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Clare K. Rothschild

Paul in Athens

The Popular Religious Context of Acts 17

Mohr Siebeck

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*For my parents,
Alexander B. Komoroske Jr. &
Judith Roach Komoroske*

ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν.

Acts 17:28a

Acknowledgments

As so many ideas of NT scholarship over the past fifty years, the foundational idea for this book is traced to Hans Dieter Betz. To this day, Betz repeatedly states the need for a careful updating of interpretations of Acts 17. This monograph is based on his essay, “Transferring a Ritual: Paul’s Interpretation of Baptism in Romans 6” (see *Paulinische Studien: Gesammelte Aufsätze III* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994], 240 – 71) as well as the work of one of his distinguished graduate students, James Constantine Hanges: *Paul, Founder of Churches* (WUNT 1/292; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012). Betz and Hanges argue that Paul viewed himself as, in part, a cult transfer figure – this position coming across in his letters. I argue that Luke knew this viewpoint and conveyed it in Acts. The precise thesis about Epimenides derives from a close examination of the short philosophical citation in 17:28a: ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμὲν in view of related Stoic ideals. I wondered whether there was more to the association of this saying with the Cretan seer, sage, and cult transfer figure. Long-held objections to this line of investigation – based partly on Max Pohlenz’s persuasive Stoic reading of Acts 17 and partly on justified skepticism concerning the reliability of so-called *Epimenidea* – struck me as entirely surmountable in light of new research methods. Thus, Kirsopp Lake’s conclusion that it could be no coincidence that the saying in v. 28a, the Areopagus itself, and the altar to an unknown god all pointed to Epimenides seemed worth pursuing. The reader will judge for her/himself the value of the results of my investigation.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

[Crito] “But how shall we bury you?”
“However you please,” he [Socrates] replied,
“If you can catch me and I don’t get away from you.”¹

Paul’s visit to Athens and, in particular, his Areopagitica in Acts 17:22–31 is one of the most well known excerpts of early Christian literature. It is the only significant speech by Paul to a Gentile audience in Acts (cf. Acts 14:15–17) and functions as a literary crest of the overall narrative.² Martin Dibelius refers to the scene as a narrative climax:

The scene in the book of Acts in which Paul preaches to the people of Athens (17.19–34) *denotes, and is intended to denote, a climax of the book*. The whole account of the scene testifies to that: the speech on the Areopagus is the only sermon reported by the author which is preached to the Gentiles by the apostle to the Gentiles. Moreover, peculiarities of style, and an abundance of motifs which here appear compressed into a few verses, give the account a particular importance.³

Paul Schubert likewise hails Acts 17 as the narrative’s “final climactic part”:

The Areopagus speech is not only a hellenized but also a universalized version of Luke’s βουλή-theology ... *Luke regarded the Areopagus speech as the final climactic part of his exposition of the whole plan of God*.⁴

Phillip Vielhauer calls Paul’s speech in Acts 17 the “high point” of the book.⁵ Joseph A. Fitzmyer refers to the passage as the “major speech” of Luke’s “hero”

¹ *Phaedo* 115C (ET Harold North Fowler, LCL). Except where indicated, biblical texts are cited from the New Revised Standard Version. Translations of Acts 17 are my own.

² The Lukan Paul makes shorter speeches to Gentiles in the following passages: Acts 20:18b–35 (Ephesian elders); 21:13b–c (Caesarea); 24:10b (Felix); 25:8b, 10b–11 (Festus); 26:2–23, 25–27, 29 (Agrippa); 27:10b, 21b–26, 31b, 33b–34 (sea voyage).

³ *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Heinrich Greeven; New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1956), 26, emphasis added.

⁴ “The Place of the Areopagus Speech in the Composition of Acts,” in *Transitions in Biblical Scholarship* (Essays in Divinity 6; ed. J. C. Rylaarsdam; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 235–61, here: 260–61, emphasis added.

⁵ “On the ‘Paulinism’ of Acts,” in *Studies in Luke-Acts* (eds. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn; Mifflintown, Pa.: Sigler, repr. 1999), 33–50, here: 34.

Paul.⁶ Richard I. Pervo touts the speech's importance despite the fact that its chief elements arise earlier in the book:

Although the essential elements of this speech were set out in 14:15–17 and Gentiles have been among the converts since chap. 13, Luke has reserved his detailed justification/description of the theological means of this mission for the symbolic environs of Athens.⁷

Implying its high status, Eduard Norden begins his important book on the speech by citing Adolf von Harnack:

Wie immer die Predigt Act. 17,22–31 und der ganze Bericht über die Predigt des Paulus in Athen entstanden sein mag – er ist das wundervollste Stück der Apostelgeschichte und ist in höherem Sinn ... voll Wahrheit.⁸

Likewise, Gottfried Schille comments: "Athen wird durch die Szene (ähnlich wie Jerusalem in Kap. 15 zum ekklesiologischen) zum geistig-kulturellen Mittelpunkt der Gesamtdarstellung."⁹

Yet at the same time scholars concur that the speech is too brief and hardly 'Christian.'¹⁰ It possesses few specifically 'Christian' terms. Although Jesus' name plays an important role in Acts, Jesus is not mentioned in Paul's Areopagus speech apart from a single parenthetical reference. Some interpreters are even convinced that the speech extols the pagan god, Zeus.¹¹

Related to the speech's pagan effect, much scholarship on Acts 17 focuses on whether it is rightly attributed to the historical Paul.¹² Eduard Norden argues that it is out of the question that Paul delivered the speech.¹³ Similarly, Luke

⁶ *The Acts of the Apostles* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 601. Fitzmyer also refers to the speech as "an essential element of the narrative." Throughout this monograph, the name 'Luke' is used to refer to the author of Luke-Acts for the sake of convenience, irrespective of the author's actual name, which is taken to be unknown.

⁷ *Acts: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 430, cf. 433.

⁸ *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchungen zur Formgeschichte Religiöser Rede* (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1913; repr. 1956), 1; citing: Adolf von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1924), 321.

⁹ *Die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas* (THKNT 5; Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1939), 354.

¹⁰ Still, Haenchen, following Dibelius, argues that it is not to be viewed as fragmentary (*The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* [trans. Bernard Noble, et al.; rev. R. McL. Wilson; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971], 528–29). German: *Die Apostelgeschichte* (16th ed.; KEK 3; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977) (ET of 14th ed.).

