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PAUL'S CITIZENSHIP AND ITS FUNCTION  
IN THE NARRATIVES OF ACTS

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A Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Biblical Studies  
University of Sheffield

June 1996

To  
my wife, Myung-Hee  
and lovely son, San Yoon

1982



## ABSTRACT

### PAUL'S CITIZENSHIP AND ITS FUNCTION IN THE NARRATIVES OF ACTS

BY

CHEOL-WON YOON

The thesis aims to observe the function of Paul's dual citizenship in the narratives of Acts. Luke reports Paul's status as a Tarsian and a Roman citizen. However this conflicts with the account of Paul's origins mentioned in his own letters. After surveying Paul's origins in his letters and Acts, the conclusion drawn is that the biblical texts are inconsistent. Thus, the issue of Paul's citizenship reaches an impasse in terms of historical discussion. Therefore, the study of Paul's citizenship turns to a literary approach, since Paul's Roman citizenship is the dominant force which enables Paul to appeal to Caesar in the trial narrative. Without Roman citizenship, the narratives of Acts cannot be interpreted clearly. For a fuller understanding of the trial narratives in Acts, this thesis also investigates the trial narratives in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, a collection of ancient documents which record the political conflict between the Alexandrian Greek citizens and Jews in Alexandria during the early Roman Egypt, as the closest known parallels to the Acts texts. At the centre of each of their accounts is the issue of citizenship. The *Acta Alexandrinorum* also contain significant motifs, particularly "patriotic motifs" and "martyrdom motifs", and two propagandistic ideologies: "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism" which form the groundwork for our understanding of the function of Paul's dual citizenship. The comparison between the two documents casts new light on Luke's genuine purpose. This thesis shows that Paul's citizenship functions primarily to control the narratives of Acts as well as Luke's ideological stance. Luke's ideological stance is demonstrated to be "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Roman" in a manner which ultimately discloses the power of the Gospel of Jesus. The *dramatis personae* and even the Roman empire are won over by the Gospel of Jesus in Paul's trial narratives.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most thankful for God's everlasting love and guidance for my studying journey in Britain. I am especially grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Loveday C.A. Alexander, without whose incessant encouragement and bright supervision my doctoral course would probably never have been undertaken. Her comments and challenges along the way made this dissertation a much better product than it would have otherwise been. My understanding of the Graeco-Roman milieu of the New Testament has benefited greatly from seminars conducted at the Centre for early Christianity and the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Graeco-Roman world by Dr. L.C.A. Alexander and Professor Philip Davies. I wish to express my gratitude to the New Testament scholars who encouraged me to be interested in the New Testament writings while I was a student preparing for ordination at Seoul Theological University. Professor Kyung-Yun Chun stimulated my interest in Paul's trial narratives of Acts while I was a post-graduate student at the United Graduate School of Theology in the University of Yonsei. He has always been encouraging for this study. In expressing my appreciation for the help from the departmental teaching staff and secretaries, I would like to thank in particular Professor Andrew T. Lincoln who is now teaching in the Wycliff College University of Toronto for his comments. I owe a debt of gratitude to the invaluable Inter-Library Loan system which enabled me to access several documents from the British Library. I also owe special thanks to the John Rylands University Library of Manchester. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to Revd. Tammie Crews for assistance with the English of this thesis.

I will never forget the prayers and full support from my parents, my brothers, Revds. Sung-Won and Jang-Won Yoon, and my parents-in-law. I will always remember the prayers and understanding of the congregation of the Sheffield Korean Church which was planted at the beginning of my research here in the 15th of November 1992. My best English friends, Mr. & Mrs. Steve and Lesley Ingamells, Mr. & Mrs. Michael and Linda Gray and Father M.E. Charles, have taken care of our family with Christian's warm fellowship which must not be forgotten.

Financial support for my studies has come in various ways. The Korean Evangelical Holiness Church Scholarship was an important component in this research. I wish to thank the Revd. Dr. Kun-Ho Choi who has recommended me as a candidate for sponsorship to the Scholarship Committee of the KEHC and who has given me much encouragement. The Revd. Dae-Won Choi who is the senior pastor of Puyo Jung-Ang Evangelical Holiness Church, the church of my home town, has continually given me financial support which has been most helpful for my family's stay in Britain. I am also thankful for the support from some pastors in South Korea and my colleagues in Sheffield. I owe a debt of gratitude to some graduates of the Kang-Nam Theological Seminary and the young adult group of the Choong-Moo Church who have especially arranged support for my research.

Finally, to my wife and lovely son, who have shared the patience and joy throughout the whole period of research and writing, I dedicate this dissertation with the deepest love. We are deeply pleased to know that a baby will be born into our family this December as this stage of my work comes to end and as we as a family face a new beginning.

Sheffield, England  
June 1996

Cheol-Won Yoon

## Abbreviations

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	D. N. Freedman (ed.), <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , New York: Doubleday, 1992.
<i>Aeg</i>	Aegyptus
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
Ant	Flavius Josephus, <i>Antiquitates Judaicae</i>
<i>AJAH</i>	American Journal of Ancient History
<i>AJBI</i>	Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute
<i>AJP</i>	American Journal of Philology
<i>AJT</i>	American Journal of Theology
ANRW	H. Temporini/W. Hasse (eds.), <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> , Berlin: de Gruyter, 1972-1992.
ASP	American Studies in Papyrology
BAGD	W. Bauer, W.F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature</i> , Chicago/London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1979.
BC	F. J. Foakes Jackson/Kirsopp Lake (eds.), <i>The Beginnings of Christianity</i> , part 1, The Acts of the Apostles, 5 vols.
BAFCS	B. Winter (ed.), <i>The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting</i> , Grand Rapids: Eerdmans/Carlisle: Paternoster, 1993-
<i>Bib</i>	Biblica
<i>BICS</i>	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies (University of London)
BJ	Flavius Josephus, <i>Bellum Judaicum</i>
<i>BJRL</i>	Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester



<i>BTB</i>	Biblical Theology Bulletin
<i>BZ</i>	Biblische Zeitschrift
<i>CBQ</i>	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
<i>CR</i>	Classical Review
<i>CTR</i>	Criswell Theological Review
<i>EvQ</i>	Evangelical Quarterly
<i>ExpTim</i>	The Expository Times
<i>HNT</i>	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>HTR</i>	Harvard Theological Review
<i>ICC</i>	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	Interpretation
<i>IVPNTCS</i>	The IVP New Testament Commentary Series
<i>JAAR</i>	Journal of the American Academy of Religion
<i>JAC</i>	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum
<i>JBL</i>	Journal of Biblical Literature
<i>JEA</i>	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
<i>JES</i>	Journal of Ecumenical Studies
<i>JHS</i>	Journal of Hellenic Studies
<i>JJP</i>	Journal of Juristic Papyrology
<i>JJS</i>	Journal of Jewish Studies
<i>JQR</i>	Jewish Quarterly Review
<i>JR</i>	Journal of Religion
<i>JRH</i>	Journal of Religious History
<i>JRS</i>	Journal of Roman Studies
<i>JSJ</i>	Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period
<i>JSNT</i>	Journal for the Study of the New Testament



JSNTSS	Journal for the Study of the New Testament -Supplement Series
JSOTSS	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament -Supplement Series
JSPSS	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha - Supplement Series
<i>JSS</i>	Journal of Semitic Studies
<i>JTS</i>	Journal of Theological Studies
LSJ	Liddell, Scott and Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940 (rep. 1978).
<i>LTQ</i>	Lexington Theological Quarterly
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNTT	New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology
<i>NovT</i>	Novum Testamentum
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum, Supplements
<i>NTS</i>	New Testament Studies
<i>OCD</i>	Oxford Classical Dictionary
RAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RE	Pauly-Wissowa-Kroll (eds.), <i>Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , Stuttgart: J.B. Metzlerscher Verlag, 1894-1972.
<i>RQ</i>	Restoration Quarterly
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLRBS	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>TB</i>	Tyndale Bulletin
<i>TDNT</i>	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , trans. G.W. Bromiley, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964.
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
<i>TS</i>	Theological Studies
TSAJ	Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum

<i>TSR</i>	Trinity Seminary Review (Columbus, OH)
<i>TU</i>	Texte und Untersuchungen
<i>USQR</i>	Union Seminary Quarterly Review
<i>WBC</i>	Word Biblical Commentary
<i>WUNT</i>	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
<i>ZPE</i>	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1. The problem of Paul's dual citizenship in Acts

Luke-Acts has frequently been at the centre of recent research in New Testament scholarship.<sup>1</sup> Yet, there has been surprisingly little research into the issue of Paul's dual citizenship. As J.C. Lentz claims, "[Paul] is very proud of his Roman citizenship and his citizenship of the city of Tarsus. Not enough attention has been paid to this fact."<sup>2</sup> Whether or not one agrees with its importance, this dual citizenship plays an important role in the Pauline trial narratives of Acts. Here we may make a suggestion: If we do not take into consideration the value of Paul's citizenship as a main key to interpret Acts, we could without exaggeration fail to approach Luke's main purpose. It is undoubtedly apparent that Paul works for the Kingdom of God not only as a Christian missionary but also as a Roman prisoner in the narratives of Acts. It should be mentioned that his dual citizenship, particularly the Roman citizenship, makes it possible for him to be tried in front of the Roman authorities.

Acts scholars have questioned the historical credibility of Paul's citizenship for the following reasons: 1. Paul's citizenship in Acts is called into doubt by scant biblical evidence from Paul's letters. He never mentions the possession of citizenship even in dangerous situations. 2. As some have claimed, Paul's citizenship functions simply as a literary invention by Luke in order to provide a legal technicality for Paul's trial in the narratives. This interest is reinforced by ambiguities in the evidence as will be described in chapter 3. 3. If Paul is a *Roman* citizen, why is it not mentioned in his epistles since Roman citizens in the empire should be protected from Roman punishment? Paul, however, writes that he was beaten with rods (2Cor.

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<sup>1</sup> cf. W.C. van Unnik, 'Luke-Acts, a Storm Center in Contemporary Scholarship', in L.E. Keck/J. L. Martyn (eds.), *Studies in Luke-Acts* London: SPCK, 1966, 15-32; C.H. Talbert, 'Shifting Sands: The Recent Study of the Gospel of Luke,' *Int* 30 (1976) 381-395; W.W. Gasque, 'A Fruitful Field: Recent Study of the Acts of the Apostles,' *Int* 42 (1988) 117-131.

<sup>2</sup> J.C. Lentz, *Luke's Portrait of Paul*, SNTSMS 77, Cambridge: CUP, 1993, 1.

11:25). In order to address these problems, we will discuss Paul's origins, including his dual citizenship from the exegesis of Paul's Epistles and Acts.<sup>3</sup> The comparison will explain the blind-end reached by historical exegesis on this issue.

## 1.2. Method and Procedure for this study

We need to look at the issue of Paul's dual citizenship from a different perspective since the difficulties in historical analysis might be resolved in another way. As mentioned, a clear understanding of the issue of citizenship provides the groundwork for any discussion about Luke's ultimate purpose when writing Acts. Thus, a comparative study of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and Acts will form the bulk of this research. The reason the *Acta Alexandrinorum* have been chosen is that the documents have a number of literary parallels which can be compared or contrasted with Paul's trial narratives.<sup>4</sup> As will be clear, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* contain some ideological motifs which possibly provide a direct comparison with the Acts narratives. We will argue that the motifs of patriotic pride, martyrdom, and "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism," are especially valuable when comparing the two narratives.<sup>5</sup> Among the "patriotic motifs," "Amour-propre of pedigree" and "Love of home town (Alexandria)" may be the most useful ones to lead to new ideas for our interpretation of Paul's trial narratives. Among the "martyrdom motifs" "death motifs" and "injustice of Romans" are also important as a revelation of the weak portrayal of the Roman authorities as described in Acts. Since these motifs in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* could ultimately function to propagandise anti-Romanism, the analysis of the narratives of Acts according to the motifs will suggest that Luke has kept an anti-Roman stance which would ultimately aid the spread of the Gospel of Jesus. Indeed, even though Paul is a Roman citizen, he is willing to be called a prisoner and is also pleased to work for missionary activity. That is to say, Paul's

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<sup>3</sup> See Chapter 3. "The Quest for Paul's dual citizenship in Acts and Paul's Epistles"

<sup>4</sup> See on comparing narratives; F. Martin (compiled and ed.), *Narrative Parallels to the New Testament*, SBLRBS 22, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988, 5-7.

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 6. "Significant motifs in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*"

boldness (*Παρησία*) for the mission would serve to stress Luke's original purpose which is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus.

This narrative comparison between the two documents has been most valuable for this thesis. Thus, the procedure of this work is divided into three parts:

1. To explain why research on this issue is necessary in the light of recent studies concerning Paul's dual citizenship and exegesis of the biblical texts, namely Paul's letters and Acts.
2. To analyse our main comparative source - the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.
3. To compare the trial narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* with those of Acts.

The opening chapter forms a review of recent study of the issue of Paul's dual citizenship and its exegetical analysis in Acts and Paul's letters. After recognition of the issue from previous research (ch. 2), the exegesis of texts containing Paul's origins will follow (ch. 3). There attention will be given especially in identifying Paul's pre-Christian Jewish origins which are typical in order to provide a basis for determining to what extent Paul's dual citizenship is or is not consistent with Acts and Paul's own words.

Until now, no one has discussed Paul's trial narratives with the emphasis on his dual citizenship. In order to demonstrate that this issue is worth raising, chapter 2 will survey the recent research of Paul's citizenship which will unveil the real issue of Paul's dual citizenship as it has been discussed by some scholars. The fruits of the discussion will guide the direction of this study which will turn to a literary debate on the narrative analysis of Paul's dual citizenship in Acts.

Chapter 3 will be devoted to an exegetical study of the biblical texts concerning Paul's origins in the epistles and Acts. It will raise the problem of the contradictory nature of Paul's citizenship as described in Acts and the epistles. Therefore, this chapter will deal with this problematic issue by comparing Acts and Paul's letters. As will be clear in chapter 3, even though both Paul's letters and Acts stress Paul's Jewish origin, his dual citizenship as mentioned in Acts is particularly inconsistent with Paul's letters. The primary interest is that it is never mentioned in



Paul's own words. On Paul's Tarsian citizenship, we will argue whether Luke employed the word *πολίτης* in a technically exact fashion or not (21:39). In addition we will ask: How is the combination made between Tarsian and Roman citizenship?; How could Paul's Jewish ancestors have got Roman citizenship?; and Why did Paul's ancestors come to Tarsus? Chapter 3 will show that the historical debate on Paul's dual citizenship reaches an impasse because Paul's origins even as described in Acts have the problem of internal inconsistency. Although Paul's dual citizenship is not conclusively improbable, this study proposes that Luke uses the citizenship motif further a literary stratagem which aims to spread the Gospel of Jesus. For his ultimate intention, Paul is proudly portrayed as a Roman and a Tarsian citizen in the narratives of Acts.

As will be continually emphasised, Paul's dual citizenship has a powerful effect within the narrative, particularly in controlling the Roman authorities. When his Roman citizenship is disclosed in front of Roman authorities, they are concerned that the citizen has received the wrong treatment (16:38, 22:25-29). In Acts 21:37f., when the Roman tribune thinks that Paul is the Egyptian who recently stirred up a revolt, Paul replies "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city." Here, the Tarsian citizenship would also function to discriminate Paul from the social slur of being called an Egyptian. In light of this, the legal issues emerging from the Roman hearings in Acts will be also discussed. Lastly, it will be clear that the legal procedure described in Paul's trial narratives is a real procedure attested from ancient evidence of the period.

Chapters 4 to 7 are an introduction to the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. First, chapter 4 will survey the historico-political background of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. There the direct reason for political conflict between the Alexandrian Greeks and the Jews will be described in terms of the political tension "the issue of citizenship" created

between the two sides. As will be discussed, "Of particular importance to the question of citizenship is the position of the Alexandrian Jewish community."<sup>6</sup>

Chapter 5 provides a literary analysis of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. We will show that their dramatic presentation is similar to that of the Acts narratives, namely trial scenes and the scorning of the Roman authorities' lack of *εὐγένεια*. The structural comparison between the *Acta* and Acts as "trial narratives" will produce ideological parallels. In particular the "dialogue" between the *dramatis personae* and the "defence speech" will be analysed for a later discussion of the Acts narratives.

In chapter 6, significant motifs of the papyri in the *Acta* will be investigated. There the *Acta Alexandrinorum* may suggest some ideological motifs, namely "patriotic motifs" and "martyrdom-motifs" with an ultimate intention, namely of "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism." These selected motifs will provide the groundwork for an analysis of Paul's trial narratives afresh. It can be suggested that the most probable method of exit from the impasse of the issue of Paul's citizenship is by means of a comparison between Acts and the related classical sources. Naturally one cannot suppose that these materials will give a full picture of Paul's dual citizenship; however, the literary motifs found across several fragments of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are examples for comparison with Paul's trial narratives. That is, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* contain numerous parallel materials for understanding the literary function of Paul's dual citizenship. As will be examined, Paul's trial narratives can be clearly understood on the basis of the significant motifs found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

In chapter 7, *Παρρησία*, which means "boldness," "frankness," or the "right to say everything" will be analysed. Even though the word, *Παρρησία* is not itself used in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the *concept* underlies the dramatic presentation of the Alexandrian Greek leaders. As will be argued, the concept of *Παρρησία* can function both negatively and positively: the emperors treated it negatively as

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<sup>6</sup> L.L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, London: SCM Press, 1994, 407, see further pp.405-409 "Citizenship for Diaspora Jews?"



"insolence" while the Alexandrian Greek leaders treated it positively taking great pride in this bold behaviour. This behaviour will be fully compared with Paul's behaviour in the Acts narratives because *Παρρησία* is a significant concept for the analysis of Paul's trial narratives.

Chapter 8 will deal with the content of Paul's trial narratives of Acts in which the significance of his dual citizenship will be considered. As pointed out, we cannot clarify the issue of Paul's dual citizenship through historical analysis, so we should approach the issue by literary analysis which will focus on the *narrative* function of Paul's dual citizenship. Therefore, the narratives of Acts will be analysed on the basis of significant motifs found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, for the document contains many motifs which may compare with Paul's trial narratives.

### **1.3. The purpose of this study**

This study aims to clarify the function of Paul's dual citizenship in the trial narratives of Acts. Even though Paul's citizenship is a significant factor for interpretation of the Acts narratives, it has not been emphasised enough. This research aims to suggest a new interpretation. It is feasible that if Paul had not appealed to Caesar in his trial narratives, he would not have been able to arrive in Rome which is Luke's intended destination. Moreover, it is apparent that if Paul had not first disclosed his Roman citizenship, it would not have been possible to appeal to Caesar at all. Is it not too much to suggest that Paul's citizenship is an essential tool to analyse Paul's trial narratives? Frankly speaking, we could ask: How could the reader read Paul's trial narratives without proper evaluation of his citizenship? In particular, Paul's Roman citizenship is especially valuable because this issue carries Paul to Rome in the narratives.



In addition, our purpose in this thesis can be reached through an "opposite direction of reading."<sup>7</sup> By this, I mean that if we start to read from the end of Acts and work backwards, we may possibly shed new light on Luke's intention in Acts.<sup>8</sup> By using a different approach to reading, we will focus, in this thesis, on Luke's main purpose as the proclamation of the victory of the Gospel of Jesus. We will show, for example, by our "opposite direction of reading" that instead of being pro-Roman, Luke could indeed be showing the opposite. Finally, the reader of Acts may be able to perceive Luke's ultimate intention which is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus and that in particular, the motif of Paul's Roman citizenship may function to reveal Luke's main purpose.

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<sup>7</sup> cf. B.R. Gaventa, 'Toward a Theology of Acts: Reading and Rereading,' *Int* 42 (1988) 146-157; Also see, F. Watson, *The Open Text: New Directions For Biblical Studies?* London: SCM Press, 1993; A.K.M. Adam, *What Is Postmodern Biblical Criticism?* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> cf, E.K. Brown, *Rhythm in the Novel*, Lincoln/London: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1978, 6. Here Brown writes that "There is nothing magical in reading: it is in *rereading* that some magic may lie. Our habits as students, as teachers, as simple readers for simple pleasure, are not those of rereaders." (my italics)

## Chapter 2

### A Review of Research on Paul's citizenship: the historical debate and the literary debate

It has long been acknowledged that Luke's portrayal of the early Church in Acts is not entirely historical. The issue of Paul's citizenship is not excluded from this category. As will be surveyed in further depth, even though numerous investigations have been carried out, the historical quest for Paul's citizenship still stands at an impasse. However, there is still a need to analyze this question in detail because previous research has not dealt thoroughly with every aspect of the question. That is, while some have expressed doubts about the Lukan description of Paul's citizenship, others have only shown a positive attitude in discussing it. In this chapter, we will start with a survey of the history of previous investigations into Paul's citizenship debated by recent Acts scholars. A review of research can be of importance in identifying and classifying the issues at stake and in establishing which methodologies and results have proved worthwhile and which have not.

Our review, following the example of D.A. Neale,<sup>1</sup> will be divided into two parts, namely "historical debate" and "literary debate." As Neale comments that "Historical and literary analysis combine to produce a result unobtainable by a single method.... Historical-critical investigation can serve as guard against the tendency of the literary approach to detach a story from its historical setting,"<sup>2</sup> here historical and literary analysis is also a useful method of pursuing the issues on Paul's dual citizenship. That is, we need to analyze both debates side by side to gauge their effectiveness in producing a solution which will clarify the function of Paul's citizenship in Acts. We shall conclude that the literary debate takes its starting point from the *cul-de-sac* of the historical debate.

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<sup>1</sup> cf. D.A. Neale, *None but the Sinners: Religious Categories in the Gospel of Luke*, JSNTSS 58, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> D.A. Neale (1991) 14.



## 2.1. Historical debate

Of the ancient documents concerning Acts, only Jerome reports concerning Paul's Roman citizenship. For this reason, the debate naturally opens with Jerome despite the fact that many scholars today are convinced that to a large extent his report has become obsolete. Jerome reports that Paul's family belonged to Gischala in Galilee and emigrated to Tarsus at the time of the Roman conquest of Palestine.<sup>3</sup> However, it is not known whether this interesting piece of information came from a reliable source or not.

The Lukan Paul claims two kinds of citizenship, Tarsian and Roman. The majority of the scholars consulted have confined their discussion to the question of Roman citizenship. However, some have devoted their attention to the significance of Tarsian citizenship as well, e.g. J.C. Lentz. As will be discussed more extensively, the perspective toward the historical concern of Acts including Paul's citizenship forms a dichotomy, e.g. the first is the "positive viewpoint" which is an acknowledgement of the historical reliability of Acts, and the second is the "negative viewpoint" which denies the historical reliability of Acts.<sup>4</sup> Our survey will bring to light the usefulness of both perspectives as aids for recognizing the implication of Paul's citizenship in Acts.

The following suggestions from the historical debate, therefore, will broaden our comprehensive knowledge of Paul's citizenship in Acts. Scholars such as A.N. Sherwin-White,<sup>5</sup> F.F. Bruce,<sup>6</sup> and M. Hengel,<sup>7</sup> are concerned about the historical value

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<sup>3</sup> Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*, V. "Paulus apostolus, qui ante Saulus, extra numerum duodecim apostolorum de tribu Benjamin ex oppido Iudeae Giscalis fuit, quo a Romanis capto cum parentibus suis Tarsum Ciliciae commigrauit."

<sup>4</sup> See below § 2.1.2. The critical argument of W. Stegemann is the most sceptical argument on Paul's citizenship in recent scholarship.

<sup>5</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963. 189. Here Sherwin-White points out that "For Acts the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming. Yet Acts is, in simple terms and judged externally, no less of a propaganda narrative than the Gospels, liable to similar distortions. But any attempt to reject its historicity even in matters of detail must now appear absurd. Roman historians have long taken it for granted."; Sherwin-White also wrote another volume on Roman citizenship, but it is little related to this work. See. A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973 which was revised from the first edition in 1939.

<sup>6</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: the Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, Grand Rapids, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 59; *Idem*, 'Is the Paul of Acts the real Paul?', *BJRL* 58 (1975-6) 282-305; *Idem*, 'The Acts of the Apostles: Historical Record or Theological Reconstruction?', *ANRW* II 25.3 (1985) 2600; *Idem*, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit*, Exeter: Paternoster, 1977, 38.



of Luke's report on Paul's citizenship. Indeed, it should be noted that Acts scholarship has been influenced by them. Consequently, their guidance is indispensable in researching Paul's citizenship. However, within the limited framework of this study, we cannot deal with all topics as exhaustively as might be desirable. Therefore, in the recent historical debate, three scholars, G. Lüdemann, W. Stegemann, and H.W. Tajra, will be briefly examined. For their respective research not only constitutes a fresh and valuable achievement in understanding Paul's citizenship but also is profoundly related to this work.

### 2.1.1. G. Lüdemann

G. Lüdemann gives some attention to the historical accuracy of Acts unlike the German biblical main stream.<sup>8</sup> Lüdemann stands in opposition to the main tendency of his German predecessors: for example, E. Haenchen insists that "the question of the historical reliability of the book of Acts does not touch the central concern of the book".<sup>9</sup> As regards Paul's Tarsian citizenship, Lüdemann observes that "whether at the same time he was also a citizen of Tarsus (Acts 21.39) is not so easy to decide. At all events, being a citizen of Tarsus did not rule out being a Roman citizen."<sup>10</sup> However, Paul's Tarsian citizenship is not degraded in the narrative, for its disclosure shows Paul to be honourable. This is demonstrated in Acts 21:38-40 where the Roman tribune thought

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<sup>7</sup> M. Hengel has been well known so called as a leading scholar of "the Tübingen Biblicist School." Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*, London: SCM, 1979, vii. Here he proposes a convincing view of the historical reliability of the biblical texts, especially the book of Acts: "Two things, above all, concern me. First, to question the radical historical scepticism which is so widespread in a number of areas within German scholarship; this scepticism is often coupled with flights of imagination which suggest a retreat from any historical research worth taking seriously. Secondly, however, I am no less vigorously opposed to the primitive ostracism of historical - and that always means critical - methods, without which neither historical nor theological understanding of the New Testament is possible. It is remarkable how closely the two extremes can converge in this 'flight from history', no matter what the reasons for it may be."

