

ARCO DEN HEIJER

Portraits of Paul's
Performance in the
Book of Acts

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen
zum Neuen Testament*

Mohr Siebeck

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556



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Portraits of Paul's Performance in the Book of Acts

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

Mohr Siebeck

Arco den Heijer, born 1989; studied Classics and Theology; 2015 MA Literary Studies from Radboud University Nijmegen; 2016 MA Theology from the Theological University Apeldoorn; 2021 PhD from the Theological University Kampen; currently Lecturer of Greek and New Testament there.
orcid.org/0000-0001-7650-4238

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For Philip and Matthias

Preface

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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 Eunkyuu. 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.

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Arco den Heijer
Nijmegen, 1 January 2021

Table of Contents

Preface	VII
List of Tables	1
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
<i>1.1. Research Field and Question</i>	<i>1</i>
1.1.1. Historical Issues	2
1.1.2. Literary Issues	4
1.1.3. Purpose of Luke's Portrait of Paul	5
1.1.4. Scholarship on the Speeches in Acts	9
1.1.5. Research Question	10
<i>1.2. Concept of Performance</i>	<i>10</i>
1.2.1. Performative Turn	11
1.2.2. Defining Performance	12
1.2.3. Aspects of Performance	13
1.2.4. Performance in Antiquity	14
1.2.5. Representation of Performance in Acts	26
<i>1.3. Selection of Case Studies and Research Design</i>	<i>28</i>
1.3.1. Structural Markers in Acts	29
1.3.2. Sections, Episodes, and Scenes	31
1.3.3. Distribution of Case Studies	31
1.3.4. Research Design	32
<i>1.4. Some Preliminary Remarks</i>	<i>34</i>
1.4.1. Editions Used	34
1.4.2. Assumptions about Dating and Authorship	34
1.4.3. Use of 'Luke' in This Study	37

1.5. <i>Romans, Jews, and Christians around 100 CE</i>	38
 Chapter 2: Performance in Paphos (Acts 13:6–12).....	42
2.1. <i>Narrative Context and Structure</i>	42
2.2. <i>Setting: Place and Location</i>	44
2.3. <i>Setting: Persons</i>	46
2.4. <i>Performance</i>	51
2.4.1. <i>The Gaze</i>	52
2.4.2. <i>The Speech</i>	53
2.5. <i>Audience Response</i>	55
2.6. <i>Script</i>	58
2.7. <i>Function of This Portrait</i>	60
 Chapter 3: Performance in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14–52)...	62
3.1. <i>Narrative Context and Structure</i>	62
3.2. <i>Setting: Place and Location</i>	64
3.2.1. <i>Pisidian Antioch</i>	64
3.2.2. <i>Sitting in the Synagogue</i>	66
3.2.3. <i>Reading Law and Prophets on Sabbath</i>	69
3.3. <i>Setting First Performance: Persons</i>	70
3.4. <i>First Performance: Synagogue Speech</i>	72
3.4.1. <i>Standing Up</i>	72
3.4.2. <i>Motioning with the Hand</i>	74
3.4.3. <i>Speech</i>	76
3.5. <i>Audience Response First Performance</i>	84

3.6. <i>Setting Second Performance: Persons</i>	85
3.7. <i>Second Performance: Response to Slander</i>	89
3.7.1. Words Used to Characterise the Speaking	89
3.7.2. Rhetorical Aspects.....	91
3.8. <i>Audience Response Second Performance</i>	93
3.9. <i>Setting Third Performance: Persons</i>	94
3.10. <i>Third Performance: Gesture</i>	95
3.11. <i>Concluding Narrative</i>	97
3.12. <i>Script</i>	98
3.13. <i>Function of This Portrait</i>	99
Chapter 4: <i>Performance in Lystra (Acts 14:6–20)</i>	101
4.1. <i>Narrative Context and Structure</i>	101
4.2. <i>Setting: Place and Location</i>	103
4.2.1. Lystra in Lycaonia.....	103
4.2.2. No Synagogue	104
4.2.3. Movement between City and Periphery	105
4.2.4. Background Activity.....	106
4.3. <i>Setting First Performance: Persons</i>	106
4.4. <i>First Performance: Raising a Paraplegic</i>	108
4.4.1. The Gaze	108
4.4.2. Loud Voice.....	108
4.4.3. Command	109
4.5. <i>Effect First Performance</i>	109
4.6. <i>Audience Response and Setting Second Performance</i>	110
4.7. <i>Second Performance: Response to the Crowds</i>	112

4.7.1. Tearing Clothes and Rushing Forth	112
4.7.2. Speech	114
4.8. <i>Effect Second Performance</i>	116
4.9. <i>Concluding Scene</i>	117
4.10. <i>Script</i>	118
4.10.1. Messenger and Prophet	118
4.10.2. Charlatan as Counterscript	121
4.11. <i>Function of This Portrait</i>	122
Chapter 5: Performance in Athens (Acts 17:16–34)	123
5.1. <i>Narrative Context and Structure</i>	123
5.2. <i>Setting: Place and Location</i>	125
5.2.1. Athens	126
5.2.2. Synagogue and Marketplace	127
5.2.3. Areopagus	131
5.3. <i>Setting: Persons</i>	137
5.4. <i>Performance: Speech</i>	140
5.4.1. Verbs Used to Characterise the Speaking	140
5.4.2. Rhetorical Aspects	142
5.5. <i>Audience Response</i>	147
5.6. <i>Concluding Narrative</i>	148
5.7. <i>Script</i>	152
5.7.1. Socrates	152
5.7.2. Epimenides	156
5.7.3. Demosthenes	160
5.7.4. Prophet	161
5.7.5. Complementarity	162

5.8. <i>Function of This Portrait</i>	164
Chapter 6: Performance in Caesarea (Acts 25:23–26:32)	166
6.1. <i>Narrative Context and Structure</i>	166
6.2. <i>Setting: Place and Location</i>	169
6.2.1. Caesarea	169
6.2.2. Audience Hall.....	172
6.3. <i>Setting: Persons</i>	172
6.4. <i>Performance: Gesture and Speech</i>	178
6.4.1. Extending the Hand	179
6.4.2. Speech	180
6.5. <i>Audience Response</i>	184
6.5.1. Festus' Response and Paul's Reply.....	185
6.5.2. Agrippa's Response and Paul's Reply	185
6.5.3. Verdict of Festus and Agrippa	187
6.6. <i>Script</i>	188
6.6.1. Socrates	188
6.6.2. Saul and Pentheus as Counterscript	189
6.6.3. Prophet.....	191
6.6.4. Obedience to God as Background Symbol.....	192
6.7. <i>Function of This Portrait</i>	192
Chapter 7: Conclusion	194
7.1. <i>Aspects of Paul's Performance</i>	194
7.1.1. Setting of the Performances	194
7.1.2. Performances: Body Language and Speeches	195
7.1.3. Responses to Paul's Performances	196
7.1.4. Scripts of Paul's Performances	196
7.1.5. Convergence of Aspects and Scripts.....	197

7.2. <i>Function of These Portraits in Acts</i>	198
7.3. <i>Usefulness of the Concept of Performance</i>	200
7.3.1. Focal Point for the Analysis of Episodes	200
7.3.2. Facet of Ancient Life and Literature	201
7.3.3. Bridge to the Twenty-First Century	201
7.4. <i>Suggestions for Further Research</i>	202
7.4.1. Widening the Scope.....	202
7.4.2. Historical Contextualisation	203
7.4.3. Paul's Self-Presentation in the Letters	203
Bibliography.....	205
Index of References.....	233
Index of Modern Authors	254
Index of Subjects.....	255

List of Tables

Table 1: Aspects of Performance	33
Table 2: Correspondence between Acts 14:8 and 10.....	107
Table 3: Bringing before Authorities in Luke and Acts.....	132
Table 4: Interpretations of Areopagus in Acts 17:19 and 22	135
Table 5: Correspondence between Acts 13:42–43 and Acts 17:32–34	147

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.