¹¹ E. Norden et al. Cf. recently Pervo: "Paul will not speak of a 'new god' to adorn the already crowded polytheist pantheon, and he will come no closer to novel teaching than the judgment announced in v. 31" (*Acts*, 433).

¹² On one hand, Ernst Curtius, Adolf von Harnack, Alfred Wikenhauser, and Eduard Meyer seek to explain the speech using Paul's letters. On the other hand, Eduard Norden and Alfred Loisy view the passage as an insertion by an editor of Acts, containing contradictions with other parts of the book.

¹³ *Agnostos Theos*, 3–83. Eduard Meyer, however, reports that Norden later admitted the possibility that the author accurately reproduced the contents of a genuine speech of Paul (*Ursprung*

Timothy Johnson refers to the address as “not what happened but Luke’s idealized version of what ought to have happened.”¹⁴ Martin Dibelius established what remains the consensus today on all of the speeches in Acts:

These speeches, without doubt, are as they stand inventions of the author. For they are too short to have been actually given in this form; they are too similar to one another to have come from different persons; and in their content they occasionally reproduce a later standpoint (e.g. what Peter and James say about the Law in chap. xv).¹⁵

It seems, thus, that the highpoint of the first early Christian history is a speech that is not about Jesus and was not delivered by Paul.

Furthermore, most critical analyses of the speech describe it as eclectic. Nearly all commentators characterize it as an *ad hoc* blend of Greek and Jewish elements. Joseph Fitzmyer, for example, comments: “One has to reckon with the mixed character of the speech.”¹⁶ Hans Conzelmann summarized the scholarly consensus in the 1960s similarly:

The most recent investigations have confirmed the essentials of Norden’s analysis: the speech includes an underlying Jewish-Christian motif as well as an accompanying Stoic motif. The piece that forms the heart of the speech is indeed Stoic (with Platonic components; Poseidonius!). But the material has obviously come to Luke through the mediation of Hellenized Judaism.¹⁷

und Anfänge des Christentums. Vol. 3, *Die Apostelgeschichte und die Anfänge des Christentums* [Stuttgart and Berlin, Cotta, 1921; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962], 92 n. 4). Referring to Curtius, Blass, and E. Meyer, Henry Joel Cadbury states: “The classicists are among the most inclined to plead for the historicity of the scene of Paul at Athens” (*The Beginnings of Christianity*, 5 vols. [eds. F.J. Foakes-Jackson and K. Lake; London: Macmillan, 1920–33; repr. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979], 5:406 n. 1).

¹⁴ *The Acts of the Apostles* (SP 5; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 318. Cf. the opinion of Hans Conzelmann: “This is not the abbreviated version of an actual speech given by Paul so that the original form could be recovered by a hypothetical filling out of hints given in the text. It is not a resume but a specifically literary creation” (*Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* [Hermeneia; trans. J. Limburg, A. T. Kraabel, and D.H. Juel; ed. E.J. Epp with C. A. Matthews; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987], “Excursus,” 146; from the German: *Die Apostelgeschichte* [2d ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1972]).

¹⁵ *A Fresh Approach to the New Testament and Early Christian Literature* (New York: Scribner; London: Ivor Nicholson, and Watson, 1936), 262. Cf. Conzelmann, “not a real sermon by Paul” (“Address of Paul on the Areopagus,” in Keck and Martyn, *Studies in Luke-Acts*, 218).

¹⁶ Bertil E. Gärtner emphasizes Jewish elements in the speech: *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation* (ASNU 21; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell; Lund: Gleerup, 1955). Like Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff who thought the speech could not represent Paul of Tarsus, Dibelius argues that the speech was “foreign to the entire NT” and even separate from the overall thrust of Acts (“Paul on the Areopagus,” in idem, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Heinrich Greeven; New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1956), 26–77, here: 71). Fitzmyer concludes: “If Paul himself could write to the Thessalonians, ‘You turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God’ (1 Thess 1:9), he could well have preached as Luke depicts him here in Acts. So the real Paul might well have tried to meet pagans halfway” (*Acts of the Apostles*, 602).

¹⁷ *Acts of the Apostles*, 147.

Most recently Richard Pervo refers to the speech as “muddled” yet powerful:

Paul’s Athenian speech has not eluded scholarly attention. A cultured Greek would dismiss these brief words as a stylistically inadequate and muddled collection of clichés with an unexpected and improbable conclusion, but it has power and vigor that would have eluded such critics, and, as an experiment in missionary theology, it continues to challenge Christian thinkers.¹⁸

These commentators fail to acknowledge, however, that characterizations of the mixed, even “muddled,” yet significant and powerful nature of the speech belie a contradiction. The author’s most calculated speech is at once miscellaneous and impromptu.¹⁹ Arguably the most erudite of the four evangelists, Luke writes in an uncharacteristic way at the high point of his *opus magnum*.

This project proposes that 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 crystallized around the figure of Epimenides in the second century C.E. It seeks to dismiss the apparent contradiction that Paul’s Areopagitica is both intentional *and* inadvertent by demonstrating how its jumbled collection of elements fit within a single, popular, ancient literary paradigm. Beginning with the traditional attribution of Acts 17:28a to Epimenides, the study hypothesizes that Luke makes Paul speak in character (i. e., *προσωποποιῶ*) in order that he might “appear” at the highpoint of the narrative as this ancient Cretan seer, the individual accredited with transferring Cretan Zeus worship to Athens.²⁰ Such a portrayal of Paul as Epimenides, one of the seven sages and the philosopher’s hero, met one of the author’s most important literary goals, namely to present Paul as the early Christian cult transfer facilitator *par excellence* (*κρίστης, οἰκιστής*), a representation Luke knew, at least in part, from Paul’s self-descriptions in his letters.²¹ Scholars have overlooked this intention by clinging

¹⁸ Acts, 429–30. Also: “Early readers would not have doubted that the speech was a tour de force” (441).

¹⁹ Pervo finds Paul’s Areopagitica “ideal,” that is, “fictional” (*Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987], 45). He cites Haenchen, “What we see here is an ‘ideal scene’ which baffles every attempt to translate it into reality” (*Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*, 528). Pervo does not think the author used sources for Paul’s speech: “It is impressive testimony to what Luke could accomplish without the assistance of evident sources” (*Profit with Delight*, 45).

²⁰ Don Richardson imaginatively argues that certain ancient pagans, including Epimenides, demonstrate knowledge of Christianity prior to the coming of Jesus (*Eternity in Their Hearts* [Ventura, Calif.: Regal Books, 1981]).

