 10, 27; 4:7; 5:7, 11, 15). Elsewhere in the Septuagint, magicians are referred to as φαρμακοί (Exod 7:11; 9:11; 22:17; Deut 18:10; Ps 57:6; Mal 3:5; Jer 34:9; OGDan 2:2, 27; 5:7, 8; DanTh 2:2) and ἐπαοιδοί (Exod 7:11, 22; 8:3, 14, 15; Lev 19:31; 20:6; 20:27; 1 Sam 6:2; 2 Chr 33:6; Sir 12:13; Isa 47:9; OGDan 2:2, 27; 5:7, 8; DanTh 1:20; 2:2, 10, 27; 4:7, 9; 5:11).

[18] Cf. LSJ, s.v. μάγος.

[19] On the portrait of Simon in Acts, cf. Brinkhof, *Zicht*. On professional astrologers in the entourage of provincial governors, cf. Klauck, *Magic*, 51 (referring to Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.22.2).

[20] Klauck, *Magic*, 48–49. Similarly Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:33.

conceived of himself as a Jewish prophet; there are many parallels in Josephus' work for such prophets whom Josephus regards as deceivers.[21] Bar-Jesus' character as false prophet becomes evident through his actions: he seeks to turn the proconsul away from the faith. "Turning away" presupposes the Lukan conception of God's teaching as the "way" of the Lord (cf. Acts 13:10):[22] the Lord teaches the straight ways, but false prophets and teachers seek to turn disciples away from it (cf. 20:30).

Bar-Jesus' character is finally indicated through his second name, Elymas. Cicero comments on the usage of names to characterise someone: some names arouse suspicion and can be used to characterise someone in a negative way.[23] Luke regularly informs his audience about the meaning of names such as Barnabas ("son of exhortation", Acts 4:32) or Tabitha ("gazelle", Acts 9:36). This indicates that for these names, he judges their meaning significant to understanding the character of the one who bears it. All such instances in Luke and Acts concern Jews with Aramaic names, and since Elymas is a Jew as well, the natural assumption should be that Elymas is an Aramaic name. Indeed, it is a regular Greek transcription of Aramaic חָלוֹמָא, "which designates a person who, supernaturally inspired, could not only interpret dreams but also deliver divine messages revealed to him in a state of trance."[24] Thus, ὁ μάγος is an apt rendition that suits Luke's purpose of characterizing Bar-Jesus as a pretender.[25]

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[21] Cf. Grabbe, "Prophet", 241.

[22] Cf. below, §4.4.2.

[23] Cic. *Inv.* 2.8–9.

[24] Yaure, "Elymas", 305. Yaure provides extensive discussion of alternative etymologies from Arabic, the variant reading Ἕτοιμας, the alternatives in the versions, and the attempts to align Elymas with the magician named Ἄτομος attested by Josephus (*A.J.* 20.141). Cf. also Schreiber, *Paulus*, 34–36; Klauck, *Magic*, 50. Rather more farfetched is the solution of Strelan, who thinks that Luke makes a wordplay on the Name (because Jesus is "the name", the Peshitta renders Bar-Jesus as Barshuma, and Elymos [not Elymas] is in Josephus the eponymous ancestor of the Elamites and son of Shem). "Bar Jesus, therefore, is not the son of the Name, but the son of Shem, the ancestor of the Persians and of the *magoi*, and so he is a *magos*, a foreigner to the true Christian community and an opponent of the truth." Strelan, "Bar Jesus", 80. Schmidt considers Elymas to be a translation of Bar-Jesus, but concedes that one would expect the translation υἱὸς Ἰησοῦ. He concludes that it must therefore be "ein Wortspiel, das auf dem Kunstnamen Ἐλύμας basiert". Schmidt, "Weg", 84. This is not a real solution to the problem, however. And his conjecture that the original text could have read Λυοας (unaccented in Schmidt's article) instead of Ἐλύμας, making it the reverse of Σαούλ, is entirely unfounded. Schmidt, 85.

[25] This reading of the verse makes much more sense than the alternative interpretation, that Elymas is presented as a translation of Bar-Jesus (the interpretation first attested in a gloss on the name Bar-Jesus in manuscript E). Thus, e.g., Haacker, *Apostelgeschichte*, 219. Elymas is not a meaningful Greek word, and in other instances where Luke translates foreign names, he always translates them into Greek. Indeed, it would be pointless to provide the reader with a translation if the translation is unintelligible. The only weakness of the interpretation provided by Yaure is that ὁ μάγος, on this reading, has a double function in the

The other character in this episode is Sergius Paulus. He gets an unambiguously positive characterization, as a "prudent man" (ἀνήρ συνετός) who wants to "hear the word of God" (Acts 13:7). As proconsul (ἀνθύπατος) of Cyprus, he is situated at the top of the elite. Cyprus, being a senatorial province, was governed by a proconsul of senatorial rank who had at least attained praetorship in the Roman *cursus honorum*. Sergius Paulus has a higher rank than Felix and Festus, the equestrian prefects or procurators who governed Judea and were subordinate to the governor of Syria.[26] In the narrative of Acts, the only person higher in rank is the emperor, so that the encounter of Paul with Sergius Paulus at the beginning of Paul's mission foreshadows the expected encounter with the emperor at the end of the book (cf. Acts 27:24: "You will have to stand before Caesar"). Other ἀνθύπατοι are mentioned in Acts 18:12 (Gallio) and 19:38 (in a general sense); king Agrippa II reached similar status in the 70s when he was rewarded with the insignia of praetorship for his support of the Flavians.[27] In Luke 2:2, the birth of Jesus is dated to the reigning governor of Syria (an imperial province), Quirinus.

For readers familiar with the elite of Roman society, the name of the proconsul has a positive ring as well, the *tribus Sergia* being an old patrician family. A Lucius Sergius Paulus was suffect consul in Rome in 70 CE, and thus an important public figure shortly before the time when Acts was probably written. The Sergius Paulus of the text, if not to be identified with this individual,[28] must at least have been a close relative.[29]

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text: to identify Elymas as an alternative name of "the foresaid magician" and to provide the translation of Elymas. The construction is somewhat awkward, but not unintelligible. Likewise Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte*, 383–84. Barrett thinks that "a simple error seems the best explanation" (Barrett, *Acts*, 1:616).

[26] On the title of Felix and Festus (*praefectus* or *procurator*), cf. Labbé, *Affirmation*, 163–231, who analyses the available sources in great detail, and concludes cautiously (p. 230): "[L]e passage du titre de préfet de Judée à celui de procurateur de Judée a dû intervenir sous le règne de Claude, mais à une date qui reste imprécise, au plus tôt en 44, au plus tard, semble–t–il, en 52, mais encore sans certitude absolue, le maintien du titre de préfet jusqu'en 66 ne pouvant être tout à fait exclu."

[27] Cf. below, §6.3.

[28] As argued by, among others, Nobbs, "Cyprus"; Weiß, "Sergius".

[29] An inscription found at Chytri (Cyprus) mentions a Quintus Ser[gius] (cognomen missing) in connection with […]ius Caesar Augustus. Douglas Campbell has argued that the emperor mentioned on the Chytri inscription should be reconstructed as Tiberius Caesar Augustus, and that Quintus Sergius was therefore proconsul under Tiberius, and to be equated with the Sergius Paulus of Acts. Campbell treats Paul's stay on Cyprus under Sergius Paulus as an authentic tradition, but distrusts the chronological framework of Acts. According to Campbell, Paul began his mission around 36 CE by a visit to Cyprus, under emperor Tiberius and proconsul Quintus Sergius Paulus. The weakness of his argument consists in the identification of the Quintus Sergius from the inscription with the Sergius Paulus of Acts; given that we know so few names of proconsuls on Cyprus, it is not impossible that one Sergius

Werner Eck has noted the tendency of Josephus to blame the trouble in Judea on the equestrian prefects and to present in favourable light the interventions of the Syrian governors and argues that Josephus praises the senatorial proconsuls because he needs their favour in Rome.[30] In Acts, a similar difference in the portrayal of senatorial proconsuls and equestrian prefects can be detected, although it is perhaps less marked. Sergius Paulus is characterised as a "prudent man" and Gallio (proconsul of Achaea, Acts 18:12) dismisses the Jewish accusations against Paul.[31] On the other hand, the Gospel of Luke contains negative traditions about the equestrian prefect Pilate (Luke 13:1) and Acts acknowledges his role in the death of Jesus (Acts 4:27). Felix, though acknowledging Paul's innocence, is presented as open to bribery and keeps Paul captive to do the Jews a favour (Acts 24:26–27); still, Luke is more neutral in his depiction of Felix's successor Festus.[32]

2.4. Performance

Paul's central performance in this episode is a response to the opposition of Elymas. It consists of an intense look (ἀτενίσας, verse 9) and a speech act (εἶπεν, verse 10). Although the look is presented as preceding the speech act, it should be understood as continuing while Paul speaks to Elymas.

Before I examine this performance, however, two textual details require attention. First, "Paul" is introduced here as an alternative name of Saul. *Paulus* or *Paullus* is a Latin name meaning "little", but Luke does not have a habit of translating Latin names (he may assume some familiarity with Latin for his audience), and highlighting the meaning would not benefit the rhetoric of his narrative in this context.[33] Somewhat more significant is the fact that Paul shares his name with the proconsul, which could suggest to the reader some sort of social connection between the two, which could help explain the favourable attitude of the proconsul towards him. In this episode, the first time that

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was proconsul under Tiberius and another Sergius was proconsul under Claudius. Campbell, "Inscriptional Attestation". Another inscription found at Soli (Cyprus) refers to a proconsul Paulus, but praenomen and nomen are missing and it is probably to be dated under Hadrian (although Campbell points out that the basis for this dating is slim. Campbell, 2). Cf. Mitchell, "Review". For a critical evaluation of Campbell's reconstruction of Pauline chronology, cf. Bernier, "When Paul Met Sergius".

[30] Cotton and Eck, "Josephus".

[31] On Gallio, cf. Winter, "Gallio".

[32] Cf. below, §6.3.

[33] Cf. "Joseph called Barsabbas who was conamed *Iustus*", (Acts 1:23), where the positive connotation of the name does have some relevance to the narrative, but Luke still does not bother to translate it. For a list of Latin words and names in the New Testament, cf. Robinson, *Grammar*, 109–10.

he addresses a non-Jewish audience, "Saul, named the Tarsean" (Acts 9:11), the zealous persecutor with letters of recommendation from the high priest of Jerusalem (Acts 9:2), turns out to have a Roman identity as well.[34] The narrative of Acts will develop this Roman identity in later interactions with the Roman government, introducing Paul's Roman citizenship in the interaction with the attendants of the magistrates of Philippi (16:37), which is referred to again in the context of his arrest in Jerusalem (22:25–29; 27); while also developing his Jewish identity further, informing the reader of Paul's education in Jerusalem with Gamaliel (Acts 22:3) and his adherence to the Pharisaic school of thought (Acts 23:6; 26:5). Paul is never referred to as Saul after his encounter with Sergius Paulus, except when he recalls how Jesus called him (in Hebrew) on the way to Damascus (Acts 22:7; 26:14) and how Ananias addressed him afterwards (22:13). This suggests that the narrator associates Paul's Jewish name Saul with his past, whereas he knew him as Paul as he accompanied him from Troas to Philippi, from Philippi to Jerusalem, and from Caesarea to Rome (cf. above, §1.4.2, on the we-passages). Significantly, however, the preferred name does not change at the moment of his vision of Christ, but at the moment that he is first said to speak the word of God to a Gentile. The Latin name 'Paul' is thus associated with his mission among Gentiles, the ἔργον for which the Spirit had called Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:2; cf. 14:26–27).[35]

The second detail is that Paul is said to be "filled with holy Spirit", echoing earlier statements about the disciples gathered at Pentecost (Acts 2:4), about Peter (4:8), and about Stephen (6:5, 10; 7:55). The phrase also echoes Ananias' statement that he was sent to make him see again and to be filled with holy Spirit (9:17). It contrasts Paul with Bar-Jesus Elymas, whom Paul unmasks as "full of all deceit and all wrongdoing" (13:10), and it highlights the fact that

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[34] In fact, a large number of Paul's associates in Acts are Jews who (also) have Latin names: John Mark (Acts 12:12), Lucius of Cyrene (13:1), Niger (Acts 13:1), Crispus (Acts 18:8), Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2), Silas (Acts 15:22, 27, 32; 16:19, 22, 25, 29, 35, 38, 40, 17:4, 5, 10, 14, 15; 18:5). Further, Acts mentions a God-fearer Titius Justus (Acts 18:7). Of Gaius (Acts 19:29, 20:4) and Secundus (Acts 20:4) it is not said whether they are Jews or not. Judge argues that in many instances, these are cognomina, which would mostly imply Roman citizenship. Cf. Judge, "Roman Base". Note also the "Romans residing there [sc. in the regions of the Mediterranean world mentioned before], Jews as well as proselytes" specifically mentioned in Acts 2:10. For this (unconventional) interpretation of Acts 2:10, see Witherington III, *Acts*, 137. The existence of Romans who adopted Jewish customs is well attested: see Tacitus, *Annales* 2.85; Josephus, *A.J.* 18:81–84; Suetonius, *Tib.* 36; Cassius Dio 57.18.5; Seneca the Younger, *Ep.* 108.22; Williams, *Jews*, 63–80.

[35] Cf. also Schmidt, "Weg". According to Schmidt, the journey of Acts 13–14 is a *Bildungsreise* in which Paul gradually has to learn – guided by his mentor Barnabas – what it means to be an apostle to the Gentiles. Klauck associates the change name with Paul's mission to the Gentiles as well, although he overstates his case when he says that "In the presence of the Roman proconsul Sergius Paulus, the career of Saul the missionary to Jews ends." Klauck, *Magic*, 53.

this is the first instance of direct speech by Paul that is thus identified as spoken through the Spirit (cf. Acts 6:10), the same Spirit who spoke through the prophets (Acts 7:51; 28:25).

2.4.1. The Gaze

The gaze is an important gesture that is mentioned a couple of times in Acts.[36] The verb ἀτενίζειν denotes the act of intently fixing one's eyes on someone (cf. Acts 7:55) and often accompanies speech as a reinforcement. Quintilian highlights the power of the eyes to convey emotions.[37] In a subtle way, this single word evokes a mental picture of the encounter between Paul and Elymas.

Further, the penetrating gaze corresponds to Paul's power to expose the deceit and fraud that fills Elymas' heart. Referring to Proverbs 15:11, 1 Samuel 16:7, Luke 11:17 and Acts 15:8 (none of which, it should be noted, employs the verb ἀτενίζειν used here), Benedict Kent rightly observes that "Paul's searching gaze (13:9) reveals that Paul has insight into his adversary's inner self, an ability commonly associated with God and his prophets in the OT, as well as with Jesus in the Gospels."[38]

It is not necessary to regard ἀτενίζειν as "a technical term, used particularly in the context of a divine epiphany or a manifestation of divine power" as Rick Strelan has argued.[39] Although the verb is used remarkably often in such contexts, Strelan himself admits that it does not always carry such weight.[40] In this particular context, Paul's gaze does serve to express the power of the Holy Spirit that has filled him (Acts 13:9), but it cannot be regarded as a technical term for such manifestations.

2.4.2. The Speech

As Paul has his eyes fixed on Elymas, he addresses him fiercely. Paul's brief speech consists of two parts.[41] The first part exposes Elymas' opposition to

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[36] Acts 3:4, 12; 6:15; 7:55; 10:4; 11:6; 13:9; 14:9; 23:1. In Luke, it occurs in 4:20; 22:56. The verb ἀτενίζειν is rare in classical Greek, but occurs frequently in Jewish and Christian texts from the first centuries BCE and CE (2 Cor 3:7, 13; 1 Esd 6:27; 3 Macc. 2:26; Pr Man 12:9; T. 12 Patr. 1.4.2.2. LAE 33:2; Josephus, *A.J.* 19.345; *B.J.* 5.517; 1 Clem. 7.4; 9.2; 36.2; Ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 3.40.1; 4.10.3; 5.25.3; 10.1.2. T. Ab 8.7).

[37] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.75.

[38] Kent, "Curses", 416.

[39] Strelan, "Strange Stares", 255.

[40] Cf. also Silva, "ἀτενίζω", which mentions the article of Strelan, but does not seem to take over all his conclusions. Likewise, Craig Keener expresses caution with regard to the supernatural element in Luke's use of this verb. Keener, *Acts*, 2013, 2:1063.

[41] Kent divides the speech in three parts, 13:10a "Insight and re-labelling", 13:10b "Accusation in the form of a rhetorical question", and 13:11a "Verdict". Kent, "Curses", 415.

Paul as a diabolic attempt to pervert the ways of the Lord: "You full of all fraud and all deceit, devil's son, enemy of all righteousness, will you not stop distorting the straight ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10).[42] Paul brings the teaching of the Lord (διδαχὴ τοῦ κυρίου, verse 12), which is elsewhere called the "word of the Lord/of God" or "the way of the Lord/of God", often abbreviated to "the Word" or "the Way", terminology that has its origins in the Septuagint, particularly the Psalms and the Prophets (cf. the excursus below). His opponent can therefore be said to be "distorting the ways of the Lord" when he opposes Paul and seeks to "turn the proconsul away (διαστρέψαι) from the faith" (Acts 13:10).

By calling him a "devil's son", Paul alludes to the role of the devil in twisting God's words and deceiving humans (cf. Acts 5:3–4; John 8:44). Conversely, by accusing Elymas of distorting the "straight ways of the Lord", Paul is presented as one who claims to teach these ways correctly – after Jesus had appeared to him "on the way on which he was going" (ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ᾗ ἤρχου, Acts 9:17) and he had been found praying "on the Straight Road" (τὴν ῥύμην τὴν καλουμένην Εὐθεῖαν, Acts 9:11).[43]

Excursus: "the way" in Luke and Acts

"The way", (ἡ ὅδος) occurs in absolute usage four times in Acts (9:2; 19:9; 19:23; 22:4). In three instances, it is qualified by a genitive, as "the way of the Lord", (Acts 18:25) "the way of God", (Acts 18:26, with considerable variation in the manuscripts) or "a way of salvation" (16:17). In Acts 24:14–15, it is qualified by a relative clause, and in Acts 22:4 by a demonstrative pronoun. Apparently, Luke assumes that the designation is familiar to his audience.[44] Serving God "according to the way" is explicated by Paul as "believing everything that is according to the Law and that is written in the Prophets, and having put my hope in God that there will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked" (Acts 24:15). In this passage, "the way" is best seen as a designation of the apostolic teaching (which encompasses both beliefs and conduct).[45] This usage evokes the language of the Psalms (e.g. Ps 24:8 LXX) and the Prophets (e.g. Mic 4:2; Isa 2:3; 59:8; Jer 5:4–5; Jer 39:39 LXX [=Jer 32:39 MT]) where the way of God can function as a synonym for the Law or the word of the Lord (cf. esp. Isa 2:3). Other texts are more ambiguous. In Acts 9:2, the "disciples of the Lord" (9:1) are identified as "some of the way", where the genitive may indicate either adherence to a teaching or belonging to a community. In Acts 19:9, the slandering in the Corinthian synagogue at "the way" can refer both to the content of Paul's preaching and to the community of the disciples; the same is true for the unrest "concerning the way" in Acts 19:23. Finally, in Acts 22:4, Paul says that he "persecuted this way until death" (ταύτην τὴν ὁδὸν ἐδίωξα ἄχρι

On the basis of the syntax, however, a partition in two is preferable (the speech consists of two sentences).

[42] Cf. van Eck, *Handelingen*, 280. Van Eck refers to Rhet. Her. 4.22, on the use of apostrophe to express indignation (*exclamatio*).

[43] Schmidt, "Weg", 86.

[44] Olsson, "Vägen", 271.

[45] Cf. Michaelis, "ὁδός", 93; Zahn, *Apostelgeschichte*, 321.

θανάτου), thus clearly using the word to designate the disciples. On the basis of these texts, "the way" has been interpreted as a "self–designation" of the Christian community,[46] but the passages where ὅδος clearly refers to the beliefs and way of life taught by the apostles outweigh the passages where the reference is ambiguous.[47] The term primarily designates that which the apostles taught, which is given divine authority as "the way of the Lord", and can be used metonymically to denote those who adhere to this teaching. Such metonymical usage is also attested for the term "the word of the Lord": in Acts 6:7; 12:24; 13:49 and 19:20, the growth of the word is a metonym for the growth of the number of disciples. Moreover, the Lukan use of λόγος also provides the closest parallel for the variation between absolute usage and qualified usage: like ὅδος, λόγος can be used in an absolute way (Acts 4:4; 11:19) or qualified by various genitives as "the word of God" (6:7; 12:24; 17:13), "the word of the Lord" (13:49; 19:20; several manuscripts read "the word of God") and "the word of salvation" (13:26).

Through the words of Paul's speech, Luke frames Paul's confrontation with Elymas in Scriptural schemes of wisdom versus foolishness, the righteous versus the wicked, true versus false prophecy.[48] The repetition of "all" (παντὸς [...] πάσης [...] πάσης), nicely continued with "will you not stop" (οὐ παύσῃ) gives the pronouncement extra gravity and force.

In the second part of the speech, Paul announces the Lord's punishment of Elymas: "And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is against you, and you will be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." Again, the language is Septuagintal. The phrase καὶ νῦν ἰδού occurs especially in the historical books of the Septuagint to introduce conclusions in speeches[49] and is used elsewhere in Acts by Paul in his address to the elders of Ephesus (Acts 20:22, 25). The "hand of the Lord" with the preposition ἐπί + acc. denotes God's powerful action either in punishment (Exod 9:3; Judg 2:15; 1 Sam 5:6; 7:13; 12:15) or in empowerment (1 Kgs 18:46; Ezra 7:6); in this context, it clearly denotes punishment.[50]

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[46] Trebilco, *Self-Designations*, 247–49.

[47] Cf. also Lyonnet, "Voie", 151–53.

[48] That the "ways of the Lord are straight" is expressed in many Scriptural passages, but the most exact parallel can be found in Hosea 14:10, the closing verse of the book: "Who is wise and understands these things? Who is understanding (συνετός) and knows these things? For the ways of the Lord are straight (εὐθεῖαι αἱ ὁδοὶ τοῦ κυρίου), and the righteous will walk in them, but the wicked will stumble in them." In Proverbs, the opposite of the righteous ways are the "distorted ways of the evil men" (διεστραμμένας ὁδοὺς κακῶν) which Wisdom hates (Prov 8:13). Moreover, Proverbs 10:9 assures that "he who perverts his ways will be found out" (ὁ δὲ διαστρέφων τὰς ὁδοὺς αὐτοῦ γνωσθήσεται).

[49] Gen 12:19; Exod 3:9; Num 24:14; Deut 26:10; Josh 9:25; 14:10; 1 Sam 12:2, 13; 24:21; 25:7; 2 Sam 14:32; 1 Kgs 1:18; 22:23; 2 Chr 18:22; 20:10f; Tob 5:3; Ps 26:6; Job 16:19.

[50] Scholars debate whether this speech act can be viewed as a curse. Kent has recently argued that ancient Mediterpanean curses are diverse in form, style and setting and that it benefits the understanding of the apostolic pronouncements against Ananias and Sapphira, Simon Magus and Bar-Jesus when they are understood within this context. Kent, "Curses".

2.5. Audience Response

As the structural outline of this episode provided in §2.1 showed, the actions of Sergius Paulus and Elymas before Paul's performance are mirrored by what is said about them after the performance.

In the case of Elymas, the punishment pronounced by Paul immediately sets in. "Immediately, mist (ἀχλύς) and darkness fell upon him."[51] The term ἀχλύς does not occur in the LXX or elsewhere in the New Testament, but is found in Philo, Josephus and the versions of Aquila and Symmachus.[52] It is used in ancient medical literature for mist-like ulcers on the pupil of the eye.[53] However, the expression "mist and darkness fell upon him" is more plausibly construed as a hendiadys for temporary divine blinding. ἀχλύς is used in contexts of temporary blinding by the gods in Homeric epic (see below, §4.6, on the script of the performance).[54] The Homeric usage may have informed its use in one passage in Josephus' writings, a parallel that is especially instructive because it occurs in the context of the prophet Elisha, who asks God to blind the Syrians "by throwing a mist (ἀχλύν) on them due to which they would not recognise him."[55] They follow the prophet, "their eyes and mind darkened (ἐπεσκοτημένοι) by God".[56] When they arrive in Samaria, Elisha prays to God that "he cleanse their eyes and take away the mist from them".[57] Thus, ἀχλύς and a verb related to σκότος are used together to indicate limited vision caused

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[51] Acts 13:11.

[52] Philo, *Deus* 130; Josephus, *A.J.* 9.56–57; Ezek 12:7 (Aquila); Job 3:5 (Symmachus). Cf. Barrett, *Acts*, 1:618.

[53] Cf. Hippocrates, *Prorrhetica* 2.20, where ἀχλύες, καὶ νεφέλαι, καὶ αἰγίδες ("mists, clouds, and specks") are listed as symptoms of ulcers in the eye that disappear over time after the ulcer has been healed. Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* 7.2.20 notes that wild lettuce can be used to "remove mist from eyes and take away an ulcer" (ἀχλὺν ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπάγειν καὶ ἄργεμα ἀφαιρεῖν). See also Dioscorides Pedanius, *De materia medica* 2.78. Aëtius of Amida (fifth century CE), *Iatrici* 7.27, defines ἄχλυς as an ulceration on the pupil (ἕλκωσις ἐπὶ τοῦ μέλανος) and distinguishes it from a "small cloud", (νεφέλιον) which is a thicker and smaller ulcer on the pupil. Cf. Hobart, *Medical Language*, 44–45; Harnack, *Lukas*, 134; Lake and Cadbury, *Acts*, 4:146; Wildhaber, *Paganisme*, 85–86.

[54] Cf. Homer, *Il.* 5.127; 15.668; 20:321.341; *Od.* 20.357; 22.88. In 15.668, the lifting of the "cloud of mist from their eyes" (ἀπ' ὀφθαλμῶν νέφος ἀχλύος) is associated with the coming of light (φόως, the opposite of σκότος). In 20:321, Poseidon "immediately poured mist over the eyes" of Achilles ("αὐτίκα τῷ μὲν ἔπειτα κατ' ὀφθαλμῶν χέεν ἀχλὺν"), a mist that is lifted in 20:341. *Od.* 20.357 associates mist and darkness.

[55] Josephus, *A.J.* 9.56: ἀχλὺν αὐταῖς ἐπιβαλόντα ἀφ' ἧς ἀγνοήσειν αὐτὸν ἔμελλον. Josephus rephrases 2 Kgs 6:18, "Strike this people with blindness" (Πάταξον δὴ τοῦτο τὸ ἔθνος ἀορασίᾳ·).

[56] Josephus, *A.J.* 9.57: τὰς ὄψεις ὑπὸ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν ἐπεσκοτημένοι.

[57] Josephus, *A.J.* 9.57: καθᾶραι τὰς ὄψεις τῶν πολεμίων καὶ τὴν ἀχλὺν αὐτῶν ἀνελεῖν.

by God. In this retelling of 2 Kings 6:18–20, Josephus uses the same Homeric idiom that Luke uses for the blinding of Elymas; in the *Iliad*, ἀχλύς is used both for limited vision and for total blindness, thrown on or lifted from people by gods. Philo connects mist, darkness and blindness in a simile about a mind deprived of the power of reasoning.[58]

The darkness (σκότος) forces Elymas to "search for guides"[59] which evokes both Paul's blindness on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:8) and his mission among the nations "to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness into light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified through faith in me [Jesus]."[60] (Acts 26:18). These passages have been advanced as clues from the narrative context that help to interpret Elymas' temporary blindness as a chastisement that aims at Elymas' repentance.[61] Indeed, the blindness creates a narrative link between Saul and Elymas, both of whom opposed the teaching of the Lord. Saul was blinded after a vision of Jesus, Elymas was blinded after the encounter with Paul, who represents Jesus as his messenger. However, the narrator is not so much interested in the response of Elymas, as in the response of the proconsul who watches Paul's performance.

"Then, when the proconsul saw what happened, he believed, being perplexed at the teaching of the Lord" (Acts 13:12). The seeing of the proconsul contrasts with the blindness of Elymas. It is in response to the visible punitive miracle that the proconsul believes. At the same time, Luke states that Sergius Paulus was "perplexed at the *teaching* of the Lord". The expression recalls the response of the inhabitants of Capharnaum at the teaching of Jesus (Luke 4:32), where it is explained as "because his word was in authority". Brought by Paul as messenger of God, the teaching of the Lord (Jesus) carries the same authority, which is made visible in the punishment of those who oppose it. As elsewhere in Acts, visible miracles are a divine testimony to the word preached by Jesus, the apostles, and Paul and Barnabas (cf. 2:22; 2:43; 5:12; 6:8; 14:3; 15:12).[62]

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[58] Philo, *Deus* 130.

[59] Acts 13:11.

[60] Acts 26:18.

[61] Cf. John Chrysostom, *Hom. Act.* 28 and further references in Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2024.

[62] Rothschild notes, "Numerous episodes in Acts comprise both a miraculous and an intellectual (i.e., preaching) component, as if to address the concerns of these two primary constituencies: the common people persuaded by displays of natural power and the intellectuals persuaded by reasoned arguments, respectively." Rothschild, "Pisidian Antioch", 345. However, in this passage, the faith of Sergius Paulus is attributed both to seeing the punitive miracle and to the perplexing teaching of the Lord. The two are indissociable: as Marguerat notes, "Diffuser une parole intelligible et performante est la clef du succès de l'Evangile" (Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:33).

Luke's reference to the "teaching of the Lord", the final words of this pericope, indicate what is at stake in this passage. Paul is the Spirit-filled messenger of the "word of God" (13:7), which is validated by divine intervention against a pseudoprophet who "distorts the way of the Lord" (13:10) and by the faith of a prudent proconsul.

The statement that the proconsul "believed" is a matter of contention in commentaries on Acts, because it seems incredible that a Roman senator converted to Christianity at such an early state without leaving any further trace in early Christian literature.[63] However, this should not predetermine the exegesis of the text. There is nothing in the text that suggests that the faith response of Sergius Paulus was in any way different from all the other persons in Acts of whom it is said that they "believed".

What this implied for his public function as governor (with its inevitable cultic duties) is left unsaid.[64] There is no reason to assume that he would not be able to continue to exercise his public duties after he believed. The episode about Cornelius in Acts 10–11 is informative in this respect. Cornelius is introduced as "pious and fearing God with his entire household, who did many acts of mercy for the people and prayed to God for everything" (Acts 10:2). Part of his household are two household servants and a "pious soldier" (στρατιώτην εὐσεβῆ), who describe Cornelius to Peter as "a man who is righteous, fears God and has a good testimony among the entire nation of the Jews" (ἀνὴρ δίκαιος καὶ φοβούμενος τὸν θεόν, μαρτυρούμενός τε ὑπὸ ὅλου τοῦ ἔθνους τῶν Ἰουδαίων). To Cornelius, Peter says that "in every nation the one who fears God and practices righteousness is acceptable (δέκτος) to him" (Acts 10:32). This receives divine affirmation by the gift of the Spirit upon him and his household (10:44). Peter does not exhort Cornelius to repentance: as a God-fearing man who practices righteousness, he is already acceptable before God. There is not the slightest indication in Acts that believing the word of God concerning Jesus and receiving salvation would be incompatible with being a soldier, a centurion, or indeed, even a proconsul. This may well be significant for the "esteemed Theophilus" to whom Luke and Acts are addressed.[65]

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[63] Haacker suggests as explanation for this absence that Sergius Paulus remained a "hidden disciple" in the manner of Joseph of Arimathea (John 19:38) because of his office as provincial governor. Haacker, *Apostelgeschichte*, 219. Lake and Cadbury suggest that Paul and Barnabas mistook courtesy for conversion. Lake and Cadbury, *Acts*, 4:147.

[64] Thus also Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte*, 385; Haacker, *Apostelgeschichte*, 219; Holladay, *Acts*, 262. Extensive discussion in Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2024–26.

[65] Contrast, e.g., Josephus, *A.J.* 18.84, where Jews refuse to serve in the army "because of the keeping of the ancestral laws" and are punished by Tiberius for their refusal. Celsus reproached Christians for declining both military and public duties, and Origenes defends their refusal by pointing out how they serve the common good through prayer and taking office in the church. Tertullian spoke out strongly against Christian participation in the army in his *De corona militis,* a response to other Christians who did not consider it problematic

Moreover, it suits the apologetic agenda of Luke that esteemed members of the Roman elite, such as Sergius Paulus, could be believers of the Gospel in the Julio-Claudian age precisely in their capacity as proconsul.

2.6. Script

Paul's first narrated performance after he has been sent out from Antioch constitutes a reaction to the opposition against the word of God that he teaches. In this episode, Scriptural narratives about prophets provide the script for his performance.

The encounter with a pseudoprophet, who wants to persuade a governor not to listen to the word of God, evokes a range of biblical narratives in which a spokesperson of God addresses a king but meets resistance from others who claim to speak on behalf of God as well. Thus, Moses and Aaron opposed Egyptian magicians before the Pharaoh (the Septuagint uses σοφισταί, φάρμακοι and ἐπαοιδοί, Exod 7:11, words that belong to the same semantic field as μάγοι), Micaiah opposed Zedekiah and other prophets before the king Jehoshaphat of Judah and Ahab of Israel (1 Kgs 22:1–28), and Jeremiah opposed Hananiah in front of the priests, false prophets (LXX: ψευδοπροφηταί), and people of Israel in the temple (Jer 33).[66] Prophets of God, when faced with attempts to oppose God's message, are required to respond fiercely and to pronounce divine punishment on the opponents. The Septuagintal wording of Paul's speech (all its words except for ῥᾳδιούργημα are found in the Septuagint)[67] characterises him, in contrast to the pseudoprophet Elymas, as a true prophet of Israel.[68]

Do other cultural backgrounds also play a role? Luke's usage of the Homeric word ἀχλύς, used to describe the blindness that falls on Elymas, is noteworthy. Katherine Veach has proposed to read the encounter between Saul and Bar-

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to wear the military garland as Christian soldiers in the Roman army and who even criticized a Christian soldier for refusing to wear this garland in a ceremony and thereby creating trouble for his fellow-Christians (Tertullian, *Cor.* 1.4–5). Unlike Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria viewed the military as simply one of the occupations in which Christians can be active (*Protr.* 10.100; *Paed.* 2.118.2). For an overview of Christian participation in the Roman army until 337 CE, cf. Helgeland, "Army".

[66] Yaure sees an allusion to the dreamer prophets of Jeremiah 23, specifically to Shemaia "the dreamer" (הַנֶּחֱלָמִי, Jer 29:24): Cf. Yaure, "Elymas", 306. "In fact, Paul vs. Elymas — although in itself a highly realistic and historical record — is in substance and in terminology an accurate and conscious reflex of the record of Jeremiah vs. the dreamer prophets." Likewise Schreiber, *Paulus*, 34.

[67] Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte*, 385.

[68] Cf. also van Eck, *Handelingen*, 280.

Jesus in light of Iliadic battle scenes, highlighting especially a number of parallels with *Iliad* 5.95–296, where Diomedes meets opposition by a Trojan, responds with a taunt and kills him with the help of Athena. Moreover, she suggests that Luke conflates two Homeric phrases: the phrase "darkness covered his eyes" (σκότος ὄσσε κάλυπσεν), used for the death of a victim in a battle scene,[69] and the use of ἀχλύς for a temporary blinding by the gods. The conflation serves to adapt the motive of the Homeric battle scene to the contest between Saul and Bar-Jesus, where Bar-Jesus is not killed, but temporarily blinded.[70] For readers nurtured on the *Iliad,* the remarkable use of ἀχλύς may induce them to compare Paul to the Homeric heroes, providing a complementary cultural script for the interpretation of this performance.[71] Since Josephus applies the same idiom in his retelling of Elishah's prayer for the blinding of the Syrians (2 Kgs 6:18), it is clear that the Homeric and prophetic script do not exclude each other.

2.7. Function of This Portrait

How does Luke depict the performance of Paul before the proconsul?

The *setting* of Cyprus functions in Acts as a Jewish environment in foreign territory: it is the birth place of many Jewish disciples in Acts and has several synagogues, to which the preaching of Saul and Barnabas is confined until the proconsul summons them to speak to him.

Paphos, as the provincial capital and residence of the proconsul (and thus connected in the narrative to Caesarea and, ultimately, Rome) highlights Paul's encounter with the Roman authorities, which will continue as a common thread through Acts 13–28 until his expected meeting with the emperor at the end of the book. It echoes the residence of the lower-ranking Roman centurion Cornelius where Peter first experienced that God had opened the door of conversion for the Gentiles.

Paul responds to the actions of two other characters: the Jew Bar-Jesus, who is characterised negatively as a deceiver, and the proconsul Sergius Paulus, who belongs to the highest stratum in the Roman hierarchy below the Emperor.

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[69] Cf. *Iliad* 4.461, 4.503, 13.575, 14.519, 15.578, 16.316, 16.325, 20.393, 20.471 and 21.181.

[70] Veach, "Debut".

[71] Cf. a similar judgment by Hummel on Acts 27: "Hellenistisch gebildete Heiden bemerken darin eine Odysseus–Paulus–Typologie zugünsten des Letzteren, hellenistisch gebildete Juden sehen im glaubensgehorsamen Paulus die Jona–Gestalt des Ersten Testaments positiv überboten." Hummel, "Factum", 52. It should be noted, however, that precisely "*hellenistisch gebildete* Juden" (italics mine) would also be able to appreciate the Odysseus-Paulus typology.

Paul's *performance* itself, as presented by Luke, consists of a powerful, searching gaze, and a short speech, in which Paul uses Septuagintal language to expose Elymas as an enemy of God and to announce God's punishment on him.

Thus, Paul is presented as a prophet in continuity with the prophets of Scripture, in contrast to Elymas, who stands in continuity with the false prophets of Scripture. The scriptural theme of the conflict between true and false prophets provides the *script* for Paul's performance. Paul's identity as a true prophet is confirmed by the blindness that falls on Elymas. The Septuagintal style of his performance testifies to his Jewish identity, but at the same time, the introduction of his Latin name Paulus signals his Roman identity. He stands before the proconsul as a Jewish prophet, but not as one who is a stranger to the world of the proconsul – he shares his cognomen with Sergius.

The performance demonstrates the authority of Paul's teaching and leads to a very positive *audience response*: the prudent Sergius Paulus believes and is deeply impressed by the teaching of the Lord. Thus, the narrative shows that Gentiles can come to faith without the need for Paul to abandon his Jewishness, nor for Sergius Paulus to abandon his Romanness and his public duties as proconsul.

In the larger narrative context, this performance of Paul opens a journey in which he enters increasingly Gentile space, where he experiences "that [God] opened the door of faith to the Gentiles" (Acts 14:27). Paul's powerful, prophetic response to the opposition of Elymas shows that the salvation of the Gentiles is a crucial part of the teaching of the Lord: if Jews seek to turn Gentiles away from believing, they are punished as opponents of the Spirit. At the same time, by presenting Saul/Paul as a prophet who speaks Septuagintal language, Luke highlights the fact that the salvation of the Gentiles is part of the ongoing history of God with Israel. Paul is not establishing a new cult, he acts as messenger of the God of Israel, in the footsteps of the ancient prophets. Finally, Paul's performance is depicted as capable of rendering a prudent proconsul perplexed by the teaching of the Lord. Thus, it serves to show that the teaching of the Lord is not a superstition of simpleminded people, but a teaching that strikes highly distinguished Roman senators as convincing and trustworthy.

Chapter 3

Performance in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14–52)

Immediately after the episode before Sergius Paulus on Cyprus, an episode in Pisidian Antioch depicts Paul's performance in two Sabbath assemblies of Jews and God-fearing Gentiles, as well as a final gesture when he leaves the city. In this chapter, these three performances will be analysed according to the various aspects of performance outlined in chapter 1 (§1.2.5), preceded by a section on the narrative context and structure of this episode (§3.1). The chapter concludes with observations about the function of the portrait of these performances in the narrative.

3.1. Narrative Context and Structure

After the encounter with the proconsul of Cyprus, Paul takes the lead: no longer is Barnabas named first, but "Paul and his companions (οἱ περὶ Παῦλον) boarded a ship from Paphos and came to Perge in Pamphylia" (Acts 13:13). Perge is only a place of transit: from here, they continue to Pisidian Antioch.[1] John leaves them and returns to Jerusalem.

The episode in Pisidian Antioch is the focal point of Acts 13–14, the synagogue speech taking up most of the space of these chapters. The section is demarcated by the arrival in Antioch (Acts 13:14) and the departure for Iconium (Acts 13:51–52). The rather long episode is structured as follows:

Acts 13:14–52: Text

First Sabbath
(14) Αὐτοὶ δὲ διελθόντες ἀπὸ τῆς Πέργης παρεγένοντο εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν τὴν Πισιδίαν, καὶ εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν σαββάτων ἐκάθισαν. (15) μετὰ δὲ τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν
[setting]

[1] On the voyage from Paphos to Perge, and why Paul travels via Attalia on the return journey to Antioch (Acts 14:25), cf. Campbell, "Pamphylia". On the route from Perge to Antioch, cf. Wilson, "Route". Wilson opts for the Western route (along the Via Sebaste) for the journey to Antioch, adding that Paul may have taken the more direct route along the Cestus river on his return journey.

ἀπέστειλαν οἱ ἀρχισυνάγωγοι πρὸς αὐτοὺς λέγοντες• ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, εἴ τίς ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν λόγος παρακλήσεως πρὸς τὸν λαόν, λέγετε.
[introduction of other characters]

(16) Ἀναστὰς δὲ Παῦλος καὶ κατασείσας τῇ χειρὶ εἶπεν• ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλῖται […] ὑμῖν. [central performance]

(42) Ἐξιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν παρεκάλουν εἰς τὸ μεταξὺ σάββατον λαληθῆναι αὐτοῖς τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα. [audience response]

(43) λυθείσης δὲ τῆς συναγωγῆς ἠκολούθησαν πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τῶν σεβομένων προσηλύτων τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Βαρναβᾷ, οἵτινες προσλαλοῦντες αὐτοῖς ἔπειθον αὐτοὺς προσμένειν τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ.
[connecting narrative]

Second Sabbath
(44) Τῷ δὲ ἐρχομένῳ σαββάτῳ [temporal setting]

σχεδὸν πᾶσα ἡ πόλις συνήχθη ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου. (45) ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τοὺς ὄχλους ἐπλήσθησαν ζήλου καὶ ἀντέλεγον τοῖς ὑπὸ | – / τοῦ | Παύλου | λαλουμένοις / λεγομένοις | βλασφημοῦντες. [introduction of other characters]

(46) παρρησιασάμενοί τε ὁ Παῦλος καὶ ὁ Βαρναβᾶς εἶπαν• ὑμῖν […] γῆς.
[central performance]

(48) Ἀκούοντα δὲ τὰ ἔθνη ἔχαιρον καὶ ἐδόξαζον τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἐπίστευσαν ὅσοι ἦσαν τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον•
[audience response]

(49) διεφέρετο δὲ ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου | δι’ / καθ’ | ὅλης τῆς χώρας. (50) οἱ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι παρώτρυναν τὰς σεβομένας γυναῖκας τὰς εὐσχήμονας καὶ τοὺς πρώτους τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἐπήγειραν διωγμὸν ἐπὶ τὸν Παῦλον καὶ Βαρναβᾶν καὶ ἐξέβαλον αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν ὁρίων αὐτῶν. [connecting narrative]

Last Act
(51) οἱ δὲ ἐκτιναξάμενοι τὸν κονιορτὸν τῶν ποδῶν ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἦλθον εἰς Ἰκόνιον,
[last performance]

(52) | οἵ τε / οἱ δὲ | μαθηταὶ ἐπληροῦντο χαρᾶς καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου.
[concluding statement]

The outline shows that the pericope centres on two performances: a synagogue speech on the first Sabbath, and a response to opposition on the second Sabbath.[2] Both are presented according to the pattern outlined in §1.2.5.

[2] Thus, as Koet notes, the speech “is only one element of the interaction between the disciples and their audiences in Antioch.” Koet, *Studies*, 97.

First, the text provides a spatiotemporal setting for the performance (§3.2): in Pisidian Antioch, during Sabbath, in the synagogue, after the reading of the Law and the Prophets (Acts 13:14–15) and "on the next Sabbath" (Acts 13:44). Then, other characters are introduced (§3.3 and §3.6): for the first performance, οἱ ἀρχισυνάγωγοι, who convey an invitation to Paul and Barnabas to speak to the people (Acts 13:15). For the second performance, Luke introduces "the entire city", which assembles to hear the word of the Lord, whereas "the Jews" are filled with zeal, speak against what is said by Paul and slander it (Acts 13:44–45). The actual performances (§3.4 and §3.7) consist of a standing pose, a waving gesture, and a speech (Acts 13:16–41), as well as an act of frank speaking (Acts 13:46–47). Then, Luke notes the response of the characters to the performance (§3.5 and §3.8), in the first instance by mentioning the invitation of Paul and Barnabas to speak on the next Sabbath (Acts 13:42), in the second instance by noticing joy and faith among the Gentiles. Finally, a last act of Paul and Barnabas is recorded as they depart to Iconium and a summary statement about the disciples concludes the episode (§3.9–11). Small narratives about the Jews and God-fearers who follow Paul and Barnabas (13:43), and about the spread of the word and the inciting of persecution by the Jews (13:49–50), connect the three scenes of the episode.[3] My analysis ends with a discussion of the script (§3.12) and a conclusion about the function of this episode in the larger narrative (§3.13).

3.2. Setting: Place and Location

Both performances share their setting in Pisidian Antioch, on a Sabbath. The first performance is situated more specifically in a synagogue, and after the reading of the Law and the prophets. As for the second performance, the text notes that "the whole city gathered to hear Paul speak"; since Paul's speaking is done at the request of the synagogue leaders to speak again on the next Sabbath, it is implied that the second performance takes place in a Jewish Sabbath assembly as well, although the text is silent about the location of this gathering. Below, I will discuss the significance of this spatial setting for the depiction of Paul's performance.

3.2.1. Pisidian Antioch

The narrative of Acts suggests a significant difference between the locations of Cyprus and Pisidian Antioch. In contrast to Cyprus, which is populated in Acts mostly by Jewish disciples of Jesus, where the Cypriot Jew Barnabas takes

[3] On the distinction between "episode" and "scene", cf. above, §1.3.2. Cf. also Roloff, "Paulus-Darstellung", 201, who uses the term "Szenenfolge" for Acts 13:13–52.

Saul along with him to preach in synagogues, Antioch is uncharted territory where *Paul* takes the lead. It is in line with this contrast that John's Latin name Mark is omitted here, when Luke mentions his return from Perge back to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13), although this can also be explained as an incidental case of stylistic variation.[4]

Luke takes care to provide the names of the regions with the names of the towns: Perge is qualified as "of Pamphylia" and Antioch is labelled as "Pisidian".[5] Although Strabo describes Antioch as belonging to Phrygia and being called "Antioch near Pisidia",[6] Pliny the Elder, closer to the time of Luke, assigns "colonia Caesarea, also called Antioch" to the Pisidians (*Natural History* 5.24). Anyhow, by associating Antioch with Pisidia, not with Phrygia, Luke situates it between Pamphylia, which borders Pisidia on the South, and Lycaonia, which lies to the east of Pisidia (see also Acts 14:24), and postpones a northward journey to "the Phrygian and Galatian region" to Acts 16:6.[7]

Clare Rothschild has argued that Antioch, as a Roman colony, functions in the narrative as a "little Rome", that forms an inclusio with "big Rome" at the end of the book of Acts.[8] Others have pointed to a connection between Antioch and Paphos on the basis of epigraphic evidence for Sergii Paulli in Antioch.[9] However, the narrative of Acts does not draw attention to either of these connections, and of all the Roman colonies visited by Paul in the book of Acts (Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Troas, Corinth), only Philippi is explicitly termed (using a Latin loanword) a κολωνία (Acts 16:12), which suggests that only that city's status as a *colonia* is relevant to the narrative of Acts.[10]

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[4] Cf. Acts 12:12, 25; 15:37 ("John Mark"); and 15:39 ("Mark"). According to Col 4:10, Mark was a nephew of Barnabas. This is not stated in the text of Acts, but it fits his role as someone who accompanies Barnabas.

[5] The adjective Πισιδίαν has the same meaning as the variant reading τῆς Πισιδίας.

[6] Strabo, *Geography* 12.8.14. Translation Roller, *Geography*, 551.

[7] The Majority Text reads τὴν Φρυγίαν καὶ τὴν Γαλατικὴν χώραν, "Phrygia and the Galatian region". The ECM, based on all early manuscripts, reads τὴν Φρυγίαν καὶ Γαλατικὴν χώραν, "the Phrygian and Galatian region". According to van Bruggen, *Paulus*, 66, Paul travelled first through Phrygia, and then wandered through Galatia, an interpretation that is more plausible on the reading of the Majority Text than on the reading of the earlier manuscripts, which speak of one region that is loosely defined as "Phrygian and Galatian". According to Rothschild, Luke has constructed the mission to Antioch, Iconium and Lystra to provide foundation stories for the churches addressed in Paul's letters to the Galatians, Rothschild, "Pisidian Antioch". However, Breytenbach, *Paulus und Barnabas*, provides ample evidence that makes it unlikely that the entire missionary journey of Acts 13–14 is fictional.

[8] Rothschild, "Pisidian Antioch", 346–48.

[9] As first suggested by Mitchell, *Anatolia*, 2:7. Cf. also Gill, "Christianity", 75–77; Breytenbach and Zimmermann, *Lycaonia*, 62.

[10] Cf. Brélaz, "Center".

Instead, stripped of all local specifics,[11] Antioch becomes a stereotypical Gentile city with a Jewish synagogue,[12] eminently suitable as a setting for the first performance of Paul as messenger of God on territory that has not yet been reached by the Gospel.

3.2.2. Sitting in the Synagogue

In Luke's narrative, Paul and Barnabas head straight for the synagogue after they arrived in Antioch. "They arrived in Pisidian Antioch, and having gone into the synagogue on the day of the Sabbath, they sat down" (Acts 13:14). Thus, the synagogue is singled out as the venue for Paul's performance here, and it is the only feature of Antioch that Luke deems relevant to his narrative.

In Acts, the teaching of Paul is situated from the outset in the synagogues. After his arrival in Damascus, having seen Jesus on the way, he "immediately proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, that he is the son of God" (9:20). From then onwards, the synagogue is the primary context of Paul's activity in the diaspora (Acts 13:5; 13:14; 14:1; 17:1,10,17; 18:4,19; 19:8).[13]

The significance of the synagogue as venue for Paul's performance is that the Jewish diaspora communities gather in it to hear the Law and the Prophets being read on Sabbath (cf. Acts 15:21). In the diaspora, in contrast to the Galilean and Judean setting of Luke's Gospel, the synagogues are often referred to as "the synagogues of the Jews" (13:5; 14:1; 17:10), also translatable as "the gatherings of the Jews".[14] In Acts 13:14, the language of "entering" (εἰσέρχομαι) can apply both to a building and to a gathering, whereas in 13:43, it unequivocally denotes a gathering.[15] Only in Acts 18:7 and in Luke 7:5 does

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[11] I took this observation from Rothschild, "Pisidian Antioch", 342–43. She takes this to suggest "that the author had no information about Paul's visit to this city." However, this does not follow necessarily from the lack of detail; I suggest that Luke leaves out any details he may have known about Antioch or about Paul's stay there in order to give his performance exemplaric character for any urban centre of the Roman empire outside of Israel. In general, though, Luke seems less informed about the interior of Asia Minor than about the coastal cities (Bechard, *Paul*, 345–52). Marguerat confirms that the episode in Antioch functions as "un stéréotype de la mission paulinienne" (Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:38). Likewise Pervo, *Acts*, 344.

[12] According to Walter Ameling, there was no significant city in Asia Minor without a Jewish community; Jewish presence concentrated in the regions of Lydia, Phrygia and Caria. Ameling, "Gemeinden", 31.

[13] Cf. also Acts 18:26 (about Apollos) and Acts 24:12: Paul denies having spoken in the synagogues of Jerusalem.

[14] Cf. also Kloppenborg, *Associations*, 28. According to Kloppenborg, the "assemblies" (synagogues) of Jews can be regarded as instances of diasporic associations, associations formed around a shared ethnic identity.