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's⁹ and Paul's theologies are incompatible.¹⁰ However, both his assessment of Luke's theology and his Lutheran interpretation

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 Buttica 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, Buttica, 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).

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"; Buttica, "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,

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 Jewish³⁰ 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

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

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.

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 Buttica, "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

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”; Buttica, *Identité*; Buttica, “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 Ikk. 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

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

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”.

Index of References

Old Testament

Genesis

2:24	148
12:19	54
17:5	44
17:15	44
21:30	95
31:44	95
34:1	112
35:10	44
37:11	85
37:29	112
44:13	112

Exodus

3:9	54
7:11	47, 58
7:22	47
8:3	47
8:14	47
8:15	47
9:3	54
9:11	47
20:11	115
22:17	47
22:27	91

Leviticus

10:6	112
16:13	90
19:31	47
20:6	47
20:27	47
21:10	112
23:29	91
24:22	66

Numbers

12:6	47
14:6	112
24:14	54
25:7–11	85

Deuteronomy

6:4	78
10:12	148
18:10	47
18:15–20	91
21:20	80
26:10	54
31:19	95
31:26	95
32:41	161

Joshua

7:6	112
9:25	54
14:10	54
24:27	95

Judges

2:15	54
11:35	112

1 Samuel

4:12	112
5:6	54
6:2	47
7:13	54
9–11	189
9:24	95
12:2	54
12:13	54
12:15	54

13:13–14	189	11:14	112
13:14	189	17:13	97
15	189	18:6	148
16:7	52	18:37	112
23:8	141	19:1	112
24:15	190	21:10	97
24:21	54	22:11	112
25:7	54	22:19	112
26:18	190	24:2	97
31:9	76		
		<i>1 Chronicles</i>	
<i>2 Samuel</i>		10:9	76
1:2	112	19:9	104
1:11	112		
1:20	76	<i>2 Chronicles</i>	
3:3	112	13:4	73
4:10	76	18:22	54
9:13	107	20:10–11	54
12:14	161	24:19	97
13:31	112	24:20–22	98
14:30	112	33:6	47
14:32	54	34:19	112
18:19–20	76	34:27	112
18:26	76	36:16	97
18:31	76	36:22	141
20:2	148		
		<i>1 Esdras</i>	
<i>1 Kings</i>		6:27	52
1:18	54	8:68	112
1:42	76	8:70	112
11:2	148		
15:22	141	<i>2 Esdras</i>	
17:10	104	9:3	112
17:21	197, 203	9:5	112
18:46	54		
20:16	112	<i>Ezra</i>	
21:39	113	1:1	141
22:1–28	58	7:6	54
22:23	54		
		<i>Esther</i>	
<i>2 Kings</i>		4:1	113
1:18	148	8:19	90
3:3	148		
4:34	203	<i>Tobit</i>	
5:6–8	112	2:10	107
6:18–20	56	5:3	54
6:18	55, 59	5:10	107
6:30	112	10:7	113
10:9	104		

Judith

7:1	141
14:16	112
14:17	113

1 Maccabees

2:24–26	85
2:27	85
3:47	112
4:18	90
4:39	112
5:14	112
5:58	141
11:71	112
13:45	112

2 Maccabees

3:18	113
5:25	141
8:36	45
9:17	45
12:5	141
13:10	141
13:26	180
15:10	141

Job

3:5	55
16:8	95
16:19	54
20:1	112
22:26	90
27:10	90

Psalms

11:6	90
16	81
24:8 LXX	53
26:6	54
39:9	76
57:6	47
63:9	148
67:12	76
68:26	91
93:1	90
95:2	76
98:9	142
119:31	148
146:6	115

Proverbs

1:20	90
6:3	161
8:13	54
10:9	54
10:10	90
13:5	89–90
15:11	52
20:2	161
20:9	90
27:4	85
27:17	161
29:14	95

Wisdom of Solomon

3:9	84
5:1	90
6:10	180

Sirach

6:11	90
12:13	47
25:25	90

Isaiah

2:3	53
14:16	161
23:11	161
35:6	109
40:9	76
42:7	91, 191
42:16	91, 191
47:9	47
49:3	92
49:5	92
49:6	29, 88, 91, 92, 97
52:7	76
59:8	53
60:6	76
60:14	161
61:1	76
63:10	161

Jeremiah

1:5	91
1:7	91
1:8	191
1:17	91
1:19	191

2:5 LXX	116		
5:4-5	53		
7:25-27	119		
10:12-15 LXX	116		
12:1	180		
13:11	148		
20:12	180		
20:15	76		
23	58		
26:14	141		
27:29	141		
28:27	141		
29:24	58		
32:39	53		
33	58		
34:9	47		
38:6	180		
39:39 LXX	53		
43:24	112		
48:5	112		
<i>Ezekiel</i>			
2:1-3	191		
2:1	109		
3:2	197		
4:12	197		
4:13-14	197		
4:4-6	197		
12:7	55		
33:1-7	95		
<i>Daniel</i>			
2:2	47		
2:10	47		
2:27	47		
3:4	141		
5:7-8	47		
11:10	161		
12:2	91		
		<i>Daniel (Theodotion)</i>	
		1:20	47
		2:2	47
		2:10	47
		2:27	47
		4:7	47
		4:9	47
		5:7	47
		5:11	47
		5:15	47
		<i>Susanna</i>	
		1:39	113
		<i>Hosea</i>	
		2:14	95
		14:10	54
		<i>Joel</i>	
		2:28-32	91
		3:5	76
		<i>Amos</i>	
		1:11	95
		<i>Micah</i>	
		1:2	95
		4:2	53
		7:18	95
		<i>Nahum</i>	
		2:1	76
		<i>Habakkuk</i>	
		1:5	75, 82
		<i>Zephaniah</i>	
		3:8	95
		<i>Malachi</i>	
		3:5	47

New Testament

<i>Matthew</i>		3:3–6	182
1:21	77	3:3–14	144
4:18	72	3:8	141
5:1	72	3:10–14	182
5:14–16	17	3:16	109
6:1–18	17	3:19	174
10:5	141	4:15	67
10:14	94	4:18	76, 142
13:1–2	72	4:20–27	67
15:29	72	4:20	52, 71–72
15:35	141	4:32	56
19:5	148	4:44	67
23:15	186	5:1–3	72
24:3	72	5:14	141
27:19	171	6:13	118
		6:23	98
<i>Mark</i>		7:5	65
3:29	161	7:12	104
4:1	72	7:16	119
6:8	141	7:19	109
6:11	94	7:22	109
6:47	133	8:2–3	151
8:6	141	8:4	72
8:32	90	8:7	133
9:34	128	8:29	141
9:35	72	8:41–49	70
11:27	72	8:56	141
12:41	72	9:1–2	118
13:3	72	9:10–11	72
14:63	112	9:21	141
16:8	141	9:5	94–96
		9:8	98
<i>Luke</i>		10:3	133
1–2	98	10:11–12	94, 95
1:1	24	10:11	95
1:2	30, 36, 38	10:25	91
1:4	38	10:39–42	151
1:6	81	11:17	52
1:19	76	11:43	67
1:75	144	11:47	98
2:2	49	11:49	119–120
2:10	76	11:50	98
2:25–26	75	12:10	88
2:30–32	198	12:11–12	180
2:32	84, 183	12:11	67
2:46	133	13:1	50