²¹ See James C. Hanges, *Paul, Founder of Churches: A Study in Light of the Evidence for the Role of “Founder-Figures” in the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (WUNT 1/292; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012). The book is a revised version of Hanges’ Chicago dissertation under Hans Dieter Betz entitled: “Paul, Founder of Churches: A Study of Evidence for the Role of ‘Founder-Figures’ in the Hellenistic-Roman Period” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1998). See also: Hanges, “The Greek Foundation-Legend: Its Form and Relation to History,” in *SBLSP* 34 (ed. E. H. Lovering Jr.; Atlanta: Scholars, 1995), 494–520. Hanges’ work and correlative studies are discussed in Chapter 8 of the present monograph.

too fervently to an association between Athens and the presence of the philosophers in the narrative segment (Acts 17:16–21) preceding Paul’s famous speech. The tradition of Stoics teaching at the Painted Stoa, a covered colonnade on the northern edge of the Agora in Athens, beginning in the Hellenistic Period, most likely came to an end during the first century B.C.E.²² Epicureans met outside of the city walls. Neither group congregated in the Agora in the middle of the first century when Paul visited. The reference to their presence in the Agora in Acts 17 is an inaccurate stereotype that decreases the likelihood Luke intended any meaningful engagement with them in Paul’s speech.

With regard to Acts 17:22–31, Richard Pervo comments: “No passage in Acts has elicited so many references to Greco-Roman philosophical writings.”²³ Yet those arguing for such connections mostly ignore that the speech possesses few of Hellenistic philosophy’s requisite technical terms. Major Stoic themes, such as determinism, are absent.²⁴ At times the author even seems to take measures to *avoid* the technical terms of philosophy.²⁵ As noted already, the philosophical ideals clearly represented in the speech are clichés. Pervo makes this point, referring to claims such as ‘the gods need nothing’ as “fixed points of the Greco-Roman philosophical tradition ... *from the pre-Socratics to the Neo-Platonists.*”²⁶ Likewise, Pervo regards theological notions that a sovereign god “does not inhabit products of human manufacture” and “requires no human ministrations”

²² John Sellars, *Stoicism* (Ancient Philosophies 1; Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 2.

²³ Acts, 430. Fitzmyer points to the allusive quality of the speech with regard to Jewish texts and Paul’s letters: “There is no explicit quotation of the OT in this speech ... Nevertheless, there are in it some echoes of Pauline teaching, even if allusions to phrases found in the LXX (especially Isa 45:18–25) ... other elements of the speech echo not only Jewish belief, but OT phraseology” (*Acts of the Apostles*, 602).

²⁴ Some resonances between Paul’s speech in Acts 17 and Hellenistic Period Stoic philosophy are clear. A divine anthropogony is not an *anti*-Stoic or *anti*-philosophical construct. Such dichotomies are false. Nevertheless, technical terms from Stoicism are missing. Moreover, distinctly religious aims, such as cult foundation narrative elements, as well as Stoic precedents in for example older philosophy, are overlooked. As the monograph aims to show, Epimenides was a fourth-century Greek philosopher’s hero – a crossover figure between religion and philosophy. The etymology of Zeus’ name as “life” is characteristic of Stoic theology (Diog. Laert. 7.147). While Diogenes traces it to Zeno (333–261 B.C.E.) however, [Aristotle], *Mund.* 7.401a12–14 attests the same idea. Cf. Johan C. Thom, *Cleanthes’ Hymn to Zeus: Text, Translation, and Commentary* (STAC 33; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 47 nn. 21, 22; pp. 48–49. The present argument will be that Stoicism’s approval by Seneca or the presence of the philosophers on the Agora in Acts 17:18 should not determine how the pericope is interpreted. Pohlenz (treated at greater length in the next chapter) too hastily dismisses the Epimenides thesis, replacing it with an unnecessary dichotomy between the two (“Paulus und die Stoa,” *ZNW* 42 [1949]: 69–104).

²⁵ E. g., πνοή rather than πνεῦμα (v. 25).

²⁶ Acts, 434 and n. 93 (pp. 434–35), emphasis added.

as “intellectual commonplaces, amenable for different reasons, to a dramatic audience but subversive of civic religion.”²⁷

That said, the present treatment of Acts 17 does not deny all connections between the Areopagus speech and philosophy. Neither does it pursue the argument that parallels amount to mere philosophical commonplaces, including (where they exist) Jewish exemplars. Rather, it seeks to show that *in tandem* with certain unexceptional philosophical ideals, the episode of Paul in Athens utilizes currently overlooked, distinctly ‘religious’ *topoi* (e.g., Epimenides) to reveal its underlying aim of cult transfer²⁸ – an aim spanning the entire narrative of Luke-Acts, although focused in Luke’s portrait of Paul.

The argument defending this thesis is taken up in the monograph as follows. Chapter 2 addresses the *status quaestionis* of Acts 17:28a, “in him we live and move and have our being” – a saying with a complicated history of attribution to Epimenides. Chapter 3 offers a preliminary text and translation of Acts 17:16–34 with the priorities of the book’s thesis concerning cult transfer taken into account. Chapter 4 discusses ancient traditions about Epimenides, the so-called *Epimenidea*, highlighting their ubiquity and popularity in the second century c.e. Chapter 5 discusses correspondences between *Epimenidea* and the Lukan Paul in Acts 17:16–34, whereas chapter 6 expands the study of correspondences between *Epimenidea* and the Lukan Paul to the rest of Acts. Chapter 7 considers points of contact between the Lukan Paul and *Epimenidea* not limited to Acts 17 and chapter 8 concludes the investigation with an exploration of Acts in terms of the key elements of ancient cult transfer narratives. Chapter 9 summarizes findings and poses a few final questions concerning Crete and the authorship, purpose, and tradition history of Acts.

²⁷ Acts, 434. Pervo’s emphasis on the dramatic aspect is echoed in the discussion in chapter 5 concerning the speech’s deployment of *προσωποποιία*.

²⁸ This is not to say that the two ‘languages’ of philosophy and religion never overlap; they do. See discussion in chapters 3 and 4.

CHAPTER 2

History of Research

2.1 Introduction

As a point of entry into the discussion of the intersections of cult transfer, *Epimenidea*, and Acts, the present chapter takes up the history of interpretation of Acts 17:28a. The possible citation, ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν sometimes attributed to Epimenides may at first glance appear too brief or general for in-depth consideration. It has, nevertheless, garnered serious, scholarly interest over the centuries. While most interpreters are reasonably confident that Luke quotes Aratus, *Phaenomena* in Acts 17:28b, the same group is hesitant to attribute the citation in 17:28a to Epimenides. The present chapter argues that, with certain important qualifications, reasons for this hesitation are not sound.