[15] In 1 Cor 14:23, it is used for unbelievers who enter the gathering of "the whole church".

it unambiguously denote a building.[16] In general, the size and financial resources of a Jewish diaspora community would have determined whether it gathered in a house of a patron, in a building specifically designed for these gatherings (as in Ostia), or elsewhere.[17] When I use the term "synagogue" in the following discussion, it does not imply a decision either way.

The synagogues "of the Jews" are not restricted to Jews. They are also open for "those who fear God" or "Greeks" (Ἑλλήνες) who are explicitly addressed by Paul (Acts 13:16, 26; 14:1; 17:17; 18:4). The identity of these God-fearers is disputed.[18] In Acts 13:16, "those who fear God", (οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν) as distinct from "Israelite men", must refer to non-Jewish people who attended the synagogue because they "feared" the God of Israel. In Acts, the boundary between "God-fearers" and "proselytes" is unsharp: προσηλύτος is used in Acts 13:43 in contrast to "Jews" to denote a non-descript group of ethnically Greek visitors to the synagogue.[19] Thus, Luke follows the Septuagint, which uses προσηλύτος to refer to strangers who live among the people of Israel.[20] Luke distinguishes only between Jews ("sons of the offspring of Abraham", Acts 13:26: those who belong to the ἔθνος of Judea, with Jerusalem as their mother city, living either in their homeland or in communities in the diaspora),[21] and non-Jews or Greeks, some of whom honour God and are then var-

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[16] Cf. Claussen, "Meeting", 151–52. In Josephus, the term is likewise ambiguous (*A.J.* 19.300, 305; *B.J.* 2.289; 7.55). Cf. also Catto, *Synagogue*. One of the inscriptions found in Berenice, dated to the second year of Nero, uses συναγωγή first for the congregation or assembly of "the Jews in Berenice", and then for the building itself (when it mentions those who contributed to the repair of the συναγωγή). Text: *SEG* 17.823. Cf. Catto, 81–82.

[17] Cf. Claussen, "Meeting".

[18] Cf. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, 342–82; Levinskaya, *Diaspora*, 120–26.

[19] Not only the boundary between "proselytes" and "God-fearers", but also the boundary between "proselytes" and "Jews" is blurred in Acts. In Acts 2:11, "Jews and proselytes" are distinguished, but both are included under the general heading of "Jews, pious men from every nation of those under the heaven" (Acts 2:5). Cf. further Witherington III, *Acts*, 341–43. Ferguson, *Backgrounds*, 546. On Jews as ethnos in Acts, cf. also Barreto, *Ethnic Negotiations*; Stroup, *Christians*.

[20] E.g. Lev 24:22. Although this text stipulates that one law holds for the people of Israel and for strangers, Philo concedes that circumcision is not necessary for proselytes, because they circumcise their hearts (Philo, *QE* 2.2. Cf. Watson, *Paul*, 75–77). Barrett recognizes that proselytes and God-fearers are not distinguished clearly from each other in Acts, but concludes from this that the God-fearers referred to are, in fact, (circumcised) proselytes. An important part of his argument is that there was "a great gulf between Jews and proselytes on the one hand and, on the other, the rest of mankind". Barrett, *Acts*, 2:630. This gulf is not evident in Acts, however, where "proselytes" can alternate with "Greeks" (Acts 14:1) as a reference to non–Jewish attenders of the synagogue.

[21] For recent discussion about the term Ἰουδαῖος, cf. Miller, "Ethnicity"; Le Donne, "Complicating"; Eckhardt, "Rom und die Juden"; Tomson, "Names".

iously designated as "those who fear God", "proselytes" or "God-fearing proselytes".[22] The phrase "those who fear God" recalls Acts 10:35, where it is said that "in every nation, those who fear God and work righteousness are accepted by him."[23]

As spatial settings for Paul's teaching, the synagogues invite comparison with Jesus' teaching in synagogues (Luke 4:15; 4:44; 13:10), particularly with his programmatic address to the people in the synagogue of Nazareth (Luke 4:20–27). In Nazareth, Jesus' performance resulted in his expulsion from the city. Indeed, the synagogues figure as a potential context of punishment and persecution elsewhere in Luke and Acts (Luke 12:11; 21:12; Acts 9:2; 22:19; 26:11).

Finally, the synagogue functions in Luke's Gospel as a place of public display: Jesus reproaches the Pharisees, "who love the seats of honour in the synagogues and the greetings on the marketplaces" (11:43) and he warns his disciples to be on their guard against "the scribes, who are eager to walk in robes and love the greetings on the marketplaces and the seats of honour in the synagogues and the couches of honour in the meals" (20:46): the synagogues are mentioned together with the markets and the meals as places where honour and social status are displayed.

Paul and Barnabas "sat down" in the synagogue (Acts 13:14). Seating arrangements in synagogues are noted by Philo,[24] and archaeological evidence confirms that first-century synagogue buildings had seats or benches along three or four of its sides, focussed on the centre of the hall where the Scriptures were read and speeches delivered.[25] Given the importance of seating arrangements in the ancient world, it is well possible that non-Jewish attenders of the synagogue had to stand in the back of the synagogue.[26] A third- (or fifth?)-century inscription found in Aphrodisias provides a list of donors, probably arranged according to status, listing first the names of sixty-eight Jews, then of

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[22] Cf. Feldman, *Jew and Gentile*, 342–82.

[23] Cf. also Philo, *Praem.* 152, where he states that it is virtue, not birth, that counts for God.

[24] Philo, *Hyp.* 7.12–13.

[25] Cf. Levine, *Synagogue*, 337–41.

[26] There is no evidence for partitions and balconies in ancient synagogues, which would separate men from women, or Jews from non-Jews (Levine, 341, 502–5), but status clearly determined who sat or stood where in the synagogues. According to Philo, the older men sat on the benches, and the younger sat before them at their feet; Philo, *Hyp.* 7.12–13. A fascinating third-century inscription from Phocaea (no. 738 in Frey, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaicarum*, 2:8) honours "Tation, daughter of Straton, son of Empedon" with a golden crown and with προεδρία, the privilege of sitting on the front seats (cf. LSJ s.v. προεδρία). Although Trebilco assumes that Tation is a Jewish woman, the fact that she is said to have gifted the house and enclosed courtyard to "the Jews" may suggest that she is a prominent non–Jewish woman sympathizing with Judaism. Trebilco, *Communities*, 110. See also Kloppenborg, *Associations,* 28.

three proselytes (here in the meaning of full converts) and then of fifty-four God-fearers (θεοσεβείς), the first nine of which are city councillors (βουλευταί), which suggests that the status of Gentile attenders of the synagogue, even if they had important functions in the *polis*, was considered inferior to that of Jews.[27] If this is presupposed by the account of Acts, Paul's "turning to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46) may have involved a physical gesture towards those in the back. However, the lack of contemporary evidence makes it impossible to be certain about this. At least, "the Gentiles" to which Paul "turns" should not be envisaged only outside the synagogue: Acts 13:48 says explicitly that "when the Gentiles heard this, they rejoiced."

3.2.3. Reading Law and Prophets on Sabbath

The narrative further situates the performance in Antioch by indicating the day ("on the day of the Sabbath") and the time ("after the reading of the Law and the Prophets"). The reading of the Law and the Prophets on Sabbath is the primary reason Jews and Greeks come to the synagogue, according to Luke. This is presented as an ancient custom: Acts 15:21 seems to imply that it was instigated by Moses himself, a view also attested by Josephus and Philo.[28] The statement on the proclamation of "Moses" (i.e., the Law) in Acts 15:21 is complemented by the phrase in Paul's speech here in Pisidian Antioch, when he speaks of the "sayings of the prophets which are read on each Sabbath" (Acts 13:27).

Situating Paul's performance after the reading of the Law and the Prophets characterises Paul as a teacher of Israel whose message is based on the Scriptures, as Luke repeatedly emphasises.[29] External evidence for the proceedings of a synagogue gathering and the place of speeches in them is scant for the first century CE and does not present a homogeneous picture. Philo's *Hypothetica* suggests a running commentary on the Law by the same priest or elder who has read the text, which resembles to some extent Philo's own commentaries, the *Targumim* and the proem homilies of the rabbinic midrashim.[30] His *Special Laws,* however, depict a school gathering where one of the most experienced stands up to admonish his seated audience to virtue.[31] An Armenian translation

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[27] Cf. Trebilco, *Communities*, 153. The date is contested: Angelos Chaniotis provides a thorough study with arguments for fifth–century dating in Chaniotis, "Aphrodisias". Cf. also Rajak, "Diaspora", 158).

[28] Cf. Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.175; Philo, *Hyp.* 7.12.

[29] Acts 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28 (on Apollos); 28:23. The explicit reference to the "Prophets" is in line with an emphasis on the Prophets as key to the interpretation of Scripture throughout Luke and Acts, as shown by Koet, "Prophets".

[30] Philo, *Hyp.* 7.12–13. Several scholars have suggested that synagogue preaching developed out of the Targum. Cf. (with further bibliography) Stewart-Sykes, *Prophecy*, 57.

[31] Philo, *Spec.* 2.61–62.

preserves two biographical *encomia* (festive speeches) on Jonah and Samson, that derive lessons from their lives for the audience and seem to be have been delivered in synagogues. These speeches do not provide running commentary on the text, but a free retelling of the narrative.[32] There may have been much regional variation. Safrai notes that it is doubtful whether synagogues provided a sermon every Sabbath.[33] Hence, Luke's depiction of the synagogue meeting is best interpreted without prior assumptions about the Sabbath gatherings of Jews in the diaspora in the first century CE.[34]

The synagogue as context of the proclamation of the Gospel functions to highlight the coherence of Paul's message with the Scriptures of Israel and thus undermines the charge that Christians constitute a new *superstitio*, as Daniel Marguerat has pointed out.[35] The Gospel is proclaimed from the midst of the assembly of Israel,[36] where both Jews and Gentiles gather to hear it.

A final detail is that the "reading of the Law and the Prophets" is presented as a single event, which is followed by the invitation of Paul and Barnabas to speak a "word of exhortation to the people". Safrai has argued that the reading of the Law and the Prophets is shorthand for a liturgy that includes the recitation of prayers and that the sermon is "not really part of the synagogue service".[37] He reminds us of the importance not to interpret Paul's speech anachronistically as an integral part of the liturgy. However, to conclude that the sermon is not really part of the service makes equally anachronistic assumptions about what a service actually was. The text speaks of a "gathering" (συναγωγή), which is dissolved only after Paul has delivered his speech and has been asked to speak again on the next Sabbath (13:43).[38]

3.3. Setting First Performance: Persons

Paul's first performance in Antioch is a response to a request by the ἀρχισυνάγωγοι, the "synagogue leaders".[39] The term is an honorific title that

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[32] Siegert, *Predigten*, 1:6. Cf. also Siegert, *Einleitung*, 323–29.

[33] Safrai, "Synagogue", 932–33.

[34] For a comparison between the speeches in Acts with the available evidence for synagogue sermons, cf. Bowker, "Speeches".

[35] Marguerat, "Torah", 64–65.

[36] Cf. Wasserberg, *Mitte*.

[37] "The reading from the Prophets was therefore a sort of conclusion and the signal for the dismissal of the congregation." Safrai, "Synagogue", 932.

[38] In 13:43, the connection with λυθείσης implies that here, συναγωγή must refer to the gathering (the original meaning of the Greek) rather than the building.

[39] Rajak argues persuasively that the term is a compound of ἀρχι– and συναγωγός ("convener", a title known in the pagan cult associations as well) rather than being derived from συναγωγή, suggesting "chief convener" as translation. However, Luke's use of ἄρχων τῆς

appears on many Jewish inscriptions, and its holders functioned as benefactors and patrons.[40] Luke uses the term to refer to the representatives of the local Jewish community, resembling the "rulers" (ἄρχοντες) of Acts 14:5 and "the prominent men (πρώτους) of the Jews" mentioned in Acts 28:17. Their invitation of Paul and Barnabas to address the people characterises the synagogue rulers as positively inclined towards them. Some synagogue leaders in Luke's Gospel and in Acts believe (Jairus in Luke 8:41–49; Crispus in Acts 18:8), and the prominent Jews of Rome show a willingness to hear Paul's thoughts that resembles the attitude of the synagogue leaders in Pisidian Antioch (28:22).[41]

The invitation of these local Jewish authorities to Paul and Barnabas to address the people reflects positively on Paul's status in this episode. It is noteworthy that in the book of Acts, only Paul and Apollos are said to have been speaking in synagogues. Although there were no formal requirements for preachers, Philo states that the explanation of the text is done by "one of those most experienced (τις τῶν ἐμπειροτάτων)",[42] and elsewhere that the reading and explanation of the laws was done by "someone present of the priests or one of the elders/old men (τῶν ἱερέων δέ τις ὁ παρὼν ἢ τῶν γερόντων εἷς)".[43] Thus, the invitation of Paul to speak a word of exhortation to the people may reflect a recognition of his expertise in the Law.[44]

3.4. First Performance: Synagogue Speech

3.4.1. Standing Up

Luke presents synagogue speeches as delivered either seated (Luke 4:20) or standing, as here in Acts.[45] An important factor may have been the size of the

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συναγωγῆς as equivalent term (Luke 8:41) suggests that Luke interprets the term as "leader of the synagogue/assembly". Rajak and Noy, "Archisynagogoi", 409.

[40] Ameling, "Gemeinden", 39; Rajak and Noy, "Archisynagogoi".

[41] Other synagogue leaders are presented as less positive towards the Gospel (Luke 13:14; Acts 18:17). In Acts 14:5, the Gentiles and the Jews concur "with their leaders" to stone Paul and Barnabas.

[42] Philo, *Spec.* 2.62.

[43] Philo, *Hyp.* 7.13: "Someone present of the priests, or one of the elders/old men, reads the holy laws to them and explains them one by one until about the late afternoon." τῶν ἱερέων δέ τις ὁ παρὼν ἢ τῶν γερόντων εἷς ἀναγινώσκει τοὺς ἱεροὺς νόμους αὐτοῖς καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον ἐξηγεῖται μέχρι σχεδὸν δείλης ὀψίας. See also b. Taanith 16a (an elder, a sage, or some distinguished person); cf. Safrai, "Synagogue", 932.

[44] Apollos, likewise, could qualify for a synagogue speech, being an Alexandrian Jew, a learned man, powerful in the Scriptures (Acts 18:24).

[45] Cf. also Philo, *Spec.* 2.62, where it is said that the teacher in the synagogue stands up to teach. Lee Levine opines that "we may simply have two alternate practices with no geographical or chronological implications." Levine, *Synagogue*, 158.

community gathered in the synagogue.[46] Jesus' seated posture in the synagogue of the small village of Nazareth (Luke 4:20) conveys a sense of intimacy, whereas when Paul stands to speak in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch, it invites the reader to envisage a larger audience and a more public setting (which corresponds with the need to quiet the audience by motioning with his hands).[47] Indeed, first-century Sabbath gatherings varied from meetings in houses[48] to meetings in large halls, such as the monumental Ostia synagogue, which (in its earliest, first-century phase) had a hall of 15 by 12,5 metres, with benches along the sides for sitting and a raised platform for addressing the audience.[49] Archaeological or epigraphic evidence of a synagogue in Pisidian Antioch has not (yet) been found, but Luke's depiction invites the reader to imagine a setting similar to that in Ostia.[50]

Standing up in order to deliver a speech is mentioned in the book of Acts in 1:15; 2:14; 5:34; 11:28; 13:16 (in combination with a hand gesture); 15:7; 17:22; 21:40 and 27:21. To stand up is a natural means of "turn-taking" in an assembly with several potential speakers and functions as such when Peter takes the word among the disciples seated in the "house" in Jerusalem (Acts 1:15 and 2:14)[51] or among the apostles and elders convened in Acts 15 (Acts 15:7).[52] It should be noted, however, that it is not the customary posture for teaching in antiquity. The two basic forms of teaching (both by philosophers and rabbis) are a teacher sitting and disciples sitting around him (either in his house or in public space), or a teacher strolling with disciples.[53] Both forms can be found in relation to Jesus' teaching activity throughout the Gospels

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[46] Hezser explains the custom of both philosophers and rabbis to teach while sitting as most suitable to "relatively intimate meetings between a rabbi and a relatively small number of students, mostly conducted in private, away from the public's eye." Hezser, *Body Language*, 94.

[47] Cf. Acts 1:15, where Peter stands up to speak to a group of about 120 persons.

[48] On these, cf. Claussen, "Meeting".

[49] Cf. Runesson, "Synagogue", 52, 80. Runesson counters the later date advanced by Michael White.

[50] Levine writes about post-70 synagogues: "Sermons appear to have been delivered from a raised platform so the speaker could be seen more readily, as was the custom among pagan rhetors who spoke in a public setting." Levine, *Synagogue*, 581. Cf. also Bregman, "Darshan"; Hirshman, "Preacher"; Weiss, "Actors".

[51] On the "house" (οἶκος) mentioned in Acts 2:2, cf. Adams, *Meeting Places*, 56–57.

[52] Smith points out that "Homer already uses a formulaic description of sitting down and standing up to show a change in speaking turns", referring to *Il.* 1.68, 101; 2.76; 7.354, 365; *Od.* 2.224 (Smith, *The Rhetoric of Interruption*, 216).

[53] Both "sitting and expounding", and "walking on the way" are frequently mentioned in rabbinic literature as well. Hezser comments: "By using these settings Palestinian rabbis presented their halakhic discussions as a particularly Jewish form of intellectual interaction resembling the disputes and teaching conducted in Graeco–Roman philosophical schools." Hezser, *Body Language*, 248–49.

(though Jesus is seldom portrayed sitting in the Gospel of Luke).[54] In contrast, references to disciples teaching while "sitting" are virtually absent from the book of Acts.[55] In Acts 2:2, the disciples are said to have been "seated" (καθήμενοι), but when Peter addressed this group of circa 120 persons, he stood up (1:15).[56] A noticeable exception is Acts 16:13, where Paul sits down with the women at the riverside to speak with them on Sabbath (just as Jesus teaches sitting in the synagogue of Nazareth, Luke 4:20).[57] In the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch, however, Paul stands to give his synagogue speech, not as one who instructs his students, but as one who delivers a speech in a public assembly: in this case, a "word of exhortation to the people" (Acts 13:15, discussion below in §3.4.3 sub a).[58]

Quintilian prefers speakers in public assemblies and courts to speak standing, because a seated position inhibits a speaker in giving vehemence to his performance (*impetus actionis esse non possunt*).[59] The pose assumed by the speaker at the beginning of the speech should communicate self-confidence: "The stance should be upright, feet balanced and somewhat apart, or with the left foot very slightly in front; knees straight, but not strained; shoulders relaxed, expression stern but not sad or blank or languid; arms slightly away from the side; left hand as described above [cf. *Inst.* 11.3.142]; right hand, when the time to begin approaches, slightly advanced beyond the fold of the toga, with a modest gesture [cf. 11.3.96], as though waiting for the moment to start".[60]

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[54] Jesus is portrayed sitting (καθίζω / κάθημαι) in Matt 5:1; Matt 13:1–2 // Mark 4:1 (not in Luke 8:4; but cf. Luke 5:1–3: Jesus stands preaching the word, but then goes into a boat to teach the crowd sitting); Matt 15:29 // John 6:3 (but not in Luke 9:10–11); Matt 24:3 // Mark 13:3 (but not in Luke 21:5); Mark 9:35; 12:41; John 8:2. In the synagogue of Nazareth, Jesus stands to read Scripture, but sits down to explain it (Luke 4:20). Teaching while strolling (περιπατέω) is mentioned in Matt 4:18; Mark 11:27; John 10:23.

[55] Acts 22:3 implies that Gamaliel is envisaged as teaching seated.

[56] Cf. Balch, "Church Sitting".

[57] The reference in Acts 16:13 is too concise to be certain. That the we-group "sat down" (καθίσαντες) coheres with the reference to Paul's and Barnabas' sitting in the synagogue of Antioch (13:14). From the statement "we spoke with the women gathered there" it cannot be deduced whether or not there were also men present in/at the προσεύχη (the *minyan* rule dates from a much later period) and whether Paul delivered a speech or simply had a conversation with some women.

[58] Cf. also Philo, *Spec.* 2.61–62, which presents the synagogues as schools of virtue in which people sit to listen to a speech delivered standing by "one of the most experienced". (τις τῶν ἐμπειροτάτων).

[59] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.134. He observes that those who plead seated (as happened in minor court cases), still feel the urge to rise to their feet, sometimes doing so at the end of every sentence (Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.135). Cf. also Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 2.19.3.

[60] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.157–158 (Russell, LCL).

Thus, a standing posture coheres with a more vehement speech.[61] Paul seeks to proclaim the word of God with rhetorical power in the midst of the assembly of Jews and God-fearing Greeks.

3.4.2. Motioning with the Hand

After having stood up, Paul commands the attention of the audience by motioning with his hand. Luke explicitly mentions hand movements five times in the book of Acts: in 12:17 (Peter), 13:16 (Paul), 19:33 (Alexander), 21:40 (Paul), 26:1 (Paul). In the last instance, it is said that Paul "stretched out his hand", a well-known oratorical gesture that accompanies the beginning of a speech (ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα, Acts 26:1);[62] in all the other cases, the verb κατασείω is used with either the dative or accusative case of χείρ.

The expression κατασείω τῇ χειρί can be used for various movements of the hand,[63] but is frequently used specifically for speakers using their hand to urge their audience to be silent, so that they can begin their speech.[64] Shiell rightly distinguishes this request for silence from the gesture that accompanies the beginning of a speech. It is questionable, however, whether it is possible to identify the request for silence with a particular hand gesture, such as the one found on a ninth-century illustration of Philotis silencing the crowd prior to the prologue of Terence's play *Hecyra*.[65] A similar (though not fully identical) gesture occurs on a sixth-century BCE Attic vase. Because other gestures found in the illustrations of the manuscripts of Terence's plays correspond to gestures

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[61] Cf. also the angry rising up of parties in the Sanhedrin (Acts 23:9), which results in general στάσις, "standing up, uproar".

[62] Cf. below, §6.4.2.

[63] Philo, *Jos.* 211: Joseph's stewart waving his hands to urge Joseph's brothers to stop from running away; *Legat.* 181: Gaius waving to the embassy from a distance as a benign sign of greeting; Polybius, *Hist.* 1.78.3: Naravas waving his hand to draw attention; Josephus, *B.J.* 2.21.8 (with ellipsis of τῇ χειρί), for gestures of supplication; Heliodorus, *Aeth.* 9.7, signaling approval; Xenophon, *Cyrop.* 5.4.4, to beckon someone to come along; Josephus, *A.J.* 4.320: Moses urging the people to remain quiet while he ascends Mount Nebo ("Abaris") to depart to heaven.

[64] Josephus, *A.J.* 8.275 (Josephus' retelling of 2 Chr 13:4); Vita Aesopi Westermanniana (rec. 2) 87; Acts Andr. 10; Heliodorus, *Aeth.* 10.7. Cf. also Lucan, *Bell. Civ.* 1.298: *dextraque silentia iussit;* Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.25: *silentium manu poscens* (mentioned in Barrett, *Acts*, 1:586); the Armenian version of Ps.-Callisthenes, *Vita Alex.* 2.3 (142): Demosthenes silencing the Athenian assembly by a sign of his hand (consulted in the English translation of Wolohojian, *Romance*, 79).

[65] Shiell, *Reading Acts*, 140–45. Referring to Aldrete, *Gestures*, 54–67. For the illustration, see https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3868, page 66r.

mentioned by Quintilian, Shiell concludes that the gesture depicted for silencing the crowd can also be traced back to the first century CE.[66] However, there are some objections to this argument. First, the verb κατασείω does not refer to placing the hand in a fixed position, but to waving or moving the hand up and down.[67] Second, artistic representations cannot depict motion and, therefore, need their own iconographic conventions to represent gestures.[68] In reality, it cannot be taken for granted that speakers would always use the same gesture to calm a crowd.[69]

Concerning Acts 13:16, Shiell argues that Paul is given permission to speak and would, therefore, not need to silence the crowd. Shiell, therefore, interprets the phrase used here, κατασείσας τῇ χειρί, as referring to the same gesture as ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα in 26:1. However, it is questionable whether the modest stretching out of the hand at the beginning of a speech can be the referent of the verb κατασείω, which signifies shaking or waving, as I have argued. In light of the usage of κατασείσας τῇ χειρί elsewhere in Acts and in other ancient sources, the phrase is better interpreted as referring to a motioning of the hand that is used to silence the audience.[70] Moreover, the text does not say that Paul is given permission to speak (in contrast to Acts 26:1). Rather, it is said that the synagogue leaders sent word (ἀπέστειλαν) to Paul and Barnabas to speak a word to the people, if they had one. Paul has to take the floor himself.

The gesture signals both here and in 21:40 Paul's being in control, his authority as a figure who captures the attention of the audience with a mere gesture. This becomes clear by contrast with 19:33, where Alexander's attempt to silence the crowd by the same motioning of his hand is ignored as the crowd continues to shout for two hours.[71]

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[66] Karl Sittl was skeptical about the value of the illustrations in the manuscripts of Terence for reconstructing first century practices and regarded them as typical products of the Carolingian Renaissance. Sittl, *Gebärden*, 205. After Sittl, Jones and Morey argued that the illustrations derive from a fifth-century manuscript of a certain Calliopius (Jones and Morey, *The Miniatures of the Manuscripts of Terence Prior to the 13th Century*. I was unable to access this book). Although the illustrations of this manuscript could be copies of illustrations from Terentius' own time, most scholars think that they are not. Cf. Aldrete, *Gestures*, 55; Vince, *Theatre*, 69.

[67] Montanari et al., *Dictionary*, 1078, categorizes hand signals under the sense "to shake, wave" of the verb κατασείω. Cf. also Barrett: "the word may refer to many different kinds of movement or shaking, is often used of a (manual) signal, and is not infrequently an orator's gesture". Barrett, *Acts*, 1:586.

[68] Cf. Korte, *Body Language*, 93. Korte refers to Cupchik, "Paintings", 227–28.

[69] Notice the wide variety of gestures used by former US president Barack Obama in his attempt to silence a crowd in this video: https://youtu.be/xCJTXCWlxaQ.

[70] Cf. Zmijewski, *Apostelgeschichte*, 782.

[71] For the importance of paying attention to unsuccessful performances in narratives, cf. Quiroga Puertas, *Dynamics*, 5.

3.4.3. Speech

After standing up and motioning with his hand, Paul delivers his speech. The speech is characterised in the narrative by the synagogue leaders as "a word of exhortation to the people" (Acts 13:15) and by Paul and Barnabas as an act of εὐαγγελιζέσθαι (Acts 13:32) and of καταγγέλλειν (Acts 13:38). After a discussion of these characterizations, I will proceed to discuss rhetorical aspects of the speech as part of Paul's performance.[72]

a) Terms Used to Characterise the Speaking

A Word of Exhortation

"After the reading of the law and the prophets", that is, after the central activity of the Sabbath gathering,[73] the synagogue leaders extent the invitation to Paul and Barnabas: "If you have a λόγος παρακλήσεως to the people, speak it" (Acts 13:15). In the New Testament, the author of the epistle to the Hebrews refers to the letter as a "word of exhortation" (λόγος παρακλήσεως, Heb 13:22), and in Acts, the verb παρακαλέω is used repeatedly for the exhortation of the disciples by apostles and prophets (Acts 11:23; 14:22; 15:32; 16:40; 20:1, 2).[74] This fits Luke's more general tendency of using the same words for teaching in synagogue gatherings and in gatherings of disciples (both audiences are also addressed as "brothers").[75] Here, the exhortation that follows the reading from the Law and the Prophets suggests an exhortation to live according to the commandments of the Law (as reinforced by the Prophets) and corresponds with Philo's depiction of the synagogue as a school of virtue.[76] Indeed, Paul's speech ends with an exhortation, when he warns his audience to watch out that the words of Habakkuk 1:5 will not apply to them.

The term λόγος παρακλήσεως may signal another meaning as well. Παράκλησις can be translated as "encouragement, exhortation",[77] but also as "appeal, request" or "comfort, consolation".[78] In the Gospel of Luke, it is said of Simeon that he was expecting the "consolation of Israel", that is, the redemption of Israel by "the Lord's anointed one" (Luke 2:25–26). Since Paul is

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[72] More extensive analyses of the speech are provided in Buss, *Missionspredigt*; Morgan-Wynne, *Pisidian Antioch*.

[73] Cf. above, §3.2.3.

[74] Cf. Rom 12:7, which lists παρακλήσις as one of the gifts given to the body of Christ, after prophecy, ministry and teaching.

[75] Note especially διαλέγομαι + dative, which is used for synagogue contexts (17:2, 17; 18:19) and for Paul's speaking with the disciples in Troas (20:7).

[76] Cf. Philo, *Spec.* 2.61–62.

[77] Cf. McDonald, *Kerygma*, 39: "as 'exhortation' the word can denote both summons to decision and encouragement to persevere".

[78] Cf. BDAG, s.v. παράκλησις.

bringing them news of precisely this redemption, Luke may have intended a wordplay on the double meaning of the term παράκλησις. Paul's speech is truly a "word of παράκλησις" in a sense of which the synagogue leaders were unaware when they invited Paul and Barnabas to speak it: it is the "word of this salvation" that has been dispatched to them (13:26).

Bringing a Good Message

Within the speech, Paul characterises the activity of himself and Barnabas using two verbs in the first person plural. In verse 32, after having spoken of Jesus' resurrection and appearance to those who accompanied him from Galilee to Jerusalem and who are now his witnesses to the people, he says: "And *we* bring *you* the good message concerning the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled it for us, their[79] sons, when he raised Jesus."

The LXX illustrates both the profane background of the verb εὐαγγελίζομαι in the activities of messengers who bring good news[80] and its application to prophets and psalmists who bring good news on behalf of God.[81] In the Gospel of Luke, Gabriel was sent to bring the good message of the birth of John and Jesus (Luke 1:19; 2:10). Jesus was sent to bring a good message to the poor, its contents being the imminent kingdom of God (e.g., Luke 4:18, cf. Isa 61:1; Luke 16:16, cf. Isa 52:7). In Acts, the apostles bring the good message that Jesus is the Anointed One, a message that is based on their eyewitness testimony of his resurrection, which confirms the fulfillment of Scriptural promises in Jesus (Acts 5:42). The good message can be circumscribed as the "word of God", which identifies the sender of the message (Acts 8:4). In Acts, the content of this message is not only the "kingdom of God", but also "the Name of Jesus" (Acts 8:12). It is a good message of peace (cf. Nah 2:1) through Jesus the Anointed One, sent to the sons of Israel (Acts 10:36). However, it is not a message solely for the sons of Israel, because Jesus is Lord of all (Acts 10:36; 11:20); therefore, Peter brings the message to Cornelius, and the disciples in Antioch bring it to the Greeks.

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[79] A possessive pronoun is appropriate in the English translation regardless of whether αὐτῶν is original or not (the ECM prints only ἡμῖν, but this reading is not supported in any of the available manuscripts; the Tyndale Greek New Testament prints αὐτῶν ἡμῖν, which has little support among the majuscules). Many early witnesses read "to our sons" (τοῖς τέκνοις ἡμῶν, P^{74}, 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 1409), which fits less well in the context but could precisely for that reason deserve preference as *lectio difficilior*. Barrett suggests that the single ἡμῖν is what Luke intended to write, but misspelled as ἡμῶν, which was then changed to αὐτῶν ἡμῖν. Barrett, *Acts*, 2:645.

[80] 1 Sam 31:9 // 1 Chr 10:9; 2 Sam 1:20; 4:10; 18:19–20, 26, 31; 1 Kgs 1:42; Jer 20:15. Cf. also LSJ, s.v. εὐαγγελίζομαι.

[81] Ps 39:9; 67:12; 95:2; Isa 40:9; 52:7; 60:6; 61:1; Joel 3:5; Nah 2:1; cf. also Pss. Sol. 11:1.

Thus, in the narrative of Luke and Acts, Paul and Barnabas stand in a long and notable tradition when they present themselves to the (Jewish and Greek) attenders of the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch as messengers of good news. Also in Acts 14:15, 16:10 and 17:18, this verb is used to describe Paul's activity.

The pronounced Καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμᾶς relates the task of Paul and Barnabas to that of the apostles in Jerusalem: the apostles are now "Jesus' witnesses to the people" [in Jerusalem] (Acts 13:31),[82] whereas Paul and Barnabas are bringing the good news to their audience in the synagogue, Jews and God-fearers living among the nations.[83]

Announcing

Another verb that relates to the activity of messengers is καταγγέλλω, which Paul uses in the passive in 13:38. Elsewhere in Acts, Paul uses this verb in first person active,[84] and when Paul says here, "Let it therefore be known to you, brothers, that remission of sins through (διά) him is (being) announced (καταγγέλλεται, present tense) to you", it is implied that Paul is the one who announces the remission to his audience. The announcement of remission is "through him" in the sense that Jesus enables the remission, not in the sense that Jesus is the one who announces it, as Paul continues to explain: "From all the things from which you could not be justified through the law of Moses, everyone who believes in him will be justified" (Acts 13:38).[85]

Conclusion

The verbs used to characterise the speech act present the speech as a message. Paul is asked to speak a "word of exhortation to the people", and in his speech he describes his message as a "good message", an "announcement of remission". Thus, Paul is presented as a messenger who delivers this message on behalf of God.

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[82] Note Acts 8:1: only the apostles stayed in Jerusalem. On the significance of this, cf. Fuller, *Restoration*, 267–69.

[83] Thus, a contrast is implied between the apostles and Paul and Barnabas, but Barrett rightly expresses caution about emphasizing this contrast too much. Barrett, *Acts*, 2:644.

[84] Cf. above, §2.2, and below, §5.4.1.

[85] The combination of δικαιόω with ἀπό is odd and may be a distinctly Pauline expression (cf. Rom 6:7), created by analogy with "to free from sin" (ἐλευθερόω ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας, Rom 6:18, 22) or "to save from their sins" (σῳζω ἀπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, Matt 1:21). Moreover, the preposition ἀπό may have been inspired by the preceding ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν, although ἄφεσις normally governs a genitive because the preposition ἀπό is already part of the compound noun.

b) Rhetorical Aspects

Paul unfolds his message in a speech that is structured according to the conventions of Greco-Roman rhetoric, building up towards a climax in the concluding part of his speech, which makes for an effective and powerful performance.

However, instead of the conventional exordium, the speech opens by a simple cal to "hear" (ἀκούσατε), addressed to the "Israelite men and those [non–Israelites] who fear God". The call to "hear" carries prophetic overtones. It is not how Greek orators typically address their audiences, but it is a regular feature of the beginnings of speeches in the Septuagint, both in the historiographical books and in the prophets.[86] In a slightly different form, it is how Moses addressed the assembly of Israel on behalf of God in the *shema*: "Hear, Israel, our God is Lord, (only) one is Lord" (Deut 6:4, Ἄκουε, Ισραηλ· κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστιν·), a text that was part of the daily morning prayer in the temple (m.Tamid 5.1) and may have been recited in communal prayer in synagogues.[87] While virtually absent in the entire corpus of Josephus (which contains many speeches),[88] the imperative "hear" occurs in five speeches in Acts: Acts 2:22; 7:2; 13:16; 15:13; 22:1. Thus, it can be counted as part of Luke's imitation of the style of the Septuagint,[89] portraying Paul as addressing his audience just like Moses and the prophets.

Following this address is a speech that can be divided in three sections, marked by the repetition of the vocative (vs. 26, ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί etc.; vs. 38, ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί).[90] These sections correspond roughly to the *narratio, argumentatio* and *peroratio* of a speech in conformity with Greco-Roman rhetorical conventions.[91] The omission of an *exordium* expresses self-confidence: Paul

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[86] As can be verified by a word search on ἀκούσατε in the LXX (performed in BibleWorks).

[87] Cf. the discussion in Levine, *Synagogue*, 162–69.

[88] A search on ἀκούσατε in the works of Josephus, which retell the entire biblical history and record many speeches, yields only one hit (Josephus, *A.J.* 6.88).

[89] Cf. Alexander, "Septuaginta".

[90] Buss divides the speech in five sections: verses 16–23; 24–26; 27–31; 32–37; 38–41, based not only on the address, but also on the distribution of words (*Wortverteilung*) (Buss, *Missionspredigt*, 26–31). However, the more straightforward criterium of the address as structural marker, which yields a structure corresponding to the conventions of ancient rhetoric, should be taken as primary, without excluding the possibility of further subdivision of the three sections. An extensive overview of proposals for the structure of the speech is provided by Morgan-Wynne, *Pisidian Antioch*, 62–68, who opts for the tripartite division based on the repetition of the address. Marguerat divides the speech in three (recognizing the correspondence with *narratio, argumentatio/probatio* and *peroratio*), but subdivides the second part on thematic grounds. Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:39.

[91] Likewise Pichler, *Paulusrezeption*, 124–32. "In Apg 13,16 entfällt das exordium" (p. 124–125). Van Eck sees only in the *peroratio* of the speech a certain correspondence to the

does not bother to secure the goodwill of his audience, but after one authoritative "Hear!" immediately proceeds to the facts.[92]

Narratio

After the address, the first section narrates what God has done in the history of Israel. The subject of a long chain of aorists is "the God of *this* people Israel", a way of speaking that appears to imply that Paul speaks to non-Israelites about the God of Israel. This God "elected our fathers", "exalted the people", "led them out", "nourished them", "allotted their land", and "gave them judges until the prophet Samuel". Verse 21 contains a sudden subject change: "But they desired a king". Paul proceeds again: "And God gave them Saul", "having replaced him, he raised David for them as king, about whom he testified: "I have found David, son of Jesse, a man to my heart, who will do all my desires."

Then, Paul introduces Jesus. "From his seed, according to the promise, God raised for Israel a Saviour: Jesus." The reference to Israel forms an inclusion with verse 17. Thus, the first section of the speech (17–25) is a narrative chain of beneficial acts of God to Israel, and the raising of Jesus as the promised Davidic saviour is placed as the climactic act in this chain. Verses 24–25 conclude the section by recalling the testimony of John, the herald of Jesus' entrance, who announced a baptism of repentance for all the people of Israel to prepare them for the arrival of their Saviour. By telling the story of God's acts for Israel, Paul situates Jesus squarely within the history of Israel, as the Saviour promised by the ancient prophets.

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classical model (van Eck, *Handelingen*, 284), and objects against attempts to apply the rhetorical handbooks to the structure of the speeches in Acts on the grounds that the speeches are summaries of sermons and not full speeches delivered before a court (van Eck, 163–64). However, the instructions of teachers such as Quintilian do not constitute rigid schemes; they allow for flexibility. The tripartite division of the speech is clear from the repetition of the address, and the first part is clearly more narrative than the second, which is more argumentative. Hence, it is possible, in my view, to discern a *narratio*, an *argumentatio* and a *peroratio* in this speech, if one takes into account a certain flexibility in the use of these schemes in the creation of speeches for different contexts (i.e., for the Jewish assembly rather than the Roman court).

[92] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.72 notes that the exordium can sometimes be omitted, when introducing the case is superfluous. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1415b22–23 is even more outspoken, noting that *prooemia*, designed to capture the goodwill of the audience, may be perceived as a way of avoiding the facts: "Introductions are popular with those whose case is weak, or looks weak; it pays them to dwell on anything rather than the actual facts of it" (LCL, Roberts).

As befits a *narratio*, its function is both to instruct and to persuade, and its presentation is straightforward, without immoderate use of rhetorical embellishment.[93]

Argumentatio

The second section focuses on the role of Paul and Barnabas. The central claim is made at the beginning: "To us the message (λόγος) of this salvation has been dispatched" (verse 26). "This salvation (τῆς σωτηρίας ταύτης)" refers back to the σωτῆρα Ἰησοῦν mentioned in verse 23. The saviour has arrived, and Paul and Barnabas have been entrusted to spread the news. The subsequent narrative, introduced by γάρ, provides a further explanation of what happened between the arrival of Jesus and the activity of Paul and Barnabas in Antioch. Verse 27–29 speaks about what the inhabitants of Jerusalem and their leaders did, verse 30 creates a contrast by speaking of what God did, which explains why Paul and Barnabas can now be doing what they do (verse 32). The inhabitants of Jerusalem and their leaders fulfilled the prophets by their judgment on Jesus, having not recognised him (ἀγνοήσαντες, cf. Acts 3:17; 17:23, 30).[94] They demanded from Pilate that their saviour be killed, just as their fathers demanded a king instead of Samuel (the recurrence of ᾐτήσαντο creates a link between verses 21 and 28, suggesting a narrative correlation between Samuel and Jesus, and between Saul and Pilate). Verse 29 emphasises once more that their actions fulfilled the Scriptures, when they took Jesus from the "pole"[95] and placed him in a tomb.

As in the first section, God's benevolent acts are contrasted with the evil acts of the inhabitants of Jerusalem: God raised Jesus from the dead. The following relative clause provides proof of this: he appeared to those who had accompanied him from Galilee to Jerusalem and who are now his witnesses to

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[93] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2 summarizes and takes a position in various discussions about the nature and function of the *narratio*. Although his account has forensic speeches especially in view, most of it also applies to other types of speeches.

[94] The sentence is compact, but carefully crafted and rhetorically effective. Grammatically, ἐπλήρωσαν is preceded by two participles: ἀγνοήσαντες, with the object τοῦτον, and κρίναντες, with the object τὰς φωνὰς τῶν προφητῶν [κτλ.]. The voices of the prophets also function as an object of the main verb ἐπλήρωσαν. Syntactically, this renders the translation "having not recognized him, and having judged the voices of the prophets which are read each Sabbath, they fulfilled them." Luke suggests that in judging Jesus, they were in fact judging the voices of the prophets, which they also fulfilled because the prophets had predicted the suffering that they inflicted on God's anointed one by judging him. Moreover, τὰς φωνὰς τῶν προφητῶν can also be interpreted as second object of ἀγνοήσαντες: they were ignorant of the voices of the prophets, *even though* they were read each Sabbath! The whole sentence closely parallels Acts 3:17–18, where Peter addresses the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

[95] Ξύλον, cf. Acts 5:30; 10:39; Gal 3:13, a subtle reference to Deut 21:20.

the people. Having told this, Paul can reiterate what he said in prolepsis in verse 26, that "we are bringing you the good message concerning the promise made to the fathers, that God has fulfilled it to us, their sons" (Acts 13:32–33).

In this second section, Paul emphasises the fulfillment of the Scriptures. In verses 28–29, he merely states that what the inhabitants of Jerusalem did to Jesus fulfilled what was written about him, but verses 33–37 proceed to demonstrate this by actual quotations from the Psalms and from Isaiah, interpreting Psalm 16 along the same lines as Peter did in his speech on Pentecost.[96]

Thus, in the second section, the author skillfully interweaves narrative and argumentation, continuing the story where the first section ended (except for the prolepsis in verse 26) and also providing an argument on the basis of Scripture that Jesus was indeed the promised Saviour – an argument that is reinforced by the recurrence of patterns in the narrative.

Peroratio

The concluding section (verses 38–41) applies the preceding narrative in a direct appeal to the audience. Here, Paul refers both to the Law of Moses and to the Prophets, a reference that is particularly fitting in the context of the synagogue, where the Law and the Prophets have just been read (13:15). As for the Law, Paul announces that there is remission of sins through Jesus. These sins are specified as "all the things from which you could not be justified under the Law of Moses". In Acts 15:10–11, Peter elaborates on this: neither "our fathers" nor "we" (the Jewish apostles and elders present in the assembly) had been able to bear the yoke of the Law;[97] they are saved, just like the Gentiles, by the favour of the Lord Jesus. Through Jesus, there is "remission of sins" (ἄφεσις ἁμαρτιῶν): God does not take previous sins into account for everyone who believes in Jesus.[98] Thus, in an assembly where the Law of Moses is read, Paul brings a message of salvation that addresses the failure of the people of Israel to live according to the Law.[99]

Second, Paul exhorts them to watch out lest "what is said in the prophets will happen". Earlier in the speech, in Acts 13:27, Paul had pointedly coordinated three elements: the reading of the prophets at each Sabbath, the failure of the inhabitants of Jerusalem to understand how the prophets spoke of Jesus as the Saviour, and the fulfillment of the prophets through their condemnation

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[96] Cf. Acts 2:27–29. On the quotations, cf. Steyn, *Septuagint*, 168–84.

[97] This should not be taken in an absolute sense: Luke's Gospel opens with two individuals who were "righteous, walking in the commandments and regulations of the Lord, blamelessly" (Luke 1:6). However, as a collective, the people of Israel, of which Peter knows himself to be a part, had not been able to keep the Law.

[98] Cf. Acts 17:30: "God, passing by the times of ignorance, […]."

[99] In line with the so-called Deuteronomistic conception of Israel's history as a history of disobedience to God. Cf. Moessner, "Christ", 225–27.

of Jesus. In the synagogue of Antioch, the prophets have likewise just been read (13:15), and as his speech reaches its climax, Paul quotes a verse from Habakkuk through which he addresses his audience in the name of God himself: "I am working a work in your days, a work that you will certainly not (οὐ μή) believe if someone tells you about it." Clearly, the "someone" (τις) of whom the prophet speaks is Paul, who tells his audience about the work that God has done, probably having the change of mind of the Gentiles primarily in view (cf. 13:2; 14:26; 15:12).[100] The prophet warned that "you will certainly not believe it". Quoted by Paul, this is not a deterministic prediction, but an urgent warning to the audience. For the reader of Acts, this creates narrative suspense: will the audience, unlike the inhabitants of Jerusalem, succeed to escape the fulfillment of this prophecy?[101]

According to Quintilian, the *peroratio* is the place where emotional appeals and dramatic gestures are most apt. He writes:

> But here, if anywhere, we are allowed to release the whole flood of our eloquence. If we have spoken the rest well, we shall by now be in possession of the hearts of the judges; having escaped the reefs and shoals, we can spread our sails; and, as the main business of an epilogue is amplification, we can use grand and ornate words and thoughts. The moment to move the audience is when we come to the phrase with which the old tragedies and comedies end: "Now give us your applause".[102]

Although Paul does not call for applause at the end of his speech, the appeal to lend credence to his words at the end of the speech is made with appropriate grandeur and intensity. The quotation from Habakkuk, though introduced as a quotation, is spoken directly to the audience and, thus, functions as a προσωποποιΐα of God himself. Paul uses the persona of God who speaks in the present tense to his audience: "I am working a work in your days, a work which you will certainly not believe if someone reports it to you." The ὑμῖν at the end of the speech is an addition to the text of the Septuagint and reinforces

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[100] On the "work"-motif, cf. Wall, "Function", 251. That the "work" refers to the conversion of Gentiles, and not to the destruction of Jerusalem or the resurrection of Christ, is argued convincingly by Dekker, "Licht", 64–66. Differently Grosheide, in a Dutch commentary on the book of Acts first published in 1942 (!): "het groote werk Gods is de verwerping van het oude bondsvolk, dat den Christus niet aanvaardt [the great work of God is the rejection of the old covenantal people, that does not accept the Christ]." Grosheide, *Handelingen*, 1:439.

[101] Cf. Wall, "Function". Wall points out that the citation of Habakkuk 1:5 in Acts 13:41 is echoed in Acts 15:3.

[102] Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.1.51–52, (Russell, LCL, slightly modified). *At hic, si usquam, totos eloquentiae aperire fontes licet. Nam et, si bene diximus reliqua, possidebimus iam iudicum animos, et e confragosis atque asperis evecti tota pandere possumus vela, et, cum sit maxima pars epilogi amplificatio, verbis atque sententiis uti licet magnificis et ornatis. Tunc est commovendum theatrum cum ventum est ad ipsum illud quo veteres tragoediae comoediaeque cluduntur 'plodite'.*

the direct application of the prophetic text to the present audience. Quintilian recommends the use of προσωποποιΐα in the *peroratio*, because the judge will not hear the lawyer speak, but the victim himself.[103] Paul follows a similar strategy as his mediating role as messenger fades away and the speech is transformed into a direct address by God.

3.5. Audience Response First Performance

After the speech, Luke writes: "And while they left, they entreated that on the next Sabbath, there would be spoken to them these words. And after the gathering was dissolved, many of the Jews and the worshipping proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they talked to them, urged them to abide in the mercy of God" (Acts 13:42–43).

In verse 42, αὐτων must refer to Paul and Barnabas, who have finished their speech and leave. The subject of παρεκάλουν is to be interpreted either as an impersonal plural or as the synagogue leaders who were subject of verse 15. As the ones who invited Paul and Barnabas for the speech on the first Sabbath, the synagogue leaders would be a fitting subject of the invitation for speaking on the second Sabbath. To the extent that the synagogue leaders act as representatives of the community, the difference with an impersonal plural is not very large.

The Majority text reads this verse significantly differently: "While they left the synagogue of the Jews, the Gentiles entreated […]." The most plausible explanation for this longer reading is that it added the missing subject of παρεκάλουν and projected the contrastive reactions of Jews and Gentiles in verses 45–48 onto the audience response to the first speech. This changes the meaning of the text significantly and obscures the initial positive response of the synagogue community to Paul's speech. The unanimous reading of all early witnesses should be preferred here.[104]

As in the case of Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:7), the audience is not presented as eager to hear *Paul* again, but to hear "these words" (Acts 13:42). In this case, Luke even uses a somewhat awkward syntactical construction to direct attention away from Paul and Barnabas to the words spoken by them, anticipating the gathering of almost the entire city "to hear the word of the Lord" in verse 44.

The positive reception of Paul's speech is confirmed by the large numbers of Jews and "worshipping/reverent proselytes" (σεβομένων προσηλύτων)[105]

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[103] Quintilian, *Inst.* 6.1.25–27.

[104] The earliest attestation of the reading of the Majority text is codex L, dated to the eighth century.

[105] On the meaning of the middle voice of σέβω, cf. BDAG s.v. σέβω.

who "follow" (ἠκολούθησαν) Paul and Barnabas. The verb ἀκολουθέω belongs to a range of verbs that can indicate discipleship (including κολλάω, cf. below, §5.6.4).[106] The context makes clear that they accompany Paul and Barnabas as followers, which contrasts sharply with the second instance in Acts where this verb is used in relation to Paul, in Acts 21:36, where the people come after him shouting, "Away with him!"

The narrative about the first Sabbath in Pisidian Antioch concludes with a reference to Paul's and Barnabas' speaking to their followers (προσλαλοῦντες αὐτοῖς ἔπειθον). The use of the imperfect marks this as a "background activity" rather than a "foreground performance" (cf. the distinction made in §1.2.5 above). They persuade them to "abide in the grace of God", a typical exhortation for disciples to remain faithful (cf. Acts 11:23; Wis 3:9).[107]

The positive reception of Paul's first performance in Antioch reflects an important element of Luke's narrative: in the macrostructure of Acts, large numbers of Jewish believers (Acts 1–5) also precede the proclamation of salvation among the Gentiles. Thus, Luke shows that Jesus announced a light both for the people of Israel and for the Gentiles (Acts 26:23; cf. Luke 2:32) and counters the charge that Jesus failed to persuade even his own people.[108]

3.6. Setting Second Performance: Persons

For the second Sabbath, a different cast of characters is introduced as a setting for Paul's performance. Now, two groups are distinguished. First, "almost the entire city gathered to hear the word of the Lord." Then, "the Jews, seeing the crowds, were filled with ζῆλος and spoke against what was spoken by Paul, slandering." The contrast implies that ἡ πόλις has primarily the non-Jewish inhabitants of the city in view, which is confirmed in verse 49, which narrates the response of τὰ ἔθνη.

The city is characterised by its desire to "hear the word of the Lord", which parallels the desire of Sergius Paulus to "hear the word of God" (13:7). Whereas Sergius Paulus' significance lies in his social status, the emphasis in 13:44–45 is on the quantity of those drawn to the word: "almost the entire city", "crowds" (ὄχλοι).

The Jews, on the other hand, "speak against the things spoken by Paul" (13:45), which shows that both groups are characterised by their attitude to the

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[106] Cf. Louw-Nida, s.v. ἀκολουθέω (§203), who distinguish three meanings: "go/come behind"; "accompany as follower"; "be a disciple".

[107] Cf. Koet, "Antioch", 98.