4:35–37	118	8:9–25	46
4:36	45	8:10	118
5:3–4	53	8:12	76
5:12	56, 118	8:40	169
5:13	148	9	189, 191
5:17–20	118	9:1–11:18	31
5:17	85–86	9:1–2	86
5:27	132	9:2	51, 53, 67
5:28	86, 141	9:8	56
5:29	152, 188	9:11	51, 53, 118
5:30	80	9:14	86
5:33	86	9:15	29, 198
5:34–49	167	9:16	118
5:34	71	9:17	51, 53
5:35–39	86	9:20	29, 65
5:36–37	35	9:22	45
5:39	188, 190	9:24	104
5:40	119, 141	9:25	117
5:42	76	9:26	148
6:1–9:31	29, 31	9:27–28	88
6:5	51	9:27	118
6:6	118	9:28–29	45
6:7	54	9:30	169
6:8–10	86	9:32	109
6:8	56	9:36	48
6:10	51–52	9:40	109
6:12	132	10–11	44, 57
6:13–14	86	10	170
6:15	52	10:1	176
6:37	51	10:2	57, 170
7:2	78	10:4	52
7:9	85	10:5	170
7:16	110	10:17	104
7:41	127	10:25	113
7:42	98	10:28	148
7:51–52	85, 120	10:32	46, 57
7:51	52	10:33	46
7:52	98	10:34–35	170
7:54	86	10:35	67, 141, 144
7:55	51–52	10:36	76
7:57	86, 108	10:39	80
7:58–60	118, 120	10:42	141
7:58	30, 118	10:44	57
7:60	108	10:45	170
8	47	11:1	119
8:1	29, 77, 86, 118	11:6	52
8:3	86	11:13	119
8:4	76	11:18	115, 169
8:7	108	11:19–13:1	31

11:19	45, 54	13:21	79–80, 189
11:20	45, 76	13:23	80
11:23	75, 84	13:24–25	79
11:26	38, 39, 187	13:24–26	78
11:28	30, 36, 71	13:26	54, 66, 76, 78, 80–81
12:12	51, 64		81
12:13	104	13:27–29	80
12:17	73	13:27–31	78
12:19	177	13:27	68, 81
12:20–23	170	13:28–29	81
12:22	114, 170	13:28	80
12:24	54	13:29	80
12:25	64	13:30	80
13–14	29–31, 42, 51, 61, 64, 101, 105, 119	13:31	29, 77, 119
13–20	124	13:32–33	81, 127
13:1–14:28	31, 32	13:32–34	119
13:1–3	42, 119	13:32–37	78
13:1	51, 117	13:32	76, 80, 92, 106
13:2	51, 82	13:33–37	81
13:4–12	1, 28, 32, 42	13:38–41	78, 81, 85
13:4–6a	44	13:38	45, 77–78
13:5	43, 45, 65	13:41–14:5	42
13:6–7	43, 46	13:41	82, 97
13:6–12	42–43	13:42–43	83, 147
13:6	43–44	13:42	63, 83
13:7	27, 43, 46, 49, 57, 83–84, 140, 149	13:43	63, 65–66, 69, 96
13:8	43, 47, 88	13:44–45	63, 84
13:9–11	43	13:44	44, 63, 93–94, 140
13:9	43, 52, 108	13:45–48	83
13:10	48, 51, 53, 57, 88	13:45	44, 84–85, 89, 93
13:11–12	43	13:46–47	63
13:11	55, 56, 93, 109	13:46	68, 90–92
13:12	43, 56	13:48–49	96
13:13–52	63	13:48	44, 68, 91
13:13	42, 61, 64	13:49–50	63
13:14–15	63	13:49	54, 84, 93
13:14–50	42	13:50	93–94, 96
13:14–52	1, 28, 32, 61	13:51–52	61
13:14	61, 65, 65, 67, 72	13:51	94–95
13:15	63, 72, 75, 81–83	13:52	96
13:16	66, 71, 73, 74, 78, 181	14:1	65, 66
13:16–23	78	14:3	56, 88
13:16–41	63, 124, 128–129	14:4	118–119
13:17–25	79	14:5–6	101
13:17	79, 91	14:5	70
13:21–22	189	14:6–7	101
		14:6–20	1, 28, 32, 42, 102
		14:6	101, 103
		14:7	101, 106–107, 114

14:8–10	101	15:7	29–30, 71, 198
14:8–20	101, 106	15:8	52
14:8	101, 103, 106–107	15:10–11	81
14:9–10	101	15:12	56, 82
14:9	52, 106, 110	15:13	78
14:10–20	102	15:20	127
14:10	105, 107, 109	15:21	65, 68, 159
14:11–13	101–102	15:22	51, 119
14:11–18	101	15:27	51
14:11	103, 105, 108–110,	15:32	51, 75
	114	15:36–19:40	31
14:12	120	15:36–28:31	31
14:13	105–106, 110	15:36	30, 45
14:14–15	112	15:37	64
14:14–18	101	15:39	45, 64
14:14	106, 109–110, 112,	16–19	129
	118–119	16–28	30, 36, 119
14:15–16	115	16:1–3	105
14:15b–17	101	16:1	103
14:15	77, 110, 114, 116,	16:2	104
	145	16:4	119
14:16–17	142	16:5	30
14:16	116	16:6–10	29, 123
14:17	115–116	16:6–19:40	123, 125, 129
14:18	106, 110–111, 116	16:6–21:17	123
14:19–20	101–102, 117	16:6	64
14:19–20a	101	16:8	36
14:19	104–106, 110–111	16:10	30, 77
14:20–21	106	16:12–40	123
14:20	105, 116–117	16:12	64
14:20b	101	16:13–15	94
14:21–22	96	16:13	72, 104
14:21–26	42	16:14	104
14:21	101, 103, 117	16:17	45, 53
14:22	75, 116	16:18	141
14:24	64	16:19	51, 129
14:25	61	16:19–20	132
14:26–27	51	16:20–21	40
14:26	42, 82	16:21	45
14:27–16:5	31	16:22	51
14:27	42, 44, 99, 110,	16:23	141
	115, 122, 169	16:25	51
15	30, 71, 119	16:26	190
15:2	119	16:28	108
15:3	82	16:29	51, 113
15:4	119, 123	16:35	51
15:5	141	16:38	51
15:6	119	16:40	51, 75
15:7–11	30	17	181