2.2 *Status quaestionis*

As noted in chapter 1, although many commentators and other interpreters agree that Acts 17:16–34 represents the climax of the Acts narrative, at the same time they struggle to explain, as an essentially pagan sermon, why it would be. Most divide the Athens narrative into three parts: (1) Paul’s observations of the city leading up to his speech before the Areopagus (vv. 16–21); (2) Paul’s speech before the Areopagus (vv. 22–31); and (3) Athenian reaction to Paul’s Areopagus speech (vv. 32–34). This chapter focuses on the second section, vv. 22–31, Paul’s so-called Areopagitica, and on v. 28, in particular.

The “text” of the speech is the altar inscription ἀγνώστῳ θεῷ (“to an unknown god”) (v. 23). Tradition holds that the ancient Cretan seer, Epimenides, who flourished ca. 500 B.C.E. according to Plato’s *Laws*, but ca. 600 B.C.E. according to Aristotle’s *Constitution of the Athenians*,¹ placed similar altars on the Areopagus when he came to purify Athens of plague. Among other marvels, Epimenides was known for sleeping for many years, eventually waking up with the

¹ *Leg.* 1.642D4; *Ath. pol.* 1. Aristotle’s date is preferred. Charles W. Fornara and Loren J. Samons II point out that Epimenides’ “truly Methuselan longevity” may have its origin in attempts to place his purification of Athens under Solon rather than its more plausible occurrence in the direct aftermath of the Cylonian affair (*Athens from Cleisthenes to Pericles* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991], 3–7).

gift of prophecy, a precursor to the Rip Van Winkle legend.² Later in the speech, Paul offers a plural citation formula, *ὡς καὶ τινες τῶν καθ' ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασιν* (“as even some of your own *poets* have said”), followed by a quotation of Aratus: “For we too are his offspring (τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμὲν)” (17:28b). Technically speaking, the citation formula may refer backward *or* forward. Because, however, some patristic evidence views the prior line, Acts 17:28a: *ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμὲν* (“For ‘in him we live and move and have our being’”) as a citation of Epimenides, various scholars have concluded that the *plural* citation formula refers both backward *and* forward, that is, to both 28a and 28b.³ The question of this brief chapter is a methodological one: namely, *how* we should think about v. 28 – both the two citations and the citation formula. The chapter has three parts: (1) history of interpretation; (2) possible weaknesses in the *status quaestionis*; and (3) concluding remarks.

2.3 History of Interpretation, Acts 17:28a

To begin the investigation, we turn to Acts 17:28 and Tit 1:12 (Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύσται, “Cretans are always liars!”). Both are NT passages that, at various times and by various commentators, have been attributed to Epimenides. Their attribution histories are, thus, sometimes mixed and may, therefore, be treated together.

2.3.1 Clement of Alexandria (150±215 C.E.)

In *Stromata* 1.14, Clement of Alexandria endorses Epimenidean authorship of Tit 1:12.⁴ He likens it to Paul’s citation of Menander in 1 Cor 15:33 (φθειρουσιν ἦθη χρηστὰ ὁμιλίας κακαί, ET: “Bad company ruins good morals”).⁵ With regard

² E. g., Diog. Laert. 1.111. Length of Epimenides’ long sleep varies in the sources. He is reputed to have lived for 299, 157, and 154 years.

³ Of those attributing v. 28a to Epimenides, some argue that “some of your own poets” (plural) in 28b refers both to the citation before it and to the citation after it. However, it was common in antiquity to use the plural to refer to only a single writer. See Kirsopp Lake, “Note XX: ‘Your Own Poets,’” in idem and Foakes-Jackson, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 5:246–51; Henry Joel Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999 (1927)], 155–68, esp. 159 n. 3). What is more, late antique Christian commentators demonstrate resistance to pagan citations, suggesting they might overlook one if they could – especially in a case like Acts 17:28a where attribution is omitted. See the defensive protestations of, e. g., Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, esp. 1.1. The historical Paul, however, does not indicate that 1 Cor 15:33 is a citation, although as commentators note it cites a lost play of Menander.

⁴ Jerome also accepts that Paul cites Epimenides in Titus: *dicitur autem ista versivulus in Epimenidis Cretensis poetae oraculis reperiri* (“This verse is said to be found in the Oracles of Epimenides, a Cretan poet”) (*Comm. Tit.* 7, p. 707; Vallarsi). ET George G. Findlay, “The Reproach of the Cretans,” *Expositor* (1882): 401–10, here: 406.

⁵ Entire citation: “The Greeks say, that after Orpheus and Linus, and the most ancient of the poets that appeared among them, the seven, called wise, were the first that were admired for

to Acts 17:28a, however, Clement is silent,⁶ noting only that Paul cites Aratus in v. 28b.⁷ Clement must not have recognized v. 28a as a citation, reading the plural citation formula in 28b, “as even some of your own *poets* have said,”⁸ with Henry Joel Cadbury and others,⁹ as referring *only* to the quotation following it.¹⁰

their wisdom. Of whom four were of Asia – Thales of Miletus, and Bias of Priene, Pittacus of Mitylene, and Cleobulus of Lindos; and two of Europe, Solon the Athenian, and Chilon the Lacedæmonian; and the seventh, some say, was Periander of Corinth; others, Anacharsis the Scythian; others, Epimenides the Cretan, whom Paul knew as a Greek prophet, whom he mentions in the Epistle to Titus, where he says: ‘One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. And this witness is true.’ You see how even to the prophets of the Greeks he attributes something of the truth, and is not ashamed, when discoursing for the edification of some and the shaming of others, to make use of Greek poems. Accordingly to the Corinthians (*for this is not the only instance*), while discoursing on the resurrection of the dead, he makes use of a tragic Iambic line, when he said, ‘What advantage is it to me if the dead are not raised? Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die. Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners.’ Others have enumerated Acusilaus the Argive among the seven wise men; and others, Pherecydes of Syros. And Plato substitutes Myso the Chenian for Periander, whom he deemed unworthy of wisdom, on account of his having reigned as a tyrant. That the wise men among the Greeks flourished after the age of Moses, will, a little after, be shown. But the style of philosophy among them, as Hebraic and enigmatical, is now to be considered. They adopted brevity, as suited for exhortation, and most useful. Even Plato says, that of old this mode was purposely in vogue among all the Greeks, especially the Lacedæmonians and Cretans, who enjoyed the best laws” (*Strom.* 1.14, *ANF*¹ 2:313–14).