[108] A charge explicitly attested for Celsus in Origenes, *Cels.* 1.29; 2.74. Cf. Alexander, "Apologetic Agenda".

word of the Lord. The Jews are not so much opponents of Paul, as of the message he brings.[109] Luke presents them as motivated by ζῆλος, which results from seeing the crowds. Exegetes disagree about how to interpret this ζῆλος. In Greek, the word ζῆλος has a semantic range that includes "eager rivalry", "emulation", "passion", "fervour", "indignation", and "pride", and can in some contexts mean "jealousy, envy", thus bordering on the meaning of φθόνος.[110] In Acts 7:9, the meaning is close to that of φθόνος when Stephen speaks about the patriarchs who sold Joseph after being filled with ζῆλος.[111] Like its Latin counterpart *aemulatio,* it denotes primarily the "mental effort"[112] which can be directed at good things (virtue, learning, the law, God's honour, a particular teacher)[113] or at bad things, a distinction pointed out by Josephus when he states that the Zealots use their name because they claim to be zealous for the good, whereas they really only show zeal for evil.[114] Zeal for the good may result in violence, as in the case of Mattathias, who killed a Jew who abandoned his ancestral cult out of zeal for the law (1 Macc 2:24–26, referring to the example of Phineas, Num 25:7–11, who killed an Israelite and his Midianite wife in zeal for God and thus stopped God from killing the people in his zeal).[115]

Concerning Acts 13:45, the question is whether the Jews spoke against Paul because they were driven by jealousy (i.e., by zeal for his popularity) or by zeal for God. This question needs to be addressed both by tracing the motif of zeal throughout Acts and by investigating the immediate context here.

In Acts 5:17, the high priest and his Sadducean companions were filled with ζῆλος after "the multitude of the surrounding cities of Jerusalem gathered the sick and those possessed by unclean spirits, who were all healed." Filled with

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[109] Koet suggests that the Jews object when they see the crowds, because their presence shows the consequence of Paul's appraisal of the Law in Acts 13:38–41. Koet, "Antioch", 100.

[110] Cf. LSJ, s.v. ζήλος I. An instructive example that relates ζήλος to φθόνος is 1 Clem. 4.13: διὰ ζῆλος Δαυὶδ φθόνον ἔσχεν οὐ μόνον ὑπὸ τῶν ἀλλοφύλων, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὑπὸ Σαοὺλ βασιλέως Ἰσραὴλ ἐδιώχθη. "because of zeal, not only did David incur jealousy by his brothers, but also was he persecuted by Saul the king of Israel."

[111] Cf. Gen 37:11, ἐζήλωσαν δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ. Cf. also 1 Clem. 4.9: ζῆλος ἐποίησεν Ἰωσὴφ μέχρι θανάτου διωχθῆναι καὶ μέχρι δουλείας εἰσελθεῖν. In Stephen's speech, this is part of the larger motif of Israel's resistance of the Spirit and persecution of the prophets, both in the days of the fathers and at the present time (cf. Acts 7:51–52).

[112] Lewis & Short, s.v. *aemulatio.* Cf. Prov 27:4: "wrath is merciless and anger is fierce, but zeal yields to nothing."

[113] Cf. Mason's commentary on Josephus, *Vita* 11 in Mason, *Life*, 19.

[114] Josephus, *B.J.* 7.268–270. They may have chosen the name in imitation of the Maccabees, who rallied the people to revolt by appealing to their zeal for the law (1 Macc 2:27). Hengel and Deines, *Zeloten*, 63–76; 174–75.

[115] Philo, *Spec.* 2:253 also speaks positively about the punishment of those who blaspheme God, exacted by autorities full of zeal for the laws.

zeal, they took the apostles captive. Later in the narrative, when the high priest addresses them in the Sanhedrin, he accuses them of having filled Jerusalem with their teaching in the name of Jesus, which they had forbidden (Acts 5:28, cf. 4:13–21). Thus, the high priest is not presented as jealous of the popularity of the apostles, but filled with zeal because he sees how their teaching, which he considers to be dangerous, attracts so many people. The zeal of the high priest, which ultimately results in the intention to kill the apostles (Acts 5:33) contrasts with the proposal of Gamaliel to let them go in order to see whether their teaching is from God or not, lest they be found to be God-fighters (5:35–39). Gamaliel's proposal keeps them from killing the apostles, but the speech of Stephen rekindles their zeal.[116] The word ζῆλος is not used, but their visceral expression of anger in Acts 7:54 and 57 reflects the same emotion as the ζῆλος in Acts 5:17. It is zeal aimed at his teaching, which is perceived as directed against the temple and the law of Moses, against the customs that Moses handed over to them (Acts 6:13–14). Their zeal is kindled because he attracts many hearers through his miracles and signs, and a number of diaspora Jews who engage in discussion with him cannot refute his teaching (Acts 6:8–10).

The young man Saul shares the zeal of the high priest and his companions. It is worth noting that he is not introduced in the narrative of Acts as a student of Gamaliel, who counselled against the persecution of the disciples (Acts 5:35–39), but as someone who is pleased with the murder of Stephen (Acts 8:1) and was authorised by the high priest to persecute the disciples of the Lord (Acts 8:3; 9:1–2, 14).

The zeal of Jews, which Saul/Paul encounters after his vision of Jesus and which results in attempts to kill him, echoes his own zeal as he had sought to persecute the disciples. Paul reflects on this zeal in his defence speeches, where he explicitly labels it as zeal for God (Acts 22:3), which led him to "persecute this way unto death" (22:4). His audience shows the same zeal ("as you all are today", 22:3) in seeking Paul's death because he teaches against the nation, the law, and the temple and has profaned the temple by bringing Greeks into it.

Thus, it is zeal for God that leads Jews to persecute disciples of Jesus even to the point of death. In their view, the teaching of Jesus threatens the Jewish nation, law and temple. They are provoked to anger especially when this teaching attracts many followers, as it does in Pisidian Antioch. Not all Jews have this zeal: Gamaliel is depicted as a wise, esteemed man who advises caution based on an awareness of the limits of human knowledge concerning what is "from humans" (ἐξ ἀνθρώπων) and what is "from God" (ἐκ θεοῦ); a view that would appeal to an educated Greco-Roman audience as well and corresponds to the attitude that Agrippa demonstrates towards Paul and his teaching

[116] On the relevance of Gamaliel's counsel to the apologetic strategy of Acts, cf. Tomson, "Counsel".

(cf. chapter 6 below). However, there is a development in the situation in Jerusalem, where the zeal is limited to the high priest and his companions at first, but in Paul's day has become characteristic of the people at large, including thousands who believe [in Jesus] (Acts 21:3) and show concern about Paul's teaching because they are "zealots for the law".

This zeal is directed towards good causes, but is not evaluated as an unambiguously positive characteristic: it blinds them to what God is doing among the Gentiles. Luke creates a rhetorical division between those Jews who are zealous for the law and oppose the disciples, even to the point of seeking their death, and those who are willing to allow the disciples to expound their views, even if they disagree with them. Moreover, it explains the opposition of Jews to the Gospel as caused by a particular emotion (zeal for God and the law) for which Jews were both hated and admired among their Greek and Roman contemporaries.[117] Ancient historians tend to give weight to psychological causes of events (including ζῆλος) much more than modern historians do,[118] and this is also how the reference to the zeal of the Jews functions in this episode.

From the narrative of Acts, it can be concluded that violence against the disciples, motivated by zeal for God and the law, is associated strongly with the priestly elite in Jerusalem, where it increased over time. It is not limited to Jerusalem: the Nazarene school of thought is "everywhere spoken against" (Acts 28:22), and indeed, Paul encounters zealous Jews throughout Asia Minor, Macedonia and Greece, even if the term ζῆλος is not always used.[119] However, the situation in Rome appears to be slightly different. There, Jews are willing to discuss Paul's thoughts. That they leave in disagreement suggests an

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[117] Cf. Cicero, *Flac.* 67, where Cicero refers to a "multitude of Jews burning [with anger]" (*multitudinem Iudaeorum flagrantem*) after Flaccus prohibited them from sending gold from Asia to the temple in Jerusalem. More generally, the strict Jewish observance of their customs was regarded as proof of their δεισιδαιμονία, (excessive) fear of the divine (e.g., Diogenes of Oenoanda, frg. 126), or in more positive terms, as proof of how they "powerfully worship only one God" (ἕνα δέ τινα ἰσχυρῶς σέβουσιν, Cassius Dio, *Hist. Rom.* 37.17.2). The references are taken from the selection of van der Horst, *Tussen haat en bewondering*. For more extensive references, cf. Stern, *Authors*. From the Jewish side, Philo expresses pride in the eagerness of the Jews to preserve their own customs, more than any other nation, and also assumes that the Roman governor Petronius knew how zealous the Jews would be when their laws would be violated and the temple profaned (Philo, *Legat.* 209–212, using the term σπουδή) and that he opposed the decision of Gaius to erect a statue in the temple for this reason.

[118] Polybius defines as "causes" "the events which guide our purposes and decisions, that is, thoughts, dispositions and the reasonings about these things, by which we are led to decide and execute something." Polybius, 3.6.7 (Translation: Marincola, *Writing History*, 64). An instructive example of ζήλος motivating "speaking against" (ἀντιλέγω) is provided by Appian, *Roman History* 8.15.102 (= Lybica, 480).

[119] It is used in Acts 17:5 with regard to the Jews in Thessalonica.

open ending – there is no closure of the relationship.[120] This has important implications for the interpretation of the apologetic agenda of Acts, which will be discussed more extensively in the conclusion of this study. Concerning the episode in Pisidian Antioch, the considerations just given suggest that Paul's performance on the second Sabbath is depicted as a response to Jewish zeal, rather than to Jewish jealousy.

"Slandering" (βλασφημέω) is a typical term for starting an honour contest in order to bring someone into disrepute (cf. Acts 18:6; 19:37; 26:11).[121] According to Bart Koet, the Jews are depicted as not law-abiding, because they blaspheme.[122] The participle βλασφημοῦντες describes the manner in which they speak against the words spoken by Paul. Thus, these words are to be supplied as the object of βλασφημοῦντες: they speak against his message by speaking ill of it, just as Bar-Jesus withstood Barnabas and Saul by distorting the straight ways of the Lord (Acts 13:8, 10). It depicts these Jews not only as not law-abiding, but also as enemies of God's word and of the Spirit that fills Barnabas and Paul as they speak (cf. Luke 12:10).

3.7. Second Performance: Response to Slander

The performance on the second Sabbath responds to the "speaking against" and "slandering" of the Jews, and thus parallels Paul's response to Bar-Jesus, who "opposed Paul" and sought to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith. For this performance, Luke consistently uses the plural (except for the quotation of Isa 49:6) to present Paul and Barnabas as acting in concert, enlisting the approval of Barnabas (as the senior disciple) to Paul's turn to the Gentiles.

3.7.1. Words Used to Characterise the Speaking

a) Speaking Frankly

This verb characterises Paul's performance from the moment that he saw Jesus on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:27–28).[123] It denotes courageous speech, frankness without fear of (possible) opposition, as the prayer of Acts 4:29 makes clear.[124] The verb is rare in the Septuagint, but occurs in Greek literature

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[120] Cf. Koet, "Paul in Rome"; van de Sandt, "Salvation"; Alexander, "Reading"; Wolter, "Doppelwerk".

[121] It is listed among the "vocabulary of honor" in DeSilva, *Honor*, 27–28.

[122] Koet, "Close", 178–80.

[123] Cf. further Acts 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31. Παρρησιάζεσθαι is synonymous with μετὰ παρρησία λαλεῖν. Cf. van Unnik, "Freedom"; Winter, "Παρρησία"; Hess, *Rhetor*, 161–68.

[124] Outside Acts, cf. Eph 6:20; 1 Thess 2:2.

to denote the courage to be honest with someone in discussion and was claimed by Athenians as their privilege.[125] The opposite of this is αἰσχύνεσθαι (cf. Plato, *Gorgias* 487D; Prov 13:5), refraining from speaking out of shame or bashfulness. In response to "slandering" (Acts 13:45), Paul does not back off, but unashamedly tells the truth to his opponents. Socrates lists frankness among three qualities that demonstrate the right life in a soul.[126] Along similar lines, Plutarch makes a digression about frankness in his essay on *How to tell a flatterer from a friend*: a true friend is willing to tell the truth without sparing the other's faults.[127] He distinguishes this frankness from rudeness: "Frankness has plenty of room for tact and urbanity, if such graciousness does not impair the high office of frankness; but when effrontery and offensiveness and arrogance are coupled with it, they spoil and ruin it completely."[128] In his biography of Demosthenes, Plutarch praises this famous orator for "especially reasoning with the people with frankness (μετὰ παρρησίας μάλιστα τῷ δήμῳ διαλεγόμενος) and standing firm against the desires of the many and attacking their faults (τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασιν αὐτῶν)."[129]

From a Greek perspective, therefore, Paul's frankness in pointing the Jews to the consequence of laying aside the word of God is laudable and puts him in the company with great orators of the past, who did not hesitate to speak the unpleasant truth in the public assembly, and with philosophers of the past such as Socrates.[130]

Because παρρησιάζομαι is an activity that is at home both in the public assembly and in scholastic contexts, it is not surprising that it occurs frequently in synagogue contexts in Acts, since synagogues are, in a way, both a public assembly and a school.[131]

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[125] Cf. LSJ s.v. παρρησία.

[126] Plato, *Gorgias* 487A.

[127] Plutarch, *Adul. amic* 6 (51C).

[128] Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* 27 (67F) (Babbitt, LCL). ἡ παρρησία δέχεται τὸ ἐπιδέξιον καὶ τὸ ἀστεῖον, ἂν ἡ χάρις τὴν σεμνότητα σῴζῃ, θρασύτης δὲ καὶ βδελυρία καὶ ὕβρις προσοῦσα πάνυ διαφθείρει καὶ ἀπόλλυσιν.

[129] Plutarch, *Dem.* 14.3: φαίνεται δὲ καὶ μετὰ παρρησίας μάλιστα τῷ δήμῳ διαλεγόμενος καὶ πρὸς τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τῶν πολλῶν ἀντιτείνων καὶ τοῖς ἁμαρτήμασιν αὐτῶν ἐπιφυόμενος,. ἐκ τῶν λόγων λαβεῖν ἔστιν.

[130] On παρρησία as part of the *ethos* of ancient philosophers and of Paul, cf. Divjanovic, *Philosoph*, 297–99. Divjanovic shows that παρρησία, as the courage to tell the truth to friends, is an important concept in teacher-student relations across the philosophical schools.

[131] The synagogue and Scriptural exegesis as context of παρρησιάζομαι are emphasized by Koet, "Antioch", 106.

Also in the Septuagint, παρρησία and παρρησιάζομαι have a positive connotation. The words occur especially in wisdom literature, where they are associated with the conduct of the righteous and wise, both in relation to humans and to God.[132]

The noun παρρησία is used once in Mark (8:32), when Jesus speaks openly (καὶ παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον ἐλάλει) with his disciples about his imminent suffering, death and resurrection. However, this passage is not paralleled in Luke's Gospel, where neither παρρησία nor παρρησιάζομαι is attested. In contrast, παρρησία is frequent in the Johannine literature,[133] and both παρρησία and παρρησιάζομαι are used in the letters of Paul to describe Paul's courage in proclaiming the Gospel.[134]

b) Turning

As Luke describes the scene, Paul and Barnabas stand in a synagogue addressing Jews and crowds of non-Jews who might be envisaged standing behind the Jews (cf. above, §3.2.2). Hence, the declaration of Paul and Barnabas, "behold, we are turning (present tense) to the Gentiles", addressed to their Jewish opponents, may involve a physical turn as gesture to the Gentile crowds in the synagogue, a gesture to which they draw attention by the injunction ἰδού.

3.7.2. Rhetorical Aspects

In responding to the Jews, Paul and Barnabas present themselves as messengers of God and authoritative spokesmen of "the word of God". To speak against their words is to "lay aside the word of God" and to judge themselves "not worthy of the eternal life" (13:46). The expression ζωὴ αἰώνιος is relatively rare in Luke and Acts. In the Gospel, Jesus is twice addressed by people who

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[132] The word occurs only once in the LXX Law and Prophets (in Lev 16:13, where God is said to have led the Israelites out of Egypt with παρρησία), occurring more frequently in late LXX writings. μέτα παρρησία occurs in addition to Lev 16:13 also in Est 8:19 LXX; 1 Macc 4:18; 3 Macc. 4:1; 7:12, but not in combination with *verba dicendi*. The verb παρρησιάζομαι occurs in Ps 11:6 and Ps 93:1 for God's bold speech on behalf of the poor (Ps 11:6) and as God of vengeance (Ps 93:1). Prov 1:20 presents Wisdom bringing παρρησία to the streets. Prov 10:10 speaks of those who make peace by exposing fraud with frankness (παρρησία). Prov 13:5 posits a parallel between being ashamed (αἰσχύνομαι) and not having παρρησία, both being characteristic for the ἀσεβής. Prov 20:9 asks who will have the courage to say (παρρήσιάσεται) that he is clean from sins. Job 22:26 speaks about speaking frankly before the Lord; Job 27:10 presents the negative counterpart. Wis 5:1 states that the righteous will stand in παρρησία. Sir 6:11 and 25:25 advise not to give παρρησία to a bad woman.

[133] John 7:4, 13, 26; 10:24; 11:14, 54; 16:25, 29; 18:20; 1 John 2:28; 3:21; 4:17; 5:14.

[134] Both in the undisputed letters (2 Cor 3:12; 7:4; 1 Thess 2:2; Phil 1:20; Phm 1:8) and in the disputed letters (Eph 3:12; 6:19–20; Col 2:15; 1 Tim 3:13). The verb παρρησιάζομαι is used in 1 Thess 2:2 and Eph 6:20.

ask him what to do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25; 18:18). In his response, Jesus makes clear that the eternal life is the life in the kingdom of God in the "coming age" (ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ, 18:30). In Acts, it occurs only here and in 13:48. Here, Paul asserts that by having put aside God's word (ἀπωθεῖσθε αὐτόν, referring to τόν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ), the good message of the arrival of the σωτῆρ Ἰησοῦς as delivered by Paul and Barnabas, their Jewish opponents exclude themselves from the life in the kingdom of God in the coming age. It is a technical term for a specifically Jewish concept, to be interpreted within an apocalyptic understanding of time (αἰώνιος refers to the coming age, ἀιών, of God's kingdom).[135] As in Paul's response to Elymas before Sergius Paulus, Paul and Barnabas respond to their opponents in a "biblical" idiom, despite the presence of many non-Jews among the audience. Thus, they are portrayed as Jewish teachers, messengers of "the God of this people Israel" (13:17).

In line with this, they motivate their turn to the Gentiles by referring to the instruction of the Lord, quoting Isaiah 49:6. "For thus is the instruction of the Lord to us (ἐντέταλται, the perfect tense emphasises the present state that results from the past action): I have appointed you [singular] for a light to the nations and to be for salvation until the end of the earth" (13:48). The referent of "us" (ἡμῖν) is open to various interpretations. Paul and Barnabas are presented as speaking together (13:46, εἶπαν, plural), using first person plural verb forms (στρεφόμεθα, 13:46). Thus, the pronoun could be interpreted as referring to Paul and Barnabas. In that case, they present the quotation from Isaiah as an instruction of the Lord to themselves, aligning themselves with the prophets of Scripture, who were likewise instructed (ἐντέλλομαι) by the Lord what to say (cf. esp. Jer 1:7, 17; and Jer 1:5: "I have appointed you [τέθεικά σε] as prophet to the nations"). The problem with this interpretation is that the pronoun in the quotation is in the singular. If Paul and Barnabas were speaking about the Lord's instruction to both of them, it would make more sense to change the singular σε of the quotation to a plural ὑμᾶς. Such a minor modification of a Scriptural quotation would not be exceptional in Acts.[136] On the other hand, the singular could also suggest that Paul was the actual recipient of the Lord's instruction (cf. Acts 26:15–18, alluding, among other texts, to Isaiah 42:7, 16).

The alternative is that ἡμῖν refers inclusively to Paul and Barnabas and the other Jews, and that the quotation from the prophets presents the command of

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[135] Outside the New Testament, cf. Dan 12:2; 4 Macc. 15:3; Pss. Sol. 3:12.

[136] According to Gert Steyn, Luke has adapted pronouns to apply the quoted text more closely to its current context in Acts 1:20 (Ps 68:26, changing plural to singular), Acts 2:17–21 (Joel 2:28–32), Acts 3:22–23 (Deut 18:15–20 / Lev 23:29, changing singulars to plurals), Acts 23:5 (Exod 22:27, changing a plural to the singular ἄρχοντα). Steyn, *Septuagint*, 233–36.

the Lord to the people of Israel. A clear example of the inclusive use of "us", immediately after the first person plural speech by Paul on behalf of him and Barnabas, is given in the speech on the first Sabbath, Acts 13:32: "And we bring you the good tiding about the promise done to the fathers, that God has fulfilled it *for us, their children*." On this reading, the singular σε in the quotation makes sense as referring to Israel, which is identified as Servant of the Lord in the immediate context of Isaiah 49:6 (Isaiah 49:3: Δοῦλός μου εἶ σύ, Ισραηλ). Then, it is because Israel is called to be a light for Gentiles, that Paul and Barnabas turn to the Gentiles after the Jews have laid the word of God aside.[137] This interpretation corresponds better with the fact that it is a quotation from Scripture, a word of the Lord to Israel that can be used as an authority in reasoning with Jews, rather than a personal instruction of Paul and Barnabas.[138] Finally, in the context of Isaiah 49:6, Israel is identified as the servant of the Lord (49:3), but the servant of the Lord is also distinguished from Israel as he has been formed in his mother's womb to gather Jacob and Israel to the Lord (49:5). This dynamic explains the necessity of speaking the word of God first to the Jews (Acts 13:46).

Therefore, ἡμῖν is probably best interpreted as referring inclusively to Paul and Barnabas and the Jews who speak against them. Paul and Barnabas advance the calling of Israel to be a light to the Gentiles as an argument for turning to them after they have spoken the word of God to these Diaspora Jews (cf. Isaiah 49:6: τὴν διασποράν τοῦ Ισραηλ). In any case, both in this reading and when reading the quotation as a direct command of the Lord to Paul and Barnabas, the context of the quotation from Isaiah suggests that they are presented as servants of the Lord who carry out the Lord's instruction to be a light to the Gentiles on behalf of Israel.[139]

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[137] Cf. also Romans 2:17–21, where Paul adresses "you, Jew" and presents him as convinced of being "a light of those in darkness". (φῶς τῶν ἐν σκότει).

[138] Likewise Koet, "Antioch", 107–14. In Acts 26:15–18, by contrast, Paul speaks of his personal calling by the Lord. There, the prophetic texts are alluded to, not quoted. Steyn argues that the change in person from ἡμῖν to σε, as well as the break between κύριος and τέθεικά, indicate that this is an explicit quotation. He does not, however, discuss the possibility that ἡμῖν refers inclusively to Paul and Barnabas and his fellow-Jews. Steyn, *Septuagint*, 197.

[139] Cf. Dekker, "Licht".

3.8. Audience Response Second Performance

The text does not immediately record the response of the Jews addressed by Paul and Barnabas: it is first interested in the response of the Gentile audience,[140] which consists of rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord (both imperfect indicatives) and of believing (aorist indicative, denoting the beginning of a state). The scene is concluded by a summary statement (13:49) about the spread of the word of the Lord throughout the entire region (χώρα, the hinterland of a city). It is only in verse 50 that the Jews are mentioned again, introducing a new development in the narrative to which Paul and Barnabas respond with a third performance (see below).

The joy of the Gentiles and their glorification of the word of the Lord contrast with the zeal of the Jews and their slandering of the words spoken by Paul in verse 45.[141] Moreover, that "there believed as many as were ordained for eternal life" contrasts with the statement of Paul that his Jewish antagonists "judged themselves unworthy of eternal life". This contrast stands out especially in view of the fact that these are the only two references to "eternal life" in the book of Acts.[142] The reference to "being ordained" (τεταγμένοι, the perfect tense emphasizing the resulting state rather than the moment of ordination) highlights the divine agency in the salvation of the Gentiles, which is emphasised throughout the book of Acts.[143]

The reference to the "word of the Lord" forms an inclusio with verse 44, which states that "almost the entire town gathered to hear the word of the Lord." It directs attention away from Paul to the word of the Lord that is spoken by Paul. As Paul and Barnabas turn to the Gentiles, they enact the movement of the word of God that transcends the boundary of Israel to reach the Gentiles with the news of God's salvation. It is this movement that causes the joy of the Gentiles and continues in the spread of the word of the Lord through the entire *hinterland* in a centrifugal movement that contrasts with the centripetal gathering of "almost the entire city" in verse 44. In the centre stands the turn to the Gentiles, performed by Paul and Barnabas in the midst of the synagogue, on behalf of Israel, after the word of God has been spoken to the Jews and put aside by them.

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[140] Cf. Acts 13:11, which narrates Elymas' blindness, but not his response to Paul's words and the subsequent divine punishment, being more interested in the faith of the proconsul.

[141] This contrast is a further confirmation of the interpretation of ζήλος as a negative emotion in this context.

[142] There is a noteworthy difference between the two, however: whereas a divine ordination is invoked for those who believe, this divine ordination is not invoked in respect to those who "judge themselves unworthy of eternal life". Acts does not teach a rejection of the Jews by God.

[143] Cf. Dupont, "Salut".

3.9. Setting Third Performance: Persons

The final scene of the episode in Pisidian Antioch is introduced by another action of the Jews. They "incited the worshipping women of noble standing and the prominent men of the city and excited a persecution against Paul and Barnabas and threw them out of their regions" (Acts 13:50).[144] The opposition of the Jews increases in intensity from verbal opposition (ἀντέλεγον) and slander (βλασφημοῦντες) in verse 44 to persecution (διωγμόν) in verse 50.

External evidence confirms that following Jewish customs was especially attractive for elite women.[145] Hence, the image of Jews trying to influence the local elite via their women who attended the synagogue gatherings is realistic. Elsewhere in Acts, it is the same category of God-fearing women of high social standing that are particularly receptive to the Gospel.[146] Here in Antioch, the Jews and their zeal are presented as causing the change in the city's attitude, from an almost unanimous interest to hear the word of the Lord to a persecution of Paul and Barnabas in which the city elite are complicit.

3.10. Third Performance: Gesture

In response to the persecution, the last performance of Paul and Barnabas in Antioch consists of a gesture. After the Jews have stirred a persecution of Paul and Barnabas and have thrown them out of the region, they "shook the dust off their feet against them" (Acts 13:51).

The gesture recalls the instruction of Jesus when he sent his apostles to announce the kingdom of God: "When they do not welcome you, as you leave that city, shake the dust off your feet as a witness against them" (Luke 9:5; par Mark 6:11; Matt 10:14). The meaning of this gesture is illuminated in the sending of the seventy (or seventy-two), narrated only by Luke: "If you go into a city and they do not welcome you, after you have gone out into its streets, say: "Even the dust that sticks on us from your city on our feet, we wipe off against you (ἀπομασσόμεθα ὑμῖν); but know that the kingdom of God has come near! I say to you that for the inhabitants of Sodom, it will be more tolerable on that day [the day of God's judgment] than for that city" (Luke 10:11–12).

Performing this gesture signifies that Paul acts in concert with the apostles and the seventy-two who announced the kingdom of God before him. It is a

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[144] On the terminology, cf. Breytenbach and Zimmermann, *Lycaonia*, 64.

[145] Roman gendered stereotypes may also play a role in this evidence: the ideal of the Roman male, who defends traditional Roman values, stands in contrast with the association of the female/feminine with 'the Other', with the exotic, with superstition. Cf. Lieu, "Attraction"; Matthews, *Converts*.

[146] Cf. Acts 16:13–15; 17:4, 12, 34.

gesture that is meant "as a testimony" (εἰς μαρτύριον, Luke 9:5). This phrase occurs in the Septuagint as literal translation of לְעֵדָה or לְעֵד.[147] Lambs given (Gen 21:30), covenants made (Gen 31:44), and songs taught (Deut 31:19, 26) can function as "testimony" of an agreement. In Joshua 24:27, a stone is set up as testimony "because it has heard all the things spoken to it by the Lord". In 1 Samuel 9:24, Saul and Samuel eat a piece of meat set apart for the occasion, in the presence of others, "as a testimony". Thus, it is a gesture that is made in a legal context, as part of a pledge made in the presence of other men or God.

As Luke 10:11–12 shows, the sign is accompanied by a speech that draws attention to the gesture and comments on its meaning. But what does the act signify precisely? The word καί in the comment of Luke 10:11 makes clear that the dust represents the entire city: "we wipe off *even* the dust that sticks on us from your city."[148] Thus, the gesture signifies that the seventy-two distance themselves entirely from the city, which will receive the full judgment of God because it has not accepted the kingdom of God as brought to it by the messengers sent out by Jesus.

A final text shedding light on this gesture is Acts 18:6. There, Paul's shaking the dust out of his garment communicates the same message to the Jews of Corinth that Paul's and Barnabas' shaking the dust from the feet communicates to the city of Antioch.[149] In Acts 18:6, the accompanying speech is recorded. Alluding to Ezekiel 33:1–7, Paul says: "Your blood be on your head; I am clean; from now on, I will go to the Gentiles."[150] Thus, the gesture, as a public act of distancing, implies that Paul and Barnabas are not responsible for the judgment that will come over the city. The dust can testify that Paul and Barnabas have been there and have been thrown out.

In Acts 13:51, Paul and Barnabas shake the dust off their feet "against them", primarily a reference to the Jews who had instigated the persecution of

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[147] Gen 21:30; 31:44; Deut 31:19, 26; Josh 24:27; 1 Sam 9:24; Prov 29:14; Job 16:8; Hos 2:14; Amos 1:11; Mic 1:2; 7:18; Zeph 3:8. Apart from Jewish and Christian writings, it is attested only once, in Eratosthenes, *Catasterismi* 1.26.13 (found by a TLG search on the phrase εἰς μαρτύριον, which lists no other non-Jewish/Christian attestations throughout antiquity).

[148] Cf. already Tertullian, who asserts that they cleansed themselves from "even the bits of land that cleave to them, not to mention anything else that they would share" (*et haerentia terrae eorum, nedum communicationis reliquae*: Tertullian, *Marc.* 4.24).

[149] Cf. Koet, "Close", 180–84; Cadbury, "Dust and Garments", 269–75. They argue that "the main aim of the gesture is to react to the opposition, showing Paul's innocence and the end of his responsibility for this audience." Koet, "Close", 181.

[150] Shiell, *Reading Acts*, 160, interprets the gesture as a curse (referring to Lysias, *Andocides* 51), but the shaking out of clothes by priests, mentioned in Lysias, is a specific ritual act in the context of Athenian religion. In response to an act of profanation by Andocides, "priestesses and priests stood up and cursed him, facing the west, and shook out (ἀνέσεισαν) their purple vestments according to the ancient and time-honoured custom." Note that the verb used by Lysias is different from the verb used in Acts, ἐκτιναξάμενος.

Paul and Barnabas (13:50). However, the shaking of dust suggests a distancing from a territory such as a city, and the narrative suggests that with the incitement of the leaders of the city (τοὺς πρώτους), the entire city has turned against Paul and Barnabas in a schematic portrayal that does not exclude the possibility of a number of disciples remaining in the city (Acts 13:52; 14:21–22).[151] Indeed, Paul and Barnabas will visit the city of Antioch on their return journey, but only to encourage the disciples, not to teach or proclaim the word of God in the synagogue or in the city's public space.

According to Rogers (discussing the Markan parallel to Luke 9:5), the gesture meant to signify that the inhabitants have failed to wash the feet of the apostles as an act of hospitality.[152] Indeed, the gesture is a response to a lack of welcome. But its significance goes beyond censuring inhospitality. In a theatrical way, Paul and Barnabas declare that they have been thrown out of the city, distancing themselves entirely from it and declaring that they are not responsible when God will judge the city, like Sodom long ago.

3.11. Concluding Narrative

The text does not mention a response of the city to the last performance of Paul. Instead, the episode ends with a reference to the disciples, who "were filled full of joy and holy Spirit" (Acts 13:52). Despite the opposition and persecution that Paul and Barnabas encounter in Antioch, Luke ends each of the three performances on a very positive note. After the first performance, the synagogue leaders invite Paul and Barnabas to speak the next Sabbath and "many of the Jews and worshipping proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who persuaded them to cleave to the mercy of God" (13:43). After the second Sabbath, "the Gentiles rejoiced and glorified the word of the Lord and there believed as many as were ordained for eternal life, and the word of the Lord spread through the entire region" (Acts 13:48–49). After the last act of Paul and Barnabas, "the disciples were filled with joy and holy Spirit."

The common theme in these three endings is the formation of a body of disciples from Jews and Gentiles as evidence of the efficacy of the word of the Lord and of the Holy Spirit, despite the fact that both the Jews and the city as

[151] The situation is different in Acts 18:6, where Paul shakes out his clothes in the synagogue before he leaves the synagogue to the adjacent house. There, it is not directed to the entire city of Corinth, but only to the synagogue, which has opposed Paul's testimony that Jesus is the Christ.

[152] Cf. Rogers, "Dust". Cf. Koet, "Close", 180–84; Cadbury, "Dust and Garments", 269–75.

a whole eventually turn against Paul and Barnabas. God has used the performance of Paul and Barnabas to acquire those who are ordained for eternal life as disciples.[153]

3.12. Script

In Antioch, Luke depicts three performances of Paul (and Barnabas). First, Paul addresses the Sabbath gathering (συναγωγή) of the people of Israel and the God-fearing "strangers" among them, announcing to them the work that God has done by raising Jesus and arguing from Scripture that Jesus is the promised Saviour. He silences the audience with his gesture, and demands their attention with a mere "Hear!" (ἀκούσατε) without an attempt to secure the goodwill of his audience in a proper *exordium*. Thus, Luke characterises Paul as an authoritative speaker of God's word, who even impersonates God's voice in the *peroratio* of his speech by applying a quotation from the Prophets directly to the audience.

The second performance consists of a frank turn to the Gentiles after the Jews have laid God's word aside and slandered it. Paul and Barnabas base their turn on the command of the Lord to be a light to Gentiles and, by quoting Isaiah 49:6, present themselves as servants of the Lord who perform this task on behalf of Israel.

The third performance consists of a gesture against the city of Antioch that testifies that they have been thrown out of the city and are not responsible for its judgment, as the Jews have "judged themselves unworthy of the eternal life" and have made the city elite complicit in throwing Paul and Barnabas out of the city.

These acts evoke those who God sent in the past as messengers to his people to announce his acts and to warn against unbelief (as Paul does in Acts 13:41), the messengers of the word of the Lord that Israel's historiography identifies in key passages as prophets and servants of the Lord (2 Kgs 17:13; 21:10; 24:2; 2 Chr 24:19; 36:16). The script of the "ancient prophets", as it is constructed

[153] This theme is a common thread in the summary statements, variously formulated as the "growth" of the word of the Lord, the "adding" of disciples to "those who are saved", etc. Cf. Noordegraaf, *Creatura verbi*.

in Luke-Acts,[154] includes the opposition that they face from the people of Israel.[155] It also explains the 'biblical' language used by Paul and Barnabas, which contains allusions, quotations and phraseology from the Septuagint.

Not all elements in the narrative point unequivocally to this prophetic Script. "Speaking frankly" has few lexical connections to the Septuagint and may rather serve to evoke the frankness of Greek orators who addressed the Athenian assembly. Thus, a structural analogy is construed between the way the prophets of Israel addressed the people without fearing their opposition, and the frankness of Demosthenes, remembered by Plutarch (46 – ca. 120), a younger contemporary of Luke, as the best of Athens' public speakers who did not hesitate to point the Athenian citizens at their faults. Paul's command over his audience and the rhetorical structure of his speech fits into this script. Thus, a script of Demosthenic frankness complements the prophetic script in this episode.

3.13. Function of This Portrait

The episode in Pisidian Antioch presents a triptych of performances of Paul and Barnabas. In this chapter, I have analysed how Paul's performance in this place is portrayed by Luke and in which narrative context this is to be interpreted. Here, I will summarise the findings and comment on the function of this portrait within the larger context.

The *location* in which these performances are situated is described as a stereotypical Gentile city with a Jewish synagogue. The Sabbath gathering with the reading of the Law and Prophets, after which Paul delivers his speech, portrays him as a Jew whose message is based on the Scriptures. Delivered in the

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[154] The term "some prophet of the ancient [prophets] (προφήτης τις τῶν ἀρχαίων)" is attested in Luke 9:8. Luke 11:50 indicates the temporal range of the "ancient prophets" when it specifies "the blood of all the prophets" as "from the blood of Abel until the blood of Zechariah", referring to the last prophet mentioned in the book of Chronicles (2 Chr 24:20–22); This does not deny the existence of postexilic prophets like those attested in the *Dodekapropheton* (which Luke knows as "the book of the prophets", Acts 7:42). Moreover, Acts 3:24 has the list of prophets "who predicted these days" begin with Samuel. Cf. also Peels, "Blood". Thus, the "ancient prophets" are not defined very precisely, but they are situated in a general sense in the past, in the time of the fathers (Luke 6:23; 11:47,50; Acts 3:25; 7:52; 28:25). Cf. further Cook, *Cessation*. Cook gives an overview of the relevant source texts and the scholarly discussion around them and argues that most Jews in the first century CE believed that prophecy had ceased in their own time; that it "ceased" may be too absolute, however, at least regarding Luke-Acts: after all, people like Hannah still prophesy in Luke 1–2, as emphasized by Miller, "Conception". On Josephus' view of the prophets, cf. Gray, *Prophetic Figures*, 34.

[155] Cf. especially Luke 13:33, and Nebe, *Prophetische Züge*.

synagogue of the Jews, his message draws attention from the entire (Gentile) city.

The *cast of characters* in relation to which Paul's performance is described changes throughout the episode. The invitation of the synagogue leaders – the authorities of this Jewish diaspora community – to speak in the Sabbath gathering and to speak again on the next Sabbath suggests that the message of Paul and Barnabas is a teaching worthy of discussion in the Jewish synagogue. In the second scene, the Jews who oppose Paul when they see how his message draws the attention of the entire city are characterised as motivated by zeal. In the larger context of the book of Acts, this zeal emerges as zeal for God and the Law, zeal that is oriented towards the good but results in violence to the disciples of Jesus. Thus, it explains Jewish opposition to the teaching of Paul by referring to a characteristic of the Jews both acknowledged by (Diaspora) Jewish authors and well-known in the Greco-Roman world, where it was both admired and ridiculed.

Meanwhile, the positive characterization of the entire city as eager to hear the word of God echoes the description of Sergius Paulus. Paul's message is thus characterised as appealing to Gentiles, and their positive response shows that God has opened the door of faith to them (14:27), indeed, has ordained them for eternal life.

In the *performances* itself, Paul is portrayed as a good speaker who, like a Greco-Roman orator, carefully builds up his speech to come to an intense appeal in his *peroratio*. At the same time, in the opening of his speech, in the words used to characterise his speaking, and in the content of the speech, especially in the *peroratio,* he is depicted as a prophet who announces a good message from God to his audience, a message of salvation and forgiveness of sins. In sum, he is portrayed as a messenger of God, acting on behalf of Israel, in a manner that is able to attract large non-Jewish audiences as well. In their second performance, Paul and Barnabas are portrayed as speaking frankly, which places them in the company of esteemed Greek examples such as Socrates and Demosthenes, who were not afraid of speaking the truth, but did so politely. They respond to the slander and leave the assembly in a dignified way, continuing their task as messengers of God. In their quotation of Isaiah, they show that in doing so they are obeying a command of God to Israel. Finally, their prophetic gesture against the city is in line with this portrait.

Therefore, these performances are best understood as modelled on the script of both the ancient prophets of Israel and (Greco-)Roman orators.

The function of the portrait of these performances is to show that the emergence of communities of disciples that consist of Jews and Gentiles who fear God is not the result of a teaching directed against the Jewish nation and law, but is based on (a prophetic interpretation of) the Scriptures and results from God's decision also to ordain Gentiles for eternal life in his kingdom. It provides an explanation for Jewish opposition to the disciples of Jesus by referring

to their (well-known) zeal (for God and the Law). And it counters the perception of Christians as simple-minded adherents of a superstition in the dignified manner in which Barnabas and Paul behave, in ways resembling Greco-Roman model figures.

Chapter 4

Performance in Lystra (Acts 14:6–20)

The final episode of the journey narrated in Acts 13–14 depicts Paul's performance in Lystra. In this chapter, the contribution of this depiction to the purposes of the book of Acts will be analysed according to the various aspects of performance outlined in chapter 1 (§1.3.4), preceded by a section on the narrative context and structure of this episode.

4.1. Narrative Context and Structure

The episode in Lystra is demarcated by the arrival of Paul and Barnabas in the "cities of Lycaonia: Lystra, Derbe and the surrounding region" (Acts 14:6), and their subsequent visit to Derbe (14:20b), which Luke reports only in passing before narrating their return journey to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch (14:21). The episode is framed by references to stoning: they arrive in Lycaonia fleeing the Iconians, who have attempted to stone them (14:5–6), and they leave Lystra to depart for Derbe after the Iconian Jews have succeeded to stone Paul in Lystra (Acts 14:19–20).

In Lystra, as in Antioch, Paul's performance is depicted in three scenes, though much more concisely than in the Antioch episode.[1] The performances in these scenes are central to the structure of the pericope, as the outline below shows.

First, verses 6–7 provide the background for Paul's performances: Paul and Barnabas "were announcing the good message" in "Lystra, Derbe and the surrounding area" (Acts 14:6–7, discussed below in §4.2). In verse 8, Luke introduces a lame man in Lystra (§4.3), to whom Paul's first performance relates (verses 9–10, §4.4). The lame man stands up and walks (§4.5). Then, Luke introduces the crowds, who have seen what Paul did and think that Zeus and Hermes have come down to them in human form, as well as the priest of Zeus-

[1] Cf. also the rhetorical analysis of the pericope by Fournier, *Episode*, 56–80. Fournier divides the section in a general statement (vs. 7) and three parts (8–10, 11–18, 19–20a) and argues for a general concentric structure that puts the speech of Paul (15b–17) in the centre of the pericope. An alternative structure is proposed by Schwindt, who divides verses 8–20 in four parts (8–10; 11–13; 14–18; 19–20). However, his proposal conceals how the narrative is built around the performances of Paul. Schwindt, "Angekommen", 136.

before-the-city, who wants to sacrifice with the crowds (verses 11–13, §4.6). In response to this attempt, a second performance of Barnabas and Paul (now in concert) is presented, with a short comment on its effect (verses 14–18, §4.7 and §4.8). Finally, verses 19–20 introduce Jews from Antioch and Iconium. In response to their dragging Paul out of the city, Paul stands up and enters the city again in the presence of disciples, before leaving the town for Derbe (§4.9). In §4.10, the scripts of these performances will be discussed, followed by a conclusion on the function of this portrait of Paul's performance (§4.11).

Acts 14:6–20: Text

(6) συνιδόντες κατέφυγον εἰς τὰς πόλεις τῆς Λυκαονίας Λύστραν καὶ Δέρβην καὶ τὴν περίχωρον, (7) κἀκεῖ εὐαγγελιζόμενοι ἦσαν.
[spatial setting and background]

First scene
(8) Καί τις ἀνὴρ ἀδύνατος ἐν Λύστροις τοῖς ποσὶν ἐκάθητο, χωλὸς ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς αὐτοῦ ὃς οὐδέποτε περιεπάτησεν. (9) οὗτος ἤκουσεν τοῦ Παύλου λαλοῦντος· [introduction of other character]

ὃς ἀτενίσας αὐτῷ καὶ ἰδὼν ὅτι ἔχει πίστιν τοῦ σωθῆναι, (10) εἶπεν μεγάλῃ φωνῇ• ἀνάστηθι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας σου ὀρθός.
[central performance]

καὶ ἅλατο καὶ περιεπάτει. [performance effect]

Second scene
(11) | οἵ τε / οἱ δὲ | ὄχλοι ἰδόντες ὃ ἐποίησεν Παῦλος ἐπῆραν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν Λυκαονιστὶ λέγοντες• οἱ θεοὶ ὁμοιωθέντες ἀνθρώποις κατέβησαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, (12) ἐκάλουν τε τὸν Βαρναβᾶν Δία, τὸν δὲ Παῦλον Ἑρμῆν, ἐπειδὴ αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ ἡγούμενος τοῦ λόγου. (13) ὅ τε ἱερεὺς τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ ὄντος πρὸ τῆς πόλεως ταύρους καὶ στέμματα ἐπὶ τοὺς πυλῶνας ἐνέγκας σὺν τοῖς ὄχλοις ἤθελεν θύειν.
[audience response/introduction of other characters]

(14) Ἀκούσαντες δὲ οἱ ἀπόστολοι Βαρναβᾶς καὶ Παῦλος διαρρήξαντες τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν ἐξεπήδησαν εἰς τὸν ὄχλον κράζοντες (15) καὶ λέγοντες• ἄνδρες, […] ὑμῶν.
[central performance]

(18) καὶ ταῦτα λέγοντες μόλις κατέπαυσαν τοὺς ὄχλους τοῦ μὴ θύειν αὐτοῖς.
[performance effect]

Third scene
(19) Ἐπῆλθαν δὲ ἀπὸ Ἀντιοχείας καὶ Ἰκονίου Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ πείσαντες τοὺς ὄχλους καὶ λιθάσαντες τὸν Παῦλον ἔσυρον ἔξω τῆς πόλεως νομίζοντες αὐτὸν τεθνηκέναι.
[introduction of other characters]

(20) κυκλωσάντων δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτὸν ἀναστὰς εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὴν πόλιν.
[final performance]

As this overview shows, in this pericope the text describes performance effects following the performances, rather than audience responses. The audience that responds to the healing of the lame man is not introduced before the performance and triggers Paul's second performance by its response to his first performance.

4.2. Setting: Place and Location

The performance of Paul is situated ἐν Λύστροις, where the paralysed man was sitting when he heard Paul speak.

4.2.1. Lystra in Lycaonia

Lystra is introduced in 14:6 as a city of Lycaonia.[2] This is highlighted again in 14:11, where it is said that the crowds raised their voice in the Lycaonian language (Λυκαονιστί). Lycaonia is a small inland region that was important mainly because of the road that traversed it: the route from Asia Minor, Galatia and Pisidia through the Cilician Gates to Cilicia.[3] From a Roman perspective, these regions were mere backwaters that one would rather travel through than inhabit.[4] Luke's reference to the "Lycaonian language" is best interpreted in the light of this reputation. As Dean Philip Bechard has argued, Lycaonia functions in Acts as the antipode to Athens, as a region of primitive mountain tribes who speak a local language.[5]

Lystra was located at a distance from the main road (the Via Sebaste) from Iconium to the Cilician gates, to guard it against the Homanadensian tribes that lived in the mountains to the south of this important trade route.[6] Its name can be construed either as a neuter plural or as a feminine singular. Luke alternates between the two (with Λύστραν in Acts 14:6; 21; 16:1 and Λύστροις in 14:8;

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[2] On Lycaonia, cf. the exhaustive study of Breytenbach and Zimmermann, *Lycaonia*. And cf. Bechard, *Paul*, 233–354. Bechard notes that Iconium was the administrative centre of Lycaonia as a politically defined district, while Derbe lay outside of this district; Luke may not have referred to the political district but to "a cultural or ethnographic region, situated within a conceptual map of the interior that was informed by literary and mythographic sources." Bechard, 349. Breytenbach and Zimmermann note that Lycaonia's political borders changed over time, but the geographical borders were fixed through the mountain ranges that divide Central Anatolia. Breytenbach and Zimmermann, *Lycaonia*, 37.

[3] Markus Öhler suggests that Paul and Barnabas planned to continue through the Cilician Gates to Paul's hometown Tarsus, but could not traverse the pass because of the winter season (he dates their arrival in Derbe to November 47 or 48). Öhler, *Barnabas*, 385.

[4] Cf., e.g., Livy, *Ab urbe cond.* 38.45.9–10; Cicero, *Fam.* 73.10.

[5] Bechard, *Paul*, 376–77.

[6] Levick, *Colonies*, 52.

16:2), but in both cases, the name denotes the city (not its inhabitants).[7] Paul's performance here is situated within the city (and not in the countryside before the shrine of Zeus, as Bechard argued):[8] the paralysed man sitting ἐν Λύστροις and the fact that the Jews drag Paul out of the city afterwards (ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, Acts 14:19) suggest strongly that Luke situates the scene enclosed by these statements within the city. This also implies that the πυλῶνας to which the priest of Zeus-before-the-city brings his bulls and garlands are city gates rather than temple gates.[9]

Thus, Lystra's significance for the performance of Paul is that it represents Lycaonia as a backward mountain region, populated by crowds who speak a local tongue.

4.2.2. No Synagogue

In the book of Acts, the city of Lystra is remarkable for another reason as well: it is the first city where Luke does not mention a visit to the synagogue. The only Jews in Lystra in this episode are Jews coming after Paul from Antioch and Iconium (Acts 14:19). Coming from Cyprus, where Paul is still Saul and speaks in Jewish synagogues throughout the island, via Antioch and Iconium,

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[7] Cf. also 2 Tim 3:11 (ἐν Λύστροις); *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 3.1 (ἐπὶ Λύστραν). Apart from the New Testament and its patristic reception, the name Lystra is only attested in Ptolemaeus, *Geographica* 5.4.9 and Hierocles, *Synekdemos* 675.2 (Λύστρα) and in local Latin inscriptions as *Lustra* or *Lystra,* which could be either singular or plural (cf. Zgusta, *Ortsnamen*, 349). Zgusta lists many other neuter plural toponyms in Asia Minor, including Θυάτειρα (cf. Rev 1:11; 2:18, 24; Acts 16:14, Zgusta, 187), some of which are also attested as feminine singular (Ἄναια / Ἀναία, p. 72; Θήβασα, p. 183; Εὔλανδρα, p. 176, Σύεδρα, p. 588).

[8] Bechard, *Paul*, 410–11.

[9] Πύλων can be used for gates, gate-houses, or vestibules of houses, temples, and cities. For πύλωνες as city gates, cf. 1 Kgs 17:10; 2 Kgs 10:9; 1 Chr 19:9; Rev 21:11–15, 21, 25; 22:14; Polybius, *Histories,* 4.57.11. Bechard notes that Luke uses πύλη for city gates (Luke 7:12; Acts 9:24; Acts 16:13) and πύλων for the vestibule of a house (Luke 16:20; Acts 10:17; Acts 12:13) and suggests that the plural is used here to indicate the entrance of the shrine of Zeus, as "an unassuming building just slightly larger than a private dwelling". Bechard, 410. Likewise Schwindt, "Angekommen", 147. However, the argument from lexical usage is not conclusive. Luke is versatile enough to use multiple words to refer to something. For instance, he refers to temple gates both with θύρα (Acts 3:2; 21:30) and with πύλη (Acts 3:10). David Gill posits (without argumentation or reference) that Lystra was unlikely to have been walled at the time (Gill, "Religion", 85). However, this should not influence the interpretation of the narrative, especially since Luke seems ill-informed about the interior of Asia Minor (cf. Bechard, *Paul*, 345–52). Moreover, Levick notes that the *tepe* of Lystra is only the acropolis of a larger town on the western slope, of which only blocks and small fragments of limestone remain. Absence of remains of a wall does not need to imply that there were no walls at the time. Levick, *Colonies*, 52.

where Jews and Greeks come together to hear Paul, the journey ends in mountainous inlands where they have left the Jews behind.[10]

Later in the narrative of Acts, however, Paul meets Timothy in Lystra, who has a Jewish mother and a Greek father. Paul circumcises him "because of the Jews who lived in those places", a reference to Lystra and Iconium (Acts 16:1–3). Thus, the absence of Jews in Lystra may not be as absolute as the narrative of Acts 13–14 suggests, but Luke ignores them in this context to highlight the narrative development.