<sup>8</sup> See G. Lüdemann, 'Acts of the Apostles as a Historical Source,' in J. Neusner et al (eds.), *The Social World of Formative Christianity and Judaism: In Tribute To H.C. Kee*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988, 109-125; cf. I.H. Marshall, 'Luke's View of Paul,' *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 33 (1990) 41-51; R.F. O'Toole, 'Review of *Das frühe Christentum nach den Traditionen der Apostelgeschichte. Ein Kommentar*,' *CBQ* 50 (1988) 722.

<sup>9</sup> E. Haenchen, 'The Book of Acts as Source Material for the History of Early Christianity,' in L.E. Keck/J.L. Martyn (ed.), *Studies in Luke-Acts*, London: SPCK, 1966, 278.

<sup>10</sup> G. Lüdemann, *Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts*, London: SCM, 1989, 241.

that Paul could be an Egyptian terrorist, but Paul proclaims his Tarsian citizenship and, as a result, is given permission to speak to the people.

In response to the detailed treatment of Paul's Roman citizenship, Lüdemann provides three main points which are quite similar to those of Stegemann.<sup>11</sup> The questions raised by Lüdemann may be summarised as follows:<sup>12</sup> (1) Paul never mentions his Roman citizenship in his letters.<sup>13</sup> (2) Paul is flogged three times (2Cor. 11:25). (3) Paul's manual labour (1Cor. 4:12; 1Thess. 2:9; 2Thess. 3:8-9; Acts 18:3) reflects his lower middle class status and is contrary to his Roman citizenship which indicates that he belongs to the upper class.<sup>14</sup>

On the first point, Lüdemann simply suggests that "Paul did not attach any importance to it even in the catalogue of his vicissitudes in 2Cor. 11:23ff."<sup>15</sup>

On the second point, with regard particularly to the fact that Paul was flogged three times, Lüdemann, whose views in this respect reflect those of Mommsen and Sherwin-White, observes that "the *Lex Julia* indeed does not allow the flogging to be inflicted on Roman citizens as a punishment. But there were often offences against this law."<sup>16</sup> In fact, Cicero gives a clear account of the law in the following:

To bind a Roman citizen is a crime, to flog him is an abomination, to slay him is almost an act of murder: to crucify him is - what? There is no fitting word that can possibly describe so horrible a deed.<sup>17</sup>

Whilst this law was normally enforced, there were times when it seems to have been ignored, as Cicero also reports in his account of the following incident:

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<sup>11</sup> As will be discussed, W. Stegemann reaches a totally sceptical conclusion rather than G. Lüdemann.

<sup>12</sup> G. Lüdemann (1989) 240.

<sup>13</sup> cf. Recently a study is given by Simon Légasse, 'Paul's Pre-Christian Career according to Acts,' *Palestinian Setting*, BAFCS, vol. 4, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 365-390. Here Légasse claims some hesitation to accept the historicity of Paul's Roman citizenship, but he acknowledges its historical credibility. He stresses the necessity of using Acts for the study of the life of Paul. So Légasse (p. 390) concludes that "The use of two sources with the same critical spirit (it is also necessary in approaching the letters) is essential. If no one can claim to have acquired certainty in so complex a field, one has every interest in not neglecting what can contribute to it."

<sup>14</sup> See § 2.1.2. on the critical argument of W. Stegemann, with further discussion about Paul's manual labour.

<sup>15</sup> G. Lüdemann (1989) 240.

<sup>16</sup> G. Lüdemann (1989) 240.

<sup>17</sup> Cicero, *Against Verres*, 2.5.66.



The unhappy man cried out that he was a Roman citizen... To this Verres replied that he had discovered that he had been sent as a spy...He then ordered the man to be flogged severely all over his body. There in the open marketplace of Messana a Roman citizen, gentlemen, was beaten with rods... and all the while, amid the crack of the falling blows, no groan was heard from the unhappy man... except 'I am a Roman citizen'.<sup>18</sup>

Cicero goes on to state that the man was unfortunately crucified after being beaten. Cicero then calls for the death by crucifixion of the man who was guilty of such a deed.<sup>19</sup> In addition, there appear to be recorded instances in which Romans were beaten and even executed within legal bounds; that is, no charge was made of violating the citizen's rights. For example, below, Galba judges a man guilty of poisoning another:

And when the man invoked the law and declared that he was a Roman citizen, Galba, pretending to lighten his punishment by some consolation and honour, ordered that a cross much higher than the rest painted white be set up, and the man transferred to it.<sup>20</sup>

Another example is provided by Pliny, who reports a case involving the ex-governor of the province of Africa, Marius Priscus:

Vitellius Honoratus and Flavius Marcianus were summoned to appear and duly arrived in Rome. Honoratus was charged with having procured the exile of a Roman knight and the death of seven of the latter's friends for a bribe of 300,000 sesterces, and Marcianus with having paid 700,000 for various punishments inflicted on a Roman knight, who had been flogged, condemned to the mines, and finally strangled in prison.<sup>21</sup>

Josephus also refers to Florus - who scourged and even crucified Jews of Roman equestrian rank.<sup>22</sup> In the light of the classical texts cited above, the reports in Acts are seen to reflect accurately matters of provincial Roman law in the first century C.E. Likewise, those texts could provide further insight to a closer understanding of Acts.

On the third point, Lüdemann suggests that there is no contradiction between Paul's manual labour and his Roman citizenship. He explains that "citizenship was in no way bestowed only on prominent citizens. Moreover Paul's manual work was probably motivated by rabbinic training and therefore cannot be used as conclusive evidence for

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<sup>18</sup> Cicero, *Against Verres*, 2.5.62; cf. Plutarch, *Caesar*, 29.2.

<sup>19</sup> Cicero, *Against Verres*, 2.5.67.

<sup>20</sup> Suetonius, *Galba*, 9.1.

<sup>21</sup> Pliny, *Letters*, 2.11.

<sup>22</sup> *BJ*. 2.14.9; cf. M. Hengel, *Crucifixion*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977, 39; A.H.M. Jones, 'I appeal unto Caesar,' *Studies in Roman Government and Law*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968, 51-65.



defining his social status."<sup>23</sup> That is to say, Lüdemann provides positive proof that Paul was a Roman citizen: "the apostle bears a Roman name, Paulus which is a *cognomen* or *praenomen* which indicates high birth."<sup>24</sup> This means that Paul's Roman citizenship makes it possible for him to go to Rome following an appeal to Caesar. Paul a Roman citizen who worked in the provinces might have enjoyed rights and privileges that would be unavailable to the majority of provincials. Even though his discussion is too brief,<sup>25</sup> Lüdemann illustrates arguments that can be urged in support of the historical credibility of the fact that Paul was a Roman citizen.<sup>26</sup>

### 2.1.2. W. Stegemann<sup>27</sup>

We shall now discuss Stegemann's study, since his research makes it possible for some critical scholars to raise significant questions related to Paul's Roman citizenship. Contrary to Lüdemann's view examined above, he totally denies the historical probability of Paul's Roman citizenship. Stegemann suggests that it is purely Luke's invention created for apologetic purposes.<sup>28</sup> According to Stegemann's view,<sup>29</sup> it is extremely improbable that Paul had Roman citizenship for three reasons: (1) Paul's low social class and Jewish background would make it impossible to get Roman citizenship for his family;<sup>30</sup> (2) Paul never mentions his Roman citizenship in the epistles;<sup>31</sup> and (3) The

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<sup>23</sup> G. Lüdemann (1989) 240.

<sup>24</sup> G. Lüdemann (1989) 241. "Its use can be explained two ways: (a) The Latin name Paul is the result of assimilation, in order to make social contacts or even dealing with the Roman authorities easier. (b) The name Paul goes back to the fact that the apostle was a Roman citizen. Roman citizens had the right and duty to bear a Roman name."

<sup>25</sup> See on criticism of Lüdemann, I.H. Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles*, New Testament Guides, New Testament Guides, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992, 87-8

<sup>26</sup> cf. G. Lüdemann (1989) 239, 241.

<sup>27</sup> W. Stegemann, 'War der Apostel Paulus ein römischer Bürger?' *ZNW* 78 (1987) 200-229.

<sup>28</sup> cf. W. Stegemann (1987) 229. "Die anderslautenden Nachrichten der Apostelgeschichte gehen offenkundig auf deren Verlasser selbst zurück."

<sup>29</sup> W. Stegemann (1987), 200-229.

<sup>30</sup> W. Stegemann (1987) 226-8.

<sup>31</sup> W. Stegemann (1987) 200. "An dieser Überzeugung konnte auch nicht rütteln, daß wir über den Besitz dieses bemerkenswerten Privilegs nur durch die Apostelgeschichte informiert sind, während die Paulusbriefe selbst uns nicht einmal einen indirekten Hinweis darauf geben."

reports on his Roman citizenship in Acts are Luke's inventive composition, written purely out of concern for his community and therefore quite unreliable.<sup>32</sup>

Firstly, W. Stegemann doubts Paul's Roman citizenship throughout his work. In addition, Stegemann suggests that Paul in Acts appears to belong to a low social class in terms of manual labour.<sup>33</sup> According to R.F. Hock's observation, however, Paul's tent-making could not be used as conclusive evidence to prove his or his family's low social status, because it was most likely motivated by his rabbinical education and training.<sup>34</sup>

Hock argues its history in this way:

The language that he used to refer to his trade provides a better indicator of his social class. For when Paul's use of status terms is taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the attitude toward work expressed in those terms corresponds more closely to that of the upper classes than to that of the lower. Therefore, Ramsay's view of Paul's aristocratic origin is confirmed - indeed, strengthened - because Paul's tentmaking is no longer problematic for that view. By working at a slavish and demeaning trade Paul sensed a considerable loss of status, a loss that makes sense only if he were from a relatively high social class.<sup>35</sup>

Further, whilst Stegemann suspects that Paul's long-established Jewishness is completely antithetical to his possession of Roman citizenship,<sup>36</sup> there are two possibilities for the Roman citizenship of Paul's father: (1) the grant of Augustus (2) citizenship can be taken after discharge from the Roman army. However, he denies the possibility of the military service of Paul's father, quoting Applebaum in the following manner:

Roman army life revolved extensively round the ruler-cult, the consecrated standards and the *auguria*; this and the constant tension between the Jews and the Roman power

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<sup>32</sup> W. Stegemann (1987) 229.

<sup>33</sup> cf. Acts 18:3; 1Thess. 2:9; 1Cor. 4:12; cf. W.M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1942 (19 ed.) 31. "Roman citizens (*cives Romani*) in a provincial city commonly filled the position of high-class citizens, and even had magistracies urged upon them by general consent."

<sup>34</sup> On Paul's tent-making, cf. R.F. Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980; *Idem*, 'Paul's tentmaking and the problem of his social class', *JBL* 97 (1978) 555-64; *Idem*, 'The workshop as a Social Setting for Paul's Missionary Preaching', *CBQ* 41 (1979) 438-50.

<sup>35</sup> R.F. Hock (1978) 564.

<sup>36</sup> W. Stegemann (1987) 224-5; W. Stegemann (p. 228) emphasizes that Jewish origin prevents Paul to become a Roman citizen.



more particularly in Judaea during the first century of the current era, made Jews as reluctant to enlist as it made the authorities reluctant to accept them.<sup>37</sup>

Tajra observes that "Jews were granted Roman citizenship no less than were other provincials and being a Jew did not in itself disqualify a man from the grant of Roman citizenship."<sup>38</sup> Tajra, therefore, suggests that "it is surely incorrect to portray the relationship between Jews and Romans as one of inveterate hostility,"<sup>39</sup> because the Jews were largely exempted from regular military service<sup>40</sup> and they could take oaths without invoking the gods.<sup>41</sup> Rapske also agrees that religious commitment and Roman citizenship stand together without apparent inconsistency and the fact that Roman citizenship and participation in the Jewish faith were not mutually exclusive is also evident from inscriptional evidence.<sup>42</sup>

Secondly, Stegemann emphasizes that Luke has presumably inferred Paul's Roman citizenship from his report which shows that Paul had been handed over to Rome.<sup>43</sup> In effect, Paul's Roman citizenship may actually serve to show him as a representative of contemporary Christianity in the narratives of Acts. Luke is interested that Christians should remain their contemporary cultural context, e.g. Jewish and Roman culture.<sup>44</sup> Likewise, as Stegemann observes, Paul as a Roman citizen is created by Luke, Paul's portrait as a Roman and a Jew is indicative of Luke's best intention for the Lukan community. As a result, Stegemann reaches an impasse in pursuing the historical approach to Paul's Roman citizenship, so he points out that Luke originally had a literary intention for his community.

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<sup>37</sup> S. Applebaum, 'The Legal Status of the Jewish Communities in the Diaspora', in S. Safrai & M. Stern (eds.), *The Jewish People in the First Century. Historical Geography, Political History, Social Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions*, vol. 1, Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp., 1974, 459.

<sup>38</sup> H.W. Tajra, *The Trial of Paul: A Juridical Exegesis of the Second Half of the Acts of the Apostles*, WUNT 2/35, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1989, 14-21, 88; cf. G. Kehnscherper, 'Der Apostel Paulus als römischer Bürger', *Texte und Untersuchungen* 87 (1964) 419.

<sup>39</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 88.

<sup>40</sup> *Ant* 14. 10.6; 14. 10.11-4.

<sup>41</sup> *Ant* 12. 3.2; 16. 2.3-5.

<sup>42</sup> B. Rapske, *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*, BAFCS 3, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994, 89.

<sup>43</sup> W. Stegemann (1987) 228.

<sup>44</sup> cf. W. Stegemann (1987) 229.



For Paul, however, following Christ in his suffering was more important than escaping from danger because, the "marks of Jesus on his body" (Gal. 6:17) were tokens won in an honourable battle. G. Kehnscherper<sup>45</sup> also supports this suggestion by quoting 1Cor. 9:19-23:

For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews; to those under the law I became as one under the law - though not being myself under the law - that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law- not being without law toward God but under the law of Christ - that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

Consequently, Kehnscherper observes a further possibility:

Er hat seinen Vorsatz, im Dienste des Evangeliums den Juden ein Jude, den Griechen ein Grieche, den Sklaven ein Sklave und den Kranken ein Kranker zu werden, dahingehend erweitert, daß er vor die Römer als ein "römischer Bürger," ja als Träger eines römische Senatorennamens trat, um dem Evangelium vom κύριος im Römischen Reiche bessere Bahn zu machen.<sup>46</sup>

Tajra describes the situation thus: "Legally speaking Paul's status was that of a Roman citizen, resident in Tarsus and of Jewish origin, but to the apostle himself his premier identity was that of a Christian, a citizen of the Kingdom (Phil. 3:20), a man who cared little for human courts or their judgements (cf. 1Cor. 4:3ff.)."<sup>47</sup> As debated, Stegemann's approach is quite sceptical and raises many questions about the issue of Paul's Roman citizenship.

### 2.1.3. H.W. Tajra

Tajra's discussion on Acts bears a close resemblance to that of F.F. Bruce in many respects.<sup>48</sup> Bruce confirms that the Paul of Acts is the real Paul:

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<sup>45</sup> G. Kehnscherper (1964) 411-440.

<sup>46</sup> G. Kehnscherper (1964) 415-6; My brief translation - "He has so far extended his principle of becoming, for the sake of the Gospel, a Jew to the Jews, a Greek to the Greek, a slave to the slaves and a sick man for the sick, that he came before the Romans as a "Roman citizen", - yes, even the bearer of a Roman Senatorial name - so as to make a better path for the Gospel of the κύριος in the Roman empire."

<sup>47</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 88.

<sup>48</sup> cf. C.K. Barrett, 'Review of *The Trial of St Paul*,' *JTS* 42 (1991) 230; H.W. Tajra (1989) v, where his supervisor F. Bovon says that Tajra was more influenced by British tradition and by especially by the works of F. F. Bruce.

The Paul whose portrait Luke paints is the real Paul. It is the real Paul viewed in retrospect by a friend and admirer, whose own religious experience was different from Paul's, who expresses a distinctive theological outlook, who writes for another constituency than that for which Paul wrote his letters.... A man's own work is his greatest monument, but a juster appreciation of him can be formed if it is possible to see him as others saw him. Luke provides Paul's letters with a wider context than that which the letters themselves supply; thanks to him, we have a fuller understanding of Paul's place in the world of his day and of the impact which he made on it.<sup>49</sup>

As a result, for Bruce, there is also no reason to dismiss the historicity of Paul's citizenship. However, Bruce also points out in relation to the historical uncertainty of Paul's Roman citizenship that if the circumstances in which Paul's family acquired Roman citizenship are obscure, many questions relating to his citizenship are hardly less so.<sup>50</sup> On Paul's Tarsian citizenship, Bruce calls attention to the fact that it has arisen from his being a Jew:

The citizen body, as in other cities of the Greek type, was presumably organized in tribes or *phylai*. Since the common life of the tribe or *phyle* involved religious ceremonies which would have been offensive to Jews, it has been suggested that the Jewish citizens of Tarsus were enrolled in a tribe of their own, solemnized by ceremonies of the Jewish religion. This may indeed have been so, although we have no explicit evidence to this effect. In many Gentile cities Jewish settlers lived as resident aliens, but in some, such as Alexandria, Cyrene, Syrian Antioch, Ephesus and Sardis, they enjoyed citizen rights, and they could well have done so as a distinct group in Tarsus.<sup>51</sup>

Further, Bruce stresses that the significance of Paul's status as a Roman citizen is that "In Tarsus, probably in the first decade of the Christian era, Paul was born. The privilege of Tarsian birth and civic status was, however, outweighed by the fact that he was born a Roman citizen."<sup>52</sup> According to Bruce, therefore, "his father must have been a Roman citizen before Paul and presumably Paul's father, grand father or even great-grandfather had rendered some outstanding service to the Roman cause."<sup>53</sup>

Likewise, Tajra follows the moderate tradition of Bruce. Tajra has published a book based on his PhD thesis which develops a positive view on the historicity of Acts. Tajra deals with the details of Paul's trial and Roman legal problems in Acts. Tajra is

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<sup>49</sup> F.F. Bruce (1990) 59; cf. *Idem* (1975-6) 282-305.

<sup>50</sup> F.F. Bruce (1977) 38.

<sup>51</sup> F.F. Bruce (1977) 36.

<sup>52</sup> F.F. Bruce (1977) 37.

<sup>53</sup> F.F. Bruce (1977) 37.



quite convinced that Paul's Roman citizenship plays "a key role in his case"<sup>54</sup> within the legal process. Tajra does, however, acknowledge that for Paul's trial in Acts to be understood at the legal level, Paul's Roman citizenship is absolutely necessary. Tajra notes that "the only plausible way to explain Paul's transferral to the highest court is that he was in fact a Roman citizen, who had exercised his right of appeal - a basic prerogative of Roman citizenship - a right to justice, equitable treatment and protection from magisterial abuse absolutely inherent in the *civitas*."<sup>55</sup> Finally, he regards the mention of Roman citizenship as factual:

Luke of course has his apologetic aims and theological concerns and he sometimes limits his material and omits things which do not fit in with his overall theological purpose. Yet his work contains a real historical programme. Luke's account of Paul's trial is of historical value indicating as it does the essential characteristics of that event and providing a historical understanding of Paul's relationship to the Roman judicial system.<sup>56</sup>

Likewise, it is to be assumed that Tajra regards Paul's Roman citizenship as an important key for opening the mystery of the narratives of Acts which is close to the Roman legal system. Likewise, Tajra points out that Paul's Tarsian citizenship is less important than his Roman citizenship.<sup>57</sup> In my opinion, it is likely, as Tajra points out, that the function of Paul's Roman citizenship is very significant. It is not employed as a literary mechanism to show "political apologetic" but to propagandize "anti-Roman ideology".

#### 2.1.4. Summary

As shown above, the three scholars' ideas are rather oriented to the historical accuracy of Paul's citizenship. The scholars are initially concerned about whether Acts contains historical fact or not. Lüdemann and Tajra conclude that Paul's citizenship is quite probable. Stegemann's conclusion is otherwise. As will be discussed later, even though some contradictory biblical texts still present debatable issues between Acts and Paul's letters, Paul's citizenship clearly appears in the narratives of Acts. It is also true,

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<sup>54</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 61.

<sup>55</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 89.

<sup>56</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 89.

<sup>57</sup> cf. H.W. Tajra (1989) 80.



however, that the potential value of Paul's citizenship for the exegesis or interpretation of the narratives of Acts has been missed. Indeed, no Acts scholars have concentrated on Paul's citizenship for the research of Acts in particular. What the historical debate has found is that Paul's citizenship should be questioned in several aspects in biblical and ancient documents. Paul's citizenship is only made known in Acts 16:37-8 and 22:25-9 where Paul declares his status as a Roman citizen to Roman military officers who were quite certainly frightened by the announcement. His Tarsian citizenship is also mentioned twice in Acts 21:39 and 22:3. There we may be able to find Luke's literary technique which would keep the reader in suspense. In spite of its literary significance, amongst the problems of Paul's citizenship it is still quite a debatable point whether this status is real or invented. Although Lukan Paul appears as a Roman/Tarsian citizen in the narratives, the announcement of the status in itself does not prove its historical accuracy. Indeed, the possession of Paul's citizenship has been doubted as Stegemann argues. So, I should conclude by saying at this point the historical investigation on Paul's citizenship is still inconclusive.

## 2.2. Literary debate

So far we have seen that previous historical debate on Paul's citizenship has produced a bewildering variety of contradictory opinions. In this section we focus on the question: What is the function of Paul's citizenship in the narrative of Acts? As the main stream of New Testament scholarship has in general shown, current analysis of Acts is moving in the direction of a literary debate. The literary debate is mainly interested in the narrative/literary structure of Acts which serves to clarify Luke's apologetic/political purpose in Acts. In relation to this, Acts has been regarded as a "historical novel"<sup>58</sup> and a "political/apologetic monograph" for the amiable relationship between Rome and Christianity. The literary analysis must meet several requirements of literary function in order to offer a convincing investigation into the literary structures of Paul's trial

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<sup>58</sup> R. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.

narratives in Acts. Likewise, it will become clear that Paul's citizenship has an important function in revealing Luke's original intention in this section. Now let us look at how an approach by some recent literary analysis can meet these requirements which must be fulfilled in order to remedy the weakness of the historical debate on Paul's citizenship.

Firstly, we begin with Luke's attitude to Rome in scholarship, for it is likely that Paul's Roman citizenship will be related in several ways, to Luke's broader purpose. In this section, we will consider the idea of the scholars, H. Conzelmann, P.W. Walaskay, K. Wengst, and R.J. Cassidy. Following this discussion, we will also consider the arguments of recent scholars, namely J.C. Lentz, B. Rapske, and Marie-Eloise Rosenblatt who have tried to find a fresh approach for an exit from the *cul-de-sac* of historical analysis. They have made a strong case for demonstrating the significance of the recognition of the narrative itself.

### **2.2.1. Functions related in some way to Luke's overall purpose in conveying a particular attitude to Rome**

Many writers relate Paul's Roman citizenship in Acts to the overall political/apologetic purpose of Luke-Acts. Likewise, recent Acts scholars<sup>59</sup> have been largely concerned with the political relationship between Christianity and the Roman empire in terms of the "political or ideological reading of Acts". In considering this kind of interpretation, we shall start with an examination of the work of Ramsay which suggests a "political apologetic interpretation." His work, indeed, claims that Paul's trial shows the prerogative of the *religio licita* (permitted religion) of Christianity given by the Roman empire:

We must conclude, then, that the large space devoted to the trial of Paul in its various stages before the Roman Imperial tribunals is connected with a strongly marked interest and a clear purpose running through the two books of this history; and it follows that Luke conceived the trial to be a critical and supremely important stage in the development of the Church.... If Paul was acquitted, the issue of the trial was a formal decision by the supreme court of the Empire that it was permissible to preach

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<sup>59</sup> P.W. Walaskay, 'And So We Came To Rome': *The Political Perspective of St. Luke*, Cambridge: CUP, 1983; R.J. Cassidy/P.J. Scharper (eds.), *Political Issues in Luke-Acts*, Orbis Books, 1983; R.J. Cassidy, *Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles*, New York: Orbis Books, 1987; P.F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The Social and Political Motivations of Lucan theology*, Cambridge: CUP, 1987.



Christianity: the trial, therefore, was really a charter of religious liberty, and therein lies its immense importance.<sup>60</sup>

B.S. Easton also suggests that Acts is closely related to the *religio licita* theory. He regards that "Christianity is a religion that should be tolerated by the state."<sup>61</sup> For "it is no new and independent religion, about which the government still has to make up its mind," but rather "nothing more or less than Judaism," which "has been explicitly recognized by Rome as a *religio licita*."<sup>62</sup> Easton, on the basis of this conclusion, suggests that "to a very real degree chapters 13 to 28 may be regarded as a casebook in Roman law."<sup>63</sup> Even though R. Maddox points out that '*religio licita*' was for the first time used in Tertullian<sup>64</sup> in 197 C.E., he also acknowledges the significance of the "*religio licita* idea" which Easton claims as E. Haenchen<sup>65</sup> agrees:

It has continued to command such impressive support, and partly because there is indeed an unmistakably and surprisingly irenic attitude towards Rome in Luke-Acts, which deserves to be explored and taken into account.<sup>66</sup>

On the basis of this view, Acts scholars are in general oriented to the fact that Luke wrote Acts for the formation of friendly relations between Rome and Christianity. In connection with the pro-Roman aspect of Acts, Luke intended to secure the privilege of a '*religio licita*' by means of establishing amicable relationships between Christianity and the empire. For example, H.J. Cadbury observes it in the following manner:

Still more patent is Luke's defense of Christianity from charges brought against it as breaking Roman law. It may be conjectured that his Jewish apologetic had as its aim the satisfaction of Rome's demand that foreign religions must be licensed to be permitted. If Judaism was a *religio licita* and Christianity was not, it was important to show that Christianity was only a legitimate form of Judaism and could shelter under the Jewish name.<sup>67</sup>

In a different respect, Walaskay suggests that Luke's purpose is to present an '*apologia pro imperio*' instead of '*apologia pro ecclesia*', i.e. a defence of the empire to

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<sup>60</sup> W.M. Ramsay (1942) 307-308. Ramsay (304) points out that "it must strike every careful reader that Luke devotes special attention throughout his work to the occasions on which Paul was brought in contact with Roman officials."

