

## ***Recent Literature on the Acts of the Apostles***

**Donald Guthrie**

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Because of its key importance for the early history of the Church, the book of Acts has always attracted attention during the period of Biblical criticism. It formed an integral part of the historical reconstructions of F. C. Baur and other nineteenth century scholars and has been a battleground ever since. Its authenticity has many times been questioned, but it has come through its period of critical attacks with considerable success, although it would be far from true to say that its stock stands equally high among scholars of all schools of thought. In surveying the most important recent literature, we must not lose sight of this background of earlier suspicions of its veracity. There are still many vestiges of that earlier criticism remaining.

The majority of the literature mentioned in this survey covers the last nine years, but some significant studies in the previous five years will also be mentioned.<sup>1</sup> An endeavour will be made to present a balanced assessment of current trends in criticism, exegesis and theology in this important field of early Christian history, for in some ways such a literary survey reflects the present climate of scholarly work on the New Testament as a whole.

### **COMMENTARIES**

The most learned and detailed of recent commentaries is undoubtedly that of E. Haenchen.<sup>2</sup> In his introduction, this writer gives a valuable and thoroughly up-to-date survey of critical studies on the Book of Acts, and supplies useful material on the text, chronology, language and sources of the book. But he approaches Luke as a historian via Luke the theologian. In other words, he conceives that the book was written with a decided theological purpose, to present the continuity of God's saving activity in Christ. Luke's main design was not, therefore, to write history, and the Acts ceases at once to be a reliable source for the events of early Christianity. The Lukan picture of the development of the Gentile Mission and his portrait of the Apostle Paul are, in fact, unhistorical. According to Haenchen, Luke has worked up a number of his narratives to serve the most effective theological purpose, and has smoothed over the conflicts which flared up in the primitive period. It is not difficult to see what far reaching effects such a critical assessment of Acts must have on other New Testament problems. Where a choice must be made between theology and history, the verdict is in favour of the former. But this does less than justice to

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<sup>1</sup> An excellent survey of literature on the Acts is to be found in an article by E. Grässer, 'Die Apostelgeschichte in der Forschung der Gegenwart', *TR NF* 26, 1960, 93-167. The present writer owes much to this survey although often differing from Grässer's assessments. For a similar review of literature for the previous ten years, reference may be made to W. G. Kümmel, 'Das Urchristentum II. Die Quellen für die Geschichte des Urchristentums', *TR NF* 22 1954.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 13 (KEK) 1961.

Luke as a historian.<sup>3</sup> In contrast to Haenchen who dates Acts definitely after the primitive period, the English commentator C. S. C. Williams<sup>4</sup> tends to prefer an early date. He is much more reserved in his critical conclusions and gives more credence to Luke's historical sense, although over some issues he is inclined to be non-committal. Two other commentators, W. L. Knox<sup>5</sup> and R. R. Williams,<sup>6</sup> have maintained Lukan authorship and have generally more highly esteemed Luke as a historian than Haenchen, although both admit difficulties. Knox, for instance, when discussing the threefold

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account of Paul's conversion considers that this shows Semitic influence and points out that Luke was writing for a largely Semitic public. On the other hand, he supposed that Luke did not know Paul's Epistle to the Galatians and therefore summarized in Acts ix what he supposed must have happened. Williams refuses to treat Acts as a two-part book featuring respectively Peter and Paul,<sup>7</sup> but maintains its unity under the caption 'Nothing can stop the Gospel'. It is a refreshing thing in an era dominated by an analytical approach to discover treatments of Biblical books which stress their essential unity.

For wealth of historical background material the commentary of the classicist E. M. Blaiklock<sup>8</sup> is valuable, but it lacks much discussion of theological content. It also tends to treat some critical problems too lightly. Nevertheless, the book of Acts in history comes vividly to the fore in this commentary. Bo Reicke<sup>9</sup> has written a useful exposition of the first seven chapters of Acts. This writer, while tracing back this early part of the book to a living Jerusalem tradition, nevertheless admits some duplicity in the narrative. The problem of the sources of Acts has engaged much critical attention as will be indicated below, but it should be noted here that Bo Reicke is in line with an increasing modern tendency to give greater weight to oral tradition behind the written documents.<sup>10</sup> In the Roman Catholic commentary on this book in the *Jerusalem Bible*, L. Cerfaux writes the introduction on generally conservative lines and J. Dupont<sup>11</sup> writes the exegetical comments. During the period under discussion there has been published the contribution by G. H. C. Macgregor and J. P. Ferris in the *Interpreter's Bible*.<sup>12</sup> Several further editions of older commentaries have also appeared, the most important of which are those of H. W. Beyer<sup>13</sup> and A. Wikenhauser.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Previous to the historical researches of Sir William Ramsay it was regarded as almost axiomatic that Luke was an unreliable historian, but Ramsay's work has done much to restore the balance, although strong suspicions remain in the minds of some.

<sup>4</sup> *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles (BC)* 1957.

<sup>5</sup> *The Acts of the Apostles* 1948.

<sup>6</sup> *The Acts of the Apostles (TC)* 1953.

<sup>7</sup> Critical studies have all too often been influenced by the dichotomy created by the nineteenth century Tübingen critics.

<sup>8</sup> *The Acts of the Apostles (TNT)* 1959.

<sup>9</sup> *Glaube and Leben der Urgemeinde (AbThANT, 32)* 1957.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. B. Gerhardsson's important study *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity*, 1961. Cf. also H. Riesenfeld, 'The Gospel Tradition and its Beginnings', *Studia Evangelica* 1959, pp. 43-65.

<sup>11</sup> *Les Acts des Apôtres*<sup>2</sup>, 1958.

<sup>12</sup> *The Acts of the Apostles, (IB)* 1954.

<sup>13</sup> *Die Apostelgeschichte*<sup>9</sup>, (NTD) 1959.

## MONOGRAPHS

There have been several important monographs which have been recently published, of which the following deserve special mention. F. Stagg<sup>15</sup> traces the development in Acts in three stages:—Acts i. 6-vi. 7 presenting the Hebrew Church, Acts vi. 8-xii. 25 proclaiming universalism through Grecian Jews, and Acts xiii. i-xxviii. 31 demonstrating the unhindered preaching of the Gospel, the Jews having excluded themselves.<sup>16</sup> H. Conzelmann<sup>17</sup> deals with the theology of Luke in both of the Lukan writings and maintains, as Haenchen does, that Luke conceives of the history of salvation in three stages with the time of Jesus as the 'Middle Time' and hence the time of the Church is a continuation of this. Conzelmann's book is mainly occupied with Luke's Gospel, but he proceeds to apply the same principles which he has deduced there to the book of Acts. This results in a somewhat radical treatment.