17:1–10	123	17:31	127–128, 137, 141
17:1	65	17:32–34	124, 147
17:2–3	185	17:32	185
17:2–4	128	17:33–34	148
17:2	68, 75, 128–129	17:34	27, 94, 131, 148,
17:3	45		150
17:4–5	51	18:1–5	124
17:4	94	18:1–17	123
17:5	87, 129, 132	18:2	51
17:6	132	18:4	65–66, 128–129
17:10	51, 65	18:5	51
17:11	68, 129	18:6	88, 95–96
17:11–14	123	18:7	51, 65, 161
17:12	94	18:8	51, 70
17:13	45, 54	18:12	49–50, 129, 132
17:14–15	51, 124	18:12–13	40
17:15–34	123	18:15	167, 181
17:16–17	124–125	18:17	70, 133
17:16–21	152	18:18–19:40	123
17:16–34	1, 28, 32, 125, 156	18:19	65, 75, 128–129
17:16	125, 127, 143	18:22	170
17:17	65–66, 75, 124, 129	18:24	68, 70
17:18–21	124, 137	18:25	53
17:18	45, 77, 115, 125,	18:26	53, 65, 88, 117
	127, 149, 148, 153	18:28	68
17:19	127–128, 131–132,	19:8	65, 88, 128
	134–135	19:9	53, 128–129
17:20	153	19:20	54
17:21–31	124	19:21–21:19	31
17:21	127, 137–138, 145,	19:21	29, 123
	147, 163	19:23	53
17:22–23	143, 154	19:26	144
17:22–31	124	19:29	51, 133
17:22	71, 125, 131, 133,	19:31	149
	135, 144	19:33–34	180
17:23	80, 140, 141, 154,	19:33	73–74, 180
	157–158	19:37	88, 133
17:23b	146	19:38	49, 129
17:24–29	143	20:1–21:17	123
17:26–27	146	20:1	75
17:26	146	20:2	75
17:27	145–146	20:4	51
17:28	115, 162	20:7–12	203
17:28a	156	20:7	75, 128–129
17:28b	159	20:9	128–129
17:29	146	20:10	197
17:30–31	137, 143, 146, 182	20:18–35	124
17:30	80–81, 115, 139–	20:22	54
	142, 146	20:23	187

20:25	54	24:6b	180
20:30	48	24:7–8	40
21–26	167	24:8	177–178
21	119	24:12	65, 128–129, 180
21:3	45, 87	24:14–15	53, 187
21:7	30	24:14–16	144
21:8–9	169	24:14	117
21:8	169–170	24:15	53
21:14	180	24:17–18	180
21:16	45, 170	24:24–26	170
21:18	119	24:25	128–129, 144
21:19–26:32	31, 166	24:26–27	50
21:19	123, 169	24:26	178
21:21	40	25–26	166
21:28	40, 180	25:1–5	166
21:30–31	181	25:3	178
21:30	104, 133	25:6–12	166
21:31	176	25:6	170
21:36	84	25:7	181
21:40	71, 73, 74	25:8	166, 181
22–26	124, 180	25:9	178
22–28	123	25:10	170
22	189, 191	25:13–22	166
22:1	78	25:13	169
22:3	51, 72, 86, 106	25:19	167, 181
22:4	53, 86	25:21	116
22:7	51	25:22	140, 167, 169, 172
22:13	51	25:23–26:1a	168
22:19	67	25:23–26:32	1, 28, 32, 166, 168
22:22	108, 167	25:23	166, 169, 172
22:25–29	51	25:24	174
22:30	132	25:26	172, 174, 177
23:1	52	25:30	132
23:5	91	26	179, 180, 183, 187, 189, 191, 199
23:6	51	26:1	73–74, 160, 168, 178–179
23:8	157	26:1b–29	168
23:9–10	108	26:2–3	181
23:9	167	26:2	174
23:11	29	26:4–8	182–183
23:18	118	26:4–21	181
23:22	141	26:5	51
23:23–24	170	26:6–8	181
23:26	176	26:6	182
23:29	167, 181, 187	26:7	184
23:30	141	26:8–23	183
23:31–32	170	26:8	182–183
23:35	170	26:9–21	182
24:5–6	167, 180		
24:5	117, 167		

26:9–23	182	<i>Romans</i>	
26:11	67, 88	1:8	45
26:13–16	191	2:17–21	92
26:13	182	6:7	77
26:14	51, 184, 190	6:18	77
26:15–18	91–92	6:22	77
26:16–18	184	12:7	75
26:16	109	15:19	42
26:18	56		
26:19–23	184	<i>1 Corinthians</i>	
26:19	182, 184, 188	2:1	45
26:20	141	7:10	141
26:21	181–182	9:14	45
26:22–23	182	11:17	141
26:22	182, 184, 192	11:26	45
26:23	84, 182–193, 198	13:5	161
26:24–25	190	14:23	65
26:24	108, 168, 180		
26:26–27	185	<i>2 Corinthians</i>	
26:26	88, 139, 187	3:7	52
26:27	186	3:12	90
26:28	168, 187	3:13	52
26:29	186	7:4	90
26:30–32	168	11:6	163, 204
26:31–32	188		
26:31	167, 187	<i>Galatians</i>	
27–28	29, 168	3:13	80
27	51, 59		
27:1–28:16	31	<i>Ephesians</i>	
27:1	176	3:12	90
27:2	133	4:30	161
27:4	45	6:19–20	90
27:21	71	6:20	88, 90
27:24	49		
28:11	29	<i>Philippians</i>	
28:17–21	168	1:17–18	45
28:17–23	29	1:20	90
28:17–28	168		
28:17–31	31	<i>Colossians</i>	
28:17	70	1:28	45
28:18	178	2:15	90
28:22–28	168	4:10	64
28:22	70, 87, 140	4:14	37
28:23	68, 185		
28:25	52, 98	<i>1 Thessalonians</i>	
28:28	118, 165, 198	2:2	88, 90
28:31	88, 175	2:15	120
		4:11	141

<i>2 Thessalonians</i>		1:24	37
3:4	141		
3:6	141	<i>Hebrews</i>	
3:10	141	12:4	128
3:12	141	13:22	75
<i>1 Timothy</i>		<i>1 John</i>	
1:3	141	2:28	90
3:13	90	3:21	90
4:11	141	4:17	90
5:7	141	5:14	90
6:13	141	<i>Jude</i>	
6:17	141	1:9	128
6:18	115	<i>Revelation</i>	
<i>2 Timothy</i>		1:11	104
3:11	104	2:18	104
4:11	37	2:24	104
<i>Titus</i>		21:11–15	104
1:12	157	21:21	104
<i>Philemon</i>		21:25	104
1:8	90	22:8–9	120
		22:14	104

Jewish Sources

Aristobulus		19.300	66
Frg. 4.6–7	115, 154, 159	19.305	66
		19.328–331	174
Babylonian Talmud		19.345	52
<i>b. Taanith</i>		19.360	173
16a	70	20.9	173
		20.15	173
Josephus		20.97–103	35
<i>Antiquitates judaicae</i>		20.134–136	173
4.320	73	20.141	47–48, 174
6.88	78	20.142	45
6.191	113	20.145	174
8.275	73	20.179	173
9.56–57	55	20.183	171
18.57	171	20.199–203	175
18:81–84	51	<i>Bellum judaicum</i>	
18.84	57	2.21.8	73
		2.172	171