<sup>61</sup> B.S. Easton, *Early Christianity: The Purpose of Acts and other papers*, London: SPCK, 1955, 42.

<sup>62</sup> cf. B.S. Easton (1955) 43.

<sup>63</sup> B.S. Easton (1955) 42.

<sup>64</sup> Tertullian, *Apology* 21.1

<sup>65</sup> E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971, 100-2.

<sup>66</sup> R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982, 21, 91-3.

<sup>67</sup> H.J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts*, London: SPCK, 1927 (1968, rep.), 308.



the Church rather than a statement of the political harmlessness of the Church.<sup>68</sup> In this view, Walaskay regards Luke's political attitude as an absolutely pro-Roman stance.

There have been several ideas concerning the relationship between the Roman empire and the young Christian community in discussions. Specifically, there are many ways in which the features of Roman authorities and Roman legal procedures are shown in the narratives of Acts. For example, the narrative of Paul's trial illustrates the Roman background of Acts using the issue of Roman citizenship.<sup>69</sup> There Paul as a protagonist plays himself against Roman officials. Surprisingly, the significance of Paul's Roman citizenship is dismissed in the discussion. It is merely regarded as a legal device that makes possible Paul's escape from the emergent situation.

The "politics of Luke" should be also analyzed according to Paul's Roman citizenship because the inseparable relationship of Rome and Christianity is, on this view, linked with Paul's Roman citizenship in the narratives of Acts. Though Conzelmann, Walaskay, Wengst, and Cassidy have examined political ideologies relating to the Roman empire and the Church including the value of Paul's Roman citizenship, they have not made a close connection of this issue in terms of Paul's Roman citizenship as found in Acts. However, I shall attempt to make that connection after summarizing several views of Paul's attitude to Rome including his citizenship.

#### 2.2.1.1. H. Conzelmann

H. Conzelmann is well known for his book, *The Theology of St Luke*,<sup>70</sup> which demonstrates that Luke intends to present a political apology for Christianity to the Roman empire. As he points out, the *parousia* of Christ has been delayed and the young Christian church needs to preserve its friendly relationship with the Roman empire:

As the life of the world continues, there arise certain problems concerning the relation of the Church to its environment, which had remained hidden at the beginning because of the belief that the End was imminent. It is a question mainly of the relationship of the Church with Judaism and with the Empire, and it is significant how Luke deals with these problems. He engages in apologetic. In itself, of course,

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<sup>68</sup> P.W. Walaskay (1983) esp. 50-63.

<sup>69</sup> cf. H.J. Cadbury, *The Book of Acts in History*, London: Adam and Charles Black, 1955, 65.

<sup>70</sup> H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke*, London: SCM Press, 1960.

this does not amount to a positive theological answer to the problems, but Luke does achieve this by the fact that he lays as the foundation of his defence of the Church a comprehensive consideration of its general position in the world; he fixes its position in respect of redemptive history and deduces from this the rules for its attitude to the world. This is an original achievement....It cannot be disputed that Luke's apologetic aims are political.<sup>71</sup>

Thus, Luke aims to describe friendly reciprocal communication between the Church and the Roman government, i.e. "no crime against Roman law"<sup>72</sup> and Christianity especially hopes to obtain a privileged status as a *religio licita*.<sup>73</sup> In short, Conzelmann strongly suggests political apologetic for the religious outlook of Luke's purpose. That is, Luke aims to show that Christianity is a religion which stands in the same tradition as Judaism; Luke's political apologetic purely intends to show the religious aspect of Christianity.

In this respect, Paul's Roman citizenship is also related to the political apologetic of Luke. Conzelmann writes:

The crossing to Europe provides a further typical example (xvi. 11ff.). This is the first time that Luke mentions Paul's Roman citizenship - not the irreproachable character of his Judaism. Roman law acts as a saviour in need, but not without the loyalty of the Christian citizen being underlined.<sup>74</sup>

Conzelmann believes that Paul's Roman citizenship facilitates the Lukan apologetic to the Roman empire, i.e. citizenship as a legal mechanism for "political apologetic."

Conzelmann's concept has been taken up by almost all scholars of the political apologetic to the Roman empire as a typical example. Powell admits that "Conzelmann's thesis is often disputed, but it has been very influential. Charles Giblin,<sup>75</sup> for example, builds on this basic concept when he suggests that, alongside the apology for Christianity, Luke delivers a warning to potential enemies of the faith... Another scholar, P. Walaskay, has attempted to modify Conzelmann's argument while retaining its basic theme."<sup>76</sup> Powell recognizes the influence of Conzelmann on the political apologetic that "Giblin, Walaskay, and Esler all modify or challenge portions of Conzelmann's thesis,

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<sup>71</sup> H. Conzelmann (1960) 137.

<sup>72</sup> H. Conzelmann (1960) 140.

<sup>73</sup> cf. R. Maddox (1982) 91. "The simplest way to achieve this goal was to prove to the Roman authorities that Christianity was a genuine form of Judaism; and this, it is alleged, Luke undertook to do."

<sup>74</sup> H. Conzelmann (1960) 141.

<sup>75</sup> C.H. Giblin, *The Destruction of Jerusalem According to Luke's Gospel: A Historical-Typological Moral*, AnBib 107, Rome: Biblical Institute, 1985.

<sup>76</sup> M.A. Powell, *What are they saying about Luke?* NY: Paulist Press, 1989, 83-4.



but they retain the basic idea that Luke envisions peaceful coexistence between the Church and the state."<sup>77</sup> Conzelmann's emphasis on the good relationship between the two sides in Acts deserves attention. As Conzelmann emphasizes, if Christianity's need of a friendly relationship with Rome is caused by the delay of the *parousia*, it is only one of the parameters shaping the character of Acts.<sup>78</sup> Luke's Gospel also contains the motif of imminent eschatology (cf. Lk. 12:20, 35f.). As will be discussed, the narratives of Acts contain a great deal on the negative aspect of the Roman empire and Paul's physical suffering at the hands of the Romans. It should be remembered that Paul's status as an accused lasts to the end of Acts.

#### 2.2.1.2. P.W. Walaskay

Walaskay<sup>79</sup> criticizes the traditional view that Luke presents an '*apologia pro ecclesia*' (i.e. the political harmlessness of the church) and proposes instead an '*apologia pro imperio*' (i.e. a defence of the empire to the church). Walaskay claims that Luke opposes an anti-Roman stance in support of the church which has to survive in the contemporary political order of the Roman empire, i.e. Walaskay's view is that Luke clearly stands for a "pro-Roman attitude":

Most commentators who discuss Luke's political apologetic are quite one-sided in selecting material from Luke-Acts. It is certainly true that Luke wrote much that might have impressed a Roman authority with the political harmlessness of the church: Jesus was declared innocent by Pontius Pilate, Paul was treated fairly and justly by Roman magistrates, and the attitude of the Roman government toward the church was generally neutral. The highlighting of such passages in Luke-Acts, however, obscures several scenes that would certainly have raised questions about the political innocence of the church.<sup>80</sup>

Instead, Walaskay gives a suggestion that Luke's political apologetic is directed not to Rome but to Christianity. In order to answer this question successfully, he argues that:

Luke has presented Paul as both a Pharisee and a Roman. As a diaspora Pharisee, Paul was an effective bridge between the Jerusalem church and the gentile mission churches. As a Roman citizen, Paul was the perfect spokesman to defend Christian

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<sup>77</sup> M.A. Powell (1989) 85.

<sup>78</sup> cf. I.H. Marshall (1992) 36.

<sup>79</sup> See P.W. Walaskay (1983) 50-63.

<sup>80</sup> P.W. Walaskay (1983) 15.

political loyalty in a Roman court. Paul's political *apologia*, however, takes a rather odd turn. Paul's appeal to his Pharisaism and to his Roman citizenship - to the resurrection and to Caesar - result in a rather muddled, if not unconvincing, political apologetic. If Luke's intention was to persuade a magistrate that Christianity is politically benign, he has again been less than effective an advocate. If, however, he was trying to present Rome in a positive light to the Christian reader, he has succeeded. The last chapters of Acts, dramatically written, bring Paul under the jurisdiction and protection of the Roman court.<sup>81</sup>

In conclusion, Walaskay sums up Luke's intention that "imbedded in his historical narrative was a clear message to the church, an *apologia pro imperio*, which would help the Christian community live effectively with the social, political, and religious realities of the present situation until the advent of God's reign."<sup>82</sup> For Walaskay, Paul's Roman citizenship would function as his protector on behalf of Christianity and insist that the Roman empire supports Christianity. That is to say, Paul is a bridge between the church and the Roman empire. Paul's Roman citizenship makes it possible for both sides to relate amicably. Consequently, Luke aims to write not to recommend Christianity to the Roman government, but to endorse the Roman empire to Christianity:

Luke has presented his reader with a history describing where the church has been in her encounter with the empire; in this account Luke has also helped his reader understand more completely the relationship of the church and state in the ongoing world through a decidedly pro-Roman apologetic.<sup>83</sup>

However, contrary suggestions on political apologetic are, as C.K. Barrett also criticizes, far more convincing:

It is in this sense that Acts may be regarded as an apology on behalf of Paul. It was not addressed to the Emperor, with the intention of proving the political harmlessness of Christianity in general and of Paul in particular; a few passages might be construed to serve this purpose, but to suggest that the book as whole should be taken in this way is absurd. No Roman official would ever have filtered out so much of what to him would be theological and ecclesiastical rubbish in order to reach so tiny a grain of relevant apology.<sup>84</sup>

Amongst these contrary suggestions, Cassidy is quite critical, in particular with respect to Paul's citizenship:

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<sup>81</sup> P.W. Walaskay (1983) 50.

<sup>82</sup> P.W. Walaskay (1983) 67.

<sup>83</sup> P.W. Walaskay (1983) 37.

<sup>84</sup> C.K. Barrett, *Luke the Historian in Recent Study*, London: Epworth Press, 1961, 63.



To begin with the subject of citizenship, the basic response which needs to be articulated is that, when all of the relevant passages are carefully considered, it can hardly be maintained that Luke portrays Paul as a typical citizen with traditional loyalties to the emperor and the imperial order. Rather, Luke actually portrays Paul taking an approach to his Roman standing that could only have impressed a Roman reader of Acts as highly unorthodox and even as troublesome. ... Paul's continuous references to Jesus as his "Lord" is also a feature of the Acts narrative that serves to delimit his regard for his Roman status. What Acts thereby establishes is that Paul, in contrast with Lysias and Festus, does not take the emperor as his ultimate sovereign. Clearly Paul's continuous advertences to Jesus as his "Lord" could only have proved disconcerting to Roman officials who were accustomed to think that a loyal citizen's first allegiance belonged to the emperor and his decrees.<sup>85</sup>

Although one might consider that Walaskay's proposal is similar to that of Conzelmann, the object of political apologetic is different for both sides in that Conzelmann's is for the Roman government and Walaskay's looks toward Christianity. Walaskay's view is criticized by I.H. Marshall:

While it is correct that Luke expected Christians to be generally submissive to the human government, there is too much evidence which puts the Romans in a bad light (e.g. Acts 18.17; 24. 26), and when all is said and done, the Roman material forms a small part of Acts (and of the Gospel).<sup>86</sup>

D.P. Moessner also makes the criticism that "Walaskay's thesis lacks the binding force necessary to demonstrate the *apologia pro imperio* as an overarching concern in both of Luke's volumes, especially when much of the evidence in the Acts could "cut" in either direction in an intended "political" apologetic."<sup>87</sup> Walaskay's idea, however, is still fresh, for he has used the word 'apology' in connection with the Lukan political lesson namely *apologia pro imperio*, which was directed inwards to the Christian community.

### 2.2.1.3. K. Wengst<sup>88</sup>

Wengst asks how did Christians experience the governing of the Roman empire during the time of *Pax Romana*? So he deals with the following issue: What does the *Pax Romana* mean to the Christians? He observes Luke's very positive understanding of the *Pax Romana* as follows:

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<sup>85</sup> R.J. Cassidy (1987) 150.

<sup>86</sup> I.H. Marshall (1992) 33.

<sup>87</sup> D.P. Moessner, 'Review of *And so we came to Rome*,' *Int* 39 (1985) 320; cf. F.F. Bruce, 'Paul's Apologetic and the purpose of Acts,' *BJRL* 69 (1986-7) 393.

<sup>88</sup> K. Wengst is Professor of NT at the University of Ruhr in Bochum and is deeply involved in the peace movement.



In Luke we have quite a different way of looking at the *Pax Romana* from what we find in Jesus and Paul. Here we find virtually no negative statements about Rome and its representatives; rather, they are depicted in an explicitly favourable light. In both books by Luke it is striking that soldiers, the primary guarantors of the *Pax Romana*, repeatedly appear not as manifestations of an aggressive and oppressive military power but rather on the one hand as providing the necessary protection to the legal order - Luke has very considerable interest in this in his positive account of those holding power in the empire - and on the other hand as being well disposed to the indigenous population and active in furthering its interests.<sup>89</sup>

In this respect, Wengst claims that the Roman army, which is one of the two supporting pillars of the Roman empire, has a positive function.<sup>90</sup> In Acts 21:30-35 Paul is removed from the crowd by Roman soldiers because of the riot. Wengst says of this occurrence that "In Luke's account, Paul's arrest by the Roman army seems virtually to be a protective measure in a threatening situation."<sup>91</sup> Wengst's identification of the Lukan stance as pro-Roman clearly reveals his understanding of the *Pax Romana*. According to Wengst, the "extraordinarily positive way in which almost all the Roman soldiers are presented in Luke's account needs to be noted as a first characteristic of his perception of the *Pax Romana*."<sup>92</sup> Wengst also observes Luke's account of the Roman government from a positive angle as follows:

The positive description of Roman bodies by Luke is of course matched by the view that Christians should show loyalty towards them. But again the way in which Luke expresses this loyalty is significant. He 'contents himself with demonstrating that the Christian proclamation does not affect the empire. It is primarily proclamation of the resurrection, and that is a matter which does not affect Roman penal justice'. Luke stresses that Jesus and the Christians are virtually harmless politically.<sup>93</sup>

This clearly reveals that Wengst agrees that Luke's stance is extremely "pro-Roman." Interestingly, however, Wengst also comments, "whatever positive experiences and whatever good intentions Luke may have had, the reproduction of the reality of the *Pax Romana* which he offers in the Gospel and in Acts is possible only by leaving out the violence that is practised in it. So violence is not interrupted, but painted over."<sup>94</sup> That is, "the positive description of aspects of the *Pax Romana* by Luke

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<sup>89</sup> K. Wengst, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ*, London: SCM Press, 1987, 89-90.

<sup>90</sup> K. Wengst (1987, 90) states that publicans and soldiers are the two supporting pillars of the Roman empire.

<sup>91</sup> K. Wengst (1987) 91.

<sup>92</sup> K. Wengst (1987) 92.

<sup>93</sup> K. Wengst (1987) 98.

<sup>94</sup> K. Wengst (1987) 105.



becomes understandable in terms of the readers he has in view and his purpose in addressing them."<sup>95</sup> Regarding Paul's Roman citizenship, Wengst relates it to Roman protection in Acts 21:30-5:

In order to be clear about his prisoner the tribune orders that Paul shall be interrogated under torture, as was customary for non-citizens. As the torture is being prepared Paul tells the centurion who leads the squad involved that he is a Roman citizen. The centurion immediately informs the tribune, who thereupon himself asks Paul about his citizenship.... Concerned for Paul's life, the tribune gives the alarm to the troop, which rescues him from the danger and restores him to the safety of the barracks (22.30-23.10). The events described here by Paul are historically impossible; the tribune is afraid because he has seized a Roman citizen; but he leaves him in fetters overnight; he does not interrogate Paul himself, but lets the Roman citizen be taken before a Jewish authority. In this way, however, Luke gives himself the opportunity of again presenting the soldiers of Rome as protection for Paul.<sup>96</sup>

Clearly Luke fashions Paul's Roman citizenship as a "literary mechanism" for showing the protection offered by the Roman empire. Paul as a Roman citizen on behalf of the Church is protected in every risky situation by Roman soldiers. Wengst convincingly shows that although Paul's Roman citizenship is not plausible in accordance with historical standards, it may have a possible function in a literary scheme whereby Luke advocates a pro-Roman stance to the Church. However, Wengst's remark on *apologia pro imperio* is very likely a disputable point because Luke's attitude toward Rome still remains a contention in contemporary Luke-Acts scholarship.

#### 2.2.1.4. R.J. Cassidy

A fresh investigation, quite different from those of the above scholars, has been undertaken by R.J. Cassidy, who also shares my view. My own research will show that Luke's stance is not really pro-Roman but in fact "anti-Roman stance" and there are many examples of evidence to support my view contained in the narratives of Acts and especially in the narratives concerning Paul's trial. In Cassidy's study, which covers Luke's Gospel<sup>97</sup> and also Acts,<sup>98</sup> he insists that Luke did not actually intend to describe co-existence between the Church and the Roman government in non-political apologetic

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<sup>95</sup> K. Wengst (1987) 105.

<sup>96</sup> K. Wengst (1987) 91-2.

<sup>97</sup> R.J. Cassidy, *Jesus, Politics, and Society: A Study of Luke's Gospel*, New York: Orbis, 1978.

<sup>98</sup> R.J. Cassidy, *Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles*, New York: Orbis Books, 1987.



terms. Conzelmann's argument that Luke's political purpose is the Church's political apologetic to Rome is wholly denied by Cassidy.<sup>99</sup> According to Cassidy, Luke presents Jesus as one who refuses to obey the Roman authorities.<sup>100</sup>

On the basis of this conclusion, Cassidy clearly reinforces the "anti-Roman stance of Luke in terms of the criticism of political apologetic."<sup>101</sup> Further, he states that the reason for his rejection of the "political apologetic" is that "Acts does not present Christians as 'law-abiding and harmless' and Luke does not portray the Roman system with particular favor."<sup>102</sup> Esler criticizes the argument of Cassidy below:

[Cassidy's] interpretation of individual feature of Luke's Gospel is also often quite unconvincing. This is particularly so with three items of evidence he regards as especially significant in indicating that Jesus was antipathetic to the existing political order: his reference to Herod as 'that fox' (13.31-3), his warning that the disciples will be brought before kings and governors (21.12), and his remarks on how authority is exercised by Gentile rulers (22.25). Cassidy clearly puts more weight on the first passage than it can bear: when Jesus is brought before Herod in Jerusalem (Lk 23.6-12), there is nothing in his demeanour which induces Herod to regard him as a threat. In any event, since Herod was not strictly speaking a part of the Roman administration, this incident may be disregarded here. Secondly, it is unwise of Cassidy to rely so heavily on Lk 21.12, when the notion of the disciples appearing before kings and governors occurs in the parallel passage in Mark 13.9. Worse than this, however, is Cassidy's interpreting the verse to mean that the disciples will be in conflict with kings and governors. This view ignores a central feature of Roman litigation - and one, moreover, which is continually apparent in Luke-Acts - namely, that prosecutions were almost always conducted by private individuals. To appear before a governor, therefore, did not involve a conflict with him, since the governor's role was to adjudicate, not to prosecute. Thirdly, Cassidy claims that in Lk 22.25 Jesus criticizes Gentile rulers for dominating their subjects and is using 'benefactors' (*εὐεργεταί*) sarcastically, to underline the contrast between his own approach and theirs. Both aspects of this interpretation are untenable.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> R.J. Cassidy (1978) 129-130. "Two general observations may be germane. First, Conzelmann frequently does not treat the passages in which Luke shows Jesus refusing to cooperate with, or actually criticizing, his political rulers. Second, he fails to appreciate Luke's portrayal of Jesus as one who consistently contravened the existing social patterns, patterns which the Romans were committed to maintain."

<sup>100</sup> cf. M.A. Powell (1989) 85. Powell rightly evaluates Cassidy's fresh approach on Luke's Gospel in these terms: "Jesus calls Herod a 'fox' (Lk. 12:31-3) and speaks of Pilate's atrocities (Lk. 13:1-3). He defies the Jewish Sanhedrin (Lk. 22:67-70) and repudiates Gentile rulers (Lk. 22:24-7). He also predicts that those who are faithful to him will incur trouble from secular authorities (Lk. 21:12). In the final analysis, Cassidy decides, Pilate and Herod were wrong in pronouncing Jesus innocent. According to Luke, Jesus ultimately posed more of a threat to the existing social order than their ironic pronouncements took into account."

<sup>101</sup> cf. R.J. Cassidy (1987) 145-6.

<sup>102</sup> R.J. Cassidy (1987) 148-153; *Idem*, 'Luke's audience, the chief Priests, and the Motive for Jesus' Death,' in R.J. Cassidy/P.J. Scharper (ed.), *Political Issues in Luke-Acts*, New York: Orbis, 1983, 152-3.

<sup>103</sup> P.F. Esler, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts: The social and political motivations of Lucan theology*, Cambridge: CUP, 1987, 207-8.



In my opinion, however, Esler's argument is based upon a mis-interpretation of the narratives in Luke's Gospel.<sup>104</sup> On the first point, Herod had close connections with the Roman government.<sup>105</sup> Although, as Esler points out, Herod is not officially part of the Roman administration, he has very strong pro-Roman tendencies. Indeed, Galilee where Herod governs as a tetrarch belonged to the territory of the Roman empire from the time of the death of Agrippa I in A.D. 44.<sup>106</sup> The political portrait of Herod in Lk 22:25 is not different from where it is described in Lk 13:31-3. It makes sense, as J.A. Darr points out, that "the metaphor Jesus creates will remain vital. Though readers strongly expect Herod to continue his role as evil destroyer, the other attributes of the fox might also emerge as his character is developed in the narrative. Jesus has tagged him as a fox, and so he might very well exhibit cunning, or cowardice, or even some of the natural characteristics of the varmint not usually applied to humans. That is for the reader to discover as the work unfolds."<sup>107</sup> If Esler wishes to explore Luke's purposes in comparing certain examples such as Herod's case, he must relate it to Luke's overall purposes.

On the second point, we could also argue that Esler's view of Roman governors as adjudicators, not prosecutors, while technically correct, is nonetheless rather optimistic and ignores the strongly stereotyped view of "kings and governors" in the martyr-literature (philosophical and the other) with which Luke-Acts is to be compared. Moreover, Esler dismisses the simple matter that each Roman official represents the Roman empire in Luke-Acts. Esler's conclusion is quite different from Cassidy's. Indeed, Luke does not give full support either to the Roman government or to Jewish governors such as Herod. Rather, as J.A. Darr argues, we can find two well-entrenched conventional patterns: (1) "philosopher against tyrant" within Greco-Roman literature (2)

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<sup>104</sup> Esler does not discuss the narratives of Acts which contain a lot of materials on the Roman empire.

<sup>105</sup> cf. M.H. Williams, 'Palestinian Jewish Personal Names in Acts,' in R. Bauckham (ed.), *Palestinian Setting*, BAFCS, vol. 4, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 98.

<sup>106</sup> cf. A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 124.

<sup>107</sup> J.A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992, 146.



"prophet versus king" appeared in the LXX<sup>108</sup> which shows the confrontational role of these typical encounters in Luke-Acts.

On the third point, we should enquire what grounds Esler puts forward for declaring Cassidy's view of Luke 22:25 "untenable." Esler explains benefactors (*εὐεργεταί*) as a term:

[It] was regularly used to express the reciprocal relationship which Hellenistic rulers sought to maintain between themselves and their subjects. The rulers made benefactions to the populace and thereby hoped to secure their compliance with official policy. The Lucan Jesus is not espousing the abolition of this political and social pattern in Lk 22.25ff., he is merely denying it any place in the Christian community.<sup>109</sup>

On the contrary, this word 'benefactors,' is only used once in Luke's Gospel, so its exact meaning cannot be properly understood in the sense used by Esler.<sup>110</sup> And J.B. Green remarks concerning the function of benefactor:

Luke's critique of Rome is fundamental. To see this it is necessary first to recognize that after the final victory of Octavian in the civil wars (27 BCE), Rome was unified not simply under one emperor but also by a political order based on the ethic of patronage. Octavian took for himself the name Augustus as well as a series of other titles. He was known as *princeps* - that is, *the* patron of the Roman people. He also received the title *pater patriae* - that is, father of the land of fathers, thus conceptualizing the empire as a household indebted to him as its head. Note, for example, the Myrian inscription: "Divine Augustus Caesar, son of a god, imperator of land and sea, the benefactor and savior of the whole world..." The message of Jesus in Luke violates the sacred political order of the Roman world. What is more, it does so on the basis of a clash of kings and kingdoms. Luke has consistently presented Jesus as Son of God, God's own agent, whose life and message embodies God's own purpose.<sup>111</sup>

Likewise, as Marshall points out, the possibility of hostility from the outside world was very real to the early church.<sup>112</sup> Therefore, Cassidy suggests that Luke writes to strengthen the loyalty of his community to Christ, to show them how to live as disciples

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<sup>108</sup> cf. J.A. Darr (1992) 149-158.

<sup>109</sup> P.F. Esler (1987) 208; cf. J. Nolland, *Luke 18:35-24:53*, WBC 35c, Dallas: Word Books, Publisher, 1993, 1064.

<sup>110</sup> cf. L.T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press (A Michael Glazier Book), 1991, 344; I.H. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Exeter: Paternoster, 1978, 812. Here Marshall points out that "Luke normally prefers compound verbs, inserting them where they are lacking in his sources; if he has followed the opposite procedure here, it may have been to tone down the condemnation of rulers in Mk.; this, however, is uncertain, since he does not do so elsewhere, and is quite conscious of the failures of secular rulers.... One suspects that there is an element of irony in the saying."

<sup>111</sup> J.B. Green, *The Theology of the Gospel of Luke*, New Testament Theology, Cambridge: CUP, 1995, 119-121.