E. Trocmé<sup>18</sup> has published a valuable book examining the text, purpose, method and sources of the book of Acts, and the most important features of his survey may be summarized as follows. He disputes the technical historical accuracy of Luke and considers that he was a slave to contemporary modes of expression.<sup>19</sup> He maintains that the original text of the book has been almost wholly preserved<sup>20</sup> and inclines to favour a rhythmic theory of construction,<sup>21</sup> following the suggestion of R. Morgenthaler<sup>22</sup> whose theory was based on Luke's wide use of doublets in the form of duplicate words and word groups. Trocmé disputes the theory of a proposed third volume by Luke as an ex-

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planation of the abrupt ending,<sup>23</sup> but strongly maintains the unity of Luke-Acts against A. C. Clarke,<sup>24</sup> a proposition with which most modern scholars would agree. In dealing with Luke's aim,<sup>25</sup> Trocmé sees in Acts, as in the Gospel, an attempt to deepen the elementary knowledge of Christianity on the part of Theophilus. As to the motive for the preservation of Acts, this lay in its close association with Luke, a feature which would also lessen the strangeness of its abrupt ending since Paul's history would have less prominence as the concluding portion of the joint book than it has in Acts alone. Most of Trocmé's attention is taken up with sources,<sup>26</sup> especially in the early part of Acts. His theory is that chapters iii-v are based on a homogeneous document which Luke has adapted and expanded. In addition, other sources such as a geographical source,

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<sup>14</sup> *Die Apostelgeschichte*<sup>3</sup>, (RNT) 1956.

<sup>15</sup> *The Book of Acts: The struggle for an unhindered Gospel*, 1955.

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that Acts ends abruptly with the word ἀκωλύτως—'unhindered'.

<sup>17</sup> *The Theology of St. Luke*, 1960. This is an English translation of the German *Die Mitte der Zeit*<sup>3</sup>, 1960.

<sup>18</sup> *Le "Livre des Actes" et l'histoire*, 1957.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-37.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>22</sup> *Die lukanische Geschichtsschreibung als Zeugnis (AbThANT 14, 15)*, 1948.

<sup>23</sup> *Op. cit.*, 36.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 38 ff.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 42 ff.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 122-214.

a discourse source and a narrative source (e.g. behind vi. 1-7) were used. Luke has, therefore, welded together a number of small fragmentary sources, a theory which if true, would enhance Luke's literary skill. It is significant that Trocmé agrees with de Zwaan<sup>22</sup> concerning the existence of an original Aramaic text behind the early part of Acts and thus draws attention once again to the possible influence of Aramaic on New Testament books.<sup>29</sup>

In the volume of essays of B. S. Easton<sup>33</sup> (edited by F. C. Grant), an earlier essay is reproduced on the 'Purpose of Acts' in which Easton advanced the thesis that Acts was designed to show that Christianity was closely linked with Judaism, which he thought would explain the dominance of the Jerusalem Church. He maintained that it was important for Christianity to be regarded, as Judaism was, in official imperial circles as a *religio licita*.<sup>31</sup> While there may be some truth in this, the fact remains that Luke many times stresses the antagonism of the Jews to Christianity and this must be considered an improbable method of assuring that Christianity should be regarded officially as under the umbrella of Judaism. A monograph on the Areopagus speech by B. Gärtner<sup>32</sup> contains a careful comparison of Greek and Jewish styles of writing in addition to a thorough examination of the affinities of the Areopagus speech. This speech will be mentioned again below, but it is worth noting here that Gärtner places strong emphasis on the Jewish alignments of this section of Acts which has generally been regarded as the most Hellenic of all the material in the book.

On the background of the book, the brief study of H. Metzger<sup>33</sup> on *St. Paul's Journeys* gives valuable insights into the religious and historical background of these journeys, paying particular attention to the cities which he visited. In a study entitled *The Book of Acts in History*, H. J. Cadbury<sup>34</sup> brings out the variety of influences which impinged on early Christianity. There is very little new in this book, but it does bring into focus, in a concise and yet fairly comprehensive manner, the historical environment in which the Christian Church developed. When he is dealing with oriental influences it is significant that Cadbury attaches no importance to the mystery religions as a contemporary feature of the Christian Church.<sup>35</sup> He does not think that Luke had much acquaintance with Greek literature, but he shows that the author's interest in cities and their respective officials is typically Greek.<sup>36</sup> Cadbury includes a very full discussion on Roman citizenship and Roman names<sup>37</sup> and gives some useful general information about Roman communications. In his next section, he points out that the book of Acts is almost the only early evidence for the Diaspora Judaism in the first century, which makes it difficult to place the book in its Jewish

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<sup>22</sup> *Die lukanische Geschichtsschreibung als Zeugnis* (AbThANT 14, 15), 1948.

<sup>29</sup> On this note especially the work of C. C. Torrey, *The Composition and Date of Acts* (Harvard Theological Studies 1), 1916 and M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*<sup>2</sup>, 1954.

<sup>33</sup> *Les routes de Saint Paul dans l'Orient grec*<sup>2</sup>, 1956.

<sup>31</sup> Trocmé, *op. cit.*, 52, mentions that M. Schneckenburger in his *Ueben den Zweck der Apostelgeschichte*, 1841, 244 ff. had discussed the same point. It was not, therefore, a new idea of Easton's.

<sup>32</sup> *The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation*, 1955.

<sup>33</sup> *Les routes de Saint Paul dans l'Orient grec*<sup>2</sup>, 1956.

<sup>34</sup> Published 1955.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 39 ff.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 65-81.

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setting, but he does discuss the contacts of the book with external Jewish history.<sup>38</sup> When discussing Stephen's speech, Cadbury alleges many discrepancies between this and the Old Testament and accounts for these discrepancies by the influences of contemporary Jewish interpretations on either Luke or his sources.<sup>39</sup> But some of the supposed discrepancies are due more to Cadbury's method of exegesis than to Luke or his sources. In a useful chapter on the secular evidences for Christianity, Cadbury collects up the scanty fragments of information which bear upon Christian origins.<sup>40</sup> A study of these fragmentary references in this book is enough to convince us of the superlative importance of the book of Acts as a source book on Christian origins and bears testimony to the inscrutable wisdom of God in preserving it. The concluding chapter deals with the subsequent history of Acts and Cadbury here suggests some of the motives which may have caused the separation of Acts from Luke's Gospel. In his earlier book, *The Making of Luke-Acts*,<sup>41</sup> the same author had strongly insisted on treating the two books together and there is no doubt that this is a sound principle which would have avoided many extravagances in critical estimates of the book of Acts.

J. Dupont,<sup>42</sup> who has published many works on Acts, has produced an orderly and comprehensive survey of the sources of the book, in which he studies the various types of theory, both for the first part of Acts and also for the Pauline history. More will be said about this important book when dealing with sources. Another book wholly devoted to Acts is J. C. O'Neill's<sup>43</sup> treatment of *The Theology of Acts*, which is, however, only partially devoted to the theology since the author goes to some lengths to demonstrate, to his own satisfaction at least, that the book is contemporaneous with Justin Martyr. Such a late dating is not only reminiscent of the radical schools of German criticism (from Baur onwards), but is indicative of a preconceived rejection of the historicity of Acts. Naturally this affects what O'Neill says about the theology of the book, which is interpreted as developed second century theology instead of as Apostolic doctrine. The method O'Neill adopts is to infer the author's theology from the way he constructs his book and from his attitude towards the Jews and Jewish Christianity, as well as from the positive theological content especially found in the titles given to Jesus. The conclusion to which O'Neill comes is that the author (he naturally denies that it was Luke)<sup>44</sup> had as his aim to preach the Gospel to unbelievers.<sup>45</sup> While it is not necessary to deny that this may have been part of Luke's purpose, it is certainly both unnecessary and unjustified to date the book in the second century in order to demonstrate that purpose. O'Neill is representative of a tendency which most writers on Acts reject as unhistorical, including the liberal German scholar Martin Dibelius, who had no conservative leanings but who nevertheless saw no reason to deny the Lukan authorship of the book.<sup>46</sup> O'Neill, moreover, illustrates a tendency which is all too

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 86 ff.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 102 ff.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 111 ff.

