

The First Pauline Chronologist? Paul's Itinerary in the Letters and in Acts

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Abstract

Since the recent work of the Westar Institute's Acts Seminar, and especially the publication of Richard Pervo's *Dating Acts*, the possibility that Paul's letters served as a source for the book of Acts requires renewed examination. This article tests the hypothesis of Luke's dependence on the Pauline corpus by examining its credibility as an explanation for one particular feature of the narrative, namely, Paul's itinerary as reported in Acts 15:36–20:16. The basic geographical framework of these chapters is easily explicable as Lukan deduction from Paul's letters; differences in detail are convincingly explained as Lukan redaction, clearly in keeping with his theological and narrative interests and in accord with the editorial procedure that is evident, *mutatis mutandis*, in his Gospel. What is more, this hypothesis accounts for features of the narrative that other theories of the itinerary's source do not, specifically, the remarkable correspondence between those cities named in the Pauline corpus and those that serve as Luke's narrative settings for Paul's activity, as well as the intertextual resonances in Acts 19:21 and 20:22 of Paul's travel announcement in Romans 15:31. In short, an examination of Paul's itinerary in these chapters provides strong confirmation of the explanatory value of the hypothesis that Luke used Paul's letters as a primary source.

Since the recent work of the Westar Institute's Acts Seminar, and especially the publication of Richard Pervo's *Dating Acts*, the possibility that Paul's letters served as a source for the book of Acts requires renewed examination.¹ Pervo is not, of course, the first to put forward such an argument. No, as Morton Enslin reported in his 1938 article on the matter, "the Tübingen school took the dependence of Acts upon the Pauline letters for granted."² But for the

¹ Dennis E. Smith and Joseph B. Tyson, eds., *Acts and Christian Beginnings: The Acts Seminar Report* (Salem, Oreg.: Polebridge, 2013), 116–17, 206–7 and passim; Richard I. Pervo, *Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Santa Rosa, Calif.: Polebridge, 2006), 51–147.

² Morton S. Enslin, "'Luke' and Paul," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 58 (1938): 81.

past century, despite a slow but insistent trickle of studies proposing its revival,³ this theory has remained safely on the margins of Lukan scholarship.⁴ It is not yet clear to what extent *Dating Acts* has changed this situation: Outside of Finland, where the theory already had a strong foothold,⁵ Pervo's proposal has met mostly with rather guarded approval,⁶ and also some rather perfunctory rejection.⁷

It need hardly be said that the question is an important one, with profound implications both for our understanding of the compositional practice of Luke and for the ongoing debate

³ In addition to Enslin's work, see William O. Walker, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus Reconsidered," *JSNT*, no. 24 (1985): 3–23; Walker, "Acts and the Pauline Corpus Revisited: Peter's Speech at the Jerusalem Conference," in *Literary Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays in Honor of Joseph B. Tyson* (ed. Richard P. Thompson and Thomas E. Phillips; Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1998), 77–86; Michael D. Goulder, "Did Luke Know Any of the Pauline Letters?," *PRSt* 13 (1986): 97–112; Lars Aejmelaeus, *Die Rezeption der Paulusbriefe in der Miletrede (Apg 20:18–35)* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1987); Anthony J. Blasi, *Making Charisma: The Social Construction of Paul's Public Image* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1991), 39–73; Heikki Leppä, "Luke's Critical Use of Galatians" (Ph.D. diss., University of Helsinki, 2002). Cf. also Kirsopp Lake, "Paul's Route in Asia Minor," in vol. 5 of *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part I, The Acts of the Apostles* (ed. F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake; 5 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1933), 239.

⁴ Enslin—convinced, one suspects, that his work had been unjustly ignored—published essentially the same study again more than 30 years later, and to much the same fate ("Once Again, Luke and Paul," *ZNW* 61 [1970]: 253–71).

⁵ See now Lars Aejmelaeus, "The Pauline Letters as Source Material in Luke-Acts," in *The Early Reception of Paul* (ed. Kenneth Liljeström; Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 99; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2011), 54–75; Heikki Leppä, "Luke's Selective Use of Gal 1 and 2: A Critical Proposal," in *The Early Reception of Paul* (ed. Kenneth Liljeström; Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society 99; Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 2011), 91–124.

⁶ See, e.g., Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 15–16; Stanley E. Porter, "Was Paulinism a Thing when Luke-Acts was Written?," in *Reception of Paulinism in Acts* (ed. Daniel Marguerat; BETL 229; Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 11–12; Joseph B. Tyson, *Marcion and Luke-Acts: A Defining Struggle* (University of South Carolina Press, 2006), 15–22; Tyson, "Source Criticism of Acts," in *Method and Meaning: Essays on New Testament Interpretation in Honor of Harold W. Attridge* (ed. Andrew B. McGowan and Kent Harold Richards; SBLRBS 67; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 41–57. See also the reviews by Robert Tannehill, *CBQ* 69 (2007): 827–28, and F. Scott Spencer, *Int* 62 (2008): 190–93.

⁷ E.g. Craig S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary* (4 vols.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012–2014), 1:233–37.

concerning the role of Acts in the study of Paul. But my purpose here is not to probe the implications of the theory, nor to discuss its merit in general.⁸ Rather, I propose to test the hypothesis of Luke's dependence on the Pauline corpus by examining its credibility as an explanation for one particular feature of the narrative, one that has been fertile ground for a number of source-critical theories—namely, Paul's itinerary as reported in Acts 16–20. My question here is twofold: First, to what extent can the itinerary of Acts 16–20—or, more precisely, 15:36–20:16—be explained as Luke's deduction from his reading of Paul's letters? And, second, are there features of the narrative that make this explanation preferable to other common proposals, specifically, that Luke had access to an independent “itinerary” source,⁹ or was a travelling companion of Paul?¹⁰

Indeed, it is the proliferation of just such proposals that makes the itinerary of chs. 16–20 a particularly useful testing ground for the hypothesis of Lukan dependence on the Pauline corpus. If, as I will propose, it can be demonstrated that there are no significant barriers to viewing Paul's letters as a primary source of Luke's itinerary, and, further, that this explanation

⁸ Accordingly, I will refrain from comment here on many of the questions that have been at the forefront of this debate. For general discussion, see John Knox, “Acts and the Pauline Letter Corpus,” in *Studies in Luke-Acts* (ed. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn; Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), 279–87; C. K. Barrett, “Acts and the Pauline Corpus,” *ExpTim* 88 (1976): 2–5; Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 51–58; Tyson, “Source Criticism of Acts,” 52–56; Aejmelaes, “Pauline Letters as Source Material.”

⁹ So Martin Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (ed. Heinrich Greeven; trans. Mary Ling; New York: Scribner, 1956), 196–201; Gerd Lüdemann, *Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 13–15. Cf. Stanley E. Porter, *Paul in Acts* (Library of Pauline Studies; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001), 10–46.

¹⁰ So Adolf Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles* (trans. J. R. Wilkinson; New Testament Studies 3; London: Williams & Norgate, 1909), 162–63. And, more recently, Claus-Jürgen Thornton, *Der Zeuge des Zeugen: Lukas als Historiker der Paulusreisen* (WUNT 56; Mohr [Siebeck], 1991); Colin J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (ed. Conrad H. Gempf; WUNT 49; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989), 308–64.

mitigates difficulties inherent in other proposals, that would provide strong confirmation of the explanatory value of the hypothesis.