<sup>112</sup> I.H. Marshall (1992) 79.



in the context of Roman rule, and specifically to give them perspective and guidance, if they should stand on trial before political officials.<sup>113</sup> R. Maddox also points out that Luke-Acts is not political apologetic:

We have now seen three reasons for doubting that Luke wrote his work as a political apology for the Christians. First, Luke-Acts in general makes much more sense as a work addressed internally to the church than as one addressed to imperial officials. Second, the elements alleged to be apologetic are not prominent enough in the whole scope and plan of the work to make this suggestion persuasive. Third, Luke's praise of the Empire and his promise that Christians will be obedient to it are not unqualified.<sup>114</sup>

Regarding Paul's Roman citizenship in Acts 16 and 22, Cassidy states:

The Acts narrative does not portray Paul attaching particular importance to his Roman citizenship. Luke never shows Paul publicizing his citizenship before any of the non-Roman groups or individuals whom he addresses and even before Roman officials it is not something to which Paul immediately adverts.<sup>115</sup>

Cassidy also suggests that "when all of the relevant passages are carefully considered, it can hardly be maintained that Luke portrays Paul as a typical citizen with traditional loyalties to the emperor and the imperial order. Rather, Luke actually portrays Paul taking an approach to his Roman standing that could only have impressed a Roman reader of Acts as highly unorthodox and even as troublesome."<sup>116</sup>

However, Cassidy's conception of anti-Roman stance was guided mostly by his considerations of one single clue amongst many motifs. R.F. O'Toole makes the criticism of Cassidy in the following manner:

Probably for Luke Paul's reticence about his citizenship suggests humility, and certainly Paul's citizenship is a dominant factor in the final chapters of Acts. It explains Lysias' considerate treatment of him, the journey to Caesarea and Felix, the appeal before Festus and the voyage to Rome (cf. Acts 22,25-9; 23,27; 25,11-2, 25-7; 26,32; 28,19). For Luke, Paul's citizenship is a significant part of his theme of Christians fitting well into the Roman world.<sup>117</sup>

As discussed above, Cassidy has not stressed the significant function of Paul's citizenship in the narratives of Acts. Cassidy insists on the strong anti-Roman stance of

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<sup>113</sup> See R.J. Cassidy (1987) 158-160.

<sup>114</sup> R. Maddox (1982) 96.

<sup>115</sup> R.J. Cassidy (1987) 102-3.

<sup>116</sup> R.J. Cassidy (1987) 150.

<sup>117</sup> R.F. O'Toole, 'Review of *Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles*,' *Bib* 70 (1989) 426.

Luke which is the perspective of our discussion,<sup>118</sup> and he seems to assume that Paul's citizenship is not the most important factor in understanding the Acts narratives. While Cassidy looks at Paul's citizenship from a different perspective, his emphasis on Luke's anti-Roman stance is perfectly correct. In other words, Paul's Roman citizenship is not by itself "anti-Roman," but it can be seen as a significant element in Luke's construction of a narrative with a strongly anti-Roman *Tendenz*, since, as will be evident, Paul exclusively displays his citizenship for the purpose of his missionary work. Interestingly and ironically, Roman officials become quite alarmed whenever Paul announces his citizenship. Finally, the narratives of Acts say that by using his citizenship, the Lukan Paul may be able to carry out his mission as a servant of God. It will be clearly observed at the end of this work that Paul as an accused very boldly proclaims the Gospel of Jesus under Roman custody. Regardless of whether Paul's status is that of a prisoner or a missionary, it will be clear to the reader that Luke has taken an anti-Roman approach to his portrayal of Paul in Acts.

### 2.2.2. J.C. Lentz, Jr.

Lentz begins with the assumption that Paul's Roman citizenship symbolizes his "high social status" and abundant "moral virtue."<sup>119</sup> One of Luke's original objectives is to attract to Christianity the high ranking citizens of the time using Paul in Acts as an example of one on a par with them. Lentz, thus, points out that in Acts Paul claims three origins *Greek, Roman, Pharisee*. However, he also claims that the description of Paul's origin in Acts presents difficulties.<sup>120</sup> Hence, he discusses historical and sociological issues and analyzes ancient classical sources in order to solve these difficulties. At this

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<sup>118</sup> R.J. Cassidy (1987) 156-7. Cassidy also rejects the theory of Luke's ecclesial apologetic that designs to present a favourable picture of Roman authority to the Church.

<sup>119</sup> J.C. Lentz, Jr., *Luke's Portrait of Paul*, SNTSMS 77, Cambridge: CUP, 1993.

<sup>120</sup> cf. J.C. Lentz (1993) 60; cf. R.A. Burrige, 'Book review of *Luke's Portrait of Paul*,' *JTS* 45 (1994) 241. "If the threefold combination of Rome, Tarsus, and Pharisaism was so unlikely, then who would have believed Luke's account? If, as Lentz replies, it would have been 'rather remote by the end of the first century' (p. 60), then there would have been no point in Luke using this combination to claim high status for Paul."



junction, Lentz is concerned about the socio-historical circumstances of the Roman empire in the first century C.E.

After enquiring into the historical background in the first century, he realizes that those particular problems surrounding Paul in Acts have reached an impasse. So, Lentz offers the suggestion that Luke intends to stress Paul's "high social status" and "moral virtue," i.e. Paul as one of the *splendidiore personae*. Lentz acknowledges the following possibility regarding Paul's possession of Roman citizenship: "the issue of Jews possessing the citizenship of Rome is less problematic than possession of the citizenship of a Greek city."<sup>121</sup>

Among the three legal methods to obtain Roman citizenship,<sup>122</sup> Lentz points out that, "A more likely explanation of how Paul acquired the citizenship is that his ancestors received the citizenship of Rome through manumission."<sup>123</sup> In this respect, however, Lentz also points out two improbabilities:<sup>124</sup> (1) A Roman citizen of slave origin carried the name of his master who had released him and the stigma of slavery remained for much longer than one generation. (2) Even if Paul acquired the citizenship of Rome because of his father's manumission from his slavery to a Roman citizen, it does not necessarily follow that Paul would have also automatically gained the citizenship of Tarsus. For these reasons Lentz stresses not only Paul's high social standing but also his moral virtue and his status as a Tarsian citizen in the narratives of Acts. Lentz states:

Rome attempted to cultivate the loyalty of the ruling classes in the provinces by granting to them rights and privileges. Caesar, it is reported, was generous in giving out citizenships, but most of these grants were given to wealthy individuals in Gaul and Spain, not in the East. Furthermore, even given Caesar's generosity, it was difficult for anyone without wealth and influence to obtain such an honour. The propertied classes were the ones who benefited.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 45.

<sup>122</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993, 46) states, "There were three legally recognized ways in which a Jew of the Diaspora might have received the Roman citizenship. Paul's forefathers might have served in the army of Rome. One of Paul's direct ancestors might have been a freed slave of a Roman citizen, receiving the citizenship when manumitted. Paul's nearest kin might have been given the citizenship as a personal gift in reward for special services rendered."

<sup>123</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 47.

<sup>124</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 48.

<sup>125</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 49.

Lentz is convinced "that Paul at one time in his life was a Pharisee is a highly credible possibility. That there were Pharisaic Jews in Tarsus is less likely, although the evidence is far from conclusive. However, that Paul was born into a Pharisaic family in Tarsus and also possessed the citizenship of that Greek city and could claim that he had inherited the Roman citizenship is highly improbable."<sup>126</sup> Then, why did Luke shape the portrayal of Lukan Paul in such a manner? According to Lentz, Luke wants to describe Paul in Acts as a man of high social status and moral virtue. However, it may be understood that Luke's Gospel and Acts came originally from one volume. Especially in the third Gospel, we find continuing concern about the low class: tax-collectors, sinners, the poor, the women, and the Samaritans. Luke's Gospel informs us that the community might also have had conflicts between people of different classes. Luke, as Green rightly highlights, takes an interest in Jesus' mission for 'the marginalized' saying that "it is surely of consequence that, though Jesus announces his mission 'to the poor', Luke never narrates his actually evangelizing 'the poor' so named. Instead, Jesus is continuously in the company of those on the margins of society, able neither to participate as full partners in social interchange nor completely rejected."<sup>127</sup> In the same manner, Green also observes that "Luke characterizes the shape of the mission for which Jesus was anointed, the sort of people to whom he was sent, and the nature of the divine purpose he would serve and, in time, bring to consummation. In this way, Luke also identifies the present as the arena in which those who follow Jesus must follow him in mission on behalf of the poor, the disadvantaged, the sick, the lost - that is, on behalf of the redemptive aim of God."<sup>128</sup>

Therefore, it is a pertinent remark that Luke's basic tone is the concern for lower class people. If Lentz's suggestion that Luke portrays Paul as a man of "high social status" and "moral virtue" is correct, it could answer our questions concerning Paul's

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<sup>126</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 56.

<sup>127</sup> J.B. Green (1995) 84.

<sup>128</sup> J.B. Green (1995) 100-1; cf. P.V. Linden, *The Gospel of Luke & Acts*, Message of Biblical Spirituality 10, Wilmington: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1986, 79-129; M.A. Powell (1989) 91-102; P.F. Esler (1987) 164-200.



citizenship. However, this idea now raises a question: Why in Acts would Luke change the initial attitude he held in the Gospel? Another serious question is also raised: Why would Luke portray Paul to be a man of high social status and moral virtue? As mentioned above, it is quite clear that Luke is concerned about the lower classes.<sup>129</sup> If so, it is feasible that Luke does not invent Paul's Roman citizenship. Rather, he is just making a statement of the fact. In my opinion, it would be unnecessary for Luke to portray Paul in this way, since it is quite different from his original purpose which was to describe his own concerns for the lower people.<sup>130</sup> At this juncture, Lentz gives a suggestion about an attractive interpretation by way of an advertisement-motif:

As is true in our contemporary world, advertisements are directed not to those who possess what is advertised but to those who aspire to possess what is advertised. Luke's emphasis on Paul's high social status and moral virtue offered the reader a glimpse of the truly sophisticated, cosmopolitan Christian gentleman and extended to the status-conscious Greco-Roman world an invitation to join the ever-growing community of Christians which the Lukan Paul represented.<sup>131</sup>

If Lentz's suggestion is possible, we should ask "Do we then accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ a passport to success?" Nowhere is this meaning found throughout the whole New Testament writings, particularly in Luke-Acts.<sup>132</sup> R.A. Burrige criticizes Lentz by saying "Luke's portrait of Paul is considered almost in isolation from the rest of Luke-Acts.... If Luke wanted to portray Paul as a man of high status to be imitated, he could easily have written a biography of Paul."<sup>133</sup> Lentz's view is one-sided because he fervently insists on trying to attest his assumption that Luke intends to portray Paul as a man of high social status and moral virtue. Even though Lentz's idea is quite new, his argument detracts from the overall picture of Luke-Acts. Lentz does not make it clear why Luke should portray Paul as a man of high social status and moral virtue for his

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<sup>129</sup> cf. H.J. Cadbury (1968, 260) suggests that Luke has been called the socialist among the evangelists.

<sup>130</sup> cf. J.T. Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987, 132. Here Sanders stresses that Luke's seeming interest is '*les miserables*'.

<sup>131</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 4.

<sup>132</sup> V.P. Branick, 'Book review of *Luke's Portrait of Paul*,' *CBQ* 56 (1994) 798-9. Branick points out that "Lentz's thesis opens up questions beyond the scope of his work. For instance, how could such a literary purpose in Acts correlate with the great stress on poverty and lowliness in the Gospel?"; cf. R.A. Burrige (1994) 241. Here Burrige observes that "consideration of the whole two-volume work raises questions about the 'yuppie' image of Luke writing for the socially upwardly mobile."

<sup>133</sup> R.A. Burrige (1994) 241.

contemporary readers. Although Lentz alludes to the imagery of advertising<sup>134</sup> in order to bring people into his community, he does not make reference to any biblical evidence. Finally, the weak point of Lentz's argument is that he does not discuss most of the last chapters of Acts where the Lukan Paul appears as a prisoner under Roman legal custody who has citizenship, a symbol of high social status and who appeals to Caesar. How does Lentz explain the fact that whilst Paul may be in fact a man of high social status and moral virtue, he is nevertheless a prisoner and his status is, therefore, somewhat diminished in the eyes of the reader?

### 2.2.3. B. Rapske

B. Rapske has recently published a book in the series of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting* series, entitled *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*<sup>135</sup> which is divided into three parts. He conducts an inquiry into the legal system, its status in the Roman world, and Paul's trial and imprisonment. Rapske acknowledges Paul's possession of Roman citizenship with certain reservations:

Our evidence does not permit us to say that Jewish acquisition of Roman citizenship was common. But even saying that it was rare hardly denies Roman citizenship to Paul. His claim in Acts to a dual citizenship from birth is entirely defensible. The apostle's Roman family name and the context and manner of its first appearance suggest that we are dealing with a citizen.<sup>136</sup>

Rapske suggests that Paul's actions as a Roman citizen in Acts are concrete. For example, in Acts 16, Rapske points out that whilst it is perhaps not apparent to modern eyes, an untimely disclosure of Roman citizenship could have had an effective function for the release of Paul and Silas.<sup>137</sup> Rapske, therefore, regards Paul's behaviour as 'un-Roman'.<sup>138</sup> He thinks that "Paul's disclosure of his and Silas' Roman citizenship is troubling because its lateness is so 'un-Roman',"<sup>139</sup> since "any citizen could be expected to preserve both self and dignity by the earliest, most favourable, and most forceful

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<sup>134</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 4.

<sup>135</sup> B. Rapske, *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*, BAFCS 3, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

<sup>136</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 108.

<sup>137</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 129.

<sup>138</sup> See B. Rapske (1994) 71-112. [ch. 4: Paul's Citizenship and status]

<sup>139</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 130.



presentation of his legal and social status possible."<sup>140</sup> However, according to Rapske, Paul and Silas chose roles which would make it possible for them to proclaim the mission of the Gospel:

An early claim would also have had profound negative missiological consequences. Even if Paul and Silas had not already begun evangelizing the Roman citizens of Philippi before the levelling of the charges, they could not in good conscience have denied that such activity fitted their ultimate missionary objectives. Moreover, the self-defence of an early citizenship claim would probably have been construed by the magistrates and populace as an assertion of commitment to the primacy of Roman, over against Jewish (i.e. Christian), customs. The signals sent would also have put the church at risk of dissolution if the new Philippian converts did not possess the Roman franchise. At the least, there would have been uncertainty surrounding Paul's commitment to his message. Converts might wonder whether only those suitably protected (i.e. by Roman citizenship) should become believers in Christ and they might think it disingenuous for Paul and Silas to ask others to suffer what they themselves were able to avoid. Missiological concerns might well also stand behind a desire not to become entangled in protracted litigation. Each of these potential religious costs suggests the greater probability that Paul's earlier silence concerning his citizenship reflects a carefully considered choice rather than a novelistic dramatization or the expression of Luke's juridical naiveté.<sup>141</sup>

For a fresh interpretation, Rapske adapts "the structure of honour and shame" which B.J. Malina calls the "pivotal values" of the first-century Mediterranean world.<sup>142</sup> This means that Rapske intends to investigate the function of Paul's citizenship in terms of honour in the ancient world. However, the Lukan Paul is unwilling to mention his citizenship. For example, in Acts 16 Paul and Silas just allude to their citizenship after they had suffered in custody in Philippi though that readers may be disappointed with the late mention of his citizenship. As Malina writes, "the one challenged and taking his action to court only aggravates his dishonor by publicizing it."<sup>143</sup> As a result, it is apparent that Paul's disclosure of his true status in the narratives of Acts means that he inevitably has to endure the shame of his apparently lower status being treated as a lower class citizen. Thus, Rapske points out the shame for the mission that "Paul and Silas

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<sup>140</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 130.

<sup>141</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 134.

<sup>142</sup> cf. B. Malina, *The NT World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, Atlanta: John Knox, 1981, 25-50; J.H. Neyrey (ed.), *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation*, Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1991.

<sup>143</sup> B. Malina (1981) 39. For B. Malina, "Satisfaction in court, legal satisfaction, does not restore one's honor because (1) to go to court is to demonstrate inequality, vulnerability, and puts one's own honor in jeopardy; (2) court procedure allows those who deprived you of honor to gloat over your predicament; and (3) to have the court obtain recompense or ask for an apology from another is dishonoring in itself, implying that one cannot deal with one's equals."



have, because of the constraint of their religious commitments, been seriously injured socially in a status degradation process."<sup>144</sup> That is, Luke intends to defend or justify Paul and Silas' actions as missionary prisoners. Despite their shame, as Rapske argues, they eagerly worked for the benefit of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the narrative of Acts.

Therefore, it is most likely that Paul's citizenship, especially his Roman citizenship, makes it possible for the reader to regard him as a powerful "carrier of the Gospel of Jesus." Moreover, even though Paul could have enjoyed his privileges as a citizen in the empire, he was willing to endure his worldly shame to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus. In this way, Paul chose his role as a servant of God regardless of any shame: For Paul, his shameful behaviour brought about by the gospel of Jesus just means the acceptance of heavenly honour.<sup>145</sup> Thus, Paul's citizenship makes it possible for him to change his *modus vivendi*. Needless to say, Paul works solely for the Gospel of Jesus and, in the narratives of Acts his vision is to go to Rome. So Paul's Roman citizenship is employed by Luke exclusively for his missionary activities.

In summary, Rapske's book is a very informative survey of Paul's trial from the perspective of the legal system of the Roman world in the first century CE although it is rather thin in its treatment of works in the other Acts narratives which do not include legal points. Whether or not scholarship adopts his conclusions, his arguments deserve careful attention. Therefore, I think that his interpretation of Paul's Roman citizenship by using a structure of 'honour' and 'shame' adds new insight for the current discussion of Paul's trial study. Although Rapske's argument is quite convincing, it is difficult to evaluate Paul's behaviour as being always 'un-Roman.' For example, when Paul has disclosed his citizenship in front of the Roman tribune, the tribune's figure is seen as rather 'un-Roman' (22:25-29, cf. 24:26-27, 26:24). Thus, it is most likely that Luke intended to create suspense in narrative structure. We also should not forget that Luke's

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<sup>144</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 304.

<sup>145</sup> cf. Time Magazine, 19 July 1982, 21-22. cited from Carolyn Osiek, *What are they saying about the social setting of the New Testament?* New York/Mahwah, 1992, 27. In 1982 the PLO in West Beirut were under seige by Israeli forces. Asked by a reporter whether he would prefer reason (surrender and survival) or death with honor, a fifteen year old Palestinian soldier replied: "There is no alternative. If we lose our identity, we lose everything... I would choose honor first..." His brother added: "I would never place logic before dignity."



overall voice would be quite against the Roman empire from Luke's Gospel till <sup>the</sup> end of Acts, so the Lukan Paul's action is not 'un-Roman'; instead it is 'anti-Roman.'

#### 2.2.4. Marie-Eloise Rosenblatt

A recent study of Paul's trial narratives was undertaken by Marie-Eloise Rosenblatt in *Paul the Accused: His Portrait in the Acts of the Apostles*<sup>146</sup> which she has adapted from her PhD dissertation. Her study begins with the critical evaluation that "much exegetical literature and most commentaries on Acts have rested on either of two assumptions that control the interpretation of individual passages."<sup>147</sup> Rosenblatt goes on to say that "the first assumption involves the question of Luke's politics in Acts. What is his relationship to Rome? Who is he trying to persuade and for what reasons?"<sup>148</sup> The second assumption examined by Rosenblatt is that "the theological aim of Luke's narrative is to demonstrate God's revelation passing from Judaism to the Church."<sup>149</sup> However, Rosenblatt's study of Paul in Acts deserves mention because she intends to subvert both of these assumed theses from a different analytical perspective. Rosenblatt's main argument attempts to refocus the portrait by asking: "Why has Luke placed emphasis on Paul as a prisoner and a defendant?"<sup>150</sup> Rosenblatt is convinced:

The last third of Acts is dominated by episodes of Paul's imprisonment and the texts of his defense speeches. If witness, a word often appearing in Acts, is literal reference to the world of judges, legal procedures, and court-rooms, what are the implications of legal witness for Paul's overall portrait? How does this theme of witness control Paul's portrait? Does it not reinforce his relationship with Peter and therefore his credibility as a missionary who preaches a gospel of inclusion for the Gentiles which the entire Church community endorses?<sup>151</sup>

It is widely known that Paul plays many roles including that of an educated Jew, a persecutor of believers in Jesus, and a supporter of the Christian community in Acts.

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<sup>146</sup> Marie-Eloise Rosenblatt, *Paul the Accused: His Portrait in the Acts of the Apostles*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1995.

<sup>147</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) xi.

<sup>148</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) xi.

<sup>149</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) xii.

<sup>150</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) xiii.

<sup>151</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) xiii-xiv.

Rosenblatt stresses another role among those portraits in Acts which is the "role of witness or martyr."<sup>152</sup> In addition, as Marshall rightly points out "witness undoubtedly takes place in a hostile environment."<sup>153</sup> Although Rosenblatt especially claims the religious meaning of witness,<sup>154</sup> in most cases, Paul always appears as "an accused" in the juridical setting of Acts 21-28.<sup>155</sup> Indeed, Paul's role as someone accused of crimes is closely linked with the legal witness theme. It can be attested that there is a similar example in Phil. 1:7-8:

It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment (*δεσμοίς*) and in the defence (*ἀπολογία*) and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness (*μάρτυς*), how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus.

At this juncture, Paul's defence performs a dual role in terms of the apostle's innocence and the proclamation or the witness of the gospel. For the incident in Philippi which primarily announces Paul's Roman citizenship in Acts (16:12-40), Rosenblatt offers the following explanation:

The charge against the missionaries (16:20-21) may be interpreted as a sign that there existed religious conflict between Roman custom and Jewish religion. However, the civil and legal implications of this incident are highlighted by the refusal of Paul to leave town quietly. Paul demands recognition not of his religious identity as a Jew, but of his legal rights as a Roman citizen.... The incident also demonstrates Luke's aim to reconcile religious belief with political identity. Luke is not interested in persuading Rome that Christians give loyal support to the Empire. A quite different point of view is suggested by Luke's record of Paul's angry insistence that his citizenship be acknowledged. Behind the narrative, Luke actually outlines a rationale for the persecution of Christians by the Roman magistrates. Christians are equated with Jews. They have customs alien to those of Roman citizens. If someone does not share the local customs of Roman colonials, this means a person has no regard for the civil law of Rome. Without respect for Roman law, one is an out-law or criminal. Luke underlines the fact that Paul is a Roman citizen and insists on the recognition of his rights by Roman authorities. Again, the forum where Paul's religious activity is ultimately exercised is the civic and judicial. The accusations against Paul lead him to step beyond his religious world and confront representatives of the secular government on their own ground.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) 1.

<sup>153</sup> I.H. Marshall (1992) 80.

<sup>154</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) 3-21.

<sup>155</sup> cf. A.A. Trites, 'The importance of legal scenes and language in the Book of Acts,' *NovT* 16 (1974) 278-84; *Idem*, *The New Testament concept of witness*, SNTSMS 31, Cambridge: CUP, 1977, 128-53.

<sup>156</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) 46-7.



According to Rosenblatt, the theme of Roman citizenship in Acts 16 functions as a "motif of transference" from the religious world to the secular world. As a result, Paul is able to protect contemporary Christians using his status as a Roman citizen. In this respect, Roman citizenship as a force makes it possible for Paul to protect Christians and also for him to confront the Roman empire as a witness to the Gospel of Jesus.

Paul again discloses his Roman citizenship in Acts 22 where he converses with the tribune Lysias on the citizenship. Prior to their conversation, Paul had mentioned his conversion to the Jews. There Paul says, "the Lord said to me, 'Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles'" (22:21). At the same time, the Jewish crowd shouts, "away with such a fellow from the earth!" (22:23). Then the tribune saved Paul from this dangerous situation. Rosenblatt states:

The Roman tribune assumes that Paul is the cause of the disturbance, but does not understand why, since Paul spoke in Hebrew to the crowd. He moves to have Paul tortured by scourging so the prisoner will reveal the secret. Paul is thus treated as a criminal because the crowd has shouted against him. The tribune's ignorance about Paul becomes equivalent to an accusation of criminal behaviour. To protect himself, Paul has to speak Greek again and identify himself as a Roman citizen: "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman citizen, and uncondemned?" (22:25). He turns quickly from his Jewish religious identity to his secular identity as a citizen. He makes a claim, not on his theological credentials, but on his Roman civil rights. The defence speech before the crowd had emphasized Paul's historical connections with Judaism and Jerusalem. The episode ends by catapulting Paul into a secular setting.<sup>157</sup>

Rosenblatt's new analysis suggests that Paul, the accused, acts as a witness to the Gospel, despite the Jews' opposition and the favour given to the Jews by the Roman authorities. On the basis of this conclusion, Paul's Roman citizenship makes it possible for Paul to carry out his mission as a witness of the Gospel who preaches the coming of the kingdom of God. The basis of Rosenblatt's examination is that Paul's Roman citizenship is an essential vehicle to accomplish his missionary work as a witness in the narratives of Acts. Rosenblatt's biographical study focuses on Paul as "Luke's hero" for an understanding of the trial narratives. She presents a convincing case for literary unity by demonstrating the conscious use of Paul's Roman citizenship throughout the narratives. Roman citizenship depicts Paul as a witness in the narratives of Acts.

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<sup>157</sup> M-E Rosenblatt (1995) 71-2.

However, Rosenblatt's conceptions of Paul's portrait according to the motif of witness are mostly directed by view points which are too narrow. For example, although Acts portrays Paul as a Christian witness for the Gospel of Jesus in the narratives, the context where his Roman citizenship is mentioned is also juridical.

### 2.3. Conclusion

Up to this point, we have surveyed Paul's citizenship in accordance with the historical and the literary debate. This issue originates from the fact that Paul does not mention his citizenship in his letters. The issues on Paul's citizenship begin with the incompatibility of materials which Acts and Paul's letters report. As discussed above, the main stream of the approach is divided into two main areas. On the one hand, the historical debate is concerned with socio-historical evidence for Paul's origin as a Roman and Tarsian citizen in early Roman times. In fact, the historical debate argued by some scholars could not prove the feasibility of Paul's citizenship. On the other hand, several Acts scholars have transferred their attention to the area of literary analysis. The literary debate examines the function of Paul's citizenship in the narratives of Acts, since it is not only sustained by historical critical methods, but also leads the development of Paul's trial from beginning to end.