<sup>41</sup> Originally published in 1927, but now issued in a second edition (1958) which is practically unaltered.

<sup>42</sup> *Les sources du Livre des Acts*, 1960.

<sup>43</sup> Published 1961.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 173.

<sup>46</sup> *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, 1956, 102 ff. This is the English edition of Dibelius' Aufsätze zur Apostelgeschichte, 1951.

familiar among radical scholars, that of paying scant attention to other views which conflict with his own. He dismisses the first century dating in very few words and then cites at great length the evidence for a second century dating.<sup>47</sup> He is also guilty of the very questionable procedure of assessing dating by means of theology, which must inevitably allow too great a subjective element to enter into the discussion.

Another writer who separates Luke-Acts from the Apostolic age and dates it

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at the turn of the first century is C. K. Barrett,<sup>48</sup> who after surveying and commenting on six significant modern writers on Luke as a historian gives his own opinions. His comments are compressed in a very brief compass,<sup>49</sup> with the result that the treatment is sketchy; but he sees the combined book as essentially preaching. Luke is recalling his contemporaries to the preaching of the Apostolic age. Similarly his eschatology is aimed to show the link between the Church of his own age and the first days after the resurrection.<sup>50</sup> Now the validity of Barrett's approach depends on the degree of historicity attached to Luke's writings. If Luke is writing genuine history it is self-evident that his aim is to trace back Christian origins to their Jerusalem beginnings. But if Luke is constructing his history with his eye on the contemporary scene (if that be sub-Apostolic) the question at once arises how much of his work is historical and how much apologetic. Yet, as Barrett himself admits,<sup>51</sup> there is a great difference between Luke on the one hand, and Clement of Rome and Ignatius on the other. But in admitting this he is faced with the dilemma that Luke does not belong to the spirit of his own age (on Barrett's own reckoning), but to another spirit. The dilemma is greatly lessened if Luke is placed in the Apostolic age, the age pre-eminently of the Spirit.

Another recently published book, written by U. Wilckens,<sup>52</sup> deals with the speeches of Acts and suggests that a basic structure is found in all the speeches in chapters ii-v, x, xiii. From this fact he deduces that these speeches are Luke's own composition and are not attributable to ancient tradition. He finds a different scheme behind the speeches of chapter xiv and xvii and concludes that these are traditional and non-Lukan. Luke, in fact, expounds generally his own theological system, and Acts cannot for this reason be regarded as a reliable guide to the Apostolic age but reflects the theology of a later age.<sup>53</sup> J. Dupont,<sup>54</sup> in an article devoted to a critique of Wilckens's book, justly criticizes him for drawing massive conclusions from insufficient evidence.

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<sup>47</sup> *Op. cit.*, 4 ff.

<sup>48</sup> *Luke the Historian in Recent Study*, 1961, 66.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 50-76.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, 65, 66.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 75 ff.

<sup>52</sup> *Die Missionsreden der Apostelgeschichte*, 1961.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. C. F. Evans, 'The Kerygma', *JTS* n.s. VII, 1956, 25-41. This view is also advocated by E. Käsemann, 'Das Problem des historischen Jesus', *ZThK* 51, 124-153.

<sup>54</sup> 'Les Discours missionnaires des Actes des Apôtres', *RB* 69, 1962, 37-60.

Attention has been drawn by M. Simon<sup>55</sup> to the influence of Stephen and the Hellenists in the early Church. He considers that Stephen's anti-Temple polemic was not generally adopted and was out of sympathy with the opinions of the 'Hebrews'. On the other hand, the work of J. Doeve<sup>56</sup> on Jewish hermeneutics in relation both to the Synoptic Gospels and to Acts shows that the method of Old Testament interpretation in Acts is generally akin to Rabbinic method. Another work which bears on Acts from a chronological point of view is John Knox's *Chapters in a life of Paul*.<sup>57</sup> Knox begins with the assumption that the only genuine data for the life of Paul are found in his Epistles. By ignoring Acts altogether he brings all the journeys of Paul into the period before the Council of Jerusalem, which inevitably results in a quite revolutionary new chronology. But no reconstructions can ever be convincing which arbitrarily ignored conflicting evidence. The historical sense of Luke has been too well vindicated for him to be ruled out of account altogether as a source for chronology.<sup>58</sup> Knox's hypothesis is unlikely to gain support among those who have learned to appreciate Luke's historical worth.

It is significant that during the period under survey the important work of Martin Dibelius,<sup>59</sup> which so largely dominated the previous period, has been made available in an English translation. Most of the essays in this collection are of a historical kind, in which Dibelius brings his Form-critical principles

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to bear upon the Acts narratives. He judges historically not so much by the contents of the narratives as by the methods and purposes of the narration. Perhaps the most important of Dibelius' essays is that on the speeches of Acts and ancient historiography<sup>60</sup> in which he asserts that Luke has followed the ancient practice of creating speeches to mark important turning points in the narrative. In fact, many of the speeches, according to him, do not fit the context and sometimes even correct it.<sup>61</sup> Their purpose must be judged according to their function in the book as a whole. It is against this background of Dibelius' contentions that more recent work on the Acts speeches must next be summarized.

### THE SPEECHES OF ACTS

Among the many recent studies on this subject only the more important can be mentioned. E. Schweizer<sup>62</sup> has discussed these speeches and claims to have discovered a certain basic pattern, which nevertheless is more pronounced in speeches to Jewish hearers than to others. This, he thinks, indicates the use of older traditional material, a supposition which seems nearer the truth than Wilckens's contrary opinion. The basic pattern may be summarized as follows:—address,

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<sup>55</sup> *St. Stephen and the Hellenists in the Primitive Church*, 1958. Simon's theory has been followed up by L. W. Barnard, *NTS* 7, 1960, 31-45, who shows the influence of Stephen's anti-Temple polemic on the Epistle of Barnabas.

<sup>56</sup> *Jewish Hermeneutics in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts*, 1954.

<sup>57</sup> Published 1954.

<sup>58</sup> See note 3.

<sup>59</sup> *Op. cit.* Cf. note 46.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 138 ff.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>62</sup> 'Zu den Reden der Apostelgeschichte', *ThZ* 13, 1957, 1-11.

summons to hearers, statement of some misunderstanding in the hearers, a citation, Christological preaching, individual Scriptural proofs, repeated establishment of the misunderstanding, a salvation announcement and a final appeal to the hearers. It is not surprising that most of these elements occur, for it would be difficult for a Christian preacher to avoid them. At the same time it is highly probable that some fairly uniform method of presentation was followed.<sup>63</sup> Wilckens,<sup>64</sup> in an article published before his book, made a study of Acts x. 34-43 in which he found many characteristics similar to Luke's Gospel and concluded, therefore, that Peter's speech to Cornelius was catechesis and not *kerygma*. It is, however, highly probable that the modern distinction between teaching and preaching was not recognized in the early Church.