⁶ John Chrysostom understands 1 Cor 15:33 as Paul’s own words: “And this he said, both to rebuke them as without understanding, (for here he by a charitable expression, calls good that which is easily deceived), and also, as far as he could, to make some allowance to them for the past with a view to their return, and to remove from them and transfer to others the greater part of his charges, and so by this way also to allure them to repentance. Which he does likewise in the Epistle to the Galatians, saying, But he that troubles you, shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be” (Gal 5:10) (*Hom. 1 Cor.* 40, *NPNF*¹ 12:247).

⁷ “Whence it is evident that the apostle, by availing himself of poetical examples from the *Phenomena* of Aratus, approves of what had been well spoken by the Greeks; and intimates that, by the unknown God, God the Creator was in a roundabout way worshipped by the Greeks; but that it was necessary by positive knowledge to apprehend and learn Him by the Son” (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 1.19, *ANF*¹ 2:321). As Lake observes, a strong similarity also exists between the second half of the opening passage of Aratus, *Phaenomena*, from which the citation in Acts 17:28a arises, and Acts 17:26. Lake writes: “A note to xvii.28 in Codex 1729 which usually gives the comments of Origen is Ἀράτου καὶ Ὁμήρου ποιήτου. Von der Goltz, who first published this MS., read only Ἀράτ[ου] (*TU. neue Folge*, ii. 4, p. 44), but though the note is erased and faint the other words can be read in a bright light. The same or a similar note is found in Cod. H, Syr hl and Euthalius. It is possible that Aratus was using the earlier poem of Cleanthes to Zeus, which contains the line ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ γένος ἔσμεν. No particular reference to Homer can be suggested except the familiar description of Zeus as ‘father of gods and men’” (“Note XX: ‘Your Own Poets,’” in idem and Foakes-Jackson, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 5:247).

⁸ Clement may not know the traditions recorded by Diogenes Laertius. The tradition Clement knows about Epimenides is that the Cretan seer erected altars in Athens to Insolence and Shamelessness (i. e., gods who represent types of human emotions): “And some even of the philosophers, after the poets, make idols of forms of the affections in your breasts, such as fear, and love, and joy, and hope; as, to be sure, Epimenides of old, who raised at Athens the altars of Insult and Impudence. Other objects deified by men take their rise from events, and are fashioned in bodily shape, such as a Dike, a Clotho, and Lachesis, and Atropos, and Heimarmene, and

2.3.2 Theodore of Mopsuestia (350±428 C.E.)

Clement's silence on Acts 17:28a seemed significant to interpreters (discouraging *any* attribution of v. 28a) until, early in the twentieth century (1906), J. Rendel Harris discovered a fragment of Theodore of Mopsuestia in a rare Nestorian commentary on the scriptures known as the *Gannat Busame* or the "Garden of Delights."¹¹ This commentary, full of valuable extracts from the Syrian fathers, contains numerous fragments from Theodore's writings. One unattributed fragment, which Harris understood to be Theodore's, cites an encomium to Zeus by his son Minos, the legendary first king of Crete. The encomium includes the well-known Cretan story about the death of Zeus.¹² The gist of this tale is that Cretans were considered liars on the basis of one important lie: their claim that Zeus was killed by a wild boar, buried on Crete, and, therefore, *not* immortal.¹³

Auxo, and Thallo, which are Attic goddesses. There is a sixth mode of introducing error and of manufacturing gods, according to which they number the twelve gods, whose birth is the theme of which Hesiod sings in his Theogony, and of whom Homer speaks in all that he says of the gods. The last mode remains (for there are seven in all) that which takes its rise from the divine beneficence towards men. For, not understanding that it is God that does us good, they have invented saviors in the persons of the Dioscuri, and Hercules the averter of evil, and Asclepius the healer" (*Protr.* 2.22, ET Roberts-Donaldson, modified).

⁹ E. g., Pervo agrees noting that Cicero (*Nat. d.* 2.159) prefaces his version of Aratus, *Phaen.* 129–32 with: *ut poetae loquuntur* ("as the poets say") (*Acts*, 439 n. 126). Pervo also observes that the D-Text: "excises 'poets,' probably reflecting the anti-intellectual disdain for 'heathen poets,' such as Homer, that was characteristic of puritanical Christians."

¹⁰ However, Athanasius read ἐν αὐτῷ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν not from Paul but from Greek writers: καθὼς καὶ οἱ παρ' αὐτοῖς συγγραφεῖς φασίν ("All things derive from the Word their light and movement and life, as the Gentile authors themselves say, 'In Him we live and move and have our being'") (*Inc.* 7.42, p. 34, ET Penelope Lawson <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/athanasius/incarnation.viii.html>, 13 July 2012).

¹¹ "If the blessed Paul did not hesitate to quote in his teaching, sentences that were used by Greek philosophers, such as: 'we are of the offspring of gods,' and: 'The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies,' and if he did not shrink from writing them for the reproval of his adversaries, it was all the more right for our blessed Fathers to make use in the profession of faith of the expression that the Son was *Consubstantial* with the Father, and although this word is not explicitly written in the Sacred Books, its meaning was implicitly found in many passages" (*Comm. on the Nicene Creed*, 4.49, ET A. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Nicene Creed* [Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons Limited, 1932], 49). See J. Rendell Harris, "The Cretans Always Liars," *Expositor* 7/2 (1906): 305–17, here 309–10.

¹² Cf. Cicero, *Nat. d.* 3.21, 53; Lucian, *Sacr.* 10. The apologists frequently attacked this idea, see Origen, *Cels.* 3.43; Tatian, 27; Athenagoras, *Leg.* 30; Theophilus, 1.10; Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 37.4; Tertullian, *Apol.* 25.7; Minucius, 21.8; *Ps.-Clem.*, 10.23; Arnobius, 4.14; and Athanasius, *C. Gent.* 10. An exhaustive collection of references is found in Arthur Bernard Cook, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion* (3 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914, repr. 2010), 2:940–3, 3:1173, 1:157–63.