Many have argued over whether or not Luke was conscious of any political relationship with the Roman empire, i.e. the idea of "political apologetic." Some recent Luke-Acts scholars have no doubt agreed that Luke intends to reveal a "pro-Roman attitude" for Christianity since the church has to remain in the Roman world and needs to maintain friendly relationships with the Roman government. However, Paul's citizenship has also functioned as a trigger for "anti-Roman sentiment" in the narratives of Acts. As Cassidy also points out, Luke's purpose would be "not political apologetic or ecclesial apologetic."<sup>158</sup> Wherever Paul went to work, he confronted a group of Jews

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<sup>158</sup> R.J. Cassidy (1987) 145.



and also encountered Roman authorities.<sup>159</sup> What we should remember is that all judicial contexts in Acts are controlled by Paul's dual citizenship, especially his Roman citizenship. Therefore, Paul's mission, interwoven with the trial, in the narratives of Acts should not be discussed without due consideration to his citizenship. The reason why Paul's citizenship is mentioned in this way is that it is the driving force behind the trial from beginning to end.

However, it has proved extremely difficult for scholarship on Acts to reach a consensus either on Luke's attitude to Rome or on his overall purpose. Both pro-Roman and anti-Roman tendencies have been plausibly deduced from the text. Also, a case can be made for a variety of different purposes with regard to Rome. This in itself suggests that the narrative is more ambivalent than we might expect. This point suggests that we may be able to throw some light on the problem by making a comparative study of some other ancient narratives which combine similar motifs. A major invaluable material for our study is a collection of ancient documents called the *Acta Alexandrinorum* because they contain numerous motifs on the two ideologies of "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism."<sup>160</sup> There are many comparisons to be drawn between Paul's trial narratives in Acts and the *Acta Alexandrinorum* which are worth further in-depth study.

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<sup>159</sup> cf. R.J. Cassidy, 'The Non-Roman Opponents of Paul,' in E. Richard (ed.), *New Views on Luke and Acts*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990, 150; *Idem* (1987) 70-81.

<sup>160</sup> It will be examined in chapter 6, "Significant motifs in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*."

## Chapter 3

### The Quest for Paul's dual citizenship in Acts and Paul's Epistles

The lack of agreement between scholars who have studied Paul's citizenship points to a number of unresolved issues. This chapter aims to seek answers to at least some of the questions that were raised in the previous chapter. Generally speaking, Paul's dual citizenship is presented as a "literary strategy" which appears to save Paul from dangerous situations. However, if the current Greek social or legal background is more carefully examined, this could be enough to reinforce a better discernment of the function of Paul's dual citizenship in the narratives of Acts. This chapter returns to the historical question and briefly reviews the evidence and arguments in order to show why these questions reach an impasse. This study particularly examines the function of Paul's dual citizenship for his trial narratives.

For this inquiry, the questions related to Paul's dual citizenship and his origins in Acts will be discussed. They will be compared with Paul's Jewish background as developed in his letters. This approach will be illustrated most vividly by the various adjectives applied to Paul's dual citizenship in his trial narratives in Acts. The exegesis of Paul's origins in his letters will mark a starting point for the bewilderingly diverse interpretations of Paul's portrait in Acts. Thus we will start with an analysis of the problems concerning his dual citizenship in Acts and his letters including its absence in the epistles.<sup>1</sup>

#### 3.1. Acts but not Epistles<sup>2</sup>

Paul's status as a Roman citizen is mentioned when he is prosecuted (16:37-8; 22:25-9), and he is portrayed as a Tarsian Greek citizen where he is mistaken for an

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<sup>1</sup> cf. B. Rapske, *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*, BAFCS, vol. 3, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994, 72.

<sup>2</sup> cf. W. Stegemann, 'War der Apostel Paulus ein römischer Bürger?' *ZNW* 78 (1987) 200; cf. Simon Légasse, 'Paul's Pre-Christian Career according to Acts,' *Palestinian Setting*, BAFCS, vol. 4, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 369.



Egyptian rebel (21:38-9) in Acts. Moreover, neither of these status claims can be found in Paul's epistles, that is, the epistles make no reference to Paul's dual citizenship even when it might be expected in dangerous situations. For example, the reader may be anticipating Paul's mention of his Roman citizenship in 2Cor. 11:25. Instead, Paul's physical suffering is reported: "Three times I was beaten with rods (*ἐρράβδισθην*)." This was a kind of Roman punishment. This point strongly exemplifies the disparity between Acts and Paul's letters.

Our study, inevitably, begins with this question: Would Paul have received this beating if he was a Roman citizen? This means that we are raising the question whether the account of Paul's Roman citizenship in Acts is fictional.<sup>3</sup> For instance, R. Maddox suggests that Luke-Acts is a 'theological history'.<sup>4</sup> The Acts scholars, E. Haenchen,<sup>5</sup> H. Conzelmann,<sup>6</sup> and G. Schille<sup>7</sup> have questioned the historical value of the Lukan accounts with radical scepticism. The Jewish scholar Leo Baeck insists that "the Third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles offer us more historical *belles lettres* than history."<sup>8</sup> These scholars suggest that the historical value of Acts cannot be sustained completely by means of historical-critical methods. They agree absolutely that Paul's citizenship is a Lukan invention.

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<sup>3</sup> This suggestions has been also discussed in Chapter 2 of a review of research on Paul's Roman citizenship.

<sup>4</sup> R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982, 15-18; On the other hand, the following claims are the opposite of "fiction". M. Hengel calls it 'historical monograph' in *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979, 14; while D.E. Aune claims it 'general history' in *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment*, Cambridge: James Clarke & Co, 1987, 77-115.

<sup>5</sup> E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971.

<sup>6</sup> H. Conzelmann, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, HNT 7, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1963.

<sup>7</sup> M. Hengel (*The Pre-Christian Paul*, London: SCM, 1991, 88.) cites: G. Schille, *Die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas*, THK 5, Berlin, 1983, 50. G. Schille who deserves quoting is typically critical as quoted in Hengel's translated text below: "When it depicts the actions of the leading figures and their convincing speeches, Acts reproduces the picture that the second Christian generation created of its most important men. It is concerned neither with historical circumstances, about which Luke was never very bothered, nor even with indicating a psychological development in the modern sense; Luke sets down the picture of apostles circulating in his own day, which had become wreathed in a first century halo! Therefore we best do justice to Luke and Acts by taking their statements as a contribution not to the persons of the apostles but to the formation of the tradition about them, i.e. to the picture of Peter and Paul that was unfolding."

<sup>8</sup> L. Baeck, 'The Faith of Paul', *JJS* 3 (1952) 93-110; cf. D.E. Aune (1987) 77-157; R.I. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: the Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.

However, some scholars have recently suggested a different view. L.C.A. Alexander,<sup>9</sup> although she does not imply that Acts is totally based on historical fact, argues that the character or literary style of Luke's preface still bears a considerable resemblance to that of careful, scientific writing on mathematics, engineering, and the like rather than that of fiction. As discussed in chapter 2, G. Lüdemann,<sup>10</sup> W. Stegemann,<sup>11</sup> and H.W. Tajra<sup>12</sup> have also attempted to pursue the historical credibility of Acts especially with regard to Paul's dual citizenship. The issue of Paul's dual citizenship, however, explicitly shows up a degree of textual inconsistency between Acts and Paul's epistles. We, therefore, begin with an analysis of Paul's origins in his own words and later in Acts because any question related to Paul's dual citizenship may begin with an examination of the conflict between the sources of Acts and the epistles.

### 3.2. Paul's origin according to Paul

#### 3.2.1. Paul's own words: 2Cor. 11:22/ Phil. 3:5-6/ Rom. 11:1

Although Gal. 1:14 includes Paul's autobiographic mention of his "zeal" in Judaism, only three texts among the New Testament writings describe Paul's origins in his own words. The first description of Paul's origins is found in 2Cor. 11:22 as below:

Are they Hebrews (*Ἑβραῖοι*)? So am I. Are they Israelites (*Ἰσραηλιταί*)? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.

The three components of Paul's Jewish origins according to 2Cor.11: 22 are "Hebrew," "Israelite," "descendant of Abraham." According to D. Georgi, "these designations which make Paul "the Jew" refer not to acquired attributes or functions

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<sup>9</sup> L.C.A. Alexander, 'Luke's preface in the context of Greek preface-writing', *NovT* 28 (1986) 48-74; *eadem*, *The preface of Luke's Gospel: literary convention and social context in Luke 1.1-4 and Acts 1.1*, SNTSMS 78, Cambridge: CUP, 1993, 42-146.

<sup>10</sup> G. Lüdemann, *Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts: A Commentary*, London: SCM, 1989, 240-241; *Idem*, *Paul Apostle to the Gentile, Studies in Chronology*, London: SCM, 1984.

<sup>11</sup> W. Stegemann (1987) 200-29.

<sup>12</sup> H.W. Tajra, *The Trial of Paul: A Juridical Exegesis of the Second Half of the Acts of the Apostles*, WUNT 2/35, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1989, 81-89.



but rather to origins."<sup>13</sup> Jerome Murphy-O'Connor also identifies Paul's pure Jewishness as such:

Since Paul was forced into his humiliating position (12:11), we can be sure that what he boasts about was indicated by the claims of the Judaizers. His plan is to match boast with boast; to go further would be even more unjustifiable. So we can infer that they extolled their Jewishness, their accomplishments and their visions and revelations. Paul has little difficulty with the first point. He too is a Jew ('Israelite'), of Aramaic-speaking stock ('Hebrew'; cf. Phil. 3:5), and as far as it can be traced back his lineage is Jewish ('seed of Abraham'). Culturally, racially and religiously he is no whit inferior to his opponents.<sup>14</sup>

Likewise, with boldness Paul also describes his origins as a long-established Jew in Rom. 11:1 in this way:

I myself am an Israelite (*Ἰσραηλίτης*), a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

Paul again declares his origin with pride as a practising Jew who is an "Israelite" and a "descendant of Abraham." E. Käsemann thus points out that "Paul is a qualified Jew and a representative of his people up to his former persecution of Christians."<sup>15</sup> According to J.D.G. Dunn, Paul claims the covenant name of God's chosen people in terms of an "Israelite" not a "Jew."<sup>16</sup> That is, "Israel" is the people's preferred name for themselves,<sup>17</sup> while "Jew" was the name by which they were known to others.<sup>18</sup> The difference from 2Cor. 11:22 is that this verse adopts the title "member of the tribe of Benjamin" instead of "Hebrew." This tribe is regarded as a very significant tribe. According to rabbinic tradition, Benjamin entered the Red Sea first.<sup>19</sup> In effect, Paul intends to declare that he is a practising Jew as firmly located within Judaism as anyone could be.

In Phil. 3:5-6, he also stresses more emphatically his origins as a practising Jew:

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<sup>13</sup> Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986, 41.

<sup>14</sup> Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *The Theology of the Second Letter to the Corinthians*, Cambridge: CUP, 1991, 115.

<sup>15</sup> E. Käsemann (1980) 299.

<sup>16</sup> cf. J.D.G. Dunn (1988) 635.

<sup>17</sup> cf. Sir. 17:17; Jub. 33.20; Pss. Sol. 14.5.

<sup>18</sup> J.D.G. Dunn (1988) 526.

<sup>19</sup> cf. E Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, London: SCM Press, 1980, 299; J.D.G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC 38B, Word Books, Publisher, Dallas, 1988, 635.

Circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin (*φυλῆς Βενιαμίν*), a Hebrew (*Ἑβραῖος*) born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee (*Φαρισαῖος*); as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

In 2Cor. 11:22, Rom. 11:1, and Phil. 3:5 Paul claims his strong Jewish background in detail. Paul insists that his Jewishness is much superior to the "Judaizers."<sup>20</sup> We will proceed on the basis of Paul's origins according to each particular title.

a. **Hebrew:** In the writings of the New Testament, the adjective *Hebrew* occurs at Acts 6:1 and at Phil. 3:5 where Paul claims to be a "Hebrew born of Hebrew parents." R.P. Martin regards it as such:

*Ἑβραῖοι* has two meanings: (1) a pure-blooded Jew; (2) a speaker of Hebrew as a language. The latter was regarded as a valuable asset. Also there is some suggestion that the term implied "born in Israel," at least as far as family connections went, and so not a Hellenistic Jew.<sup>21</sup>

There is, in any case, a probability that one who is a Hebrew in the primary sense will be acquainted with Hebrew and Aramaic,<sup>22</sup> even if circumstances force him to use other languages through the greater part of his life. Here, Paul insists that he is a perfect Jew by descent. By doing this he does not dispute the claim when it is made for those with whom he is comparing himself.

And as is shown in Phil. 3:5, the title "a Hebrew of Hebrews" means something more than "an Israelite by birth" just as it does at 2Cor. 11:22 where in dispute with his opponents Paul says: 'Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I'. In Acts 6:1, *Ἑβραῖοι* probably refers to Jews who normally spoke Aramaic with one another (while knowing some Greek) and who probably attended synagogues where the service was said in Hebrew. The "Hellenists," by contrast, spoke only Greek. That is to say, *Ἑβραῖος* denoted a Jew who spoke Aramaic (Hebrew) as his mother tongue, which was employed in inscriptions with

<sup>20</sup> R. Bultmann, *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985, 215, where Bultmann suggests they are rather gnosticizing pneumatics, since *νόμος* and circumcision are nowhere at issue.

<sup>21</sup> R.P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, WBC 40, Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1986, 374.

<sup>22</sup> cf. Josephus, *Ant*, 18.228.



reference to Jews who came from Palestine or, who had special connections with it.<sup>23</sup>

P.T. O'Brien suggests that in claiming to be a "Hebrew of Hebrews" Paul may yet be adding a further dimension, namely that his parents, who had brought him up to speak Hebrew and Aramaic, also avoided as far as possible any assimilation into Gentile customs and culture in their Tarsus environment.<sup>24</sup> M. Hengel explains the meaning of this:

Neither in 2Cor. 11:22 nor in Phil. 3:5 can "Hebrew" mean anything other than someone speaking *Ἑβραϊστί*, i.e. a Palestinian Jew speaking the sacred language or Aramaic, or a Diaspora Jew, who in origin and education had extremely close connections with the mother country and who therefore also understood Hebrew. In this context the term certainly does not mean 'Jew' as opposed to Gentile, since that is already expressed by the belonging to Israel, and here as in similar sequences in Paul we do not have an accumulation of synonyms.<sup>25</sup>

An excellent example of this may be found in Philo of Alexandria who is Paul's contemporary, himself a Hellenistic Jew, who employs the word "Hebrews" to denote those who speak Hebrew.<sup>26</sup> This claim of Paul's in Phil. 3:5 shows that he is a Hebrew and that neither Paul himself nor his parents were Gentiles. Rather they have to be regarded as Jews who observed the law strictly.

**b. Israelite:** An *Israelite*<sup>27</sup> is a man of Israel, the people of God. In 2Cor. 11:22 and Rom. 11:1, Paul himself claims that he is an Israelite. R. Bultmann points out:

*Ἰσραήλ*, originally a sacral concept, denotes membership in a people and religion, and is used in self-designation, while the originally political concept *Ἰουδαῖος* is the name of a people over against and in the mouth of other peoples... But here *Ἰσραήλ* is a title of honour for the people of God.<sup>28</sup>

However, according to C.K. Barrett, from Paul's point of view, the word may be said to describe the same fact from a new angle: "Hebrew" deals with it from a racial,

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<sup>23</sup> cf. M. Hengel, *Between Jesus and Paul*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983, 10.

<sup>24</sup> P.T. O'Brien *The Epistle to the Philippians*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991, 372.

<sup>25</sup> M. Hengel (1991) 25.

<sup>26</sup> cf. Philo, *On Dreams*, ii. 250; *Abraham*, 28.

<sup>27</sup> BAGD 381.

<sup>28</sup> R. Bultmann (1985) 214.

"Israelite" from a social and religious angle.<sup>29</sup> V.P. Furnish rightly suggests that "as Paul uses the term, an Israelite is one who belongs to the 'stock' (*to genos*) of Israel, and especially one who shares in Israel's religious heritage and traditions (Rom. 9:4, 11:1). It thus includes the ethnic aspect of Hebrew, but focuses more particularly on the religious meaning of being a Jew."<sup>30</sup> Philo explicitly praises the Jews in front of pagans as Israelites.<sup>31</sup> That is to say, in 2Cor. 11:22 and Rom. 11:1, this claim of Paul as a Israelite strongly shows his pure membership in Israel as one of God's chosen people.

**c. A descendant of Abraham:** In 2Cor. 11:22 and Rom. 11:1, Paul calls himself "a descendant of Abraham" in front of a group of opponents, literally meaning the "seed (*σπέρμα*) of Abraham". However, V.P. Furnish claims that the expression is hardly to be distinguished from "Israelites".<sup>32</sup> On this point, *σπέρμα* has a collective meaning in this particular phrase.<sup>33</sup> C.K. Barrett thus emphasizes its religious meaning:<sup>34</sup>

The word connotes the people of God in a collective sense, as those who come into existence as a body on the basis of God's call and promise. It may thus be said to describe Jews from a theological point of view. Precisely for this reason Paul takes up the phrase and uses it of Christ (Gal. 3:16, 19) and of the Christian church (e.g. Gal. 3:29), denying that the principle of physical descent is constitutive of the people of God (Rom. 9: 6-13). In fact, in this verse as a whole he says little more than, Are they Jews? So am I.

N.L. Calvert gives attention to this claim. She says that "by designating himself a 'descendant of Abraham' Paul has more in mind than ethnic derivation."<sup>35</sup> According to R.P. Martin, especially in Gal 3:16, "Abraham's seed" is given a christological twist: It may have been a slogan introduced to the Galatians to offer them membership in the chosen community of heavenly salvation. Similarly, Martin

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<sup>29</sup> C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1973, 293; cf. R.P. Martin (1986) 375.

<sup>30</sup> V.P. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, AB 32a, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1984, 514.

<sup>31</sup> cf. Philo, *Leg. Gai.* 4.

<sup>32</sup> V.P. Furnish (1984) 514.

<sup>33</sup> BAGD 761.

<sup>34</sup> C.K. Barrett (1973) 294.

<sup>35</sup> N.L. Calvert, 'ABRAHAM', in G.F. Hawthorne/R. Martin (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, Leicester: Intervarsity Press, 1993, 8.



suggests that "Paul is claiming this title here, 'seed of Abraham', for himself as a badge of honor to mark out his Christian self-identity over against his rivals".<sup>36</sup> That is, this title shows that Paul's Jewish background described as a "descendant of Abraham" includes the Christian community which also belongs to the "descendants of Abraham".

**d. Circumcised on the eighth day:** According to Phil. 3:5, Paul was circumcised on the eighth day after birth. Circumcision, as M. Whittaker points out, is at least seen as an unique symbol of Jews in the Graeco-Roman world: "for the ordinary man it was just one of those inexplicable practices which distinguished the Jews, a practice causing some instinctive revulsion. It was recognized as essential for proselytes who were fully converted to Judaism".<sup>37</sup> Tacitus reports it as one of the Jews' anti-social practices as follows: "They have instituted circumcision of the genitals, in order to be recognized by the difference. Converts to their customs observe the same practice."<sup>38</sup>

As we find in Gen. 17:25, Ishmael who is born to Abraham and Hagar, the maidservant of Abraham's wife was thirteen years old<sup>39</sup> when the flesh of his foreskin was circumcised. On the contrary, Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old as God had commanded him in Gen. 21:4. It means, as G.F. Hawthorne claims, that "Paul was circumcised on the eighth day by parents who were meticulous in fulfilling the prescriptions of the Law. He was a true Jew, a Jew by birth."<sup>40</sup> This would prove that his parents were practising Jews.<sup>41</sup> That is, "Paul proudly affirms that he is descended from the nation of Israel. He means by this that he possesses all the rights and privileges of God's chosen people because he

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<sup>36</sup> R.P. Martin (1986) 375.

<sup>37</sup> M. Whittaker, *Jews & Christians: Graeco-Roman Views*, Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish & Christian World 200 BC To AD 200, vol. 6, Cambridge: CUP, 1984, 80.

<sup>38</sup> Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.5.8-9.

<sup>39</sup> cf. *Ant* 1.12.2.

<sup>40</sup> G.F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, WBC 43, Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1983, 132.

<sup>41</sup> G.D. Fee, *Paul's Letters to the Philippians*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 306-7. Here Fee stresses Paul's superiority to any in Philippi.

belongs to them by birth, not by conversion."<sup>42</sup> M. Hengel demonstrates the importance of Paul's origin as a pure Jew: "neither Paul himself nor his parents were Gentiles, but rather have to be regarded as Jews who observed the law strictly."<sup>43</sup>

**e. A member of the tribe of Benjamin:** Paul insists on his membership of the tribe of Benjamin in Phil. 3:5 and Rom. 11:1. Hawthorne describes Paul's pride as a practising Jew in the fact that he is a member of the tribe of Benjamin as follows:

There is a note of pride expressed as the apostle writes these words, for the tribe of Benjamin, though small (Ps. 68:27), was nevertheless highly esteemed: (1) Its progenitor was the younger of the two sons born to Rachel, Jacob's favourite wife (Gen 30:23, 24; 35:16-18). (2) Of all the sons of Jacob only Benjamin was born in the Promised Land (Gen 35:9-19). (3) From this tribe came Israel's first lawful king (whose name the apostle carried; cf. 1Sam 9:1,2). (4) The holy city of Jerusalem and the temple were within the borders of the territory assigned to Benjamin (Judg 1:21) (5) The tribe of Benjamin remained loyal to the house of David at the time of the break-up of the monarchy (1Kings 12:21). (6) After the exile, Benjamin and Judah formed the core of the new colony in Palestine (cf. Ezra 4:1). (7) The tribe of Benjamin always held the post of honor in the army, a fact that gave rise to the battle cry, "Behind you, O Benjamin!" (Judg 5:14; Hos 5:8). (8) The famous Mordecai, responsible for that great national deliverance commemorated in the feast of Purim, was a Benjamite (Esth 2:5). (9) Benjamin resisted the inroads that pagan culture made among the other tribes and remained "pure". ... Paul, then seems to revel in the fact that he is a Benjamite. He seems also to have inherited the good qualities of strength and courage and purity and loyalty that characterized his tribe.<sup>44</sup>

According to F.W. Beare, this is probably reflected in his Hebrew name, Saul, which is only shown in Acts,<sup>45</sup> after the first of the kings, who was a man of Benjamin.<sup>46</sup> To assert that he was "of the tribe of Benjamin" shows, significantly, that Paul was able to trace his descent from this highly regarded tribe in Israel.<sup>47</sup> K.I. Cohen observes that Paul claims Benjaminite descent rather than descent from king Saul himself. As a result, Paul may have put forward this claim to assist in his ministry, just as invoking Abraham's name had a specific polemic intent and just as

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<sup>42</sup> G.F. Hawthorne (1983) 132.

<sup>43</sup> M. Hengel (1991) 26.

<sup>44</sup> G.F. Hawthorne (1983) 132-3.

<sup>45</sup> Saul as Paul appears from Acts 13:9. Paul has continually been called Saul from his first appearance in Acts 7:58.

<sup>46</sup> F.W. Beare, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians*, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1959, 106.

<sup>47</sup> P.T. O'Brien (1991) 371.



proclaiming a Pharisaic past served to communicate significant information to his listeners about his *bona fides*.<sup>48</sup> Käsemann points out that "in 2Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:5 there is pride in this self-predication and in the mention of his tribe."<sup>49</sup> The conclusion is that Paul is firmly located within Judaism.

**f. Pharisee:** Paul describes to his readers what his Jewish personal achievements were in Phil. 3:5. Paul mentions first: "in regard to the law I was a Pharisee (*Φαρισαῖος*)."<sup>50</sup> His approach to the law of Moses was that of a Pharisee. Briefly, *Φαρισαῖος* means "the separated ones, separatists."<sup>51</sup> E. Schürer identifies the Pharisees, who are called "the sacred people", in the following manner:

The only question is, to what does this term refer? Were they men who set themselves apart from all uncleanness and unlawfulness, or from certain persons? It might be an argument for the first alternative that in rabbinic Hebrew the nouns *פרישה* and *פרישות* also occur with the meaning 'separation', viz. from all uncleanness and unlawfulness. But if separation from uncleanness alone were intended, with no reference to persons, other positive descriptions such as 'the Pure', 'the Just', 'the Pious', etc., would have been more apposite. Entirely decisive however is the fact that a separation from uncleanness is always a simultaneous separation from unclean persons.<sup>52</sup>

Our major source of information about Pharisaism, as E.P. Sanders reflects, is initially Josephus.<sup>53</sup> R.A. Culpepper points out that Josephus portrays the Pharisees as a philosophical school (*BJ*. ii.162, 166).<sup>54</sup> Josephus makes it clear that the Pharisees concerned themselves with the strict interpretation and observance of the Torah, and spared themselves no efforts to fulfil the law in every detail:

The Pharisees who are considered the most accurate interpreters of the laws, and hold the position of the leading sect, attribute everything to Fate and to God; they

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<sup>48</sup> cf. K.I. Cohen, 'Paul The Benjaminite: Mystery, Motives and Midrash', *Center for Hermeneutical Studies Protocol Series* (Berkeley, CA), 60 (1990) 22.

<sup>49</sup> E. Käsemann (1980) 299.

<sup>50</sup> cf. A.J. Saldarini, *Pharisees Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989, 134-143; D. Lührmann, 'Paul and the Pharisaic tradition', *JSNT* 36 (1989) 75-94.

<sup>51</sup> *BAGD* 853.

<sup>52</sup> E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (175 B.C.-A.D. 135), rev. and ed., G. Vermes, F. Millar, M. Black, vol. 2, Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd, 1979, 396; cf. E.P. Sanders (1992) 448-9.