A. F. J. Klijn<sup>65</sup> concentrates on Stephen's speech and finds parallels between this and the *Manual of Discipline* of the Dead Sea sect. He questions whether Stephen's speech should be regarded as a turning to the Gentiles since the subsequent persecution did not result in a Gentile mission. He refers it rather to Jewish Christians outside Jerusalem and its Temple, which he thinks would explain 'your fathers' vii. 39 in distinction from 'our fathers' in vii. 38. Klijn's views were criticized by E. Grässer,<sup>66</sup> partly on the grounds that he did not regard Luke's account of Stephen's speech as historical but also because he could not conceive of Luke's identifying himself with a speech which sought to make legitimate a Jewish Christianity outside Jerusalem. Nevertheless some of Klijn's parallels are suggestive (such as the conception of a spiritual temple), although the ideas which both Christianity and Qumrân shared in common had much more meaning for the former than for the latter.

The Areopagus speech has continued to claim attention from scholars. Ever since E. Norden's<sup>67</sup> study which focused attention on the Greek character of the speech, there have been those who have reacted against the Hellenic method of interpretation. The most recent and most comprehensive reaction is that of B. Gärtner already mentioned.<sup>68</sup> He maintains that good historical reminiscence lies behind the speech and regards it as an example of Christian Gentile

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preaching, aligned not so much to the philosophical style as to the style of Jewish Diaspora propaganda. Gärtner's study is notable in that he finds no un-Pauline conceptions of God and therefore sees no reason to deny, as many others have done following Norden's example, the authenticity of this Pauline speech. H. Hommel,<sup>69</sup> on the other hand, traces the speech to a Hellenistic Jewish adaptation of a text of Poseidonios, while W. Nauck<sup>70</sup> considers the source to have been a Jewish tractate worked over by a Hellenist. The latter, while considering that the form and structure of the speech are basically Jewish, yet interprets it through Hellenistic-Stoic

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<sup>63</sup> Cf. Gerhardsson, *op. cit.*, 324-335.

<sup>64</sup> 'Kerygma and Evangelium bei Lukas (Beobachtungen zu Acta 10. 34-43),' *ZNTW* xlix, 1958, 223-37.

<sup>65</sup> 'St. Stephen's Speech, Acts 7. 2-53', *NTS* 4, 1958, 25-31.

<sup>66</sup> *Op. cit.*, 137-8.

<sup>67</sup> *Agnostos Theos (Die Areopagrede der Acta Apostolorum)*, 1923.

<sup>68</sup> See note 32.

<sup>69</sup> 'Neue Forschungen zur Areopagrede, Acts 17', *ZNTW* xlvi, 1955, 145-178.

<sup>70</sup> 'Die Tradition and Komposition der Areopagrede. Eine motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung', *ZThK* 53, 1956, 11-52.

thought. Another German scholar H. Conzelmann,<sup>71</sup> in commenting on this speech, points out that it shows that for the heathen world it was the newness of Christianity which was most apparent, especially such doctrines as the unity of God and the continuity of revelation from Old Testament times. W. Eltester<sup>72</sup> has two studies on this speech. He thinks it is certain that Luke used a Jewish tradition in spite of various other parallels, among them some Oriental. In commenting on Acts xvii. 26 f. he finds that the statement about seeking God stands in good Old Testament tradition (cf. Jer. xxxviii. 36 (LXX), Ps. lxxiii, 16 f.). In contrast to these latter scholars it is refreshing to find a staunch upholder of the Pauline character of the speech in N. B. Stonehouse,<sup>73</sup> who makes a careful study of its historical and theological aspects.

### THE SOURCES OF ACTS

For some time the theory of M. Dibelius that Luke used an itinerary source for the Pauline part of the Acts had dominated critical discussions about the sources. But this theory has been acutely challenged by G. Schille<sup>74</sup> in an article which calls attention to the fragmentariness of Paul's itinerary as given in Acts. The idea of an inventory of stopping places is highly improbable for various reasons:—the arrangement of the material tends towards straight-line development rather than parallel development; some of the individual traditions appear to be misplaced; the author's sequences in the journey narratives are not fully unified; and the existence of this kind of journey inventory would in any case be most improbable, for historical reasons. Not all of these reasons are of equal value since some depend on a certain view of Luke's historical skill, but the last one is worthy of attention. Paul would hardly have required a list of place names to remind him of the Churches which he had established, since it was his habit to remember them daily in prayer. Moreover the early expectation of the Parousia would militate against any theory which supposed that an inventory would have been made by Paul to facilitate any return visits by himself or his associates. Not too much stress may be laid upon this latter point since the early Christians were not inactive as a result of their expectation of the Parousia, which did not rule out all organization. The idea of an itinerary source would appear to be quite unnecessary if the author knew Paul personally. Yet Schille supposes that the background of Luke's history reflects the time of the *Didache*, when itinerant missionaries stayed only a short time in each place. But both Dupont<sup>75</sup> and Haenchen<sup>76</sup> are strongly critical of this theory. Dupont attributes it with justice to much imagination and little critical sense

Dupont's own work on Acts is well known and his book on the sources is

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<sup>71</sup> In an article on 'Heidenchristentum' in *RGG*<sup>3</sup> III, 1959, 128-141.

<sup>72</sup> 'Gott and der Natur in der Areopagrede', *N. T. Studien für R. Bultmann*, 1954, 202-227.

<sup>73</sup> *Paul before the Areopagus and other New Testament Studies*, 1957, 1-40.

<sup>74</sup> 'Die Fragwürdigkeit eines Itinerars der Paulusreisen', *ThLZ* 84, 1959, 165-174. 7' *Les sources du Livre des Actes*, 1960, p. 149.

<sup>75</sup> *Les sources du Livre des Actes*, 1960, p. 149.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. the criticisms of Haenchen, *Die Apostelgeschichte*. 13, (*KEK*), 1961, 14\*, 15\*.

especially valuable as giving a comprehensive survey of the various theories on this theme. His study is divided into two parts. Under source criticism he deals with the theories of Harnack (parallel sources), Cerfaux and Trocmé (complementary sources), and Wendt, Jeremias, Bultmann and Benoit (Antiochian source). Under Form Criticism he considers the views about the We-source (Harnack, with Cadbury's criticisms and Norden's comments on 'we-' and 'they-' forms), the itinerary theory (Dibelius and Cadbury) and the dislocation theories (Nock and Schille). This bare catalogue of contents is enough to show the wide variety of theories which have been proposed, and Dupont's lucid survey leaves one with the impression that the guiding principle behind most of them is not to discover the simplest solution. Dupont himself is suspicious of source theories precisely because of the lack of agreement among source critics.<sup>77</sup> Variety of hypothesis based on the same data does not inspire confidence in the stability of the critical methods used. Dupont concedes that the author has used other materials, but claims that he has put on them the imprint of his own vocabulary and style. Yet he is favourable to the view that Acts rests not on sources of another author, but on Luke's own notes. He interprets the 'we-sections' on the level of redaction and not on the level of the documentation used, that is to say, he claims that the we-form was the author's own device, a view which is surely most easily intelligible.

