

GLENN E. SNYDER

# Acts of Paul

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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Glenn E. Snyder

# Acts of Paul

The Formation of a Pauline Corpus

Mohr Siebeck

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*For Jenn and Ellie*



## Preface

I am delighted to submit this volume to Mohr Siebeck's WUNT II series. The original form of my work on *Acts of Paul* was a Ph.D. dissertation at Harvard University (2010), written under Professor François Bovon with the collaboration of Professors Karen L. King and Dale B. Martin (Yale). My committee recommended that I submit the dissertation immediately to Mohr Siebeck, as did Richard I. Pervo, who subsequently read and commented on that form in Fall 2010. But in order to prepare a volume for the WUNT II series, I decided not to submit the manuscript until I was able to add a chapter on the *Ephesus Act*, reorder the chapters, develop my comparisons with Acts (of the Apostles), and edit the parts and whole into a more cohesive argument. The summer of 2012 provided such an opportunity, which has resulted in the present work.

My research and writing were facilitated by numerous individuals. Thanks are due especially to François, Karen, and Dale, for their collaboration on the original form of my work. To them – and to my preceding advisors Harry Attridge and David Brakke – I owe a debt of gratitude that may only be repaid with a life of work that is historical, critical, ecumenical, and humanistic. Thanks are due also to the staff at Andover-Harvard Theological Library, particularly Renata Kalnins and Gloria Korsman, for acquiring materials that were often rare and obscure; to David L. Eastman and Candida R. Moss, for sharing copies of works then in progress; to the editors of the forthcoming edition of *Acta Pauli* in the Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum, for providing an advance copy of its Greek text; to my students at Harvard Divinity School and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, particularly Joshua L. Page, for discussing my lectures; to my colleagues at Harvard, the Christian Apocrypha section of the Society of Biblical literature (SBL), and the Women in the Biblical World section of the SBL, for inviting and critically engaging presentations and chapter drafts; to Richard I. Pervo, for reading and commenting on my dissertation in Fall 2010, while preparing his Yale Anchor Bible commentary on *Acts of Paul*; and to the chairs at IUPUI's Department of Religious Studies, Tom Davis and Peter Thuesen, who facilitated the completion of this work by allowing me to “teach around” my interests.



I am also pleased to thank Dr. Henning Ziebritzki – Editorial Director of Theology – and the editors of the WUNT II series – Markus Bockmuehl, Jörg Frey, James Kelhoffer, Hans-Josef Klauck, and Tobias Nicklas – for the honor and pleasure of publishing with Mohr Siebeck. From the review by Professor Frey through marketing with Kendra Sopper and Katharina Stichling to production with Matthias Spitzner, the publication process with Mohr Siebeck has been professional, collegial, and efficient.

The abbreviations used in this work are according to two sources. First and foremost is *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (ed. Patrick H. Alexander et al.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999). Supplemental abbreviations are based on Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9th rev. ed.; ed. Sir Henry Stuart Jones, with Roderick McKenzie; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996). Otherwise, full bibliographic references are provided at the first citation (and in the Bibliography), and subsequent references are by last name and abbreviated title.

In April 2010 I dedicated my dissertation to my father Paul, mother Ellen, wife Jennifer, and daughter Elizabeth. Thanks to the continued support of family and friends, I am now able to present this revised and expanded form of my work on the composition and reception of traditions ascribed to “*Acts of Paul*.” I dedicate this work – a labor of love – to Jenn and to Ellie, my coworkers.

7 July 2013

G.E.S.

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## Introduction

Paul is one of the best known, yet diversely understood, characters of early Christianity. Paul is commonly known through Christian Scripture: thirteen of the twenty-seven texts in the New Testament are letters written in his name, and two-thirds of the canonized Acts of the Apostles describes his travels. But in the early centuries of the common era, various other traditions<sup>1</sup> about Paul were also in circulation, including additional letters and acts, as well as sermons, prayers, and apocalypses. Many of those traditions were marginalized, neglected, and forgotten. But some have been preserved. The purpose of this study is to remember the composition, reception, and development of the traditions preserved in *Acts of Paul*.

The phrase “*Acts of Paul*,” as it is commonly used, refers to a group of early Christian texts and also to the category that groups those texts. Many scholars work on the presupposition that the texts grouped together as “*Acts of Paul*” are parts of an early coherent whole: even if some of its parts used to be independent texts, and even if one of its parts was added later (3 Corinthians), *Acts of Paul* so conceived is an early Christian narrative that was originally composed in Greek by a single author or community in the late second century, probably in Asia Minor. On this presupposition, a large and diverse manuscript tradition is used to abstract multiple, partial witnesses to this hypothetical whole “*Acts of Paul*,” such that “its” contents are identified and labelled according to their locations in a reconstructed form of “the” text (see Figure 0.1 below, pp. 4–5). “*Acts of Paul*” is therefore both the idea of a narrative and that text as reconstructed by scholars.

For example, several editors and commentators are reconstructing a critical edition of *Acts of Paul* for the Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum.<sup>2</sup> In order to collect any and all traditions that may have

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<sup>1</sup> In this study, I use the term “tradition” broadly and in historical retrospect to refer to oral and written materials allegedly by or about Paul.

<sup>2</sup> My thanks to the editors of *Acta Pauli* for providing me with an advance copy of the Greek text of the CCSA edition: I have used the Greek with profit and delight, and I hope to benefit from the notes, apparatus, introduction, commentary, and other materials once the volumes are completed. A penultimate translation for the edition has been published in François Bovon and Pierre Geoltrain, eds., *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens* (2 vols.; Paris:

been included in this hypothetical early whole, a preliminary database of materials is abstracted from the two manuscripts that explicitly use a title related to “*Acts of Paul*”:<sup>3</sup> a fourth-century Greek manuscript at Hamburg (*P. Hamb.*) titled ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΠΑ[ΥΛΟΥ], “*Acts of Paul*”; and a late fifth or early sixth-century Coptic manuscript at Heidelberg (*P. Heid.*) titled ⲙ-ⲡⲣⲁⲗⲓⲥ ⲙⲡⲁⲮⲗⲟⲥ ⲕ[ⲁⲧⲁ]<sup>4</sup> ⲡⲁⲫⲢⲞⲤⲞⲘⲞⲤ, “*The Acts of Paul according to the Apostle*” (assuming iotacism for ⲙⲡⲣⲁⲗⲓⲥ). Each of these manuscripts narrates several acts, and both end with Paul’s martyrdom. To this database are added manuscripts that witness to the independent circulation of acts that are extant in *P. Hamb.* or *P. Heid.*: the *Martyrdom of Paul*, the *Ephesus Act*, the *Acts of Paul and Thekla*, and 3 Corinthians. Finally, to complete its hypothetical reconstruction of “*Acts of Paul*,” further “evidence” is adduced from other materials, including various versions, rewritings, references, stichometries, other acts, and sermons. In this manner the CCSA edition of *Acta Pauli* at once assumes and reconstructs *Acts of Paul* to be a coherent whole, whose abstract parts may be organized and numbered accordingly (see Figure 0.1 below, pp. 4–5).<sup>5</sup>