<sup>53</sup> E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice & Belief, 63 BCE-66 CE*, London: SCM, 1992, 413; cf. D. Lührmann (1989) 76

<sup>54</sup> R.A. Culpepper, *The Johannine School: An Evaluation of the Johannine-school Hypothesis Based on an Investigation of the Nature of Ancient Schools*, SBLDS 26, Missoula: Scholars Press, 1975, 178; cf. S. Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, Peabody: Hendrickson, 1992, 144; See. Chapter 3. § 3.3.a. 'Pharisee/son of Pharisees'



hold that to act rightly or otherwise rests, indeed, for the most part with men, but that in each action Fate co-operates. Every soul, they maintain, is imperishable, but the soul of the good alone passes into another body, while the souls of the wicked suffer eternal punishment.<sup>55</sup>

Josephus also reports that Pharisees are proud of themselves on the exact interpretation of the law of the fathers:

There was also a group of Jews priding itself on its adherence to ancestral custom and claiming to observe the laws of which the Deity approves, and by these men, called Pharisees, the women (of the court) were ruled. These men were able to help the king greatly because of their foresight, and yet they were obviously intent upon combating and injuring him.<sup>56</sup>

Information about the life style of the Pharisees which involves commitment to the Law is also provided by Josephus:

The Pharisees simplify their standard of living, making no concession to luxury. They follow the guidance of that which their doctrine has selected and transmitted as good, attaching the chief importance to the observance of those commandments which it has seen fit to dictate to them.<sup>57</sup>

Sanders, thus, considers that "the Pharisees' special rules made them Pharisees; they did not, in their own opinion, make them the only true Jews, but they did make them different from most other Jews."<sup>58</sup> On this point, Paul as a Pharisee strictly observes the Law, so that "although Paul himself was born outside of Palestine (in Tarsus), and therefore could rightly be labeled a Hellenist, he in essence rejects this label."<sup>59</sup> *φαρισαῖος* is unique in the Epistles,<sup>60</sup> being found only in Phil 3:5 in the epistles themselves, though found 98 times in the gospels and Acts. Hawthorne comments regarding Paul's self-description:

The Pharisees were a "small" religious party in Paul's day, but it was the strictest of the Jewish sects (Acts 26:5) as far as adherence to the Law was concerned. Not content merely to obey the law of Moses, the Pharisees bound themselves also to observe every one of the myriad of commandments contained in the oral Law, the interpretive traditions of the Scribes... "Pharisee" for Paul was not a term of reproach, but a title of honor, a claim to "the highest degree of faithfulness and sincerity in the fulfilment of duty to God as prescribed by the divine Torah."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>BJ. ii 8, 14 (162-3)

<sup>56</sup> Ant. xvii 2,4 (41)

<sup>57</sup> Ant. xviii 1, 3 (12-15)

<sup>58</sup> E.P. Sanders (1992) 450.

<sup>59</sup> G.F. Hawthorne (1983) 133.

<sup>60</sup> D. Lührmann (1989) 75.

<sup>61</sup> G.F. Hawthorne (1983) 133-4.



Our concern becomes "what kind of Pharisee was Paul?"<sup>62</sup> This problem, however, is not easily answered.<sup>63</sup> In Lev. 19:2, God's law to Israel is proclaimed as such: "You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy." In this respect, presumably, Paul sets himself apart as a Pharisee and gives himself to the service of the law in order to work towards holiness and perfect righteousness. Galatians 1:14 also confirms that Paul is extremely zealous for Judaism and traditions of the fathers. On the basis of these observations, it can be presumed that Paul is a strict Jew belonging to the sect of Pharisaism.

### 3.2.2. Questions arising

We have surveyed Paul's origins so far as they are mentioned in the Epistles. Paul does decisively declare his origins as a practising Jew. This is attested from 2Cor. 11:22, Philippians 3:5, and Romans 11:1 which use the terms "Hebrew", "Israelite", "descendant of Abraham", "circumcision on the eighth day", "member of the tribe of Benjamin", and "Pharisee". In fact, the observation of Paul's origins is necessary for the analysis of the main problem which is Paul's citizenship reported in Acts. It will be also related to the correlation between the reports from Acts which mentions his citizenship and the epistles which do not mention the issue. Here, our main question is how Paul, or one of his ancestors, obtains Roman citizenship even though he is a diaspora Jew as Acts reports? This leads to the question: "Are the Epistles in general compatible with Paul being a Roman citizen?" Also, another question comes to light here: "Is Paul anti-Roman in his politics?"<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> cf. P.J. Tomson, *Paul and the Jewish Law: Halakha in the Letters of the Apostle to the Gentiles*, Assen: Van Gorcum, 1990, 53. Tomson regards Paul as a Hellenistic Pharisee.

<sup>63</sup> cf. This will be also discussed more with Paul's origin in Acts.

<sup>64</sup> The answer is absolutely "No" according to Rom. 13:1-2 where Paul insists that "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God."; See, the central discussions on Romans 13: E Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, London: SCM Press, 1980, 350-358; J.D.G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC 38B, Waco: Word Books, Publisher, 1988, 757-774; J.H. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus: Behold the Man! Our Victorious Lamb*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994, 193-211; John and Kathleen Court, *The New Testament World*, Cambridge: CUP, 1990, 96-97. Here they suggest that Paul's advice is put firmly in an eschatological perspective by 13:11-14: "the day of the Lord is at hand." And Paul is conscious of the Roman Christians who were having problems with the state authorities. So in Romans 13:1-7, Paul is an apologist for himself in the face of Roman suspicions.

It may be possible to obtain some information even from the Epistles regarding Paul's status as a Roman citizen. Although we might perceive the image of Paul as a citizen in the Epistles (e.g. Rom. 13:1-2),<sup>65</sup> it is difficult to attest whether Paul's Roman citizenship is real or not. One may ask: if Paul was a practising Jew as he says, was it possible for him to be a Roman citizen? If it was possible for him to be a Pharisaic Jew and a Roman citizen, we have to infer several possible reasons why Paul does not mention his Roman citizenship in the Epistles. (1) It is not necessary, because it is not important to Paul or to Christian readers. (2) Opponents claim his high status in terms of Judaism. That is, Paul's Roman citizenship is irrelevant to this particular argument. These points will be discussed more fully later.

### 3.3. What does Acts say about Paul's origins?

In the same way that Paul insists on his Jewish credentials in his letters, Acts convincingly stresses that Paul's background is Jewish. According to 21:39 and 22:3, Paul asserts that "I am a Jew." This is enough for the reader to reveal Paul's pure Jewish upbringing. As B. Rapske also points out, the portrait that emerges from the NT documents in terms of Paul's birth, social standing, offices, honours, wealth, character, moral uprightness, and education is primarily, though not exclusively, Jewish and religious,<sup>66</sup> and in this way Acts confirms Paul's Jewish background. That is, Acts also includes some evidence for his Jewish background, e.g.

- a. Paul's origin as a Pharisee and son of Pharisee<sup>67</sup> (23:6, 26:5)
- b. His name Saul which is the name of the first king of Israel from the tribe of Benjamin (13:9)
- c. Paul's use of Aramaic (22:2)

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<sup>65</sup> cf. Simon Légasse (1995, 372) suggests that "given that Paul presents himself as an observant Jew born of an observant family (Phil. 3:5), it must be doubted that he derived his Roman citizenship from a soldier in the Roman army. In fact the most common origin of his status for Jews outside Palestine was the manumission of Jewish slaves by masters who were themselves Roman citizens."

<sup>66</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 90.

<sup>67</sup> Except Acts, it is only in Phil. 3:5 that Paul says he had been a Pharisee. S. Mason (1992) 144. "Interestingly, Paul elsewhere says that he had been zealous, while still in Judaism, for the 'traditions of my fathers' (Gal. 1:14). This phrase is very close to the one that Josephus uses for the Pharisees' special tradition in *Ant.* 13.297."



d. Training under Gamaliel, a famous rabbi of the period (22:3)

Like the citizenship question, the issue of Paul's origins is subject to repeated discussion at the moment. At this juncture, the different aspects of Paul's Jewish origins will, firstly, be discussed in more depth using the preceding factors. Secondly, the relationship between Paul's Jewish origins and his dual citizenship will be analyzed.

a. **Pharisee/son of Pharisee:** Luke's view of Paul's Pharisaic origin is difficult to evaluate historically. Acts 23:6 reports that Paul belongs to the Pharisaic sect. Although Paul has identified himself in 22:3 as one who followed the Law strictly, Acts 23:6 is the first time he explicitly identifies himself as a Pharisee. This self-description recurs in 26:5. This disclosure of Paul's origin agrees with Paul's own testimony in Phil. 3:5, where he declares that he was "circumcised on the eighth day" and "according to the Law, a Pharisee" (*κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος*). This means that it does not conflict with the Epistles. This designation implies at least observant parents.

However, the phrase "son of a Pharisee" does create problems for the internal consistency of the Lukan narrative. That is, firstly, what is the likelihood of a Pharisaic family living in Tarsus? and secondly, would such a family have acquired Tarsian citizenship? Paul calls himself the "son of .Pharisees" (*υἱὸς Φαρισαίων*) in Acts 23:6. On this particular point, Tajra reflects that "by stating that he was the son of Pharisees, Paul was underlining the fact that his attachment to the Pharisaic party was not merely a personal affair, but an ancient family tradition as well."<sup>68</sup> Also, according to Bruce, the natural implication of *υἱὸς Φαρισαίων* is that Paul's father or remoter ancestors had a Pharisaic association. The phrase might, however, mean that he was the disciple of Pharisees.<sup>69</sup> J. Jeremias in general agrees with the meaning of *υἱὸς Φαρισαίων* as a pupil of Pharisaic teachers or a member of a Pharisaic

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<sup>68</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 95.

<sup>69</sup> F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 465.

association.<sup>70</sup> It suggests that the claim in Acts to be a "son of a Pharisee" should perhaps be read in terms of "school allegiance,"<sup>71</sup> i.e. "son of a Pharisee" does not imply a family relationship. Then, according to the nature of the ancient schools, "son" would mean "disciple" in the same circumstance as those who belonged to the prophetic schools are expressly called 'disciples' and 'sons' of the prophet, whom Yahweh had given him.<sup>72</sup> So R.A. Culpepper claims that "the similarities between the schools of the philosophers and those of the Pharisees are unquestionably extensive."<sup>73</sup> It is likely that Paul belongs to the circle of Pharisees. Rapske, therefore, observes that "Paul's purpose at Acts 23:6 is to identify himself with some of his hearers. It is surely more probable that he is claiming ties to this particular group of Pharisees within the Sanhedrin than telling them about the purity of his Pharisaic lineage."<sup>74</sup>

L.T. Johnson asserts that Paul's portrait as "son of a Pharisee" would be incompatible with Paul's dual citizenship.<sup>75</sup> Lentz goes on to point out two questions which are raised from Paul's Pharisaic claim: "(1) Were Pharisees found in the Diaspora?<sup>76</sup> (2) How probable is it that Pharisees would also be citizens of a Greek city?"<sup>77</sup> In fact, the NT indicates that Pharisees, as Rapske agrees, were found in the cities of Galilee and Judaea, but evidence for Pharisaic schools or communities in the Diaspora is scarce.<sup>78</sup> Lentz points out that "the suggestion that Paul was from a Pharisaic family from Tarsus can hardly be accepted without serious reservations."<sup>79</sup> On the basis of this argument, Lentz concludes that "while it is

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<sup>70</sup> J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, London: SCM Press, 1969, 252, n. 26.

<sup>71</sup> cf. S. Mason, 'Chief Priest, Sadducees, Pharisees and Sanhedrin,' in R. Bauckham (ed.), *BAFCS*, vol. 4, *Palestinian Setting*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 115-177, esp. 153-156.

<sup>72</sup> cf. R.A. Culpepper (1975) 171-195, esp. 186; cf. L.C.A. Alexander, 'Paul and the Hellenistic Schools: The evidence of Galen,' in Troels Engberg-Pedersen (ed.), *Paul and His Hellenistic Context*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994, 60-83.

<sup>73</sup> R.A. Culpepper (1975) 185.

<sup>74</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 96.

<sup>75</sup> cf. L.T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Sacra Pagina Series 5, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992, 397.

<sup>76</sup> cf. G. Lüdemann (1989) 240. "There is no evidence<sup>of</sup> the training of Pharisees outside Jerusalem."

<sup>77</sup> J.C. Lentz, *Luke's Portrait of Paul*, Cambridge: CUP, 1993, 54.

<sup>78</sup> cf. B. Rapske (1994) 95; cf. M. Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul*, London: SCM, 1991, 29-34.

<sup>79</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 54.



highly probable that there were strict Jews in the Diaspora, it is less probable that there were Pharisees outside of Palestine in the years preceding the Jewish war."<sup>80</sup> Then although before 70 CE there is no evidence of Pharisaism outside Jewish Palestine, it could be assumed that Pharisees had also to be able to exist under Hellenistic culture and in Palestine, even in Jerusalem, totally "pure" Judaism would not remain at all.

How can Paul's Pharisaic origin be understood in this context? On this point, Lentz negatively mentions Paul's Pharisaic origin in that "Paul makes no explicit claim outside of Acts to have been born into a Pharisaic family."<sup>81</sup> On the basis of these accounts, it can be assumed that Acts 23:6 and 26:5 intends to show Paul's intimate solidarity with Judaism in his origins, for "the Pre-Christian Paul" was deeply rooted in Judaism.

**b. Paulos as a Roman version of the Jewish name Saul:** According to Acts, Saul, later known as Paul the Apostle, makes his appearance at the time of the death of Stephen (7:58). It is right, as C.K. Barrett points out, that at 13:9 "for the first time the name Paul is used: henceforth *Σαῦλος* is not used, but the transliterated Hebrew *Σαούλ* recurs in the repeated accounts of the conversion in chs. 22 and 26."<sup>82</sup> Luke refers to Paul as "Saul" for the last time at Acts 13:9 *Σαῦλος δέ, ὁ καὶ Παῦλος*. The question as to why from this point on he should reject the name "Saul" for that of "Paul" has prompted numerous attempts at an explanation.<sup>83</sup> On this issue, K. Stendahl claims:

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<sup>80</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 55; Contra, M. Hengel, *The 'Hellenization' of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, London: SCM Press, 1989, 53; cf. G.E. Sterling, 'Thus Are Israel': Jewish Self-Definition in Alexandria', in D.T. Runia (ed.), *The Studia Philonica Annual: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism*, Vol. VII (Brown Judaic Studies 305), Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995, 1. "The paradigm shift in scholarship which now compels us to speak of Judaisms rather than Judaism when referring to Jewish life and thought during the time of the Second Temple, also raises the question whether we should speak of a diaspora or diasporas. Martin Hengel erased the line between Palestinian Judaism and Hellenistic Judaism."

<sup>81</sup> Lentz (1993) 55.

<sup>82</sup> C.K. Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 1, ICC. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994, 616.

<sup>83</sup> T.J. Leary, 'Paul's improper name', *NTS* 38 (1992) 467; cf. G.A. Harrer, 'Saul who is called Paul', *HTR* 33 (1940) 19-33; H. Dessau, 'Der Name des Apostels Paulus', *Hermes* 45 (1910) 347-368; C.J. Hemer, 'The name of Paul', *TB* 36 (1985) 179-183.

The crucial editorial seam (13:9) has the following setting: *Saulos* is on Cyprus, competing with a magician, a Jewish prophet, Bar Jesus/Elymas before a Roman proconsul by the name of Sergius Paulos. Then verse 9 reads: 'But *Saulos* who is also called Paulos, filled with the Holy Spirit ... said ...' And from that point on the book of Acts calls him Paul. Why? This is Paul's first encounter with Roman officials, and if the purpose of Acts is to show the gospel's way from Jerusalem to Rome (cf. Acts 1:8), then it is clear that the name change symbolizes the change of focus. From now on, Rome is the 'magnet'.<sup>84</sup>

In connection with this suggestion, Marshall proposes the reason why Luke puts the apostle through a name change at this point: "in Paul's case this could have been his Jewish name 'Saul', which he would use in a Jewish environment. The change in name here to the form which Paul uses in his letters corresponds to his entry into a mainly Gentile environment."<sup>85</sup>

While the name *Παῦλος* suggests Paul's Romanness, the name *Σαῦλος* emphasizes his Jewishness. Concerning the Jewish connection with the name of Saul, C.J. Hemer describes it as a neat example of the "undesigned coincidences" of Acts and the Epistles in that Paul's Hebrew name is known only from Acts and his tribe (Benjamin) only from an acknowledged Epistle (Phil. 3:5).<sup>86</sup> Barrett also demonstrates that "there may be more to be gained by asking why Luke had hitherto used the name Saul; the answer may be that he wished to show that the well-known Christian Paul had deep roots in Judaism."<sup>87</sup> On the basis of this conclusion, it is most likely that the name of Saul in the narrative is enough to show Paul's whole Jewish upbringing. E.A. Judge claims a different view: "*cognomina* ought also to be considered as possibly signifying citizenship, though we know some which established themselves too soon in Greek for this to be likely."<sup>88</sup> Paul, thus, is commonly known by his Roman *cognomen*, *Παῦλος*, and his Roman name, Paul, always identifies him in his letters (1Thess 1:1; 2:18; Rom 1:1; 1Cor 1:1,12-13; Philem 1:1; etc.). Judge's suggestion might imply that the use of Paul's Roman

<sup>84</sup> K. Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, London: SCM Press, 1976, 11.

<sup>85</sup> I.H. Marshall, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Introduction and Commentary*, Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1980, 220; cf. Hanson (1967, 141) notes that "the introduction of Saul's Gentile name appropriately heralds his mission to the Gentiles."

<sup>86</sup> C.J. Hemer (1985) 182.

<sup>87</sup> C.K. Barrett (1994) 616.

<sup>88</sup> E.A. Judge, 'Greek names of Latin origin', *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity*, vol. 2, 107.



name (which is well attested in the epistles) in itself provides evidence for citizen status.

Next, on the relationship of Paul with Sergius Paulus,<sup>89</sup> E. Haenchen rejects the idea that Paul took his name from Sergius Paulus. Instead, being born a Roman citizen, Paul would have had three names, of which Paul was probably his *cognomen*.<sup>90</sup> Johnson also claims, "It is not likely that anything more than coincidence links this with the name of the Proconsul. Lucian of Samosata tells us of men who changed their names to signify a higher social status, but in the present case it is more likely that Saul adopts the 'public' name he had used all along in contexts other than Jewish."<sup>91</sup> C.K. Barrett also suggests:

The formula *ὁ και* has innumerable papyrus parallels; that is, it does not describe a change of name but introduces an alternative name; Paul therefore did not borrow the name of the proconsul. Luke may however have thought this an appropriate occasion to introduce Saul's Roman name.<sup>92</sup>

Possibly, the name change appears in the narrative in order to lend the positive influence of emphasis on Roman origins and citizenship as Paul approaches the more civic setting within the Roman empire. This also serves as the basis for the introduction of Paul's Roman citizenship in the narrative itself.

**c. Paul's use of the 'Hebrew language' in 21:40, 22:2:** Paul speaks "in the Hebrew dialect" ( *Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ* - probably "Aramaic") in his speech to the Jews. Perhaps Paul wants to create a friendly relationship with the Jews. According to J. Stambaugh and D. Balch, there were four primary languages used in

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<sup>89</sup> See on this, S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor, vol. II. The Rise of the Church*, Oxford: OUP, 1993, 7-8. Here Mitchell stresses that "the importance of the link between Paul and the proconsul of Cyprus, his most prominent convert, is surely symbolized by the fact that precisely from this moment the former adopted the Roman *cognomen* Paulus, to supplant the name he had borne hitherto, Saul. Some have asserted that Paul since his early years may have used the Roman Paul as a more familiar and acceptable form than Saul, but the claim does not stand up in face of two facts: Paul is not a common Roman name, and there is no record that Saul assumed it until the immediate aftermath of the meeting with Sergius Paullus at Paphos."

<sup>90</sup> E. Haenchen (1971) 399; cf. F.F. Bruce (1990) 298. "As a Roman citizen, Paul has three names-*praenomen*, *nomen* (gentile), and *cognomen*. Paul must have been his *cognomen*; what his *praenomen* and *nomen* may have been we can only speculate. *ὁ και*; is the regular Gk. way of introducing a person's alternative name; it might almost be translated 'alias'."

<sup>91</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 223.

<sup>92</sup> C.K. Barrett (1994) 616.



Palestine in the first century C.E.: Latin, Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew.<sup>93</sup>

Stambaugh and Balch describe the popularity of Aramaic as follows:

Whether more Greek or Aramaic was spoken in Palestine is debated. It used to be thought that Aramaic was on the wane in the Seleucid pre-Maccabean period, but more evidence for Aramaic has accumulated recently. The finds at Qumran reveal that literature was still being composed in Aramaic in the first century before and after Christ.<sup>94</sup>

J.A. Fitzmyer suggests that "there is little evidence for Greek influence on Aramaic, but that Aramaic clearly affected the Greek used by Jews and Aramaic was the most commonly used language in Palestine in the first century C.E."<sup>95</sup> Polhill also suggests that "it is generally agreed that the language of Jerusalem in the first century was Western Aramaic, the common speech of non-Greeks in Western Asia".<sup>96</sup>

Concerning Luke's use of "the Hebrew dialect", R.P.C. Hanson says:

Even though Paul is represented as addressing the mob in Aramaic (for this is what the words Hebrew language mean) the speech itself shows no sign of translation from Aramaic, and is clearly a free composition of Luke. It is suitable to its context in a literary but not historical sense; that is to say, it is suitable to Luke's purpose that Paul should here defend himself against the hostility of the Jews by recounting his conversion, but it does not say a word to vindicate him against the charge either of violating the Temple or starting a riot, for which he is presumably in custody. This is not to say that the historical details about Paul's career given in it are necessarily false.<sup>97</sup>

Tajra argues for a slightly different view in that "by using Aramaic in his speech Paul was identifying himself linguistically with his listeners and thereby creating a bond of fellowship with them."<sup>98</sup> This, indeed, suggests that "the speech, delivered in Aramaic, stresses suitably those elements in Paul's background and experience which communicated with a Jewish audience in Jerusalem".<sup>99</sup> Johnson also points out that "by choosing Aramaic rather than Greek, Luke's Paul shows a fine sense of what is

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<sup>93</sup> J. Stambaugh/D. Balch, *The Social World of the First Christians*, London: SPCK, 1986, 87.

<sup>94</sup> J. Stambaugh/D. Balch (1986) 87; cf. J.M. Grintz, 'Hebrew as the Spoken and Written Language in the Last Days of the Second Temple', *JBL* 79 (1960) 32-47. Here Grintz observes that Hebrew is the language of Judea.

<sup>95</sup> J.A. Fitzmyer, 'The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.', *CBQ* 32 (1970) 523.

<sup>96</sup> J.B. Polhill, *Acts: An Exegetical Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture*, The New American Commentary Vol. 26, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992, 456, n. 24.

<sup>97</sup> R.P.C. Hanson (1967) 214.

<sup>98</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 72.

<sup>99</sup> C.J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, WUNT 49, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1989, 127.



demanded in the *exordium* of a defense speech: winning the attention and sympathy of the audience."<sup>100</sup> That is, this also shows that Paul is a practising Jew and he identifies with Jewish concerns. In this respect, the Lukan Paul's use of Aramaic which is their mother tongue underlines his Jewishness.

**d. Paul's training under Gamaliel in Jerusalem:** Acts 22:3 shows a Greek biographical formula<sup>101</sup> that Paul was "born" (*γεγεννημένος*) in Tarsus of Cilicia (21:39, 22:3) was "brought up" (*ἀνατετραμμένος*)<sup>102</sup> in Jerusalem and "educated" (*πεπαιδευμένος*) under Gamaliel (22:3).<sup>103</sup> The Gamaliel mentioned here is to be identified with the Pharisaic leader in 5:34 called Gamaliel I ("the Elder").<sup>104</sup> Neusner takes it for granted that Gamaliel was both a Temple-council member, as Acts alleges, and leader within the Pharisaic sect, as the rabbinic traditions hold.<sup>105</sup> Mishnah Sotah suggests that the influence of the authority of Gamaliel was such that "when he died, the glory of Torah ceased and purity and abstinence died."<sup>106</sup> Acts reports the fact that Paul as a pupil<sup>107</sup> trained under the very Gamaliel who is the leading rabbinic scholar of his day. In my opinion, Luke's report in Acts 22:3: "at the feet of Gamaliel"<sup>108</sup> I was educated strictly according to

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<sup>100</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 387.

<sup>101</sup> cf. R.P.C. Hanson (1967) 214. "The scheme was a very well known one in Hellenistic literature, including Hellenistic Jewish literature."; see Philo, *Life of Moses* 2:1; *Idem, Against Flaccus* 158.

<sup>102</sup> cf. R.P.C. Hanson (1967) 214. "Brought up means 'nurtured from infancy until the age when the child begins formal education.'"

<sup>103</sup> cf. the case of Moses in Acts 7:20-22. 'Moses was born (*ἐγεννήθη*).... Pharaoh's daughter brought him up (*ἀνεθρέψατο*)... Moses was instructed (*ἐπαιδεύθη*) in all the wisdom....";

<sup>104</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 388.

<sup>105</sup> J. Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions About the Pharisees Before 70*, Part 1, The Masters, Leiden: Brill, 1971, 376.

<sup>106</sup> M. Sot. 9:15, II.i.9; cf. *BC*. iv. 60. quotes the Mishna (Shab. 15a Bar.) to the effect that like Hillel, Gamaliel held the Nasiat (presidency of the Council). However, C.K. Barrett (1994, 292) doubts it in Acts 5:34 that "it is not correct that Gamaliel is here represented as presiding over the Sanhedrin; he is described as *τις ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ*, one who belonged to the Sanhedrin and exercised his right to express an opinion."

<sup>107</sup> cf. F.F. Bruce, *Paul Apostle of the Free Spirit*, Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1977, 51. "In most matters indeed, including, for example, the resurrection hope and the techniques of biblical exegesis, Paul was probably an apt pupil and faithful follower of his teacher."; Hanson (1967, 214) prefer the New English Bible rendering which is as such: "I am a true-born Jew... I was brought up in this city, and as a pupil of Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in every point of our ancestral law."

<sup>108</sup> cf. R.P.C. Hanson (1967) 214. "The clause *at the feet of Gamaliel* is referred only to the participle *educated* and not to *brought up*."; cf. L.T. Johnson (1992) 388. see examples, Lk. 7:38; 8:35, 41; 10:39; 17:16; 20:43; Acts 2:35; 4:35, 37; 5:2, 10; 7:58; 10:25; cf. E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* (175 B.C.-A.D. 135), rev. and ed., G. Vermes, F. Millar,

our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today" substantiates the Pauline accounts, where Paul himself claims a Pharisaic upbringing (Phil. 3:5) and "zeal for the traditions of the fathers" (Gal. 1:14). That is, due to the significance of Jerusalem as the capital city of Judaism, the Lukan Paul claims of his Jewish upbringing that he trained under Gamaliel. The relationship with Gamaliel functions to underline the fact that Paul has a rapport with Judaism.