R. Bultmann<sup>78</sup> has a brief study on the Acts sources in the volume of essays in memory of T. W. Manson, in which he maintained that the author of Acts was probably an Antiochian who found two sources, one an Antiochian source (vi. i-viii. 4, xi. 19-30, xii. 25) and the other an itinerary (xiii. 3f, 13f, 43f, 48f, xiv. 1f, 4-6, 21-26, xvi. 2-21). But as in so much of Bultmann's work, he appeals too much to subjective judgments for his opinions to command general consent. Moreover, Haenchen<sup>79</sup> pertinently puts the question why anyone would want to compose such an Antiochian source, or why, supposing it had been composed, anyone would have wished to alter it. P. Benoit<sup>80</sup> finds behind the early part of Acts a criss-crossing of three traditions, Palestinian, Pauline and Antiochian. Such a mixing up of different traditions is not, of course, impossible but it is more likely that greater care was taken in the preservation of early traditions in oral form. Could not most of the material have been passed on by eye-witnesses? This point is admitted by H. J. Cadbury<sup>81</sup> in his article on the 'We and I' passages in Luke-Acts. He bases his view on the fact that *παρηκολουθηκότι* in Luke's preface means that the author was an eye-witness of at least some of the events. If so, would he not have sought out personal eye-witnesses to verify the details of events with which he was not personally acquainted?

## THE COMPOSITION OF ACTS

Following upon this widespread interest in sources there has also been some attention given to Luke's methods of composition and his purpose. A. Ehrhardt<sup>82</sup> is more conservative than many of those mentioned in the last section and maintains the older position that Acts is intended to

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<sup>77</sup> *Op. cit.* 159 ff.

<sup>78</sup> 'Zur Frage nach den Quellen der Apostelgeschichte', *New Testament Essays in memory of T. W. Manson*, 1959, 68-80.

<sup>79</sup> *Op. cit.* 75 ff.

<sup>80</sup> 'La deuxième visite de Saint Paul à Jerusalem', *Biblica* 40, 1959, 778-796.

<sup>81</sup> '“We and I” passages in Luke-Acts' *NTS* 3, 1957, 128-131.

<sup>82</sup> 'The construction and purpose of the Acts of the Apostles', *ST* 12, 1958, 45-79.

present the activity of the Holy Spirit. His study is in three parts, the first of which deals with Luke's literary genre. He finds Luke's predecessors not in the Greek historians but

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the Jewish, in such books as 1 and 2 Samuel, Esther, Judith and 2 Maccabees. He then deals with Luke's technique which he describes as historical biography, although he understands this more as theological than as factual history. He is not favourable to the idea of a journey-book on the grounds that paper was too expensive and the compiling of a diary would have been an added burden to Paul, especially when he was ill. In dealing with Luke's purpose Erhardt develops the idea that the Acts was designed to be the Gospel of the Holy Spirit. It is refreshing to find such an emphasis, which is ultimately more illuminating for the interpretation of the book and has, in fact, generally been assumed in conservative schools of thought.<sup>83</sup> On the other hand, failure to recognize the true place of the activity of the Spirit has inevitably resulted from a disinclination to accept the historicity of Acts.

On the general plan of Acts two articles may be noted, one by P. H. Menoud<sup>84</sup> and the other by J. Dupont.<sup>85</sup> The former brings out the importance of geographical considerations for Luke in the production of the book, while both stress that the salvation of the Gentiles is the author's major theme affecting his theological purpose.

Two writers have proposed that Acts was published before the Gospel of Luke. C. S. C. Williams<sup>86</sup> suggested that it was written after the original draft of Luke, but was published before the revised edition. H. G. Russell<sup>87</sup> also tentatively maintained that Acts was written first, because it seems to have influenced the production of the Gospel. But if Luke and Acts are regarded as a unity there can be little doubt that Luke intended Acts to be a sequel to the Gospel. In this connection W. C. van Unnik's<sup>88</sup> study on the book of Acts may be mentioned, in which he regards the book as a confirmation of the Gospel for those who had not seen the incarnate Christ, in which the key-words are 'salvation' and 'witness'.

### THE TEXT OF ACTS

Because of the remarkable divergences between the Alexandrian and Western texts in this book the subject continues to attract some attention. There has not been, however, a great deal of new literature in recent years. E. Trocmé's<sup>89</sup> examination of the textual problem has already been mentioned and his chapter on this subject gives a valuable survey of work on the problem up to date. Among the more recent studies which he mentions are those of A. F. J. Klijn,<sup>90</sup> P. H.

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<sup>83</sup> It has been held also among some non-conservatives. Erhardt mentions A. Harnack.

<sup>84</sup> 'Le plan des Actes des Apôtres', *NTS* 1, 1954, 44-51.

<sup>85</sup> 'Le salut des Gentiles et la signification théologique du Livre des Actes', *NTS* 6, 1960, 132-155.

<sup>86</sup> *ExT* 64, 1953, 283 ff.

<sup>87</sup> 'Which was written the first, Luke or Acts?' *HTR* 47, 1955, 167 ff.

<sup>88</sup> 'The "Book of Acts" the Confirmation of the Gospel', *Nov. Test.* 4, 1960, 26-59.

<sup>89</sup> See note 20.

<sup>90</sup> *A Survey of the Researches into the Western Text of the Gospels and Acts*, 1949, mentioned by Trocmé, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

Menoud,<sup>91</sup> C. S. C. Williams<sup>92</sup> and E. Fascher.<sup>93</sup> But he does not mention the theory of P. Glaue<sup>94</sup> that soon after A.D. 100 the original autograph was copied and that one of these copies formed the exemplar of Codex D. Glaue thinks that the textual errors of Codex D were partly due to the scribal method of using abbreviations. Haenchen<sup>95</sup> has shown the absurdity of this theory, in an article in which he himself supports Westcott and Hort's thesis of the greater originality of the B text, but maintains the necessity for establishing the text for each separate reading. This latter caution is being repeatedly stressed by modern textual critics against Westcott and Hort's tendency to over-emphasize one manuscript. In an earlier article Haenchen<sup>96</sup> had been critical of an overemphasis by certain scholars of the Western text.

Several notes have appeared dealing with individual readings, of which the following may be mentioned. F. Scheidweiler<sup>97</sup> discusses the text of Acts v. 4

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and suggests an emendation to avoid the apparent opposition between 'communism' and Ananias' power to retain his own goods. οὐχί is emended to οὐχ, ὄ, in which case the text ceases to be a question, but asserts that land having been sold was no more in Ananias' power than before he sold it. On the Western text of Acts xi. 28, Haenchen<sup>98</sup> considers that this reading was responsible for the tradition that Luke was an Antiochian, but A. Strobel<sup>99</sup> takes the opposite view maintaining that Luke's Antiochian origin was a genuine tradition which influenced the scribe of Codex D<sup>100</sup> R. Bultmann,<sup>101</sup> however, holds that the Western reading here is more original.

## THE ACTS AND QUMRÂN

The discoveries at Qumrân have caused comparisons to be made with most parts of the New Testament, among which Acts has been particularly prominent. S. E. Johnson<sup>102</sup> finds the following parallels: reception of the Spirit as the pledge of eternal life, the idea of communal life, the idea of religious poverty, organization into a council of twelve, the disciple-body (*Ha-rabbim*) distinguished from the leaders, the common meal with priest, bread, wine and bread-breaking, and Biblical citation and interpretation. Comparisons of this kind are valuable only when set against the much greater number of differences. There is, for instance, no trace in Acts of novices, of probation time, of classification of members into different grades, or of common

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<sup>91</sup> 'The Western Text and the Theology of Acts', *Studiosum Novi Testamenti Societas*, Bulletin II, 1951, 19-32.