4.2.3. Movement between City and Periphery

A remarkable element in the Lystran episode is the movement between the city and its periphery.[11] A healing is performed within the city (14:10) and attracts the attention of the crowds (14:11). "Before the city" is a sanctuary of Zeus ("Zeus who is before the city", an epithet that identifies a god from his place of worship).[12] The polarity of intra- and extramural cults is a significant feature of Greek religion, as are the festive processions that were conducted from a city to the extramural sanctuaries, located some 10–20 kilometers from the city, where a sacrifice would be made and the meat distributed to the people.[13] In this episode, however, the procession leads in the opposite direction, the priest bringing bulls and garlands to the city gates in order to sacrifice them with the crowds.[14]

Later in the narrative, Paul is stoned and dragged "outside of the city" (Acts 14:19), but he stands up and enters the city again and leaves on the next day to Derbe (Acts 14:20). The moving in and out of the city emphasises that Paul's performance takes place inside of the city, a fact that makes it difficult to interpret this episode as a countryside performance.[15] Lystra may not be a major city, but it is still a city (πόλις, Acts 14:13; 19),[16] populated by "crowds" (ὄχλοι) who are highlighted as the audience of the performance (Acts 14:11,

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[10] Cf. Schwindt, "Angekommen", 135; Klauck, *Magic*, 56.

[11] Cf. Fournier, *Episode*, 103–5.

[12] On the local fixation of Greek cult, cf. Burkert, *Griechische Religion,* 135. Temples "before the city" are frequently attested in Asia Minor (references in Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2153).

[13] Cf., e.g., Pedley, *Sanctuaries*, 46–47.

[14] On the gates, cf. above, note 9.

[15] As proposed by Bechard, "Paul among the Rustics".

[16] "It is important to remember that there was no single structure for the *polis*, though the norm was to have one main urban centre, the *astu*, with its surrounding countryside, the *chōra*. The *polis* itself is defined by the citizens who live within its territory, for example it would be usual to talk in terms of the *polis* of the Nemeans rather than the *polis* of Nemea." Gill and Trebilco, "Research on Urban Christian Communities. Looking Ahead", 320. But the dragging "outside of the city" (Acts 14:19) suggests that πόλις here refers to the urban centre, not to the citizens within the territory.

13, 14, 18, 19; nowhere does the word ὄχλος appear in Acts as often in a single pericope as here).[17]

4.2.4. Background Activity

In the cities of Lycaonia, Paul and Barnabas "were bringing the good message".[18] Thus, they continue to carry out their task as messengers of God, as they did in Pisidian Antioch (13:32, cf. above, §3.4.3 sub a). Paul's bringing the good message is referred to in verse 9 as "speaking" (λαλοῦντος). The sequence of events depicted in this episode begins when the paralysed man "heard" (ἤκουσεν, aorist)[19] Paul speaking. This implies that Paul must be envisaged speaking as he walks through Lystra, stopping by the paralysed man to look at him.[20]

4.3. Setting First Performance: Persons

The first performance is done in relation to a man introduced in verse 8. In the reading adopted by the ECM, verse 8 must be translated as: "And a certain disabled man in Lystra was sitting at [their] feet, paralysed from his mother's womb, who had never walked."[21] To sit at one's feet is a familiar posture of pupils listening to their teachers and recalls Paul's education "at the feet of Gamaliel (παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ)" (Acts 22:3).[22] The construction with

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[17] Cf. also Levick, based on the inscriptions found here: "The impression that Lystra creates is of an active and prosperous community, not one to care much for its status as a Roman colony, a thriving, rather rustic market town." Levick, *Colonies*, 154.

[18] There are two significant variant readings at this point. Codex Bezae adds "and the whole town was moved about the teaching; and Paul and Barnabas were staying (διέτριβον) in Lystra." E adds "[they evangelized] the word of God. And the entire multitude was perplexed about their teaching. But Paul and Barnabas were staying in Lystra." These additions may reflect local knowledge about the large distance between Lystra and Derbe (cf. also the more correct rendering of the title of Ζεύς πρὸ πόλεως in verse 13 in D and Schwindt, "Angekommen", 145–46). If κἀκεῖ (verse 7) is construed as referring to "Derbe and its surrounding area", a response to the Gospel proclamation there is missing and a transition required to verse 8, which has a man sitting "in Lystra". These elements are supplied in D (supported by several Latin manuscripts) and E. However, κἀκεῖ is better taken as a general reference to the "cities of Lycaonia", which the narrative then unfolds with an episode in Lystra (8–20), after which Paul and Barnabas proceed to Derbe to "bring the good message to that city" (verses 20–21). Hence, D and E are probably later additions to the original text.

[19] B, C, and some minuscules read an imperfect. With an imperfect, the lame man's hearing of Paul is still part of the background for the chain of aorists that commences with Paul.

[20] The corresponding healing act of Peter (Acts 3:2–8) helps to visualize the scene.

[21] The insertion of ἐν Λύστροις makes it unlikely that a reader would construe τοῖς ποσίν as belonging to ἀδύνατος.

[22] Cf. above, §3.4.1.

a dative is found, for example, in Pausanias, *Description of Greece,* 10.25.3, where he describes a painting that depicts a boy or servant sitting under Amphialos, at his feet (ὑπὸ δὲ τοῦ Ἀμφιάλου τοῖς ποσὶ κάθηται).

Most manuscripts,[23] however, reverse the order of ἀδύνατος and ἐν Λύστροις, rendering the translation "disabled in [his own] feet, sitting". The construction ἀδύνατος τοῖς ποσί is attested in Polybius, where it refers to weakness in the feet due to gout.[24] If construed in this way, the scene can be envisaged analogously to Peter's healing of the lame man in Acts 3:2–9 (with which this episode has many parallels): the man sits begging somewhere in the town and hears Paul as he walks past, talking to people about the Gospel.

In view of this connection, it is unlikely that Luke wants to envisage the paralysed man at this stage in the narrative as a pupil sitting at Paul's feet. Although the reading of the ECM presents the *lectio difficilior,* it can be explained as an attempt to smooth out the redundancy of the description of the man as both "disabled in his feet" and "paralysed" (χωλός)[25] and as an attempt to supply the otherwise rather lonely ἐκάθητο with a complement, thus rendering a stylistically more balanced sentence. Hence, I opt here for the variant reading.

This means that the man is thrice characterised by his impairment: "(1) disabled in his feet, (2) paralysed from his mother's womb, (3) who had never walked." This emphatic description of his complete inability to walk serves to highlight the genuineness and greatness of his healing. The wording of verse 10 closely reflects that of verse 8, as shown in Table 2:

Table 2: Correspondence between Acts 14:8 and 10

Verse 8	ἐκάθητο	τοῖς ποσὶν	ἀδύνατος / χώλος	ὅς οὐδέποτε περιεπάτησεν
Verse 10	ἀνάστηθι	ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας σου	ὀρθός	περιεπάτει

This contrast further reinforces the interpretation of τοῖς ποσίν as the feet of the man, rather than the feet of Paul and Barnabas.

[23] Including P^{74}, A, and C. The second corrector of the Sinaïticus corrected the original ἀδύνατος ἐν Λύστροις to this reading. The texts of D and E leave ἐν Λύστροις out in this verse, because they have added these words in verse 7 (see discussion above).

[24] Polybius, *Hist.* 36.14.1, about Marcus Licinius, selected as legate to Bithynia, but considered "most incompetent" (ἀφυέστατοι) for the task, because of his physical condition. Cf. for the construction also 2 Sam 9:13 (χωλὸς ἀμφοτέροις τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτοῦ) and Tob 2:10 (Sinaïticus); 5:10 (Sinaïticus): ἀδύνατος τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς, as indication of blindness.

[25] A similar attempt is made by D, which strikes χωλὸς (verse 8).

4.4. First Performance: Raising a Paraplegic

Against the background of Paul's bringing the good news, an act of healing unfolds. In this scene this consists of two actions. First, Paul gazes at the man and sees that he has faith to be saved. Second, Paul commands him with a loud voice to stand on his feet.

4.4.1. The Gaze

The captivating power of staring eyes was acknowledged in ancient rhetorical theory: Quintilian writes about the eyes, as part of his discussion of body language (*gestus*) used in the performance of speeches in court:

> The mind shines through especially in these. Even unmoved they can sparkle with happiness or be clouded over with grief. [...] And when the eyes do move, they become intent, relaxed, proud, fierce, gentle, or harsh; these qualities should be assumed as the pleading demands.[26]

Acts shows Paul using his eyes for various purposes. In addition to this pericope, a gaze accompanies his earlier announcement of judgment on Elymas (13:9; cf. above, §2.4.1) and his declaration of innocence before the Sanhedrin later on (23:1). In the Lystran context, Paul stares in order to establish that the man has "faith to be saved" (πίστιν τοῦ σωθῆναι), i.e., faith in the Name of Jesus, proclaimed by Paul, that can restore his body, as a symbol of the eschatological salvation through this name (cf. Acts 2:20–21; 4:9–12): σωθῆναι should not be restricted to physical healing alone.[27]

4.4.2. Loud Voice

Luke juxtaposes a gaze with speaking in a loud voice. Body language (*gestus*) and voice (*vox*) constitute the two basic components of the performance of speeches in ancient rhetorical theory, as they appeal to the two senses of sight and hearing, "by which all emotion (*adfectus*) penetrates to the mind."[28]

The loud voice explains in the narrative that Paul attracts the attention of the crowds: "the crowds, having seen what Paul had done" (14:11). They have "seen" Paul's performance, which comprises his staring and his speaking, but it is the loud voice that draws the most attention.

According to ancient rhetorical theory, a raised voice signals emotional intensity.[29] This is confirmed in the usage in Acts: the reference to the loudness of the voice contributes to the emotional, dramatic vividness of the narrative.[30]

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[26] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.75 (Russell, LCL).
[27] Cf. Schwindt, "Angekommen", 138–39.
[28] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.14.
[29] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.63–65. Cf. the commentary in Schulz, *Stimme*, 340–50.
[30] Cf. Acts 2:14; 7:57, 60; 8:7; 16:28; 22:22; 23:9–10; 26:24.

This episode is particularly noisy: the loud voice of Paul triggers the raising of the voice of the crowds in Lycaonian (14:11), which is interrupted by the shouting of Barnabas and Paul (κράζοντες, 14:14).

4.4.3. Command

Paul's words to the lame man are: "Stand straight upon your feet" (Acts 14:10). The command ἀνάστηθι is also used for the healing of Aeneas in Lydda (9:32) and for the raising of the dead Tabitha (9:40). With the addition "upon your feet", the command has its closest analogy in the words of Jesus to Paul according to Acts 26:16 (ἀλλ' ἀνάστηθι καὶ στῆθι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας σου), where it echoes Ezekiel 2:1. The context is different, however: in Acts 14:10, the command is part of a healing, whereas in Acts 26:16, it is part of a vision report. The correspondence with Ezekiel 2:1 and Acts 26:16 should not be overemphasised. Rather, the wording highlights the healing power of God. As shown above (§4.3), the wording of verse 10 corresponds to verse 8. Paul commands the paraplegic not only to stand up, but also "upon his feet": upon the very body parts in which he was impaired.

4.5. Effect First Performance

The narrative does not provide a response of the paralysed man. Just as with regard to Elymas, Luke only says that mist and darkness fell on him (Acts 13:11), in this case he only notes that the paraglegic "jumped up and walked around" (Acts 14:10). Luke is more interested in the response of the crowds who have seen what Paul did than in the response of the paraplegic. The manuscripts traditionally associated with the "western text" provide variants that emphasise the immediate effect of Paul's command, reinforcing the parallel with the Elymas episode through the addition of παραχρήμα (cf. Acts 13:11).[31]

The verb ἅλλομαι ("to leap, jump up") provides a vivid demonstration of the power that has come into the feet of the paraplegic. In addition, it recalls not only Acts 3:8 (where ἐξάλλομαι is used, which is also used in manuscript E here in Acts 13:10), but also Isaiah 35:6: "the paralysed will jump up like a deer" (τότε ἁλεῖται ὡς ἔλαφος ὁ χωλός), a text alluded to in Luke 7:22 to demonstrate to John the Baptist that Jesus was "the coming one" (Luke 7:19, cf. Luke 3:16).[32] In Acts, the miracles likewise serve to demonstrate how faith

[31] On the nature of these variants, cf. Gäbel, "Western Text".

[32] The Septuagint reads in Isaiah 35:6, τότε ἁλεῖται ὡς ἔλαφος ὁ χωλός, to which Jesus alludes by observing that "the paralysed are walking" (Luke 7:22: χωλοὶ περιπατοῦσιν). Acts 3:8 and 14:10 use both (compounds of) ἅλλομαι and the verb περιπατέω.

in the name of Jesus gives complete health (ὁλοκληρία, Acts 3:16) or salvation (σωθῆναι, Acts 14:9).

Simon Butticaz has argued that the healing of the paraplegic in Acts 3:1–10 serves as a paradigm for the restoration of Israel.[33] In Lystra, it is a Gentile who is healed; as shown above, Luke depicts Lystra in this episode as a city without Jews. That faith also gives salvation to Gentiles exemplifies that God "has opened the door of faith to Gentiles" (Acts 14:27). The miracle corroborates the good message that Paul and Barnabas are bringing, "that you should turn from these vain ones [gods like Zeus and Hermes] to the living God" (Acts 14:15).

4.6. Audience Response and Setting Second Performance

Those who respond to the healing of the paraplegic are the crowds (ὄχλοι), "who, having seen what Paul had done, raised their voice in Lycaonian saying, 'the gods have made themselves like humans and have come down to us.'" (Acts 14:11). As Schwindt remarks, the audience response to the miracle deviates from the form of the miracle stories in the Gospel. The typical response to a healing by Jesus is that the audience praises God, recognizing Jesus as a great prophet (Luke 7:16).[34] The Lycaonian Gentiles, however, misunderstand the healing and mistake Paul and Barnabas for gods instead of envoys of God (ἀπόστολοι, Acts 14:14).[35]

The response simultaneously introduces the crowds as a character in relation to which Barnabas and Paul act in the ensuing scene. As noted above (§6.2.3), the noun ὄχλος appears nowhere in Acts as often in a single pericope as here (Acts 14:11, 13, 14, 18, 19). Philip Hardie has argued that "crowds" appear in ancient historiography as if they were an individual character and that leader figures are frequently evaluated according to their handling of and command over the crowds.[36] The social status of a crowd is low, being distinguished from the individuals of higher status who have to deal with them. Here, the crowds are directed into action by the priest of "Zeus who is before the city":[37] he wants to sacrifice "with the crowds" (14:13).

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[33] Butticaz, "Relèvement".

[34] Schwindt, "Angekommen", 140.

[35] On this contrast, cf. also Martin, "Gods".

[36] Cf. Hardie, "Crowds".

[37] Codex Bezae mentions "priests (pl.) of the one who was Zeus-before-city" (Διὸς πρὸ πόλεως). πρὸ πόλεως without the article appears in inscriptions as well and seems to have been the more common form. That may have been the reason to correct the text that the ECM has selected as the likely original text. Cf. Barrett, *Acts*, 1:677–78; Schwindt, "Angekommen", 146.

Luke characterises the crowds by pointing out that they speak in Lycaonian.[38] As observed above (§4.2.1), this connotes a lack of education. Moreover, it gives regional specificity to these crowds as belonging to the Lycaonian people: in Luke's worldview, the nations that inhabit the world all have their own language (cf. Acts 2:5 and 11).

Barnabas and Paul are perceived by both the crowds and the priest as gods, who have come down to them in human form. The priest affirms this by leading a procession in the opposite direction, from the sanctuary of Zeus to the city gates. They bring bulls and garlands, the latter being meant either to crown Paul and Barnabas or to crown the sacrificial animals.[39] Pliny the Elder notes that bulls are "fat victims and the most luxurious appeasal of the gods".[40] The plural used here emphasises the magnitude of the sacrifice. Ovid records a myth about Zeus and Hermes (Jupiter and Mercurius) who visited Phrygia but did not receive hospitality and punished the region with a flood.[41] If this myth is presupposed in the narrative,[42] the presence of Zeus and Hermes, in the form of Barnabas and Paul, is indeed no reason for joy, but rather for fear and strenuous efforts to appease them.

Barnabas and Paul succeed with difficulty in keeping the crowds from making a sacrifice (14:18). In verse 19, however, rivals appear on stage: Jews from Antioch and Iconium who likewise seek to gain control over the crowds and succeed: "having persuaded the crowds and having stoned Paul, they dragged him out of the city" (14:19). Like the priest, they lead the crowds into action, but in an opposite direction: whereas the priests takes the lead in sacrificing to Paul and Barnabas, the Jews from Antioch and Iconium take the lead in stoning him. The crowds themselves are presented as an easily manipulated mob, in line with the common perception of ancient historians.

This configuration enables Luke to portray Paul's handling of the crowd. It is remarkable that Paul does attempt, and succeeds, to stop the crowd from bringing improper honour to him, but does not attempt to stop the crowd from

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[38] In addition, Klauck suggests that the reference to the local dialect explains why it takes some time before Paul and Barnabas respond to their identification with Hermes and Zeus: only when sacrifices are brought do they perceive what is going on and respond in dismay. Klauck, *Magic*, 57. On "dialekte als literarisches Gestaltungsmittel" in this episode, cf. also Tischler, *Diener*, 67–69.

[39] Cf. Keener, *Acts*, 2013, 2:2154.

[40] *victimae opimae et lautissima deorum placatio*. Pliny, *Nat.* 8.7.183, reference in Keener, 2:2154.

[41] Ovid, *Metam.* 8.612–727.

[42] Not necessarily in Ovid's version, but in a version that formed the basis for Ovid's creative retelling, perhaps even a local myth circulating in Anatolia. Cf. the discussion in Denaux, *Studies*, 80; Faber, "Zeus"; van Eck, *Handelingen*, 305. A Roman audience acquainted with Ovid could see a connection between Luke's account and the well-known *Metamorphoses* and appreciate the intertextuality with Latin literature.

stoning him. As messenger of God, he is willing to undergo suffering, but not willing to receive worship that only befits the one who sent him.

4.7. Second Performance: Response to the Crowds

In response to the intention of the priest to offer sacrifices with the crowds for Barnabas and Paul, they engage again in dramatic action: they "tear their clothers and leap out into the crowd, shouting and saying […]" (Acts 14:14–15).

4.7.1. Tearing Clothes and Rushing Forth

The Septuagint mentions tearing clothes (διαρρήγνυμι ἱμάτια) often, in contexts not only of mourning and penitence,[43] but also of dismay and protest, as the following examples demonstrate. Joshua and Caleb tear their clothes when they see that the people of Israel are afraid to enter Canaan (Num 14:6); the king of Israel tears his clothes in dismay and terror when he reads that Naaman expects him to cure his disease, suspecting that Naaman aims at a conflict with him (2 Kgs 5:6–8); and Ataliah tears her clothes in dismay when she hears of the coup against her (2 Kgs 11:14). In Jewish and early Christian literature beyond the Septuagint, the high priest is found tearing his clothes in dismay over Jesus' blasphemy in Mark 14:63, and in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,* Joseph tears his garments when the wife of Potiphar proposes to kill her husband in order to marry Joseph.[44] Tearing clothes is a particularly dramatic gesture that Quintilian considered suitable in the *peroratio* as a method of arousing pity in court (Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.174; cf. 6.1.30–35). Diodorus Siculus considers it a display of "most terrible suffering (πάθος [...] διενότατον)" when wealthy Persian female captives come outside with torn clothes to beg for their lives.[45]

In Acts 14:14, it is likewise dismay, rather than grief or penitence, that Paul and Barnabas display at the sight of the crowds sacrificing to them.[46] Their display is reinforced by their "jumping out into the crowd" (Acts 14:14).

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[43] Gen 37:29; 34:1; 44:13; Lev 10:6; 21:10; Josh 7:6; Judg 11:35; 1 Sam 4:12; 2 Sam 1:2, 11; 3:3; 13:31; 14:30; 1 Kgs 20:16; 2 Kgs 6:30, 18:37, 19:1; 2 Kgs 22:11, 19; 2 Chr 34:19, 27; 1 Esd 8:68, 70; 2 Esd 9:3, 5; Jdt 14:16; 1 Macc 3:47; 4:39; 5:14; 11:71; 13:45; Job 20:1; Jer 43:24; 48:5. Tischler highlights 2 Kgs 22:11 and 19 and interprets the action of Barnabas and Paul as a gesture of penitence, enacted here not on behalf of the sinful people of Israel, but on behalf of idolatrous Gentiles. Tischler, *Diener*, 80–83.

[44] T. 12 Patr. 11.5.2.

[45] Diodorus Siculus 17.5 (τὰς ἐσθῆτας περιρρήττουσαι).

[46] Likewise Schwindt, "Angekommen", 148–49.

"Jumping out into the crowd" (ἐκπηδάω) can be used for "leaping out" in escape (cf. 1 Kgs 21:39 LXX; Sus 1:39) or in attack (cf. Josephus, *A.J.* 6.191),[47] but here, it is meant to display to the crowd the dismay that they have expressed by tearing their clothes.[48] The combination of tearing clothes and jumping out is also found in Esther 4:1, after Mordechai has heard about the decision to kill all Jews:

> Now when Mardochaios learned the outcome, he tore his clothes (διέρρηξεν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ) and put on sackcloth and sprinkled ashes, and as he rushed (ἐκπηδήσας) through the square of the city, he cried out with a loud voice, "An innocent nation is being destroyed!"[49]

In Esther 4:1, the tearing of clothes, combined with sackcloth and ashes, signifies grief and terror, but because Mordechai (Gk. Mardochaios) parades his grief in public, it is transformed into an act of protest at the royal command.

An alternative interpretation of the gesture is suggested by a similar usage in the 35th *Discourse* of Dio Chrysostom (ca. 40–120 CE; the speech may have been delivered during the reign of Vespasian),[50] who offers advice to those who are marveled by the people for their wisdom, simply because they dress as a sophist:

> He should tear off his garments and leap forth naked upon the public highways, proving to all the world that he is no better than any other man.[51]

This rather unrealistic advice serves to make the point that true wisdom is shown in virtue, not in a particular way of dressing.[52] The "leaping forth" serves to parade his nakedness, as a symbolic act of disclosing his true identity. Bechard points out that Lucian (ca. 120 – after 180) considers the peoples in the interior highlands of Asia Minor as particularly prone to being deceived by charlatans who pose as wise men.[53]

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[47] Cf. further Acts 10:25 D; Acts 16:29 (εἰσπήδησεν).

[48] Cf. also the usage in contexts of mourning in Jdt 14:17, Tob 10:7, 2 Macc 3:18 and 3 Macc. 1:17.

[49] Ὁ δὲ Μαρδοχαῖος ἐπιγνοὺς τὸ συντελούμενον διέρρηξεν τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐνεδύσατο σάκκον καὶ κατεπάσατο σποδὸν καὶ ἐκπηδήσας διὰ τῆς πλατείας τῆς πόλεως ἐβόα φωνῇ μεγάλῃ Αἴρεται ἔθνος μηδὲν ἠδικηκός. Esth 4:1 Old Greek version, trans. K.H. Jobes (http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/17–esther–nets.pdf).

[50] Cf. Bost-Pouderon, *Dion Chrysostome*, 2:39.

[51] Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 35.9–10: δεῖ περιρρηξάμενον ἐκπηδᾶν γυμνὸν εἰς τὰς ὁδούς, ἐπιδεικνύντα πᾶσιν ὅτι μηδενός ἐστι βελτίων. (Crosby, LCL). Text according to the critical edition of Bost-Pouderon and Nesselrath, *Dion Chrysostome*, 1:108.

[52] This is made clear from the context: the speech has dwelled from the start on the subject of the significance of outer characteristics of orators, such as long hair or a particular way of clothing. This point is overlooked by Schwindt, "Angekommen", 148–49.

[53] Bechard, *Paul*, 421. Referring to Lucian, *Alex.* 9.

The parallel of Dio Chrysostom led Conzelmann to assume that Paul and Barnabas display their true, human identity by tearing off their clothes.[54] However, the text of Acts does not imply this.[55] There is a subtle lexical difference: Dio Chrysostom speaks about "tearing clothes off" (περιρρήγνυμι) whereas Acts (and the Septuagint passages referred to above) refers to "tearing clothes apart" (διαρρήγνυμι), which emphasises the destruction of the clothes rather than the removal of the clothing from the body. Moreover, in contrast to Dio, it is not said that Paul and Barnabas go around naked. Rather, the gesture functions to show their dismay about the fact that the crowds want to sacrifice to them, and thus to honour them as gods rather than praising the living God for the healing of the paraplegic. The very dramatic gesture, together with their loud voice (κράζοντες), shows the pathos with which Barnabas and Paul reject this honour. Their performance contrasts starkly with that of Herod (Agrippa I) who did not give honour to God after the people in Caesarea responded to his speech by calling, "a voice of a god, not of a human" (Acts 12:22), and was punished immediately by an angel of the Lord.

4.7.2. Speech

The speech of Barnabas and Paul explains the gesture. In their speech, they (1) refute the idea that they are gods in the likeness of men and (2) explain which message they are bringing to Lystra. First, they express their bewilderment in their question, "Men, why are you doing these things? We too are humans who experience the same things (ὁμοιοπαθεῖς) as you" (Acts 14:15),[56] thus correcting the assertion of the Lycaonians that "the gods have come down to us having become like (ὁμοιωθέντες) humans" (Acts 14:11). Second, they proceed to explain what they are doing in Lystra: "we are bringing the good message (εὐαγγελιζόμενοι) that you [should] turn from these vain [gods] to the living God." εὐαγγελιζόμενοι picks up the opening statement from the narrative in 14:7, and the contents of the good message is now elaborated as a call to turn to the living God. Why is this exhortation qualified as a good message?

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[54] Conzelmann, *Acts*, 111. For Bechard, this is an important part of Luke's apologetic: in order to counter the criticism that Christians were uneducated people tricked into belief by charlatans, Luke portrays Paul according to the literary topos of "the authentic sage whose interest in wisdom rather than fame obliges him to complete a full self-disclosure." Bechard, "Paul among the Rustics", 86.

[55] More to the point is Klauck, who interprets the rushing out into the crowd as expressing a "wish to stand on the same level as the crowd, since they want to be reckoned among the people rather than among the gods" (Klauck, *Magic*, 59).

[56] On ὁμοιοπαθεῖς, cf. Diodorus Siculus 13.24, about the ὁμοιοπαθεία that causes humans to show acts of mercy beyond the boundaries of one's own polis, even to enemies. Schwindt notes that the term does not only point at having the same nature, but also at being equally subject to suffering (in contrast to the gods), which also fits the context of Diodorus Siculus 13.24. Schwindt refers moreover to 4 Macc. 12.13. Schwindt, "Angekommen", 149.

Because the turn of the Gentiles to God is presented as a gift of God at this moment in history, as other passages make clear. In Acts 11:18, the apostles conclude, "God has also given the repentance to life to the Gentiles" and in Acts 14:27, Paul concludes that "God has also opened the door of faith to the Gentiles." In Acts 17:30, another compound of ἀγγελ*, παραγγέλλει, is used for the divine command "that everyone, everywhere, should repent", a command that is presented in the narrative context as a "good message" (17:18).[57]

Thus, Paul and Barnabas present themselves as messengers of the living God, in contrast to "these vain [gods]", Zeus and Hermes. Although Paul is presented elsewhere in Acts as applying a quotation from Aratus about Zeus to the God proclaimed by him (Acts 17:28) – perhaps interpreting the poem along similar lines as Aristobulus (a Jewish apologist living in Alexandria, second century BCE) [58] – in this context Barnabas and Paul contrast Zeus and Hermes as "vain gods" with the "living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who in the past generations allowed all nations to proceed on their ways" (Acts 14:15–16). The identification of the living God by a description taken from the LXX (Exod 20:11; Ps 146:6) and the reference to "all the nations" (ἔθνη, which excludes Israel in this context), make clear that Barnabas and Paul are addressing their audience from a Jewish perspective. To the crowds, they present the living God as a benefactor (ἀγαθουργῶν),[59] a giver of rain and fertility (οὐρανόθεν ὑμῖν ὑετοὺς διδοὺς καὶ καιροὺς καρποφόρους), as one who "fills your hearts with food and joy" (ἐμπιπλῶν τροφῆς καὶ εὐφροσύνης τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν). Emperors and other aristocrats presented themselves as benefactors to the people, providing them with bread and games (*panem et circenses*).[60] Barnabas and Paul, in dealing with the crowds, present the God whose message they bring as a divine benefactor. The emphasis on rain and fertility fits the popular audience which Luke highlights in the narrative.

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[57] Cf. also below, chapter §5.4.1.

[58] Aristobulus, Frg. 4.6–7.

[59] The verb ἀγαθουργέω is rare in the New Testament and absent from the LXX, appearing, apart from Acts 14:17, only in 1 Tim 6:18. There, it is explained as "being rich in good works, generous and ready to share", characteristics that befit public benefactors. It is a rare word in classical literature in general (a TLG lemma search indicates that it occurs only in Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.67.21 and in ps.-Theano, Frg. 200.23; the noun ἀγαθοεργία/ἀγαθουργία appears in Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.154. and 3.160; Zenodorus, Περὶ Συνηθείας 254.12; Oenomaus, Frg. 12.29; Theophilus, *Autol.* 2.38.30; Clemens Alexandrinus, *Paed.* 3.1.1.1.4; *Strom.* 2.12.55.6; 4.3.8.5.2; 6.14.108.1.5; 6.16.141.7.4; Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 370C–D (about the Chaldeans – beneficent versus maleficent gods); Eudemus, Frg. 49.12. On God as benefactor (but with the more common term εὐεργέτης), cf. Philo, *Spec.* 1.299–300.

[60] Juvenal, *Satire* 10.81. In Augustus' *Res Gestae,* gifts of grain and the organisation of games figure prominently as display of Augustus' generosity to the *populus*. Cf. further Veyne, Murray, and Pearce, *Bread and Circuses*; Barclay, *Paul*, 32–39.

On the other hand, Zeus and Hermes are labelled μάταιοι or μάταια (14:15, the genitive obscures whether the grammatical gender is masculine or neutral). The contrast between the living God and the vain, unreliable idols is common in the prophets (cf., e.g., LXX Jer 2:5; 10:12–15).

Stylistically, it is noteworthy that the speech of Paul and Barnabas transforms from verse 15d onwards into a hymnic description of the living God, with long vowels, alliterations and assonances. Verse 17 uses a litotes to emphasise God's goodness even though he had let the nations go their own ways: after verse 16, the words καίτοι οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον αὐτὸν ἀφῆκεν ἀγαθουργῶν ("and yet, not without witness did he leave him[self][61], doing good") follow as an exuberant affirmation of the goodness of the living God (ἀγαθουργῶν, "doing good" is given emphasis by its position at the end of the clause), unfolded in two participle clauses that emphasise the audience (ὑμῖν, ὑμῶν) as recipient of God's gifts. Thus, it is by singing of the living God that Barnabas and Paul are able to stop the audience from sacrificing to them.[62]

4.8. Effect Second Performance

An explicit response of the audience is lacking, as in the case of the first performance in Lystra (cf. §4.5). Luke records neither if the paraplegic nor if the crowds believed. After the speech of Barnabas and Paul, verse 18 only notes their success in stopping the crowds from offering to them. Although the sequel to this passage shows that a group of disciples has been formed in Lystra (Acts 14:20, 22), the formation of this group is not the main focus of the narrated episode. Rather, the focus is on the performance of Paul and Barnabas as a successful attempt to stop the crowds from making offerings to them, which brings out their command of the crowds and their commitment to the living God whom they serve as his messengers.

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[61] In context, this pronoun can only refer to God himself who is also the subject of ἀφῆκεν. Hence, the reflexive pronoun found in the widely attested variant reading is grammatically preferable. BDR notes "αὐτόν für ἑαυτόν nur Apg 25,21" (§283$_3$); Acts 14:17 should be listed there as well. The ECM treats the variant as an orthographic variation, i.e., a variant too dependent on the habits of copyists to be helpful in determining the original text. If that is the case, however, it is strange that they subsume both variants under αὐτόν instead of ἑαυτόν. Barrett comments: "It is difficult to know how to translate αὐτόν [...]; if ἑαυτόν [...] is not read it is surely proper to write αὑτόν, even though this form became very rare in the Hellenistic period." Barrett, *Acts*, 1:682.

[62] A contrast may be noted with the conclusion of Ovid's poem on Philemon and Baucis: "through their care for the gods they are gods, and those who venerated are object of veneration" (*cura deum di sint, et qui coluere colantur.* Ovid, *Metam.* 8.726).

The abrupt ending of the scene, rapidly shifting to the arrival of Jews from Antioch and Iconium, is eased considerably in variants from manuscripts traditionally associated with the western text, including Codex Ephraemi here. For example, Codex Ephraemi provides the following sentences:

> And by saying these things they only just stopped the crowds from sacrificing to them but [told them] to go each to his own place. But while they [Barnabas and Paul] were spending the time and were teaching, some Jews came from Iconium and Antioch, and, while they [Barnabas and Paul] were speaking with frankness, they [the Jews] persuaded the crowds to turn away from them [Barnabas and Paul] saying, "they say nothing true but lie everything".[63]

In this variant, a response of the crowds is still not recorded, but at least the time spent by Barnabas and Paul teaching in Lystra after the attempted sacrifice prepares the reader for the presence of disciples in verse 20. It explicates what is implied in the shorter reading: that the crowds remained positively inclined to Barnabas and Paul after their intervention in the sacrificial procession until they were persuaded otherwise by Jews from Antioch and Iconium.

4.9. Concluding Scene

After the main scene of this episode, verses 19–20 depict a final small scene. They include an action of Paul (standing up and going into the city), but it would be artificial to discuss this short scene in separate sections.

The scene opens with the introduction of additional characters, Jews who arrive on the scene from Antioch and Iconium. They persuade the crowds, stone Paul, and "were dragging him out of the city thinking that he was dead." The stoning recalls the death of Stephen, the point at which Paul is first introduced in the narrative of Acts under his Jewish name Saul. Bart Koet has pointed out that Paul appears as an *alter* Stephen at several points in the narrative.[64] The imperfect ἔσυρον suggests an action that is still ongoing when the (or his)[65] disciples encircle Paul.[66] The imperfective aspect should perhaps not be pressed to the point that the disciples are envisaged as forcing their way

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[63] For the Greek text, see the critical apparatus, or https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/manuscript-workspace?docID=20004&pageID=1590.

[64] Koet, "Prophets", 94.

[65] P^{45} and original D read αὐτοῦ in verse 20. Cf. also Acts 9:25. As "prophets and teachers" (Acts 13:1), Paul and Barnabas make disciples (μαθητεύσαντες, Acts 14:21). This should not be taken to imply different schools of, say, Pauline disciples and Petrine disciples: all disciples adhere to one αἵρεσις (school of thought) of which Paul is perceived (by outsiders) as a leader (πρωτοστάτης) (Acts 24:5). Or, more properly, the disciples adhere to the way (of God/ the Lord), according to which Paul serves God (Acts 24:14) and which is also taught by others (e.g. Acts 18:26).

[66] As noted by Barrett, *Acts*, 1:684.

between the dragging Jews to encircle Paul's body, but it does give the action of the Jews a sense of incompleteness: they do not succeed in discarding Paul from the city because, surrounded by disciples, he stands up and promptly re-enters the city, demonstrating that he is still alive (cf. Acts 5:17–20) and that the opponents have not been able to stop the proclamation of the good news (cf. Acts 28:28).

Luke elaborates neither upon Paul's undergoing of the stoning (in contrast to the description of Stephen's death in Acts 7:58–60, which echoes the death of Jesus, Luke 23:46) nor upon his miraculous rising up when he was thought to be dead. The concise rendering of the event gives the impression that Paul remains calm under even the worst circumstances, and is willing to accept the suffering that he has to undergo for the name of Jesus (cf. Acts 9:16).

4.10. Script

4.10.1. Messenger and Prophet

This pericope contains one of the rare instances in which the name Paul is qualified by an apposited noun or adjective, which can serve as an indication of the underlying script.[67] Luke refers to Barnabas and him in 14:14 as "the ἀπόστολοι Barnabas and Paul". The Greek word ἀπόστολος denotes a messenger, ambassador or envoy. Except for Acts 14:4 and 14:14, Luke always uses the word for the twelve disciples whom Jesus selected to be his envoys (Luke 6:13), whom he gave power and authority over demons and sent out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal (Luke 9:1–2; in verse 10 the envoys return from their mission to report to Jesus what they had done). After Jesus' resurrection, Matthias is appointed to replace Judas as one of the Twelve (Acts 1:15–26). Luke explicitly says that in order to be a witness of Jesus' resurrection with the other apostles, the one who replaces Judas will have to be chosen from among the men who were with Jesus from his baptism by John until the day he was taken up away from them (Acts 1:21–22). Subsequently, the apostles remain in Jerusalem (though individual apostles may be sent out by the apostles from Jerusalem, as is the case with Peter and John in Acts 8:10), where they teach (2:42), perform signs and miracles (2:43, 5:12), testify to the resurrection (4:33), distribute money (4:35–37) and appoint seven people to serve the tables (6:6). When the other disciples are dispersed, the apostles remain in Jerusalem (8:1), where Barnabas introduces Saul to them (9:27), where they hear about

[67] The other instance is in the words of a centurion who refers to "the prisoner Paul" (ὁ δέσμιος Παῦλος), Acts 23:18. Under his Jewish name Saul, he is introduced in Acts 7:58 as a young man (νεανίου καλουμένου Σαύλου) and in 9:11 surnamed "the Tarsean" (Σαῦλον ὀνόματι Ταρσέα).

the reception of the word of God by the Gentiles (11:1) and where they convene with the elders and the church about the question whether Gentiles should be circumcised (Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22; 16:4).

In sum, the apostles fulfill a crucial function in the first half of the book of Acts (Acts 1–15): as the chosen envoys of Jesus, their task is to be witness to Jesus' resurrection (Acts 1:22, cf. Acts 13:31), and, more generally, to represent his authority in the church.[68] When the high priest forbids the apostles to speak in the name of Jesus (Acts 5:40) he points to the core of their function as envoys. Acts 15 signals a transition: in this chapter, the apostles are consistently named together with the elders (first mentioned in Acts 11:13), and after that, the apostles are not mentioned any more; when Paul comes with the narrator and other companions to Jerusalem in Acts 21, they are received by James and all the elders (Acts 21:18).[69]

In chapter 13–14, the role of Barnabas and Paul is to be understood as analogous to that of Jesus' envoys in Jerusalem. Barnabas and Paul are chosen by the Holy Spirit from a group of prophets and teachers for the work to which God had called them, and are sent out (Acts 13:1–3). Just as "those who went with him from Galilee to Jerusalem" (the twelve and other early disciples) are witnesses to the people in Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas bring the good message of Jesus' resurrection to Jews and God-fearing Gentiles in Antioch (13:32–34). Thus, they can also be termed "envoys" (ἀπόστολοι) in Acts 14:4 and 14, envoys who heal and announce the kingdom of God among the nations, even though Paul had not accompanied Jesus in Galilee.[70]

This informs the script that underlies Paul's performance in this episode. As envoys of God, Barnabas and Paul act as the ancient prophets did, who were likewise sent by God (cf. Luke 11:49, which alludes to Jer 7:25–27). Miracles performed by Jesus led the audience to glorify God and recognise him as a great prophet (Luke 7:16). In light of this, the healing of the paraplegic by Paul fits his role as envoy who enacts a prophetic script of healing and speaking the word of God.

Unlike the people of Israel in the days of Jesus, however, the crowds in Lystra misunderstand the performance: they think that Barnabas and Paul are

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[68] Margaret M. Mitchell notes a general principle for social and diplomatic relationships in the first century: "The envoy or emissary represents the one by whom and in whose name he was sent." Mitchell, "Envoys", 644. This includes "that they have the significant power and authority to speak for those who sent them in accordance with their instructions." Mitchell, 649. Terms used for envoys include ἀπόστολος, ἄγγελος, πρεσβευτής and κῆρυξ (Mitchell, 652).

[69] This transition supports the division of Acts in two halves, Acts 1–15 and 16–28, proposed in §1.3.1.

[70] Cf. Clark, *Parallel Lives*. Clark concludes that Paul is portrayed in parallel to the twelve apostles, rather than being subordinated to them, as Klein had argued (Klein, *Apostel*).

gods rather than envoys of God, and want to sacrifice to them.[71] In their response, Barnabas and Paul conform to their role as prophet-envoys in the second performance of this episode, by displaying their dismay about the attempted sacrifice and by commending the goodness of the living God to the crowds.[72] Prophets of Israel should distance themselves from all kinds of involvement in the worship of the gods of the nations, as Philo of Alexandria also affirms.[73]

Moreover, the concluding scene of the episode depicts the stoning of Paul by Jews together with the crowds. Thus, Paul undergoes the same treatment as Stephen, whose death is depicted by Luke as parallel to that of Jesus (Acts 7:58–60) and interpreted in the line of the killing of the prophets by the fathers (Acts 7:51–52; cf. Luke 11:49).[74] Being subject to killing and persecution is part of the prophetic script as well, and it is significant that Paul uses his command over the crowds only to ward off an attempt to sacrifice to him, not an attempt to kill him through stoning.

Finally, the crowd's identification of Paul with Hermes, though erroneous, rightly points to his function as "the one who conducts the speaking" (ὁ ἡγούμενος τοῦ λόγου, Acts 14:12). In the *Embassy to Gaius,* Philo recalls how he reproached Gaius for dressing up like Hermes, describing Hermes as τὸν ἑρμηνέα καὶ προφήτην τῶν θείων ("the interpreter and prophet of the divine things"), who has winged sandals in order to be fast in bringing good news (using τὰ ἀγαθὰ διαγγέλλειν and εὐαγγελίζεσθαι as synonyms) and has a herald's staff (κηρύκειον, hence the Latin *caduceus*) as one who establishes peace (εἰρήνην καθισταμένων).[75] Thus, many of the key verbs and nouns that Luke uses with regard to the task of Paul, are associated by Philo with Hermes.[76]

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[71] Cf. Schwindt, "Angekommen", 140; Martin, "Gods".

[72] Cf. Rev 22:8–9, where an angel (or 'messenger') refuses to be worshipped by John and explains that he is a fellow servant of John and his brothers, the prophets; only God should be worshipped.

[73] Cf. Philo, *Spec.* 1.315–317.

[74] On this motif, see also the comments of van Houwelingen on 1 Thess 2:15, van Houwelingen, *Tessalonicenzen*, 91.

[75] Philo, *Legatio* 99–101 (reference by Klauck, *Magic*, 58).

[76] Schwindt points out that according to Artapanos (an Alexandrian Jew, ca. 100 BCE), Moses was honoured with divine honour and called Hermes in Egypt. However, it is not an exact parallel to the identification of Paul with Hermes: Moses was called Hermes because of his interpretation of sacred letters, not because he was a messenger of the gods; here Thoth stands at the background of Hermes (cf. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.27.6). Schwindt, "Angekommen", 148.

4.10.2. Charlatan as Counterscript

The episode in Lystra emphasises Paul's refusal to be worshipped as a god. This distinguishes Paul from many charlatans that appear in Greco-Roman literature, who abuse the credulity of uneducated people for personal profit. One of these charlatans is Peregrinus, who is especially relevant because Lucian, a satirist writing in the second century CE, depicted him as taking financial advantage from the simple-mindedness of the Christians and being celebrated as a god by them.[77] In another work of Lucian, a certain Epicurean named Alexander is vilified as a false prophet who gains much from a shrine he set up in his home town Abonoteichus, where he pretended to deliver oracles in the name of Glycon, a snake-god considered to be a reincarnation of Asclepius. He devised his fraud together with a certain Cocconas, and when discussing the best site, Cocconas proposed Chalcedon, being "not far from Asia and Galatia and all the inland peoples". Alexander, on the other hand, preferred Abonotheichus, where the Paphlagonians lived:

> Most of them were superstitious and simple, and you only have to appear among them followed by someone playing the pipe or tambourine or cymbals, and telling fortunes with a sieve (as they say), and at once they are all gaping and staring at you as if you were a heavenly being.[78]

Both Peregrinus and Alexander lived in the second century CE, and Lucian's biographies of them postdate the book of Acts. The general point deserves attention, however, since the Lycaonians, just like the Christians, had a reputation for superstitiousness and simple-mindedness.[79] This reputation is evoked in the narrative of Acts by their belief that Barnabas and Paul are gods, and by the expensive sacrifices they immediately organise in order to appease them. At the centre of Luke's depiction of Paul's performance in response to this is Paul's emphatic refusal to profit from their simplemindedness, neither by allowing to be worshipped as a god himself nor even to convince them to worship Jesus. Instead, he exhorts them to return to the living God, who governs history in allowing peoples to go their way and who is sharply distinguished from the "vain gods" Zeus and Hermes. In this way, Paul and Barnabas act as messengers of the God of Israel.

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[77] Lucian, *Peregr.* 11.

[78] Lucian, *Alex.* 9. δεισιδαίμονας τοὺς πολλοὺς καὶ ἠλιθίους [manuscript β reads πλουσίους, "rich", which was adopted in the LCL edition], καὶ μόνον εἰ φανείη τις αὐλητὴν ἢ τυμπανιστὴν ἢ κυμβάλοις κροτοῦντα ἐπαγόμενος, κοσκίνῳ τὸ τοῦ λόγου μαντευόμενος, αὐτίκα μάλα πάντας κεχηνότας πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ ὥσπερ τινὰ τῶν ἐπουρανίων προσβλέποντας. Text: Macleod, *Opera,* 335. Translation: Costa, *Lucian,* 133.

[79] Cf. also Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96, discussed in §1.5.

4.11. Function of This Portrait

In this episode, Luke depicts two performances of Barnabas and Paul in Lystra. The *location* is a town in backward Lycaonia, inhabited by *crowds* – the people with whom Paul primarily interacts in this performance – who speak a regional language and engage in a superstitious attempt to appease what they regard as gods come down in human form. The town is noteworthy as the first place where Luke does not record the presence of a synagogue or of Jews. In this town, Paul heals a paralysed man in a *performance* that includes intent staring and the use of a loud voice. The healing is intended to reinforce the good message that Barnabas and Paul bring to this city: that the Lycaonians can also turn to the living God and be saved. The crowds, however, think that Zeus and Hermes have come down to them and seek to appease them through expensive sacrifice, led by the priest of Zeus in a sacrificial procession from the extramural sanctuary to the city gates. Readers familiar with the myth of Philemon and Baucis (in Ovid's version or otherwise) could interpret the action as an anxious attempt to prevent the gods from punishing the region with a flood again. In a second performance, Barnabas and Paul display their utter dismay at this initiative by dramatically tearing their clothes, jumping into the crowd and shouting. As Jewish messengers of the living God, they abhor the idea that they would be worshipped as gods. Instead, they bring them the good message that they should turn to the living God, whom they commend to the crowds as a divine benefactor. Although they can thus stop the crowds from sacrificing to them, they do not try to stop them from stoning Paul after Jews from Antioch and Iconium have come and have persuaded the crowds. Thus, they are depicted as envoys of God (ἀπόστολοι) who act according to a prophetic *script*, speaking the word of God, healing people, rejecting honour that is due to their sender and undergoing suffering.

The function of this portrait in the narrative of Acts is to show how the message of the Lord calls people away from superstitious beliefs towards faith in the God of Israel. It counters both the charge that Christians are a *superstitio* and that their teaching is directed against the Jewish law and nation. Positively, the healing of the paralysed man after Paul has seen that he had "faith to be saved" serves Luke's argument in the narrative that God has opened the door of faith for the Gentiles (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, Acts 14:27).

Chapter 5

Performance in Athens (Acts 17:16–34)

The next case study that involves the depiction of Paul's performance is the episode of Paul in Athens, a central episode in the subsection of Acts 16:6–19:40, as will be argued below. Here, Paul responds to a group of characters that have not figured earlier in the book of Acts: some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.

5.1. Narrative Context and Structure

Paul's performance in Athens is part of his Gospel proclamation in Macedonia and Achaia. After the decision of the convened apostles, elders, and congregation of Jerusalem has been communicated to the congregation in Syria, Cilicia and Lycaonia, a decisive new step in the proclamation of the Gospel is made when the Spirit directs Paul, Silas and Timothy to Troas (blocking the way to Asia and to Bithynia) and when a vision appears to Paul that calls him to come over to Macedonia (Acts 16:6–10).[1] Subsequently, Luke narrates episodes in Philippi (16:12–40), Thessalonica (17:1–10), Berea (17:11–14), Athens (17:15–34), and Corinth (18:1–17). Then, Acts 18:18–19:40 centres on Paul's work in Ephesus. In the middle of that episode, Luke narrates Paul's intention to revisit Macedonia and Achaia and then to go to Jerusalem and finally to Rome (Acts 19:21). The journey to Jerusalem (with a change of plans due to a planned attack on Paul) is then narrated in Acts 20:1–21:17. The section concludes with Paul's arrival in Jerusalem, where (as in Acts 15:4) he reports to James and the elders about what God has done among the Gentiles through his ministry (Acts 21:19). The ensuing narrative creates the transition to the final section of Acts (Acts 22–28), where Paul is in custody and defends his mission among Gentiles and his continued loyalty to his nation and to the law before a variety of audiences (cf. chapter 6).

The section of Acts 16:6–21:17 can be divided in two subsections: one about Paul's work in the cities of Macedonia and Achaia and in Ephesus (Acts 16:6–19:40), and one about his journey to Jerusalem (Acts 20:1–21:17), which is

[1] Koet, "Schatten".

distinguished from the former subsection by the motifs of farewell and impending danger in Jerusalem. Both of these subsections contain one extensive speech, which, like the speech of Paul in Pisidian Antioch in the section of Acts 13–14, forms the centrepiece of these subsections.[2] The Athens episode is also the only episode with an extensive speech in the narrower context of his ministry in Macedonia and Achaia. Thus, the Athenian episode is in various ways a central one in the narrative of Acts.[3]

At the same time, the period in Athens is only a short stop in Paul's itinerary. In the immediate context, Paul has been sent by brothers of Berea to the sea and is subsequently escorted to Athens, because Thessalonian Jews have stirred up the crowds against Paul. Those who escorted him leave him in Athens and return with an instruction to Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible (17:14–15). After the episode in Athens, Paul goes to Corinth, where he can stay with Jewish fellow-textile workers,[4] Aquila and his wife Priscilla, to await the arrival of Silas and Timothy from Macedonia (18:1–5). Luke does not depict the departure from Athens as forced by opposition, as elsewhere, or motivated by disappointment over his lack of success, as some scholars have suggested (ignoring the remarkable success of winning over a rich and influential Areopagite);[5] the natural assumption from the text is that the days spent in Athens (17:17, πᾶσαν ἡμέραν, suggests a stay of at least several days) are only a temporary break on his way to Corinth, where he knew he could lodge with Aquila and Priscilla.

Between Paul's arrival and his departure, the Athenian episode unfolds structured according to the format that was also found in earlier episodes: after presenting the spatial setting and general background (Paul's speaking in Athens in synagogue and agora, verses 16–17), Epicurean and Stoic philosophers are introduced as characters who bring Paul before the Areopagus (18–21). In response to their question what new teaching he brings, Paul's central performance in this episode consists of a speech in the middle of the Areopagus (22–31). After this, the audience response is narrated (32–34).

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[2] Dupont notes that Paul has three long speeches in Acts 13–20 (equal in number to the three long defence speeches in Acts 22–26), one to Jews and God-fearers (Acts 13:16–41, see above, chapter 5), one to Gentiles (Acts 17:21–31) and one to elders of an ἐκκλησία (Acts 20:18–35), so that the speech in Athens forms the centrepiece of his missionary career. Dupont, "Discours", 382–84.

[3] Cf. also Rowe's warning to give too much weight to the Athenian episode. Rowe, "The Grammar of Life", 31.

[4] On the meaning of σκηνοποιός and the ancient textile industry, cf. most recently Artzt-Grabner, "Weavers".

[5] E.g., Ramsay, *Paul*, 194.