### 3.4. Paul's use of his Tarsian citizenship in Acts

Our discussion begins with a question: Why is Paul's Tarsian citizenship mentioned in the narratives of Acts? In the narratives of Acts, Paul appears simultaneously as a Roman citizen and a Tarsian citizen. However, Paul's dual citizenship raises two distinct issues: Firstly, the combination of Jewish upbringing and Tarsian citizenship is problematic, as Lentz points out.<sup>109</sup> Secondly, the issue of Roman citizenship creates a different problem which will be fully discussed.<sup>110</sup>

Paul claims his Tarsian citizenship in 21:39 where he says that "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen (*πολίτης*) of an important city; I beg you, let me speak to the people". Lentz comments that "the reaction of Paul to his mistaken identity is representative of Luke's sensitivity to the issue of Paul's social status throughout these last chapters in Acts. Being mistaken for an Egyptian was an immense social slur."<sup>111</sup> Could a "Pharisee" and "son of Pharisees" have also been *πολίτης* of Tarsus? This raises the question of internal consistency within the narrative of Acts. One way to resolve this is to say that "son of Pharisees" means disciple, not family member as discussed above.

As Tajra suggests, it is quite interesting to note that the apostle does not mention his Roman citizenship in his reply to the Roman tribune in 21:37-38.<sup>112</sup>

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M. Black, vol. 2, Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd, 1979, 334. "During instruction, the students sat on the floor, and the teacher on a raised dais."

<sup>109</sup> See Chapter 2. § 2.2.2.

<sup>110</sup> See Chapter 3 § 3.5. Paul's use of his Roman citizenship in Acts.

<sup>111</sup> Lentz (1993) 29.

<sup>112</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 71.



Hanson suggests that "Paul has apparently more pride in being a Tarsian citizen than in being a Roman one. He only introduces his Roman citizenship at the last minute, mainly in order to embarrass officials, as in 16:37."<sup>113</sup> Bruce observes that "he was not only a native, but a citizen, of Tarsus. But his Tarsian citizenship (which required a substantial property qualification)<sup>114</sup> made no such impression on the tribune as his Roman citizenship did when later revealed (22:28f)."<sup>115</sup>

Tajra states "The problem of determining whether Paul was a citizen of the *πόλις* or merely a resident officially domiciled in the Jewish community of Tarsus is complicated by a lack of sources."<sup>116</sup> Johnson also states that "The more serious issue raised by his statement is the general likelihood of Jews having full citizenship in Hellenistic cities."<sup>117</sup> Lentz points out that "It can not be assumed that Jews could have possessed the citizenship on equal footing with the Greek inhabitants without to some extent compromising their Jewishness."<sup>118</sup> E.M. Smallwood clearly explains its circumstances at the time:

The section of the Jewish community which coveted Greek citizenship will have been a 'modernist', highly Hellenized minority, prepared to compromise their religious principles for the sake of the advantages of Greek citizenship, while orthodox Jews were presumably content with the *status quo* and had no desire to be put into a position in which the strict observance of their Law would be difficult.<sup>119</sup>

Tajra sums up the above observation in this way:

The use of the word *πολίτης* most likely refers to Paul's membership in the resident Jewish community at Tarsus rather than to any citizenship in the Greek *πόλις*. His mention of Tarsus in this verse is a statement of domicile and not a proclamation of citizenship.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> R.P.C. Hanson (1967) 213.

<sup>114</sup> Lentz (1993, 32) concludes that to claim the citizenship of Tarsus in the middle decades of the first century was a social distinction of no small degree.

<sup>115</sup> F.F. Bruce (1990) 453.

<sup>116</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 78.

<sup>117</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 383.

<sup>118</sup> Lentz (1993) 33.

<sup>119</sup> E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule From Pompey to Diocletian: A Study in Political Relations*, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, Leiden: Brill, 1976, 234-5.

<sup>120</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 80.

Thus, Luke is not using *πολίτης* here in a technically exact fashion. How, then, does Luke use *πολίτης* elsewhere? It is quite relevant to answer this question by saying that Luke uses the word *πόλις*<sup>121</sup> of small villages in Palestine. It suggests that he does not always use it in an exact Greek technical sense. But even if the meaning is not exact, it is significant for a narrative analysis that Luke chooses a Greek word which has strong political overtones for a Greek-speaking audience. As we shall see, this term is also very important in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.<sup>122</sup>

In fact, it simply has an immediate function here in the narrative: "Paul's identification as a resident of Tarsus was enough to dispel any suspicion on the tribune's part that he was the seditious Egyptian."<sup>123</sup> Further, the effect of the revelation that Paul came from Tarsus is that Paul reveals his Jewish origin as Diaspora and at the same time shows his difference from Palestine Judaism.

How could Paul's family, a Jewish family of Tarsus, have obtained Roman citizenship? How is the combination between Tarsian and Roman citizenship possible? The province of greater Cilicia was created by Pompey after his victory over the pirates.<sup>124</sup> At the head of the province stood Imperial legates.<sup>125</sup> "Cilicia, Paul's home town, fell within the *prouincia*<sup>126</sup> of more than one Roman general in the first century B.C. and bestowal of Roman citizenship on approved individuals was included in the supreme authority legally exercised by these generals."<sup>127</sup> Bruce suggests that presumably Paul's father, grandfather or even great-grandfather had

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<sup>121</sup> Luke uses *πόλις* to mean a small village in Lk. 1:26, 39, 2:3, 4, 11, 39, 4:29, 31, 43, 5:12, 7:11, 12, 37, 8:1, 4, 27, 34, 39, 9:5, 10, 52, 10:1, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13:22, 14:21, 18:2, 3, 19:17, 19, 41, 22:10, 23:19.

<sup>122</sup> Throughout from the Chapter 4 to 6, it will be discussed that the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are closely related with the motifs of Acts narratives.

<sup>123</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 80.

<sup>124</sup> S.A. Cook/F.E. Adcock/M.P. Charlesworth (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. XI, Cambridge: CUP, 1954, 602.

<sup>125</sup> S.A. Cook/F.E. Adcock/M.P. Charlesworth (1954) 603.

<sup>126</sup> cf. P.G.W. Glare (ed.), *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, Clarendon Press, 1982, 1506. This term is divided into three uses: "1. The special function or task assigned to a magistrate, originally one holding *imperium*. 2. A provincial command, governorship of a subject territory. 3. A territory outside Italy under the direct administration of a governor from Rome, a province." The 2nd is preferable to the case of Cilicia here.

<sup>127</sup> F.F. Bruce (1971) 234-5.



rendered some outstanding service to the Roman cause.<sup>128</sup> Ramsay claims that "When the citizenship was still jealously guarded in the first century, the *civitas* may be taken as a proof that his family was one of distinction and at least moderate wealth."<sup>129</sup>

How and why did Paul's parents or ancestors come to Tarsus? Paul was a Jew by birth. M. Hengel, assuming the transfer of Paul's family from Palestine to Tarsus, argues:

Tarsus was a significant metropolis, only slightly inferior to Antioch, in which numerous Roman citizens lived: some had migrated there, and some were resident Greeks who had earned their citizenship by merit. Paul's father (or grandfather) could have been the freedman of such a Roman or Greek, but it is also conceivable that he was the administrator in Tarsus of the property of a rich Roman who himself lived elsewhere, possibly even in the imperial court. Here there are many possibilities, but no probabilities.<sup>130</sup>

There is no evidence to confirm or to disprove the suggestions that Paul's father (or other ancestors) had been transferred from Palestine as a prisoner of war, or that Paul's family permanently lived in Tarsus. At this juncture, the issue of Paul's origins including his status as a Roman and Tarsian citizen is still an unsettled issue. Still, there is room for discussion concerning Paul's Tarsian and Roman citizenship in the narratives of Acts.

Tarsus is mentioned in Acts 9:11, 9:30, 11:25-6, 21:39 and 22:3. Among them, Acts 21:39 exclusively says that Paul is a citizen of Tarsus which is by no means an insignificant city. Although Tarsian citizenship cannot be compared with the influence of Roman citizenship, there is no doubt that it also plays a significant role in the narrative of Acts. For example, Paul could have the opportunity to speak to the Jewish people because he merely mentioned his identity as a Tarsian citizen (*πολίτης*) in 21:39. Our discussion proper on Paul's Tarsian citizenship opens with a survey of the history of Tarsus.

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<sup>128</sup> F.F. Bruce (1977) 37; cf. M. Hengel (1991) 5.

<sup>129</sup> W.M. Ramsay, *St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen*, London: Hodder&Stoughton, 1942 (19 ed.) 31.

<sup>130</sup> M. Hengel (1991) 14-5.

### 3.4.1. The importance of Tarsus

Even though "present-day Tarsus is a minor provincial town in Turkey,"<sup>131</sup> in Paul's time, as Acts 21:39 reports, Tarsus might well be described as "no mean city" (*οὐκ ἀσήμου πόλεως*). Strabo mentions that Tarsus is in fact an important centre of Hellenistic culture which we might call a "university town":<sup>132</sup>

The people at Tarsus have devoted themselves *ἐν* eagerly, not only to philosophy, but also to the whole round of education in general, that they have surpassed Athens, Alexandria, or any other place that can be named where there have been schools and lectures of philosophers.<sup>133</sup>

Strabo continually reports that Tarsus is probably the home of several famous philosophers:

The following men were natives of Tarsus: among the Stoics, Antipater and Archedemus and Nestor; and also the two Athenodoruses, one of whom, called Cordylion, lived with Marcus Cato and died at his house; and the other, the son of Sandon, called Cananites after some village, was Caesar's teacher and was greatly honoured by him.<sup>134</sup>

Lucian agrees with Strabo:

Athenodorus, son of Sando, of Tarsus, a Stoic, tutor of Caesar Augustus the divine, through whose influence the city of Tarsus was relieved of taxation, died in his native land at the age of eighty-two, and the people of Tarsus pay him honour each year as a hero. Nestor, the Stoic from Tarsus, the tutor of Tiberius Caesar, lived ninety-two years,... Those are the noteworthy philosophers.<sup>135</sup>

This means that Tarsus is a great city in terms of Hellenistic culture. Tarsus' historical reputation make it possible for the reader to estimate the value of possessing citizenship of such a city. Lentz points out that "Tarsus was a major city and one had to possess at least moderate wealth to be considered for citizenship."<sup>136</sup> In this respect, it would be most likely imagined that the Lukan Paul appearing as a Greek citizen would be a person of high status in this narrative as well.

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<sup>131</sup> S.E. Johnson, *Paul the Apostle and His Cities*, Good News Studies 21, Wilmington, Del., Michael Glazier, Inc., 1987, 26; *Idem*, 'Tarsus and the Apostle Paul,' *Lexington Theological Quarterly*, 15 (1980) 105-113.

<sup>132</sup> S.E. Johnson (1987) 29; cf. C.P. Jones, *The Roman World of Dio Chrysostom*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1978, 71-82.

<sup>133</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, 14.5.13.

<sup>134</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, 14.5.14.

<sup>135</sup> Lucian, *Octogenarians*, 21.

<sup>136</sup> Lentz (1993) 32.



### 3.4.2. What was the role of Tarsian citizenship in such a context of accusation?

As Acts 21:39-22:1 narrates, Tarsian citizenship could at least allow the Lukan Paul a timely opportunity for defence from the Jewish people's complaint:

Paul replied, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen (*πολίτης*) of an important city (*οὐκ ἀσήμου πόλεως*); I beg you, let me speak to the people." When he had given him permission, Paul stood on the steps and mentioned to the people for silence; and when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew language, saying: "Brothers and fathers, listen to the defense that I now make before you."

This reveals that Greek citizenship like Paul's Tarsian citizenship could serve to aid its holder in certain urgent circumstances. A very similar example from Achilles Tatius suggests that Greek citizenship like Tarsian citizenship plays a useful role which expresses the "pride of status" for the Greek citizens of the time:

I took courage and added: "This is what I have suffered, Sirs, though I am a free man and a citizen of no mean city (*πόλεως οὐκ ἀσήμου*); this rascal conspired against my life, but Artemis saved me and proved him a trumped-up of false charges. Now I must go and wash my face outside; God forbid that the holy water of the temple should be polluted by the blood of violence.<sup>137</sup>

Then what difference does it make to the tribune that Paul is a *πολίτης* of Tarsus? In fact, Acts 21:40 shows that the tribune only gives Paul permission to speak to the Jewish people. This makes it possible for the reader to suppose the significant potential of Paul's Tarsian citizenship. Thus, the Lukan Paul is allowed to speak at length to the Jews from 21:40 to 22:21. From the beginning of Paul's address down until the last chapters, he continually speaks to defend himself. The narrative shows his boldness in front of his antagonists. That is, the tribune's permission makes it possible for him to defend his innocence and provides an opportunity for the witness to the Gospel of Jesus. It is clear that the key to this situation is Paul's Tarsian citizenship.

As mentioned earlier, Paul's letters do not mention this citizenship at all. Both Lentz and Tajra point out that Paul's Tarsian citizenship, which is meant in a non-technical sense, cannot be proved on the basis of Acts 21:39.<sup>138</sup> Trebilco

<sup>137</sup> Achilles Tatius, *Clitophon and Leucippe*, 8.3.1; for the litotes, cf. also Euripides, *Ion*, 8. "ἔστιν γὰρ οὐκ ἀσημος Ἑλλήνων πόλις" (There is a not insignificant city of Greeks.)

<sup>138</sup> cf. J.C. Lentz (1993) 28-43; H.W. Tajra (1989) 80.

claims that "the investigation of the civic rights of the Jewish communities in the Diaspora in general and in Asia Minor in particular is difficult and much debated."<sup>139</sup> B. Rapske, however, concludes that "textually and contextually, Paul should be understood to declare his full Tarsian citizenship at Acts 21:39."<sup>140</sup> What is the solution to this problem? In Acts, Paul as the "son of a Pharisee" and Paul's "training under Gamaliel" fully proclaim his own strict Jewish discipline. However, most scholars say that Paul as a strict Jew should not hold Tarsian citizenship, because, for example, citizenship requires religious service which involves practices contrary to Jewish law. Even though Luke employs the Greek *πολίτης*, it would be careless of him to use it in the case of Paul's Tarsian citizenship. If the inconsistency is so obvious, why is it not obvious to Luke's readers? Why does Luke want to include this status of Paul as a Tarsian citizen in the narrative of Acts? Perhaps Luke has in his mind a literary mechanism within the narrative pattern of a trial. Tarsian citizenship plays an important role in the narrative because it does facilitate Paul's freedom of speech in public, and it identifies his social status to some extent according to Lentz.<sup>141</sup> When Paul is mistaken for an Egyptian terrorist, he is freed from a sort of social slur by disclosing his Tarsian citizenship. At this juncture, Paul is protected by the tribune who is a representative of the Roman empire. Paul's Tarsian citizenship, then, fulfils a narrative function, showing him to be a Tarsian citizen as opposed to an Egyptian terrorist. After this event, Paul as a Tarsian citizen does not appear in the narratives of Acts. This omission seems to have no effect on the other narrative incidents. We shall discuss this point more fully in the narrative analysis in ch. 8 section 8.2.

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<sup>139</sup> P.R. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor*, SNTSMS 69, Cambridge: CUP, 1991, 167.

<sup>140</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 83.

<sup>141</sup> J.C. Lentz, *Luke's Portrait of Paul*, Cambridge: CUP, 1993; The overall tone of Lentz's opinion is to disclose Paul's high status and to advertise Christianity to the Gentiles. cf. Ch. 2. section 2.2.2. above.



### 3.5. Paul's use of his Roman citizenship in Acts

Paul's Roman citizenship (16:37-38; 22:25-29; 23:27; 25:8-12,21; 26:32; 27:24; 28:19) plays a more important role than the Tarsian citizenship in Acts. Paul is delivered from several dangerous circumstances by employing his Roman citizenship including his appeal to Caesar for a legal hearing which was the prerogative of anyone who is a Roman citizen ( *Ῥωμαῖος*).<sup>142</sup> Luke reports that Paul appeals to Caesar by using his Roman citizenship on two occasions in Acts 16:37-8 and 22:25-9. Several questions are raised: what was the role of the provincial governor in the process? Could Roman citizenship be bought in Paul's time? How did Roman citizens prove their citizenship? What were the rights of Roman citizens? What was the appeal procedure? Why did Paul and Silas disclose their Roman citizenship so late?<sup>143</sup>

#### 3.5.1. What was the role of the provincial governor?

Here, an appropriate starting point for such an inquiry is an examination of the role of the first-century provincial governor in criminal jurisdiction. Normally, the Roman provinces are governed either by imperial legates (generals of senatorial rank) or proconsuls (former consuls or praetors).<sup>144</sup> For example, Syria is governed by the legate Quirinius from A.D. 6-11 (cf. Lk. 2:2), and Achaia is ruled by the proconsul Gallio ca. A.D. 51 (Acts 18:12). Judea, however, is one of several relatively small provinces governed by a procurator. In the New Testament, the procurator is called simply 'governor' (*ἡγεμών*), of which Pontius Pilate (Matt. 27), Felix (Acts 23f.), and Festus (Acts 25f.) are examples. In general, the authority of the procurator in Judea is equal to that of the proconsul or legate in his province.<sup>145</sup> Each holds the *imperium* (authority, power) in his district.

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<sup>142</sup> See on the rights of Roman citizen in Chapter 3 § 3.5.3

<sup>143</sup> cf. F.F. Bruce (1990) 366. Here Bruce suggests two, 1) in the general excitement it might have been useless to do so. 2) if he did so his appeal was ignored.

<sup>144</sup> *OCD* 881-2.

<sup>145</sup> Ulpian, *Digest*, 1.17.1.

This *imperium* is final by virtue of the fact that it is given to the provincial governor directly by the emperor. Therefore, each provincial governor, whether proconsul, legate, or procurator, has the total power of administration, jurisdiction, defence, and maintenance of public order in his province.<sup>146</sup> However, as Sherwin-White writes, "A problem arises in considering the role of the governor in dealing with those who were not provincial subjects. How were the Roman citizens who lived or traveled in other provinces controlled?"<sup>147</sup> This power was necessary for proper military discipline. What was the extent of his authority over civilian Roman citizens? In such an applicable case, what were Paul's rights? We will discuss this point in more detail in section 3.5.4.

### 3.5.2. Could Roman citizenship be bought?

Roman citizenship was still valuable at the time of Acts, unlike the period 150 years later when all provincials were citizens.<sup>148</sup> The claims of Paul and the tribune Lysias in Acts 22 are important for understanding Paul's trial narratives in Acts. Paul claims that he became a citizen at birth (Acts 22:28), whilst Lysias the tribune in 22:28 claims to have bought his citizenship 'for a great price' (*πολλοῦ κεφαλαίου*). That certain kinds of Roman citizenship could be bought at this time is illustrated by Dio Cassius, when he speaks of the emperor Claudius in the following manner:

A great many other persons unworthy of the citizenship were deprived of it, whereas he granted it to others quite indiscriminately, sometimes to individuals and sometimes to whole groups. For inasmuch as Romans had the advantage over foreigners in practically all respects, many sought the franchise by personal application to the emperor, and many bought it from Messalina and the imperial freedmen. For this reason, though the privilege was at first only sold for large sums, it later become so cheapened by the facility by which it could be obtained that it came to be a common saying, that a man could become a citizen by giving the right person some bits of broken glass.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963, 1-23.

<sup>147</sup> cf. A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 8-10.

<sup>148</sup> *OCD* 244. "During the time of Paul, the number of citizens was significant. However, it was by no means what it was to become in A.D. 212 when the *Constitutio Antoniniana* made virtually all provincials citizens. At that time the citizenship had lost almost all of its political importance."

<sup>149</sup> Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 60.17.5.



Although this statement is an obvious exaggeration, it nonetheless confirms Lysias' statement concerning the purchase of citizenship. Citizenship, however, was not technically for sale, the money was used to bribe<sup>150</sup> the official who could arrange to have a man's name put on the list of prospective citizens for approval by the emperor. Evidence of this occurs when Nero was enraged to find out that one of his senators was selling "the right to official promotion."<sup>151</sup> This would suggest that Luke intends to contrast the status between Paul and the tribune using a literary mechanism. While Paul proclaims his citizenship originated from his parents, instead the tribune says that his citizenship has been bought.<sup>152</sup> The portrait of the Roman tribune shows his low birth, e.g. the Lukan Paul is a very important person, whilst on the contrary, the tribune who represents the Roman empire is shown to be an inferior person. It will be clear that the image of the tribune makes it possible for us to read the narratives of Acts according to an anti-Roman perspective. We will discuss this point in more detail in chapter 8.

### 3.5.3. How did Roman citizens prove their citizenship?

Luke underlines the fact that Paul is a Roman citizen and insists on the appreciation of his rights by the Roman authorities. If indeed Paul produced any proof of it, how did he prove his Roman citizenship? While no conclusive answer can be given, two representative pieces of evidence are valuable in the understanding of the disclosure of Paul's Roman citizenship. First, it notes that a false claim to Roman citizenship is punishable by death, as suggested by Suetonius:

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<sup>150</sup> cf. H.J. Cadbury (1955, 79) observes that "In the case of a military career, if that was the ambition of Claudius Lysias, the advantages of Roman citizenship can easily be understood and the motives which led him to pay a large sum for it. For a non-citizen to buy citizenship probably involved bribery and was as illegal as in modern times; but it was no less possible. One wonders if Lysias would openly boast of having done so."; cf. W. Stegemann (1987, 205-206)

<sup>151</sup> Tacitus, *Annals*, 14.50,1.

<sup>152</sup> cf. W. Stegemann (1987, 205) notes that the exaggeration of Luke's report suggests its absolute improbability.

It now became illegal for foreigners to adopt the names of Roman families, and any who usurped the rights of Roman citizens were executed on the slopes of the Esquiline Hill.<sup>153</sup>

Secondly, it is possible that Paul had with him a "copy of his birth registration", of the kind traveling citizens are known to have carried.<sup>154</sup> However it may be questioned whether Paul would necessarily have had one, since the laws demanding birth registration seem to have arisen only after A.D. 4 (*lex Aelia Sentia*) or A.D. 9 (*lex Papia Poppaea*).<sup>155</sup> As F.F. Bruce also points out, our decision confronts a blind alley:

If Paul was born even a year or two before the earlier of these enactments, would he necessarily have been registered in this way? The fact that such questions can be asked but not answered emphasizes how limited our knowledge is.<sup>156</sup>

Indeed, Paul's case is still in issue. In any case, Paul's Roman citizenship shows his own pride to the authorities and the reader when it appears in the Acts narratives.

#### 3.5.4. What exactly were the rights of the Roman citizens in such a context?

Several Roman laws make it possible for certain Roman citizens to proclaim their citizenship using the law. The most important laws among the statutes are the *Lex Valeria* established in 300 B.C.E. and the *Lex Porcia* established in 195 B.C.E.

As Livy states below:

In the same year Marcus Valerius the consul proposed a law of appeal with stricter sanctions. This was the third time since the expulsion of the kings that such a law had been introduced, by the same family in every instance. The reason for renewing it more than once was, I think, simply this, that the wealth of a few carried more power than the liberty of the plebs. Yet the Porcian law alone seems to have been passed to protect the persons of the citizens, imposing, as it

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<sup>153</sup> Suetonius, *Claudius*, 5.25; cf. Epictetus, *Discourses*, 3.24.41.

<sup>154</sup> F. Schulz, 'Roman Registers of Births and Birth Certificates', *JRS* 32 (1942) 78-91, 33 (1943) 55ff.; cf. A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 146-7. It is very likely that Paul probably carried an "identity card" which would have been either a wooden or metal diptych with a copy of his birth registration.; F.F. Bruce (1977) 39-40; H.W. Tajra (1989) 83; B. Rapske (1994) 131; M. Reasoner, 'Citizenship, Roman and Heavenly', in G.F Hawthorne/R.P. Martin (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, Leicester: IVP, 1993, 140; *Contra*, Gardner, Jane F. 'Proofs of Status in the Roman World,' *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 33 (1986) 1-14. Here Gardner (p. 14) claims that "From an early stage in the existence of Rome, the legal validity of a transaction clearly rested on the actual physical utterance of words and performance of actions, in the presence of witnesses, and these witnesses' direct verbal testimony was the strongest proof.... Despite its manifest inconveniences and inadequacies this principle was maintained in essence, thanks to Roman conservatism, right through the history of classical law."

<sup>155</sup> F.F. Bruce (1977) 40.

<sup>156</sup> F.F. Bruce (1977) 40.



did, a heavy penalty if anyone should scourge or put to death a Roman citizen. The Valerian law, having forbidden that he who appealed should be scourged with rods or beheaded, merely provided that if anyone should disregard these injunctions it should be deemed a wicked act.<sup>157</sup>

One of the most significant way during the time of Paul of further guaranteeing the rights of citizens was the *Lex Iulia de vi publica*. Paulus reports of the *Lex Iulia* :

Anyone invested with authority who puts to death or orders to be put to death, tortures, scourges, condemns, or directs a Roman citizen who first appealed to the people, and now has appealed to the emperor to be placed in chains, shall be condemned under the *Lex Julia* relating to public violence. The punishment of this crime is death, where the parties are of inferior station; deportation to an island, where they are of superior rank.<sup>158</sup>

Ulpian parallels this statement concerning the *Lex Iulia* as follows:

This also applies to deputies and orators, and their attendants, where anyone is proved to have beaten them, or caused them any injury.<sup>159</sup>

According to the historical evidence cited above, Paul's legal position is quite obvious in Acts. Paul, as a Roman citizen, could not be beaten, scourged, or put to death by the provincial officials. On this point, it is natural that the tribune Lysias became afraid upon learning that Paul was a Roman citizen, "because he had had him chained" (Acts 22:29).<sup>160</sup> Paul in Acts may have found it necessary to claim one of these laws in accordance with the legal order. Even though Paul's proclamation saves him from the illegal actions of Roman soldiers, from now on Paul also has to remain as a waiting prisoner even till Rome.

### 3.5.5. What was the appeals procedure?

It is suggested above that protection against the scourge is based on the further right of the Romans to appeal so that their case is referred to the emperor. That is, a Roman citizen has the right to appeal from the jurisdiction of a lower court to that of the emperor of Rome. Here Paul's case gives us a clear example, as he says in Acts 25:10-1:

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<sup>157</sup> Livy, 10.9.4-5.