<sup>92</sup> *Alterations to the Text of the Synoptic Gospels and Acts*, 1951, 54-82.

<sup>93</sup> *Textgeschichte als hermeneutisches Problem*, 1953, 25-48, mentioned by Trocmé, *loc. cit.*

<sup>94</sup> 'Der älteste Text der geschichtlichen Bücher des Neue Testaments' *ZNTW* xlv, 1954, 90-108.

<sup>95</sup> 'Zum Text der Apostelgeschichte', *ZThK* 54, 1957, 22-25.

<sup>96</sup> 'Schriftzitate und Textüberlieferung in der Apostelgeschichte' *ZThK* 51, 1954, 153-167.

<sup>97</sup> 'Zu Acta 5. 4', *ZNTW*, xlix, 1958, 136, 7.

<sup>98</sup> Article 'Apostelgeschichte', *RGG*<sup>3</sup> I, 1956, Col. 505.

<sup>99</sup> 'Lukas der Antiochener (Bermerkungen zu Act 11. 28 D)', *ZNTW* xlix, 1958, 131-4.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. the comment of R. G. Heard, 'The Old Gospel Prologues', *JTS* ns. vi, 1955, 8.

<sup>101</sup> *Op. cit.*, 77 (see note 78).

<sup>102</sup> 'The Dead Sea Manual of Discipline and the Jerusalem Church in Acts', *ZATW* lxvi, 1954, 106-120. Reproduced in *The Scrolls and the New Testament* (ed. K. Stendahl), 1958.

works among the brethren. O. Cullmann<sup>103</sup> has turned his attention to the Hellenists of Acts vi. 1 and considers that these were in some way connected with the kind of Judaism found in the Qumrân texts, a view not, of course, impossible, but Cullmann's views have been criticized by P. Winter.<sup>104</sup> A more restricted study is that of J. V. McCasland<sup>105</sup> who examines the use of the word ὁδός in Acts and in the Qumrân literature and finds in both a similar use derived from Isa. xl. 3. He further suggests that the Christian use may have been derived from Qumrân *via* John the Baptist, a suggestion which may have some probability but lacks proof. It cannot be assumed that parallels establish dependence.

There have been other studies which investigate the bearing of the Dead Sea Scrolls on the book of Acts, the most notable of which are Cullmann's<sup>106</sup> article in the collection of essays entitled *Les manuscrits de la Mer Morte*, J. Daniélou's<sup>107</sup> article on the organization of the ancient Church, Bo Reicke's<sup>108</sup> article included in Stendahl's collection and Matthew Black's important monograph on *The Scrolls and Christian Origins*.<sup>109</sup>

### THE THEOLOGY OF ACTS

The mass of literature on introductory problems is of little point unless it leads to a fuller appreciation of the essential message of the book. Although in the case of Acts interest tends to be dominated by its historical contribution rather than its theological, the latter is of great importance in indicating the positive content of the primitive *kerygma*.

O. Bauerfeind<sup>110</sup> has issued a caution against assuming a specific Pauline or Lukan approach to the theology, while E. Lohse,<sup>111</sup> treating Luke-Acts as a whole, maintains that from Luke's preface it is clear that he intended in his historical writing to set out a theology of the history of salvation (*Heilsgeschichte*). The history itself, in this case, becomes a contribution to the theology, a view

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that has been more fully worked out in the monograph of H. Conzelmann already mentioned.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> 'The Significance of the Qumrân Texts for Research into the Beginning of Christianity', *JBL* 74, 1955, 213-226. Reproduced in Stendahl, *ut supra*.

<sup>104</sup> *ThLZ* 82, 1957, col. 835.

<sup>105</sup> 'The Way', *JBL* 77, 1958, 222-230.

<sup>106</sup> Published 1957.

<sup>107</sup> 'La Communauté de Qumrân et l'organisation de l'Église ancienne', *RHPR* 35, 1955, 104-115.

<sup>108</sup> 'Die Verfassung der Urgemeinde im Lichte jüdische Dokumente', *ThZ* 10, 1954, 95-112. Reproduced in Stendahl, *ut supra*.

<sup>109</sup> Published 1961. Black disagrees with Cullmann's view that Qumrân affected Christianity via the Hellenists. He suggested the 'Hebrews' of Acts vi as the more probable channel (*op. cit.*, 75 ff.).

<sup>110</sup> 'Vom historische zum lukanischen Paulus', *Ev.Th.* 13, 1953, 347-353.

<sup>111</sup> 'Lukas als Theologie der Heilsgeschichte', *EvTh* 14, 1954, 256-275. He places much stress on Luke's idea of fulfilment.

<sup>112</sup> See note 17.

In an interesting study of Stephen's vision (Acts vii. 55, 56), H. P. Owen<sup>113</sup> discusses the meaning of the Son of Man "standing" (ἑστῶτα) and finds a significant sequence in six descriptive verbs used by Luke for Christ's position, of which this is the climax. This description of Christ is used only here in this sense and Owen considers that it refers to Christ's readiness to return. It represents, therefore, an imminent eschatology. The idea that Luke presents an eschatology which is traditional is also stressed by H. J. Cadbury,<sup>114</sup> who points out that it is Luke alone who has described the Ascension and has therefore created the conditions for a return of Christ from heaven. In his opinion, Luke is, therefore, presenting a traditional-apocalyptic viewpoint, although with modifications of his own.<sup>115</sup>

In an article published before his book, J. C. O'Neill<sup>116</sup> discusses the title of κύριος as used in Acts and maintains that there are three possibilities for its interpretation. It may refer to the God of Israel, to Jesus, or to the Godhead without further definition. O'Neill is opposed to Bousset's<sup>117</sup> contention that the title is derived from Hellenistic sources and claims on the contrary that the Hebrew 'Adonai lies behind it. In his book, O'Neill devotes careful attention to the titles given to Jesus in the Acts because he considers that these are significant for an appraisal of Luke's theology,<sup>118</sup> but where a title like κύριος had Aramaic origins, Luke is said to use it in such a way as to show that its origin had been forgotten. As already pointed out O'Neill's comments on the theology are strongly coloured by his late dating of the book.

In a study on baptism, E. Barnikol<sup>119</sup> has maintained that in Luke's sources the original idea was only of Spirit-baptism (i.e. uncultic). But Luke is said to have combined this with John's water-baptism in the two sources which Barnikol supposes Luke to have used. Much of Barnikol's evidence is based on arguments from silence. For instance, the absence of reference to baptism in the account of Ananias and Saphira or in the appointment of the deacons assumes an importance which Luke surely never meant it to have. By using this method of argumentation Barnikol is able to disclaim that baptism was an initial rite of the Christian Church. He assumes that it only became so later. On the contrary E. Fascher<sup>120</sup> argues from the conversion of Paul (Acts ix. 18f, Gal. i) that Paul was called to the apostolic office *before* his baptism, and that it was on the strength of the latter that he was received into the Damascus Church. In view of the mention of baptism in the Petrine speeches and in the Cornelius incident, Fascher thinks that it was already a rite of acceptance into the Church. Clearly the difference between the estimate of the same evidence by these two scholars is essentially a difference in their canons of criticism, but Fascher's positive approach is surely more soundly based than Barnikol's negative approach.