Acts 17:16–34: Text

(16) Ἐν δὲ ταῖς Ἀθήναις ἐκδεχομένου αὐτοὺς τοῦ Παύλου παρωξύνετο τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ θεωροῦντος κατείδωλον οὖσαν τὴν πόλιν. (17) διελέγετο μὲν οὖν ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις καὶ τοῖς σεβομένοις καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ κατὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν πρὸς τοὺς παρατυγχάνοντας. [spatial setting and background]

(18) τινὲς δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἐπικουρείων καὶ Στοϊκῶν φιλοσόφων συνέβαλλον αὐτῷ, καί τινες ἔλεγον• τί ἂν θέλοι ὁ σπερμολόγος οὗτος λέγειν; οἱ δέ• ξένων δαιμονίων δοκεῖ καταγγελεὺς εἶναι, ὅτι τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν εὐηγγελίζετο. (19) ἐπιλαβόμενοί τε αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον ἤγαγον λέγοντες• δυνάμεθα γνῶναι τίς ἡ καινὴ αὕτη ἡ ὑπὸ σοῦ λαλουμένη διδαχή; (20) ξενίζοντα γάρ τινα εἰσφέρεις εἰς τὰς ἀκοὰς ἡμῶν• βουλόμεθα οὖν γνῶναι τίνα θέλει ταῦτα εἶναι. (21) Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ πάντες καὶ οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες ξένοι εἰς οὐδὲν ἕτερον ηὐκαίρουν ἢ λέγειν | τι ἢ ἀκούειν τι / τι καὶ ἀκούειν | καινότερον. [introduction of other characters]

(22) Σταθεὶς δὲ ὁ Παῦλος ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἀρείου πάγου ἔφη• ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, […] νεκρῶν. [central performance]

(32) Ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν οἱ μὲν ἐχλεύαζον, οἱ δὲ εἶπαν• ἀκουσόμεθά σου περὶ τούτου καὶ πάλιν. [audience response]

(33) οὕτως ὁ Παῦλος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν. (34) τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες κολληθέντες αὐτῷ ἐπίστευσαν, ἐν οἷς καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις καὶ ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς. [aftermath]

5.2. Setting: Place and Location

As background to Paul's performance, Luke sketches Paul's activity in Athens (using indicatives of the imperfect): "And in Athens, while Paul waited for them, his spirit was provoked in him when he saw that the city was full of idols. So[6] he was speaking in the synagogue with the Jews and the [God]worshipping [Gentiles] and on the market each day to those who happened to be there" (Acts 17:16–17). The relevance of this background to Paul's performance can be illuminated by looking at the symbolical value of Athens (5.2.1) and at the marketplace as a famous site in Athens and a motif in Acts 16:6–19:40 (5.2.2). The performance itself does not take place on the marketplace, however, but rather "in the middle of the Areopagus" (Acts 17:22) before which the philosophers

[6] Gärtner understands the μὲν οὖν that connects verse 17 to verse 16 to mean "that Paul's primary topic was the idolatry in Athens." Gärtner, *Areopagus,* 46. However, it is doubtful that so much weight can be given to the particle οὖν; the other instances of Paul's teaching in the synagogue and the remark of verse 18 suggest that the primary topic was "Jesus and the resurrection". The Areopagus speech makes clear, however, how this relates to the topic of idolatry.

have brought Paul. The meaning of this reference and its cultural significance will be discussed in 5.2.3.

5.2.1. Athens

For readers of the book of Acts in the late first or early second century, Athens had become symbolic for Greek culture.[7] Being the heir of classical Athens from the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, it was famous for the philosophers and orators that were active in the city, for the wealth of statues and monumental architecture, and for its extraordinary veneration of the gods.[8] Pausanias' description of Athens provides a visual portrait of a city filled with sanctuaries for the gods, votive gifts from many cities, statues for mythical heroes, local benefactors and emperors, and many porticoes with paintings depicting the glories of Athens' past. Pausanias wrote the first book of his *Description of Greece* under Antoninus Pius, before or around 160–161 CE,[9] and highlights the many contributions of Hadrian to the grandeur of the city. However, Athens was also rich in monuments and shrines before Hadrian.[10] A contemporary portrait of pre-Hadrianic Athens can be found scattered in the works of Plutarch (ca. 46–120 CE), who emphasises the continuity between classical Athens and the Athens of his day, both in the survival of ancient monuments and in the behaviour of its inhabitants.[11] The city had changed profoundly during the Hellenistic period, but in the perception of Plutarch, Athens represented the living presence of classical Greek culture.[12] The people were known for their benevolence (φιλανθρωπία) and kindness (χρηστότης), according to Plutarch.[13] At the same time, a letter from Pliny the Younger shows an awareness that the city had lost much of its ancient grandeur.[14]

If this was the general reputation of the city, how does the author of Acts portray it? In the book of Acts, two characteristics of Athens are highlighted. The narrative about the Athenian episode opens with the provocation of Paul's

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[7] Cf. recently Kuin, "Sulla". On Athens see also Raja, *Development*, 91–136; Worthington, *Athens*.

[8] Cf., e.g., Pausanias, 1.17.1; 1.24.3.

[9] Cf. Pausanias 7.20.6 and Frazer, *Pausanias*, 1:xvi; Burgersdijk, *Pausanias*, 24.

[10] On the extensive remodelling of Athens under Hadrian, cf., e.g., Etienne, *Athènes*.

[11] Plutarch, *Sera* 15 (*Mor.* 559B). Cf. Podlecki, "Plutarch", 232.

[12] Frazier, "Athènes", 80. This makes it unlikely that, as Clare Rothschild suggests, "the Lukan Paul visits *classical* as opposed to contemporary Athens", that "the author transports his audience to a bygone era." Rothschild, *Paul*, 52. In the perception of first-century Greeks, coming to Athens was experienced as entering the classical Athens that remained alive among them.

[13] Plutarch, *Arist.* 27.4.

[14] Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 8.24.6. Thanks to David Evans for this reference. His thesis examines in depth the origins of the Athenian church in the first two centuries CE against the background of the development of Athens in this period. Evans, "Christians in Athens".

spirit "when he saw that the city was full of idols" (θεωροῦντος κατείδωλον οὖσαν τὴν πόλιν, Acts 17:16).[15] The many statues that made Athens famous in the ancient world were, from the Jewish perspective of Paul and Luke, a provocative display of idolatry.[16] The significance of this opening verse becomes clear in the Areopagus speech, which takes Paul's observation of Athens' many σεβάσματα as a point of departure to proclaim the God who "does not dwell in handmade temples", "is not taken care of by human hands" and is not "like gold, silver or stone, the product of human art and conception".[17]

The second characteristic of Athens highlighted in Acts is that its citizens and temporary residents "devoted their leisure to nothing else but to say or to hear something new" (17:21). As I will argue later (§5.3), negative stereotypes of Athenian laziness and inquisitiveness may be at the background of this characterization, but it also suggests a certain openness to the Gospel that comes to them as a "new teaching" (17:19).

Thus, Athens, as the city of Greek culture *par excellence*, is, in the perspective of Acts, a city of Gentile idolatry and of people yearning for news.

5.2.2. Synagogue and Marketplace

As background to Paul's performance, Luke narrates his speaking (διαλέγεσθαι) in the synagogue and on the marketplace. Some substance to the content of his teaching is provided in the explanatory remark[18] of verse 18: "he was bringing the good news of Jesus and [his] Resurrection" (τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν εὐηγγελίζετο).[19] This is then elaborated in the Areopagus

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[15] Cf. Stenschke, *Portrait*, 203: "This is *the* Lukan characteristic of Athens."

[16] Tischler refers to Acts 7:41 and 15:20 (εἴδωλον) for his understanding of κατείδωλον, which he regards as a coinage of the author. Tischler, *Diener*, 147. On the meaning of παροξύνω, cf. below, §5.5.4. For another example of a probable Lukan neologism (συνομοροῦσα, Acts 18:7), see Koet, "Close", 186.

[17] On the central position of these three negations in the speech, cf. below, §5.4.2 sub b. Cf. also Jipp, "Areopagus", 570: "Luke's decision to highlight Athens as filled with idols indicates that the subject of Paul's speech will contain a polemic against idolatry."

[18] The use of the imperfect tense makes clear that the ὅτι clause is not part of the direct speech, but an explanatory remark of the narrator.

[19] The Greek usage of adding articles to personal names makes the intentional ambivalence in the text difficult to translate. Inserting a possessive pronoun probably provides the best rendition of the ambiguity of the Greek, because Resurrection can thus be interpreted both as the name of a female goddess thought to be the spouse of the Jesus proclaimed by Paul and as the central event of which Paul was to be a witness (cf. Acts 13:32–33). On the one hand, the remark should explain why some philosophers thought that Paul was introducing foreign divinities (plural): they thought that "Resurrection" was some sort of goddess; on the other hand, what Paul was preaching was simply the resurrection of Jesus, as becomes clear in the Areopagus speech (vs. 31). The point of the text is that these philosophers are so foolish that they misunderstand this: as a reader, one is supposed to laugh here. Cf. further below, §5.3.

speech, which responds to the desire of the philosophers to "know what this new teaching is that is given [lit. spoken] by you" (17:19) and culminates in the appointment of a man whom God has resurrected from the dead (17:31).

διαλέγεσθαι is an important verb for Paul's activity in the book of Acts: from the thirteen instances of this verb in the New Testament, ten occur in the book of Acts, all with Paul as subject.[20] Louw and Nida distinguish two basic meanings of the verb. The first is "to argue about differences of opinion", the second "to speak in a somewhat formal setting and probably implying a more formal use of language."[21] BDAG categorises the lexical evidence differently and distinguishes between "to engage in speech interchange, esp. of instructional discourse that frequently includes exchange of opinions" and "to instruct about something" and notes that in many instances, it is hard to decide which of the two is foregrounded in the context.[22] The distinction of Louw and Nida has the benefit of clarifying that in all the instances in Acts, not the difference of opinion, but the somewhat more elevated style of speech is central to the usage of the verb. BDAG rightly points at the instructional nature of the discourse, which may vary in its degree of interaction with the audience. The instructional nature of Paul's διαλέγεσθαι is confirmed in the immediate context by the response of the philosophers, who want to know "what this new *teaching* is that is being spoken by you" (τίς ἡ καινὴ αὕτη ἡ ὑπὸ σοῦ λαλουμένη διδαχή). Other contexts in which Paul engages in this instructional discourse are the synagogue (17:2; 18:4, 19; 19:8), the school of Tyrannus (19:9), the room on the second floor in Troas (20:7, 9), and before Felix (24:25), when Paul also denies having done this in the temple (24:12). Kemmler, in a detailed study of Acts 17:2–4, has shown that the instructional nature of this discourse implies the use of some form of argumentative reasoning.[23] In the synagogue, this is obviously argumentation from Scripture, such as can be found in the synagogue speech of Acts 13:16–41; on the marketplace, the reader should probably imagine the type of argumentation that is exemplified in the Areopagus speech.

Sandnes remarks that the verb διαλέγομαι evokes the dialogical technique of Socrates,[24] but the combination with πρός + accusative for Paul's activity on the agora makes this unlikely. Whereas Paul's διαλέγεσθαι in the synagogue is followed by a dative, suggesting instructional discourse carried out

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[20] The Gospel of Mark uses διαλέγομαι once (Mark 9:34), probably for stylistic variety as equivalent of διαλογίζομαι, which is much more frequent in the synoptic Gospels, but absent from Acts. Cf. Kilpatrick, "Διαλέγεσθαι". See further Heb 12:4; Jude 1:9. The verb occurs seven times in the LXX.

[21] Louw and Nida, s.v. διαλέγομαι, 33.26 and 33.446.

[22] BDAG, s.v. διαλέγομαι.

[23] Kemmler, *Faith*, 18–32.

[24] Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates", 21.

together with the Jews and God-fearers (dativus comitativus or, perhaps, instrumentalis), the use of πρός + accusative indicates discourse "*to* those who happen to be there",[25] which implies less mutual discussion and more lecturing. In fact, the practice in the synagogue is closer to the Socratic method than the practice on the marketplace.

The difference between the dative complement and the prepositional phrase deserves attention. The only other instance of διαλέγεσθαι πρός + accusative is in Acts 24:12, where Paul denies that he spoke *to* anyone in the temple. On the other hand, the dative complement is reserved for synagogue contexts (17:2, 17; 18:19) and the apartment of Troas (20:7), implying a school setting where the interaction with the audience is an integral part of the teaching (note Luke's praise of the Jews in Berea, who examine the Scriptures to see if Paul's interpretation is correct).[26]

The other verb used for Paul's activity on the marketplace is εὐηγγελίζετο (cf. above, §5.4.3 sub a): he was bringing a good message about Jesus and the resurrection. Bringing the good news was the purpose of Paul's coming over from Troas to Macedonia and Achaia, and thus to Athens (Acts 16:10). Thus, it is as messenger of God that Paul is engaged in instructional discourse with Jews and God-fearers in the synagogue and to those who happen to be at the marketplace.

Both locations connect this episode to other episodes in Acts. Paul's speaking with Jews and God-fearers in the synagogue has been portrayed extensively in Acts 13:16–41 (cf. above, chapter 5). The marketplace is a motif that is specific for this subsection of Acts, Acts 16:6–19:40.[27] In the other references to ἀγοραί in Acts, the judicial function stands out, the agora being the location where governors judge cases (16:19), where marketplace-advocates hang around (17:5) and where the proconsuls have their court days (19:38). This context may resonate in the Athenian episode, where the agora is the place where Paul encounters philosophers whose words recall the accusations against Socrates (cf. below, §5.7.1).

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[25] On the difference, cf. Kemmler, *Faith*, 30–31. In 18:4; 19:9; 20:9 and 24:25 the verb is used without complements.

[26] Acts 17:11, cf. Kemmler, 32–35. On rabbinic evidence for interaction of synagogue preachers with their audience, cf. Bregman, "Darshan".

[27] In Acts 16:19, Paul and Silas are dragged to the ἀγορά before the authorities; in Acts 17:5, the Jews use "some malicious men from the marketplace-orators" (τῶν ἀγοραίων ἄνδρας τινὰς πονηροὺς) to stir up the local population (cf. Tsalampouni, "Agoraioi"). Here in 17:17, Paul speaks on the ἀγορά, and in 19:38, the secretary of the Ephesian popular assembly refers Demetrius and his colleagues to the "courtdays (ἀγοραῖοι [sc. ἡμεραι]) and the proconsuls". These are the only instances of ἀγορά and ἀγοραῖος in Acts, all within chapters 16–19. To the lexical evidence may be added that the βήμα on which Gallio presides the case against Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:12) is to be identified with the *rostra* on the Corinthian agora (on βήματα cf. below, §6.2.1).

The marketplace in Athens[28] was a vital centre of Athenian commerce, politics and religion, not only in classical Athens, but also throughout the Hellenistic and Early Imperial period. Earlier scholarship tended to highlight a process of musealization, which turned a once lively urban centre into a museum of artefacts celebrating Athens' past.[29] Although this process is well attested, historians now argue that it did not inhibit the continued use of the agora for commercial, political and social purposes.[30] On the agora, Paul shares his stage with lawyers engaged in dramatic plaidoyers, patrons who display their wealth and social status, priests engaged in the spectacle of cult activities, actors who hope to receive gifts in return for their entertainment and teachers active in providing instruction to their pupils and occasionally attracting the attention of other bystanders. It is here, where so many 'performers' of one kind or another compete, that Luke situates Paul's teaching activity.

Finally, the reference to the agora of Athens evokes those who performed on this marketplace before. In view of the allusion to the accusation of Socrates in the words of the philosophers in this episode,[31] this ancient archetype of the philosopher comes first to mind. Socrates' activity on the agora implied that his teaching was publicly accessible for everyone, as Xenophon and Plato emphasise.[32] Likewise, Paul speaks here to "everyone who happens to be there": the agora as location implies a broad and diverse audience.[33] Another famous figure in connection with the Athenian agora is Demosthenes, the archetypal Greek orator. In my discussion of the script of Paul's performance (§5.7.1), I will evaluate the extent to which Paul's performance recalls the activities of Socrates and/or Demosthenes.

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[28] Most probably the ancient agora, and not the Roman Agora that had been built adjacent to it, although cf. Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2579–80. Paul may well have used the Roman agora for his teaching as well, but if Luke wanted to highlight any particular connotations of the Roman agora, he should have been more specific.

[29] Reflected in Keener, 3:2579. Keener refers to McRay, "Athens", 139.

[30] Sielhorst argues this for the Hellenistic marketplaces, but speaks of "Sakralisierung und Musealisierung" of the Athenian agora from the late first century BCE onwards and states, "Gegenüber dieser neuen Funktion spielten die politischen, judikativen und merkantilen Funktionen keine Rolle mehr." Sielhorst, *Hellenistische Agorai*, 157. However, Dickenson has subsequently challenged this view, arguing that the evidence from Pausanias is misleading, because Pausanias concentrates on the monumental buildings in his descriptions but neglects the social practices that continued to be connected to them. Dickenson, *Agora*, 258–64; 396–401. His findings are affirmed by Fouquet, *Bauen*, 303.

[31] Cf. Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates". And below, §5.7.1.

[32] Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.10; Plato, *Apol.* 17C.

[33] Cf. also Philo, *Spec.* 1.321–322, quoted above in §1.2.4 sub a. Cf. Noack, Gottesbewusstsein, 27–29.

5.2.3. Areopagus

Paul's speech in Athens, which forms the centrepiece of this episode, is located "in the middle of the Areopagus" (17:22). Ἄρειος πάγος basically denotes the Areios hill, a name perhaps derived originally from the *Arai*, goddesses of vengeance, but in classical literature explained as "hill of Ares", because this god was the first who was judged on the hill.[34] Moreover, it was used as the term for the court on this hill, as a location where trials were held. Finally, the council that presided these trials, the Council of the Areopagus (ἡ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλή) could be referred to through ellipsis as Ἄρειος πάγος.[35] In Roman times, the council addressed many other issues besides homicide,[36] and it has been suggested that it carried out these more regular duties in the Royal Stoa on the agora.[37] On these grounds, Ernst Curtius was the first to argue that the Royal Stoa was the place where the philosophers took Paul.[38] It will be shown below, however, that it is more likely that the narrative envisages Paul being brought before the Areopagus council in its traditional court on the Areios hill.

a) Reference of Ἄρειος πάγος in Acts 17:19 and 22

The Areopagus is mentioned twice in this pericope: in Acts 17:19, where the philosophers brought Paul ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον, and in Acts 17:22, where Paul stands up to speak ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ Ἀρείου πάγου. In addition, verse 34 mentions Dionysius the Areopagite, a member of the class of former magistrates that constituted the Areopagus Council.

The expression in Acts 17:19, ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον ἤγαγον, can be translated in two ways, either as "they brought him onto the *Areios pagos",* as a

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[34] For the discussion of its etymology cf. Zerhoch, *Erinys*, 303–4.

[35] Cf. Inscription 796B in Dittenberger, *Sylloge*, 2:481–82, Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 50.2; Seneca the Younger, *Tranq.* 5.1, Cicero, *Off.* 1.75; *Rep.* 1.43.

[36] For example, Plutarch narrates about Cicero: "For Cratippus the Peripatetic he obtained the Roman citizenship from Caesar, now in power, and he also induced the council of the Areiopagus to pass a decree requesting him to remain at Athens and discourse with the young men, and thus be an ornament to the city."[36] Plutarch, *Cic.* 24.5 (Perrin, LCL). On the tasks of the Areopagus in Roman times, cf. recently Fournier, *Tutelle*, 137–57.

[37] In Ps.-Demosthenes, *Or.* 25.23, the anonymous orator brings in some examples of the great benefits of Athenian government. Specifically, he is making the point that when its various gremia come together, they deliberate in quietness. In this context, he says about the council of the Areopagus: τὸ τὴν ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλήν, ὅταν ἐν τῇ βασιλείῳ στοᾷ καθεζομένη περισχοινίσηται, κατὰ πολλὴν ἡσυχίαν ἐφ' ἑαυτῆς εἶναι. "The Council of the Areopagus, when it is roped off sitting in the Royal Stoa, is on its own with much quietness." Cf. further Hemer, "Paul at Athens".

[38] Curtius and Milchhoefer, *Stadtgeschichte*, 262–63.

reference to the hill, or as "they brought him before the Areopagus", as a reference to the council. The narrative context supports the latter interpretation.[39] In this part of Acts, Paul and other disciples are brought before all kinds of local authorities, fulfilling Jesus' prediction in Luke 21:12. Often, Luke uses a form of ἄγειν in combination with ἐπί, though he also uses other expressions. The evidence is shown in the table below:[40]

Table 3: Bringing before Authorities in Luke and Acts

Passage	Verb for 'taking'	Verb for 'bringing'	Preposition	Magistrate or council
Luke 21:12 (programmatic)	ἐπιβαλοῦσιν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν […]	ἀπαγομένους	ἐπί	βασιλεῖς καὶ ἡγεμόνας
Luke 23:1 (paradigmatic)		ἤγαγον αὐτόν	ἐπί	τὸν Πιλᾶτον
Acts 6:12 (Stephen)	συνήρπασαν αὐτόν	ἤγαγον	εἰς	τὸ συνέδριον
Acts 16:19–20	ἐπιλαβόμενοι τὸν Παῦλον καὶ τὸν Σιλᾶν	εἵλκυσαν εἰς τὴν ἀγοράν	ἐπί	τοὺς ἄρχοντας
[idem]		προσαγαγόντες αὐτούς		τοῖς στρατηγοῖς
Acts 17:5		προαγαγεῖν	εἰς	τὸν δῆμον
Acts 17:6		ἔσυρον Ἰάσονα καί τινας ἀδελφούς	ἐπί	τοὺς πολιτάρχας
Acts 17:19	ἐπιλαβόμενοί τε αὐτοῦ	ἤγαγον [placed after ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον]	ἐπί	τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον
Acts 18:12	κατεπέστησαν ὁμοθυμαδὸν οἱ	ἤγαγον αὐτόν	ἐπί	τὸ βῆμα [of Gallio]

[39] Graindor refers to the legal procedure of the ἀπαγωγή, which the LSJ dictionary defines as "a summary process by which a person caught in the act might be arrested by any citizen and brought before the magistrates" (LSJ s.v. ἀπαγωγή). Graindor, *Athènes*, 121. Lestang notes that the phrase ἄγειν ἔπι in the sense of "to bring before a tribunal" is attested first in Herodotus (*Histories* 3.156.2). Lestang, "Louange", 394.

[40] Cf. further Acts 4:3, 7; 5:27; 22:30; 25:30. Brélaz notes the "special concern of the author of Acts for institutions and for legal issues" and praises the accuracy of the terminology used for local magistrates. Brélaz, "Center", 126.

	᾽Ιουδαῖοι τῷ Παύλῳ		
Acts 18:17	ἐπιλαβόμενοι δὲ πάντες Σωσθένην τὸν ἀρχισυνάγωγον	ἔτυπτον	ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος
Acts 19:29, 37	συναρπάσαντες Γάϊον καὶ Ἀρίσταρχον	ἠγάγετε γὰρ τοὺς ἄνδρας	
Acts 21:30	ἐπιλαβόμενοι τοῦ Παύλου	εἷλκον αὐτόν	

The second reference to the Areopagus is in verse 22, where Paul is said to be "standing in the midst of the Areopagus". Again, this could be a reference to a place (the *Areios* hill or the Areopagus courtyard) or (elliptically) to the Council of the Areopagus as a group of persons in the midst of whom Paul stood. Ramsay commented that standing in the middle of a hill "is in Greek an absurdity",[41] but the expression can very well be taken to refer to a location when it is understood as a reference to the enclosed courtyard on the hill where the council held its trials. The Areopagus is described by Pausanias as a sacred, enclosed precinct,[42] and Aristotle speaks of murder trials held "*in* the Areopagus",[43] that is to say, "in the sacred precinct, under the open sky" (ἐν ἱερῷ καὶ ὑπαίθριοι).[44] Alternatively, the reference to the Areopagus could be interpreted as an elliptic form of the "Council of the Areopagus", in line with other passages in Acts where "in the midst of" is followed by a group of persons rather than a location.[45] Both when understood as reference to the courtyard, and as an elliptic reference to the Council, verse 22 supports interpreting verse 19 as "they brought him before the Areopagus [council]".

Further parallels support the idea that people were brought 'before' the Areopagus Council for trial 'in' the Areopagus court: in Diogenes Laërtius, a similar expression, "to be brought up (in)to the Areopagus" (εἰς Ἄρειον

[41] Ramsay, *Paul*, 191.

[42] Pausanias 1.28.6 mentions a monument to Oedipus ἐντὸς τοῦ περιβόλου, "within the enclosure".

[43] Aristotle, *Ath. pol.* 57.3: εἰσὶ δὲ φόνου δίκαι […] ἐν Ἀρείῳ πάγῳ. The usage of ἐν for the Areopagus contrasts with other trials held ἐπὶ Παλλαδίῳ (Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 57.4).

[44] Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 57.4.

[45] Barrett argues that the usage of the preposition ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ throughout Acts suggests that in verse 22, Ἀρείου πάγου refers to a group of people rather than a location, cf. Luke 2:46; 8:7; 10:3; 22:27; 24:36; Acts 1:15; 2:22; 4:7; 27:21. But "in the midst of" can also refer to a location, as in Luke 22:55, where there is a fire "in the middle (ἐν μέσῳ) of the courtyard". Cf. also Luke 21:21 and Mark 6:47.

ἀναχθήναι πάγον) is used to indicate a trial in the Areopagus court.[46] The more frequent expression is to "summon (in)to the Areopagus" (εἰς Ἄρειον πάγον προσκαλεῖσθαι), where the court on the hill and the council presiding in the court are both implied in the reference to the Areopagus.[47] Finally, Plutarch relates that Demosthenes brought Antiphon before the council of the Areopagus in words closely resembling those used in Acts 17:19: "having taken him, he brought him up before the Areopagus Council (συλλαβὼν ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλὴν ἀνήγαγε).[48]

On the other hand, those who argue for the interpretation that Paul was "brought onto the Areios hill" usually do so in order to suggest that Paul was taken by the philosophers to a quiet place for a debate.[49] However, there is no single reference in ancient literature that suggests that the Areios hill functioned as a place for philosophical debate.[50] Rather, in all references to the hill, it functions as the location of a very severe and famous court of the ancient world.[51]

In conclusion, although it cannot be ruled out that Paul was brought before the Council of the Areopagus as it met on the agora (as argued by Colin Hemer),[52] it is more likely that Luke wants his readers to envisage a third location (after synagogue and agora), the courtyard on the Areios hill: a location with great symbolic value.

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[46] Diogenes Laërtius 2.8.101.

[47] Diogenes Laërtius 2.11.116; Demosthenes, [*Theocr.*] 29; Lucian, *Vit. Auct.* 7; *Tim.* 46; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1315b23–24.

[48] Plutarch, *Dem.* 14.4.

[49] A recent proponent of this interpretation is Scornaienchi, "Paolo", 211, who, in the spirit of Dibelius, interprets the episode as a philosophical debate, rather than an interrogation, and compares it with Cicero's dialogue *De Natura Deorum.*

[50] As already noted by Graindor, *Athènes*, 122.

[51] The only exception could be Lucian, *Pisc.* 15–16, where Philosophy suggests, while being on the agora: Ἀπίωμεν εἰς Ἄρειον πάγον, μᾶλλον δὲ εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν αὐτήν, ὡς ἂν ἐκ περιωπῆς ἅμα καταφανείη πάντα ἐν τῇ πόλει ("Let us go to the Areopagus, or rather, to the Acropolis itself, so that at the same time we may get a bird's eye view of everything in the city"). But since this dialogue recounts a formal trial of the ancient philosophers against Frankness, held before Philosophy as judge, the fame of the Areopagus as a court location is probably in view in this passage as well. The sense of the passage is that, instead of going to the Areopagus as the most obvious location of the trial, they go to the Acropolis in order to have a good view of the city.

[52] Hemer, "Paul at Athens".

Table 4: Interpretations of Areopagus in Acts 17:19 and 22

Denotation of Ἄρειος πάγος	Acts 17:19	Acts 17:22
The hill called Ἄρειος πάγος	Good rendition of Greek; unlikely because of the context	Awkward Greek; unlikely because of the context
The courtyard on the hill, called Ἄρειος πάγος	Other preposition expected (εἰς instead of ἐπί): unlikely rendition of the Greek	Plausible: Focuses on the connotation of the place, rather than on the Council as audience
The Council of the Areopagus, elliptically referred to as Ἄρειος πάγος	Preferable in view of the context; ellipsis is sufficiently attested in contemporary texts	Also possible; but audience of speech is not limited to the Council

b) Connotation of the Areopagus as Place of Justice

Aelius Aristides writes about the place to the north of the agora, an elevation on the slopes of the Acropolis:[53]

> Just as prophetic waters and exhalations draw their strength from the very spot where they rise, so this place seems to exhale a knowledge of justice which in its clarity is as close as can be to that enjoyed by the gods. So great is the consensus with which this court has been honoured from all quarters that the defeated are as contented as the victors, and all magistracies and councils including most importantly the popular assembly are as laymen by the standards of the justice residing in this place.[54]

Pausanias describes the precinct, including the stones on which defendants and prosecutors stood, an altar to Athena Areia, a sanctuary to the Semnai or Furies, cult images of Pluto, Hermes and Earth, where those who had received acquittal in the Areopagus (ἐν Ἀρείῳ πάγῳ) would sacrifice, and a monument to Oedipus.[55] As throughout Athens, shrines and statues are omnipresent.

[53] Archeologists suggest that the Areopagus court was probably located under the complex which today houses the church of St. Dionysius the Areopagite. Cf. Bodnar, Travlos, and Frantz, "Church"; Letzner, *Athen*, 65–66.

[54] Aelius Aristides, *Or.* 1.46–47 (Trapp, LCL, slightly modified). ἀλλ' ὥσπερ τὰ ὕδατα ὅσα μαντικὰ καὶ πνεύματα αὐτόθεν ἰσχύει, οὕτως καὶ οὗτος ὁ χῶρος ὥσπερ ἀνιέναι δοκεῖ τὴν τοῦ δικαίου γνῶσιν ἐναργῆ καὶ τῆς παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς ὡς δυνατὸν ἐγγυτάτω. καὶ τοσούτῳ τετίμηται παρὰ πάντων τῷ συγκεχωρηκότι, ὥσθ' οἱ μὲν ἡττώμενοι στέργουσιν ὁμοίως τοῖς κεκρατηκόσιν, ἀρχαὶ δὲ πᾶσαι καὶ συνέδρια τά τε ἄλλα καὶ τὸ μέγιστον ὁ δῆμος πάντες ἰδιῶται πρὸς τὰς ἐν τούτῳ τῷ τόπῳ δίκας εἰσίν [εἴκοντες].

[55] Pausanias 1.28.5–8.

The council that gathered in this court was proverbial for its justice, severity and sanctity.[56] So great was its reputation for severity, that it was said of Theophrastus of Eresus, the famous head of the Lyceum after Aristotle, that he "failed in a speech before the Council of the Areopagus, and made the excuse that he was struck dumb by the prestige of the assembly."[57] Notably, in Chariton's novel *Callirhoe* (first-second century CE, dramatic date ca. 400 BCE), the Athenian reputation for curiosity and inquisitiveness is connected with their reputation for litigation: someone who comes to Athens risks being brought to trial for the most trivial reasons. And then, "the Areopagus is near at hand and their officials are sterner than tyrants."[58] Similarly, Lucian depicts the Areopagus as a site that is filled daily with the noise of pleading lawyers and where trials attract crowds of onlookers.[59] Justice is a public spectacle in the ancient world, and Paul's speech is not to be envisaged as a philosophical debate held in quiet seclusion, but as a public performance of a messenger of God visible to many.

Knowing the fame of the Areopagus as a severe and sacred court helps to appreciate the deep impression that Paul's performance here would have made on ancient audiences of the book of Acts. And the setting is fitting for Paul's message: "God proclaims to the humans that everyone everywhere should repent, because he has set a day on which he will judge the inhabited world in

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[56] Cf. Cicero, *Att.* 1.14.5: *Romanae autem se res sic habent. senatus* Αρειος πάγος. *nihil constantius, nihil severius, nihil forties*. Cf. also Valerius Maximus 2.4; Seneca the Younger, *Tranq.* 5.1. Several centuries earlier, Isocrates' Areopagiticus speech praised the court as the summum of sobriety and virtue (Isocrates, *Areopagiticus* 7.37–38). Cf. also Aeschylus' *Eumenides*, which provided a founding myth for the council by staging its institution by Athena for the trial of Orestes.

[57] Aelian, *Var. hist.* 8.12 (Wilson, LCL, modified). ἐξέπεσε γὰρ καὶ οὗτος ἐπὶ τῆς ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου βουλῆς λέγων, καὶ ταύτην ἀπολογίαν προεφέρετο, ὅτι κατεπλάγη τὸ ἀξίωμα τοῦ συνεδρίου.

[58] Chariton 1.12 (Goold, LCL). Ἄρειος πάγος εὐθὺς ἐκεῖ καὶ ἄρχοντες τυράννων βαρύτεροι.

[59] In the satirical dialogue *Twice Accused,* Pan (whose cave is just below the Areopagus) is introduced as saying "Heavens, what a hubbub! What a shout they raised, Justice, and how eagerly they are gathering at a run, dragging each other up the hill, straight for the Areopagus! Hermes, too, is here already, so busy yourselves with the cases, empanel your juries and give your verdicts as usual; I am going back to the cave to pipe one of the passionate melodies with which I am in the habit of provoking Echo. I am sick of trials and speeches, for I hear the pleaders on the Areopagus every day. [ἀκροάσεων δὲ καὶ λόγων τῶν δικανικῶν ἄλις ἔχει μοι ὁσημέραι τῶν ἐν Ἀρείῳ πάγῳ δικαζομένων ἀκούοντι.]" Lucian, *Bis acc.* 12 (Harmon, LCL). Although the dialogue is set in a mythical setting, the reference to the noise of the advocates on the Areopagus seems to be a satirical comment on the contemporary situation.

righteousness" (verses 30–31). Paul posits God as supreme judge over even the most awe-inspiring human court.[60]

5.3. Setting: Persons

On the Athenian agora, where Paul teaches as he is accustomed, the scene begins to unfold with the appearance of philosophers on the stage. Verses 18–21 narrate how they bring Paul before the Areopagus, as typical Athenians who want to know the latest news.

> And also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers were conversing with him,[61] and some said: "What does this rook want to say?" and others: "He seems to be a herald of foreign divinities", because he was bringing the good message about Jesus and [his] Resurrection. And having taken hold of him, they brought him before the Areopagus saying: "Can we know what this new teaching is that is spoken by you? For you bring some strange [or: surprising] things into our ears. We want to know, then, what these things are supposed to be." And all Athenians and the resident strangers devoted their leisure to nothing else but to say or hear the latest news (τι καινότερον). (Acts 17:18–21).

The use of the imperfect συνέβαλλον suggests that the conversation of the philosophers with Paul on the agora is still part of the background sketch, a typically Athenian scene where "those who happen to be on the agora" include some philosophers from the two most prominent schools of philosophy at the time.[62] In their curiosity about Paul's teaching, they represent all Athenians, as verse 21 makes clear. This further suggests that Paul's speech in the Areopagus targets not a specifically philosophical audience, but a typical Athenian audience, which includes philosophers as typical Athenian figures.[63]

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[60] Cf. already Bengel on Acts 17:31: *Apte hoc in* Areopago *dictum, ubi ius dicebatur.* Bengelius, *Gnomon*, 507.

[61] Cf. LSJ, s.v. συμβάλλω I.11: λόγους is the implied object (cf. Acts 4:15). The LSJ refers to Plutarch, [*Apoph. lac.*] 222C: ἔγνω οὐχ οἷόν τε εἶναι συμβαλεῖν αὐτῷ ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, which is, however, translated by F.C. Babbitt in the Loeb Classical Library as "when he realized that it was not possible to meet Cyrus on that day". Indeed, the LSJ includes intransitive "to come together" as possible meaning of the active voice (συμβάλλω I.5). Thus, one may question whether λόγους is to be supplied, but it is clear that "to throw together with someone" does not have a hostile connotation here. Cf. also BDAG, *s.v.* συμβάλλω, "(1) to engage in mutual pondering of a matter". Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:154. Cf. also van Unnik, "Bedeutung".

[62] Scornaienchi, "Paolo", 210. Scornaienchi points out that these schools were especially prominent in Rome at the time, which could be significant if the addressee or implied audience of Acts is to be located in Rome; cf. above, §1.4.2.

[63] A number of Latin manuscripts disconnect the scene at the Areopagus entirely from the conversation with philosophers on the Agora: "In those days, the Jews took him and brought him before the Areopagus." The most plausible textual development would seem to

In the words of the philosophers, their puzzlement about Paul's teaching becomes apparent. Thus, their words explain why they take him before the Areopagus. The first question betrays a measure of contempt for Paul: A σπερμολόγος is the Greek name for a rook, used contemptibly as a designation of people who do not have a coherent philosophical system but pick and choose from various sources what they like.[64] It is an insult to Paul and thus likely to make the readers of Acts negatively predisposed towards the philosophers.[65] Malherbe points out that their view of Paul as an unsystematic street philosopher at the marketplace corresponds to Celsus' picture of Christians and of Lucian's portrait of Peregrinus.[66] The philosophers' second remark demonstrates their lack of understanding: to the intended audience of Acts, it is clear that Paul is not announcing "Jesus and [his] Resurrection" as foreign divinities (plural!).[67] Even if they only considered Jesus as a divinity proclaimed by Paul, they did not really understand his message: What Paul does announce will be clarified in the speech in the Areopagus, where Jesus will turn out to be not the divinity proclaimed by Paul, but the man appointed by the God proclaimed by Paul. Thus, the philosophers are characterised as people who look down on Paul (calling him a rook) and who do not understand his message. Moreover, they are representatives of the Athenians in general,[68] who "devoted their leisure to nothing else but to say or hear the latest news" (17:21). It is worthwhile

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be that first "in those days" was added, disconnecting the Areopagus scene from the interaction with the philosophers. This resulted in uncertainty about the identity of those who brought Paul before the Areopagus. Hence, the Jews were inserted as likely suspect. One manuscript inserts "the Athenians" (L1825). For the textual evidence and an alternative proposal of the local stemma, cf. https://ntg.cceh.uni-koeln.de/acts/ph4/coherence/4415.

[64] On σπερμολόγος, cf. also the comment of Isho'dad: "Because they thought his doctrine weak and contemptible, they called him a *word-pecker,* by the name of a bird which is called by some a *chatterer,* and by others a *pecker of words,* which is very small and despicable, which is useless for food or for delight, and its provender is either human filth, or stakes of the wood of trees." Gibson, *Isho'dad*, 27. Cf. also Jipp, "Areopagus", 571; Scornaienchi, "Paolo", 211. See Demosthenes, *De Corona* 18.127 (269); Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 32.9**;** Plutarch, *Demetr.* 902; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 19.5.3; Philo, *Legat.* 203.

[65] Rowe, "The Grammar of Life", 37.

[66] Malherbe, "Corner", 151, referring to Origenes, *Cels.* 3.50; Lucian, *Peregr.* 11–13.

[67] Cf. Menoud, "Jésus". Zmijewski, following H. Conzelmann and G. Schille, expresses doubt about this interpretation: Paul may have been labled a "herald of foreign divinities" in a more general sense, without specific reference to Jesus and the Resurrection. Zmijewski, *Apostelgeschichte*, 639. Likewise van Eck, *Handelingen*, 375. However, the explanation of the narrator is of relatively little value if it does not explain of which divinities Paul was assumed to be a herald.

[68] Usually, the established philosophical schools were not associated with rejoicing in "saying or hearing something new", but rather with loyalty to the body of doctrines attributed to the founder, creative exegesis of the founder's writings, and passing the tradition on to new generations of disciples. Cf. Runia, "Philo", 119–22; Sedley, "Allegiance". Malherbe points out that Luke turns the tables against the philosophers: not Paul, but the Athenians

to pay attention to the phrase "nothing else" (οὐδὲν ἕτερον). Quintilian criticises philosophers for not being active in public office and for retreating into school rooms and expresses a longing for philosophers who would combine their philosophical work with (political) oratory – he may have Cicero in mind, who is his hero throughout his work.[69] According to Quintilian, philosophy "is now hated for the arrogance of its name and the vices of some who are ruining its property",[70] which indicates that he represents a more common sentiment in Roman society.[71] In fact, around the time that Quintilian writes this (and the book of Acts may have been written), Domitian banishes philosophers from Rome more than once and is said to have executed people on the charge of philosophizing.[72] Also outside of Rome, the reputation of philosophers is not only positive: Lucian and Galen (authors not affiliated with a particular philosophical school) criticise the never-ending debates between the various schools of thought (αἱρέσεις).[73]

The devotion of the Athenians "to say or hear the latest news" is also reflected in other sources that portray the Athenians as inquisitive and prone to gossip, as Gray has shown.[74] Demosthenes' *First Philippic* castigates the Athenians for not fighting the Macedonian general Philip, but sitting idle and merely asking each other for any news about him.[75] Thus, their curiosity prevents them from acting. Stereotypes of Athenian inquisitiveness and philosophers' neglect of public duty may be in the background of Luke's portrait of the philosophers as typical Athenians. What the Athenians, including the philosophers, need is someone like Demosthenes to stir them to action.

At the same time, their curiosity should not only be interpreted as a negative trait: it also implies a certain receptiveness of the Athenians for the words of Paul, which is an announcement of something new: "God, having seen past the times of ignorance, *now* announces to the humans that everyone, everywhere,

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are the innovators – Paul speaks in accordance with the Jewish ancestral traditions and with pagan poets such as Aratus. Malherbe, "Corner", 152.

[69] The criticism of philosophers retreating into a corner, away from their public duties, was widespread and is countered by Paul regarding his own activity in Acts 26:26, according to Malherbe, "Corner", 155–58.

[70] *superbo nomine et vitiis quorundam bona eius corrumpentium invisam.* Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.2.9 (Russell, LCL).

[71] Cf. also Too, "Education".

[72] Cassius Dio 67.13.3. Cf. Toynbee, "Dictators", 58.

[73] An important theme throughout the works of Lucian; cf. also Philo, *Mos*. 1.21–29; Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.2.26–27. For Galen, cf. *De animi cuiuslibet peccatorum dignotione et curatione* 75–76. Cf. Alexander, "Galen".

[74] Gray, "Curiosity".

[75] Demosthenes, *1 Philip.* 10.

should repent" (17:30).[76] Their willingness to hear the teaching of Paul, which is affirmed by part of the audience after the speech ("we will hear you about this again") aligns them with, among others, Sergius Paulus (13:7), the city of Antioch (13:44), king Agrippa (25:22) and the Jews in Rome (28:22).[77]

5.4. Performance: Speech

In response to the question of the philosophers, "Can we know what this new teaching is that is spoken by you?" put to Paul before the Areopagus, Paul stands up to deliver a speech in the middle of the Areopagus (on the standing pose, cf. above, §3.4.1). This speech will be analysed as a performance by looking first at the verbs used to characterise Paul's activity in the Areopagus and then at rhetorical aspects of the speech.

5.4.1. Verbs Used to Characterise the Speaking

Jacques Dupont has noted the correspondence of τοῦτο ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν (17:23) with ὁ θεός τὰ νῦν παραγγέλλει (17:30) and has related it to the preceding narrative, in which Paul is perceived as a ξένων δαιμονίων καταγγελεύς (17:18) because Ἰησοῦν καὶ τὴν ἀνάστασιν εὐηγγελίζετο.[78] The element that unites these phrases is the verb ἀγγελλεῖν. The prefix εὐ- in εὐηγγελίζετο qualifies the message as good; the prefix κατ- functions as an intensifier, hence the usual translation 'proclaim'; and the prefix παρ- highlights the passing on of a message, usually as an order or command.[79] Through these verbs, Paul's performance in the Areopagus is presented as a continuation of his activity in the marketplace: being asked to explain what his teaching is, after the philosophers encountered him while "bringing the good news of Jesus and the resurrection", he "proclaims" God and ends by transmitting God's exhortation to repentance with a reference to Jesus' resurrection.

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[76] At the level of lexical correspondence, one may note Luke 22:20, where Jesus declares the cup after supper to be the new (καινή) covenant in his blood. For Luke at least, the newness of Paul's teaching is not necessarily negative.

[77] Stenschke notes that the curiosity of the Athenians make the "intellectual climate ideal for the proclamation of a new faith" (Stenschke, *Portrait*, 210), but emphasizes the contrast with the meagre result and concludes that for Luke, Judaism, not Greek philosophy, is the *praeparatio evangelica* (Stenschke, 223). Likewise Jervell: "'reine Heiden' lassen sich nicht bekehren." Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, 451. In §5.6, I will argue that Luke does not present the audience response to Paul's performance as meagre.

[78] Dupont, "Discours", 392.

[79] Cf. LSJ, s.v. κατά E.V; παρά G; παραγγέλλω.

When Paul says in the exordium of the speech that "this is what I am proclaiming to you", (17:23) he takes up and confirms the philosopher's perception of him as a herald (καταγγελεύς)[80] on behalf of the divine.[81] The emphatic first personal pronoun (ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν, 17:23) directs attention to Paul as the one who brings this message. As herald, he has to pass the command of God to mankind that everyone, everywhere, should repent (παραγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πάντας πανταχοῦ μετανοεῖν, Acts 17:30) in anticipation of God's day of judgment. παραγγέλλει is frequently used in Greek for the giving of orders by, for example, a general to his soldiers.[82] Also in the Septuagint, it is often used for the commands of kings, frequently in a military context.[83] Daniel 3:4 mentions a herald (κῆρυξ) who transmits a royal order to the crowds before the statue of Nebuchadnezzar (ὑμῖν παραγγέλλεται, "you are ordered"). In the New Testament, the verb is used more generally for issuing commands or instructions.[84] Of all fifty-five occurrences in LXX and NT, it is only here that it is used with God as the subject, depicting God before the Areopagus as a king who issues his orders. The syntax of verse 31 carefully distinguishes sender, addressees and content of the command. It is a command from God (ὁ θέος is subject) to humankind (τοῖς ἀνθρώποις as dative complement) and its content is formulated in an accusative and infinitive construction: "everyone, everywhere, should repent."[85] μετανοέω denotes a change of mind,[86] which becomes evident in a change of conduct: the doing of deeds worthy of this change of mind (Luke 3:8; Acts 26:20), practicing righteousness (Acts 10:35).

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[80] Cf. LSJ s.v. καταγγελεύς. An inscription in Samothrace (first century BCE) also mentions among a list of initiates a "pious initiate, herald of the sacred and crown–prized contest of the Pythia, and bearer of offerings Amatokos, son of Demetrius" (μύστης [ε]ὐσεβὴς [ὁ] κατα<γ>γε[λ]εὺς τοῦ [ἱ]εροῦ καὶ σ̣τ̣[ε]φανείτου ἀγῶνος τῶν Πυθ[ί]ων καὶ {vac.} ἱ̣ε̣ραγωγὸς Ἀ̣μάτοκος [Δ]ημητρί[ου], IG XII,8 190b.37–48, text from https:// epigraphy.packhum.org/text/79375?hs=820–845).

[81] Cf. Siffer, who notes the "motif de l'annonce" as one of the correspondences between the two speeches to Gentiles, Acts 14:15–17 and 17:22–31. Siffer, "Annonce", 530. On καταγγέλλω, cf. further above, §4.2.

[82] LSJ s.v. παραγγέλλω II.

[83] Cf. 1 Sam 23:8; 1 Kgs 15:22; 2 Chr 36:22; Ezra 1:1; Jdt 7:1; 1 Macc 5:58; 2 Macc 5:25; 12:5; 13:10; 15:10; Jer 26:14; 27:29; 28:27; 3 Macc. 1:1. In Dan 3:4, a herald (κῆρυξ) transmits a royal order to the crowds.

[84] Matt 10:5; 15:35; Mark 6:8; 8:6; 16:8; Luke 5:14; 8:29, 56; 9:21; Acts 1:4; 4:18; 5:28, 40; 10:42; 15:5; 16:18, 23; 17:30; 23:22, 30; 1 Cor 7:10; 11:17; 1 Thess 4:11; 2 Thess 3:4, 6, 10, 12; 1 Tim 1:3; 4:11; 5:7; 6:13, 17.

[85] With verbs expressing a command, an accusative and infinitive construction can be translated modally.

[86] LSJ s.v. μετανοία.

The announcement of Paul entails God's graciously not taking into account the times of their ignorance (17:30).[87] As an announcement of God's judgment, it proclaims God's βασιλεία (kingship/kingdom). In Luke 4:18, God's kingdom has been presented as good news for the poor, and Psalm 98:9 praises God for judging the world in righteousness, using the same words that recur in the climax of Paul's speech (κρινεῖ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ).

On the basis of the verbs used to characterise the speech (which share the root αγγελ* as common element), I conclude that the performance of Paul on the Areopagus is presented as an announcement of judgment on behalf of God, and a command from God to mankind to change their mind and conduct, delivered by Paul as his messenger or herald.

5.4.2. Rhetorical Aspects

In 1979, Jacques Dupont was one of the first to argue for a rhetorical approach to the speech, instead of the then prevailing thematical approach by Dibelius.[88] Although a thematical approach has its own merits, the rhetorical approach is most appropriate when considering the speech as a specimen of public performance.

The speech cannot be assigned to any of the three genres of rhetorical theory. G.A. Kennedy, a pioneer in rhetorical analysis of the speeches in Acts, assumed that the court setting implied that the speech is a specimen of judicial oratory.[89] However, Paul is not taken to the Areopagus in order to be put on trial, but in order to expound his teaching before the authorities.[90] Zweck opts for the *deliberative speech* as the rhetorical genre,[91] but ancient definitions of this genre have the advice of orators on political matters in public assemblies in view.[92] The proposal of Lestang, that the speech belongs to the epideictic genre, being a speech in praise of God, is also forced: he has to admit that two of the three principal *topoi* of a speech in praise of a deity are lacking in the Areopagus speech.[93] The conclusion must be that speeches of teachers asked to expound

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[87] The article in τῆς ἀγνοίας has an anaphoric function, referring back to the beginning of the speech when Paul spoke about the Athenians' ignorance of the God they venerated. Cf. the more explicit remarks on God's dealing with the nations in the past in Acts 14:16–17.

[88] Dupont, "Discours", 389.

[89] Kennedy, *Interpretation*, 129–32. Likewise Soards, *Speeches*, 95–100.

[90] Cf. Graindor, *Athènes*, 123. According to Gärtner, Paul was brought before the education committee of the Areopagus court for an informal inquiry. Gärtner, *Areopagus,* 55–65. That there was such an education committee of the Areopagus is doubtful, however (cf. Barnes, "Apostle", 410).

[91] Zweck, "Exordium".

[92] Cf., e.g., Quintilian, *Inst.* 3.8.14.

[93] Lestang, "Louange", 398.

their teaching, though heavily influenced by rhetorical theory and practice, do not conform to any of the three established *genres*.[94]

However, the speech does conform in general lines to the *structure* prescribed by rhetorical theory, consisting of an *exordium* (17:22–23), an *argumentatio* (24–29), and a *peroratio* (30–31).[95]

The exordium follows the rhetorical strategy of *insinuatio*, an indirect approach to the topic that was commended as suitable for more critical audiences.[96] It uses an altar-inscription as a point of departure for his speech, a well-known literary device in the first century.[97]

The body of the speech (the *argumentatio*) contains three negations as its core, as Jacques Dupont has pointed out through syntactical analysis: God does not dwell in handmade temples; he is not served by human hands; and we should not think that the divine is like gold, silver or stone.[98] Through these negations, the speech expresses Paul's critique of the idols that provoked his spirit when he encountered them in Athens (17:16):[99] God, as the one who made the world, should not be thought of as dwelling in temples or needing human care (like a statue in the Greco-Roman world received); and humankind, as made by God and therefore his offspring, should not think the divine to be like the products made by humans.[100] Kavin Rowe has rightly questioned the idea of a "deep theological *Anknüpfungspunkt* between pagan philosophical thinking and Paul's proclamation", although there are certainly parallels between Paul's speech and philosophical ideas about the divine in the Stoic and

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[94] Cf. also Anderson, *Rhetorical Theory*.

[95] Dupont distinguishes in the body between a *narratio* (24–25) and an *argumentatio* (26–29), but the division between a *narratio* and an *argumentatio* is forced, and a *narratio* is only required in judicial oratory, when the events of the case are narrated before the arguments are presented in favour of guilt or innocence of the accused. Cf. Lestang, "Louange", 396.

[96] Cf. Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates", 15; van Eck, *Handelingen*, 380–81. Cf. Rhet. Her. 1.6.9–10; 1.7.11; Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.42–50.

[97] Cf. Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, 49–50; van der Horst, "Altar", 197–98.

[98] Dupont, "Discours", 396.

[99] Gärtner, *Areopagus*; Litwak, "Prophets"; Siffer, "Annonce", 527; Strait, "Wisdom".