¹³ Harris, "Cretans Always Liars," 305–17; idem, "A Further Note on the Cretans," *Expositor* 3 (1907): 332–37; and, idem, "Notes of Recent Exposition," *ExpTim* 18/3 (1906): 98. This issue was part of a larger debate, reflected by Diodorus Siculus (6.2), about whether gods were eternal or "earthly" (ἐπιγειαί). Photius offers the following account, "He [Ptolemy Chennus] reports that Athenodorus of Eretria, in the eighth book of his commentaries, says that Thetis and

The tale incorporates both Tit 1:12 *and* Acts 17:28a.¹⁴ Because Clement of Alexandria attributes Tit 1:12 to Epimenides and because Diogenes Laertius (1.112) records that Epimenides wrote a thousand-verse poem in which Minos is the primary subject, Harris inferred that Theodore traced v. 28a to Epimenides. The attribution to Minos, he argued, simply mistakes speaker for author.¹⁵ Harris concluded that Paul cited the poem because he knew of Epimenides' connection to the city of Athens and to the altar of the "unknown god."

2.3.3 John Chrysostom (347±407 C.E.)

In his commentary on Acts, John Chrysostom who not only had a distinguished education but urged his students to learn classical literature¹⁶ is, like (and perhaps thanks to) Clement of Alexandria, silent on the attribution of Acts 17:28a. In his *Commentary on Titus*, however, Chrysostom repeats Clement's association of Tit 1:12 with Epimenides.¹⁷ In this section of his work, Chrysostom also as-

Medea had a dispute in Thessaly as to which was the most beautiful; their judge was Idomeneus, who gave the victory to Thetis; Medea in anger said that the Cretans were always liars and in revenge she made the curse that he would never speak the truth, just as he had lied in his judgment; it is from that, he says, that Cretans pass as liars. Athenodorus cites as author of this story Antiochus in his second book of *Legends of the Town* ("New History," in Photius, *Bib.* 186–222 [#190]; ET J. H. Freese from French translation of René Henry). The editor writes: "Many of the people and details given may be the invention of Ptolemy Hephaestion (also known as Ptolemy Chennos or Chennus) himself, rather than the product of his research. According to the Suda, this fantasist lived in the times of Trajan and Hadrian. For more detail, R. Hercher, "Über die Glaubwürdigkeit der neuen Geschichte des Ptolemaeus Chennus," *Jahrbücher für classische Philologie*, Suppl. I (1855–56): 269–293, cited from http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/photius_copyright/photius_05_bibliotheca.htm (10 July 2012). See editions of Photius' abridgment by Joseph Immanuel Gislain Roulez, *Ptolemaei Hephaestionis Novarum historiarum ad variam eruditionem pertinentium excerpta e Photio* (Leipzig: Mayer et Somehuasen, 1834); A. Westermann, *Mythographi graeci* (Brunsviga: G. Westermann, 1843); R. Hercher, *Über die Glaubwürdigkeit der neuen Geschichte des Ptolemaeus Chennus* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1856); J. E. Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship* (3 vols.; 3rd ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1921 [2nd 1906]). Cf. also story in the Chronicle of John Malalas (491–578 C.E.) 1.13.17 in Elizabeth Jeffreys, Michael Jeffreys, Roger Scott et al., *The Chronicle of John Malalas: A Translation* (Byzantina Australiensia 4; Melbourne: Australian Association for Studies, 1986).

¹⁴ Harris conjectures that Theodore's source for the poem is most likely Callimachus' source given that the line cited in Tit 1:12 is verifiably cited by Callimachus, but Theodore offers additional information not in Callimachus.

¹⁵ Lake speculates that Minos was introduced as a speaker in the *Κρήτικα* ("Note XX: 'Your Own Poets,'" in idem and Foakes-Jackson, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 5.250). It was largely on the basis of Isho'dad that scholars such as Norden viewed the citation as that of Epimenides (*Agnostos Theos*, 277 n. 1).

¹⁶ On Chrysostom's view of classical literature, Thomas Edward writes: "A deeper and more sympathetic study of his sermons would have revealed the fact that, though he is unsparing in his condemnation of pagan error and immorality, he is at heart not hostile to the refining and cultural influences of antiquity" (*The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Panegyric Sermons* [Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1921], 21). E. g., *Oppung.* 21.2 on Ephesians; *Vid.* 6.48, 607; *Hom. I Thess.* 62, 472.

¹⁷ Later, as background to the saying of Epimenides in Tit 1:12, Chrysostom takes up the basis

sociates the inscription in Acts 17:23, ἀγνώστῳ θεῷ (“to an unknown god”) with Epimenides *as well as* the saying typically attributed to Aratus in Acts 17:28b. Later in the commentary, however, he reverses this position, attributing Acts 17:28b to Aratus.¹⁸

Creating even greater confusion, the verses Chrysostom cites as the original context of Tit 1:12 (by Epimenides) are the *ipsissima verba* of Callimachus.¹⁹ This observation suggests either that Callimachus borrowed from Epimenides or that Chrysostom was incorrect in his attribution of Tit 1:12, posing problems for Clement’s similar claim.²⁰ Kirsopp Lake once summed up this dilemma as follows:

It is conceivable that the Epistle to Titus is quoting Callimachus, as Chrysostom says, not Epimenides, as Clement says, but [it is] *scarcely possible that Clement did not know that Epimenides wrote thus.*²¹

for the slur against Cretans. Zeus, he says, had a tomb on Crete with the inscription: “Here lies Zeus whom they call Jove.” On account of this inscription denying Zeus’ immortality, Epimenides, “the poet” composed a verse “ridiculing the Cretans as liars.” Increasing the ridicule [Epimenides] wrote: “For even a tomb, O King, of you/They made, who never died, but aye shall be” (*Hom. Tit. 3 [NPNF¹ 13:528]*). Jerome also attributes Tit 1:12 to Epimenides (see above, n. 4).

¹⁸ Chrysostom acknowledges problems of attribution. Commenting on Tit 1:12–14, he writes: “There are several questions here. First, who said this. Second, why Paul quoted it. Third, why he brings forward a testimony that is not correct. Let us then offer a reasonable solution to these, having premised some other things. For when Paul was discoursing to the Athenians, in the course of his harangue he *quoted* these words, “to the Unknown God”: and again, “For we also are His offspring, as certain of your own poets have said [Acts 17:23, 28]. It was Epimenides who said this, himself a Cretan, and whence he was moved to say it is necessary to mention” (*Hom. Tit. 3 [NPNF¹ 13:528, emphasis added]*).