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Gallimard, 1997– ) 1:1115–77. Another critical commentary is under contract with the Yale Anchor Bible Commentary Series by Richard I. Pervo. For a helpful list of the most important manuscripts, including recensions and versions, see Maurice Geerard, *Clavis apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (Corpus Christianorum; Turnhout: Brepols, 1992) nos. 211–14. Editions of the most important manuscripts are Rodolphe Kasser and Philippe Luisier, “Le Papyrus Bodmer XLI en édition princeps. L’épisode d’Éphèses des *Acta Pauli* en copte et en traduction,” *Le Muséon* 117:3 (2004) 281–384; Richard A. Lipsius and Maximilien Bonnet, eds., *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* (2 vols in 3; Lipsiae: H. Mendelssohn, 1891–1903); Willy Rordorf, “Les Actes de Paul sur papyrus: problèmes liés aux P. Michigan inv. 1317 et 3788,” in *Proceedings of the XVIII International Congress of Papyrology* (1986) (Athens: Greek Papyrological Society, 1988) 453–60; Carl Schmidt, *Acta Pauli aus der Heidelberger koptischen Papyrus-handschrift Nr. 1*. (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1904; second enlarged edition, 1905); idem, “Ein Berliner Fragment der alten Πράξεις Παύλου,” *SBAW* (1931) 37–40; Carl Schmidt and Wilhelm Schubart, *ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΥ. Acta Pauli nach dem Papyrus der Hamburger staats- und Universitäts-bibliothek unter Mitarbeit von Wilhelm Schubart* (Hamburg: J. J. Augustin, 1936); Michel Testuz, *Papyrus Bodmer X–XII* (Genève: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1959) 6–45; and Léon Vouaux, *Les Actes de Paul et ses lettres apocryphes. Introduction, textes, traduction, et commentaire* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1913).

Note that a separate “pagan” *Acta Pauli* (*et Antonini*) was written shortly after the diasporic rebellion of 115–117 C.E.; see Herbert Musurillo, *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954) 49–60 and 179–95.

<sup>3</sup> Also explicit is a fourth-century Coptic manuscript (*Papyrus Bodmer* 41) with the title ⲡⲣⲁⲗⲓⲥ ⲡⲁⲮⲗⲟⲩ (“*An Act of Paul*”). But in terms of methodological procedure, its act in Ephesus is (partly) paralleled in *P. Hamb.* See §2.0 below, pp. 66–68.

<sup>4</sup> On the reconstruction ⲕⲁⲧⲁ, see §5.2, pp. 207–8 below.

<sup>5</sup> For the purposes of this study, I refer to *Acts of Paul* according to the abstract sections used in the forthcoming CCSA volumes (compare Bovon and Geoltrain, *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, 1:1115–77), since the CCSA edition will function as the standard

In all of “its” attested and hypothetical forms, none of the stories attributed to *Acts of Paul* matches a story in Acts of the Apostles;<sup>6</sup> and to the extent that an overall sequence of *Acts of Paul* can be reconstructed, the structure of its narrative differs as well. Sometimes Paul is said to have visited the same cities in Acts and *Acts of Paul* (e.g., [Damascus, Jerusalem,] Antioch, Iconium, Ephesus, Philippi, Corinth, and Rome), sometimes similar traditions are preserved (e.g., in the *Martyrdom of Paul* and in Acts 20:7–12, a youth falls from a window and is restored to life), and sometimes the “parallels” even use identical phrases.<sup>7</sup> But the events, the sequences of events, and the emphases – all of these differ.

So why are there different stories about Paul’s life? – How do Acts and *Acts of Paul* relate to each other literarily, theologically, politically, historically, and otherwise? Not surprisingly, a variety of answers have been proposed; and as prolegomena to my study on *Acts of Paul*, I will provide a selective history of scholarship on the relations between Acts and *Acts of Paul* (§0.1.1) and critique the presuppositions and methods used in such scholarship (§0.1.2). For, it is all too common to privilege Acts over – or to the exclusion of – *Acts of Paul*. After proposing a method for comparing the traditions in Acts and *Acts of Paul* more critically, I will explain my plan of study on the composition, reception, and development of the traditions abstractly attributed to “*Acts of Paul*” (§0.2).

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reference for subsequent scholarship. Another abstraction was popularized by Hennecke-Schneemelcher and continues to be used by most scholars (see n. 8, p. 4 below). See also Figure A.1 below, p. 262, where a more comprehensive analysis is offered, including parallels to Acts.

<sup>6</sup> Manuscripts of Acts include the titles ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ in a, 1175; ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ἈΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ (“Acts of Apostles”) is broadly and early attested in Ⲫ<sup>74</sup> (as desinit, with singular or iotacism: ΠΡΑΞΙΣ), B, D, Ψ, 1; ἈΙ ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ἈΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ (“The Acts of the Apostles”) in 323<sup>s</sup>, 945, 1241, 1739; ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ἈΓΙΩΝ ἈΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ in 453, 614, 1505, 1704, 1884; and ΛΟΥΚΑ ἘΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΤΟΥ ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΤΩΝ ἈΓΙΩΝ ἈΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ in 33, 189, 1891, 2344. Attestation for the title occurs also in SC 211.229; Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* II.1.16.1; Origen, *Contra Celsum* 3.46; GCS 1.243; see NA<sup>27</sup> ad loc. and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Yale Bible 31; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998) 47–49, at 47. References to Irenaeus are helpfully collected at Richard I. Pervo, *Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Santa Rosa, Calif.: Polebridge Press, 2006) 376 n. 6.

<sup>7</sup> See for example the parallels collected by Julian V. Hills, “The Acts of the Apostles in the *Acts of Paul*,” *SBLSP* 33 (1994) 24–54, esp. in the Appendix at 51–54; idem, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Legacy of the Lukan Acts,” *Semeia* 80 (1997) 145–58, esp. 150–54; Richard Bauckham, “The *Acts of Paul* as a Sequel to Acts,” in *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting* (vol. 1 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*; ed. Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1993) 105–52, at 112 n. 17.