2.289	66	Philo	
2.301	171	<i>De decalogo</i>	
5.517	52	16.81	144
7.55	66	<i>De Josepho</i>	
7.268–270	85	211	73
<i>Contra Apionem</i>		<i>De praemiis et poenis</i>	
1.51	173	152	67
2.135	154	<i>De specialibus legibus</i>	
2.158	154	1.299–300	115
2.175	68	1.315–317	120
2.259	155	1.321–322	17, 130
2.262	155	2.61–62	68, 72, 75
<i>Vita</i>		2.62	70
11	85	2.253	85
42	188	<i>De vita Mosis</i>	
355–360	173	1.21–29	139
359	175	<i>Hypothetica</i>	
364–366	173	7.12–13	67–68
367	175	7.12	68
Letter of Aristeas		7.13	70
16	159	<i>Legatio ad Gaium</i>	
Mishna		181	73
<i>m. Tamid</i>		203	138
5.1	78	209–212	87
Life of Adam and Eve		282	45
33:2	52	<i>Quaestiones et solutiones in Exodum</i>	
3 Maccabees		2.2	66
1:1	141	<i>Quod Deus sit immutabilis</i>	
1:17	113	130	55–56
2:26	52	Prayer of Manasseh	
4:1	90	12:9	52
7:12	90	Psalms of Solomon	
4 Maccabees		3:12	91
12:13	114	11:1	76
15:3	91	Testament of Abraham	
		8.7	52

Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs		Tosephta	
1.4.2.2	52	<i>t. Hullin</i>	
11.5.2	112	2:24	40

Greco-Roman Sources

Aelian		66.15.4	173
<i>Varia historia</i>		67.13.3	139
8.12	136	68.32.3	44
Aelius Aristides		Chariton	
<i>Orationes</i>		<i>De Chaerea et Callirhoe</i>	
1.46–47	135	1.12	136
Aëtius of Amida		Cicero	
<i>Iatrici</i>		<i>De inventione rhetorica</i>	
7.27	55	2.8–9	48
Appian		<i>Epistulae ad Atticum</i>	
<i>Historia romana</i>		2.1.3	160
8.15.102	87	1.14.5	136
Apuleius		<i>De oratore</i>	
<i>Metamorphoses</i>		2.85	21
2.21	179	<i>Epistulae ad familiares</i>	
Aristotle		73.10	103
<i>Athenaion politeia</i>		<i>Pro Flacco</i>	
57.3	133	67	87
<i>Politica</i>		<i>De officiis</i>	
1315b23–24	134	1.75	131
<i>Rhetorica</i>		<i>De republica</i>	
1415b22–23	79	1.43	131
Cassius Dio		<i>Tusculanae disputationes</i>	
<i>Historia romana</i>		1.71	155
37.17.2	87	Demetrius	
57.18.5	51	<i>De elocutione</i>	
65.15.3–4	173	44	146

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------|--|-----|
| 53 | 146 | Dionysus of Halicarnassus | |
| 59 | 146 | <i>Antiquitates romanae</i> | |
| 77 | 146 | 19.5.3 | 138 |
| 92 | 146 | Dioscorides Pedanius | |
| 96–97 | 161 | <i>De materia medica</i> | |
| 198 | 146 | 2.78 | 55 |
| Demosthenes | | Eratosthenes | |
| <i>In Theocrinem [spurious]</i> | | <i>Catasterismi</i> | |
| 29 | 134 | 1.26.13 | 95 |
| <i>Philippica i</i> | | Eudemus | |
| 10 | 139 | Frg. 49.12 | 115 |
| <i>De corona</i> | | Euripides | |
| 18.127 (269) | 138 | <i>Bacchae</i> | |
| Dio Chrysostom | | 792–795 | 190 |
| <i>Ad Alexandrinos (Or. 32)</i> | | <i>Iphigenia Taurica</i> | |
| 9 | 138 | 944 | 157 |
| <i>Celaenis Phrygiae (Or. 35)</i> | | Galen | |
| 9–10 | 113 | <i>De animi cuiuslibet peccatorum digno-</i> | |
| <i>De administratione (Or. 50)</i> | | <i>tione et curatione</i> | |
| 2 | 131 | 75–76 | 139 |
| Diodorus Siculus | | Heliodorus | |
| <i>Bibliotheca historica</i> | | <i>Aethiopica</i> | |
| 13.24 | 114 | 9.7 | 73 |
| 17.5 | 112 | 10.7 | 73 |
| 34+35.5 | 47 | Herodotus | |
| Diogenes Laërtius | | <i>Historiae</i> | |
| <i>Vitae philosophorum</i> | | 1.67.21 | 115 |
| 1.10.110 | 157 | 3.154 | 115 |
| 1.10.112 | 156–157 | 3.156.2 | 132 |
| 2.5.40 | 153 | 3.160 | 115 |
| 2.8.101 | 134 | Hierocles | |
| 2.11.116 | 134 | <i>Synekdemos</i> | |
| Diogenes of Oenoanda | | 675.2 | 104 |
| Frg. 126 | 87 | | |

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|--|----------|
| Hippocrates | | Lucan | |
| <i>Prorrhetica</i> | | <i>Bellum civile</i> | |
| 2.20 | 55 | 1.298 | 73 |
| Homer | | Lucian | |
| <i>Iliad</i> | | <i>Alexander</i> | |
| 1.68 | 71 | 9 | 113, 121 |
| 1.101 | 71 | <i>Bis accusatus</i> | |
| 2.76 | 71 | 12 | 136 |
| 4.461 | 59 | <i>De morte Peregrini</i> | |
| 4.503 | 59 | 11–13 | 138 |
| 5.95–296 | 59 | 11 | 39, 121 |
| 5.127 | 55 | <i>Piscator</i> | |
| 7.354 | 71 | 15–16 | 134 |
| 7.365 | 71 | <i>Quomodo historia conscribenda sit</i> | |
| 13.575 | 59 | 55 | 26 |
| 14.519 | 59 | 58 | 23 |
| 15.578 | 59 | <i>Timon</i> | |
| 15.668 | 55 | 46 | 134 |
| 16.316 | 59 | <i>Vitarum auction</i> | |
| 16.325 | 59 | 7 | 134 |
| 20.321 | 55 | Lysias | |
| 20.341 | 55 | <i>Andocides</i> | |
| 20.393 | 59 | 51 | 95 |
| 20.471 | 59 | Oenomaus | |
| 21.181 | 59 | Frg. 12.29 | 115 |
| <i>Odyssey</i> | | Ovid | |
| 2.224 | 71 | <i>Metamorphoses</i> | |
| 20.357 | 55 | 8.612–727 | 111 |
| 22.88 | 55 | 8.726 | 116 |
| Isocrates | | Pausanias | |
| <i>Areopagiticus</i> | | <i>Graeciae descriptio</i> | |
| 7.37–38 | 136 | 1.17.1 | 126 |
| Juvenal | | 1.24.3 | 126 |
| <i>Satirae</i> | | 1.28.5–8 | 135 |
| 6.157 | 174 | | |
| 10.81 | 115 | | |
| Livy | | | |
| <i>Ab urbe condita</i> | | | |
| 38.45.9–10 | 103 | | |