¹⁹ In *Hymn to Zeus 1*, Callimachus writes:

Ζεῦ, σὲ μὲν Ἰδαίοισιν ἐν οὐρεσὶ φασὶ γενέσθαι,
Ζεῦ, σὲ δ’ ἐν Ἀρκαδίῃ. πότεροι, πάτερ, ἐψεύσαντο;
Κρήτες αἰεὶ ψεύσται. καὶ γὰρ τάφον, ὃ ἄνα, σείο
Κρήτες ἐτεκτῆναντο. σὺ δ’ οὐ θάνες, ἐσσι γὰρ αἰεὶ.

Citations often come from the beginnings of cited works. As Cadbury writes: “By an intelligible if not especially creditable trait of human nature, familiar quotations tend to come from near the beginning of works of literature. ‘We also are his offspring’ would be no exception if the phrases it echoes were those which occur in line 5 of the *Phaenomena* of Aratus and in line 4 of Cleanthes’ *Hymn to Zeus*” (*Making of Luke-Acts*, 122 n. 10). Cf. also Orphic Fragment 164 about which Barrett comments: “Not only Stoic but pre-Stoic [!]” (*Acts XV±XXVIII*, 849):

ἔστιν δὴ πάντων ἀρχὴ Ζεὺς· ζῆν γὰρ ἔδωκεν
ζῳά τ’ ἐγέννησεν, καὶ Ζῆν’ αὐτὸν καλέουσιν
καὶ Δία τῆδ’, ὅτι δὴ διὰ τοῦτον ἅπαντα τέτυκται.
εἰς δὲ πατὴρ οὗτος πάντων, θηρῶν τε βροτῶν τε.

²⁰ Peter Bing, *The Well-Read Muse: Present and Past in Callimachus and the Hellenistic Poets* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988); Alan Cameron, *Callimachus and His Critics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), esp. ch. 11: “The Critic as Poet: Callimachus, Aratus of Soli, Lycophron”; Daniel Seldon, “Alibis,” *Classical Antiquity* 17 (1998): 289–411.

²¹ Lake writes: “as Chrysostom says,” but he may have meant: “as Chrysostom suggests” (“Note XX: ‘Your Own Poets,’” in idem and Foakes-Jackson, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 5:250).

In other words, it is more likely that Chrysostom did not realize or state explicitly that Callimachus cited Epimenides than that Clement would have attributed Tit 1:12 to Epimenides without clear evidence.

2.3.4 *Isho'dad* (c. 850 C.E.)

In 1913, the twins Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson, known as “the Westminster sisters,” published the ninth century commentary on Acts by Isho'dad. Isho'dad was a Nestorian whose work they discovered on a trip to the now famous Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai.²² Like Theodore (or, at least, the *Gannat Busame*), Isho'dad viewed Tit 1:12 as part of the same poem in which Acts 17:28a originated, attributing it to Minos.²³ Isho'dad probably *took* this information from Theodore whom he refers to as “the Interpreter,” chief among his sources.²⁴ At the time of the discovery, some scholars lamented that Isho'dad, as a Syriac witness to the Minoan attribution of Acts 17:28a, did not (as Tit 1:12 does) retain the original hexameter of Epimenides' poem.²⁵ Assuming it was lost in transmission (as is often the case), J. Rendel Harris, along with Arthur B. Cook²⁶ and John U. Powell,²⁷ undertook reconstructions. Harris' reconstruction closely resembles Acts 17:28a:

²² See Agnes Smith Lewis, *In the Shadow of Sinai: A Story of Travel and Research from 1895 to 1897* (Cambridge: Macmillan and Bowes, 1898); D. Cornick and C. Binfield, eds., *From Cambridge to Sinai* (United Reformed Church, 2006). The monastery is most well known for Constantin von Tischendorf's roughly contemporaneous manuscript discoveries there.

²³ “This, ‘in him we live and move and have our being’; and this, ‘As certain of your own sages have said, We are his offspring.’ Paul takes both of these from certain heathen poets. Now about this, ‘In him we live,’ etc.; because the Cretans said as truth about Zeus, that he was a Lord; he was lacerated by a wild boar and buried; and behold! His grave is known amongst us; so therefore Minos, son of Zeus, made a laudatory speech on behalf of his father; and he said in it, ‘*The Cretans carve a tomb for thee, O holy and high! Liars, evil beasts, and slow bellies! For thou art not dead for ever; thou art alive and risen; for in thee we live and are moved, and have our being,*’ so therefore the blessed Paul took this sentence from Minos; for he took again ‘We are the offspring of God’ from Aratus a poet, who wrote about God, and about the seven [planets] and the twelve [signs]; saying, ‘From God we begin, from the Lord of heaven, that is, Zeus; for all markets, and seas, and havens are filled with his name; and also in every place, all we men are in want of him, because we are his offspring; and he out of his goodness giveth good signs to us and to all men. He moves us to come forward to work; and he ordains all that is visible and invisible; and because of this we all worship him and say, Hail to thee, our Father, wonderful and great!’” (ET Margaret Dunlop Gibson as cited in Foakes-Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 5:249).

²⁴ Foakes-Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 5:249.

²⁵ W.M. Ramsay sums up the primary differences between metered and un-metered versions: “The metrical character is disguised by transformation from the Ionic dialect to the Attic and from the second person to the third” (*Asiatic Elements in Greek Civilisation: The Gifford Lectures in the University of Edinburgh, 1915±16* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1928], 33).

²⁶ Rendel Harris reconstructs the entire passage as follows:

Τύμβον ἐποίησαντο σέθεν, κύδιστε, μέγιστε,
Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψευδεῖς, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί.
ἀλλὰ σύ γ' οὐ θνήσκεις, ἔστηκας γὰρ ζῶος αἰεὶ,
ἐν σοὶ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθ' ἡδὲ καὶ ἐσμέν.

Acts 17:28a: ἐν αὐτῷ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθα καὶ ἐσμέν.
 Harris: ἐν σοὶ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινούμεθ' ἡδὲ καὶ ἐσμέν.

With the discovery of Isho'dad, the pendulum swung decisively in the direction of attributing Acts 17:28a to Epimenides. Much like 1 Cor 15:33 and Tit 1:12, in Acts 17:28, it was concluded, Paul claimed to be citing Greek poets (plural): Epimenides, first; and Aratus, second – the citation formula pointing in two directions. In 1932, Lake summarizes this position:

Combining the testimony of Isho'dad and Clement, it seems clear that they referred the two quotations [Acts 17:28a, Titus 1:12] to a poem of Epimenides ... This evidence seems sufficient to justify the statement that “we live and move and have our being” is a reference to Epimenides. It is true that, as it stands in Acts, this passage is not an hexameter, but it is possible that the metrical form has been lost in the course of transmission, and very slight change suffices to restore it.²⁸

Thus, although Clement and Chrysostom remain silent, Lake argues that the combined evidence of the *Gannat*, Isho'dad, and Clement (on Tit 1:12) justifies the attribution of Acts 17:28a to Epimenides.