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<sup>113</sup> 'Stephen's Vision in Acts vii. 55-56', *NTS* 1, 1954, 224-226.

<sup>114</sup> 'Acts and Eschatology', in *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology* (ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube), 1956, 300-321.

<sup>115</sup> E. Grässer has produced a monograph on this subject, *Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte*, Beihefte ZNTW 22, 1957, but this was not available to me when the present study was produced.

<sup>116</sup> 'The use of "Kyrios" in the Book of Acts', *SJTh* 8, 1955, 155-174.

<sup>117</sup> *Kyrios Christos*<sup>3</sup>, 1926.

<sup>118</sup> *Op. cit.*, 117-145.

<sup>119</sup> 'Das Fehlen der Taufe in den Quellenschriften der Apostelgeschichte und in den Urgemeinden der Hebräer und Hellenisten'. *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Martin-Luther-Universität*, Halle-Wittenburg 6, heft 4, 1956-57: 1-18.

<sup>120</sup> 'Zur Taufe des Paulus', *ThLZ* 80 1955, 643-648.

H. P. Owen<sup>121</sup> has a study in which he compares Romans i with Acts xvii and maintains that the idea of the world "related to God as created to Creator was never believed by any Gentile".<sup>122</sup> According to Owen, Paul 'would seem to imply that knowledge gained by natural revelation constitutes a "point of contact" for the Gospel.'

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### EXEGETICAL STUDIES

*i.* Acts i. 9-11. When comparing this passage with Luke xxiv. 50-53, P. A. van Stempvoort<sup>123</sup> finds two totally different versions of the same event. Whereas in Lk. xxiv Luke gives "the first version of his theology of the Ascension", as a doxological view, in Acts he gives an ecclesiastical and historical account with the accent on the Spirit's work. According to Stempvoort, Luke was one of the first exponents of realized eschatology, thereby preserving the Church from 'an hysterical futurist eschatology'. Yet he maintains that Luke's two interpretations are complementary to one another.

*ii.* Acts i. 15-16. Two scholars have recently discussed the question of the original tradition behind the re-constitution of the Twelve. Ch. Masson<sup>127</sup> considers that only verses 15, 16, 18*a*, 20, 23-26 of this tradition are genuine, the rest is Luke's own version of the Apostolate. He sees Luke's purpose as bringing out the universality of the Gospel, the Apostles being witnesses to the Church and to the world. Thus the Twelve, after being representatives of the people of Israel, have now become witnesses generally. Menoud,<sup>125</sup> on the other hand, maintains that for Luke the word ἀπόστολος has still its original sense of "guarantee".

*iii.* Acts i. 25-26. On the whole question of Luke's inclusion of the narrative of the choice of Matthias, K. H. Rengstorf<sup>126</sup> has a full discussion of the reason for this focus on the Twelve who play so little part in the Acts story. He thinks the significance lies in the immediate juxtaposition of the outpouring of the Spirit, a happening of far greater importance than the constitution of the Twelve.

*iv.* Acts ii. G. Kretschmar<sup>127</sup> discusses the Pentecost tradition in this chapter in the light of the Qumrân sect. He thinks that ii. 1 belongs to the oldest state of the tradition. But P. A. van Stempvoort<sup>128</sup> does not think that Luke was interested in the Jewish feast, which 'only gives him the opportunity of using a loosely-connected chronological reference.'<sup>129</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> 'The scope of natural Revelation in Rom. 1 and Acts xvii,' *NTS* 5, 1959, 133-143.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 139.

<sup>123</sup> 'The interpretation of the Ascension in Luke and Acts', *NTS* 5, 1959, 30-42.

<sup>127</sup> 'Himmelfahrt and Pfingsten', *ZKG* 66, 1954-5.

<sup>125</sup> 'Les additions au groupe des douze apôtres d'après de livre des Actes', *RHPR* 37, 1957, 7-80.

<sup>126</sup> 'Die Zuwahl des Matthias', *ST* 15, 1962, 35-67.

<sup>127</sup> 'Himmelfahrt and Pfingsten', *ZKG* 66, 1954-5.

<sup>128</sup> See note 123.

<sup>129</sup> *Op. cit.*, 41.

v. Acts viii. 26, 27. W. C. van Unnik<sup>133</sup> has given attention to the meaning of *κατὰ μεσημβρίαν* and *αὕτη ἐστὶν ἔρημος* in these verses. The latter is not a gloss as Beza held, but was meant to indicate an uninhabited road. The former he considers to be improbable as a mark of time (i.e. at noon), since no-one would travel at noon-day.

vi. Acts ix. There have been two recent studies on the account of Paul's conversion in this chapter. W. Prentice,<sup>131</sup> who accepts the view that Acts contains no authentic speeches, finds the historical account of Paul's conversion in Galatians i. 15-17. He thinks that Luke's account is popular legend, which generally included a miracle without which it would not have been so readily believed. But Paul himself was as conscious as Luke that the event on the Damascus road was super-normal. It was revelation from God (cf. Gal. i. 12), a fact which Prentice overlooks. Luke makes it read like a miracle because it was a miracle. H. G. Wood<sup>132</sup> is surely right in maintaining the historical basis of Acts ix and in finding it in essential agreement with Galatians i.

vii. Acts x. 13 and xi. 7. J. Sint<sup>133</sup> has studied the use of the words *θύειν* in these two passages and has come to the conclusion that it is not here concerned with sacrifice, but connotes the general idea of killing.

viii. Acts xii. 3 ff. In a suggestive discussion on the significance of the

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connection of Peter's release with the Passover season, A. Strobel<sup>134</sup> compares some parts of Acts xiii with Exod. xii. He thinks that the Passover night is thus regarded theologically as the night of deliverance for the righteous.

ix. Acts xii and xv. In a broadly based study of Peter's position in the early Church G. Schulze-Kadelbach<sup>135</sup> discusses among other things the change of leadership at Jerusalem from Peter to James. Acts xii. 17 describes how Peter himself requests that James and all the brethren should be told of his release, while in Acts xv. it is James who presides. According to Acts xxi. 17 ff. Paul deals only with James on his visit to the Jerusalem Church. The conclusion is reached by Schulze-Kadelbach that the New Testament tradition about Peter is a development from Mt. xvi. 17 ff. But James' presidency of the Jerusalem Church need not lead us to suppose that Peter's leadership among the Jews generally was in dispute.

x. Acts xii. 25. R. W. Funk<sup>136</sup> regards this as an interpolation by Luke, placed in the wrong chronological setting, since according to him the hunger distress did not occur until later. Funk actually places all the record of the mission journeys of Paul and Barnabas between xi. 26 and

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<sup>133</sup> 'Schlachten and opfern zu Apg. 10, 13; 11, 7', *ZKTh* 78, 1956, 194-205.

<sup>131</sup> 'St. Paul's Journey to Damascus', *ZNTW* xlvi, 1955, 250-254.