Figure 0.1. CCSA's Reconstruction of the Acts of Paul<sup>8</sup>

Abstract Sections	<i>P. Hamb.</i> (4th-cent. Greek) <sup>9</sup>	<i>P. Heid.</i> (6th-cent. Coptic) <sup>10</sup>
1. Damascus (see also the unpublished John Rylands papyrus) <sup>11</sup>		<i>P. Heid.</i> 60/59 and 61/62
2. Antioch		<i>P. Heid.</i> 1–6
3–4. <i>Acts of Paul and Thekla</i> : (3) Iconium (4) Antioch [and Myra]		<i>P. Heid.</i> 6–28
5. Myra		<i>P. Heid.</i> 28–35
6. Sidon		<i>P. Heid.</i> 35–39
7. Tyre		<i>P. Heid.</i> [39–]40 <sup>12</sup>
8. Jerusalem, Cilicia, Smyrna		[ <i>P. Heid.</i> 67–70, 73–78, 81–83] <sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Compare the abstract section numbers popularized by Hennecke-Schneemelcher: *Acts of Paul and Thekla* was simply *Acts of Paul* 3, Myra was 4, Sidon 5, Tyre 6, Ephesus 7, Philippi 8, Corinth 9, the travel from Corinth to Italy 10, and the *Martyrdom* 11. It is also instructive to contrast the sequences adduced by Schmidt (see n. 12 below) and Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press: 1st ed., 1924; 2d ed., 1953).

<sup>9</sup> On the pagination of the Hamburg manuscript, see Figure 2.1, p. 68. *P. Hamb.* is dated ca. 300 C.E., which I have normally glossed as “the fourth century.”

<sup>10</sup> On the subheadings in *P. Heid.* (the Heidelberg manuscript), see Figure 5.1, p. 208. *P. Heid.* is dated to the late 5th to early 6th cent. C.E., which I have normally glossed as “the sixth century.”

<sup>11</sup> *John Rylands Library Suppl.* 44 (4th cent. Coptic); translation by Walter E. Crum, “New Coptic Manuscripts in the John Rylands Library,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 5 (1918–1920) 501.

<sup>12</sup> According to Schmidt’s *editio princeps*, the fragmentary pages 59–70 were to be situated between 40 and 41 and pages 71–74 between 52 and 53, whereas the miscellaneous fragments were labelled pages 75–78 and placed immediately before 79–80, which Schmidt understood to be fragments of a gospel (rather than part of Paul’s speech at the house of Claudius in Rome [*Acts of Paul* 13]).

<sup>13</sup> In Figure 0.1, I have used Rordorf’s pagination of *P. Heid.* for *Acts of Paul* 8 (Bovon and Geoltrain, *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, 1:1149–50; see *ibid.*, 1:1117 n. 3 on the forthcoming CCSA edition). Otherwise, I have used the pagination in Schmidt’s *editio princeps* (*Acta Pauli*, 1904).

## Figure 0.1., cont.

Abstract Sections	<i>P. Hamb.</i> (4th-cent. Greek)	<i>P. Heid.</i> (6th-cent. Coptic)
9. Ephesus: <i>Ephesus Act</i> (see also <i>Papyrus Bodmer 41</i> )	<i>P. Hamb.</i> 1–5	
10–11. Philippi: (10) 3 <i>Corinthians</i> (11) <i>Frontina</i>		<i>P. Heid.</i> 45–50, 41, 42, 44
12. Corinth	<i>P. Hamb.</i> 6–7	<i>P. Heid.</i> 44/43, 51/52
13. Travel from Corinth to Italy	<i>P. Hamb.</i> 7–8	<i>P. Heid.</i> 79/80
14. Rome: <i>Martyrdom of Paul</i>	<i>P. Hamb.</i> 9–11	<i>P. Heid.</i> 53–58

## 0.1. Prolegomena on Acts and Acts of Paul

## 0.1.1. Select Issues and Options in Recent Scholarship

Modern scholarship has produced several theories on the relationship(s) between Acts and *Acts of Paul*. The simplest theory about the relationship of Acts and *Acts of Paul*, which is also the commonest, is that Acts was written prior to the *Acts of Paul* and that the author of the *Acts of Paul* was familiar with Acts in one or another of its final written forms.<sup>14</sup> Often this theory has been paired with a negative theological valuation, whether implicit or explicit: namely, that the earlier (and divinely inspired) canonized text is “orthodox,” and that the later (and human- or demonically-inspired) text is heretical and apocryphal. Indeed, this negative valuation has sometimes been explained by appealing to one or more traditions of authorship – with Acts allegedly composed by Luke the physician and travelling companion of Paul,<sup>15</sup> and *Acts of Paul* by an anonymous presby-

<sup>14</sup> See for example the influential editions by Schmidt (*Acta Pauli*, 1904/1905; ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΥ, 1936) and Vouaux (*Actes des Paul*, 1913).

<sup>15</sup> For a list of scholars who accept the traditional authorship of Luke, see Fitzmyer, *Acts of the Apostles*, 51. For early traditions, see next note and n. 53, pp. 13–14 below.

ter or a certain Leukios Charinos.<sup>16</sup> With or without appealing to such authorship, the theory reckons each of the texts as an abstract whole (Acts versus *Acts of Paul*), and then Acts is given pride of place in terms of dating and historicity, as *Acts of Paul* is understood to depend upon Acts literarily – often, in a manner that is negatively valued.

Conversely, Willy Rordorf has argued against the theory that *Acts of Paul* is literarily dependent upon Acts of the Apostles.<sup>17</sup> Using several “parallel” texts, Rordorf has critiqued the arguments in favor of *Acts of Paul* depending on Acts and has proposed that the “parallels” in question may be better explained as material that both Acts and *Acts of Paul* acquired from the language of Christian liturgy or from terminology and phrasing commonly used in Koine Greek. In other words, Rordorf – with arguments from part to whole – has proposed a theory of literary independence: neither Acts nor *Acts of Paul* is dependent upon the other for “parallels” words and phrases.

Somewhere between these theories of literary dependence or independence is the opinion of Wilhelm Schneemelcher. Working explicitly on the presupposition that *Acts of Paul* was written toward the end of the second century (185–195 C.E.), Schneemelcher affirms that the author of *Acts of Paul* would have been familiar with Acts but also that “the literary genus, the aims in view, and the completely different situation tell in favour of literary independence.”<sup>18</sup> For Schneemelcher, the parallels between Acts and *Acts of Paul*, rather than being due to literary dependence or to common phrasing (general or liturgical), should instead be attributed to

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<sup>16</sup> On the tradition of the “presbyter,” see Tertullian, *De bapt.* 17.5 (see discussion in §3.3.3, pp. 134–37 below); and on the tradition of Leukios Charinos’s authorship of the *Acts of Paul*, see for example Knut Schäferdiek, “Die Leukios Charinos zugeschriebene manichäische Sammlung apokrypher Apostelgeschichten,” in *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen* (ed. Wilhelm Schneemelcher; 5th ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987–89) 2:81–93; for English translation, see “The Manichean Collection,” in Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2:87–100.