1. The Framework of Luke's Itinerary

It will be useful to begin by considering the basic geographical framework of Luke's account (see Table 1). Following the council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:1–35), Luke has Paul reprise the journeys through Syria, Cilicia, and Lycaonia undertaken in chapters 13 and 14 (15:36–16:5), then narrates his evangelizing activity in Phrygia and Galatia (16:6),¹¹ and—via Troas (16:8)—Philippi (16:12), Thessalonica (17:1), Beroea (17:10), Athens (17:15), and Corinth (18:1). This is followed by a brief stopover in Ephesus (18:19) en route to Jerusalem and Antioch (18:22), a return to Ephesus (19:1) via Phrygia and Galatia (18:23), and then a second trip to Macedonia (20:1) and Greece (20:2). Finally, Paul makes his farewell journey to Jerusalem via Philippi (20:3, 5), Troas (20:6), and Miletus (20:14).

It should be immediately clear that, with the exception of Paul's visit to Jerusalem in Acts 18, this is an itinerary the framework of which could quite easily have been constructed from cues in the letters. The letter to the Galatians attests to Paul's evangelistic work in that region,¹²

¹¹ The analogies provided by Acts 19:21 (τὴν Μακεδονίαν καὶ Ἀχαΐαν) and 27:5 (τὴν Κιλικίαν καὶ Παμφυλίαν), as well as Luke's varied usage (cf. 16:6; 18:23), tell against the notion that Luke intends by τὴν Φρυγίαν καὶ Γαλατικὴν χώραν to designate a single region ("Phrygia-Galatia"). Cf. Luke 3:1. So James Moffatt, *An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (International Theological Library; New York: Scribner, 1922), 93; Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (trans. Bernard Noble and Gerald Shinn; Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 483–484. Contra, e.g., Rainer Riesner, *Paul's Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology* (trans. Doug Stott; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 285.

¹² By Galatia I refer to the traditional ethnic territory ("North Galatia") and not the Roman province. See n. 33 below.

and perhaps to a subsequent visit also (4:12–20).¹³ Although it is not easy to determine on the basis of his letters whether Paul was first in Galatia before or after his initial trip to Europe,¹⁴ one can certainly imagine Luke deciding on an early visit simply on account of the geography. Paul will travel from east to west, thus providing Luke with a opportunity too good to miss: If he is to visit Galatia twice—and in Luke’s scheme Paul must visit every place he evangelizes a second time, to strengthen and encourage the believers (cf. 14:22; 15:41; 16:5; 18:23; 20:1–3a)¹⁵—the most economical solution is to have Paul make his first pass through the region on his way to the Aegean.

From Troas¹⁶ to Corinth Luke’s task is a simple one. The sequence Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, Corinth can quite easily be deduced from Paul’s own remarks (1 Thess 2:1–2; 1 Thess 3:1–3; Phil 4:15–16; 2 Cor 11:9).¹⁷ And one hardly need imagine Luke going to the trouble of carefully collating the three or four relevant texts. He need only have considered that it was to Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth that Paul wrote letters, remembered Paul’s comment about being “left alone in Athens” (1 Thess 3:1), and then connected the dots. Of

¹³ Paul’s τὸ πρότερον in Gal 4:13 is often interpreted to mean “the first time [I visited],” thus implying a second visit. See Gerd Lüdemann, *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984), 90–92; Moffatt, *Introduction*, 84. Whether or not this was indeed Paul’s meaning, Luke certainly could have interpreted the phrase in this way.

¹⁴ Cf. Lüdemann, *Studies in Chronology*, 109.

¹⁵ Note that Luke’s wording of these texts almost certainly betrays his familiarity with the letters. Although the words στηρίζω/ἐπιστηρίζω and παρακαλέω may be common enough, a TLG search demonstrates that, prior to the 4th c., they appear together only in 1 Thess 1:2; 2:7; Acts 14:22; 15:32, and texts clearly dependent thereupon (e.g. *Acts Andr.* 28; *Acts John* 45).

¹⁶ Paul’s presence in Troas is attested in 2 Cor 2:12. On the city as a logical launching point for Paul’s transition from Asia to Europe, see Dietrich-Alex Koch, “Kollektenbericht, ‘Wir’-bericht und Itinerar: Neue (?) Überlegungen zu einem alten Problem,” *NTS* 45 (1999): 386.

¹⁷ Cf. Thomas H. Campbell, “Paul’s ‘Missionary Journeys’ as Reflected in his Letters,” *JBL* 74 (1955): 82–83; Blasi, *Making Charisma*, 47–48.

course, the appearance of Beroea does present an additional problem here, and one to which we will return.

Things get somewhat more complicated henceforward. It is no surprise that Paul will end up in Ephesus. His letters clearly attest to his presence there (1 Cor 15:32; 16:8), and, indeed, 1 Cor 16:8–9 seems to reflect an initial evangelizing visit that took place only after the Corinthian community had been founded. But there is nothing in Paul’s letters to indicate two separate visits to Ephesus bracketing a trip to Jerusalem, Antioch, Phrygia, and Galatia. Here Luke is not taking direct cues from Paul’s letters.¹⁸

Once back in Ephesus, however, matters clear up considerably. An extended stay in Ephesus is described in 1 Cor 16:8–9, and Paul’s follow-up visit to Macedonia and then Greece could easily be inferred from verses 5–7.¹⁹ It is interesting that Luke refers only generally in 20:2 to “Greece” instead of naming Corinth, which is presumably what he means.²⁰ In what are perhaps related omissions, we hear nothing of Paul’s protracted conflict with the Corinthian community, of his restless travels waiting to hear news from Titus (2 Cor 2:12–13; 7:5–6), or of his disastrous second visit to the city (2 Cor 12:21; 13:1–2). Given Luke’s well-known preference for harmony among the believers, this would not be a surprising abbreviation of the story. Notice, though, that the motif of a mediating ambassador to Corinth does not disappear entirely: Certainly the controversy-stained Titus does not figure here—or anywhere else in Acts,

¹⁸ Contra Bartosz Adamczewski, *Heirs of the Reunited Church: The History of the Pauline Mission in Paul’s Letters, in the So-Called Pastoral Letters, and in the Pseudo-Titus Narrative of Acts* (Frankfurt: Lang, 2010), 100–101.

¹⁹ Note that when Paul describes here his intention to remain in Ephesus prior to retracing his steps around the Aegean, he notes that there are “many adversaries” (1 Cor 16:9)—and this he describes not as a reason to leave the city but rather as a reason to stay. Perhaps we hear an echo of this remark when Luke, in narrating Paul’s departure from Ephesus, emphasizes that he was not driven out of town by Demetrius’s riot but left on his own accord, and only after the tumult had already died down (μετὰ δὲ τὸ παύσασθαι τὸν θόρυβον [Acts 20:1]).

²⁰ Haenchen, *Acts*, 581. Cf. 18:12, 27; 19:1, 21.

for that matter²¹—but Luke does report that Paul sends his trusted helpers Timothy and Erastus ahead of him from Ephesus (19:22; cf. 1 Cor 16:10).

That Paul should travel from Corinth back to Jerusalem comes as no surprise.²² Indeed, Luke has already had Paul announce—in terms strikingly reminiscent of Romans 15, as we will see—that he is on his way to Jerusalem, after which he must see Rome (19:21; cf. 20:22–23). But Luke makes a point of noting that Paul changes his intended route. After learning of a Jewish plot—and here we have the sort of characteristic comment that should surely be attributed to Lukan redaction (cf. 9:24; 20:19; 23:30)²³—Paul chooses to go overland through Macedonia instead of sailing directly for Syria (20:3).²⁴ The Paul of the letters too, remember, spoke of

²¹ On Luke's irenic motivations for eliminating Titus, see William O. Walker, "The Timothy-Titus Problem Reconsidered," *ExpTim* 92 (1981): 231–35; Enslin, "'Luke' and Paul," 89. And cf. already Matthias Schneckenburger, *Ueber den Zweck der Apostelgeschichte: Zugleich eine Ergänzung der neueren Commentare* (Bern: Fischer, 1841), 115. If Richard Fellows suggestion that Titus *was* Timothy is correct, then Luke could have decided to refer to him exclusively as Timothy for precisely the same reason ("Was Titus Timothy?," *JSNT* 23 [2001]: 33–58).