[100] Cf. De Zwaan: "Deze stelling, dat de mensch nl. van goddelijken huize zou wezen, dient hier slechts tot steun voor den echt Joodschen afkeer van tempels en beelden, die reeds in 17:16 uiting vond. Dat ook philosophen zich over deze uiterlijke dingen van het veelgodendom minder waardeerend hebben uitgelaten, doet aan het typisch-Joodsche van dat feit niets af [This statement, that humankind would be of divine origin, only serves to support the characteristically Jewish aversion of temples and images, which was already expressed in 17:16. That philosophers also have expressed themselves less positively about the external things of polytheism does not detract from the typical Jewishness of this fact]." De Zwaan, *Handelingen*, 120.

Platonic traditions.[101] Philo, commenting on the second commandment, likewise notes that the artists who made statues of the gods have led the whole world astray in blinding them regarding the true nature of God.[102]

Paul's speech aims at dispelling the ignorance (ἀγνοία) of the Athenians. He expresses a central Jewish belief in teaching that "gods made by hands are no gods", as it is put more concisely in Acts 19:26. In the speech at the Areopagus, the motif of ἀγνοία follows immediately on Paul's observation that the Athenians are δεισιδαιμονέστερους because they have even built an altar to a god they do not know. Although this could be interpreted by the dramatic audience as a positive *captatio benevolentiae*, to the readers of the book of Acts the link between δεισιδαιμονία and ἀγνοία suggests at least an ambivalent interpretation of this term.[103] According to Plutarch, "unlearnedness and ignorance in regard to the gods (Τῆς περὶ θεῶν ἀμαθίας καὶ ἀγνοίας) divides itself at the very beginning into two streams, of which the one produces in hardened characters, as it were in stubborn soils, atheism (τὴν ἀθεότητα), and the other in tender characters, as in moist soils, superstition (τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν)."[104] Thus, Paul's prophetic critique of idolatry takes the form of a teaching aimed at curing superstition, exhorting his audience to worship the God who made the heaven, the earth and everything in it, by changing their lives to prepare for a day of righteous judgment, i.e., by living righteously.[105] This is especially noteworthy because both Jews and Christians were regarded by Romans as adherents of a *superstitio*, in the case of the Jews because they were excessively careful in observing strange customs because their god had ordered them to do so, in the case of the Christians because they regarded a crucified man as a god.[106] In contrast, Paul is presented here as someone who teaches the Athenians about the identity of the god whom they worship ignorantly. As in Lystra, he appears as someone who seeks to counter superstition.[107] This portrait appeals both to Jewish and to Roman readers: to the former, because Paul exposes Gentile idol-worship as ignorance, and to the latter (especially elite Romans sympathetic to Stoic and/or Epicurean beliefs about the divine, such

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[101] Rowe, "The Grammar of Life", 34.

[102] Philo, *Decal.* 16.81.

[103] Cf. de Villiers and Germiquet, "Paul and Paganism in Acts 17. Superstition in Early Christianity and Graeco-Roman Society"; Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2629.

[104] Plutarch, *Superst.* 1 (165D) (Babbitt, LCL, modified).

[105] This is a motif throughout Luke-Acts: cf., e.g., Luke 1:75 ("serving God in holiness and righteousness"), Luke 3:3–14 (with concrete examples of righteous life), Acts 10:35; 24:14–16; 24:25.

[106] Cf. above, §1.5.

[107] Cf. Becker: "The accusation [against Jews and Christ-believers] of *superstitio* is both literary *topos* and polemical stereotype; it is frequently deployed against religious groups which do not conform to the milieu of Greco-Roman religion. In Acts 17:22, however, the stereotype is subverted […]." Becker, *Birth*, 57.

as Cicero, Seneca and Quintilian), because Paul criticises what they perceive as popular misconceptions about the nature and proper worship of the divine.[108]

Paul's criticism of pagan idolatry ends in the *peroratio* with a call to conversion in the light of coming judgment. Until now, the Athenians were ignorant – an ignorance that to some extent provides an excuse for their idolatry, as the ignorance of the Jews did in Peter's speech in Jerusalem (Acts 3:17).[109] However, their ignorance was not innocent, because God was tangibly near to them (17:27) and some of their own poets even attained a measure of knowledge about the nature of the divine. Now, Paul has proclaimed God's true identity to the Athenians, and they are put before the choice either to respond by a change of mind and conduct or to endure in their idolatry. Jesus' resurrection is mentioned as proof of his appointment as judge in the coming judgment; however, it is not mentioned explicitly that calling upon his name will be a means to escape God's wrath. Before a Gentile audience, the call to a changed way of life is foregrounded, not the call to faith in Jesus as God's Anointed One (likewise in Lystra, Acts 14:15).

In terms of form and style, the performance of Paul is that of an orator. After having taken a standing position (στάθεις, vs. 21)[110] and having addressed his audience as "Athenian men" (ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι), which was the conventional address of many of Demosthenes' speeches and also the way Socrates addressed his audience in his defence speech,[111] Paul delivers a speech that is structured to conform with Greco-Roman rhetorical conventions.

When compared to the description of the four styles (grand, elegant, plain, and forceful) distinguished by Demetrius' *On Style* (second century BCE),[112] it corresponds best to the grand style (μεγαλοπρέπη χαράκτηρ), with its long

[108] Cf., e.g., Seneca the Younger, *Ep.* 41. Extensive references are given in the commentary of Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2626–75. Keener rightly observes that "Luke eagerly portrays Paul as articulating the sort of providentialist ethical monotheism respected by many Greek and Roman intellectuals in this era", Keener, 3:2615.

[109] Cf. also Jesus' prayer at the cross, Luke 23:34, with a different verb. In a number of early witnesses, this prayer is omitted.

[110] Cf. above, §3.4.1.

[111] Demosthenes, *Orations*, passim; Plato, *Apol.* 17A. Remarkably, in the *Vita Alexandri* (recension α) 2.3, Demosthenes claims that he would address the Athenians only as "Athenians" if he were a stranger among them and instead addresses them as "citizens" (ἄνδρες πολῖται).

[112] The work is difficult to date with certainty; dates suggested range from the third century BCE to the first century AD. The introduction in the Loeb Classical Library favours the second century BCE. Innes and Roberts, "Style", 311.

clauses,[113] hypotactic sentences,[114] relative abundance of connective particles,[115] paeonic composition (starting and ending a clause with a long syllable),[116] usage of compound, relatively unfamiliar words,[117] several figures of speech,[118] and a quotation of a poet.[119] It lacks the lightness and charm of the elegant style, the intense brevity of the forceful style, or the clarity of the plain style. Some features of the grand style are absent, such as the use of metaphors and similes or poetic vocabulary, but this does not detract from the general impression of a grand, dignified speech.[120] Even the absence of a corresponding δέ to the μέν of verse 30 can be explained from the grand style, as Demetrius comments:

> Connectives should not correspond too precisely (e.g. *men* and *de*, "on the one hand" and "on the other hand"), since there is something trivial about exact precision.[121]

As befits a good speech, it ends with a climax in respect of its stylistic gravity: the *peroratio* (verse 30–31) is an extreme example of hypotaxis, includes extensive alliteration on the π- (παραγγέλλει [...] πάντας πανταχοῦ; πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν) and its final clause begins and ends with long syllables and has many long syllables in between (*πίστιν* παρ*ασχὼν πᾶσιν* ἀν*αστήσ*ας *αὐτ*ὸν ἐκ *νεκρῶν*, long syllables in italics). This proclamation on behalf of God has a grandeur and dignity that befits both the subject matter (divine judgment) and the place (the Areopagus).[122] Furthermore, although it contains allusions and echoes of prophetic texts, it does not contain the typical features of Luke's Septuagintal style (such as ἐγένετο, καὶ ἰδόυ), which could count as barbarisms to the narrative audience. Finally, the reference to "the divine" (τὸ θεῖον, 17:29) is "language perfectly at home among philosophically educated Greeks and Greek-speaking Jews seeking to relate to them."[123]

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[113] Cf. Demetrius, *Eloc.* 44.

[114] Especially the complex sentences of Acts 17:26–27 and 30–31. Cf. Demetrius, *Eloc.* 198.

[115] E.g. Acts 17:27: εἰ ἄρα γε […] καί γε. Cf. Demetrius, *Eloc*. 59.

[116] E.g. Acts 17:23b: τοῦτο ἐγὼ καταγγέλλω ὑμῖν.

[117] E.g. ὁροθεσίας, Acts 17:26. Cf. Demetrius, *Eloc.* 77; 92.

[118] As already noted by Dibelius: paronomasia: πάντας πανταχοῦ; parechesis: ζωὴν και πνοὴν; alliteration: πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν. Dibelius, *Aufsätze*, 54.

[119] Demetrius does not comment on this in relation to the grand style, but cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.8.10–12.

[120] Cf. also Morgenthaler, *Lukas*, 331–34.

[121] Demetrius, *Eloc.* 53 (Innes, LCL): Χρὴ δὲ καὶ τοὺς συνδέσμους μὴ μάλα ἀνταποδίδοσθαι ἀκριβῶς, οἷον τῷ "μὲν" συνδέσμῳ τὸν "δέ"· μικροπρεπὲς γὰρ ἡ ἀκρίβεια·

[122] *Contra* Pervo, who states that "a cultured Greek would dismiss these brief words as a stylistically inadequate and muddled collection of clichés with an unexpected and improbable conclusion." Pervo, Acts, 429–430.

[123] Cf. Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2666.

5.5. Audience Response

After the speech on the Areopagus, the narrative relates a twofold response (οἱ μέν [...] οἱ δέ [...]). The narrative logic suggests that this response is voiced by the same philosophers who brought Paul before the Areopagus, although Luke does not press this point and one may imagine more Athenians present who had accompanied the philosophers to the Areopagus or were present there already. The distinction between philosophers and Athenians in general is not very important to Luke, since the philosophers, in their eagerness to learn new things, act as typical Athenians (17:21).

The initial two-fold audience response consists of some jeering at Paul and others expressing their intention to hear Paul another time. The intention to hear Paul again should be interpreted as an honest expression of interest in Paul's teaching that clearly contrasts with the mocking response of the first group,[124] not as a polite way of expressing disinterest.[125] That the response of the second group is presented in direct speech, whereas the response of the mockers is narrated in a single verb, has the effect of emphasizing the positive response: "After they heard about the raising of the dead, some [indeed] were mocking, but others said: 'We will hear you about this again.'"

Interpreted in this way, verses 32–34 show a strong analogy with Acts 13:42–43, the response and aftermath of Paul's extensive speech in Antioch. The table below shows the corresponding elements (note that the order of the elements in the texts is slightly different, however).

Table 5: Correspondence between Acts 13:42–43 and Acts 17:32–34

Acts 13	Chapter 17
42a Ἐξιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν	33 (!) οὕτως ὁ Παῦλος ἐξῆλθεν ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν.
42b παρεκάλουν εἰς τὸ μεταξὺ σάββατον λαληθῆναι αὐτοῖς τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα.	32 (!) Ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν οἱ μὲν ἐχλεύαζον, οἱ δὲ εἶπαν• ἀκουσόμεθά σου περὶ τούτου καὶ πάλιν.
43 λυθείσης δὲ τῆς συναγωγῆς ἠκολούθησαν πολλοὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ τῶν σεβομένων προσηλύτων τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Βαρναβᾷ, οἵτινες προσλαλοῦντες αὐτοῖς ἔπειθον αὐτοὺς προσμένειν τῇ χάριτι τοῦ θεοῦ.	34 τινὲς δὲ ἄνδρες κολληθέντες αὐτῷ ἐπίστευσαν, ἐν οἷς καὶ Διονύσιος ὁ Ἀρεοπαγίτης καὶ γυνὴ ὀνόματι Δάμαρις καὶ ἕτεροι σὺν αὐτοῖς.

[124] Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates", 19; Gaventa, *Acts*, 254.

[125] As it is interpreted by, e.g., Graindor, *Athènes*, 123.

The mixed response of contempt for and genuine interest in Paul's teaching also explains why Paul can leave the Areopagus without the need for a trial, although Luke does not elaborate on this.[126]

5.6. Concluding Narrative

"Therefore, Paul went out from their midst." Paul has brought God's message in the middle of the Areopagus and has aroused an eagerness to hear him again. One may sense a touch of pride in Luke's concise remark. Finally, going beyond the willingness to hear Paul again, "some persons (ἄνδρες, including a γυνή) joined him (κολληθέντες) and believed" (17:33–34): these men apparently come from the group that Paul has just left and whose response has been noted.

Κολλάω derives from κόλλα, "glue", and hence, the verb denotes sticking things together and, more generally, joining and uniting things. In the Septuagint, however, it is also used in a metaphorical way for following someone closely.[127] This idiomatic usage of κολλάω is uncommon in non-biblical Greek,[128] and may have emerged due to the influence of the idiomatic usage of the Hebrew דבק. In Acts it is often used in the context of discipleship (Acts 5:13; 9:26), and that is how it functions in 17:34 as well.[129] These men "stick to Paul", accompanying him in all his activities, as was characteristic for the

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[126] "Il me semble que Paul put comparaître effectivement devant le Conseil de l'Aréopage, mais moins pour y être jugé que dans le cadre d'une audition préliminaire, destinée à informer les Aréopagites – toujours gardiens de l'éthique et des lois – du contenu de la doctrine nouvelle qu'il répandait. Le caractère insolite de ses propos sur la resurrection ayant convaincu qu'elle ne représentait pas une menace pour l'ordre religieux de la cite, Paul aurait alor été laisse libre. Si l'audition avait abouti à un procès, l'affair aurait certainement été qualifiée comme crime d'impiété." Fournier, *Tutelle*, 148.

[127] The metaphor is explicated in Jeremiah 13:11 (NRSV): "For as the loincloth clings to one's loins, so I made the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah cling to me." 'To cling to' means to follow someone closely, and thus, in relation to God, to follow his commandments and not depart from his ways (cf. Deut 10:12; 2 Kgs 18:6; Ps 63 [LXX 62]:9; Ps 119 [LXX 118]:31); but it can also be used to mean following a predecessor in his sins (2 Kgs 1:18; 3:3), or following other gods (1 Kgs 11:2). In 2 Sam 20:2, a contrast is drawn between the Israelites who turned away from David to follow Sheba, and the Judaites who "clinged to" David. It is also used of the joining together of man and wife (Gen 2:24, using προσκολλάω; but without preposition in Matt 19:5).

[128] The LSJ, s.v. κολλάω, lists for the meaning "to cleave to [...] of persons, κ. τινί" only Acts 5:13 as example.

[129] Further, it is used to describe Philip, who joins the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch, and in Peter's statement that it is not lawful for a Jewish man to associate with someone from another nation (Acts 10:28).

teacher-student relationship in the ancient world. Still, they remain in Athens: they are out of view as soon as Paul leaves Athens for Corinth.

From this group, Luke singles out two by name, which together constitute a gender pair.[130] The first one is Dionysius the Areopagite.[131] That he is an Areopagite does not necessarily imply that he was officiating in the Areopagus when Paul was brought before it. As I will show below, not all Areopagites had to be in function in the Areopagus court at a given time. In my reading of the text, Dionysius the Areopagite comes from among those who brought Paul before the Areopagus and responded to his speech; he may have been a philosopher himself.[132]

Still, Luke is not interested in his status as philosopher or in the philosophical school to which he belongs (or, for that matter, in whether it were Stoics or Epicureans who responded most positively to Paul's teaching – although commentators have speculated about this):[133] Luke is interested in his status as Areopagite.

The qualification of Dionysius as an Areopagite assigns him to the top of the Athenian elite in terms of both status and reputation. The reputation of the Areopagus Council has been discussed earlier (§5.2.3 sub b). In Roman times, the Council consisted of former ἄρχοντες,[134] city magistrates who were expected to act as public benefactors during their term of office, which made the office the preserve of the wealthy.[135] Thus, the Areopagites formed a class (comparable to a Roman *ordo*) of plutocrats drawn from ancient families and more recent citizens who were admitted because of their wealth, of which only a small number would actually be in function.[136] In terms of social status, Dionysius the Areopagite is on a par with proconsul Sergius Paulus (13:7, cf. above, §2.3) and the *asiarchs* in Ephesus (19:31). In terms of reputation, he is the embodiment of ancient tradition and aristocratic dignity.

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[130] On male/female pairs in Luke-Acts, cf. Seim, *Message*.

[131] Alexander Weiß suggests that the Dionysius of Acts could be identical to the Dionysius mentioned in *IG* II 1990, 23.25 (dated 61/62 CE), as father of two persons listed as Areopagites of the Ephebes (an organisation of young aristocrats which reflected in its titles the titles of the Athenian officials). Weiß, *Soziale Elite und Christentum, Studien zu ordo-Angehörigen unter den frühen Christen*, 98–101.

[132] Later tradition understood him as such, enabling a fifth-century Christian Neo-Platonist to publish under the name of Dionysius Areopagita.

[133] Keener, for example, suggests that it may have been the Epicureans who called Paul a "rook" and mocked after hearing about the resurrection, whereas the Stoics called him a "herald of foreign divinities" and showed interest in his teaching. However, the text does not make this identification and speaks simply about "some" and "others" from among the "some of both Epicurean and Stoic philosophers" (17:18). Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2595–96.

[134] Geagan, *Constitution*, 55–57.

[135] Geagan, 3. Cf. also Brélaz, "Democracy".

[136] Fournier, *Tutelle*, 141–42.

As in the case of Sergius Paulus, one would love to know what it implied for his public duties that he "believed". Neither Luke nor later sources inform us about this, however; although according to Eusebius, Dionysius of Corinth already mentioned Dionysius the Areopagite as first bishop of Athens in a letter written about 170 CE.[137]

The second person singled out among the group of "some men" is "a woman named Damaris" (except in Codex Bezae, which only mentions "a certain Dionysius, an honourable Areopagite" and omits Damaris).[138] David Gill is cautious about drawing any conclusions about this woman, but argues that her name "is calculated to sound ancient and respectable".[139] However, it is more likely that Damaris was known to Luke as the real name of an early member of the church of Athens; if Luke had invented the name for his narrative, he would have chosen a well-known name with a positive ring, rather than invent an unusual name. Perhaps she was a member of the prominent Spartan family of the Voluseni, which had connections to the Athenian aristocracy and used the male name Damares in alternation with Aristocrates over several generations in the first centuries CE. This suggestion has not, to my knowledge, been made before in the history of scholarship on Acts 17:34.[140] John Chrysostom appears

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[137] Eusebius, *H.E.* 4.23.3. Cf. Evans, "Identity".

[138] Cf. the text on https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/manuscript-workspace?docID=20005&pageID=9930.

[139] Gill, "Dionysios and Damaris", 487. "The name seems to be constructed from the noun δάμαρ, "spouse (female)", plus the feminine name termination –ις. It is just the right kind of name for the context. Δάμαρ is an old-fashioned, poetic word, and so the name Damaris is calculated to sound ancient and respectable – like Areopagus." More precisely, the suffix -ιδ (nom. -ις) has several functions; as part of a personal name, it can be interpreted as a metronymic, a diminutive, or to denote the person concerned or occupied with something. Smyth, *Grammar*, 233–35. (§843–852).

[140] In 2012, Lestang still repeated the claim of Gill, "le nom de la femme, Damaris, est rare; il n'est pas attesté en tant que tel dans les sources classiques." Lestang, *Annonce,* 165. However, the name Δαμάρις is not entirely unattested. Some inscriptions could be reconstructed as reading Δαμάρις: an inscription from the fifth century BCE mentions a person named Δαμαρ[...] (*SEG* 32, 1982, 391, cf. Farace, "Santuario", 41). An inscription from 223/2 BCE mentions a [Δ]άμαρις on Crete (Frazer and Matthews, *Lexicon*, 113); IG V,1 972 reconstructs an inscription from Asopos (Laconia) as Δαμαριλι? χαῖρε (https:// epigraphy.packhum.org/text/31379?&bookid=11&location=16); however, M.N. Tod refers to a copy sent to him by A.J.B. Wace which would show that the true reading is Δαμάριν, as in IG V,1 1302; 1304 mentions a Δαμάριον. Tod, "Survey", 112. More importantly, a Δαμάρις appears in full on a votive inscription at the Acropolis of Sparta, dated to the middle of the third century BCE. Woodward, "Excavations", 243–44. The male name Δαμάρης is attested predominantly in Sparta (cf. http://claslgpn2.classics.ox.ac.uk/name/Δαμαρης), frequently in the Voluseni family. In this family, the names Aristocrates and Damares alternated in successive generations, and "by the reign of Claudius at the latest the family had acquired a prominent place in Sparta's elite, possessing Roman citizenship and related, not only to P. Memmius Pratolaus (III), but also to aristocratic houses in Epidauros and Athens"

to have regarded Damaris as the wife of Dionysius, but if that were intended, one would expect an article before γύνη.[141] Rothschild has argued that, since the wives of the elite were not expected to appear in court settings, Damaris should be envisaged as a courtesan, a ἑταίρα, for which Athens was famous.[142] However, Luke does not explicitly characterise her as such; the text refers to her as a "woman" (γύνη), perhaps to be reckoned among the philosophers who brought Paul before the Areopagus.[143]

As such, Damaris fits a pattern of prominent Greek women who come to faith and follow Paul. Having women among one's followers is not unusual in the ancient world: women philosophers are known from all epochs of Greek philosophy.[144] Especially Pythagoras and Epicurus were famous for including women in their schools. It was not uncontroversial, however, and ancient references to female philosophers often focus on their gender rather than on their intellectual contribution. That Leontion, a female member of Epicurus' school, wrote a treatise in which she criticised a (male) Aristotelian philosopher, provoked the scorn of both Cicero and of Pliny the Elder.[145] More generally, the presence of women in Epicurus' school was perceived by opponents as a result of Epicurean hedonism, which led to lavish dinner parties in his garden with women, food and drinks.[146] In Luke and Acts, both Jesus and Paul stand out for having female followers.[147] In the immediate context, Luke mentions prominent women following Paul in Acts 16:13–15; 40 (Lydia), 17:4 and 17:12.[148] Luke does not elaborate on the controversies that having female followers could cause (in contrast to the apocryphal *Acts of Paul*).[149]

(Spawforth, "Families", 216). Thus, perhaps, Damaris was a female member of this prominent family (just like Timosthenis is used as female form of Timosthenes, in the same family). A more common female name is Δάμαλις (heifer), which is the reading of the fifth-century CE Latin codex h (Bruce, *Acts*, 341).

[141] John Chrysostom, *Sac.* 4.7.426: "That Areopagite, from that most religious city, did he not follow Paul after a single speech, together with [his] wife?" (ὁ δὲ Ἀρεοπαγίτης ἐκεῖνος, ὁ τῆς δεισιδαιμονεστάτης πόλεως ἐκείνης, οὐκ ἀπὸ δημηγορίας μόνης ἠκολούθησεν αὐτῷ, μετὰ τῆς γυναικός;). John is providing evidence for Paul's skill in pleading on behalf of the doctrines of truth (4.6.423).

[142] Rothschild, *Paul*, 94–105. The same suggestion already in Ramsay, *Paul*, 194.

[143] Thus Richter Reimer, *Frauen*, 254: "Damaris ist durch ihre Unabhängigkeit und Zuordnung zum Areopag als Philosophin anzusehen."

[144] Collected first by Gilles Ménage in his *Historia Mulierum Philosopharum* (published 1690).

[145] Snyder, *Woman*, 103–5; Wider, "Women Philosophers".

[146] Cf. Gordon, "Remembering".

[147] Cf., e.g., Luke 8:2–3 and 10:39–42.

[148] This image of Paul is in line with the prominent place of women in lists of greetings in Paul's letters.

[149] The apocryphal *Acts of Paul* elaborate much more upon the controversies caused by Paul's habit of making female disciples. In *Acts of Paul* 4, Thecla seems to be perceived as

That Dionysius the Areopagite, Damaris and others with them believe testifies to the persuasive power of Paul's speech on behalf of God, even upon a man from the Athenian elite and upon a noteworthy woman.

5.7. Script

What are the cultural scripts of this performance? Several suggestions have been made in the history of exegesis. Most often mentioned is the reference to Socrates (5.7.1). Clare Rothschild recently argued for a depiction of Paul as an Epimenides *redivivus* (5.7.2). Is it plausible to speak of a Socratic or an Epimenidean script for Paul's public performance in Athens, as narrated in Acts? Or should Paul be viewed as an orator like Demosthenes (5.7.3)? To what extent is the prophetic script that undergirded earlier performances of Paul reflected in Athens as well (5.7.4)? Are these options mutually exclusive or can they be combined (5.7.5)?

5.7.1. Socrates

The parallels with Socrates have been conveniently summarised by Karl Olav Sandnes.[150] He notes that it is "usually observed that the prelude to the Areopagus speech depicts Paul according to the model of Socrates"[151] and suggests that this observation should also be applied to the interpretation of the speech itself.

In the prelude (verses 16–21), Sandnes finds three similarities between Paul and Socrates.[152] First, Paul is said to speak on the marketplace in Athens, where Socrates was also said to be conversing with the people who happened to be there.[153] Second, the verb διαλέγομαι is used both for Paul's activity in Athens

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a ἑταίρα of Paul, when Alexander, a syriarch and prominent citizen of Antioch, falls in love with Thecla and wants to buy her from Paul. Paul distances himself from Thecla, and Thecla defends herself by saying that she is a prominent citizen of Iconium, implying that she is not a ἑταίρα, for ἑταίραι did not possess citizenship.

[150] Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates". Cf. also Jantsch, "Areopagrede"; Marguerat, "Socratic Figure".

[151] Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates", 20.

[152] Sandnes, 20–22. Elsewhere in Acts, a Socratic motif may be present in Acts 5:29 (πειθαρχεῖν δεῖ θεῷ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀνθρώποις): cf. Plato, *Apol.* 29D: πείσομαι δὲ μᾶλλον τῷ θεῷ ἢ ὑμῖν, "I shall obey the god rather than you." Scornaienchi, "Paolo", 212.

[153] According to Sandnes, "Luke and Plato, in their presentation of Paul and Socrates respectively, both use the Greek verb ἐντυγχάνω saying that they talked to those they happened to meet at the market–place." Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates", 21. However, Luke uses a participle of παρατυγχάνω, not ἐντυγχάνω; and although Plato does use the expression ὅτῳ ἂν ἐντυγχάνω with reference to Socrates' habit to question everyone he encounters

and for the dialogical technique of Socrates. I have argued above, however, that in combination with the preposition πρός, the verb is less likely to refer to the dialogical technique of Socrates. It refers, rather, to instruction, with some (but limited) degree of interaction with the audience. Thus, the verb merely characterises Paul as a teacher and does not point specifically to Socrates.[154] Third, the charges against Paul evoke those against Socrates. These charges, indeed, form the most pertinent reference to the traditions around Socrates, although the verbal analogy is not very strict. The accusations against Socrates were well-known in the first century CE; the accusation of "introducing new deities" (καινὰ δαιμόνια εἰσφέρειν)[155] in particular seems to be reflected in the words of the philosophers about Paul: in their declaring him to be a ξένων *δαιμονίων* […] καταγγελεύς, in their statement that "you are bringing some strange elements to our hearing" (ξενίζοντα [...] τινα *εἰσφέρεις* εἰς τὰς ἀκοὰς ἡμῶν) and in their longing to know "what this new teaching is" (τίς ἡ *καινὴ* αὕτη [...] διδαχή). Thus, the words of the accusation against Socrates recur in the words of the philosophers, but are distributed over three sentences.

Sandnes does not interpret Paul's speech as a defence speech, which would fit the Socratic script if verses 18 and 20 are read as evoking the accusations against Socrates;[156] instead, he uses the Socratic model as a guide to interpret the indirect approach of the speech. According to Sandnes, the speech speaks indirectly about Jesus and the Gospel in order to arouse curiosity, just as Socrates sought to arouse curiosity by his method of questioning people. The response of some among the audience, who want to hear Paul again, shows that he has succeeded in his strategy.[157] Sandnes' interpretation is not convincing: Paul's speech is only indirect if one presupposes that he has to speak about Jesus; he is perfectly candid in his announcement of God's judgment.

Nevertheless, the Socratic model deserves attention for several reasons. First, because it is highlighted in one of the earliest allusions to the book of

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(Plato, *Apol.* 29D), the agora is not explicitly mentioned in the immediate context, so that the lexical correspondence is less substantial than Sandnes posits.

[154] This is not to say that Socrates is never portrayed as engaged in instruction through longer discourses. Xenophon especially depicts Socrates in this way, downplaying the disruptiveness of Socrates' activity for apologetic reasons (cf. Gera, "Xenophon's Socrateses"). My point is that the verb διαλέγομαι cannot be taken as a reference to a way of teaching uniquely associated with Socrates.

[155] Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.1: οὓς μὲν ἡ πόλις νομίζει θεοὺς οὐ νομίζων, ἕτερα δὲ καινὰ δαιμόνια εἰσφέρων: ἀδικεῖ δὲ καὶ τοὺς νέους διαφθείρων. Cf. Plato, *Euthyphr.* 3B; Diogenes Laërtius 2.5.40; Xenophon, *Apol.* 10–11; Justin, *1 Apol.* 5.4; *2 Apol.* 10.5; Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.4.5.

[156] Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates", 22.

[157] Sandnes, 22–24.

Acts, Justin's *Second Apology* 10.5–6.[158] In this text, which may well have been part of Justin's original petition to Antoninus Pius in 154–155,[159] Justin speaks about Socrates as someone who "urged them [that is, the Athenians] to knowledge, through rational enquiry, of the God who was unknown to them."[160] This follows immediately upon a reference to Socrates being "accused of the same things as we are, for they said of him also that he brought in new divinities, and that those whom the city recognised as gods he did not."[161] Thus, as Nyström concludes, Socrates functions for Justin as "a pre-incarnational model for the persecuted Christian".[162] The reference to the θεός ἀγνώστος recalls Paul's reference to the unknown God in Acts 17:22–23.[163]

Second, the Socratic model deserves attention because of the place of Socrates in Jewish apologetic literature. Socrates is mentioned in a fragment attributed to Aristobulus (a Jewish apologist living in Alexandria, second century BCE)[164] and, closer to the time of Luke, by Josephus, though not as much as one might expect. In all his works, Josephus refers only twice to Socrates, both in the second book *Against Apion*. The first reference is in a list of intellectuals that Apion used as an example of the kind of intellectuals the Jews lacked (2.135). The second reference is more extensive and used for apologetic purposes by Josephus. He responds to an accusation by Molon Apollonius, that Jews do not admit those who hold other opinions of God (2.158), by pointing out that this practice is common even "to the most illustrious among the

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[158] The reference to the "God who was to them unknown" is taken by commentators on the text of Justin as an allusion to Acts 17:23, though it is not discussed in Gregory, *Reception*. Witetschek notes the parallel and suggests that Justin was acquainted with Luke–Acts (Witetschek, *Ephesische Enthüllungen*, 246). The parallel is also noted by Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates", 20. Cf. also Benz, "Christus und Sokrates", 206–7, whose position is misrepresented by Sandnes when he paraphrases him as saying "that Socrates in Acts 17 appears as 'der frühgeborene Bruder des Apostels'": Benz argues rather that, on the basis of the parallel with Acts 17, Socrates appears *in Justin's Apology* as 'der frühgeborene Bruder des Apostels' who likewise made the unknown God known to the Athenians.

On the debate about Justin's knowledge of Acts, cf. most recently den Dulk, *Jews*. In the appendix, den Dulk argues that Justin depends on Acts for his list of seven Jewish sects.

[159] On the relationship of this second apology to the first, cf. Parvis, "Justin".

[160] Justin, *2 Apol.* 10.6. πρὸς θεοῦ δὲ τοῦ ἀγνώστου αὐτοῖς διὰ λόγου ζητήσεως ἐπίγνωσιν προὐτρέπετο. Text and translation: Minns and Parvis, *Justin*, 310–11.

[161] Justin, *2 Apol.* 10.5. ὁ πάντων δὲ αὐτῶν εὐτονώτερος πρὸς τοῦτο γενόμενος (198a) Σωκράτης τὰ αὐτὰ ἡμῖν ἐνεκλήθη, καὶ γὰρ ἔφασαν αὐτὸν καινὰ δαιμόνια εἰσφέρειν καὶ οὓς ἡ πόλις νομίζει θεοὺς μὴ ἡγεῖσθαι αὐτόν. Text and translation: Minns and Parvis, 310–11.

[162] Nyström, *Apology*, 87.

[163] That the allusion is indeed to the text of Acts is especially likely if the phrase "to an unknown god" was a Lukan modification of the actual text of the altar inscriptions, as Jerome already suggested (*Comm. Tit.* 1.12). Cf. van der Horst, "Altar".

[164] Aristobulus, Frg. 4.6–7.

Greeks",[165] adducing the execution of Socrates as an example of how severe the Athenians punished those "who uttered a single word about the gods in contravention of their laws".[166]

Josephus' depiction (based on Xenophon, *Mem.* 1.2.63–64) corresponds to an image of Socrates that circulated widely in the Roman world of the first century CE. An interest in Socrates' life and teaching method, which seems to have predominated in the Hellenistic period, gave way to an interest in his death in the Roman period,[167] sparked primarily by the identification of Cato with the dying Socrates that soon became legendary.[168] This gave Socrates the status of a political martyr: "the death of Socrates became the symbol of the just man unjustly put to death."[169]

In Josephus, the trial of Socrates serves to characterise the Athenians. In fact, in the book of Acts, the philosophers' statement that Paul teaches strange divinities (the most explicit allusion to the Socratic tradition in the pericope) also serves to characterise primarily the Athenian philosophers. They perform in a way that echoes the performance of the Athenians in the days of Socrates. What appears as a neutral statement in Acts, "he seems to be a proclaimer of strange divinities", becomes ominous in light of the precedent of Socrates.

In this context, a Socratic response to the philosophers who take Paul to court would be to face the court with courage and to speak openly. This is how Cicero praised Socrates in his *Tusculan Disputations*:

> Socrates sought out no advocate when on trial for his life and was not suppliant to his judges, but showed a noble obstinacy derived from greatness of soul, not from pride.[170]

Such courageous outspokenness is in fact what is found in the speech in the Areopagus, in which Paul does not hesitate to announce divine judgment before this very sacred court of the ancient world. On the other hand, Paul, in contrast to Socrates, is not portrayed as on trial for his life: he is asked to expound his teaching before the Areopagus, and although the subtle allusion to the accusation against Socrates may strike an ominous note, at least some of the philosophers/Athenians show interest in Paul's teaching, want to hear more about it after the speech, and even become his followers. The Socratic script should not

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[165] Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.259 (Barclay): τῶν ἐν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν εὐδοκιμωτάτων.

[166] Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.262 (Barclay): τοὺς ῥῆμα μόνον παρὰ τοὺς ἐκείνων νόμους φθεγξαμένους περὶ θεῶν.

[167] Geiger, "Socrates". Cf. also the overview of Socrates' reception by Michael Trapp, who draws attention to the numerous lost works about Socrates, including dialogues, *Apologies*, biographies and *Successions*: Trapp, "Socrates".

[168] Griffin, "Philosophy I"; Griffin, "Philosophy II".

[169] Geiger, "Socrates", 92.

[170] Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* 1.71 (King, LCL, modified): *Socrates nec patronum quaesivit ad iudicium capitis nec iudicibus supplex fuit adhibuitque liberam contumaciam a magnitudine animi ductam, non a superbia.*

make us blind to more positive elements in the characterization of Paul's audience.

5.7.2. Epimenides

Clare Rothschild has recently argued that Paul is portrayed in Acts 17:16–34 as an Epimenides *redivivus.* According to Rothschild, "the most logical explanation of the apparently ad hoc components of Paul's visit to Athens, including its beginning, climax, and ending, is the nexus of traditions crystallised around the figure of Epimenides in the second century C.E."[171] She observes that "the speech possesses few of Hellenistic philosophy's requisite technical terms."[172] But whereas others have taken this as a reason to emphasise the Jewish background of the speech,[173] Rothschild argues that Luke portrays Paul as Epimenides in order to "present Paul as the early Christian cult transfer facilitator *par excellence*."[174]

The clearest allusion to Epimenides traditions is Acts 17:28a, "for in him we live and move and have are being", a line that appears to have been attributed to Epimenides by Theodore of Mopsuestia,[175] although scholars such as Clement of Alexandria, John Chrysostom and Jerome did not take notice of the quotation. Theodore's commentary on Acts is lost, but has probably been used by later Syriac commentators,[176] who identify Acts 17:28a as part of an encomium to Zeus by his son Minos, quoting the following lines:

> A grave have fashioned for thee, holy and high One, the lying Kretans, who are all the time liars, evil beasts, idle bellies; but thou diest not, for to eternity thou livest, and standest; for in thee we live and move and have our being.[177]

The Syriac commentaries are the only sources in which this poem is preserved, but given the fragmentary survival of ancient poetry in general, that is no reason to doubt that this poem was indeed part of the *Epimenidea*, the traditions and writings associated with the legendary figure of Epimenides. The Cretan poet, prophet and miracle worker was said to have been called to Athens to purify it from a plague.[178] He took black and white sheep to the Areopagus, let

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[171] Rothschild, *Paul*, 4.

[172] Rothschild, 5.

[173] Gärtner, *Areopagus*; Litwak, "Prophets"; Strait, "Wisdom".

[174] Rothschild, *Paul*, 4.

[175] Cf. Lake, Kirsopp, "Poets", 250.

[176] The author of *Gannat Busame* (Harris, "Cretans") and Isho'dad (Gibson, *Isho'dad*, 29).

[177] As cited in translation in Harris, "Cretans", 310. Harris considers it part of a poem on Minos and Rhadamantus, referring to Diogenes Laertius 1.10.112. Diogenes refers to a prose work, not a poem, about Minos and Rhadamantus; still, the poem may have been cited in the prose work.

[178] On the various sources for his life, cf. Rothschild, *Paul*, 37–49.

them go from there, and had shrines established where the sheep stopped in order to graze. According to Diogenes Laërtius, these "nameless altars" (βωμοὺς ἀνωνύμους) could still be found "even now" throughout the demes (districts) of the Athenians (i.e., of Attica).[179] Moreover, Epimenides had established the temple of the *Semnai* (the 'revered [goddesses]', a name for goddesses of vengeance), which was located at the Areopagus. Thus, the Epimenides legend had become part of the complex of foundation myths that existed about the Areopagus court.[180] Finally, Epimenides was well-known for his saying that "all Cretans are liars", a saying quoted in Titus 1:12 that forms a part of the poem quoted above. In its original context, the saying refers to the Cretan belief that Zeus was buried on Crete. Epimenides allegedly protested against this belief because he considered it blasphemous to think of Zeus as dead.[181]

Rothschild points out several analogies between Epimenides and Paul. Not all of them are convincing. She argues that Paul's message of the resurrection recalls Epimenides' awakening after having slept for decades, which also amounts to a kind of resurrection.[182] However, the belief in resurrection forms a common thread throughout the book of Acts, and is placed explicitly in a Jewish framework (as a Pharisaic doctrine).[183] Rothschild limits her investigation to motifs of the Epimenidea paralleled in Acts and does not discuss how this relates to the Jewish background of Acts.

Another possible (and more widely accepted) reference to Epimenidean traditions is the altar inscribed "to an unknown god" (Acts 17:23).[184] However, the identification of this altar with those established by Epimenides is contestable. The altars about which Diogenes Laërtius speaks in connection with Epimenides are "nameless altars" that were established at the injunction of Epimenides to sacrifice "to the god concerned" wherever the sheep would stop to graze. The vagueness of the phrase "to the god concerned", the fact that these altars were established to purify Athens from a plague and that Epimenides was said to have dedicated an altar to the Σέμναι θέαι on the Areopagus, together suggest that the altars were altars for the Erinyes, goddesses of vengeance, which were already referred to as "nameless goddesses" in Euripides.[185] The altars placed "for the god concerned" were either without inscription, or inscribed "to the nameless gods", not because their names were unknown, but because naming them would incur their wrath.[186]

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[179] Diogenes Laërtius 1.10.110.

[180] Pausanias 1.28.5; Diogenes Laertius 1.10.112. On the cult of the Erinyes, cf. the detailed study of Zerhoch, *Erinys*, 266–327.

[181] Cf. Harris, "Note".

[182] Rothschild, *Paul*, 76–80.

[183] Acts 23:8.

[184] Cf. already Lake, Kirsopp, "Poets", 251.

[185] ἀνώνυμοι θεαί. Euripides, *Iph. Taur.* 944.

[186] Cf. Henrichs, "Anonymity", 35–39; Zerhoch, *Erinys*, 301–3.

On the other hand, the altar "to an unknown god" mentioned in Acts 17:23 is advanced as illustrating the Athenians' piety, which is so great that they even venerate gods they do not know. Pieter van der Horst has shown that there was a clear tendency in the Hellenistic period towards worshipping "all gods", including the gods one may not know, in "what appears to be an anxious endeavour not to pass over or omit any inhabitant whatsoever of the divine world."[187] The Lukan narrative presupposes this interpretation of the altar inscribed "to an unknown god". According to Jerome, Paul had adapted the plural form of the original inscription to the singular, and the real inscription read: "To the gods of Asia and Europe and Africa: To the unknown and foreign gods",[188] a clear example of aiming at completeness, which is different from the nameless altars for the chthonic goddesses of vengeance associated with Epimenides.

If there is no connection of the altar of Acts 17:23 with Epimenides, all that is left is a likely allusion to a poem attributed to him, an allusion made on a fitting location, the Areopagus, with which Epimenides' name was strongly associated. To argue from this that the figure of Epimenides constitutes the primary background to interpret the various elements of Paul's performance in Athens seems unwarranted.

To be fair, Rothschild suggests that the author of Acts uses a "motif technique" in which classical traditions are evoked in a "popularizing and piecemeal" way.[189] Hence, her argument for Paul's depiction as an Epimenides does not in principle exclude Paul's depiction as a Socrates, a Demosthenes, or a prophet of Israel (for Demosthenes or the prophets as script, cf. below, §5.7.3–4). Nevertheless, she attaches great significance to the reference to the *Epimenidea* because Epimenides was a "cult transfer facilitator".[190] Building on studies of Hans Dieter Betz, James Hanges, and Elizabeth R. Gebhard, who argued from Paul's letters that "Paul's mission can best be compared with the activities of those who introduced foreign gods and cults into a city",[191] Rothschild ar-

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[187] Van der Horst, "Altar", 176.

[188] Jerome, *Comm. Tit.* 1.12, 706. Van der Horst, 180–181, translates: "But the altar-inscription was not, as Paul asserted, 'to an unknown god,' but as follows: 'To the Gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa, to the unknown and foreign gods.' Since, however, Paul did not need a number of gods but only one unknown god, he used the singular." Cf. also Jerome, *Epist.* 70. Van der Horst allows that a dedication in the singular "belonged to the possibilities and cannot be ruled out", though it is not attested in the literary and archaeological evidence, and demonstrates that "if one assumes that Luke changed the plural 'unknown gods' into a singular, he can be shown to have followed a procedure that was employed in a variety of forms in both early Jewish and early Christian writings when pagan material had to be made palatable." Van der Horst, 198.

[189] Rothschild, *Paul*, 106.

[190] Rothschild, 123.

[191] H.D. Betz, quoted in Rothschild, 121.

gues that Acts seeks to provide a "cult transfer narrative" in which Paul transfers Christianity from Jerusalem to Athens.[192] Again, she does not reflect on the qualifications that the Jewish context of Acts imply for the notion of "cult transfer". One can hardly expect the author of Acts to mean that Athenian Christians should henceforth worship at altars inscribed "to an unknown god".[193]

Rather than speaking of a "cult transfer facilitator", this investigation shows that Luke presents Paul as a herald or messenger who has come to proclaim the identity of the God whom the Athenians venerate in ignorance. Socrates and (perhaps) Epimenides function as precursors of Paul in their criticism of traditional Greek mythology, and their performance in Athens in the past yields a cultural script that may have enhanced the effectiveness of Paul's performance. Aristobulus lists Socrates along with Aratus (the poet quoted in Acts 17:28b)[194] among those who followed Moses and had correct notions of God, though they addressed him as Zeus.[195] These incidental figures, however, had not succeeded in liberating the Gentiles from their ignorance, and it is only "now", with the coming of Paul on behalf of God, that the "times of ignorance" are coming to an end and the Gentiles face the choice either to repent and have faith or to reject his message.[196] In this regard, Paul is, from Luke's perspective, 'more than' Epimenides, and it is more appropriate to speak of Paul as appealing (in part) to a cultural script of Epimenidean traditions than to speak of Paul as an Epimenides *redivivus*.

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[192] Rothschild, 120–32.

[193] Cf. Van der Horst: "After Christ's coming, Luke implies, there is no longer room for altars dedicated to an unknown god because God has now made himself known." Van der Horst, "Altar", 200.

[194] This quotation, introduced by a quotation formula, was widely acknowledged in the early church as being from Aratus (cf. Jerome, *Comm. Tit.* 1:12; *Comm. Eph.* 5:14; John Chrysostom, *Hom. Tit.* 3, a passage misinterpreted in Rothschild, *Paul*, 18–19). Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus* contains an allusion to the line in Aratus' *Phaenomena,* and some commentators have argued that Paul actually quoted Cleanthes instead of Aratus. The consensus today is to assign the quotation to Aratus. Cf. the discussion in Keener, *Acts*, 2014, 3:2659–60. Scornaienchi, following D. Kidd (in the 1998 edition with commentary of Aratus' *Phaenomena*), quite plausibly suggests that the plural "your poets" implies a reference to both Aratus' *Phaenomena* and Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus*. Scornaienchi, "Paolo", 225.

[195] Aristobulus, Frg. 4.6–7. Cf. also *Letter of Aristeas* 16.

[196] The narrative does not contain reflection on how the ignorance of the Athenians relates to the existence of a synagogue with Jews *and* God-fearers in Athens, of whom it can scarcely be said that they venerated God without knowing him. Also, the question remains open how the Athenian ignorance relates to the statement of Acts 15:21 that Moses has "from ancient times onwards" in every city those who proclaim him when he is read in the synagogues on every Sabbath.

5.7.3. Demosthenes

Athens was known in the ancient world not only as a city of philosophers, but also as a city of orators.[197] When Quintilian discusses the required reading list for the student of rhetoric and comes to the classical orators, he begins with the famous canon of ten Athenian orators and states, "of these, Demosthenes was far the greatest, almost a law of oratory in himself."[198] The public/political setting of Paul's activity in Athens, first on the *agora*, and then in the Areopagus, fits with a depiction of Paul as an orator like Demosthenes. His speech is presented in the grand style, as I argued above, and conforms to the conventions of rhetoric at least regarding its structure (§5.4.1.2). Further, Demosthenes was known for his frankness (παρρησία) in speaking to the people, a quality of Paul's speaking that can be found elsewhere in Acts (cf. §3.7.1.1).[199] In particular, he rebuked them in the *First Philippic* for only asking about the latest news without going into action. The stereotype of Athenian curiosity is not limited to Demosthenes,[200] but his *Philippics* were well-known in the first century as models for the deliberative genre of rhetoric.[201] As we saw, Paul addresses his audience in the Areopagus as "Athenian men", which is how Demosthenes also addressed his audience.

On the other hand, Paul is presented as someone who expounds his teaching, and his speech does not conform neatly to any of the three established genres of rhetoric. Luke does not mention a typical orator's gesture, as he does for Paul's defence speech in Acts 26:1. Paul's frankness is not mentioned in this particular episode of Acts. Thus, Luke does not go out of his way to depict Paul as a second Demosthenes, although he does depict Paul as delivering an impressive speech at a renowned site in Athens.

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[197] I thank Jürgen K. Zangenberg for the suggestion to discuss Demosthenes in relation to the script of Paul's performance.

[198] Quintilian, Inst. 1.10.79. *Sequitur oratorum ingens manus, ut cum decem simul Athenis aetas una tulerit. Quorum longe princeps Demosthenes ac paene lex orandi fuit: tanta vis in eo, tam densa omnia, ita quibusdam nervis intenta sunt, tam nihil otiosum, is dicendi modus, ut nec quod desit in eo nec quod redundet invenias.* "Next comes the vast army of orators—so vast that a single age produced ten at the same time at Athens. Of these, Demosthenes was far the greatest, almost a law of oratory in himself: such is his force, the concentration of his thought, his muscular firmness, his economy, his control—one feels there is nothing lacking and nothing superfluous." (Russell, LCL).

[199] Plutarch, *Dem.* 14.3.

[200] Cf., e.g., also Thucydides 2.38.5, referred to in Bruce, *Book*, 332.

[201] Cf. Cicero, *Att.* 2.1.3; Quintilian, *Inst.* 3.8.65.

5.7.4. Prophet

A weakness of Rothschild's interpretation is that it ignores the pronounced emphasis on Paul's Jewishness in the book of Acts. Paul comes to Athens as a Jew who is called to proclaim on behalf of God repentance in view of a judgment day. For Luke, the first thing to note about Paul in Athens is Paul's indignation at how full of idols the city is: παρωξύνετο τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ θεωροῦντος κατείδωλον οὖσαν τὴν πόλιν. The choice of words is significant: the verb παρωξύνω occurs in the New Testament only twice (the other passage is 1 Cor 13:5: ἡ ἀγάπη [...] οὐ παροξύνεται), but is used forty-seven times in the LXX, thirty-seven of which concern God who is provoked by human sin and idolatry.[202] In the provocation of Paul's spirit at the sight of how "full of idols" (a hapax legomenon, perhaps coined by Luke)[203] the city is, Paul reflects God's own anger about idolatry.[204] The distinction in the text between Paul (in the genitive absolute clause) and his spirit may indicate that it is God's spirit in Paul that is provoked at the sight of the idols.[205] As the opening sentence of the episode, it provides an important key to the interpretation of the entire episode.[206]

Indeed, many commentators have taken this verse as their point of departure to read the Areopagus speech as anti-idol polemic in the tradition of Israel's prophets. The classic representative of this interpretation is Bertil Gärtner's *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation*, which argues that the aim of the speech is the "antithesis to wrongful ideas of God and a fallacious worship of God".[207] Gärtner notes, moreover, that "the criticism of idolatry follows the pattern often found in Old Testament and Jewish texts."[208] His argument has more recently been taken up by Kenneth Litwak, who uses intertextual analysis

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[202] The exceptions are: Deut 32:41; 2 Sam 12:14; Prov 6:3; 20:2; 27:17; Isa 14:16; 23:11; 60:14; Dan 11:10.

[203] Ancient writers on style observe that neologisms (often as compounds) contribute to a grand style, though their meaning should be clear from its constituents. Cf. Demetrius, *Eloc.* 96–97. Luke has more neologisms; the term συνομοροῦσα (Acts 18:7) is probably a neologism as well (cf. Koet, "Close", 186).

[204] *Contra* Rothschild, who downplays Paul's irritation by the idols: "like many visitors to Athens, the Lukan Paul displays interest in the city as 'full of idols' and in the idols themselves, but never even alludes to the destructive consequence of idolatry for Gentiles whom God would save. On the contrary, he interprets one such 'idol' as representative of and dedicated to the god he wishes to reveal and extol." Rothschild, *Paul*, 75. Here, she does not do justice to the intensity of παρωξύνετο. According to her, the verb "probably connotes not anger, but attention". Rothschild, 82.

[205] The Holy Spirit is object of provocation in Isa 63:10; cf. Mark 3:29, Eph 4:30. Thus Tischler, *Diener*, 147.

[206] Cf. Gärtner, *Areopagus,* 45; 203; Litwak, "Prophets", 210–11.

[207] Gärtner, *Areopagus*, 203.

[208] Gärtner, 250.

to argue for the existence of many echoes of Scripture in the Areopagus speech, which serve to present "Paul's message as standing in continuity with the oracles of Israel's prophets".[209] Taking up the notion of recurrence and reenactment as key elements of ancient historiography, he argues that it is appropriate "to see Paul's anti–idol polemic on Mars Hill as a reenactment that connects Paul's preaching with that of Israel's prophets in the past".[210]

Litwak's intertextual approach can be complemented with my analysis (above, §5.4.2.1) of the verbs by which Paul characterises his own performance within the speech, and by which the narrator describes his performance in the preceding narrative.[211] Through these verbs, Paul is presented as a messenger of God. However, they also show that it is not entirely appropriate to characterise the performance – as Gärtner and Litwak do – as an "anti–idol polemic" or an "attack on idols". Paul is not engaged in a war on idols, he is bringing good news about Jesus and the resurrection in a city full of idols. Paul does not mock idols in the way Isaiah, Jeremiah or *Wisdom of Solomon* did.