<sup>17</sup> See for example Willy Rordorf, “Im welchem Verhältnis stehen die apokryphen Paulusakten zur kanonischen Apostelgeschichte und zu den Pastoralbriefen?,” in *Text and Testimony: Essays on New Testament and Apocryphal Literature in Honor of A. J. F. Klijn* (ed. Tjitze Baarda; Kampen, Netherlands: Kok, 1988); reprinted in Rordorf, *Lex Orandi – Lex Credendi*, 449–74; and idem, “Paul’s Conversion in the Canonical Acts and in the *Acts of Paul*,” *Semeia* 80 (1997) 137–44.

<sup>18</sup> Wilhelm Schneemelcher, “Introduction” to “Acts of Paul,” in *New Testament Apocrypha*, 2:213–37, at 233. See also idem, “Die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas und die *Acta Pauli*,” in *Apophoreta: Festschrift für Ernst Haenchen zu seinem siebenzigsten Geburtstag am 10. Dezember 1964* (ed. Walther Eltester and Franz Heinrich Kettler; BZNW 30; Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1964) 236–50; reprinted in Schneemelcher, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament und zur Patristik (Analekta Vlatadōn 22; Thessaloniki: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1974) 204–22.*

“traditions that were in circulation about Paul and his work.”<sup>19</sup> So while accepting that Acts was available to and read by “the” author of *Acts of Paul*,<sup>20</sup> Schneemelcher argues that the parallels are not sufficient to argue for the literary dependence of the latter upon the former, but neither are they indicative of complete independence. To understand such “parallels,” claims Schneemelcher, a third entity is required: “oral” traditions about Paul that were accessible to both authors, at least in some form.

Julian Hills has considered how to move beyond these three options.<sup>21</sup> After dismissing the legitimacy of criteria for identifying literary dependence (e.g., the ones adduced by Richard Hays or Richard Brawley), Hills recounts some of the events that occurred during the 1994 Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature’s Seminar on Intertextuality in Christian Apocrypha. Among the events was a written response that Rordorf provided against the arguments – issued separately by Hills and Richard I. Pervo<sup>22</sup> – that *Acts of Paul* knew and used the Acts of the Apostles. For his conference presentation,<sup>23</sup> Hills had collected sixteen passages in *Acts of Paul* that appear to parallel Acts, either in terms of exact replication or the recollection of a structure or idea.<sup>24</sup> But against his and Pervo’s arguments, Rordorf reaffirmed his position that devotional language would account for the parallels, and he added a methodological critique: that appeal to a *hapax legomenon* – or to another rare expression – says less about literary dependence than about the accidents of history, in terms of the paucity of extant written materials and the absence of oral ones.<sup>25</sup>

In his 1997 response, Hills first considered whether “devotional language” could be used as a positive criterion for dependence, and if so, how that would work. Then he reiterated some of his many examples of “combinations of words,” not in order to convince through statistics, but because he thinks “it is surely legitimate to judge a word or expression rare or common to *the best of our knowledge*”<sup>26</sup> and because if a rare word or

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<sup>19</sup> Schneemelcher, “Introduction,” 232.

<sup>20</sup> Schneemelcher’s theory implies that, at least for the author of *Acts of Paul*, Acts did not have normative status.

<sup>21</sup> Hills, “The *Acts of Paul*.”

<sup>22</sup> Richard I. Pervo, “A Hard Act to Follow: The *Acts of Paul* and the Canonical Acts,” *Journal of Higher Criticism* 2/2 (1995) 3–32.

<sup>23</sup> Hills, “The Acts of the Apostles in the *Acts of Paul*.”

<sup>24</sup> For other uses of the “parallels,” see for example Schneemelcher, “Die Apostelgeschichte,” 242–44, supplemented by Bauckham, “The *Acts of Paul* as a Sequel to Acts,” 112 n. 17.

<sup>25</sup> An unpublished response of Rordorf cited in Hills, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Legacy of the Lukan Acts,” 148; see *ibid.*, 147 on Rordorf’s written presence but bodily absence at the event.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

expression occurs only in two texts, then its presence in the later text would imply dependence on the earlier text, “to the best of our knowledge.” Coupled with his presupposition that *Acts of Paul* was written “a few decades” later than Acts, Hills thus argued that *Acts of Paul* depended literarily – specifically, for some of its terminology (in or out of historical or theological context) – on Acts of the Apostles. In this way, Hills set forth a theory of literary dependence that does not require negative valuations of such dependence. However, as Peter Dunn has noted, it does ask us “to believe that the [author of *Acts of Paul*] has meticulously copied the wording of Acts without carrying over any of its substance”;<sup>27</sup> moreover, it asks us to do so without an explanation for how or why the author of *Acts of Paul* would have acted in such a manner.

Richard Bauckham, who is sympathetic to Rordorf’s theory of literary independence, has proposed a different kind of literary dependence:<sup>28</sup> according to Bauckham, “the *Acts of Paul* was intended as a sequel to the Lukan Acts, continuing the story of Paul’s life up to his martyrdom. In other words, the missionary journey it describes is to be dated after the end of Luke’s narrative.”<sup>29</sup> As evidence for his position, Bauckham notes that the travels in *Acts of Paul* assume the previous existence of Christian communities in the cities visited,<sup>30</sup> and he argues that *Acts of Paul* depends

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<sup>27</sup> Peter W. Dunn, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Pauline Legacy in the Second Century” (Ph.D. diss., The University of Cambridge, 1996), 38–39 n. 48. So whereas Schneemelcher’s theory implies that the author of *Acts of Paul* lacked a positive valuation of Acts (at least, compared to shared traditions), the theory of Hills seems to imply the presence of a negative valuation, insofar as the author would have been religiously disregarding the source from which he was excerpting phrases.

<sup>28</sup> Rordorf (“Nochmals. Paulusakten und Pastoralbriefe,” in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament: Essays in Honor of E. Earle Ellis for His 60th Birthday* [eds. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Otto Betz; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1987] 319–25) earlier argued that the *Acts of Paul* portrays circumstances in Paul’s life after the events narrated in Acts 28. Rordorf disagrees with Bauckham that the author of the *Acts of Paul* knew and used the Pastoral Epistles; and Rordorf’s arguments against the literary dependence of the *Acts of Paul* upon Acts imply that he would also contest Bauckham’s claim that the *Acts of Paul* was intended as a sequel to Acts.