²² What has indeed proven surprising to Pauline scholars is the lack of any clear mention in Acts of what Paul describes as the purpose of the trip, namely, his delivery of the collection to "the poor among the saints at Jerusalem" (Rom 15:26–28). Luke's reticence cannot be taken as ignorance, since in Acts 24:17 we do get an oblique reference to the project (as perhaps also in Acts 20:4–7), though it has now been transformed into a general act of piety: ἐλεημοσύνας ποιήσων εἰς τὸ ἔθνος μου παρεγενόμεν. Hence this is no more of a difficulty for our hypothesis than for any other account of Luke's sources, each of which confronts the same basic problem: Why has Luke downplayed the collection if he or his sources knew about it? The most compelling solution is still that of John Knox, who suggests that Paul's motive would, from Luke's perspective, have been anachronistic: "This offering was essentially a peace offering, but according to Luke-Acts there had been peace in the church for many years—indeed ever since the apostolic council, early in Paul's ministry" (*Chapters in a Life of Paul* [rev. ed.; Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1987], 51). Cf. Morton S. Enslin, "Emphases and Silences," *HTR* 73 (1980): 223–25.

²³ See, e.g., Luke's modification of Paul's escape from the hands of King Aretas (2 Cor 11:32–33) into deliverance from a Jewish plot (Acts 9:23–25). Cf. Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009), 507.

²⁴ Against Enslin's tentative suggestion, which has been taken up by Adamczewski, I am not convinced that Acts 20:3 depends on Rom 15:31 (Enslin, "'Luke' and Paul," 90; Adamczewski, *Reunited Church*, 101).

modified travel plans, also involving both Macedonia and Corinth, though in that text the change of mind did not take place in Corinth but on the way to it (2 Cor 1:15–17). Still, one might justifiably ask, as did Enslin, “whether Luke was led to his statement by words of Paul which he remembered, but not too exactly.”²⁵

In sum, then, it should be clear that with only one or two exceptions the basic framework of Paul’s itinerary in these chapters can easily be explained as Luke’s deduction from a few key passages in the letters. These need not have been open before our author, nor, for the most part, recalled with any great precision. In fact, a fairly general familiarity with what Paul had written, combined with a willingness creatively to connect the dots, could have sufficed to suggest these routes.

Of course, to observe that Luke could have constructed this itinerary on the basis of Paul’s letters does not yet provide grounds for concluding that he did so. Indeed, a curious feature of this discussion is that scholars on each side have their own reasons for highlighting the striking similarities between the itinerary of Acts 16–20 and that suggested by Paul’s own passing comments. So, when Anthony Blasi lists the correspondences that, to his mind, attest to Luke’s knowledge of the letters,²⁶ he provides much the same data as that adduced by Thomas Campbell three decades earlier, for whom these correspondences represented instead just what “one would expect from two reliable, but independent sources.”²⁷ So, how is one to decide which explanation of the data is preferable? Is Luke dependent on the Pauline corpus, or does he simply report reliably, and independently, the same itinerary to which Paul’s letters attest.

²⁵ Enslin, “Once Again, Luke and Paul,” 255.

²⁶ Blasi, *Making Charisma*, 43–50, 64–65.

²⁷ Campbell, “Missionary Journeys,” 86. And see now Keener, *Acts*, 1:237–50.

We may begin, I suggest, with a question posed already in Enslin's programmatic article: "Is it simply coincidence," Enslin asked, "that the missionary journeys of Paul as sketched in Acts carry him to precisely those communities to which we have Pauline letters?"²⁸ The force of this question has not, I think, been adequately felt. It is evident from Paul's letters—and particularly his claim in Rom 15:19 to have "fulfilled the gospel" (πεπληρωκέμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) from Jerusalem clear around to Illyricum—that neither the letters nor Acts provides a complete account of the geographical scope of Paul's work (cf. 2 Cor 11:23–27). Indeed, it is common for even the most committed defenders of Acts's historicity to acknowledge that Luke's treatment of Paul's career is selective.²⁹ But why should it select just those parts of the story to which the letters themselves bear clearest witness?³⁰ If Luke were in fact working from an independent source, this would be an extremely unlikely result.

To be sure, Luke does name numerous other cities visited by Paul, cities not mentioned at all in the Pauline corpus. For some, this is clear evidence that he is utilizing an independent source. Said Dibelius, "It is inconceivable that Luke should have included insignificant and unimportant stations in his account of the journey if he had not had a description of the route at his disposal."³¹ But in fact these numerous station stops only sharpen the point of Enslin's question: Is it only a coincidence that, with the sole exception of Beroea, cities named in Acts 16–20 fall neatly into two categories: first, those which are absent from Paul's letters and regarding which Luke tells us nothing except that Paul came and went; and, second, those which do appear in Paul's letters and also provide the setting for extended Lukan narrative? Not once

²⁸ Enslin, "'Luke' and Paul," 84; cf. Lake, "Paul's Route in Asia Minor," 228.

²⁹ E.g. Keener, *Acts*, 1:228; Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 88.

³⁰ See Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 98–99.

³¹ Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, 197.

does Luke name a city that appears in Paul's letters and then neglect to provide his readers with an account of Paul's work there; only once does he name a city not mentioned by Paul and then use it as a narrative setting. Again, why should he choose to omit events that take place in just those cities about which the letters also leave us uninformed? To my mind, the fact that the list of Luke's "redundant toponyms"—that is, those places mentioned only in passing—is almost precisely coextensive with the list of those cities unique to Acts is most credibly explained as a result of Luke's dependence for his "primary toponyms" on his knowledge of the Pauline corpus.³²

Luke's narration of Paul's travels through Galatia provides striking confirmation of this pattern of correspondence. Regardless of what Paul meant when he addressed αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Γαλατίας (Gal 1:2), it is quite clear that Luke understood the term to designate the region often referred to in scholarship as "North Galatia."³³ Uncharacteristically, he names not a single city in

³² Loveday Alexander draws this useful vocabulary from the work of Thomas Hägg (Alexander, "The Pauline Itinerary and the Archive of Theophanes," in *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune* [ed. John Fotopoulos; NovTSup 122; Leiden: Brill, 2006], 153–54; Hägg, *Narrative Technique in Ancient Greek Romances: Studies of Chariton, Xenophon Ephesus, and Achilles Tatius* [Skrifter Utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen 8/8; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1971], 87–89).

³³ Pace Hemer, *Book of Acts*, 277–307. When discussing the so-called "South Galatian" cities of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, Luke speaks not of Galatia but of Pisidia and Lycaonia (13:14; 14:7). Moreover, the aorist participle κωλυθέντες in Acts 16:6 most naturally indicates that Luke envisions Paul's traversal of τὴν Φρυγίαν καὶ Γαλατικὴν χώραν as explained by his abortive plan to enter Asia, and thus subsequent to his time in Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium. See Moffatt, *Introduction*, 92–93n; Haenchen, *Acts*, 484n1; Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 126; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998), 578. Conzelmann is surely right that Luke's knowledge of the interior was vague (*Acts*, 126–27; cf. Koch, "Kollektenbericht," 384–85; Acts 19:1), which renders Rainer Riesner's geographical objection to the North Galatian interpretation moot (*Paul's Early Period*, 282).

the region (cf. 16:6; 18:23). Can it be merely coincidence that this is the one missionary region that Paul too refers to only generically, failing to name the specific cities in which he labored?³⁴

In sum, then, it is not only in his account of the geography that Luke corresponds with Paul, but also in his description of that geography. In other words, these are not historical correspondences only, but also literary correspondences, and thus they are explained most credibly by positing literary dependence. What we have here is, in a word, intertextuality.