Indeed, it is the prophetic script that provides the most consistent connection between the provocation of Paul's spirit at the sight of the 'idols' of Athens, Paul's activity of teaching and proclaiming on behalf of God, the display of his Jewishness in his visit of the synagogue, the echoes of Scripture in his speech, the recognition of a cultural and ethnic boundary between Paul and his audience expressed in the phrase "your poets" (Acts 17:28),[212] the utilization of motifs familiar from earlier and contemporary Jewish texts that targeted an educated Greek audience,[213] and Paul's courage when he is brought before the most eminent local authorities of the Greek world.[214]

Still, there are other passages in Acts where the prophetic script is more pronouncedly visible than here. It is because readers have already encountered Paul as a prophetic figure in earlier chapters (e.g., in his encounter with Bar-Jesus; cf. above, chapter 2), that they are likely to identify the prophetic motifs in his performance in Athens as well.

5.7.5. Complementarity

The identification of the script of the performance as 'prophetic' does not exclude reminiscences of Socrates and Epimenides in this episode. The allusions to the accusations of Socrates evoke the memory of Socrates as an example of

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[209] Litwak, "Prophets", 202.

[210] Litwak, 213, building on Trompf, *Idea*.

[211] Cf. above, §5.4.1.

[212] The variant reading in P^{74}, B, 326 and 614 (καθ' ἡμᾶς ποιητῶν) could be understood as a reference to the Cilician background of both Aratus and Paul, as Barrett has pointed out. Barrett, *Acts*, 2:848.

[213] Cf. Eltester, "Gott", 226, and recently Strait, "Wisdom".

[214] Cf. also Stählin, *Apostelgeschichte*, 232.

someone who faced an unjust death sentence with courage, an image of Socrates that was popular in the first century and that coheres very well with the image of the prophets as it can be found in Luke-Acts (on this image, cf. §2.1.3 above). However, the allusions to Socrates are subtle, and the philosophers are not presented as a homogeneous group of opponents of Paul: they are interested in Paul's new teaching not because they seek Paul's death, but out of their Athenian eagerness to hear and say something new (17:21).

That Paul alludes to a poem that was connected with the figure of Epimenides may have reminded some among Luke's audience of Epimenides' earlier performance on the Areopagus, as well as of his criticism of elements of Greek mythology. This confirms the importance of taking the spatial setting of Paul's performances into account: the parallel with Socrates is situated locally on the *agora*, the place where Socrates was known to have taught as well; the allusion to Epimenides is situated on the Areopagus, an important site in the traditions about Epimenides.

Further, Paul delivers a speech in a grand style in the city of the great classical orators, Demosthenes ranking first among them. Readers may be inspired to compare Paul to Demosthenes,[215] but Luke does not make much effort to depict Paul as a second Demosthenes.

In sum, one may speak of both the prophets and of Socrates, Demosthenes and Epimenides as (partial) precursors of Paul, whose memories are evoked in Paul's actions and in the places where he performs. The scripts are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. This being said, the prophetic script appears to encompass more textual elements of this episode than the other scripts.

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[215] The comparison does not have to favour Paul. As John Chrysostom, student of the famous teacher of rhetoric Libanius, writes, "now were I to insist upon the polish of Isocrates, the weight of Demosthenes, the dignity of Thucydides, and the sublimity of Plato, in any one bishop, St. Paul would be a strong evidence against me. But I pass by all such matters and the elaborate ornaments of profane oratory; and I take no account of style or of delivery; yea let a man's diction be poor and his composition simple and unadorned, but let him not be unskilled in the knowledge and accurate statement of doctrine; nor in order to screen his own sloth, deprive that holy apostle of the greatest of his gifts, and the sum of his praises." John Chrysostom, *Sac.* 4.6.424, translation W.R.W. Stephens, http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1922.htm. He connects this to Paul's own statement that he was "rude in speech, but not in knowledge" (2 Cor 11:6). It was due to the quality of Paul's argumentation, not on the basis of flowery rhetoric, that the Areopagite and his wife followed Paul after a single speech (*Sac.* 4.7.426). Here, John Chrysostom ignores the intended eloquence of the Areopagus speech for the sake of his own rhetorical argument.

5.8. Function of This Portrait

How does Luke depict the performance of Paul in Athens?

The *location* of Athens has great symbolic value, as the living embodiment of classical Greek culture. Its inhabitants, however, are portrayed as idle pursuers of news, whose excessive religiosity is characterised by ignorance.

As background to Paul's speech in the Areopagus, Luke depicts Paul as speaking in the synagogue and on the agora. His instruction in the synagogue displays his ongoing commitment to his own nation. The agora as location emphasises Paul's desire to have as broad an audience as possible: he speaks to everyone who happens to be there. Moreover, the location of the agora recalls Socrates' activity in Athens. The Areopagus court provides an apt location for the proclamation of God's righteous judgment over the world and provides Paul with one of the ancient world's most dignified and sacred stages for his message. In a place that reputedly left other teachers dumbstruck with awe, Paul delivers a courageous speech in a grand style.

On the agora, Paul encounters Epicurean and Stoic philosophers as typical Athenian figures who spend their time with nothing else but discussing the latest news and are therefore also interested in the new teaching brought by Paul, whom they consider to be an unsystematic "rook" or a "herald of foreign divinities". Paul's speech is a response to their interest in his teaching; it is not a defence speech.

The *performance* itself consists of Paul assuming a standing pose and delivering a speech in grand style in which he corrects the ignorance of the Athenians concerning God and the right veneration of God, and transmits God's exhortation to humankind to repent in view of his righteous judgment.

The *audience response* to Paul's performance is divided: some mock, but others want to hear Paul again. Luke seems to emphasise the positive response, which culminates in his report of a number of followers of Paul. A modern reader will easily overlook the significance of the reference to an Areopagite as part of Paul's retinue. The high social status and the almost legendary reputation of the members of the Areopagus Council highlights the impressiveness of Paul's performance on the Areopagus, as depicted by Luke. Further, Luke draws attention to a nameworthy female.

Ancient audiences could perceive various cultural *scripts* underlying Paul's performance. Paul's performance on the agora and his courageous response to the Athenian philosophers who take him to court as a proclaimer of foreign divinities recall the model of Socrates, who was famous in the Roman empire of the first century CE for his courage in the face of trial and death. The line "for in Him we live, move, and have our being" reminded at least one ancient commentator of a poem connected to the traditions around Epimenides, who had come from Crete to the Areopagus to purify Athens from a plague. Paul's impressive speech to "Athenian men" in the Areopagus invites comparison

with Demosthenes. These scripts, none of which are present in a very marked way in the text, are complementary to the other referential text of Paul's performance as messenger of God, which is provided by the model of the ancient prophets of Israel. It is the prophetic script that provides the most consistent connection between the various elements of Paul's performance in Athens. The allusions to Socrates and Epimenides can be interpreted as references to precursors of Paul who had acquired some knowledge of the true nature of God but had not succeeded in dispelling the ignorance of the Athenians, in line with depictions of Socrates in both earlier Jewish and later Christian apologetic literature.

So, how does the depiction of Paul's performance in Athens function in the narrative of Acts? Central to the message of this pericope is that the message of God is brought to the capital of culture of the Gentile world. Complementing the episode in Lystra, Luke continues to inform the reader how salvation was sent to the nations and how they hear it (cf. Acts 28:28, where "they will hear" entails an openness for a future continuation of what is initiated in the preceding narrative). Paul's teaching, which he expounds at the request of a typically Athenian audience of philosophers, targets the Gentile idol-worship that provoked Paul's spirit when he came to Athens. In his portrait of the philosophers, Luke seems to draw on Roman stereotypes about philosophers and Athenians that were not very flattering. The speech contrasts the excessive religiosity of the Athenians, which is characterised by ignorance, with the reasonable teaching of Paul, thus countering the Roman elite's labelling of the Christians as adherents of a *superstitio*. Central to the episode is not Paul's interaction with philosophers, but his exposition of his teaching before the Areopagus, giving him a stage in one of the most impressive courts of the ancient world. In narrating the audience response, Luke singles out an Areopagite as well as an apparently noteworthy woman, focussing on the social position of these believers (Dionysus being a member of the Athenian equivalent of Rome's *ordo* of senators) rather than on their philosophical allegiance.

In his speech, Paul deploys Greek rhetoric and poetry, but remains loyal to his Jewish identity in emphasising the contrast between the God he is proclaiming and the idols worshipped in Athens. He expounds his teaching politely, capturing the goodwill of his audience by taking the altar "to an unknown god" as a point of departure for his speech. Thus, the depiction of Paul's performance counters the charge that the message of Paul is directed against the Jewish nation and law and counters the view that Christians are a *superstitio* incompatible with Roman values.

Chapter 6

Performance in Caesarea (Acts 25:23–26:32)

The last passage selected for analysis in this study is Acts 25:23–26:32, Paul's defence before Agrippa. This passage is selected as representative of the defence speeches in Acts 21:19–26:32. As in the previous chapters, my analysis aims to show how Paul's performance is portrayed in this scene and which function this depiction of Paul's performance has in the book of Acts. Based on the examination of the aspects of Paul's performance as introduced in §1.3.4 and the place of the episode in the narrative of Acts, I will conclude by making some observations concerning the function of this depiction in the book of Acts.

6.1. Narrative Context and Structure

The scene is introduced in Acts 25:23 with an indication of time: "On the next day", which distinguishes this scene (Acts 25:23–26:32) from the previous scene, with which it is closely related. It is the last and longest part of chapters 25–26, which form one episode about Festus' dealing with Paul. In these chapters, Festus, after assuming his office, first visits Jerusalem where the leading priests and the most prominent men of the Jews (that is, Judeans) ask him to send Paul to Jerusalem, with the intention of killing him on the way; Festus denies their request (25:1–5).[1] Back in Caesarea, Festus sits down at the βῆμα and orders that Paul be brought before him. Against the accusations of the Jews who have come from Jerusalem, Paul defends himself by declaring: "I have done nothing wrong against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar" (Acts 25:8). Festus asks Paul whether he is willing to be judged in Jerusalem, but Paul insists on being judged where he is: before the seat of Caesar. Since Festus is apparently willing to give him to his accusers to do them a favour, Paul appeals to Caesar. Festus decides to send him to Caesar (Acts 25:6–12). The next scene describes the visit of king Agrippa and Bernice to Festus (Acts 25:13–22), during which the governor speaks about the case of Paul. Festus summarises the events of the preceding days and states that the

[1] On the nature and ceremonies of such visits by provincial governors to cities in their provinces, cf. Kinman, *Entry*, 34–39.

accusers brought no charge of anything that he considers evil: they only had some questions (ζητήματα) concerning their own δεισιδαιμονία ("fearfulness for divine beings")[2] and concerning a certain dead Jesus whom Paul claims to be alive (25:19). Festus does not explicitly ask Agrippa for advice, but Agrippa expresses his wish to hear Paul of his own accord (25:22).

This context makes clear that Festus considers the conflict between Paul and his opponents an inter-Jewish disagreement about how to worship their God.[3] This prepares for the hearing of Paul by Agrippa as the climactic scene that will establish Paul's innocence by someone who (in contrast to Festus) is knowledgeable in Jewish matters, and whose advice will be included in Festus' letter to the emperor. The scene ends with the joint conclusion of the king, the governor, Bernice, and those seated with them, that "this man has done nothing worthy of death or chains" (26:31), followed by the verdict of Agrippa, "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar."

Agrippa's words follow a series of judgments made with respect to Paul in Acts 21–26. The crowd before the stairs of the Antonia fortress in Jerusalem judged that it was unlawful for Paul to live (Acts 22:22). The Sanhedrin cannot reach an agreement but is divided between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, with some scribes from the latter group exclaiming "we find nothing bad in this man" (Acts 23:9).[4] Claudius Lysias found that the Sanhedrin was charging him concerning questions of their law, but had no charge worthy of death or chains (23:29). The high priest Ananias, together with some elders and a lawyer, state before Felix that they have found Paul to be "a pest and someone who stirs up rebellions among all the Jews in the world, who tried to profane the temple" (24:5–6). Felix does not reach a judgment on Paul, keeping him in custody as a favour to the Jews, hoping for a bribe. Thus, Agrippa's judgment, in line with that of the Pharisees and countering the charge of the high priest, forms the climax in Luke's apology for Paul. Central here is the political innocence of Paul and, by extension, of the αἵρεσις of the Nazarenes of which he is perceived to be a leader (24:5): they serve the God of their ancestors and may have disagreements with other Jews who do so (primarily with the Sadducees and the priestly elite), but they have the support of the Pharisees. They do not incite rebellion and hence are not liable to any punishment under Roman law. The authority of the high priest in matters pertaining to internal Jewish affairs is trumped by the authority of king Agrippa.

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[2] δεισιδαιμονία denotes "fearfulness for divine beings" both in the positive sense of the respect due to the gods and in the negative sense of excessive, superstitious fear. Further, it includes the practices that result from this fearfulness. In the mouth of a Roman procurator, the negative sense is probably implied.

[3] Just like Gallio, 18:15: ζητήματα [...] περὶ λόγου καὶ ὀνομάτων καὶ νόμου τοῦ καθ' ὑμᾶς; and Claudius Lysias, 23:29: περὶ ζητημάτων τοῦ νόμου αὐτῶν.

[4] Cf. also the counsel of Gamaliel in Acts 5:34–49.

The structure of the scene of Acts 25:23–26:32 can be outlined as follows:[5]

Acts 25:23–26:32 (Text: ECM)

(23) Τῇ οὖν ἐπαύριον ἐλθόντος τοῦ Ἀγρίππα καὶ τῆς Βερνίκης μετὰ πολλῆς φαντασίας καὶ εἰσελθόντων εἰς τὸ ἀκροατήριον σύν τε χιλιάρχοις καὶ ἀνδράσιν τοῖς κατ' ἐξοχὴν τῆς πόλεως καὶ κελεύσαντος τοῦ Φήστου ἤχθη ὁ Παῦλος. (24) καί φησιν ὁ Φῆστος• Ἀγρίππα βασιλεῦ [...] αἰτίας σημᾶναι. Ἀγρίππας δὲ πρὸς τὸν Παῦλον ἔφη• ἐπιτρέπεταί σοι περὶ σεαυτοῦ λέγειν.

[setting and introduction of characters]

(26:1) τότε ὁ Παῦλος ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα ἀπελογεῖτο• Περὶ πάντων [...]

[central performance]

(26:24) Ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀπολογουμένου ὁ Φῆστος μεγάλῃ τῇ φωνῇ φησιν• μαίνῃ, Παῦλε• τὰ πολλά σε γράμματα εἰς μανίαν περιτρέπει. (25) ὁ δὲ Παῦλος• οὐ μαίνομαι, φησίν, κράτιστε Φῆστε, [...]. πιστεύεις, βασιλεῦ Ἀγρίππα, τοῖς προφήταις; οἶδα ὅτι πιστεύεις.

[response by Festus, with reply of Paul and an invitation to Agrippa to respond]

(28) ὁ δὲ Ἀγρίππας πρὸς τὸν Παῦλον• ἐν ὀλίγῳ με πείθεις Χριστιανὸν ποιῆσαι. (29) ὁ δὲ Παῦλος• εὐξαίμην ἄν [...].

[response by Agrippa, with reply of Paul]

(30) Ἀνέστη τε ὁ βασιλεὺς καὶ ὁ ἡγεμὼν ἥ τε Βερνίκη καὶ οἱ συγκαθήμενοι αὐτοῖς, (31) καὶ ἀναχωρήσαντες ἐλάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους λέγοντες ὅτι οὐδὲν θανάτου ἢ δεσμῶν ἄξιόν [τι] πράσσει ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος. (32) Ἀγρίππας δὲ τῷ Φήστῳ ἔφη• ἀπολελύσθαι ἐδύνατο ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος εἰ μὴ ἐπεκέκλητο Καίσαρα.

[concluding narrative: joint verdict on Paul's innocence]

After this scene, chapters 27–28 narrate Paul's journey to Rome and his meeting with the Jews there. They convey a sense of homecoming,[6] after a last dramatic journey over the Mediterranean Sea that contains allusions to the *Odyssey*.[7] The concluding episode from Acts (28:17–28), which is not discussed further here, brings together important motifs from throughout the book. It mentions Paul's innocence (verse 17–21) on the one hand, and includes, on the other hand, a conversation with the Jews about Paul's thoughts (verses 22–28),

[5] Zmijevsky divides the scene in three sections, an introductory frame narrative (25:23–26:1a); the defence speech of Paul that ends in a dialogue (26:1b–29) and the concluding frame narrative (26:30–32). However, the interruption marks the end of the speech as centrepiece of the episode, at a point where Luke wants to put the exclamation mark: that the prophets and Moses say that the Christ must suffer and, as the first from the resurrection of the dead, will proclaim light both to the people and to the nations. The dialogue that follows narrates the responses of Festus (24) and of Agrippa (28), each followed by a reaction of Paul. The speech is framed by the verb ἀπολογέω (26:1, 24).

[6] Alexander, "Reading".

[7] Hummel, "Factum".

in which Paul seeks to convince them on the basis of the Law of Moses and the Prophets. He ends with the assurance that God's salvation has been sent to the Gentiles, as has been concluded at important moments throughout the book (Acts 11:18; 14:27; cf. 21:19). There is a continuing disagreement among the Jews about Jesus, a disagreement that Paul interprets in the light of the history of Israel: the Jews who do not accept his message act in the footsteps of their fathers at the time of Isaiah. This conclusion shows that Paul continues to follow in the footsteps of the prophets of Israel until the end of the book.

However, his speech to the Jews in Rome is much shorter than his speech before Agrippa and is not labelled as a defence speech in the narrative. Thus, his speech before Agrippa is the climax of Paul's defence speeches and, as such, the culmination of all the performances portrayed in Acts.[8] For this reason, it has been selected as the fifth and final 'portrait of Paul's performance' analysed in this study.[9]

6.2. Setting: Place and Location

The scene is part of an episode situated in Caesarea. Acts 25:13 mentions that king Agrippa and Bernice came to Caesarea to greet Festus. More specifically, the hearing of Paul is situated in the audience hall (ἀκροατήριον, Acts 25:23). In terms of chronology, the scene is situated "on the next day" (τῇ ἐπαύριον, Acts 25:23), which connects it with the previous verse, where Agrippa had expressed his wish to hear Paul and was promised to hear him the next day (αὔριον, Acts 25:22). Below, the significance of Caesarea as the location of this scene, and of the audience hall as the stage for Paul's performance, will be explored in more detail.

6.2.1. Caesarea

Caesarea is an important location in the book of Acts: whereas it is not mentioned in the Gospels, it is named fifteen times in Acts, second only to Jerusalem, as Joan Taylor has pointed out in a recent overview of the function of Caesarea as narrative setting in Acts.[10] It is first mentioned when Philip reaches the city after having brought the good message to all cities on the way from Azotus (8:40). In Acts 21:8, Philip is still in Caesarea, where he lives with his four prophesying daughters in a house (Acts 21:8–9). Saul is brought to Caesarea and sent from there to Tarsus in Acts 9:30. The first major episode located

[8] Schubert, "Cycle", 10.

[9] Marguerat notes that the speech looks back at Paul's entire ministry, as obedience to an imperative calling, before Luke passes to the final act of his book, the journey to Rome. Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:331.

[10] Taylor, "Caesarea", 43.

in Caesarea is narrated in Acts 10, where Caesarea is mentioned as the residence of Cornelius, a (Gentile) centurion of the Italian cohort, who is characterised as "pious and fearing God with his entire household, doing many acts of mercy for the people and praying to God always" (Acts 10:2). His house becomes the place where Peter learns "that God is not someone who judges people by their face (προσωπολήμπτης), but that in every nation he who fears him and practices righteousness is accepted by him" (Acts 10:34–35), and where the gift of the Holy Spirit is poured out upon the Gentiles/nations (Acts 10:45).

The next episode in Caesarea introduces the βῆμα on which "Herod" (that is, Agrippa I), in royal dress, delivers a speech to the δήμος, who applaud it as "the voice of a god and not of a human" (Acts 12:22). Because he did not give honour to God, an angel of the Lord struck him dead.

Caesarea is briefly mentioned as a place of transit for Paul in Acts 18:22, and then again in Acts 21:8 when the we-group lodges there in the house of Philip. After a prophecy from Agabus, both the we-group of Paul's companions and "the locals (οἱ ἐντόπιοι)", the disciples in Caesarea, ask Paul not to go to Jerusalem. When Paul insists, some of these disciples accompany him to Jerusalem (Acts 21:16).

When Paul returns to Caesarea, it is in Roman custody and protected by a large military escort (Acts 23:23–24, 31–32). Paul is placed under guard in the "praetorium of Herod" (23:35), a name that reminds the reader of Herod's death (Acts 12:20–23) and of the fact that Herod's government has been replaced by that of Roman procurators, as Felix now resides in Herod's praetorium.

This praetorium becomes the site for the protracted trial of Paul. While Paul is in custody, Felix, with his Jewish wife Drusilla, regularly sends for him (μετεπέμψατο) to hear about the faith in Christ Jesus (24:24–26). But unlike the centurion (who 'sent for' Peter, μετάπεμψαι, Acts 10:5), Felix does not believe and is not baptised.

In Acts 25:6, Felix' successor Festus sits down at the βῆμα, which may well be the same βῆμα from which Herod delivered his speech to the δήμος, to preside over the trial of Paul. Under the changed administration since Herod's death, this is now the βῆμα of Caesar, where the procurator executes judgment on behalf of the emperor (Acts 25:10).

The βῆμα is the raised platform on which a Roman governor hears cases brought to him as a judge, the Greek equivalent of the Latin *tribunal* or *rostra*.[11] Such a seat was usually located outside, visible to crowds who came to watch

[11] Cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.134.

the trials.[12] Trials were public spectacles: Quintilian had good reasons to emphasise that orators pleading cases should not behave like actors in a theatre.[13] In Caesarea, two platforms have been identified as possible βήματα; one within the large audience hall of the *praetorium* of Herod (the so-called Promontory Palace), and one in the courtyard before the *praetorium* which may have served as an outside βῆμα – just as Pilate sat on a βῆμα before the praetorium in Jerusalem at Gabbatha (Matt 27:19; John 19:13).[14] In addition, Josephus mentions that Pilate once seated himself on the βῆμα in the stadion so that the crowd could be surrounded by his soldiers.[15] In view of the public functions of the Caesarean βῆμα in Acts, it is better envisaged outside than in the audience hall.

In sum, the preceding narrative has presented a number of sites in Caesarea: the house of Philip, the house of the centurion, and the praetorium of Herod, with a βῆμα to be envisaged in front of it. The city functions as a transit place for journeys between Jerusalem and the Gentile world.[16] Joan Taylor has pointed out that the city "performs" Rome in the narrative of Acts.[17] Its name is telling: it is the city of Caesar, where his βῆμα stands and the Roman government resides. At the same time, it is also a place where the Gentile world meets the Jewish world, as the people who populate it make clear. It is the city of a Roman centurion who fears God; of a Jewish king who speaks to the (Syrian) δήμος and is applauded as a god; of a Roman procurator married to a Jewish wife.

According to Josephus, at the beginning of Festus' government, Nero withdrew the ἰσοπολιτεία granted to the Jewish inhabitants of Caesarea after a substantial gift of the leading men of the Syrians in Caesarea.[18] Thus, at the time Paul was brought before Agrippa, tensions between the Jewish and Syrian

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[12] Even the Roman emperor would sit outside to hear cases, cf. Seneca the Younger, *Apoc.* 7. In the New Testament, cf. Matt 27:19. In Corinth, a structure on the Roman agora has been identified as a βῆμα from the middle of the first century CE that was modelled on the famous *rostra* on the Forum Romanum of Rome (http://corinth.ascsa.net/id/corinth/monument/ bema?q=&t=monument&v=icons&sort=&s=24; Scranton, "Monuments", 91; Fouquet, *Bauen*, 147; Dickenson, *Agora*, 308–17).

[13] Cf. above, §1.2.4 sub b.

[14] Patrich, *Studies*, 207–8. Gleason et al., "Promontory Palace"; Burrell, "Palace".

[15] Josephus, *B.J.* 2.172 (with comments of Steve Mason ad locum); *A.J.* 18.57. Cf. also *B.J.* 2.301 where Florus has his βῆμα set up before the "royal grounds" in Jerusalem and then sits on it to hear the elite of Jerusalem.

[16] It is noteworthy that in rabbinic sources, the city is in a very real sense a border city: throughout late antiquity, it continued to be debated whether or not the city and the surrounding land were within the borders of *Eretz Israel,* which had important halachic implications. Cf. Habas, "Caesarea".

[17] Taylor, "Caesarea", 66–67. Cf. also van Eck, *Handelingen*, 234.

[18] Josephus, *A.J.* 20.183.

inhabitants of the city were rising. In Acts, however, this tension is not mentioned.

6.2.2. Audience Hall

The praetorium of Herod, the residence of the Roman governor, was built by Herod the Great as a palace with a private wing and a public wing and identified by archaeologists with the so-called Promontory Palace. The public wing (the Upper Palace) contains a large hall for public receptions.[19] This hall is probably the ἀκροατήριον where Paul is brought before Agrippa. Such halls were used for many purposes, but the Greek term suggests 'listening' was its primary purpose (from ἀκροάομαι, 'to listen'), providing a fitting place where Agrippa can "hear" Paul (ἀκοῦσαι, Acts 25:22). Unlike the scene before the βῆμα, Paul is not on trial in this scene, but is subject to a juridical examination.[20] His case will be continued in Rome, but Festus needs more information for an accurate description of the charges made against Paul. Festus therefore brings him before Agrippa so that Paul can present his defence before someone acquainted with the Jewish laws and customs (25:26).

6.3. Setting: Persons

An impressive cast of characters is brought together in the auditorium as the audience of Paul's performance. Luke describes their entrance in circumstantial genitive clauses. "Agrippa and Bernice arrived with much display and they entered into the audience hall with the tribunes and the prominent men of the city, and Festus issued the command. Then Paul was brought in." (Acts 25:23)

Agrippa and Bernice play a key role in this episode. After Roman governors have established time and again that the accusations brought against Paul concern intra-Jewish disagreements about the Law, Agrippa is enlisted as an expert in the Jewish Scriptures who confirms – just as the Pharisees in the Sanhedrin earlier – that Paul does not deserve death or chains.[21] His expert witness thus counters that of the high priest, who is politically subordinate to Agrippa.

[19] Netzer, *Architecture*, 110–11. Patrich, *Studies*, 205–24.
[20] Rightly so Wilker, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 262–63.
[21] Cf. Wilker, 268; Holzmeister, "Paulus (2)", 776–77.

Agrippa possesses the ἐξουσία τοῦ ναοῦ[22] and can replace high priests whenever they act contrary to his wishes.[23]

Moreover, Agrippa is not only a person with authority and high social standing in the Jewish homeland, but also in the diaspora and especially in Rome, where he spent his youth at the imperial court[24] and where he intervened successfully before the emperor on behalf of several prominent Jews.[25] For his support of the Flavian campaign in Judea, Agrippa was rewarded with the *ornamenta praetoria,* the insignia of praetorship, which means that his social status equaled that of senior senators.[26] Josephus claims that Agrippa read his works, and he cites two of the sixty-two letters in which Agrippa expressed his interest in and endorsement of Josephus' historiography.[27] In his apologetic work *Against Apion,* Josephus lists Agrippa among those Jews ("our men") who had knowledge of Greek wisdom and calls him "the most remarkable king Agrippa" (ὁ θαυμασιώτατος βασιλεὺς Ἀγρίππας).[28]

His sister Berenice (Acts uses the shorter form Bernice) was likewise well-known in Roman circles. She attained the height of her power in 75 CE, when she came with Agrippa to Rome and expected to marry the emperor Titus, until Roman disapproval of this marriage led Titus to send her away.[29] But already in 60 CE she was a powerful woman who carried the title of queen, being the widow of Herod of Chalcis. (In the early sixties, she was to marry a certain Polemo to silence rumours about an improper relationship with her brother Agrippa.) Lester Grabbe argues that it would constitute "a serious breach of protocol" that both Festus and Paul fail to address her with her title alongside

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[22] On what this power entails, cf. Wilker, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 205–52. The "authority over the temple and the holy properties and the right to appoint high priests" had been given to Agrippa's uncle Herod II by Claudius (Josephus, *A.J.* 20.15) and was given to Agrippa after Herod II's death in 48, as is implied by Josephus when he reports that Agrippa appoints Ismael ben Phiabi as high priest, Josephus, *A.J.* 20.179.

[23] Cf. also Wilker: "Agrippa fungiert [...] in diesem Abschnitt der *Apostelgeschichte* als eindeutig jüdischer und in religiösen Fragen bewanderter, d.h. als qualifizierter Zuhörer, er wird aber von den jüdischen Anklägern aus Jerusalem deutlich unterschieden. Der Herodianer wird somit im Rahmen der *Apostelgeschichte* als gebildeter, aufgeklärter und mit der hellenistischen und römischen Kultur vertrauter Jude dargestellt, der sich der paulinischen Lehre gegenüber aufgeschlossen zeigte oder sie zumindest nicht als bekämpfenswerte Bedrohung ansah." Wilker, 275.

[24] Josephus, *A.J.* 19.360.

[25] Cf. Josephus, *A.J.* 20.9; 20.134–136; *Vita* 355–360. Cf. Kilgallen: "Herod Agrippa II [...] represents for Luke a link between Rome and Judaism." Kilgallen, "Paul", 170.

[26] Cf. Jacobson, *Agrippa II*, chap. 8, with reference to Cassius Dio 66.15.4.

[27] Josephus, *Vita* 364–366.

[28] Josephus, *C. Ap.* 1.51. On Agrippa II, cf. most recently Jacobson, *Agrippa II*.

[29] Cassius Dio 65.15.3–4; more sensationally in Suetonius, *Life of Titus,* 7.1–2. On Berenice in Acts, cf. Ebel, *Lydia und Berenike*, 77–167; Gillman, "Berenice"; Metzner, *Prominenten*, 543–50.

king Agrippa (25:24; 26:2); the omission would demonstrate the author of Acts' ignorance about the political reality of the time.[30] Florence Gillman is likewise struck by her silence and relative marginal role in the episode, and interprets this as part of a tendency that feminist exegetes have discerned in Luke-Acts, the tendency to present women as "patriarchially correct".[31] Indeed, the reason cannot be that it was generally forbidden for women to speak in court under Roman law: later in Rome, Berenice will even preside as a judge over a case recalled by Quintilian.[32] Be this as it may, for the portrayal of Paul's performance in this episode, it is sufficient to conclude that Luke focuses on Agrippa as Paul's primary interlocutor.

Luke introduces Agrippa and Berenice in a neutral way. He does not mention their family relation with their father Herod Agrippa I, who is consistently called Herod in the book of Acts and who is portrayed much more negatively.[33] Also, Luke is silent about the rumours that Agrippa and Berenice had a sexual relationship, rumours that Josephus mentions but does not endorse.[34] Remarkably, Luke also does not explain that Drusilla, the wife of Felix, was the sister of Agrippa and Berenice, although he does note that she was a Jew. Luke has no interest in drawing attention to the many issues surrounding the marriages of these sisters (Felix had persuaded her to leave her former husband Azizus, who had been circumcised in order to marry Drusilla, according to Josephus),[35] in marked contrast to his comments on the relation of tetrarch Herod and Herodias in Luke 3:19. As the episode enfolds, the interest of Agrippa in hearing Paul, Paul's confidence about Agrippa's belief in the prophets, and the conclusion of Agrippa, Berenice, and Festus that Paul does not deserve death or chains yield a positive impression of this Jewish king.[36]

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[30] Grabbe, "Author", 459.

[31] Gillman, "Berenice", 263.

[32] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.19. Cf. Bablitz, *Actors and Audience*, 489. Nonetheless, Julia Wilker advances the presence of Berenice as female as an argument not to regard the hearing of Paul before Agrippa as part of a formal procedure. Wilker, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 272. However, Acts 25:26 makes clear that the ἀνάκρισις (*cognitio*) will only be completed after Agrippa has heard Paul, so that Festus has something to write to the lord. The contrast between what is 'formal' and what is 'informal' should not be pressed, especially since in a provincial *cognitio* much freedom was given to the provincial governor in how to conduct his investigation. Heusler, *Kapitalprozesse*, 213. On the *cognitio* (with reservations to the extent to which this was a technical term for a particular procedure), cf. recently Rüfner, *Cognitio*.

[33] As in Josephus, cf. *A.J.* 19.328–331.

[34] Josephus, *A.J.* 20.145. Cf. Juvenal, *Sat.* 6.157, who mentions a diamond given by Agrippa "to his incestuous sister".

[35] Josephus, *A.J.* 20.141.

[36] *Rex* and *regina* according to the reconstructed inscription in Beirut: [Rex magnus Agrippa Philocaesar et r]egina Berenice regis magni A[grippae filii]. Lendering, "Beirut Inscription".

However, the text does not give the impression that Luke seeks to flatter Agrippa and Berenice in the portrait he draws of them; if they would still be alive and could potentially read his work, one might expect a more deliberate attempt to invoke their continuing support in the contemporary situation. The date of their death is debated. Agrippa II probably died around 94/95 CE,[37] before Josephus completed his *Vita.*[38] Nothing is known about Berenice's final years, she may have died in the 80s or early 90s. If Acts is to be dated to the reign of Nerva or Trajan (cf. §1.4.2), both would probably have died.

One of the reasons why Agrippa would be an important witness to the innocence of Paul's teaching in an apologetic strategy aimed at Roman governors, is that Agrippa and Bernice emphatically displayed their loyalty to Rome in the suppression of the Jewish War and their support of the Flavian dynasty, to which the victory over Judea was central in legitimating their authority.[39]

Indeed, a relatively positive relation between Agrippa and the early Christians is confirmed by Josephus. At least, Josephus mentions that Agrippa deposed the Sadducean high priest Ananus after some Jews ("those who were deemed to be the most reasonable of those in the city, and precise concerning the laws", probably Pharisees) had complained to procurator Albinus about the stoning of James, the brother of Christ, an incident that probably occurred during the two years that Paul spent in custody in Rome according to Acts 28:31.[40]

In this light, Luke's remark that they entered "with much display" raises the question whether this is a neutral description of the entrance of important royals or contains a hint of criticism at excessive display. In the *Histories* of Polybius, φαντασία is sometimes used to denote "ostentation", an immoderate display of status and wealth.[41] But in *Histories* 31.26, it is used in a positive sense when Scipio is said to have given the beautiful dresses and decorations of Aemilia to his mother, whose means were formerly "rather lacking the display in correspondence to her noble birth" (ἐλλιπεστέραν [...] τῆς κατὰ τὴν εὐγένειαν φαντασίας). Thus, the Greek allows both interpretations: it can denote excessive display of wealth, but also the proper appearance that goes with one's status.

In the case of Agrippa and Berenice, "much display" certainly fits their status as royals who stand in the favour of Rome. Luke's reference adds to the

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[37] Cf. Jacobson, *Agrippa II*, chap. 8. Coins continued to be issued in Agrippa's name until this year; Jacobson responds extensively to the revised chronology of the coins proposed by Kushnir-Stein, on which Barclay relies for dating Agrippa's death in 88/89 CE. Barclay, *Against Apion*, xxvii.

[38] Josephus, *Vita* 359, 367. The *Life* is probably to be dated not too long after the completion of the *Antiquities* in 93/94 CE and before the death of Domitian. Cf. Mason, *Life*, xv–xix.

[39] See further above, §1.5.

[40] Josephus, *A.J.* 20.199–203.

[41] Cf. Polybius, *Histories* 12.25d.4–6; 15.25.22; 16.21.1.

grandeur of the stage on which Paul is allowed to perform and does not deflect from the positive characterization of the royals.

Entering together with them are the military tribunes (χιλίαρχοι, *tribuni militum*) and the prominent men of the city. The tribunes, literally "commanders over thousand", are high officers in the Roman army; earlier in the narrative, Luke has mentioned Claudius Lysias as tribune of the cohort stationed in Jerusalem (21:31; 23:26). The majority of the Roman troops were stationed in Caesarea, however,[42] including – according to Acts[43] – the "Italian cohort", in which Cornelius served as centurion (Acts 10:1), and the "cohort of Augustus", of which a centurion, named Julius, will bring Paul and some others to Rome (Acts 27:1). The tribunes assigned to these troops make a natural appearance at the residence of the provincial governor.[44] Only later, in 66/67, would Caesarea become the base for two Roman legions, brought to Syria to fight the Jewish uprising.[45]

Caesarea was a Syrian city, though one with many Jewish inhabitants, who had the privilege of "equal citizen rights" (ἰσοπολιτεία). Luke's reference to the prominent men of the city is probably a reference to the prominent Syrian inhabitants. Thus, Paul, Agrippa, and Berenice are the only Jews in a very Roman, Gentile setting; but it is a setting in which these three Jews are very much at home.

Finally, Festus is the host in whose residence the hearing of Paul takes place. After the entrance of the Agrippa and Berenice, who are higher in social standing than he is, as equestrian procurator of Judea, he orders Paul to be brought in and introduces him to the assembled audience.

Festus addresses the guests as follows: "King Agrippa and all men who are together present with us, behold this man [...]." The attention, not only of king Agrippa and those present in the audience hall, but also of the reader of Acts, is thus directed at Paul. Who is this man, "concerning whom all the multitude of the Jews have petitioned me both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he should not live anymore"?[46] Festus does not understand all the fuss about Paul: "I, for me, have concluded that he has done nothing worthy of death, and after

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[42] Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 381.

[43] For a historical evaluation of these notices, cf. Speidel, "Roman Army".

[44] Tacitus complains about the custom of the young to spend their tribunate in the provinces indulging in pleasures rather than becoming experienced in military service and acquiring knowledge of the province (Tacitus, *Agricola,* 5).

[45] Cf. Lendering, "Legio X".

[46] The Harklean Syriac version and one Latin manuscript have a long addition here, which includes a reference of Festus to "orders of Caesar" not to hand Paul over to the Jews. Pervo notes that the addition serves to heighten the disrepute of the Jews. It is best understood as an addition in the context of the increasing anti-Judaism in the second century, to which the writings of the Apologetes and Apostolic Fathers testity. Pervo, *Acts*, 620.

he appealed to the Augustus,[47] I decided to send him [to the Augustus].” After stating his decision, he explains the reason for bringing Paul before the audience:

> I have nothing accurate to write to the lord about him, therefore I have brought him before you [plural] and especially before you, king Agrippa, so that after the examination has been done, I will have something to write. Because it appears unreasonable to me that someone who sends a captive does not also indicate the accusations against him. (Acts 25:26)

This introduction defines the session as part of the “examination” (ἀνάκρισις). Although Festus has already decided to send Paul to Rome, he does not yet have something to write to his lord about the nature of the case. Therefore, he considers his examination as yet unsatisfactory and enlists the expertise of Agrippa so that “after the examination has happened”, (τῆς ἀνακρίσεως γενομένης) he will have something to write (Acts 25:26).[48] In the previous section, the initiative for the hearing of Paul seemed to come from Agrippa, who expressed his wish to hear Paul. At the same time, that Festus brought the case of Paul to the attention of Agrippa can be interpreted as an indirect, polite request for a second opinion. In the presence of Caesarea’s civil and military chief men, Festus takes the opportunity to present himself as a dutiful Roman governor who goes to great lengths to administer just government.[49] ἀνάκρισις functions here as the Greek equivalent of the Latin *cognitio,* the enquiry by a provincial governor in which he was both the investigating magistrate and the judge.[50] An analogous situation is described by Pliny the Younger when he describes how he, as governor of Bithynia and Pontus, went about the *cognitiones de Christianis*, investigating the charges against those brought before him, releasing those who were willing to sacrifice to the gods, punishing those who persistently refused to abandon their superstition, and sending the Roman citizens for trial to Rome.[51] The related verb ἀνακρίνω is used for the examination of Jesus before Pilate (Luke 23:14), the examination of the apostles before the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem (Acts 4:9), Herod’s examination of the guards (Acts 12:19), in his capacity as vassal king, Felix’s examination of Paul

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[47] The full name of Nero after he succeeded Claudius was Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus. Augustus functions both as name and as title.

[48] Cf. Luke 23:14 and Acts 24:8 where the cognate verb is used to describe the task of Pilate to examine Jesus’ case and that of Festus to examine Paul’s case. Heusler highlights that a formal role in the trial procedure is thus given to a Jewish king. Heusler, *Kapitalprozesse*, 112–13.

[49] Cf. also Walton, “Trying Paul”, 138. Pervo thinks that the reader will be amused by Festus’ self-serving interpretation, but that this is not intended to impugn his reliability. Pervo, *Acts*, 617.

[50] Cf. Heusler, *Kapitalprozesse*, 213. On the *cognitio* (with some reservations to the extent in which this was a technical term for a particular procedure), cf. recently Rüfner, *Cognitio*.

[51] Cf. Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10.96, discussed above in §1.5.

(Acts 24:8), and Paul's examination by "the Romans", (28:18, looking back at his trials before Felix and Festus).

Luke does not comment on the self-presentation of Festus as a conscientious Roman governor. His characterization is less negative than that of Felix, who is portrayed as a governor who keeps an innocent man captive because he hopes for a bribe (24:26). The fact that Festus, like Felix, wants to do the Jews a favour (25:9), aligns him with Felix, but should not be interpreted as a negative depiction of Festus as a biased judge: as a newly arrived provincial governor, it is simply prudent to extend a favour to the local authorities by granting them a seemingly innocent request. Festus does not appear to know about the ambush that the Jews have planned (25:3), and Paul would still be tried in Jerusalem before Festus (25:9).[52]

After Festus has introduced Paul, it is Agrippa who gives Paul permission to speak: it is a hearing before Agrippa, and Festus acts only as host. Agrippa permits Paul to speak about himself (περὶ σεαυτοῦ λέγειν),[53] i.e., to give his perspective on the accusations that have been brought against his person.[54]

6.4. Performance: Gesture and Speech

In line with the permission given to Paul by Agrippa, Paul begins to defend himself (ἀπελογεῖτο). This defence is preceded by a gesture of the hand (ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα, Acts 26:1). Below, the gesture will be examined, and the speech will be discussed by inquiring into the words used to characterise the speech and by providing an overview of the speech's rhetoric and style.[55]

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[52] Walton, "Trying Paul", 137, 139; Blumenthal, "Paulus vor Gericht", 175–77. "Rather than clear red (for guilt) or clear white (for innocence), Felix seems considerably deeper pink than Festus." Walton, "Trying Paul", 139. I would suggest, indeed, that Festus is portrayed as (almost) white.

[53] Many manuscripts read ὕπερ σεαυτοῦ ("before yourself"). This makes explicit that Paul is allowed to speak in defence of himself. However, this is also implied in the wording "to speak about yourself". For the present investigation, the variant does not effect the interpretation.

[54] According to Pervo, the "interview with the features of a judicial hearing has been turned into entertainment for the royalty." Pervo, *Acts*, 621. Indeed, trials often constituted public spectacles and, thus, a form of entertainment. However, there is little indication in the text that Luke wants to present it as public entertainment. Even though the initial response of Festus is brusque, and the initial response of Agrippa may be viewed as mildly ironical, the conclusion of the narrative, with the joint verdict on Paul's innocence, is quite solemn.

[55] Cf. also Neyrey, "Speech".

6.4.1. Extending the Hand

The expression ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα (26:1) is used to refer to the gesture that accompanies the beginning of a speech.[56] An example of such a gesture is known from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* 2.21, where one of the participants in a symposium is asked to tell his story:

> And so Thelyphron piled the covers in a heap and propped himself on his elbow, sitting half upright on the couch. He extended his right arm, shaping his fingers to resemble an orator's: having bent his two lowest fingers in, he stretched the others out at long range and poised his thumb to strike, gently rising as he began.[57]

Quintilian mentions this gesture as the most common gesture, fitting for an exordium and elsewhere in the speech.[58] As an especially modest gesture that is suitable to start a speech with, he recommends "bringing the thumb and the first three fingers gently together to a point, and moving the hand towards the body in the region of the mouth or chest, then letting it fall, palm downwards and slightly brought forward", as he imagines Demosthenes to have begun his defence speech for Ctesiphon.[59]

Luke only mentions "extending the hand" here. Elsewhere, he mentions a different hand gesture: a movement of the hand that is intended to ask the audience for silence.[60] In Acts 26, however, the silence has been created by Agrippa as he allows Paul to speak. Slightly extending the (right) hand is what the orator should do when he begins his speech.[61] Mentioning this gesture before presenting the speech itself has the effect of slowing down the speed of the narrative, and thus adds dignity to the speech itself. Such a dignity befits the final long speech of Paul in the book of Acts and the grandeur of the setting in which it is performed, as many commentators have noted.[62]

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[56] Cf. Shiell, *Reading Acts*, 52–54.

[57] Apuleius, *Metam.* 2.21 (Hanson, LCL). *Ac sic aggeratis in cumulum stragulis et effultus in cubitum suberectusque in torum porrigit dexteram, et ad instar oratorum conformat articulum, duobusqueinfimis conclusis digitis ceteros eminus porrigens et infesto pollice clementer surrigens infit Thelyphron.* The passage is also quoted by Blumenthal, "Paulus vor Gericht", 178.

[58] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.92.

[59] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.96 (Russell, LCL). Cf. also Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.3.157–158.

[60] Cf. above, §5.4.2.

[61] Quintilian, 11.3.157–158. Heusler sees a tension between the depiction of Paul as rhetor and as accused (Heusler, *Kapitalprozesse*, 129–30). However, a defence speech should also be presented with rhetorical spirit. As an innocent man, he can speak frankly (παρρησιαζόμενος) before the presiding king.

[62] Cf., e.g., Tomson, "Josephus", 447–48; Spencer, "Style".

6.4.2. Speech

a) Verbs Used to Characterise the Speaking: Defending

Paul's speech is presented as a defence speech: ἀπελογεῖτο is used to introduce the direct speech, and in the prooemium of the speech, Paul expresses how fortunate he is "to be about to defend before you today" (ἐπὶ σοῦ μέλλων σήμερον ἀπολογεῖσθαι). Finally, the expression returns in verse 24: "As he was saying these things in defence" (Ταῦτα δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀπολογουμένου).[63] In Luke-Acts, the verb and the cognate noun ἀπολογία are used with respect to Paul only in Acts 22–26, providing a motif that holds these chapters together as a separate section of the book of Acts. In Luke's Gospel, Jesus has promised his disciples that the Spirit will teach them what to say when they have to defend themselves (Luke 12:11–12, cf. 21:14). In Acts, the verb only occurs outside Acts 22–26 in Acts 19:33, with respect to Alexander, a Jew who wants to defend himself before the *demos* assembled in the theater, but is not able to silence the crowd by moving his hands (19:33–34). The triple occurrence of forms of ἀπολογεῖσθαι in Acts 26 clearly marks Paul's speech as a defence speech, in contrast to the episodes investigated in the previous chapters of this study.

It is a defence speech "concerning all things of which I have been accused by Jews".[64] The most complete list of accusations is given in Acts 21:28, where Jews from Asia identify Paul as "the one who teaches everyone everywhere against the nation, the law and this place" and claim that "he has now even brought Greeks into the temple and has [thus] made this holy place common" (Acts 21:28). The official accusation before Felix is given in 24:5–6: inciting rebellion among Jews around the world as leader of the school of the Nazarenes and trying to make the sanctuary profane. The accusers' version of the events in the temple that led to Paul's arrest is that Paul was encouraging a rebellion in the temple and that the temple authorities arrested him (Acts 24:6b).[65] Paul's (and Luke's) version is that Paul was not in the temple to teach or to incite a rebellion, but to sacrifice, after having purified himself, demonstrating his observance of the law.[66] The uproar in the temple was not created by Paul, but by the Jews from Asia who stirred up the people against him (Acts 24:12, 17–18).

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[63] In the Septuagint, both the verb ἀπολογεῖσθαι and the noun ἀπολογία are rare. Cf 2 Macc 13:26; Wis 6:10; Jer 12:1; 20:12; 38:6. 2 Macc 13:26 is the only occurrence in a comparable context.

[64] As Kilgallen notes, the plural "all things" indicates that the accusations against Paul from the previous chapters are still in view and that Paul does not defend only or mainly the resurrection of Christ, as O'Toole argued. Cf. Kilgallen, "Paul", 171; O'Toole, *Climax*, 39.

[65] A number of manuscripts from the Western textual cluster add that the priests wanted to judge him according to their law, but the tribune Lysias took him violently out of their hands (!).

[66] Cf. Koet, "Nazirate".

Lysias saved Paul from a mob lynching (21:30–31) rather than intervening in an orderly trial by the temple authorities. In the trial before Festus, the accusers brought against Paul "many and heavy accusations which they were not able to prove" (Acts 25:7), the nature of which is reflected in Paul's defence that he has not commited any offense "against the law of the Jews, against the sanctuary, or against Caesar" (25:8).

In the speech before Agrippa, part of Paul's defence consists in stating that the true reason why Jews accuse him and why he is judged is the hope for the resurrection of the dead (26:6–8), which is the hope for God's promise to the fathers, the promise that the twelve tribes of Israel hope to obtain as they eagerly perform their (cultic) service night and day. This does not mean that the concrete accusations of his accusers are not addressed by Paul: when he states in 26:21 that "because of these things [sc. his proclamation in Damascus, Jerusalem, Judea and the nations, performed out of obedience to the heavenly appearance of Jesus], the Jews have taken me in the temple and tried to lay their hands on me", he responds implicitly to the claim of having incited a rebellion in the temple.

b) Rhetorical Aspects

Paul's speech can be divided into three parts, just like his speech in Acts 17: a *prooemium,* a central part, and a *peroratio.* The first part, the *prooemium*, praises Agrippa for his knowledge of Jewish affairs and petitions him to listen (26:2–3) – a polite elaboration of the straightforward ἀκούσατε of Acts 13:16. This concise introduction is in line with the guidelines of Quintilian: "The reason for a Prooemium is simply to prepare the hearer to be more favourably inclined towards us for the rest of the proceedings",[67] and "we should ensure the judge's goodwill not only by praising him (which must be done with restraint, though it is something both sides can do) but by linking his praise to the needs of our own Cause."[68]

Noteworthy in Paul's prooemium is his praise of Agrippa as "knowledgeable of all customs and disagreements among the Jews", which puts him in the position of judging on the internal disagreements of Paul with other Jews about the law, to which Roman governors have referred three times before (18:15; 23:29; 25:19).

Following the *prooemium* is the body of the speech (verse 4–21), which explains why the Jews have tried to lay their hands on him (i.e., to kill him) in the temple. This counters the charge of stirring up rebellion in the temple, by providing an alternative version of the events: the Jews did not arrest him because he was encouraging a rebellion, but they wanted to kill him because of

[67] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.5 (Russell, LCL).
[68] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.16 (Russell, LCL).

his message of μετάνοια that he proclaimed in faithfulness to a heavenly vision of Jesus.[69]

The last two verses, introduced by the particle οὖν, present a *peroratio* (similar to the one in Acts 17:30–31) in which he concludes that it is by divine support that he stands to this day "testifying to small and great [i.e., to everyone] nothing else than what the prophets said would happen, including Moses, that the Anointed One would have to suffer, and that, as the first one of the resurrection of the dead, he would announce light to [his] people and to the nations."[70] This counters the charge of teaching against the law of Moses.

At the same time, however, the entire speech after the *prooemium* can be divided into two parts (4–8 and 9–23) in which a section introduced by μὲν οὖν (Τὴν μὲν οὖν βίωσίν μου, verse 4; Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ἔδοξα, verse 9), which looks back to the past, leads to a conclusion about the present: καὶ νῦν [...] ἕστηκα κρινόμενος (verse 6) and ἐπικουρίας οὖν [...] ἕστηκα μαρτυρόμενος (verse 22).[71] The parallelism between these parts is important especially because verses 22–23 explain the statement made in verse 6 that Paul stands on trial because of his hope in the promise to the Fathers: this promise consists of the message of the Prophets that the Anointed One would have to suffer and would, as the first of the resurrection of the dead, announce light to his people and to the nations. As Paul has explained in verses 9–21, he stands on trial because he was announcing this light in obedience to the heavenly vision of Jesus. In verses 9–21, the use of the vocative (often a structural marker in the speeches of Acts), functions to draw the attention of the king to this heavenly vision as the main event that triggered Paul to begin his proclamation: a heavenly vision of Jesus (26:13; 19). Hence, the body of Paul's speech cannot be divided in a *narratio* and *argumentatio*, such as prescribed

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[69] Kilgallen notes the correspondence between Paul's message of repentance and that of John the Baptist at the beginning of the Gospel (Luke 3:3–6; 10–14). Kilgallen, "Paul", 181.