Table 1 summarizes attributions of Acts 17:28a to Epimenides.

Table 1: Ancient Attribution of Acts 17:28a to Epimenides

	Acts 17:28a	Acts 17:28b	Titus 1:12	Acts 17:23
Clement of Alexandria (150–215 C.E.)		<i>Aratus</i>	<i>Epimenides</i>	
Theodore of Mopsuestia (350–428 C.E.)	<i>Minos</i> *		<i>Minos</i> *	
John Chrysostom (347–407 C.E.)		<i>Epimenides</i> / <i>Aratus</i>	<i>Epimenides</i>	<i>Epimenides</i>
Isho'dad (ca. 850 C.E.)	<i>Minos</i> *	<i>Aratus</i>	<i>Minos</i> *	

* Speaker in Epimenides' Κρήτικα

A. B. Cook offers this reconstruction:

Σοὶ μὲν ἐτεκτῆναντο τάφον, πανυπέρτατε δαίμων,
 Κρήτες αἰεὶ ψεύσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί.
 ἀλλὰ γὰρ οὐ σὺ θάνες, ζῶεις δὲ καὶ ἴστασαι αἰεὶ,
 ἐν σοὶ γὰρ ζῶμεν καὶ κινεόμεσθα καὶ εἰμέν.

(*Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion* [Cambridge: The University Press, 1914–40], 1:664). Cook's reconstruction is preferred by J. U. Powell in “On An Alleged New Fragment of Epimenides,” *CR* 30 (1916): 139–40. Powell argues that both Harris and Cook are incorrect in their reconstructions of the first two lines, preferring John Chrysostom's version in *Comm. Tit.* 3 (see above).

²⁷ Καὶ γὰρ τάφον, ὃ ἄνα σεῖο / Κρήτες ἐτεκτῆναντο. σὺ δ' οὐ θάνες, ἐσοὶ γὰρ αἰεὶ. See P. R. Coleman-Norton, “St. Chrysostom and the Greek Philosophers,” *CP* 25 (1930): 305–17, here: 309. As noted above, John Chrysostom attributes the passage in Titus to Epimenides.

²⁸ Foakes-Jackson and Lake, *Beginnings of Christianity*, 5:250. Cf. F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts* (repr.; NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 338.

2.3.5 Max Pohlenz & Hildebrecht Hommel

The last word rested with Lake for almost twenty years until, in 1949, Max Pohlenz argued in the appendix to his article, “Paulus und die Stoa,” that the passage in Isho‘dad did not adequately support attribution of the citation in Acts 17:28a to Epimenides.²⁹ Cued by Acts 17:18 where Paul bumps into Stoics and Epicureans in the Athenian *agora* and seeing in Paul’s speech pronounced resonances with Stoicism,³⁰ Pohlenz argues against Harris that Isho‘dad, interpreting “poets” (v. 28) literally, invented the attribution to Minos based (perhaps) on an apocryphal work. He notes that fourth century exegetes were not so gullible. Writing in the middle of the first century B.C.E. even Philodemus refers to writings not *by* Epimenides, but *attributed to* him: ἐν τοῖς εἰς Ἐπιμενίδην ἀναφερομένοις.³¹ Pohlenz thus maintains that even in antiquity doubt surrounded traditions attributed to the Cretan seer,³² concluding that Isho‘dad was naive in his attribution of Acts 17:28a to Minos.

²⁹ Pohlenz, “Paulus und die Stoa,” 69–104. Marcia L. Colish puts Pohlenz’s perspective in the context of the debate about Paul and Stoicism: “The classicists of the period can be well illustrated by Max Pohlenz, its leading authority on Stoicism, whose outlook was shared by many of his colleagues who wrote on the relationship between Christianity and Stoicism. Pohlenz agrees with Bultmann that Paul was a man with a Hellenistic education, and that he was familiar with Stoic and other philosophical ideas and with the rhetorical culture of his time. Paul, Pohlenz also agrees, did not hesitate to appropriate Stoic terminology, both ethical and metaphysical, as well as specific Stoic arguments, such as the proof of God’s existence *ex consensus omnium* and the appeal to natural law as a moral guide. At the same time, Pohlenz considers the particular contexts in which Paul refers to these ideas, and the audiences before whom he preached them. The key point, and this takes us back to what Bultmann had said before his earliest disciples had exaggerated his thesis, is that Paul draws on Stoic ideas and rhetoric for missionary purposes. As Pohlenz notes, the apostle rarely calls upon them in writings with a more intramural audience. Pohlenz also capitalizes on the work done by contemporary scripture scholars in distinguishing the authentic epistles of Paul and the way he speaks in them, in contrast with the Acts of the Apostles. The Paul of Acts, Pohlenz observes, is much more likely to advert to Stoic *topoi* and ideas, a trait that reflects the perspective of Luke, the author of Acts, rather than of Paul himself. Further, as Pohlenz points out, even in those cases where Paul draws on Stoic material, he attaches his own theological meanings to the terms he uses. Concepts such as law, moral freedom, and the *logos* thus receive a thoroughly non-Stoic denotation in Paul’s hands. While Pohlenz would agree that the appeal made by Paul and other New Testament authors to Stoicism helped to preserve and transmit Stoicism, Paul’s goal, he maintains, was to find a Hellenistic language with which to draw a Hellenistic audience to a basically non-Hellenistic set of theological beliefs” (“Stoicism and the New Testament,” *ANRW* 2.26.1:373–74).

³⁰ Pohlenz, “Paulus und die Stoa,” 69–104.

³¹ Philodemus, *Piet.* 47.19; Theodor Gomperz, *Philodem: Über Frömmigkeit* (Herkulanische Studien 2; Leipzig: Teubner, 1866), 19.

³² A similar suspicion is voiced in Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 13.78, 79. In contrast to Pohlenz, Diosdorus Siculus describes traditions about Epimenides as reliable (5.80.4): “And since the greatest number of writers who have written about Crete disagree among themselves, there should be no occasion for surprise if what we report should not agree with every one of them; we have, indeed, followed as our authorities those who give the more probable account and are the most trustworthy, in some matters depending upon Epimenides who has written about the gods, in others upon Dosiades, Sosicrates, and Laosthenidas” (ET C. H. Oldfather, LCL).

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