<sup>29</sup> Bauckham, “The *Acts of Paul* as a Sequel to Acts,” 112; see also idem, “The *Acts of Paul*: Replacement of Acts or Sequel to Acts?,” *Semeia* 80 (1997) 159–68. Note that the *Acts of Peter*, at least according to the Vercelli manuscript, is probably a sequel to the canonized Acts; and below I will argue that one of the narrative traditions in *Acts of Paul* may also have been written as a sequel. In general, it is taking the *Acts of Paul* only as a whole that has resulted in scholarly impasse. For ancient precedent for Bauckham’s position, see for example Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 2.22.1–8, which appeals to 2 Tim 4:16–18 and to a certain λόγος (probably the *Martyrdom of Paul*; see *Hist. eccl.* 2.25.5 on Paul’s beheading; cp. 3.1.3).

<sup>30</sup> Bauckham notes (“The *Acts of Paul* as a Sequel to Acts,” 137–38) that the theme of travel, paralleled in the so-called romance novels, is particularly prevalent in *Acts of Paul*

literarily on *1 Clement* and on the Pastoral Epistles (especially 2 Timothy and Titus).<sup>31</sup> On this theory, the author of *Acts of Paul* used the letters that Bauckham attributes to Paul's later missionary work (1–2 Corinthians, 2 Timothy, and Titus), as well as the account of Paul's sufferings in *1 Clem.* 5:5–7, to creatively construct a narrative that incorporates the relevant and otherwise missing data from the Lukan Acts: "His story of Paul's experiences at Ephesus, for example, must have seemed to him the kind of thing that must have happened to account for what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:32; 2 Corinthians 1:8–10 and 2 Timothy 4:16–18."<sup>32</sup> With comparison to genres that flourished or emerged in the late second century (romance novels, biographies in general and novelistic biographies of philosophers in particular, and martyrdoms),<sup>33</sup> Bauckham concludes that "contemporary influences" – not to mention the authorial plan of the author – help to explain the differences between Acts and the later *Acts of Paul*, which he understands to be a "a work of novelistic biographical character."<sup>34</sup> By way of comparison, Bauckham's theory thus progresses beyond the argument of Hills by proposing an explanation for why the author of *Acts of Paul* might depend on Acts literarily yet "change" the text in such marked ways: because the author of *Acts of Paul* was writing a conclusion to Acts.<sup>35</sup>

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versus the other early noncanonized acts – a feature he attributes to the *Acts of Paul* imitating the Lukan Acts.

<sup>31</sup> Bauckham, "The *Acts of Paul* as a Sequel to Acts," 113–15. Bauckham observes that there are seven characters common to the *Acts of Paul* and 2 Timothy (*ibid.*, 117). Dunn proposes two additional names from Titus ("The *Acts of Paul*," 40), and he concurs with Bauckham that "the Presbyter" (i.e., the alleged author of the whole *Acts of Paul*) knew the Pauline letters but with Rordorf that he did not know Acts (*ibid.*, 43–44). Two comments: first of all, concerning parallel names, it is not necessary to Titus to 2 Timothy (see 2 Tim 4:10); and second, the names are paralleled more specifically in the *Martyrdom of Paul* and in the *Acts of Paul and Thekla*.

<sup>32</sup> Bauckham, "The *Acts of Paul* as a Sequel to Acts," 131–32.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 125–30, 132–33, 145.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 139–50, at 150. In "Replacement of Acts or Sequel to Acts?," Bauckham clearly states that he dates the *Acts of Paul* to the second half of the second century, probably the later part; and he argues, for example regarding Paul's "conversion," that the author of *Acts of Paul* was engaged in "harmonizing and imaginative expansion of his sources" (165). Bauckham ("The *Acts of Paul* as a Sequel to Acts," 115–16) also provides a counterargument against the position that *P. Bodm.* 41, in its description of Paul at Damascus, refers to Paul's call/conversion. For discussion of *P. Bodm.* 41, see §2.2, pp. 76–81 below; see also §§2.3.1, 6.1.3.1, et passim.

<sup>35</sup> As a thoroughly "documentary" theory, Bauckham's position does not account for the possibility that the author may (also) have used oral or non-extant written materials. Also, it is interesting to note that (intentionally or unintentionally) Bauckham's theory would be compatible with an early dating of Acts. For, on his theory of *Acts of Paul*, one may argue that "Luke" wrote Acts concurrent to the end of its narrative (ca. 63 C.E.) and

In critical reply to Bauckham, Pervo has offered a “redaction-critical argument,” based on three examples, that “(some edition of) Acts was one written source of the *Acts of Paul*” and that the author of *Acts of Paul* wanted “to correct and *probably to supplant*” Acts.<sup>36</sup> To do so, Pervo first assumes that *Acts of Paul* is a coherent whole<sup>37</sup> and then, on the basis of its various parts, concludes that the author of *Acts of Paul* must have composed his text with certain motivations (e.g., to resolve conundra, fill gaps, and provide edifying details).<sup>38</sup> Then, with these motives in mind (and to the exclusion of the explanatory benefits of competing theories),<sup>39</sup> Pervo interpreted the parallels in *Acts of Paul* to count as evidence for its literary dependence upon and correction of Acts.

Daniel Marguerat critiqued Pervo, Rordorf, and Schneemelcher – and by implication Hills – on the grounds that all of their theories consider literary dependence “exclusively in terms of similitude,” especially in terms of “similar narrative sequences” or “by language common to both texts.”<sup>40</sup> Unconvinced by the argument of Bauckham, Marguerat nonetheless finds promise in the way Bauckham moves beyond the analysis of similarities to consider how one text may creatively use another. Deploying Gérard Genette’s literary model of “hypertextuality,”<sup>41</sup> Marguerat therefore proposes an intertextual analysis of both similarities and differ-

that only later did Paul write additional letters and do what was later incorporated into *Acts of Paul*. In any case, Bauckham’s theory implies that Acts may have been considered at least somewhat authoritative by the author of *Acts of Paul*.

<sup>36</sup> Pervo, “A Hard Act to Follow,” 28 (*italics added*). Not surprisingly, Pervo also critiques Bauckham’s considerations for genre (28–31).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 3 n. 3, discusses extant data in terms of “multiple editions” that evince “expansions,” “abbreviations,” “extractions,” and “excisions.”

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 11. In n. 39, Pervo offers an interesting discussion of the Bezae form of Acts 20:1–12, which includes variations that we otherwise know only from *Acts of Paul* (or, if I may be more specific, from the *Martyrdom of Paul*).

<sup>39</sup> For example, citing Dennis Ronald MacDonald (*The Legend and the Apostle: The Battle for Paul in Story and Canon* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983]), Pervo (“A Hard Act to Follow,” 12) notes that the Patroclus story in the *Martyrdom (Acts of Paul 14)* “plays a more explicit role in the plot of *Acts of Paul*” than does the Eutychus story in Acts 20:7–12; and regarding the riots in Ephesus (*Acts of Paul 9*; Acts 19), he notes that “if one were to argue for priority on the basis of coherence, *Acts of Paul* would seem to be more original” (*ibid.*, 13). Most persuasive, in my opinion, are the set of parallels to *Acts of Paul 12* (labelled as “*Acts of Paul 9*”) adduced as Pervo’s third example. But see my discussions in §2.3, pp. 81–98 below (esp. §§2.3.1; 2.3.3).