[70] εἰ takes the place of ὅτι here, introducing the content of what Paul is testifying, just as in 26:8, where it introduces the content of what Paul's audience judges to be unbelievable, rather than the condition for this judgment. That may have inspired the usage in 26:23. εἰ can replace ὅτι after verbs that express emotions (cf. LSJ, s.v. εἰ; Barrett, *Acts*, 2:1165–66), although μαρτυρέω is not usually ranked among those. An alternative explanation is given by Van Eck, who interprets it as a conditional clause "if, indeed, the Christ would have to suffer [then I have testified saying nothing else than the prophets said]" (van Eck, *Handelingen*, 530).

[71] This diptych-structure is highlighted by O'Toole, *Climax*, 30–33. His proposal, however, risks overlooking the importance of verse 21 as the concluding line of the body of the speech before Paul comes to his final conclusion.

for defence speeches by Quintilian.[72] The *prooemium* – 'body' – *peroratio* structure conforms only loosely to rhetorical theory.

After the *peroratio* in 26:23, Paul is interrupted by Festus. Daniel Smith has shown that interruptions function as exclamation marks to what Luke perceives as the central statements of the speeches in Acts.[73] The central statement of this speech is thus the concluding line of the speech quoted above (Acts 26:23).[74] Many commentators view the resurrection as the central theme in this speech, since it ends the first panel (26:8 "Why is it judged incredulous by you [plural] that God raises the dead?")[75] and is referred to in the second panel (the Anointed One as πρῶτος ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν).[76] Indeed, the resurrection is an important theme in the book of Acts, and more specifically in the defence speeches: Before the Sanhedrin, Paul has likewise claimed that he is on trial for his belief in the resurrection of the dead, a belief that he shares with the Pharisees in the Sanhedrin. However, in the closing verse of the speech in Acts 26, the resurrection is not the main theme: the central proposition of the sentence is that the Anointed One will announce light to the people and to the nations.[77] This recalls Luke 2:32 and ties in with the central theme of the salvation of the Gentiles.[78]

In his speech, Paul demonstrates his commitment to his nation by the *pathos* with which he, as someone who lived from his youth as a Pharisee, is willing to defend the hope of the twelve tribes, a pathos that comes to the fore particularly in the exclamation "why is it judged incredulous among you that God raises the dead?" (verse 8). The plural ὑμῖν suggests that in this regard,

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[72] Though Quintilian allows room for flexibility and notes instances where a *narratio* is not necessary or can be expressed briefly (Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.4–8). Cf. also Quesnel, "Analyse". Marguerat rightly observes that the speech cannot be pressed in the scheme of a forensic defence speech with *narratio, propositio* and *probatio*. Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:329.

[73] Smith, *The Rhetoric of Interruption*.

[74] Blumenthal argues for a ring structure in which the speech of Christ "for this I have appeared to you, to appoint you as servant and witness" is the centre. However, ancient speeches tend to build up to the end as climax, rather than having their focal point in the middle. Blumenthal, "Paulus vor Gericht", 179.

[75] Kilgallen interprets the question in a very different way: "Why would it be judged incredulous among you that God raises the dead?" (Kilgallen: "he asks why they might find resurrection of the dead unbelievable", Kilgallen, "Paul", 176), implying that he seeks to rally his audience to his side as supporters of the resurrection, against his Sadducean opponents. The present tense in the question discourages this interpretation. Paul's question presupposes that his audience judges it incredulous that God raises the dead and expresses bewilderment about this fact.

[76] Especially O'Toole, *Climax*.

[77] Thus also Kilgallen, who regards verses 4–8 as Paul's response to the charge of believing in the resurrection of the dead, and verses 9–23 as Paul's response to the charge of teaching against the people, the law and the temple. Kilgallen, "Paul", 177.

[78] Cf. Koet, "Worte".

Agrippa shares the views of the other people present. This does not make him a Sadducee: it is representative of the viewpoint of many elite Jews, as is also confirmed by funenary inscriptions. Alternatively, the ὑμῖν can be read as addressed to the men present other than king Agrippa, who has been addressed in a vocative in the preceding verse; one may imagine a wide, inclusive arm gesture to them as he expresses his bewilderment at their unbelief.[79]

In terms of style and figures of speech, a number of further observations can be made.[80] First, there is unusual vocabulary: τὸ δωδεκάφυλον ἡμῶν (verse 7). Second, the sentences increase in length, building up to the hymnic language of Jesus' instruction to Paul, couched in a very long and complex sentence (verses 16–18), and again building up in verses 19–23 from shorter to longer sentences. Third, Jesus is presented as using a proverbial saying that could be recognised as an allusion to Euripides' *Bacchae* (σκληρόν σοι πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζειν, verse 14). Fourth, there is a lengthy alliteration of the glottal stop (οὐκ ἐγενόμην ἀπειθὴς τῇ οὐρανίῳ ὀπτασίᾳ, verse 19) and of the *mu* (μαρτυρόμενος μικρῷ τε καὶ μεγάλῳ, verse 22). Thus, the speech is eloquent, but without an extravagant rhetorical flourish: it creates the impression of a polished, respectful and yet passionate defence speech.[81]

6.5. Audience Response

The interruption by Festus constitutes the first response to Paul's performance. Paul responds to Festus and then continues to focus on Agrippa, which leads to a response from Agrippa, followed by a reply from Paul. This dialogue of the three main characters (Berenice remains silent throughout, perhaps because she is a woman) ends the examination, and Festus and Agrippa conclude that Paul is innocent.

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[79] Julia Wilker, in contrast, thinks that Agrippa is portrayed as a Sadducee, who does not believe the resurrection (Wilker, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 270). However, the Sadducees are closely linked to the high priest and consistently portrayed in a negative light in Acts, whereas Agrippa is rather presented in the same more positive perspective as the Pharisees (including Gamaliel), in Acts as well as in Josephus. If Agrippa is to be included among those who do not believe a resurrection, it should be interpreted not as a Sadducean trait, but as belonging to the Hellenistic convictions of elite Jews like Agrippa. For the epigraphic evidence, cf. Park, *Afterlife*.

[80] Marguerat notes a "syntaxe complexe et recherchée" and numerous "tournures atticistes" (Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:331). Pervo, usually not much impressed by the style of the speeches in Acts, regards this speech as "the best-crafted oration in the book, with a skillful structure and a relative abundance of stylistic niceties". Pervo, *Acts*, 625.

[81] Cf. further Spencer, "Style".

6.5.1. Festus' Response and Paul's Reply

The response of Festus is a loud exclamation: "You are insane, Paul! Your many books drive you to insanity!" Festus' response echoes the response of others in Acts who mock the preaching of the apostles.[82] It also reflects a charge often made against Cynic philosophers.[83] Specific to Festus' response is his reference to τὰ πολλά γράμματα that drive Paul to insanity. This echoes a Roman prejudice against theoretical knowledge, but it also reflects positively on Paul's learning and highlights his interpretation of the Scriptures as driving motivation for his beliefs.

Paul replies to Festus with a polite but resolute rejection: "I am not insane, excellent Festus, but I voice a true and sound opinion [litt. words of truth and prudence]." That Paul does not spend more time to respond to Festus, but continues to speak to Agrippa, suggests a hint of condescension at and superiority over this Roman knight, who is evidently unfamiliar with Jewish learning. Luke presents Paul as being on speaking terms with a Roman senator (Sergius Paulus) and an influential Jewish king, as well as a friend of powerful Asiarchs. To spend much time to reply to the brusque remarks of an equestrian governor is beneath the standing that is assigned to Paul in Acts.[84]

6.5.2. Agrippa's Response and Paul's Reply

Paul turns again to Agrippa: "For the king knows about these things, to whom also I frankly continue to speak, for to him I am convinced that nothing of these things is hidden. For it has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe" (Acts 26:26–27)

Paul's emphasis on Agrippa's knowledge further exposes Festus' ignorance. Paul continues where he was interrupted: the prophets have foretold the things that he is proclaiming, so if Agrippa believes the prophets, he should also agree with Paul. Elsewhere in Acts, the proclamation of Jesus as the Christ is often based on arguments from Scripture.[85] Paul is applying a wellknown rhetorical strategy: asking someone to agree to a premise in order to pin him down on the conclusion of an argument.[86]

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[82] E.g., Acts 2:13; 17:32.

[83] Malherbe, "Corner", 159. In Justin, *Dial.* 39.4, Trypho similarly accuses Justin of madness.

[84] Goodman remarks that "governors [of Judea] will have been uneasily aware that the political clout in Rome of some members of the Herodian family was considerably greater than theirs [...] Few governors will have been as close to the emperor as Agrippa II seems to have been." Goodman, *Rome and Jerusalem*, 381–82.

[85] Cf., e.g., Acts 17:2–3; 28:23.

[86] Quintilian speaks about the power of questions "to increase the force and cogency of proof" (Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.6) and the pleasing effect of answering a question that you have

Agrippa cleverly refuses to answer the question by pointing out what Paul is doing: instead of defending himself, he is trying to make Agrippa into a Christian. The Greek question as the ECM has reconstructed it translates at first sight as: "You are in little [sc. χρόνῳ, in a short time, quickly; or, πόνῳ, with little effort] persuading me to make a Christian." This interpretation of ποιέω has a clear parallel in Matthew 23:15: "you go about sea and land to make a single proselyte."[87] The meaning suggested by Haenchen, "to conduct yourself as a Christian" or to "play a Christian" is much more farfetched; also improbable is the theoretically possibile rendering "to do something Christian". However, that Paul is persuading Agrippa to start making Christians is also unlikely. Instead, one option is to regard Paul as the subject of the infinitive that complements πείθεις in a construction that has a parallel in Xenophon, although it is not very common in Greek.[88] This yields the following translation: "You are persuading me in order to make me a Christian." The other option is to view the sentence as a contamination of two expressions: "You are trying to make me a Christian"[89] and "you are persuading me to become a Christian." The latter is the reading of an important variant in the manuscripts, which is intrinsically more correct, but may precisely for that reason be secondary.[90]

Agrippa's question has been viewed as sarcastic and even aggressive, but this interpretation is based on an anti-Herodian bias among interpreters of Acts rather than on the text, as Julia Wilker has shown.[91] Actually, Agrippa's response contributes in an important sense to the depiction of Paul: it highlights the fact that even as he has to defend himself, he is trying to persuade his audience in favour of the Gospel. Paul's reply makes explicit that this is his wish. "May I pray (εὐξαίμην ἄν) to God that in little and in great (ἐν ὀλίγῳ καὶ ἐν μεγάλῳ), not only you but also all those who hear me today, may become such as I also am, except for these chains" (Acts 26:29). Noteworthy in this reply is, first, the eloquent use of the optative εὐξαίμην ἄν, which adds dignity to this

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put yourself (Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.14). On the question of Acts 26:27, cf. also Estes, *Questions*, 284–85.

[87] περιάγετε τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηρὰν ποιῆσαι ἕνα προσήλυτον.

[88] According to the most recent Greek grammar, πείθω is followed either by an accusative and declarative (accusative and) infinitive (meaning "to convince someone that something is the case") or by an accusative and dynamic infinitive (meaning "to persuade someone to do something"), cf. van Emde Boas et al., *Grammar*, 538. However, Barrett points to Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.2.49, where the subject of πείθω is also the implied subject of the infinitive. Barrett, *Acts,* 2:1170.

[89] In 1908, J.E. Harry conjectured an original (ἐπι)πόθεις instead of πείθεις, translating "you desire to make me a Christian a little". Without textual basis, this conjecture cannot be substantiated. Harry, "Response".

[90] Cf. the excellent overview of the issues in Barrett, *Acts*, 2:1169–71. For the option of a contamination, Barrett points to Bauernfeind.

[91] Wilker, *Rom und Jerusalem*, 275–76.

final statement of Paul in this episode; second, the expression ἐν ὀλίγῳ καὶ ἐν μεγάλῳ, which is a wordplay on Agrippa's remark, perhaps to be rendered as "both quickly and in the long term";[92] third, Paul's refusal to affirm that he is trying to make Agrippa a Christian. Nowhere in Acts do disciples of Jesus call themselves Christians, Nazarenes or members of a αἵρεσις.[93] They do not deny this either, but rephrase it in terms of continuity with Israel's ancestral worship of God. What Paul is, he has explained in his speech: a Pharisee who has received a heavenly vision of Jesus and now proclaims what the prophets and Moses said would happen.[94] This can be interpreted as part of Luke's apologetic strategy: although the Romans perceive the *Christiani* as a new, perfidious sect,[95] they are in fact Jews and Gentiles ('God-fearers') who together worship the God of Israel and believe in Jesus as the promised Anointed One.

Finally, Paul's reference to his chains, which may have been accompanied by a gesture of some kind that showed his chains, is an implicit appeal to his audience to release him, and fits the character of his performance as a defence (cf. also Acts 20:23; 23:29). It is taken up by Festus and Agrippa in their verdict that Paul does not deserve chains (Acts 26:31). It demonstrates that Paul is engaged in defence throughout chapter 26, which is to be emphasised in response to exegetes who argue that "Paul's speech is not so much to prove his innocence as to bear witness to the risen Jesus and to call for a response."[96] The subtlety of the way in which he reminds his audience of his chains further portrays Paul as someone who is more interested in defending his work as a messenger of Jesus than in defending his personal fate.

6.5.3. Verdict of Festus and Agrippa

After Paul's words, his immediate dialogue partners, as well the others present, stand up, signaling the end of the ἀνάκρισις. Bernice is not listed together with king Agrippa, but is mentioned separately as part of the larger audience.

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[92] Malherbe points out that quick, instantaneous conversion was considered suspect in the philosophical tradition and translates Paul's response as "I could wish that rapidly or gradually, […]." Malherbe, "Corner", 161–63. Barrett's proposal to read it as "with little argument, aye, and with much, if needed" fits better with the "making me a Christian" of verse 26 than with the "becoming like me" of verse 28. Barrett, *Acts*, 2:1172.

[93] In Acts 11:26, χρηματίσαι Χριστιανούς suggests the adoption of a title given to the disciples by others.

[94] Cf. also Acts 24:14–15.

[95] John Barclay has shown that Roman authors around 100 CE do not associate *Christiani* with Jews, but regard them as adherents of a new *superstitio*. Barclay, "'Jews' and 'Christians.'"

[96] Yamazaki-Ransom, *Empire*, 190. Yamazaki–Ransom incorrectly refers to Kilgallen for this viewpoint (Kilgallen, "Paul").

The king and the governor stood up, as well as Bernice and those seated together with them, and having retreated they said to each other: "This man does not do anything worthy of death or chains." And Agrippa said to Festus: "This man could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar." (Acts 26:31–32)

That the episode concludes with this verdict is to be interpreted as a positive effect of Paul's performance.[97] It is instructive to compare this episode with Paul's performance before Sergius Paulus. There, the governor is eager to hear Paul's *teaching*, and after hearing it, believes. Here, Agrippa wants to hear Paul in order to examine the legitimacy of the accusations brought against him, and after hearing him, concludes that he is innocent. Agrippa and Festus do not become disciples, although Paul expresses his prayer to God that they would, but Luke does not highlight this: he focuses instead on the positive outcome of their declaration of Paul's innocence, which is formulated first as a joint, unanimous statement, and then confirmed by Agrippa, who is thus given the last word in the matter.[98]

6.6. Script

Situated in the centre of the second panel of the body of Paul's defence speech, verse 19 constitutes the central motif of Paul's defence: "Therefore, king Agrippa, I have not been disobedient (ἀπείθης) to the heavenly vision." Thus, Paul presents himself as someone who acts out of obedience to God, appealing to a central notion in the ancient world that obedience to the gods is more important than obedience to men.[99] This notion has been explicitly mentioned earlier in Acts in the defence speech of Peter and James before the high priest: "One must be obedient (πειθαρχεῖν) to God more than to humans" (Acts 5:29). After their speech, Gamaliel advised the Sanhedrin to let Peter and James go, lest they would be found to be "God-fighters" (μήποτε καὶ θεομάχοι εὑρεθῆτε, Acts 5:39).

6.6.1. Socrates

The notion of obedience to God and his instructions is central also in one of the most famous defence speeches of the literary canon of Hellenistic education at the time: Plato's account of the *Apology* of Socrates. Socrates, like Paul,

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[97] *Contra* Yamazaki-Ransom, *Empire*, 190.

[98] Heusler, *Kapitalprozesse*, 115.

[99] Cf. Josephus' autobiography, in which the account of a heavenly vision has an important place in the defence of his support for Rome (Josephus, *Vita,* 42). Cf. also Kilgallen, "Agrippa must see that, whatever Paul's critics might charge against him, the motive force behind Paul was the divinity – and no one can find fault with obedience to the divinity." Kilgallen, "Paul", 178.

advanced a divine command – the saying of the Oracle at Delphi – as the central motivation for his activities in Athens that caused him to be accused of neglect of the traditional gods and of corrupting the young.[100] Moreover, Socrates stated in his speech that "I will obey God more than you [...] and will not stop philosophizing and exhorting you […]."[101] Thus, in his obedience to the heavenly vision, Paul is not only portrayed in line with Peter and James, but also with Socrates, with whom he has been compared earlier in Acts, as I concluded in §5.7.1.

Going beyond Socrates, Paul's commission shows parallels with many philosophical commission stories.[102] The significance of this is that reference to a divine calling is not only a plausible motive for a Jewish audience familiar with the call narratives of the prophets, but also for a Greco-Roman audience.

6.6.2. Saul and Pentheus as Counterscript

Paul uses a litotes to express his obedience: he has not been disobedient. The words of Jesus in the heavenly vision recalled by Paul allude to examples of people who were disobedient, namely Saul, the king of Israel, and Pentheus, king of Thebes. Saul is presented in the Septuagint as someone who was disobedient to the instructions of God given through Samuel, for which reason God would seek a man after his heart to be king over the people (1 Sam 13:13–14; cf. also 1 Sam 15), a narrative briefly alluded to in Acts 13:21.[103] When Paul recalls the heavenly vision of Jesus, he mentions how Jesus addressed him in Hebrew as "Saul, Saul", which could trigger a comparison with his biblical namesake – indeed, it triggered this comparison for readers such as Augustine and Jerome, as Michael Kochenash has recently pointed out.[104] More specifically, Jesus' question "Saul, Saul, why do you pursue me" (Σαοὺλ Σαούλ, τί με διώκεις;) recalls David's question to Saul, "Why does my lord pursue his

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[100] Plato, *Apol.,* especially 23B–C.

[101] Plato, *Apol.* 29D. πείσομαι δὲ μᾶλλον τῷ θεῷ ἢ ὑμῖν, καὶ [...] οὐ μὴ παύσωμαι φιλοσοφῶν καὶ ὑμῖν παρακελευόμενός [...].

[102] Cf. Czachesz, *Commission*, 60–88. The parallels pointed out by Czachesz are interesting, but his conclusion that Acts 9 provides an institutional commission narrative (drawing on 1 Sam 9–11), Acts 22 a prophetic commission narrative (drawing on the figure of Jeremiah) and Acts 26 a philosophical commission narrative, ignores the clear evidence for a prophetic script also in Acts 26. The philosophical and the prophetic scripts should be seen as reinforcing one another, rather than excluding each other.

[103] Cf. Samuel's words to Saul in 1 Sam 13:14: ζητήσει κύριος ἑαυτῷ ἄνθρωπον *κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ*, [...] ὅτι οὐκ ἐφύλαξας ὅσα ἐνετείλατό σοι κύριος with the contrast implicit in Acts 13:21–22: κἀκεῖθεν ᾐτήσαντο βασιλέα καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς τὸν Σαοὺλ […], καὶ μεταστήσας αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν τὸν Δαυὶδ αὐτοῖς εἰς βασιλέα ᾧ καὶ εἶπεν μαρτυρήσας· *εὗρον* Δαυὶδ τὸν τοῦ Ἰεσσαί, *ἄνδρα κατὰ τὴν καρδίαν μου*, ὃς ποιήσει πάντα τὰ θελήματά μου.

[104] Kochenash, "Paul".

servant closely behind him?" (τί τοῦτο καταδιώκει ὁ κύριός μου ὀπίσω τοῦ δούλου αὐτοῦ, 1 Sam 26:18, cf. 24:15).

The potential allusion to Saul is followed by an allusion to the archetypal god-fighter of Greek tragedy, king Pentheus of Thebes. Euripides' *Bacchae* contains this dialogue between Pentheus and the god Dionysus, disguised in human form, after he has freed himself by an earthquake from the prison in which Pentheus had shut him up:

> Pentheus: No lectures from you! You have escaped your chains: see that you don't lose that benefit. Or shall I punish you again?
> Dionysus: I would sacrifice to him rather than kick angrily against the goad (θυμούμενος πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζοιμι), man against god.[105]

Although the metaphor of an oxen kicking against the goads is found more widely in ancient literature,[106] many commentators have argued that the words in Acts (σκληρόν σοι πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζειν, Acts 26:14) refer specifically to Euripides' *Bacchae*.[107] Several considerations support this view: first, the theme of fighting against the gods is a central theme of the tragedy and is also referred to in the book of Acts;[108] second, Euripides' *Bacchae* was widely known in the first century CE; and third, scholars have noted other motifs in the book of Acts that recall the *Bacchae* – in the immediate context, the contrast between μανία and σωφροσύνη stands out in particular.[109] Alfred Vögeli has argued that the proverb was so widespread that a direct dependence on Euripides is unlikely,[110] but in view of these other motifs, ancient readers trained in Greek παιδεία may have been more likely to have thought of the *Bacchae* than of other possible intertexts. Vögeli points at the many differences between Dionysus in the *Bacchae* and Jesus in Acts, which are undeniable, but they do not

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[105] Euripides, *Bacchae* 792–795: ΠΕΝΘΕΥΣ: οὐ μὴ φρενώσεις μ', ἀλλὰ δέσμιος φυγὼν
σώσῃ τόδ'; ἢ σοὶ πάλιν ἀναστρέψω δίκην;
ΔΙΟΝΥΣΟΣ: θύοιμ' ἂν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον ἢ θυμούμενος
πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζοιμι θνητὸς ὢν θεῷ.

[106] Cf. art. Κέντρον, *ThWNT* 3, 1938, 663–664.

[107] Cf., e.g., Nestle, "Anklänge"; Moles, "Jesus and Dionysus"; MacDonald, *Luke and Vergil*, 11–65; Friesen, *Dionysus*, 207–35. Lentz does not think that Luke has the *Bacchae* specifically in view, but highlights the use of the proverb in ancient discourse on virtue, observing that Paul changed from a man filled with hubris to a man of self-control (σωφροσύνη). Lentz, *Portrait*, 84–86.

[108] Cf. Acts 5:39.

[109] Cf. Acts 26:24–25. In the wider context, the earthquake in Acts 16:26 is a motif also found in the *Bacchae*, though this correspondence can hardly be decisive as argument in favour of Luke's knowledge of the *Bacchae*.

[110] Vögeli, "Euripides". Many commentators follow Vögeli in expressing caution about an intentional allusion to the *Bacchae*, including Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:336. Barrett regards the parallel in the *Bacchae* as "probably the most important passage" though he leaves open whether Luke knew the *Bacchae*. Barrett, *Acts*, 2:1158.

imply that there cannot be an intertextual play with the *Bacchae* in Luke's use of the quote.[111]

Thus, both king Saul and king Pentheus could serve as a counterscript,[112] which serves to show that Paul did the right thing in obeying the divine command. It is noteworthy that Saul and Pentheus were both kings – unlike Paul, but like Agrippa. Paul is not only defending himself, but also appealing to the king to become a disciple of Jesus, as Agrippa recognises in his response to Paul. The counterexamples of Saul and Pentheus serve a political appeal not to try and persecute Jesus by imprisoning and killing his disciples, like Paul once did.

This political orientation is especially important because this speech is set in Caesarea, was arranged to supply Festus with information for his letter to the Emperor, and is thus a kind of substitute for Paul's defence before Nero.

6.6.3. Prophet

Moreover, Paul's narrative of his calling by Jesus in Acts 26 evokes the call narratives of the ancient prophets of Israel. Marguerat notes that because Paul does not mention the mediating role of Ananias in this speech, the account in Acts 26 is the one most closely modelled on the calling of the prophets in the Old Testament.[113]

Indeed, Acts 26 formulates the incident on the way to Damascus in terms that allude more clearly to the calling of Ezekiel than the accounts of Acts 9 and Acts 22 (26:13–16; cf. Ezek 2:1–3).[114] Further, Paul recalls how he was appointed "as a servant and witness (ὑπηρέτην καὶ μάρτυρα) both of that you saw me and of that in which I will appear to you, saving you from this people and from the nations to which I send you", which corresponds to the promise given to Jeremiah (cf. Jer 1:8, 19), and he phrases the goal of his sending in terms taken from Isaiah 42:7, 16.

In his defence before king Agrippa, Paul presents his work of announcing repentance to Jews and Gentiles as performed in obedience to this calling, which can thus be thought of as a prophetic calling. For the reader of Acts, this retrospectively confirms the impression that Paul enacted a prophetic script in

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[111] Vögeli, "Euripides", 432–38. Vögeli takes a minimalist approach to intertextuality and argues that the parallels do not prove a direct relationship between Luke and Euripides. In contrast, Moles explicitly takes a maximalist approach, interpreting the parallels that ancient readers may have perceived between the *Bacchae* and Acts (Moles, "Jesus and Dionysus", 65). On my approach to intertextual connections, cf. above, §1.3.4.

[112] Cf. also Dormeyer, who argues for a typology and an anti–typology between Christianity and Dionysiac themes in Acts. Dormeyer, "Bakchos".

[113] Marguerat, *Actes*, 2:332. For more extensive analysis in the light of Old Testament call narratives, cf. Storm, *Paulusberufung*.

[114] Allison, "Paul and Ezekiel".

his previous performances as messenger of God, as was observed in the case studies examined in chapters 2–5.

In all this, Paul has said "nothing else than what the Prophets said" (Acts 26:22): not only his calling, but also his message is in line with that of the ancient prophets. In this way, the prophetic scriptures also legitimate his vision.[115]

6.6.4. Obedience to God as Background Symbol

From the previous episodes examined in this study, it has become clear that different scripts often reinforce one another. This is also the case here, and the motif of obedience to God stands out as the connection between the various scripts. In the terms of Jeffrey Alexander's theory of social performance, this motif can be regarded as a "background symbol" on which the scripts are based. Background symbols are the shared values of a society to which social performances should appeal in order to be persuasive.[116] Indeed, obedience to God is one such value that was shared both by Jews and non-Jews in the ancient Mediterranean world.

6.7. Function of This Portrait

In this episode, the *setting* of the performance in terms of *location* and *persons* highlights the Roman-juridical context of the speech. In a city named after Caesar, a king with social standing in Rome is consulted as an expert on Jewish matters by the Roman governor before whom Paul is on trial, in the presence of the typical elite of an administrative centre of a Roman province. The *performance* itself depicts Paul as a learned, passionate and dignified defender of his testimony, which accords with what the Prophets and Moses said would happen. His personal defence is that he has acted in obedience to a heavenly vision and in accordance with the Scriptures. In terms of length and style of the speech, and of the gesture mentioned, this speech is the grandest rhetorical performance of Paul portrayed in the book of Acts and a fitting climax of the book. Moreover, Paul looks back on his entire activity as a messenger of God since his calling on the way to Damascus and presents it as performed in obedience to a prophetic calling. Other *scripts* may also be in view: intertextual connections with Socrates' defence speech as presented in Plato's *Apology* and with Euripides' *Bacchae* contribute to the central motif of obedience to God as the motivating force behind Paul's work and constitute an apologetic appeal

[115] Koet, "Trustworthy Dreams", 47.

[116] Alexander, *Performance and Power*, 198.

not to oppose God by persecuting disciples of Jesus. The *audience response* confirms that Paul's teaching does not deserve death or chains.

Thus, the episode forms an effective climax to a political thread throughout the book of Acts, in which Romans have three times judged the conflicts between Paul and other Jews to be intra-Jewish disagreements about their law. Paul's defence focuses on central apostolic teachings rather than on his personal conduct, and Paul stands on trial as leader of the school of thought of the Nazarenes (Acts 24:5). Therefore, it is likely intended by Luke as a broader political defence for the legitimacy of Christian teaching, presented as being in continuity with the ancestral traditions of Israel. People known as Christians, like Paul, do not deserve death or chains for what they teach. The cultured and dignified way in which he defends himself, moreover, counters the view that the Christians constitute a *superstitio*.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

In this study, I have sought to answer the following question: "How is Paul's performance portrayed in five episodes of the book of Acts, and what is the function of this depiction?" In the introduction, it became clear that performance in public space, including the delivery of speeches, is important for the representation of groups and individuals in society and that it matters where these performances are held and before which audiences. In the book of Acts, Paul, perceived as leading figure of the school of the Nazarenes, is presented as performing at a number of locations and before various audiences. In his performances, he emerges as a figure with *dignitas* and *auctoritas,* someone able to captivate and persuade audiences through his gestures and speeches, corresponding to Roman ideals such as those found in the work of Quintilian. At the same time, he is depicted as acting in the tradition of the prophets of Israel, as a Jew who teaches nothing against the Jewish customs. By presenting him as loyal Jew, dignified Roman, and eloquent speaker of Greek, Luke seeks to counter the perception of the "teaching of the Lord" that Paul brings as a *superstitio* or *minut*. Below, I will substantiate this overall conclusion by looking at the various aspects of his performance that were analysed in the five case studies.

7.1. Aspects of Paul's Performance

7.1.1. Setting of the Performances

In each of the five case studies, I looked closely at the setting of the performance, both in terms of the location and venue where Paul performed and in terms of the people before whom he performed. In three cases, the performances where held at places associated with local government: before proconsul Sergius Paulus in Paphos, in the Areopagus court of Athens and in the audience hall of the praetorium in Caesarea, before king Agrippa in the presence of many other dignitaries. Sergius Paulus and king Agrippa are people of senatorial rank in Roman society, and the Areopagus was famous for the severe and ancient governing body of the Areopagites that was perceived as the Athenian equivalent of Rome's senate. Paul speaks before these people with dignity and even persuades some of them (Sergius Paulus, Dionysius the Areopagite)

to believe his message. In Pisidian Antioch, Paul also performs in a public space: in the synagogue, the assembly of the Jewish diaspora community, at the invitation of the local Jewish authorities, where the entire city gathers to hear him speak on the next Sabbath. At the second Sabbath, the synagogue also becomes the place where Paul responds to zealous Jews who slander his message, providing an occasion to show how Barnabas and Paul leave the assembly in a dignified way. Finally, the backward town of Lystra provides Luke with the occasion to showcase Paul's handling of large crowds who superstitiously attempt to make sacrifices to Barnabas and Paul, led by a priest.

Thus, these venues contribute to the depiction of Paul as a persuasive and dignified speaker. In addition, I noted differences in the description of these places regarding the presence of Jews. On their journey from Antioch, Paul and Barnabas travel from Cyprus, with its synagogues of Jews, where they meet their first Gentile at the western extreme of the island, via Pisidian Antioch, where Jews and Gentiles are present together in the synagogue, to Lystra, where they only encounter Lycaonians speaking their local language. However, Paul remains loyal to his Jewish identity in all these places, calling the Lycaonians away from the worship of Zeus and Barnabas to worship the living God. Athens is characterised as a city full of idols, which provoke Paul's spirit just as idolatry provokes the God of Israel in the Septuagint. Caesarea functions as a border city between Israel and the Gentile world, where Paul, Agrippa, and Berenice appear as people at home in both worlds.

7.1.2. Performances: Body Language and Speeches

The gestures (in a broad sense) contribute to the image of Paul as a persuasive speaker. Intrusive glances add strength to words of punishment and healing, and perceive the enmity or the faith of people. A loud voice also strengthens the power of Paul's words. Demonstrative tearing of clothes and shaking off dust are actions with their own message. When Paul and Barnabas encounter opposition in Antioch, they leave the synagogue, and later the city, in a dignified manner. By means of a single movement of his hand, Paul can bring his audience authoritatively to silence, and as a worthy orator he starts his defence before Agrippa with a modest stretching of the hand. Eyes, voice, hands, feet, and clothing: Paul uses his whole body to proclaim the message he brings in the name of God. In doing so, he remains within the realm of what Quintilian considers body language that is worthy of Roman public speakers, not affecting the extravagance of actors or sophists who speak primarily to entertain their audiences.

In the episodes examined, Paul's speaking ranges from short statements, such as when he announces God's punishment to Bar-Jesus or orders a paralyzed man to stand on his feet, to longer speeches that are more or less con-

structed according to rhetorical conventions and give the impression of polished speeches, which often end in a powerful, appealing conclusion. The style is appropriate to the occasion: an exalted style on the Areopagus, a polite but passionate plea before Agrippa, and an unadorned style when Paul narrates God's actions throughout Israel's history in the synagogue of Antioch.

7.1.3. Responses to Paul's Performances

How the audience responds to a performance contributes decisively to the depiction of it: a speech followed by applause leaves a much more positive impression than a speech followed by an awkward silence, regardless of the actual content and delivery of the speech. In the examined case studies, the response to Paul's speech is often ambivalent, but the emphasis of the narrative is on the positive response. Proconsul Sergius Paulus, prudent Roman senator, is perplexed by the teaching of the Lord. After Paul's speech in Pisidian Antioch, Barnabas and Paul are invited to speak again. After the second performance, the Gentiles rejoice and the word of God spreads throughout the region. Even when Paul and Barnabas are thrown out of the city, Luke notes the joy that fills the disciples who remain. In Lystra, he highlights the success of Paul and Barnabas in stopping the crowds from sacrificing to them. In Athens, there are people who mock, but also those that ask Paul to speak another time, and even some who follow him, among whom is, crucially, an Areopagite. His response to Paul, as a member of the class of Athens' most prestigious magistrates, is of greater importance to Luke than the response of the philosophers, who are portrayed according to a pejorative Roman stereotype. Finally, the speech before Agrippa leads to a unanimous verdict of Paul's innocence, both by the provincial governor and by a king with expertise in Jewish matters and political influence in Rome. That they are not said to believe does not deflect from the very positive impression that this response gives of Paul's performance.

7.1.4. Scripts of Paul's Performances

Intertextual connections suggest that Paul's performances are modelled both on the prophets of Israel and on important figures from the Greco-Roman cultural canon (παιδεία). The prophetic script was found to be most consistently present throughout the various episodes. Paul acts as a prophet in announcing a message of the God of Israel to humans, often citing or alluding to prophetic texts and even impersonating God by the use of these texts in direct appeal to his audience. He is described as an envoy and servant of God, terms that are also used of the prophets in key passages in the Septuagint. Furthermore, the persecution and suffering that Paul has to undergo because of the message of God that he brings corresponds to this prophetic script, especially in light of how the speech of Stephen connects the opposition of the Jewish authorities to

his message about Jesus with the opposition of the people of Israel to the ancient prophets. Finally, Paul describes his calling by Christ in language reminiscent of the calling of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel and presents his subsequent performance as messenger in terms of obedience to this calling. Beyond the case studies examined here, the raising of Eutychus should be especially noted as narrated in terms that recall the raising of the son of the widow of Sarephat by Elijah (cf. Acts 20:10 and 1 Kgs 17:21).

However, Paul does not reenact any of the more shocking performances of Israel's prophets. Ezekiel had to eat scrolls, lie on his left side for 390 days and for another forty days on his right side, and almost had to eat barley-cake baked "before their eyes" on human feces (Ezek 3:2, 4:4–6 and 4:12; after Ezekiel protested against eating impure food, he was allowed to bake the cake on cow dung, Ezek 4:13–14). Paul's account of his calling evokes that of Ezekiel, but he does not do any of these things, which would compromise his *dignitas* and *auctoritas.*

Similarly, where Paul is modelled on Socrates (as I suggested especially regarding Paul's performance in Athens and before king Agrippa), it is not on the annoying, gadfly-like Socrates admired by Cynic philosophers, but on the Socrates of the *Phaedo,* who remains calm and speaks frankly and courageously even when he faces trial and death, being more obedient to God than to humans, the Socrates enshrined in Roman memory through stories about Cato's death.[1] In modelling Paul's performance of this particular Socratic script, Luke evokes a reception of Socrates that I also found in the work of Philo and Josephus, Jews participating in the cultural world of the Roman elite.

Finally, my reading of Paul's performances in the light of Quintilian suggests that Paul performs according to Roman rhetorical ideals, ideals embodied in exemplary orators such as Demosthenes and Cicero. The connection with Athens and the reference to Paul's παρρησία suggest a comparison with Demosthenes.

Other intertextual connections furnish counterscripts rather than scripts, highlighting the fact that Paul does not act like a typical charlatan (in Lystra) and was stopped by Jesus from acting like God-fighter Pentheus or like king Saul, who persecuted God's anointed one (to which Paul appears to allude in his speech before Agrippa).

7.1.5. Convergence of Aspects and Scripts

These various aspects of Paul's performances yield a portrait of him as an obedient Jewish messenger of the God of Israel who maintains a Roman dignity in all the centres of public life where he delivers his message, from backward

[1] For the changing perception of Socrates between the fifth century BCE and the first century CE, taking into account the representation of him in visual culture, cf. Zanker, *Maske*.

Lystra to the Athenian Areopagus. His Romanness and Jewishness, his prophetic and Socratic appearance, do not contradict each other, but overlap and converge.

7.2. Function of These Portraits in Acts

The second question that my investigation attempted to answer is: what purpose does the depiction of Paul's performances serve in the book of Acts? Which function does it have? I have sought to answer this question from the narrative context in which the episodes are embedded. At structural junctions in the narrative, it is emphasised that God allows Gentiles to change their mind in repentance, to believe in Jesus as Lord, and to be saved when God will judge the world in righteousness through Jesus. Paul is called as a witness to Jesus "before kings, nations and sons of Israel" (Acts 9:15) and his depiction as dignified, persuasive Jew-and-Roman fits this calling. The book of Acts concludes with Paul's declaration to the Jews in Rome, "let it be known to you, therefore, that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles: they, indeed, will listen" (Acts 28:28), which corresponds with the announcement at the beginning of Luke's Gospel that God's salvation through Jesus will be a light for the illumination of the Gentiles and for the glory of God's people Israel (Luke 2:30–32). Paul explains before Agrippa that the Prophets and Moses have said that the Christ would announce light to his people and to the Gentiles (Acts 26:23). The announcement of this light, after Jesus' resurrection, is thus the main theme of the book of Acts, and Paul emerges as successor to Peter in announcing this light to the nations as well as to the people of Israel (for Peter's role in "the early days", see Acts 15:7, concluding the first half of Acts). To this end, Luke portrays Paul as an obedient messenger of God who, with his double Roman and Jewish identity, can speak persuasively to Jews and Gentiles alike.

At the same time, the book of Acts was written at a time when Roman elites regarded the Christians as a *superstitio,* and many scholars of the book of Acts have pointed to various apologetic strands in the narrative. In the episodes examined, I found indications that the depiction of Paul's performance seeks to counter the perception of the teaching of the Lord as a *superstitio.* Moreover, Paul insists time and again in the book of Acts that his teaching is not directed against the Jewish nation, the law, and the temple. These two apologetic strands should not be seen as unrelated to each other. To counter the Roman label of a *nova superstitio,* Paul needs to be portrayed not only as a Roman, but also as bringing a message rooted in the ancient writings of the Jews. Thus, his depiction as a Jewish prophet contributes to the 'Roman apologetic' as well.

Conversely, the performance of Paul as a Romanised Jew who speaks persuasively to Gentile audiences provokes the zeal of Jews who perceive this

teaching as a threat to the Jewish nation, law, and temple and therefore violently persecute Paul, as the episode in Antioch shows. Acts 26 pits the positive verdict of the pro-Roman Jew Agrippa against the zeal of the anti-Roman Jewish high priest and his associates who plot to kill Paul in an ambush without the permission of the Roman governor – indeed, Josephus records that the high priest Ananus stoned James, the brother of Christ, taking advantage of the absence of Roman authority between the departure of Festus and the arrival of his successor Florus. The post-70 perspective on Jerusalem and its priesthood, which Luke shares with Josephus, is important in understanding the "Jewish apologetic" in Acts. Agrippa, known for his firm allegiance to Rome in the Jewish War, is quite willing to acknowledge that Paul's teaching is not directed against the Jewish nation, law, and temple. The weight given to Paul's speech before Agrippa in the narrative of Acts, as well as the fact that the book of Acts ends with Paul's exposition of his teaching before Jews in Rome, suggests that such Roman Jews are an important target of the apologetic agenda of the book of Acts.[2] For them, it is not only important to portray Paul as a loyal Jew, but also as a Jew acculturated in Roman circles, who performs like the prophets, but also like Socrates or Demosthenes.

The complexities of this apologetic strategy reflect the position of Christians at the end of the first century. Roman governors treat them as a *superstitio,* while Jewish authorities in Israel treat them as *minut* that threatens Jewish identity as the rabbis seek to define it, perhaps inspired by enmity to Rome, as Adiel Schremer has argued.[3] Christian apologists in the second half of the second century will capitalise on anti-Jewish sentiments in Roman society by emphasizing how Christians do not share the superstitious beliefs and practices of Jews. The apologetic strategy of the book of Acts is different: it depicts Paul as a Jew whose teaching is in line with the ancient Scriptures of Israel and as a Roman who rejects superstition but calls people to fear God and live righteously, while accounting for the violent persecution of disciples of Jesus by other Jews by referring to their (well-known) zeal for their own customs and identity. Since Paul is presented as representative teacher of the "way of the Lord", his depiction serves the reputation of the "disciples of the Lord" in general.

Thus, Luke's portrayal of Paul's performance does not primarily serve to defend his position in relation to other Christian groups. Its aim is not primarily

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[2] Cf. also the large number of Jews with a Latin/Roman name mentioned as disciples in Acts (see above, §2.4), and the specific reference to "Romans residing [sc. in the countries mentioned before], both Jews and proselytes" in Acts 2:10. If "Jews and proselytes" are taken as apposition only with "Romans", the reference to Cretans and Arabs after that is less problematic. These Romans, now inhabiting Jerusalem, came from all over the empire, where they "resided" among those who "dwelt" there. For this interpretation, cf. Witherington III, *Acts*, 137.

[3] Schremer, *Brothers Estranged.*

to show that Paul's teaching is in harmony with that of Peter. Paul follows in the footsteps of Peter and Stephen because they are all part of one story that Luke tells about the identity of those known as "Christians". Luke's reluctance to adopt this "outsider designation" can best be explained by the negative sound the term has in the wider Roman world. Luke uses Paul's performance to tell a different story about them: they serve the God of Israel according to the way indicated by the Scriptures. This story has an apologetic shape, although I argued in the introduction that it is addressed to an insider, Theophilus. For him, this story offers certainty about the instruction he has received about Jesus and his teaching, in a world in which other, negative stories about Christians are also circulating. Through Theophilus' network, this story about the disciples of the Lord could reach a wider audience.

7.3. Usefulness of the Concept of Performance

The conclusions of my investigation of the five selected case studies from Acts resonate well with earlier scholarship, especially with the work of John Lentz on the portrait of Paul in Acts, Marion Soards on the function of the speeches in their narrative context, Loveday Alexander and Peter Tomson on the apologetic agenda of Acts, and Bart Koet on the salvation of the Gentiles as major theme of Acts (which does not imply a rejection of the Jews). The new element in this study is the consistent use of the concept of "performance" as a heuristic lens for the analysis of the episodes. Therefore, it is fitting to evaluate the usefulness of this concept in this concluding chapter. In my view, the concept has been particularly useful in three ways: in providing a focal point that is capable of integrating many of the textual details of the episodes; in connecting the narrative of Acts with a facet of ancient life that has drawn increasing attention from classicists and ancient historians in recent scholarship; and in uncovering a link between the medial representation of performances and the construction of a social identity with apologetic aspects.

7.3.1. Focal Point for the Analysis of Episodes

This study has shown that the aspects of performance distinguished by sociologist Jeffrey Alexander map rather well onto the various textual elements of the selected episodes of Acts. Gestures and speeches of the main protagonist, Paul, form the heart of these episodes, but they are presented in relation to a spatial setting that contributes to the depiction of the performance as the stage on which it is enacted and in relation to an audience of other characters. Paul's performance reacts to those characters and, after the performance, they provide their audience response. The compositional technique of the author, known as

the *dramatische Episodenstil,* is ideally suited to portraying Paul in his performance. Therefore, using "performance" as a heuristic lens for the analysis of the episodes does not impose a theoretical framework that is alien to the text, but provides a perspective that shows how the various elements of the narrative are related to each other.

7.3.2. Facet of Ancient Life and Literature

The emergence of Paul's performance as primary focus of the text, rather than Paul's psychological development or spiritual experiences, is in line with the general focus of ancient literature, including the overlapping genres of biography, historiography and fiction. In research on this literature, "performance" is increasingly recognised as a central element of the characterization of the protagonists, particularly by classicists such as Tomas Hägg, Koen De Temmerman, Evert van Emden Boas, Julie Van Pelt and Alberto Quiroga Puertas.[4]

The focus on performance in ancient literature reflects its importance in ancient life, where "the ideal of a successful career in the cultural and political milieus was partly imagined as the result of increasing one's presence in the public scene."[5] In the introduction, this was shown through a cursory reading of Quintilian's guidelines on the performance of speeches and embedded in broader scholarship about the role of performance in both Roman and Jewish culture. In Acts, the representation of Paul's performance is not so much used to further Paul's career as to show the respectability of the group he represents and the credibility of what this group teaches, countering the perception of Christians as *superstitio*. Thus, understanding the key role of performance in ancient life and literature enables a better understanding of the apologetic strategy of the author of Acts. Approaching Acts through the lens of "performance" embeds the book firmly in its historical context.

7.3.3. Bridge to the Twenty-First Century

Finally, 'performance' as a lens on these episodes also situates my interpretation of Acts squarely in the twenty-first century. Social media has revolutionised the way representations of performances can spread globally within hours. As I am writing this, in June 2020, the world is outraged about US president Donald Trump parading in front of a church holding a (closed) Bible high in the air, while being under severe criticism for failing to control police violence

[4] Hägg, *Art*; De Temmerman, *Crafting Characters*; De Temmerman and van Emde Boas, *Characterization*; Van Pelt, "Saints in Disguise"; Quiroga Puertas, *Dynamics*.

[5] Quiroga Puertas, *Dynamics*, 2.

against people of colour.[6] Politicians are keenly aware of the power of performances and their representations in various media – and so are their audiences. There is no objective answer to the question whether such performances are 'authentic' or 'merely staged': such claims are themselves part of the political debates that are enacted in these performances.

The power of performances is not limited to the political arena, of course, but is also at work in the church. In live-streamed synod meetings, speakers can claim authority for the factions they represent by using the right voice, wearing the right dress and holding the right kind of Bible in their hands. Surely, it is better to reflect on these dynamics than to deny them. This study contributes to such reflection by showing that similar dynamics were already at work in the biblical texts, where the representation of Paul's performance is a tool in the narrative rhetoric of Luke, as he argues for the credibility of the Gospel about Jesus and the kingdom of God.

On an academic level, the concept of "performance" has functioned to connect my reading of Acts with interdisciplinary work on "performance" in the humanities and social sciences. In general, the results confirm that the sociological dynamics of performance in the ancient world do not differ much from those outlined in recent performance studies, although the forms that these performances take and the media and narrative conventions in which they are represented are historically and culturally conditioned. However, the focus of my research has been on the exegesis of the text of Acts, rather than the contribution to the contemporary academic debates in disciplines (sociology, anthropology, communication, and media studies) in which I am not trained. Hopefully, my study will be a stepping stone for more interdisciplinary engagement between ancient historians and social scientists, and within the theological faculties, between exegetes and practical theologians in their reflection on performance.

7.4. Suggestions for Further Research

At the end of this investigation, new avenues for research open up along various lines.

7.4.1. Widening the Scope

The most obvious avenue is to widen the scope of case studies. The book of Acts is composed as a sequence of episodes, each of which can be studied with a focus on the performance of its main protagonist. For the portrait of Paul in Acts, a particularly promising addition would be an analysis of Paul's raising

[6] Cf., e.g., Pengelly, "Photo Op".

of Eutychus (Acts 20:7–12), a performance that involves less speaking than the episodes examined in this study, but includes a dramatic action (lying down on the dead boy and embracing him) that may recall an act of Elijah (1 Kgs 17:21) and/or Elisha (2 Kgs 4:34) – or does it rather display an almost Stoic calmness of Paul in establishing that the boy is still alive and resuming the gathering? Further, the episode is interesting because it is situated in a gathering of the we-group on Sunday, usually taken to reflect a typical Christian Sunday meeting.

7.4.2. Historical Contextualisation

The focus of this study has been the exegesis of the text of the selected episodes with 'performance' and its various aspects as heuristic lens. It was argued that the depiction of Paul in these episodes serves an apologetic agenda to which the Romanness and the Jewishness of Paul have a function precisely in their mutual relationship, and in which Paul is taken as a leading representative of the "disciples of the Lord" in general. I have suggested a historical contextualization of this agenda in the triangular relationship between Romans, Jews, and Christians at the end of the first or beginning of the second century, under Nerva or Trajan. These are preliminary observations that call for further engagement with current debates about the "Parting of the Ways", the historical position of the writings of the New Testament *vis-à-vis* Marcion and his Gospel, and the differences and similarities of the apologetic agenda of Acts with that of Christian *Apologies* from the mid-second century CE onwards, debates in which long-standing scholarly views are no longer taken for granted.[7]

7.4.3. Paul's Self-Presentation in the Letters

Finally, a traditional focus of scholarship on the "Paul of Acts" has been the historical adequacy of Paul's depiction in Acts, with the Paul of the (undisputed) letters used as primary source for the "historical Paul". Recently, there has been a call for a more sophisticated approach to this comparison, that compares the presentation of Paul in Acts to his various (rhetorical) self-presentations in the letters attributed to him.[8] This study has refrained from investigating the letters. However, 'performance' could provide an interesting vantage point for comparison with the letters as a follow-up on my analysis of Acts. In his self-presentation to the Corinthians, he claims to be "unskilled in speaking",

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[7] Cf., e.g., Pervo, *Dating Acts*; Klinghardt, *Evangelium*; Theobald, *Israel-Vergessenheit*; Schwartz and Tomson, *Jews and Christians*; Lüke, *Kohärenz*.

[8] Cf. especially the current EABS research unit on "the Remembered Paul" and the "Historical Paul", building on the work of White, *Remembering Paul*. Some of their research has been collected in the edited volume of Schröter, Butticaz, and Dettwiler, *Receptions*.

(2 Cor 11:6) which seems to be at odds with the depiction of Paul's performance in Acts; however, the claim is a topos in the rhetoric with which Paul denounces his opponents as sophists who deceive their audiences by their eloquence. Indeed, it has been interpreted in the light of Socratic tradition.[9] A more in-depth comparison between the self-presentations of Paul and the portrait in Acts, including the cultural scripts underlying these, could move beyond both the antithesis between the "historical Paul" and the Paul of Acts, for which critical scholarship has long argued, and the apologetic response by other scholars in support of the "accuracy" of Luke's depiction of Paul. Moreover, the letters themselves, read in the gatherings of their addressees, can be seen as performances of Paul, constituting a replacement for Paul's performance when he was present. They can be analyzed along similar lines as the episodes of Acts concerning the spatial setting of the performance, its audience, rhetorical aspects and the cultural scripts of Paul's self-representation.[10]

[9] Cf. Betz, *Paulus*.

[10] On the methodology of performance criticism of the Pauline letters, cf. Oestreich, *Performance Criticism*. The classicist Albert Harrill has pointed to the "particularly Roman discourse of 'clout' (*auctoritas*)" advanced by Paul in his letters, "that asserted his personal authority over potential rivals" (Harrill, *Paul*, 97).

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The abbreviations used in this book are in conformity with Billie J. Collins (ed.), *The SBL Handbook of Style: Second Edition* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014).

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Index of References

Old Testament

New Testament

Jewish Sources

Greco-Roman Sources

Early Christian Sources

Inscriptions

Index of Modern Authors

Index of Subjects

Personal Names

Place Names

Subjects

Greek Words