2. A Key Instance of Luke-Paul Intertextuality

If there is one aspect of Paul's itinerary in these chapters that most clearly reflects the influence of his letters, it is surely his announced intention to travel to Jerusalem and then Rome. What is particularly noteworthy here, we will see, is, again, that it is not merely with regard to geography that Luke agrees with Paul; his description of that geography too corresponds with Paul's.

In Acts 19:21 and again in 20:22, Luke has Paul speak determinedly and ominously about the journey to Jerusalem that will be narrated in chapter 21. Both texts contain numerous intertextual echoes,³⁵ not least echoes of one another. Both refer to the fact that the trip is undertaken under the impetus of the Spirit (ἐν τῷ πνεύματι / δεδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι), and they use very similar language to describe Paul's destination: πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα / πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ. Clearly they are to be read in tandem.³⁶

³⁴ Though note also "Arabia" in Gal 1:17, which Acts omits entirely.

³⁵ See further Aejmelaeus, *Die Rezeption der Paulusbrieve in der Miletrede (Apg 20:18–35)*, 112–19; Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 119–20.

³⁶ Cf. Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation* (2 vols.; Foundations and Facets; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 2:239. On Luke's propensity "to express himself independently but similarly on the same theme," particularly in summary material, and his tendency to paraphrase his sources in so doing, see Henry J. Cadbury, "The

And when we do read them in tandem, the evidence for the influence of Rom 15 is compelling indeed.³⁷ Corresponding elements include the precise phrase πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ (Rom 15:25; Acts 20:22) as well as the temporal marker νῦν or νυνί, which, in each case, modifies just this phrase. More generally, both Rom 15:30–31 and Acts 20:22–23 refer to Paul’s foreboding regarding his fate upon arrival (cf. 21:4, 12–14). And, tellingly, both Paul and Luke draw our attention all in the same breath both to Paul’s final journey to Jerusalem and to his desire thereafter to “see” (θεάσασθαι/ἰδεῖν) Rome (Rom 15:23–25; Acts 19:21; cf. Rom 1:11). In short, it is not only the Achaia-Jerusalem-Rome itinerary that Luke shares with Paul, but also the anticipatory mode and the foreboding mood in which that itinerary is first announced. Luke’s knowledge of the itinerary itself could easily enough reflect independent historical memory, but such correspondence with Paul’s anticipatory description of it is difficult to explain unless one acknowledges a literary relationship.

That Luke meanwhile can saturate this Pauline material with his own characteristic emphases,³⁸ and even cause it to resonate with his description of Jesus’s own announcement of a fateful journey to Jerusalem,³⁹ attests to the nature of his literary art. There is no reason to doubt that he is capable of this. Studies of intertextuality in Luke’s Gospel, the sources of which are somewhat less in doubt, attest to his ability to create what Joel Green aptly refers to as an “echo

Summaries in Acts,” in vol. 5 of *The Beginnings of Christianity: Part 1, The Acts of the Apostles* (ed. F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake; 5 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1933), 392–402.

³⁷ See Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 119; Adamczewski, *Reunited Church*, 101.

³⁸ Note esp. the role of the Spirit in guiding Paul’s travels, here as in 13:24; 16:6–10. See further Koch, “Kollektenbericht.”

³⁹ See esp. Luke 9:51–52 ([συμ]πληρώω, πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, ἀποστέλλω), but also 9:22; 13:33; 22:37; 24:7; 24:26, 44, in which Luke indicates the “divine necessity” of Jesus’s suffering and death in Jerusalem by use of the impersonal verb δεῖ (cf. Acts 19:21; 23:11). See further Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, 2:239–40; Armand Puig i Tàrrach, “Les voyages à Jérusalem (Lc 9,51; Ac 19,21),” in *The Unity of Luke-Acts* (ed. J. Verheyden; BETL 142; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 493–505.

chamber” of intertextual resonances.⁴⁰ An author that can, as Green demonstrates, draw on the language of Genesis to make Zechariah resemble both Abraham and Sarah, and then go on to construct parallels between Zechariah and Cornelius,⁴¹ cannot be said to be innocent of Romans simply because he is reiterating his Gospel.

In fact, we need not speculate that Luke could take the words of his hero from his source material (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32–33), reiterate them in a variety of permutations (Luke 9:22, 31, 44, 51; 13:22, 33; 17:11, 25; 18:31–34; 24:6–7, 25–27, 44–74), and then integrate this complex into both the thematic and geographical structure of his narrative.⁴² We know with near certainty that he did so. And he appears to have done it again in Acts.

3. Addressing Objections: Luke’s Use of Paul’s Letters and the Gospel of Mark

In inviting consideration of Luke’s redactional tendencies in his Gospel, I am following the methodological suggestion of Ben Witherington, who in a 1996 essay opined that “a study of how Luke handles Mark . . . should give us some basic clues about the character, style, and tendencies of his editorial work in general,” and therefore also his treatment of sources in Acts.⁴³ As we approach some potential objections to the hypothesis that the itinerary of Acts 16–20 is, in

⁴⁰ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 57.

⁴¹ Joel B. Green, “Internal Repetition in Luke-Acts: Contemporary Narratology and Lucan Historiography,” in *History, Literature and Society in the Book of Acts* (ed. Ben Witherington; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 291, 294.

⁴² See John T. Squires, *The Plan of God in Luke-Acts* (STNSMS 76; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 140–41, 168–70.

⁴³ Ben Witherington, “Editing the Good News: Some Synoptic Lessons for the Study of Acts,” in *History, Literature and Society in the Book of Acts* (ed. Ben Witherington; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 326. Cf. Leppä, “Luke’s Selective Use of Gal 1 and 2,” 105–8. Still, in making such comparisons, we must be careful not to beg the question of the *nature* of the sources, as Witherington could be accused of doing. Cf. Haenchen, *Acts*, 81; Tyson, “Source Criticism of Acts,” 42.

the main, derived from Luke's knowledge of Paul's letters, it will indeed be useful to bear in mind what we know from studying his Gospel about how Luke handles his sources.

A brief note is in order before we begin: As will already have been observed, I assume here Markan priority, and I take it to be at least approximately true that the Gospel of Luke and Acts were composed by the same author. Neither position is uncontested;⁴⁴ to defend either would take me well beyond the scope of this article. In any case, advocates of the revived Griesbach hypothesis and those who question the authorial unity of Luke and Acts will notice that the credibility of my account of the use of sources in Acts is enhanced by but not dependent on these positions.