<sup>40</sup> Daniel Marguerat, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Canonical Acts: A Phenomenon of Re-reading,” *Semeia* 80 (1997) 169–83, at 170. The article was also published in French as “*Actes de Paul et Actes canonique: un phénomène de relecture*,” *Apocrypha* 8 (1997) 207–24.

<sup>41</sup> See Gérard Genette, *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree* (trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinsky; Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1997) 5.

ences, arguing that “the *Acts of Paul* neither ignores nor rejects the canonical Acts; rather, it transforms the narrative in light of new theological interests and changed historical circumstances.”<sup>42</sup> In other words, according to Marguerat, *Acts of Paul* is creatively modeled after Acts, which it supplements as a kind of modern reworking (compare, for example, the many modern reworkings of Shakespeare).

Indeed, Marguerat attributes to the author of *Acts of Paul* a positive valuation of Acts, desiring both to complete its story (by narrating the martyrdom of Paul) and to portray the apostle in an even more venerable light. On Marguerat’s reading, *Acts of Paul* assumes the story of Acts (e.g., its portrait of Paul as a founder of communities) and then, in continuation of the practice in Acts to “reread” its own stories, *Acts of Paul* provides different emphases and amplifies the stories of Acts (e.g., by portraying Paul’s welcome by Christian communities and by providing higher status to characters of secondary roles).<sup>43</sup> But why would someone re-read and literally re-inscribe Acts in this manner? Marguerat offers three proposals: (1) to complete the biography of Paul; (2) to reflect an alleged change in historical opponents – from “the Jews” in the first century, to “the Roman Empire” at the end of the second; and/or (3) to provide additional veneration of Paul in “a clear progression of hagiographical tendency,”<sup>44</sup> which he claims is a “new level of veneration the apostle received during the second century.”<sup>45</sup> Marguerat’s theory thus works to explain the similarities and differences between Acts and *Acts of Paul* by arguing that the latter assumes the narrative of the former but reworks it for a community in different circumstances, “for love of Paul.”<sup>46</sup>

István Czachesz complexifies matters further by taking into account the “D” text-type of Acts.<sup>47</sup> Preferring an early dating for the original form

<sup>42</sup> Marguerat, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Canonical Acts,” 169 (see “Abstract”).

<sup>43</sup> Marguerat (“The *Acts of Paul* and the Canonical Acts,” 174–78) discusses three scenes: the riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:1–40; *Acts of Paul* 9), the resuscitation of the boy who falls (Acts 20:7–12; *Martyrdom of Paul* 1), and Paul’s “conversion” (Acts 9; 22; 26; *Acts of Paul* 9, according to *P. Bodm.* 41). The stories in Acts 9, 22, and 26 are understood to be “rereadings” of the relevant kind.

<sup>44</sup> Marguerat, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Canonical Acts,” 179.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 181. See also Daniel Marguerat and Walter Rebell, “Les *Actes des Paul*. Un portrait inhabituel de l’apôtre,” in *Le mystère apocryphe* (ed. Jean-Daniel Kaestli and Daniel Marguerat; *Essais bibliques* 26; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1995) 107–24.

<sup>46</sup> Marguerat, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Canonical Acts,” 181. Among other things, the theory does not account for the differences in named individuals (see Bauckham, “Replacement of Acts or Sequel to Acts?”), which Bauckham attributes to the author of *Acts of Paul* intentionally telling a different story but which could also support Rordorf’s theory of literary independence.

<sup>47</sup> The “D” text-type is not only a “Western” recension; it is attested in Gaul, Italy, North Africa, Egypt, and even the “East.”



of Acts (which he basically identifies with the “B,” “Alexandrian,” or “Neutral” text-type), Czachesz argues that the “D” form of Acts (ca. 140–160 C.E.) and *Acts of Paul* (ca. 185–195 C.E.) were rough “contemporaries” that sometimes depended on “common tradition.”<sup>48</sup> Following Bauckham, Czachesz understands *Acts of Paul* not to have been written “as a correction or substitute to Luke’s Acts, but rather as a supplement to it, while,” he adds, “the primary goal of *D* was to correct the canonical Acts, although it also added some supplementary material to it.”<sup>49</sup> On this theory, *Acts of Paul* had access to the “B” but not the “D” form of Acts; and hence *Acts of Paul* provides independent attestation to some of the traditions that are otherwise preserved only in the “D” text.<sup>50</sup> By considering “parallels” between the “D” form of Acts and *Acts of Paul*, Czachesz thus reminds us that simplistic discussion of Acts as an early coherent whole should be avoided, given its complicated textual history.<sup>51</sup>

Debates about the relations between Acts and *Acts of Paul* have therefore centered on the questions of dating and dependence of one text upon another. For many scholars, Acts is understood to be the earlier written text, upon which the author of *Acts of Paul* was dependent literarily. But some have proposed counterarguments against the literary dependence of *Acts of Paul* upon Acts; some have argued for the mutual dependence of both texts on other materials (oral and/or written) for the “parallels” between Acts and *Acts of Paul* – for example, materials that are the product of common Greek language, shared liturgical practice, and/or traditions particularly related to Paul; and others have complicated matters by assuming the dependence of *Acts of Paul* upon the “B” or “Alexandrian” text of Acts, while arguing for “shared traditions” between the “D” form of Acts and *Acts of Paul*.

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<sup>48</sup> István Czachesz, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Western Text of Luke’s Acts: Paul between Canon and Apocrypha,” in *The Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla* (ed. Jan N. Bremmer; Kampen, the Netherlands; Kok Pharos, 1996) 107–25, at 123 and 115.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>50</sup> Czachesz (basing his analysis on Eldon J. Epp, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966]) notes that where *D* and *Acts of Paul* most disagree is on the role and function of women (“The *Acts of Paul* and the Western Text of Luke’s Acts,” 122); Czachesz also suggests that, in the absence of further manuscript evidence, the lacunae in *D* may be due to the intentional excision of “excessively apocryphal” material (*ibid.*, 125). Contrast for example the opinion of M. Wilcox, “Luke and the Bezan Text of Acts,” in *Les Actes des Apôtres. Traditions, rédaction, théologie* (ed. J. Kremer; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979) 447–55, who argues that both *B* and *D* forms partially represent an earlier text. As I imply below, an historical leveling needs to occur, in which acts canonical and non-canonical are considered on parallel terms.

<sup>51</sup> See also Pervo, “A Hard Act to Follow,” 11 n. 39.