<sup>132</sup> 'The Conversion of St. Paul: its nature, antecedents and consequences', *NTS* 1, 1955, 276-282.

<sup>133</sup> 'Schlachten and opfern zu Apg. 10, 13; 11, 7', *ZKTh* 78, 1956, 194-205.

<sup>134</sup> 'Passa-Symbolik and Passa-Wunder in Acts xii. 3 ff.', *NTS* 4, 1958, 210-215.

<sup>135</sup> 'Die Stelling des Petrus in der Urchristenheit', *ThLZ* 81, 1956, 1-14.

<sup>136</sup> 'The Enigma of the Famine Visit', *JBL* 75, 1956, 130-136.

27. In an article on the same verse, J. Dupont<sup>137</sup> discusses the enigmatic character of the statement, if εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ is the correct reading, for Paul and Barnabas had already been sent from Antioch to Jerusalem and in xiii. i are back again in Antioch. More over, no reason is given why Mark was taken with them to Jerusalem. Consequently Dupont, who considers εἰς to be a better attested reading than ἐξ or ἀπό connects εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ with the following words and interprets them in the sense of 'having accomplished their ministry in Jerusalem', taking εἰς as equivalent to ἐν.

*xi.* Acts xv. The problem of Paul's Jerusalem visits is a constant one and J. N. Sanders<sup>138</sup> speculates on a new reconstruction of the course of events, based on the following proposals. (a) Paul's two were visits before AD 44; (b) The James of Gal. ii. 19 is not to be regarded as the Lord's brother, but as the son of Zebedee; (c) The date of Paul's conversion is set at AD 31; (d) Paul was not present at the Apostolic Council; and (e) The epistle to the Galatians was composed after the events of Acts xv. It will at once be seen that this reconstruction is at the expense of the historicity of the Acts account of the Jerusalem Council, and since it is based more on conjecture than on fact is not likely to command general consent.

Three brief studies have appeared on verse 14 of this chapter. J. Dupont<sup>139</sup> and N. A. Dahl<sup>140</sup> consider that the language shows Septuagintal influence, but P. Winter<sup>141</sup> appeals to the Hebrew text of Deut. xxvi. 18 f. to show that the LXX is not necessarily in mind here.

*xii.* Acts xviii. 24-26, xix. 1-7. Two views of Apollos are found in studies by E. Käsemann<sup>142</sup> and E. Schweizer<sup>143</sup> respectively. The former suggested that Apollos was a Christian teacher who was unconnected with Apostolic Christianity, but who has been brought into it by Luke on the principle of *una sancta ecclesia catholica*. But Schweizer has a different interpretation. To him Apollos was a Jewish teacher who had taught ethical teaching in the synagogue ('the way of the Lord'). But Luke has misunderstood the Jewish terms and represented Apollos as an imperfect Christian. Once again, in both these studies, the veracity of Luke's account is questioned and it becomes clear that

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imagination unrestrained by the written text can quite easily come to remarkably divergent conclusions.

*xiii.* Acts xix. G. S. Duncan<sup>144</sup> has two studies dealing with Paul's ministry in Asia in which he argues particularly on the basis of xix. 22 for an Ephesian imprisonment for Paul as the key to Pauline chronology. These articles are a sequel to the same theme developed many years

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<sup>137</sup> 'La Mission de Paul à Jérusalem (Acts xii. 25)', *Nov. Test.* 1 1956, 275-303.

<sup>138</sup> 'Peter and Paul in the Acts', *NTS* 2, 1955, 133-143.

<sup>139</sup> 'Λαὸς ἐξ ἔθνων', *NTS* 3 1957, 47-9.

<sup>140</sup> 'A people for His name (Acts xv. 14f, *NTS* 4, 1958, 319-327.

<sup>141</sup> 'Miscellen zur Apostelgeschichte', *EvTh* 17, 1957, 398-406.

<sup>142</sup> 'Die Johannesjunger in Ephesus', *ZThK* 49, 1952, 144-154.

<sup>143</sup> 'Die Bekehrung des Apollos, Apg. 18. 24-26', *EvTh* 15, 1955, 247-54.

<sup>144</sup> 'St. Paul's ministry in Asia—the last phase (Acts 19, 22)', *NTS* 3 1957, 211-218.

previously by Duncan in his book on *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry*,<sup>145</sup> although he has now slightly modified his original theory. Although given a widely sympathetic reception this theory has nevertheless not been able to gain full recognition, largely because it is based on an hypothesis which cannot be proved.

*xiv.* Other special studies. J. Dupont has given attention to a number of special features of the book of Acts, on the Claudian famine,<sup>146</sup> on Peter and Paul in Acts<sup>147</sup> and on some general matters of interpretation.<sup>148</sup> A. E. Haefner<sup>149</sup> discusses the connection between Mark and Acts and considers Acts i. 13, 14 to be a 'bridge' between Mark and Acts iii. 1 ff., which he considers to be the continuation of the Markan Gospel.

### AN ASSESSMENT

In view of the considerable amount of recent literature on the book of Acts, it is relevant to ask what positive advances have been made in the interpreting and understanding of the book. The preceding survey has shown that a wide variety of opinions are current regarding the book's value, from the extreme position which ignores its contribution as a historical document to the opposite which regards it as the message of the Spirit not only to the author's own age, but also to all subsequent ages. Clearly the position adopted on such an important question affects the relevance of the book for our modern times. Whatever theory is held regarding Luke's sources, it is of interest to the Biblical historian, but very little if any relevance to the Christian Church in its practical living. It tends to be a purely academic question, although not without some importance for the scholar. The studies in Luke's theology and in exegetical questions has drawn attention to a maintained, if not increasing, interest in the content of Acts. This is a healthy sign, for the book has had much to contribute to the life of the Church, especially among those convinced of a conservative approach to theology. The book contributes so much to a true doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and it is noteworthy that that doctrine has become considerably blurred since critical opinions denied the authenticity of the book. Acts is more than a text book of Church History. It is the all-important connecting link between the Gospels and the Epistles, the one interpretation of the age of transition, the age presided over by the Spirit. It is no wonder that it still provides the impetus for many spiritual movements. Any trends which contribute to close the gap between an academic assessment and a spiritual appreciation of the book are to be welcomed. A truly academic assessment must surely be in complete harmony with a real appreciation of its message, but this is clearly not evident in all the hypotheses mentioned above. Nevertheless, except among the more liberal critics of the book, there seems to be a real desire to plumb more fully the depths of its early Christian theology, even although such quests are often vitiated by presuppositions regarding dating. It is to be hoped that in the

[p.47]

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<sup>145</sup> *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry*, 1929.

<sup>146</sup> *RB* 62, 1955, 52-55.

<sup>147</sup> *RB* 64, 1957, 35-47.

<sup>148</sup> *RB* 62, 1955, 45-59.

<sup>149</sup> 'The Bridge between Mark and Acts,' *JBL* 77, 1958, 67-71.

Donald Guthrie, "Recent Literature on the Acts of the Apostles," *Vox Evangelica* 2 (1963):33-49.

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next decade scholarly work on the Acts will bring into yet clearer focus the dynamic part that the book can play in promoting the spiritual development of the modern Church.

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Prepared for the Web in December 2006 by Robert I. Bradshaw. The footnotes in this article appear to be terribly confused and should be checked before being used.

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