First, then, it is significant to our topic here that Luke, though he generally preserves the order of the Markan material, is demonstrably more concerned with the demands of his narrative than with fidelity to the chronology suggested by his sources. To give just one example, he is quite willing to delay the call of the disciples, which, according to Mark, occurs immediately upon Jesus's appearance in Galilee (1:16–20), until after the first remarkable incidents of the Galilean ministry (Luke 5:1–11).⁴⁵ Such a change occurs not, I would suggest, because Luke is uninterested in chronology, but rather because chronological accuracy is not so important to him

⁴⁴ The most significant recent challenge to Markan priority comes the labor of William Farmer and his intellectual heirs. See, e.g., David B. Peabody, ed., *One Gospel from Two: Mark's Use of Matthew and Luke* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2002). And, amidst a larger debate regarding the relationship between Luke and Acts, it is Patricia Walters who has most forcefully called into question their common authorship: *The Assumed Authorial Unity of Luke and Acts: A Reassessment of the Evidence* (SNTSMS 145; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁴⁵ For additional examples, see Henry J. Cadbury, *The Style and Literary Method of Luke* (Harvard Theological Studies 6; Harvard University Press, 1920), 77–78; John Drury, *Tradition and Design in Luke's Gospel: A Study in Early Christian Historiography* (Atlanta: John Knox, 1976), 85–96; C. F. Evans, *Saint Luke* (TPINTC; London: SCM, 1990), 266–67.

as chronological verisimilitude.⁴⁶ Or, better, it is precisely because he knows that narrative order (cf. 1:3) is meaningful that Luke is willing to improve on the chronology of his sources—in this case by providing Simon and the sons of Zebedee with a credible reason to drop everything and follow.⁴⁷

Such flexibility pertains not only to the chronology of Luke’s narration, but also to his explicit chronological notices. Luke has no scruples about changing, for reasons that continue to elude commentators,⁴⁸ Mark’s six-day pause prior to the transfiguration (9:2) into a period of “about eight days” (9:28). And he can treat Mark’s geographical settings with equal plasticity: Mark specifies that the healing of Bartimaeus occurred after Jesus had passed through the city of Jericho, and was on his way out of town (10:46). But Luke has another Jericho story he wants to tell, and thus his τυφλός τις meets Jesus not as he leaves the city, but as he approaches it (18:35).⁴⁹ Only a pedant would be troubled by such a modification, which clearly has no bearing on the import of the story. Luke is not one.

Evidently, then, it will not do to argue, as does Craig Keener, that the fact “that Luke appears to contradict [Paul’s letters] on some points of detail (Acts 17:14–16; 1 Thess 3:1–2)”⁵⁰

⁴⁶ On the relationship between veracity and verisimilitude in Hellenistic historiographical narrative, see esp. Todd Penner’s incisive reading of Polybius in his *In Praise of Christian Origins: Stephen and the Hellenists in Lukan Apologetic Historiography* (Emory Studies in Early Christianity; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 153–62.

⁴⁷ Cf. Drury, *Tradition and Design*, 84–87; Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 42–44.

⁴⁸ See François Bovon, *Luke: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (ed. Helmut Koester; 3 vols.; Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002–2013), 1:373–74.

⁴⁹ For discussion, see I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC 3; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 692–93.

⁵⁰ What Keener refers to here is the apparent discrepancy between Timothy’s dispatch from Athens to Thessalonica (per Paul) and his tarrying with Silas in Berea (per Luke). Karl Donfried has recently broken consensus by insisting that the discrepancy results only from an unnecessary reading of 1 Thess 3 (“Was Timothy in Athens? Some Exegetical Reflections on 1 Thess. 3:1–3,” in *Paul, Thessalonica, and Early Christianity* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002], 209–21). I will refrain from comment on the question here.

... reinforces the likelihood ... that where his accounts agree with Paul's letters ... they do so independently of the letters."⁵¹ By this logic, Luke should have had to narrate the story of Bartimeaus independently as well.

Second, it is clear from Luke's method in the Gospel that he finds travel thematically suggestive, and is willing, if necessary, to generate more of it than his sources provide. Of course, Mark's Jesus too does indeed make the trip from Galilee to Jerusalem. But, in constructing the famous "travel narrative" of his central section, Luke elaborates considerably, albeit vaguely, on what he found in his source.⁵² Most notably, Luke has Jesus pass through Samaria (9:52; 17:11), a deviation from the route presupposed by Mark,⁵³ and one that appears to be motivated by Luke's singular concern for Samaritans. This does, incidentally, result in some geographical imprecision (cf. 17:11)⁵⁴—imprecision comparable, perhaps, to that which we noted above in Luke's description of Paul's travels through the Galatian hinterland.

Luke also feels free to omit travel. Missing entirely from his Gospel are the travels of Jesus to Bethsaida, Gennesaret, Tyre and Sidon, "the region of the Decapolis," "the district of Dalmanutha," then again Bethsaida, all of which occur during Luke's so-called "great omission" (Mark 6:45–8:26).⁵⁵ Clearly, then, the fact that this author neglected to report the details of

⁵¹ Keener, *Acts*, 1:235.

⁵² For a general overview, see Evans, *Luke*, 433–34.

⁵³ Cf. C. C. McCown, "The Geography of Luke's Central Section," *JBL* 57 (1938): 59; John R. Donahue, *The Gospel of Mark* (SP 2; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical, 2002), 292; Evans, *Luke*, 657.

⁵⁴ Still a lucid discussion is that of McCown, "Geography," 60. Cf. Evans, *Luke*, 624.

⁵⁵ Some, of course, have argued that Luke's copy of Mark was missing the section in question. But Frans Nierynck has noted reminiscences of this Markan material elsewhere in Luke's Gospel, thus providing compelling evidence that Luke had access to these pericopae ("Synoptic Problem," in *NJBC* [ed. Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Roland E. Murphy; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1990], 589). For recent attempts to account for such redaction, see Michael Pettem, "Luke's Great Omission and His View of the Law," *NTS* 42 (1996): 35–54; Filip Noël, *De compositie van het Lucasevangelie in zijn relatie tot Marcus: Het*

Paul's second and third trips to Corinth cannot be taken as evidence that he lacked access to such sources as could have informed him of them. Likewise, though one might have expected to find Luke's Paul in Illyricum at some point (Rom 15:19), this omission cannot be construed as evidence that Luke had not seen Rom 15. Our author in fact omits very few places named by Paul—only Illyricum, Arabia, and Spain⁵⁶—and these lacunae pale in comparison to the geographical data omitted from Mark.⁵⁷

Of course, we must also account for the places Luke adds to the itinerary deducible from the letters. Here it is immediately striking that, as noted above, with the exception of Bereoa, all of the cities unique to this section of Acts are “redundant toponyms”—places in which nothing happens.⁵⁸ This in itself does not settle the question of their origin, but it does invite us to consider the possibility that at least some of this geography derives from Lukan invention. The fact that these are, for the most part, “natural stopping places” along Paul's route has often been taken as evidence that they come from authentic tradition.⁵⁹ But, as Pervo notes,⁶⁰ the argument

probleem van de “grote weglating” (Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Letteren 56/150; Brussels: AWLSK, 1994).

⁵⁶ To refer to Spain (Rom 15:24, 28) would, of course, have taken Luke beyond the scope of his narrative, the abrupt ending of which remains puzzling regardless of one's understanding of its sources. Such advance notices of Paul's geographical destiny as are provided in regard to Jerusalem (19:21; 20:22; 21:13) and Rome (19:21; 23:11; 27:24) are valuable to Luke because they attest to the “divine necessity” of this itinerary, and, when that very itinerary is subsequently narrated, to the realization of God's plan (see esp. Charles H. Cosgrove, “The Divine ΔΕΙ in Luke-Acts: Investigations into the Lukan Understanding of God's Providence,” *NovT* 26 [1984]: 178–79). Advance mention of a trip to Spain would have served no such purpose—and, if Luke or his audience suspected that Paul had never made it to Spain, would indeed have contradicted it. (On this latter question, see the various essays in Friedrich W. Horn, ed., *Das Ende des Paulus: Historische, theologische und literaturgeschichtliche Aspekte* [BZNW 106; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001].)

⁵⁷ See Cadbury, *Style and Literary Method*, 127–28.