- | | | | |
|---|---------------|--|---------|
| 1.28.5 | 157 | <i>De Iside et Osiride</i> | |
| 1.28.6 | 133 | 370C–D | 115 |
| 7.20.6 | 126 | | |
| 10.25.3 | 107 | <i>Demosthenes</i> | |
| | | 14.3 | 89, 160 |
| Plato | | 14.4 | 134 |
| <i>Apologia</i> | | <i>Demetrius</i> | |
| 17A | 145 | 902 | 138 |
| 17C | 130 | | |
| 23B–C | 189 | <i>De sera numinis vindicta</i> | |
| 29D | 152, 153, 189 | 15 (559B) | 126 |
| <i>Euthyphro</i> | | <i>De superstitione</i> | |
| 3B | 153 | 1 (165D) | 144 |
| <i>Gorgias</i> | | <i>Quomodo adulator ab amico</i> | |
| 487A | 89 | <i>internoscatur</i> | |
| 487D | 89 | 6 (51C) | 89 |
| | | 27 (67F) | 89 |
| Pliny the Elder | | Polybius | |
| <i>Historia naturalis</i> | | <i>Historiae</i> | |
| 5.24 | 64 | 1.78.3 | 73 |
| 8.7.183 | 111 | 3.6.7 | 87 |
| | | 4.57.11 | 104 |
| Pliny the Younger | | 12.25d.4–6 | 175 |
| <i>Epistulae</i> | | 15.25.22 | 175 |
| 2.19.1–4 | 20 | 16.21.1 | 175 |
| 2.19.3 | 72 | 31.26 | 175 |
| 8.24.6 | 126 | 36.1.1–7 | 23 |
| 10.96 | 40, 121, 177 | 36.14.1 | 107 |
| 10.96.1 | 40 | | |
| 10.96.2 | 40 | Pseudo-Callisthenes | |
| 10.96.5 | 40 | <i>Vita Alexandri (Armenian version)</i> | |
| 10.96.9–10 | 40 | 2.3 | 73 |
| 10.96.10 | 40 | | |
| Plutarch | | Pseudo-Demosthenes | |
| <i>Apophtegmata laconica (spurious)</i> | | <i>Orationes</i> | |
| 222C | 137 | 25.23 | 131 |
| <i>Aristides</i> | | Pseudo-Hermogenes | |
| 27.4 | 126 | <i>Progymnasmata</i> | |
| <i>Cicero</i> | | 9.20 | 23 |
| 24.5 | 131 | | |

Pseudo-Theano		6.1.30–35	112
Frg. 200.23	115	6.1.51–52	82
		9.2.6	185
Ptolemaeus		9.2.14	186
<i>Geographica</i>		Rhetorica ad Herennium	
5.4.9	104	1.6.9–10	143
		1.7.11	143
Quintilian		3.2.7	22
<i>Institutio oratoria</i>		4.2.2	53
1.8.10–12	146		
1.10.79	160	Seneca the Elder	
10.1–2	25	<i>Controversiae</i>	
11.3.14	108	1 Pr. 9	21
11.3.63–65	108	Seneca the Younger	
11.3.67	20	<i>Apocolocyntosis</i>	
11.3.68	20	7	171
11.3.75	108	<i>Epistulae</i>	
11.3.92	179	41	145
11.3.96	72, 179	108.22	51
11.3.134	72, 170	<i>De tranquillitate animi</i>	
11.3.135	72	5.1	131, 136
11.3.142	72	Strabo	
11.3.150	20	<i>Geographica</i>	
11.3.153	20	12.8.14	64
11.3.154	21	Suetonius	
11.3.157–158	72, 179	<i>Divus Titus</i>	
11.3.174	112	7.1–2	173
11.3.177	20	<i>Tiberius</i>	
11.3.181	21	36	51
11.3.184	21	Tacitus	
12.1.1	21	<i>Agricola</i>	
12.1.3	21	5	176
12.2.7	25	<i>Annales</i>	
12.2.9	139	1.25	73
12.2.26–27	139	2.85	51
12.2.29–31	25	15.44.2–3	39
3.8.14	142		
3.8.65	160		
4.1.5	181		
4.1.16	181		
4.1.19	174		
4.1.42–50	143		
4.1.72	79		
4.2	80		
4.2.4–8	183		
4.4.5	153		
6.1.25–27	83		

<i>Historiae</i>		Vita Alexandri (rec. α)	
1.22.2	47	2.3	145
Theon		Xenophon	
<i>Progymnasmata</i>		<i>Agésilau</i>	
1.60	23, 24	1.6	23
5.78	24	<i>Apologia</i>	
8.115–117	23	10–11	153
8.115	23	<i>Cyropaedia</i>	
Theophrastus		5.4.4	73
<i>Historia plantarum</i>		<i>Memorabilia</i>	
7.2.20	55	1.1	153
Thucydides		1.2.49	186
<i>Historiae</i>		1.2.63–64	155
1.22.1–4	23	1.10	130
2.38.5	160	Zenodorus	
Vita Aesopi Westermanniana (rec. 2)		Περὶ συνηθείας	
87	73	254.12	115

Early Christian Sources

Acts of Andrew		<i>Protrepticus</i>	
10	73	10.100	58
Acts of Paul and Thecla		<i>Stromateis</i>	
4	151	4.3.8.5.2	115
3.1	104	6.14.108.1.5	115
1 Clement		6.16.141.7.4	115
4.9	85	2.12.55.6	115
4.13	85	Eusebius	
7.4	52	<i>Historia ecclesiastica</i>	
9.2	52	4.23.3	150
36.2	52	6.14.6	35
Clement of Alexandria		Jerome	
<i>Paedagogus</i>		<i>Commentaria in Epistulam ad Ephesios</i>	
2.118.2	58	On Eph 5:14	159
3.1.1.1.4	115		

Commentaria in Epistulam ad Titum

On Tit 1:12 154, 158–159
1.706 158

Epistulae

70 158

John Chrysostom

Homiliae in Acta apostolorum

28 56

Homiliae in Epistulam ad Titum

3 159

De sacerdotio

4.6.423 151
4.6.424 163
4.7.426 151, 163

Justin Martyr

Apologia i

5.4 153

Apologia ii

10.5–6 154
10.5 153, 154
10.6 154

Dialogus cum Tryphone

39.4 185

Origenes

Contra Celsum

1.29 84
2.74 84
3.50 138

Papias

Frsg. 3.4 35
Frsg. 13.2 35
Frsg. 13.5 35

Proteuangelium of James

24 36

Pseudo-Clementine Homilies

3.40.1 52
4.10.3 52
5.25.3 52
10.1.2 52

Tertullian

Ce corona militis

1.4–5 58

Adversus Marcionem

4.24 95

Theophilus

Ad Autolyicum

2.38.30 115

Inscriptions

CIJ 738 67
Dittenberger 796B 131
IG II 1990, 23.25 149
IG V,1 1302 150
IG V,1 1304 150