## 0.1.2. On Relating Acts and Acts of Paul

Concerning these debates on the dating and relations of Acts and *Acts of Paul*, some comments should be made, particularly on presuppositions and methods. (1) First of all, most discussions have assumed that Acts was a coherent and stable whole. But even beyond the second century, Acts was not a fixed text; it was being produced in at least two distinct forms (the “B” and “D” text-types), with significant variation occurring within each recension.<sup>52</sup> (2) Second but relatedly, while assuming Acts to be a stable and coherent whole, most of the scholars who have compared Acts and *Acts of Paul* have assumed that the original text of Acts should be equated with the “B” text-type, which was only later redacted into the “D” text-type. However, in several cases, it is evident that the “D” form of Acts is more original. For this and other reasons, some have therefore argued that the “D” text-type of Acts – which is attested earlier (chronologically), more widely (geographically), and more diversely (among various Christian groups) than the “B” text-type of Acts – is the “original text” of Acts; others have argued that both the “B” and “D” text-types are “original texts” (for example, first and second editions drafted by “Luke”); and others have argued that both are dependent upon some earlier form of Acts. Therefore, since it is less than certain that the “B” text-type represents was the “original form” of Acts, it may be unwise to depend on such an assumption when comparing *Acts of Paul* with Acts. For, the “B” form of Acts may represent a later, “cleaner” text that was produced in Alexandria – perhaps even by someone who knew and intentionally cut out, condensed, etc., traditions that are otherwise attested in the “D” text-type, *Acts of Paul*, and/or other texts. After all, Acts is not definitely attested until the last quarter of the second century (see the “anti-Marcionite prologues” and Irenaeus of Lyons, *Adv. haer.*, ca. 185 C.E.),<sup>53</sup> and there is a counter-

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<sup>52</sup> To discuss such matters is difficult, since “forms” and “recensions” are anachronistic categories of analysis, used by modern scholars in historical retrospect. Historically, there would have been particular churches, scriptoria, schools, etc., with various kinds and degrees of authority and mechanisms to help regulate the production of manuscripts. But each manuscript is its own witness to a scribe (or set of scribes) producing a particular form of text.

<sup>53</sup> Some argue for uses of Acts in Polycarp (*Phil.* 1:2, perhaps ca. 140 C.E.), Justin Martyr (*I Apol.* 50.12, ca. 155 C.E.), or *Didascalia Apostolorum* (late 2d cent.), not to mention *Acts of Paul*. But Irenaeus and the anti-Marcionite prologues are the earliest certain references. Irenaeus, as a supplement to his arguments that Marcion altered the gospel of Luke (*Adv. haer.* 3.12.12), argued that Luke was also the author of the Acts of the Apostles (3.13.3–14.1) and that Acts was composed in Rome (3.1.1; 3.14.1). The anti-Marcionite prologue of Luke reads: “Luke is a Syrian of Antioch, a Syrian by race, a physician by profession. He had become a disciple of the apostles and later followed Paul until his [Paul’s] martyrdom, having served the Lord continuously, unmarried, without

consensus developing within scholarship on Acts that its “original text” should be dated as a whole to the second quarter, if not into the third quarter, of the second century.<sup>54</sup>

(3) Especially when working with only the “B” form of Acts, debates about the relationship of Acts and *Acts of Paul* often consider only the final form(s) of Acts – that is, the stories produced by “the” author of Acts. Not surprisingly, such considerations are often made on the basis of two related presuppositions: that Acts was written prior to *Acts of Paul*, and that the author of *Acts of Paul* knew and used Acts in its “B” form. For, on those presuppositions, it is common to consider where, how, and why the author of *Acts of Paul* changed whatever form of Acts had been received. However, many of the stories produced by the author(s) of Acts were neither block quotations of source material nor compositions *de novo*; rather, the stories in Acts – in the “B,” “D,” and/or some other form – are often an artful mixture of tradition and redaction. So even though it is simpler to compare whole texts, and while it makes sense to do so on a theory that presupposes redaction of Acts in some original or later form by the author of *Acts of Paul*, a desideratum in scholarship would be to offer comparisons that also consider the pre-redacted traditions of Acts. For, if comparisons included the results of source and redaction criticism, such

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children, filled with the Holy Spirit he died at the age of eighty-four in Boetia” (translated from the editor of Heard by Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* [Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1990] 335; for a different Latin edition, see Kurt Aland, *Synopsis Quattuor Evangeliorum* [15th rev. ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997] 563). In contrast to Irenaeus’s tradition, as well as one that names Caesarea as the place of composition, the anti-Marcionite prologue claims a provenance of Achaia. Both traditions name Luke as the author of the text and situate Acts within a myth of origins for “the Church.”

<sup>54</sup> Pervo (*Dating Acts*) has provided the most recent thorough argument for late dating. For a helpful summary of scholarly opinion, see *ibid.*, “Appendix II: Scholarly Estimates of the Date of Acts,” 359–63. Other representatives of the second quarter of the second century include P. W. Schmiedel (105–130 C.E.), J. C. O’Neill (ca. 115–130), J. Drury (ca. 115–130), J. Knox (up to 125), C. Mount (up to 130), E. Barnikol (ca. 135), and P. L. Couchoud (135 or later). Joseph B. Tyson (*Marcion and Luke-Acts: A Defining Struggle* [Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 2006] 5), who argues for a date around 120–125 C.E., explains that another representative would be F. C. Baur (140–150). Others such as John T. Townsend (“The Date of Luke-Acts,” in *Luke-Acts: New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature Seminar* [ed. Charles H. Talbert; New York: Crossroad, 1984] 47–62) may also be added. For discussion of the related question of the reception of Acts, see François Bovon, “The Reception of the Book of Acts in Late Antiquity,” in *Contemporary Studies in Acts* (ed. Thomas E. Phillips; Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2009) 66–92. In Germany, an argument for an early dating was released the same year as Pervo’s *Dating Acts*: Alexander Mittelstaedt, *Lukas als Historiker. Zur Datierung des lukanischen Doppelwerkes* (Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter 43; Tübingen: Francke, 2006).

that the materials in one or another form of Acts would be grouped into distinct sets of tradition(s) and redaction(s), one would be able to consider whether a “parallel” in *Acts of Paul* had more in common with pre-Lukan tradition or particularly Lukan redaction. Granted, a significant amount of the “data” produced in this way would continue to be interpreted variously, based on different working hypotheses; but in some cases, it might strengthen or weaken one or more theories about the relations of Acts and *Acts of Paul*.

(4) So also, studies comparing Acts and *Acts of Paul* have often neglected to incorporate the results of source and redaction criticism on *Acts of Paul* – with the notable exception of studies that consider Acts (in its “B” form) to be a tradition redacted by the author of *Acts of Paul*. What other traditions, oral or written, were used in *Acts of Paul*? And how would use of those traditions relate to the alleged “parallels” between Acts and *Acts of Paul*?