⁵⁸ The pattern persists throughout the description of Paul's activities in Acts, with only a few additional exceptions: Cyprus (13:1–12), Caesarea (9:30; 21:8–14; 24), and Malta (28:1–10).

⁵⁹ So, regarding the station stops listed in 16:11, Lüdemann, *Traditions in Acts*, 183.

just as easily cuts the other way: If Luke thought it would improve his narrative to provide additional geographical specificity—no strange notion in a narrative concerned precisely with the geographical advance of the gospel⁶¹—these are just the cities we should have expected him to name.

And it is clear from Luke's procedure in the Gospel that he is not averse to adding geographical specificity where it is lacking in his source. Note, for example, the appearance of Bethsaida in Luke 9:10, where Mark and Matthew have Jesus in an unnamed desert place (Mark 6:32; Matt 14:13).⁶² One could argue that here Luke is preparing the soil for Jesus's condemnation in 10:13 of Bethsaida's otherwise unnarrated lack of repentance—though that would require considerable advance planning on Luke's part, not only anticipating the woe in the following chapter, but also recalling in advance that he plans to omit upcoming Markan pericopae in which Bethsaida will appear (6:45; 8:22). It may also simply provide, to use the happy phrases of Loveday Alexander, "topographical depth" and/or "geographical verisimilitude."⁶³ In any case, Luke feels free here to add geographical detail that is lacking in his source, and even contradicted by it.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Pervo, *Acts*, 401.

⁶¹ Cf. Daniel Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian: Writing the "Acts of the Apostles"* (SNTSMS 121; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 231–56, esp. 254: "To travel is to claim a territory for the Word."

⁶² For discussion see Evans, *Luke*, 402.

⁶³ Loveday Alexander, "Narrative Maps: Reflections on the Toponymy of Acts," in *The Bible in Human Society: Essays in Honour of John Rogerson* (ed. M. Daniel Carroll R., David J. A. Clines, and Philip R. Davies; JSOTSup 200; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 40–41.

⁶⁴ Likewise, Luke modifies Mark's notices that Jesus, after teaching in the temple, spent the night in Bethany (11:11), "outside the city" (11:19), by providing him with the "custom" (22:39) of sleeping at the Mount of Olives (21:37), where he was finally arrested. Here it is not easy to tell whether Luke is working toward narrative continuity, modifying Jesus's lodging place in order to give Judas reasonable grounds for anticipating his location on the night of the

But this is not, in fact, very common—certainly not so common as we are positing for Acts. More frequently in the Gospel we find Luke providing, as C. C. McCown long ago noted, “indefinite geographical settings where his sources had none.”⁶⁵ Note, for example, the addition of the notice that Jesus’s healing of a leper occurred ἐν μιᾷ τῶν πόλεων (5:12; cf. 8:1; 13:22). But this vagueness need not be interpreted as reticence on Luke’s part to name speculative names. Perhaps he simply did not have a large supply of serviceable Galilean place names at his disposal. In other words, it is at least possible that these vague notices should be considered structurally equivalent to the more specific information we get once we are in geographical territory with which our author is more familiar.⁶⁶

Or perhaps once on the sea he is simply better informed.⁶⁷ Loveday Alexander once noted the affinity between the topographical descriptions in Acts and the *periplus* literature,⁶⁸ those guides to coasts and harbors that served “travellers and merchants,” yes, but also “a growing public of armchair tourists.”⁶⁹ Texts of this sort would have provided just such information as Luke needed to fill out Paul’s itinerary—and he would by no means have been the first to incorporate *periplus* material into a narrative of another genre.⁷⁰ It comes as no surprise that the *Periplus* attributed to Scylax includes all four of the way stations that appear in Acts

arrest, or whether it results from his dependence on the association of Bethany with the Mount of Olives in Mark 11:1.

⁶⁵ McCown, “Geography,” 56.

⁶⁶ On Luke’s knowledge of the Aegean region, and especially Ephesus, see esp. Pervo, *Acts*, 5–6. Cf. Loveday C. A. Alexander, “‘In Journeyings Often’: Voyaging in the Acts of the Apostles and in Greek Romance,” in *Acts in Its Ancient Literary Context: A Classicist Looks at the Acts of the Apostles* (LNTS 298; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 84.

⁶⁷ As Alexander has observed, Luke’s focus on the coast “is one of the features that makes the mental map of Acts look so different from that of Paul, despite the fact that almost all Paul’s toponyms are included in Acts” (“Narrative Maps,” 44).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁶⁹ Marguerat, *The First Christian Historian*, 242.

⁷⁰ See Yuval Shahar, *Josephus Geographicus: The Classical Context of Geography in Josephus* (TSAJ 98; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 40–41.

16:11 and 17:1, and all in close proximity (66–67).⁷¹ I am not proposing that Luke used this particular text as a source. My point is rather that for an author who was, like ours, at least modestly bookish, if not also well-travelled, there were other ways to become informed of shipping routes than accompanying Paul or happening upon a copy of his itinerary.

Certainly this does not prove that Luke had no additional sources. But I would insist that, just as “local color” provides no guarantee of historicity,⁷² so Luke’s specific place names are not in themselves evidence that he was following a source. Again, Luke is known from his Gospel to have added geographical notices as he found them useful. There is no reason he should not have done the same in Acts. Therefore, claims that he was using an independent source here will have to be made on other grounds. (In my judgment, with regard to the travel narrated in 16:11 and 17:1, no such grounds are apparent; the detailed accounts in 20:5–6 and 20:13–14 of the diverging routes of Paul and his companions may be a different matter.)

As noted above, however, Beroea does present a special problem: It is the only city that is absent from the Pauline corpus but which Luke nevertheless uses as a narrative setting. To be sure, the story itself contains nothing that is not easily attributable to Lukan variation on favorite themes.⁷³ But why should Luke have insisted on locating it just here, in a town that, according to Cicero, lies off the beaten track (*Pis.* 36.89)?⁷⁴ One answer is perhaps suggested by Cicero’s

⁷¹ Text in Karl Müller, *Geographi Graeci minores* (2 vols.; Paris: Didot, 1855), 1:15–96.

⁷² So Koch, “Kollektenbericht,” 368. And note esp. Stephen J. Harrison, “Literary Topography in Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses*,” in *Space in the Ancient Novel* (ed. Michael Paschalis and Stavros A. Frangoulidis; Ancient Narrative Supplementum 1; Groningen: Barkhuis, 2002), 40–57.

⁷³ A visit to the local synagogue (17:10b; cf. 13:14; 14:1; 17:1–2); an initial welcome (17:11; cf. 13:42); the conversion of some (17:12a; cf. 13:48; 14:1; 17:4), including Greeks and respectable women (17:12b; cf. 17:4); envious Jews who stir up the crowd (17:13; cf. 13:45, 50; 14:2; 17:5)—in this case from cities previously visited (17:13; cf. 14:19); and the flight of the apostle(s) (17:14; cf. 13:51; 14:5–6, 20; 17:10a).

⁷⁴ Cf. Riesner, *Paul’s Early Period*, 360.

remark itself, which is occasioned by that fact that Piso, the subject of Cicero's invective, had, like Paul, fled to Beroea from Thessalonica when he found the crowds in the latter city uncomfortably hostile. In other words, the geography is logical enough—and thus, again, equally likely to be either veracious or verisimilitudinous.