IG V,1 972 150
IG XII,8 190b.37–48 141
SEG 17.823 66
SEG 32.391 150

Index of Modern Authors

- Aletti, Jean-Noel 31
Alexander, Jeffrey 12–14, 24–25, 33,
192, 200
Alexander, Loveday 38, 200
Austin, John L. 11
Barclay, John 18
Baur, Ferdinand Christian 6
Bechard, Dean Philip 113
Becker, Eve-Marie 6, 38
Bost-Pouderon, Cécile 26
Burke, Peter 11
Butler, Judith 11
Butticaz, Simon 110
Carlson, Marvin 12
Curtius, Ernst 131
De Temmerman, Koen 25, 201
Dibelius, Martin 142
Dupont, Jacques 140, 142
Eck, John van 7
Eck, Werner 50
Emde Boas, Evert van 25, 201
Gärtner, Bertil 161–162
Geertz, Clifford 11
Gempfl, Conrad 10
Gill, David 150
Gillman, Florence 174
Goffman, Erving 11–12
Goldhill, Simon 15
Grabbe, Lester 173
Gray, Patrick 139
Hägg, Tomas 201
Hardie, Philip 110
Hezser, Catherine 17
Horst, Pieter van der 158
Jervell, Jacob 8
Kemmler, Dieter W. 128
Kennedy, George A. 142
Kent, Benedikt 52
Klauck, Hans-Josef 47
Kochenash, Michael 189
Koet, Bart 4, 8, 88, 117, 200
Konstan, David 15
Lang, Manfred 4
Lentz, John 4, 200
Lestang, François 142
Litwak, Kenneth 161–162
Macnamara, Luke 4
Malherbe, Abraham J. 138
Marguerat, Daniel 191
Martin, Richard 16
Morgenthaler, Robert 19
Osborne, Robin 15
Paley, William 2
Quiroga Puertas, Alberto 16, 201
Ramsay, William 133
Riemersma, Nico 31
Rogers, T.J. 96
Rothschild, Clare 5, 64, 151–152, 156–
158, 161
Safrai, Shmuel 69
Sandnes, Karl Olav 128, 152–153
Schechner, Richard 12
Schröter, Jens 3
Schwindt, Rainer 110
Searle, John R. 11
Shiell, William D. 73–74
Skinner, Matthew 4
Soards, Marion 200
Strelan, Rick 52
Taylor, Joan 169, 171
Tomson, Peter 41, 200
Turner, Victor 11
Van Pelt, Julie 201
Veach, Katherine 58
Vielhauer, Philipp 2
Wason, Brandon 10
Wilker, Julia 186
Zweck, Dean 142

Index of Subjects

Personal Names

- Aelius Theon 22, 23
Agrippa I 174
Agrippa II 41, 49, 140, 167, 172–176, 185–188
Aristobulus 115, 154, 159
Bar-Jesus 46, 47, 48, 51, 108
Barnabas 30, 45, 48
Bernice, or Berenice 19, 172–176, 187
Cato 21, 155
Celsus 84, 138
Cicero 21, 139, 197
Cornelius 57, 170
Damaris 150–152
Demosthenes 19, 89, 98, 100, 130, 139, 145, 160, 163, 179, 197
Dionysius the Areopagite 131, 149–150
Domitian 19, 36, 41, 139
Elisha 55
Elymas, *see* Bar-Jesus
Eutychus 197, 203
Felix 49–50, 178
Festus 49–50, 176–178, 185, 188
Gallio 50
Gamaliel II 40
Gamaliel I 86, 188
Hermes 111, 115, 120–121
Herod, *see* Agrippa I
Homer 55–56
Irenaeus 9
James, brother of Christ 175
John Mark 64
Josephus 41, 47, 55–56, 154–155, 173, 175
Justin Martyr 154
Lucian 121, 138
Lucius Sergius Paulus 49, *see also* Sergius Paulus
Marcion 8–9, 203
Nero 39, 171, 191
Nerva 34, 36, 175, 203
Odysseus 26
Pausanias 107, 126
Papias 35
Pentheus 190–191
Pilate 50
Pliny the Younger 39, 177
Plutarch 126
Quintilian 16–22, 25, 33, 52, 72, 74, 82–83, 108, 112, 139, 160, 171, 179, 181, 195, 197, 201
Quintus Sergius Paulus 49
Quirinus 49
Sergius Paulus 45–46, 49, 83, 99, 140, 149, 185, 188
Simon Magus 47
Socrates 5, 26, 89, 100, 128–130, 145, 152–155, 159, 162–163, 188–189, 197, 204
Tacitus 39
Theophilus 6, 38, 57, 200
Timothy 105
Titus 173
Trajan 34, 36, 39–40, 175, 203
Vespasian 19, 113
Zeus 104–105, 111, 115, 121, 156–157, 159

Place Names

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| Antioch, Pisidian 63–65 | Lycaonia 103–104 |
| Athens 37, 98, 103, 126, 127, <i>see also</i>
Athenians | Lystra 103–104, 106 |
| Caesarea 46, 169–172, 176 | Paphos 46 |
| Cyprus 44–46 | Sparta 150 |
| | Perge 61, 64 |

Subjects

- accusations, against Paul 180–181
age, of Luke 36, 37
altar
– nameless altars 157
– to unknown god 157–158
announcement, *see* καταγγέλλω
anti-Imperialist interpretation 18
apologetic
– ~ agenda 58, 88, 175, 187, 199–200, 203
– ~ interpretation of Acts 37, 39
– Jewish 6
– Jewish ~ literature 154
– political ~ in Acts 6
– Roman 198
Apologists, Christian 199, 203
apostle, *see* ἀπόστολος
Arai, goddesses of vengeance 131
Areopagites, *see* Areopagus
Areopagus Council, *see* Areopagus
Areopagus 131–137, 149, 156, 157
Ares 131
argumentatio 78–80, 143, 182
Asiarchs 149, 185
Athenians 89, 137–138, 155
audience hall, *see* ἀκροατήριον
authorship / of 34–37
- Bacchae* 184, 190
background activity 27, 84
background symbol 192
Bar-Kokhba war 37
benefactor, God as 115
blindness 56
body language, *see* gestures
calling
– Israel’s ~ to be a light to the Gentiles 92
– Paul’s personal ~ 92
– prophetic 191–192
captatio benevolentiae 144
case studies / selection of 28–29
change of names 44, 51
characterization
– metaphorical 25–26, 28
– of Paul in Acts 4
– through names 48
charlatan 46–47, 113–114, 121
Christians, as term in Acts 186–187, 200
city gates, of Lystra 104
clothes, tearing of 112–114
Codex Ephraemi 117
cognitio, *see* ἀνάκρισις
cohort
– Italian 176
– of Augustus 176
colonia, Roman 64
counterscript 121, 189–190, 197
courtesan, *see* ἐταίρα
crowds 84, 104–106, 109–111, 116, 118
cult transfer 158–159
cults, intra- and extramural 105
curiosity, Athenian reputation for 136–139, 160
cursus honorum 49
- dating of Acts 34–37
display, of honour and social status 67
dust, shaking off as gesture 94, 95
duties, public and military 57, 150