(5) Moreover, just as Acts is normally considered simply in its final (“B”) form as a stable text, so is it commonly presupposed that *Acts of Paul* was an early coherent whole – regardless of the state of “its” manuscript preservation. Often the epistolary correspondence called 3 Corinthians is excluded from this generalization: many understand this “part” to be a later addition to “the” *Acts of Paul*. But as I will argue, 3 Corinthians is an exception that proves the rule. Indeed, the presupposition that *Acts of Paul* is an early coherent whole is so deeply and thoroughly embedded in scholarship that it often used, in many cases unwittingly, to argue mereologically: for example, sometimes an observation or conclusion about “one part” of *Acts of Paul* (e.g., part of the *Ephesus Act*, attested in *P. Hamb.* and *P. Bodm.* 41) is used to interpret another (e.g., the *Acts of Paul and Thekla*, attested in *P. Heid.*); sometimes scholars argue from part-to-whole or from whole-to-part; and so forth. With some notable exceptions, arguments of this kind may be reasonable if *Acts of Paul* was indeed composed as a single, coherent whole. But what if it was not?

That is, what if the modern scholarly category “*Acts of Paul*” – namely, an early Christian narrative originally composed in Greek by a single author or community in the late second century, probably in Asia Minor – is ahistorical? What if the traditions variously collected under this and related titles were not produced by the same author?

In my study of the composition and reception of traditions in *Acts of Paul* (abstractly conceived), I have therefore decided not to predetermine the relations between Acts and *Acts of Paul* by reinscribing such presuppositions. In particular, I have decided: neither to consider only the final form(s) of the abstract(ed) whole texts “Acts” and “*Acts of Paul*,” nor to

consider (without argument) the form(s) of stories attested in one or more forms of Acts to be superior to those of the stories abstractly grouped as “*Acts of Paul*” – chronologically (i.e., in terms of composition), recensionally (i.e., in terms of oral and/or written dependence), historically (i.e., in terms of reliable reporting of events), theologically, or otherwise. Rather, I have decided to work in terms of the distinct traditions preserved in Acts and *Acts of Paul* and to consider the processes by which such were developed.

## 0.2. Plan of Study

I am therefore offering a critical and historical study of the composition and reception of the traditions abstractly ascribed to “*Acts of Paul*.”<sup>55</sup> For, it is time to take seriously the question of how and why various narratives were produced about Paul, and it is important to do so from an historical perspective, so that each narrative can tell its own story, providing its own perspective on and part within the diverse and multifaceted history of early Christianity. To this end, I study *Acts of Paul* without equating categories that should be considered separately (e.g., “historical,” “canonical,” “orthodox,” “true,” and “useful [for *x*]”), and I work critically with the manuscripts attributed to *Acts of Paul*. Rather than assuming that *Acts of Paul* was an early coherent whole, I begin by studying its separable traditions (chapters 1–4), using the manuscript evidence for independently circulating “parts” as a heuristic to reconsider the diverse thoughts, practices, and groups represented by each of these texts. With such diversity in mind, I continue by analyzing manuscripts that include several “*Acts of Paul*” (chapter 5) and discussing what may and may not be known about the composition and reception of *Acts of Paul* (chapter 6).

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<sup>55</sup> For modern translations, see for example in English: J. K. Elliott, ed., *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) 350–89; Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha* (2 vols.; rev. ed. of the collection by Edgar Hennecke; trans. Robert McL. Wilson; Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991) 2:213–70; French: Bovon and Geoltrain, *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, 1:1115–77; German: Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen in deutscher Übersetzung* (5th ed., based on the collection of Edgar Hennecke; Tübingen: 1987–1989) 2:193–243; Italian: Mario Erbetta, *Gli Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento* (2d ed.; 4 vols.; Torino: Marietti, 1966–1981) 2:243–88; Luidi Moraldi, *Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento* (2 vols.; *Classici delle religioni*; Torino: 1971) 2:1061–1130; and Spanish: Antonio Piñero and Gonzalo del Cerro, eds., *Hechos Apócrifos de Los Apóstoles* (2 vols.; Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2004–2005) 2:683–859.

Over and against the working consensus for an early coherent whole *Acts of Paul*, I will be setting forth an alternate theory, as I argue that the materials included in one or more collections of “*Acts of Paul*” represent not the re-collection of “parts” that belonged to some original “whole” but rather to receptions of at least three distinct strands of composition, each of which had its own stages of growth and development. Considering “*Acts of Paul*” in this way allows one to situate and understand these traditions in their historical contexts, for example by reconsidering the relations between distinct “parts” of *Acts of Paul* and Acts. My hope is that we will no longer think in terms of abstract wholes; we must divide and conquer. For, the “parts” were once wholes, oral and/or written; and it is the composition, reception, and development of such that resulted in the various forms of Acts and *Acts of Paul*.

Chapters 1–4 study traditions that circulated both independently and in one or more collections of “*Acts of Paul*.” In these chapters, rather than assuming that the independently circulating traditions are simply “parts” of “the whole” *Acts of Paul*, each is studied separately – according to the majority of its manuscripts. The result, within and between these chapters, is a display of the diversity among traditions attributed to “*Acts of Paul*.” For, when each of these traditions is studied as a distinct early Christian text, it is simple to observe that they attest to different sets of intertexts, ideologies of Scripture, christologies, understandings of baptism, theologies of resurrection, political stances, and so forth. To put it simply, each of these “*Acts of Paul*” remembers Paul differently. The function of these first four chapters is therefore twofold: (1) to hear again the discrete remembrances of Paul that are preserved in these early Christian texts, as testimony to the diversity of early Pauline communities; and (2) to problematize the theory that these traditions are simply “parts” of “the whole” *Acts of Paul*.

Chapter 1 studies the *Martyrdom of Paul*, which circulated independently and in the Hamburg and Heidelberg manuscripts that collect *Acts of Paul*. The *Martyrdom of Paul* tells a story that is conspicuously lacking among the stories canonized in Acts of the Apostles: Paul’s trial and execution by Nero, *imperator* of Rome (54–68 C.E.). The *Martyrdom* opposes Paul and Nero, and it includes descriptions of Paul’s post-mortem appearances that parallel gospel stories of Jesus’ uprising (ἀνάστασις). At least parts of the story would have had oral antecedents; and the story of Paul’s death circulated in a variety of oral and written forms, as attested by its early and widespread distribution among Christians of various persuasions and by the many variants and versions that have been preserved (§1.0). But in this chapter I study the earliest written form(s) of the *Martyrdom of Paul*, among other ways by discussing its redactional levels and comparing