But perhaps we can still make some progress. Notably, Beroea appears again in 20:4 as the hometown of one of the delegates who accompany Paul on his way to Jerusalem. Despite a few arguments to the contrary,⁷⁵ most agree that in listing these delegates Luke is dependent on source material that is no longer extant.⁷⁶ If so, it is not difficult to imagine Luke inferring from the appearance of a Beroean delegate that Paul had evangelized the town, and then finding a narrative home for the incident in his account of Paul's journey from Thessalonica to Athens. This procedure might also explain the summary narration in Acts 14 of the evangelization of Derbe (20b–21a; cf. 14:4; 16:1)—another city that fails to appear in the Pauline corpus, but from which a delegate is named in 20:4.

One final difficulty demands explanation: If Luke derived Paul's itinerary in these chapters from the letters, how are we to account for the trip to Jerusalem, Antioch, and Galatia that interrupts Paul's stay in Ephesus (18:20–23), a journey of which those letters provide not a hint? Here two observations are in order.

⁷⁵ E.g. David J. Downs, *The Offering of the Gentiles: Paul's Collection for Jerusalem in Its Chronological, Cultural, and Cultic Contexts* (WUNT 2/248; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 64–65n93.

⁷⁶ Rudolf Pesch, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (2 vols.; EKKNT 5; Zürich: Benziger, 1986), 2:185; Pervo, *Acts*, 13–14, 508; Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 87, 665; A. J. M. Wedderburn, "Paul's Collection: Chronology and History," *NTS* 48 (2002): 103–4; Koch, "Kollektenbericht," 375. Cf. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 167.

First, it is worth pausing to consider the function of this journey in Luke's narrative. This is by all accounts an odd story.⁷⁷ Paul deposits Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus,⁷⁸ yet, despite a successful visit to the synagogue, refuses to stay in town himself. Then, in a mere two verses, Luke narrates his trip all the way to Jerusalem and most of the way back. No purpose for the trip is given. Finally, leaving Paul to traverse the inland roads of Galatia, our author returns our gaze to Ephesus, where the real action is taking place in Paul's absence (18:24–28). From a narrative perspective, it appears that the real purpose of Paul's trip is simply to remove him from the Ephesian stage until it can be prepared for his triumphant arrival.⁷⁹

It is probably not coincidental that Paul's presence in Ephesus had been avoided earlier as well, when, close as he was, the Spirit would not allow him to proclaim the word in Asia (16:6). Thus it was Apollos who was destined first to make converts in Ephesus (18:25); Paul's role would rather be to reeducate those who were, at least by implication, the former's deficient disciples—those possessing, as Apollos had been, only John's inadequate baptism (19:2–7). What is more, against 1 Cor 16:12, Luke explicitly avoids allowing the tenures of Paul and Apollos in Ephesus to overlap (19:1).⁸⁰ This makes it difficult to avoid the conclusion that what we have here is intentional disassociation of Paul from the earliest proclamation of the gospel in Ephesus, which Luke apparently finds suspect.⁸¹ His motivation here is not transparent.

Haenchen proposed that this narrative strategy allowed Luke to depict Paul as one who “wins

⁷⁷ See esp. Haenchen, *Acts*, 546–48.

⁷⁸ For an argument that the movements of Priscilla and Aquila here are deductions from the Pauline corpus, see William O. Walker, “The Portrayal of Aquila and Priscilla in Acts: The Question of Sources,” *NTS* 54 (2008): 479–95.

⁷⁹ Thus Pervo, *Dating Acts*, 399n251.

⁸⁰ See esp. Michael Wolter, “Apollos und die ephesinischen Johannesjünger (Act 18:24–19:7),” *ZNW* 78 (1987): 58–60.

⁸¹ Cf. Christopher N. Mount, *Pauline Christianity: Luke-Acts and the Legacy of Paul* (NovTSup 104; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 113–20.

over the sects.”⁸² Or perhaps there persisted in Luke’s time Asian believers who traced their origins to non-Pauline roots and thereby occasioned such narrative polemic.⁸³ Whatever Luke’s precise motivation, he is clearly expending considerable effort in keeping Paul away from both Apollos and premature activity in Ephesus.

Second, it is evident even from his Gospel that Jerusalem plays a special role in Luke’s vision, serving as “the necessary base from which the Christian movement is to proceed.”⁸⁴ Relevant here is what is perhaps the most substantial change in geography that Luke makes to his gospel sources, and one that we have not yet had occasion to mention—his transposition of the disciples’ final encounter with Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem.⁸⁵ Mark makes things perfectly clear: “He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you” (16:7; cf. Matt 28:7, 16–20). And so does Luke: “Stay here in the city” (24:48; cf. Acts 1:4).⁸⁶ For Luke, then, Jerusalem remains home base. Related to this, of course, is Luke’s well-recognized emphasis on Paul’s cooperation with, even subordination to the Jerusalem apostles. Indeed, these twin Lukan *Tendenzen* almost certainly cooperated earlier in the narrative to generate an extra Pauline visit to Jerusalem (Acts 9:20–29; cf. Gal 1:17).⁸⁷ It should be no great surprise if they did likewise here, thus mitigating for Luke the inconvenience of having Paul remain in Ephesus.

⁸² Haenchen, *Acts*, 557. Cf. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 642.

⁸³ Note Joseph Tyson’s similar attempt to explain Paul’s avoidance of Bithynia as anti-Marcionite polemic (*Marcion and Luke-Acts*, 77).

⁸⁴ Evans, *Luke*, 888. Cf. J. Bradley Chance, *Jerusalem, the Temple, and the New Age in Luke-Acts* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1988), 99–113; Drury, *Tradition and Design*, 52–53.

⁸⁵ See Chance, *The New Age in Luke-Acts*, 65–66.

⁸⁶ Cf. Luke 24:6–8, where the dominical sayings to be recalled do not pertain to Galilee, but instead were uttered there.

⁸⁷ The essential arguments are laid out by Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ: His Life and Work, His Epistles and His Doctrine* (ed. Eduard Zeller; trans. Allan Menzies; 2 vols., 2nd ed.; London: Williams & Norgate, 1876), 1:110–20; John Knox, *Chapters in a Life of Paul*, 35–40.

4. Conclusion

Richard Pervo offers the methodological principle that we should prefer sources we know to those we do not.⁸⁸ Given the vagaries governing the survival of ancient documents, perhaps this leaves rather too much to chance.⁸⁹ Still, it does seem clear that when extant texts explain the phenomena in question, there are no good grounds for inquiring into hypothetical ones.

In considering Paul's itinerary in Acts 15:36–20:16, we have found very little fuel for further source-critical speculation. The basic geographical framework is easily explicable as Lukan deduction from Paul's letters. With perhaps a single exception (Beroea; see below), differences in detail are convincingly explained as Luke's redaction, clearly in keeping with his theological and narrative interests, and, moreover, in accord with the editorial procedure that is evident, *mutatis mutandis*, in the Gospel. This last point merits additional emphasis: It surely speaks to the credibility of the hypothesis that the authorial role it demands is one into which the author we know from the Gospel very comfortably steps.

Not only is Luke's use of Paul's letters a credible explanation for this itinerary, but there are also at least two considerations that make this explanation preferable both to alternative source theories and to the claim that the author drew on personal recollections. First, we noted the striking correspondence between Luke's "primary toponyms"—that is, the places in which the action happens—and those cities that appear in the Pauline corpus, as well as correspondence between Luke's "redundant toponyms" and those absent from it. Given that the scope of Paul's work was broader than that directly attested either in the letters or in Acts, this is difficult to

⁸⁸ Richard I. Pervo, "Acts in the Suburbs of the Apologists," in *Contemporary Studies in Acts* (ed. Thomas E. Phillips; Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2009), 32.