- Editio Critica Maior 34
 envoy, *see* ἀπόστολος
 Epicurean philosophy 144
 Epimenides 5, 156–159, 162–163
 Episodenstil, dramatische 201
 episodes, structure of ~ in Acts 26–27, 31
 etymology of Elymas 48
 exhortation, *see* παρακαλέω
 exordium 78, 143, 179
 faith
 – of Sergius Paulus 57
 – of the Gentiles 115, 122
 – of the paralyzed man 108, 110
 feet, sitting at one's ~ 106–107
 figures of speech, *see* style
 Flavians 39, *see also* Vespasian, Titus, Domitian
 foreground action 27, 84
 form criticism 9
 frankness, *see* παρρησία
 fulfillment, of the Scriptures 81–82
 function of the portrait of Paul's performance 33, 98–100, 122, 164–165, 192–193, *see also* purpose
 fusion 13
 gaze 50–51, 108
 genres / of speeches 142–143
 gesture / of the hand 178, *see also* motioning
 gestures 20, 195
 Gnostics 8
 God-fearers 66–68, 94, 129
 God-fighters 188
 Gospel, *see* εὐαγγελίζομαι
 herald 45, 79, 120, 141–142, 159
 Homeric idiom 55–56, 58–59
 hospitality 96
 identity figure, Paul as ~ 8
 idolatry 116, 127, 144–145, 161–162
 ignorance, of the Athenians 144
Iliad 59
imitatio 25, 33
insinuatio 143
Institutio Oratoria 18
 instructional discourse, *see* διαλέγομαι
 interpretation of Scripture in Acts 45, 185
 intertextuality 33
 jealousy, *see* ζήλος
 Jewish Christians 8
 Jewish identity of Paul 4, 51, 165
 Jewish War 175
 journey
 – of Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13–14 42, 61
 – of Paul to Jerusalem 123–124
 – Paul to Rome 168
 joy 93, 96
 judge, God as 137
 judgment 95
 jumping into the crowd 113
 kerygma, *see* theology
 Law and Prophets, reading of 68–69, 81
 legitimation, Acts as ~ of Christian identity 7
 letters of Paul, compared to Acts 2–3, 203–204
 look, *see* gaze
 Lycaonian language 103–104, 109, 111
 Lycaonians 121
 magic, *see* μάγος
 magicians 58
 Majority text 83
 marketplace
 – as motif in Acts 16:6–19:40 129
 – in Athens 130
minut 40, *see also* *superstitio*
 miracles, as divine testimony 56, 109–110
 mist, *see* ἀχλύς
 motioning, with the hand 73–74
 names, Latin 51
narratio 78, 79, 80, 143, 182
 narration, six elements of 24
 Nazarenes 87, 167, 187, 193, 194, *see also* αἵρεσις

- obedience, as motif in Paul's defence
188–189, 192, 197–198
- Odyssey* 168
- officia oratoris* 20
- optative 186
- ornamenta praetoria* 173
- outline, of the structure of an episode
43, 61–62, 102, 125, 168
- parallels between Jesus, Peter, Stephen,
and Paul 4
- paralysed man 106–109
- part, as narrative unity in Acts 31
- Parting of the Ways 203
- pathos 114, 183
- Paul
– meaning of Paulus 50
– ~ within Judaism 3
- Performance
– ~ culture 14–17
– as situational action 28
– aspects of ~ 33
– concept of ~ 10–28, 200–202
– definitions of ~ 12–13
– field of ~ Studies 13, 15, 16
– rhetorical narrations of ~ 16
– sociological theory of ~ 13–14
– spatial and temporal situation of ~
27
- performative turn 11, 14
- peroratio* 21, 78–79, 81–83, 112, 143,
145–146, 181–183
- persecution 86–87, 94, 120, *see also*
stoning
- persona 26, *see also* προσωποποιῖα
– of God 82
- philosophers 138–139, 147, 149
– Cynic ~ 185
– women ~ 151
- Platonic philosophy 144
- postcolonial theory 18
- postmodernity 11
- posture, standing or seated 71–72, 145
- praetorium, of Herod 170–172
- prefects, equestrian 49–50
- priest, of Zeus 110, 111
- proconsul 49–50, 58
- progymnasmata* 22
- prologue
– Monarchian and anti-Marcionite 36
– of Luke 35, 38
- prooemium* 181–183, *see also* *exordium*
- prophetic figure, Paul as ~ 5, 78
- prophets, ancient 98
- proselytes 66–68, 83
- prosopography 6
- purpose of the representation of Paul's
performances 5, 37
- religio licita* 6
- restoration of Israel 110
- Resurrection
– as goddess 127, 138
– as theme in Acts 183
- rhetoric
– ancient theory 108
– conventions of speeches 145
– rhetorical approach of speeches 142
– rhetorical aspects of Paul's speeches
78, 90–92
- Rhetorica ad Herennium* 21
- Roman citizenship of Paul 51
- Roman identity of Paul 51
- Roman Jews 199
- Sabbath 68
- salvation 80–81
– of the Gentiles 60, 84, 93, 100, 110,
165, 169, 183, 198, 200
- Saul
– Jewish name of Paul 44–45, 51, 86
– king of Israel 189–191
- scene, as narrative unity in Acts 31
- script 14, 24–26, 28, 33
– complementarity of scripts 162–163,
197
– Homeric 59
– of Demosthenic frankness 98
– prophetic 58–59, 97–98, 119–120,
161–163, 191–192, 196–197
– Socratic 152–155, 188–189, 197
- seating arrangements in synagogues 67
- self-presentation of Paul 203–204
- Semmai* 157
- Septuagint, Luke's imitation of the style
of the ~ 54, 58, 78, 91, 98, 146
- sequence, as narrative unity in Acts 31
- Sermon on the Mount 17

- sermon, *see* speeches
shema 78
 slandering 94, *see also* βλασφημέω
 social status of Paul in Acts 3–4
 speech act 50
 speeches
 – in Acts 9
 – in synagogue gatherings 68–69
 – performance of 18
 – rhetorical structure of ~ in Acts 78–79
 Spirit, Holy 51–52, 96, 123, 170
 Stephen, Paul as alter ~ 117, 120
 Stoa, Royal ~ in Athens 131
 Stoic philosophy 143–144
 stoning 101, 105, 111, 117–118
 structure
 – of Acts 29–31
 – of speeches 101, 143, 181
 style, of speeches 145–146, 184, 196
superstitio 38–39, 41, 60, 100, 121–122, 144, 165, 187, 193–194, 198–199, 201
 synagogue 104, 127, 129
 – as public assembly and school 89
 – as school of virtue 75
 – as setting of Paul’s performance 65–68
 – Jesus’ teaching in the ~ 67
 – ~ leaders, *see* ἀρχισυνάγωγοι
 – size of gatherings 71
 – synagogue buildings on Cyprus 44
 theology of Acts 7
 Torah, Paul’s view of ~ according to Acts 4
tribuni militum 176
tribus Sergia 49
 turning, to the Gentiles 90–93
 Valentinians 9
 Villa of Theseus 46
 visits by provincial governors 166
 vividness 108
 voice 20, 108, 114
 Voluseni family 150
 Way of the Lord 48, 53–54
 we-passages 30, 36
 women, elite 94, 151
 zeal 199, *see also* ζήλος

Greek Words

- ἀγορά, *see* Marketplace
 αἵρεσις 29, 39, 117, 139, 167, 187
 ἀκολουθέω 84
 ἀκροατήριον 172
 ἀνάκρισις 177, 187
 ἀπαγωγή 132
 ἀπολογέομαι 180
 ἀπόστολος 118–119
 ἀρχισυνάγωγοι 69–70
 ἀτενίζω 50, 52
 ἀχλύς 55, 58–59
 βῆμα 170–171
 βλασφημέω 88
 δεισιδαιμονία 144, 167
 διαλέγομαι 128–129, 152, 153
 διήγημα 24
 ἐνάργεια 26
 ἐταίρα 151
 εὐαγγελίζομαι 76–77, 110, 114–115, 127, 129, 140
 ζήλος 84–88, 93–94, 100
 ζητήματα 167
 ζωὴ αἰώνιος 90–91
 ἦθος 22–23
 καταγγέλλω 45, 77, 140–141
 κατασεῖω τῆ χειρί, *see* motioning
 κηρύσσω 45
 κολλάω 148
 μάγος 47–48
 μετανοέω 141
 μετάνοια 182
 μίμησις, *see* imitatio
 παραγγέλλω 141
 παρακαλέω 75–76, 83
 παρρησία 88–90, 160, 197
 προσωποποιεῖα 10, 22, 23, 82–83

σπερμολόγος 138
φαντασία 175

ψευδοπροφήτης 47