⁸⁹ Cf. Tannhill, review of Pervo, 828.

explain except as literary dependence of Acts on Paul's letters. The failure of each author to name specific localities for Paul's work in Galatia further strengthens the case. Second, the twin announcements in Acts 19:21 and 20:22 of Paul's intention to make a perilous visit to Jerusalem and then to proceed to Rome evince not only knowledge of Paul's route, but also knowledge of his anticipatory description of that route in Romans 15.

Of course, the conclusion that Paul's letters provided Luke with his primary source for the itinerary of these chapters does not necessarily preclude his use of other sources. But it does render hypothetical sources very difficult to detect, for, if the bulk of the itinerary has already been explained, there is little specific data to be attributed to them. Since attempts to identify sources solely on stylistic grounds—including the use of the first person plural—have famously floundered,⁹⁰ the scarcity of such data leaves very little scope for additional reconstruction.

Only in one instance did we find it necessary to appeal to an additional source: Beroea is the only city in these chapters that is both absent from Paul's letters and is the setting for Lukan narrative. If Luke's report of the delegation in 20:4 derives from an independent source, the presence of a Beroean delegate there could easily have provided the impetus for Luke to narrate the city's evangelization. Such a conclusion does not demand but does leave room for the hypothesis that the detailed travel narrative associated with the delegation (20:5–6, 13–14) derives from the same source.⁹¹

I have made no effort here to account for the stories that flesh out the itinerary we traced. In any case, these are more often ascribed to "tradition" than to specific sources. We might note,

⁹⁰ See Harnack, *Acts*, 163; Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, 5, 104–5; Jacques Dupont, *The Sources of Acts: The Present Position* (trans. Kathleen Pond; New York: Herder & Herder, 1964), 166–67; William S. Campbell, *The "We" Passages in the Acts of the Apostles: The Narrator as Narrative Character* (SBL Studies in Biblical Literature 14; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 4–5.

⁹¹ So Pervo, *Acts*, 13–14.

however, that compelling arguments have been made that certain of these narratives too derive from Luke's reading of Paul's letters.⁹²

The foregoing analysis requires Luke to have accessed almost all of Paul's undisputed letters—Romans (including ch. 16), 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians (chs. 1–2 and perhaps 11), Galatians, 1 Thessalonians, and probably Philippians. Paul's itinerary in Lycaonia and Pisidia can also be accounted for if one adds to this list 2 Timothy.⁹³ Notably, for our purposes we need not attribute to Luke such conscientious collation of the data in the letters as we find in modern reconstructions of Pauline chronology—a procedure for which he would likely have lacked both motive and technological means.⁹⁴ He need only have possessed such familiarity as comes with careful and repeated reading. It is therefore only in a rather attenuated sense that we can indeed refer to Luke as the first Pauline chronologist.

Table 1: Paul's Itinerary in Acts 15:36–20:16, with Epistolary Cues

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| 15:36–16:5 | <i>Dispute of Paul and Barnabas</i> Syria and Cilicia Derbe* Lystra (and Iconium) <i>Timothy circumcised as concession to "the Jews"</i> <i>"the cities" [of Lycaonia]</i> | cf. Gal 2:13 Gal 1:22 2 Tim 3:11 cf. 2 Tim 1:5; Gal 2:3–5 |
| 16:6–10 | Phrygia* and Galatia (bypassing Asia, Bithynia*, Mysia*) <i>Hindered (κωλύω) by the Spirit</i> Troas <i>Vision of Macedonian</i> | Gal 4:12–20 cf. Rom 1:13 cf. 2 Cor 2:12–13 |
| 16:11–40 | Samothrace* | |

⁹² E.g. Walker, "The Timothy-Titus Problem Reconsidered"; Enslin, "Once Again, Luke and Paul," 265.

⁹³ Note that Walker also finds it necessary, though on other grounds, to posit Luke's knowledge of 2 Timothy in addition to the undisputed letters ("Aquila and Priscilla," 495).

⁹⁴ See esp. F. Gerald Downing, "Compositional Conventions and the Synoptic Problem," *JBL* 107 (1988): 69–85; R. A. Derrenbacker, *Ancient Compositional Practices and the Synoptic Problem* (BETL 186; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005).

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|-------------|---|---|
| | Neapolis* Philippi <i>Conversion of Lydia</i> <i>Exorcism of slave girl; imprisonment; conversion of jailer</i> | 1 Thess 2:1–2; cf. 2 Cor 11:9 cf. 1 Thess 2:1–2; 2 Cor 11:23 |
| 17:1–9 | Amphipolis* Apollonia* Thessalonica <i>Proclamation in synagogue</i> <i>Jewish opposition embroils Jason, who posts bail</i> | 1 Thess 2:1–2; Phil 4:15–16 |
| 17:10–15 | Beroea* <i>Proclamation in synagogue</i> <i>Thessalonian Jews renew opposition</i> <i>Silas and Timothy remain behind</i> Athens (Paul alone) | cf. 1 Thess 3:6 1 Thess 3:1 |
| 17:16–34 | <i>Paul at Areopagus, converts Dionysius and Damaris</i> | |
| 18:1–17 | Corinth <i>Encounters Aquila and Priscilla</i> <i>Silas and Timothy rejoin Paul</i> <i>Gives up on Jews</i> <i>Converts Crispus in house of Titius Justus</i> <i>Receives reassuring vision, and stays 18 months</i> <i>Jews bring Paul before Gallio</i> <i>Sosthenes beaten</i> | 2 Cor 11:9 cf. Rom 16:3 2 Cor 1:19; 1 Thess 1:1; 3:6 cf. 1 Cor 1:14 cf. 1 Cor 1:1 |
| 18:18–23 | Cenchreae <i>Hair cut; under a vow</i> Ephesus <i>Declines extended stay; leaves Priscilla and Aquila</i> Caesarea [Maritima]* [Jerusalem] Antioch Galatia and Phrygia* | cf. Rom 16:1 1 Cor 16:8–9 cf. 1 Cor 16:19 Gal 4:13 |
| 18:24–19:20 | <i>Priscilla and Aquila correct Apollos in Ephesus</i> <i>Apollos goes to Achaia with letters of recommendation</i> Ephesus <i>Paul rebaptizes [Apollos's?] deficient converts</i> <i>Preaches in synagogue, then Tyrannus's σχολή</i> <i>Miracle summary – handkerchiefs and aprons</i> <i>Sons of Sceva rebutted</i> | cf. 1 Cor 1–4; 16:12; 2 Cor 3:1 1 Cor 16:8–9 |
| 19:21–41 | <i>Resolves to go to Macedonia/Achaia en route to Jerusalem</i> <i>Sends Timothy and Erastus ahead of him to Macedonia</i> <i>Uproar in Ephesus led by Demetrius</i> | 1 Cor 16:3–6; 2 Cor 1:16; Rom 15:22–25 cf. 1 Cor 16:10; 2 Cor 2:12–13 cf. 1 Cor 15:32; 2 |

| | | |
|----------|--|---|
| | | Cor 1:8 |
| 20:1–12 | Macedonia “Greece” [Corinth] <i>Aborts plan to sail for Syria due to Jewish plot</i> <i>Reroutes through Macedonia</i> Macedonia/Philippi <i>With Timothy/delegates from Beroea, Thessalonica, Derbe</i> Troas <i>Meet representatives from Asia</i> <i>Eutychus saved</i> | 1 Cor 16:5–8 cf. 2 Cor 8–9 cf. 2 Cor 1:16–17 cf. 1 Cor 16:3–4; 2 Cor 8:19 |
| 20:13–16 | Assos* Mitylene* Chios* Samos* Miletus (bypassing Ephesus; en route to Jerusalem) | cf. 2 Tim 4:20 |

Bold text denotes primary toponyms; * = toponym not attested in Pauline corpus