<sup>158</sup> *Sententiae*, 5.26.1.

<sup>159</sup> *Digest*, 48.6.7.

<sup>160</sup> However, it should be mentioned that if Paul had not made this claim, the tribune did not need to be frightened of the centurion's report that "Paul is a Roman citizen" (22:26). For their deeds are not illegal in themselves.

I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to be tried; to the Jews I have done no wrong, as you know very well. If then I am a wrongdoer, and have committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape death; but if there is nothing in their charges against me, no one can give me up to them. I appeal to Caesar (*Καίσαρα ἐπικαλοῦμαι*).

There is no consensus of opinion among scholars as to the details of the appeals procedure. On the one hand, A.H.M. Jones<sup>161</sup> and A.N. Sherwin-White<sup>162</sup> claim that there is a difference between *provocatio* and *appellatio*. They agree that *provocatio* was the earlier system employed in Paul's trial narratives of Acts. The appeal of *provocatio* can be mentioned before the trial as in Lukan Paul's case. Jones and Sherwin-White think that *appellatio* is a system of the later Empire in which appeal can be made after the sentence of the court. It is most likely that *appellatio* arose as a necessity as the number of Roman citizens grew. P. Garnsey,<sup>163</sup> on the other hand, argues that there was only one basic appeals process in the Empire.<sup>164</sup> Garnsey goes so far as to state that Paul's case was not an example of an appeal at all, but that it was rather an example of *reiectio iudicii*, the rejection of a court biased against him. However, A.W. Lintott observes that Paul's case, although prompted by the problem of the biased court, was clearly an example of the appeals process.<sup>165</sup> The procedure described in Acts is a real procedure attested in other documents of the time.<sup>166</sup> Regardless of any criticisms on the Lukan Paul's appeal in Acts, it is enough to show that Acts includes an invaluable source on the system of appeal in a Roman court.

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<sup>161</sup> A.H.M. Jones, 'I appeal unto Caesar', *Studies in Roman Government and Law*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1960, 53ff.

<sup>162</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 57-70; W.W. Gasque (*A History of the Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975, 277) positively evaluates Sherwin-White's book as the work of a historian who attempts to come to grips with the historical phenomena of the New Testament.

<sup>163</sup> P. Garnsey, 'The *lex Iulia* and Appeal under the Empire', *JRS* 56 (1966) 167-189.

<sup>164</sup> *Provocatio* and *appellatio* can be interchangeably used in a Roman court.

<sup>165</sup> A.W. Lintott, 'Provocatio. From the struggle of the Orders to the Principate', *ANRW* I.2. 264-5.

<sup>166</sup> cf. Dio Cassius, *Hist.* 51.19; Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96.



### 3.6. Conclusion

Until now, we have extensively surveyed Paul's origins from Luke's reports and Paul's Epistles. Paul's dual citizenship causes several problems between Acts and the Epistles. The most significant point is that Paul appears as a Tarsian citizen (*πολίτης*) and especially a Roman citizen (*Ῥωμαῖος*) in Acts, but the Epistles never mention either citizenship. On this point, we have firstly discussed Paul's portrait in the Epistles. According to the Epistles 2Cor. 11:22, Phil. 3:5-6, and Rom. 11:1, Paul comes to light as a practising Jew whose titles are *Ἑβραῖος*, *Ἰσραηλίτης*, *σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ*, *φυλῆς Βενιαμίν*, *Φαρισαῖος* and "who is circumcised on the eighth day" (*περιτομῆ ὀκταήμερος*). Gal. 1:14 also mentions that Paul is "far more zealous for the traditions of his ancestors." That is, they show that Paul's origins are deeply rooted in Judaism. Then, it is generally asked: Why do the Epistles not mention Paul's dual citizenship? For this, the simplest answer is that Paul does not possess the status of citizenship, i.e. Acts is wrong in reporting it. But other explanations have been suggested for Paul's failure to mention his citizenship status. Firstly, its disclosure is not relevant in the context of Paul or for his readers. Secondly, Paul is not interested in human status. This impasse unfortunately makes it impossible to resolve this question according to the evidence in the text.

As in Paul's letters, Acts reports Paul's origins. Paul in Acts is called a "Pharisee" (*Φαρισαῖος*) and "son of Pharisees" (*υἱὸς Φαρισαίων*) in Acts (23:6, 26:5). This claim has no conflict with the Epistles, because Paul himself claims to have been circumcised on the eighth day which implies his parents are observant. The phrase "son of Pharisee" becomes not a designation for "family" but "school allegiance," "disciple." However, the "son of Pharisee" does create problems for the internal consistency of the Lukan narrative. a) What is the likelihood of a Pharisaic family living in Tarsus? b) Would such a family have acquired Tarsian citizenship (*πολίτης*)? Acts reports a portrait of "Paulos" which is shown as a Roman version of the Jewish name "Saul" (13:9). Acts 22:2 describes Paul as a practising Jew who

uses the "Hebrew language" (*Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ*). Furthermore, Paul is said to have trained under Gamaliel (22:3), a fact which is not inconsistent with the Epistles.

In order to establish the probability of Tarsian or Roman citizenship, there needs to be convincing evidence of Pharisees in the Diaspora. On the other hand, *Πολίτης* does not necessarily mean full Greek citizenship in a technical sense as suggested by Tajra.<sup>167</sup> With this meaning in mind, does the issue of dual Tarsian and Roman citizenship produce any inconsistencies or conflicts between Acts and the epistles? Also, how is Paul's Jewish family of Tarsus given Roman citizenship? The most likely possibility is that one of Paul's ancestors was granted citizenship by one of the Roman leaders. However, as Sherwin-White points out, to speculate how and when Paul's family acquired citizenship is a fruitless task.<sup>168</sup> In effect, it is very likely that the question of Paul's citizenship meets an impasse.

As argued above, historical questions on Paul's dual citizenship in Acts only suggest that Paul's trial narratives are comparable with other Roman trial documents as to how citizens are treated. Therefore, as discussed in chapter 2, several Acts scholars who intend to escape from this impasse have observed the narrative or literary function of Paul's dual citizenship, especially his Roman citizenship, in the trial narratives. That is, the move from historical queries to literary queries represents a significant paradigm shift in the study of Paul's dual citizenship, and it allows further issues to arise in a less obscure manner. Nevertheless, one cannot conclude that Paul could not be a Tarsian citizen or a Roman citizen. In the next chapters, we shall discuss the issue of citizenship with regard to the *Acta Alexandrinorum* which are ancient documents containing citizenship motifs among several other motifs for comparison with Acts narratives. This will provide a starting point in analysing the function of Paul's citizenship in the narratives of Acts.

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<sup>167</sup> Tajra (1989) 80.

<sup>168</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 151-2.



## Chapter 4

### Historico-political analysis on the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

This chapter aims to give an introduction to the historical and political situation of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* which contain many points for comparison with the narratives of Acts. A more detailed analysis will follow in chapters 5 and 6. The *Acta Alexandrinorum* include numerous points that we may be able to discuss regarding the citizenship problem and the political relationship between Greeks and Jews in Alexandria. As has been argued, Paul's Roman citizenship and sometimes Tarsian citizenship plays a principal role in the narratives of Acts. In relation to Paul's Tarsian citizenship, we may compare the theme of the Alexandrian patriots' citizenship as found in the narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The Alexandrian patriots' citizenship performs several kinds of function in these texts (cf. Ch. 6 below). By a comparison between the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and the narratives of Acts, it may be possible to make sense of some of the functions of Paul's citizenship in the narratives of Acts.

From a literary point of view, how can the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and Acts be compared? There are, of course, significant differences between the two texts which must be borne in mind when pursuing a literary comparison. In the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, citizenship is a patriotic motif linked with nationalistic propaganda. In Acts, by contrast, the Roman citizenship is linked with legal procedures in the narrative. However, in both cases citizenship is an important catalyst in the development of the plot. We may also note points of comparison regarding the role of the Jews in both sets of narratives. The *Acta Alexandrinorum* report the conflicts between the Alexandrian Greeks and the Romans. There Jews only play the role of "trouble-makers"<sup>1</sup> between the Alexandrian Greeks and the Romans. In a similar manner, Acts reports that Jews also take the role of "trouble-makers" in that Jews are always located in the centre of conflict between the Lukan Paul and Roman officials. On this point, we can find some

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<sup>1</sup> cf. On Jewish figure as the agents of violence. Seland suggests Stephen and Paul as victims of Jewish Establishment Violence. See, T. Seland, *Establishment Violence in Philo & Luke: A Study of Non-Conformity to the Torah and Jewish Vigilante Reactions*, Leiden: Brill, 1995.

similarities which can be compared with the two documents. The narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* suggest that Alexandrian Greek citizenship functions similarly in the case claimed by Paul's dual citizenship.

By analysing the narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, we will initially explore the historico-political situations which made it possible for the *Acta Alexandrinorum* to be produced. The historical study of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* will contribute to our understanding of the main issues relating to critical conflicts between Greeks, Romans, and Jews in Alexandria, especially regarding the political alignment or religious alignment of the narratives of Acts including anti-Semitism and anti-Romanism.<sup>2</sup> A comparison of the ideologies of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* with the narratives of Acts indicates new avenues for the clarification of the purpose of Acts. Before the discussion of these ideologies within the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, it will be of benefit to analyse the historico-political situation which brought about its creation in early Roman Egypt.

#### 4.1. What are the *Acta Alexandrinorum*?

The *Acta Alexandrinorum* which reflect the opposition of the Greek nobility of Alexandria to the Romans are a series of papyrus fragments based for the most part on what purports to be court-records investigated in the presence of the Roman emperors.<sup>3</sup> The *Acta Alexandrinorum* are composed of about twelve fragments of Alexandrian patriotic literature in Greek describing the appearance of Alexandrian Greek nationalistic

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<sup>2</sup> cf. see Chapter 6 § 6.3.

<sup>3</sup> On the *Acta*: H.A. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs: Acta Alexandrinorum*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954; *idem*, 'Christian and Political Martyrs in the Early Roman Empire: a Reconsideration', in D.M. Pippidi (ed.), *Assimilation et Résistance à la Culture Gréco-Romaine Dans Le Monde Ancien*, Paris: Société d'Édition Les Belles Lettres, 1976, 333-42; V.A. Tcherikover/A. Fuks, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1957, Vol. II; K. Berger, 'Hellenistische Gattungen im Neuen Testament', *ANRW* II.25.2. (1984) 1034-1380, esp. 1248-56; J.G. Gager, 'Judaism as seen by outsiders', in R.A. Kraft and G.W.E. Nickelburg (eds.), *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986, 99-116; *idem*, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity*, New York and Oxford: OUP, 1983, 47-54; Ronconi, A. 'Exitus illustrium virorum,' in *RAC*, Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1966, vol. VI, 1264-66; E.M. Smallwood, 'Acts of the Pagan (or Heathen) Martyrs', in N.G.L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard (2nd edn., eds.), *OCD*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970, 7; L.L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, London: SCM Press, 1994, 399-401.



leaders, usually just before their execution as patriotic martyrs.<sup>4</sup> For the Alexandrian Greeks in Egypt, their political leaders were idealized as victims in an attempt to preserve Greek culture, law, and citizen's rights against the barbarism of Roman domination. On this point, E.G. Turner outlines on the *Acta Alexandrinorum*:

The favourite form is that of a trial scene or an embassy, whose participants speak in the clipped syntax of official minutes; prominent Alexandrians cock a snook at their Roman masters, pour scorn on their lack of *εὐγένεια*, allege domination by sinister Jewish interests, and before being led out to death recall the tradition of Alexandria's line of martyrs.<sup>5</sup>

Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.E) conquered Palestine in 332. After that, he moved on to take Egypt from the Persians. In 332/331 BCE, he founded the city of Alexandria near the mouth of the Nile. It was a city destined to become a new commercial and cultural centre for the eastern Mediterranean. E.M. Smallwood explains the historical background of the city:

Alexandria was an unique city, founded on Egyptian soil as the capital of a conquering foreign dynasty and wholly Greek in character and municipal organization. Greeks naturally formed the bulk of the enfranchised citizen body, and very few of the depressed native Egyptians were admitted to citizen rights.<sup>6</sup>

The political situation was thus predisposed from the start to cause serious conflicts between the Alexandrian Greek citizens and other peoples, especially the Jews. These are the conflicts which are critically narrated in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

#### 4.2. Jews in Alexandria during the Roman period

According to Genesis and Exodus, the biblical stories of the patriarches and Moses relate the earliest contacts between the Israelites and the Egyptians. Jeremiah 41:16-44:30 also mentions that some Israelites fled to Egypt during the time of the Exile in 587 BCE. After the Persian conquest of Babylon and Persia's annexation of Egypt in

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<sup>4</sup> cf. A.R.C. Leaney, *The Jewish and Christian World: 200 BC to AD 200*, Cambridge: CUP, 1984, 210; cf. M. Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul*, London: SCM, 1991, 108. Hengel mentions that the *Acta* provide eloquent testimony to the virulent, anti-Roman and at the same time anti-Jewish national pride of the Greek upper classes.

<sup>5</sup> E. G. Turner, *Acta Alexandrinorum*, CR 5 (1955) 304.

<sup>6</sup> E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule From Pompey to Diocletian: A Study in political relations*, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, Leiden: Brill, 1981, 224-5; cf. R. Williamson, *Jews in the Hellenistic World: Philo*, Cambridge: CUP, 1989, 6.

525 BCE, more Jews settled there, probably including some from Babylonia and Mesopotamia.<sup>7</sup> Josephus claims that from the time of the founding of Alexandria, a Jewish community was present in that Greek city.<sup>8</sup> As E.M. Smallwood states, "Inscriptions and papyri show that Jewish settlements were to be found throughout the whole length of the country during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods."<sup>9</sup> Even though Philo may have overestimated the Jewish population of Alexandria when he spoke of "the many myriads of the Alexandrian Jews,"<sup>10</sup> we can take his statement as evidence that the size of the Jewish community was impressive.

Gager points out the appearance of Jewish people in Ptolemaic Egypt in the following manner:

Ptolemaic Egypt is strikingly similar to Hellenistic Palestine and Syria with regard to the reception of Judaism. Jewish settlers and mercenaries figured prominently in the affairs of the early Ptolemies, particularly during the reign of Ptolemy Philometer (181-145 B.C.E.). From that time on, the dangers of this involvement became increasingly apparent in the internal dynastic struggles of the Ptolemies and later still with the intervention of Rome, for by making friends with one side, the Jewish mercenaries automatically made enemies with the other. In particular, the Greek population seems to have resented the role played by Jewish military advisers. This resentment exploded into action when the Jews of Alexandria later placed their full weight behind the Romans.<sup>11</sup>

However, as V.A. Tcherikover points out, "during the whole Hellenistic period, anti-Semitism does not pass beyond the limits of the purely literary".<sup>12</sup> Briefly, the anti-Semitism of this time is a minor theme. V.A. Tcherikover, therefore, stresses the divisions in the Alexandrian Jewish community between the educated, cultured Jews who favoured a synthesis between Hellenism and Judaism, and the low strata of the population whose ideology, more open to influences from Palestine, was dedicated to messianism and a fighting spirit.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> cf. A.R.C. Leane (1984) 135-140; cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981) 220-1.

<sup>8</sup> *c. Ap.* ii.3-6; cf. *BJ* ii.18.7. Josephus summarizes the historical position at Alexandria.

<sup>9</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 222.

<sup>10</sup> *Leg. Gaj.* 350; *Flacc.* 43; cf. Josephus, *Ant* xii.11.

<sup>11</sup> J.G. Gager (1986) 107-8.

<sup>12</sup> V.A. Tcherikover, *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1957, Vol. I, 25; cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981) 224.

<sup>13</sup> cf. V.A. Tcherikover, 'The Decline of the Jewish Diaspora in Egypt in the Rome Period', *JJS* 14 (1963) 22-7.



Nevertheless, Gager suggests reasons for a change in the situation in the 30s of the first century CE.

The much-debated texts attributed by Josephus to Manetho,<sup>14</sup> an Egyptian priest of high standing in early Ptolemaic Egypt (*circa* 300 B.C.E.), are relevant here. Whether they are authentic or fabrications, their hostile versions of the Jewish exodus from Egypt under Moses demonstrate the potential for an anti-Semitism whose form and roots are religious as well as political. Ironically, a second important factor in the rise of anti-Semitism during the 30s and 40s of the first century was the privileged position of the Jews in Ptolemaic Egypt.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore E.M. Smallwood proposes that "the favour which the Jews enjoyed under the Ptolemies may have accounted for or contributed to the rise of later anti-Semitism."<sup>16</sup> In brief, the violent anti-Semitism that blazes up in early Roman Egypt may be seen largely as the Greek and Egyptian response to the Jews' firm alliance with the Roman oppressor.

J. Grafton Milne, therefore, points out an element which should not be dismissed:

The Jews had long been established there and throughout Egypt, and under the general toleration of the Ptolemies had got on well enough with both Egyptians and Greeks. But Augustus chose, for some reason, to favour local powers of self-government by a senate, while he confirmed the Jews in all privileges they had enjoyed. This naturally enough, exasperated the Greeks against the Jews. ... References to some of these attacks are to be found in contemporary historians: but a much more picturesque, though fragmentary, account has been obtained from papyri which contain parts of what have been termed the Acts of the Alexandrian Martyrs.<sup>17</sup>

S. Sandmel's summary is particularly valuable in enabling us to understand the political situations in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. S. Sandmel explains the contemporary political situation:

The Roman historians stress that Egypt in general and Alexandria in particular were hotbeds of both resentment against Rome and rebelliousness. That Egypt was ruled by a prefect subject not to the Roman Senate but to the Emperor himself reflects the Roman anxiety<sup>18</sup> about the stability of the Roman rule there.<sup>19</sup> Culturally,

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<sup>14</sup> Manetho wrote the history of Egypt in Greek, which survives on in quotations of Josephus particularly in *c. Ap.* 1.14-15, 26-31. Josephus reports two interesting narratives from Manetho: *the first* is about the Hyksos rulers related to the Joseph stories in OT and *a narrative* about Osarsiph who is Moses called by Manetho. *the second*

<sup>15</sup> J.G. Gager (1986) 108.

<sup>16</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 224.

<sup>17</sup> J. Grafton Milne, 'Egyptian Nationalism Under Greek and Roman Rule', *JEA* 14 (1928) 230-1.

<sup>18</sup> It would be always understood that this anxiety had something to do with the security of the Roman corn-supply from Egypt. cf. S.A. Cook/F.E. Adcock/M.P. Charlesworth (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. X, Cambridge: CUP, 1952, 398 "The surplus of corn was vast, far greater even than that which a past-master of economic policy, Ptolemy Philadelphus, had squeezed from the land. Twenty million modii went year to Rome, and this sufficed to supply the needs of the city for a space of four months."



Alexandria and its eminence challenged the supremacy of Rome. Politically, there existed some adversary presumptions between Alexandria and Rome. In the areas in which Rome was suspicious of Alexandria, the Jews of Alexandria were an additional factor of Roman disquietude. In other words, Rome had its problems with Alexandria. The Jews there constituted a complication to those problems.<sup>20</sup>

Therefore, the Roman empire with the motivation to keep peace might secure the Jews' rights which could be regarded as their status as citizens and ensure a strong Jewish ethnic community with its own distinctive customs and body of officials. Thus, it is most likely that Rome would deal with the Jews for the purpose of political manipulation in Alexandria.

#### 4.3. The background of tensions expressed in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

The *Acta Alexandrinorum* preserve the backdrop of the civic struggle between the Jews and the Alexandrian Greeks in Egypt for civic privileges and social and political status in the first century of Roman rule. The Jews had been granted political rights in Alexandria either when the city was founded in 331 B.C.<sup>21</sup> or when Ptolemy I ruled.<sup>22</sup> As regards their relationship with the Romans, the Jews had experienced a much more friendly relationship than the Greeks of that city had. With the coming of Roman rule the Greeks resented not only the diminution in importance of their city but also the Jews' desertion of "the national dynasty on the arrival of the Romans and reward in the confirmation of their privileges and in the special favour of the Emperors."<sup>23</sup> That is to say, the Alexandrian Greeks were most conscious of the politically close relations between the Jews and the Empire. It is clear that the suspicion regarding their connection would become an important catalyst for the creation of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

In summary, obviously, there were political tensions concerning the protection of civic rights between the Greeks and the Jews in Alexandria as outlined in 4.2.

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<sup>19</sup> cf. Josephus (*BJ.* ii.383, 386) reports that "Egypt supplied one third of Rome's grain.; P.A. Brunt, 'The Administrators of Roman Egypt', *JRS* 65 (1975) 124. "Egypt was probably the most populous province in the empire and contributed more than any other to the revenues, partly in grain that provided much of Rome's essential food."

<sup>20</sup> S. Sandmel, *Philo of Alexandria: an Introduction*, Oxford: OUP, 1979, 6.

<sup>21</sup> *BJ.* ii.487-8; *c.Ap.* ii.35.

<sup>22</sup> *Ant* xii.8.

<sup>23</sup> cf. H.I. Bell, *Jews and Christians in Egypt*, London: OUP, 1924, 11.



Apparently Greek resentment was directed towards both the Romans and the Jews and their political intrigues.<sup>24</sup> However, the ultimate target of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is the Roman emperors who offer political favour to Jews. This resentment is resolutely expressed in all fragments contained in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. R. MacMullen, therefore, points out the features of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*: "In general, the themes that recur are three, and fit what else is known of the Greek population in the city: namely, their exclusive pride, anti-Semitism, and restiveness under Roman rule."<sup>25</sup> That is to say, as H.I. Bell points out, "Alexandria then was a city acquainted with communal tension."<sup>26</sup> P. Garnsey and R. Saller agree with Bell that "Alexandria had a very bad record for civil disturbance involving the Jewish and Greek populations."<sup>27</sup> It is apparent that this kind of political and economic conflict between the Alexandrian Greeks, the empire, and the Jews are the credible ingredients that constitute the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

It is significant that some scholars propose that economic and religious factors contributed to anti-Semitism which are preserved in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* according to R. Barraclough.<sup>28</sup> Needless to say, Judaism implies its strangeness and exclusiveness to the other people. As a result, as Smallwood points out, "Their exclusiveness bred the unpopularity out of which anti-Semitism was born."<sup>29</sup> It is,

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<sup>24</sup> cf. H.A. Musurillo (1954) 256. According to the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, anti-Semitism as a minor motif and the main motif anti-Romanism are two ideologies which ultimately aim to propagandize the Alexandrian Greeks complaint against the Romans.

<sup>25</sup> R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1966, 85; cf. R. Barraclough (1984, 424) means three features that "pride in their culture and Alexandrian citizenship, restlessness under Roman rule and their anti-Semitism."; J.G. Gager (1986, 108) points out that "one recurrent theme in the *Acta* is that the emperors are avid supporters of the Jews".

<sup>26</sup> H.I. Bell, 'Anti-Semitism in Alexandria', *JRS* 31 (1941) 4-5; cf. A.N. Sherwin-White, *Racial Prejudice In Imperial Rome: The J.H. Gray Lectures for 1966*, Cambridge: CUP, 1970, 62-101 (esp. 86-97); G.E.M. De Ste Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World from the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests*, London: Duckworth, 1983, 442.

<sup>27</sup> P. Garnsey/R. Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture*, London: Duckworth, 1987, 31.

<sup>28</sup> R. Barraclough, 'Philo's Politics. Roman Rule and Hellenistic Judaism', *ANRW* II. 21.1 (1984) 417-553, esp. 421-35.

<sup>29</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 123.



however, also relevant from an economic perspective that the Jews were particularly active in the area of commerce.<sup>30</sup> J. Grafton Milne describes it more realistically:

The first serious disturbance with which the Romans had to deal in Egypt, after the desultory fighting which went on for two or three years after the conquest, was headed by the Greeks of Alexandria, and the circumstances are significant. The immediate object of their attack was, not the Roman garrison, but the Jewish community, an important body of merchants, at Alexandria.<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, M.P.B. Zeev recently has drawn a new interpretation in terms of a "Marxist point of view"<sup>32</sup> especially concerning socio-economic factors. Zeev sites socio-economic factors as the reason for the pogrom which broke out between the Greeks and the Jews in Alexandria in 38 C.E. in this way.<sup>33</sup> Thus, one may reasonably assume that the Alexandrian Greeks' anti-Semitism is not only linked to the issue of religious relationships, but it is also deeply related to the economic and socio-political matters in Alexandria itself.

#### **4.4. The relationship between the Jews and the other people: The roots of anti-Semitism and anti-Romanism**

Perhaps, Alexandria is the location where anti-Semitism has its beginning. A large number of Jews are found there almost from the city's foundation by Alexander. Here we can ask what is anti-Semitism? Concerning the difficulty of defining anti-Semitism, J.L. Daniel writes:

The complexities of the Graeco-Roman world coupled with the nature of Judaism itself produce a situation which is difficult to analyze. Anti-Semitism certainly existed and was a phenomenon of some importance in the Hellenistic world as well as in the Roman Empire, but its extent, nature, causes, and results are controversial and have inspired an immense literature.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> cf. H.I. Bell (1924,11) points out that "Jews were employed as "tax farmers or farmers of the royal domains."

<sup>31</sup> J. Grafton Milne (1928) 230-1; cf. A. Segré, 'Antisemitism in Hellenistic Alexandria', *JSS* 8 (1946) 135.

<sup>32</sup> cf. P.A. Brunt, 'A Marxist view of Roman History', *JRS* 62 (1982) 158-63.

<sup>33</sup> M.P.B. Zeev, 'New Perspectives on the Jewish-Greek Hostilities in Alexandria during the Reign of Emperor Caligula', *JSJ* 21 (1990) 235. Here Zeev (p, 234) suggests that the Jews in Egypt were not all well-to-do; many were quite poor and were often constrained to seek loans under arduous terms and at times even food.; H.I. Bell, 'Anti-Semitism in Alexandria', *JRS* 31 (1941) 2. So Bell suggests that "it seems clear that the envy of Jewish wealth which undoubtedly existed was due to anti-semitism rather than anti-semitism to Jewish wealth."

<sup>34</sup> J.L. Daniel, 'Anti-Semitism in the Hellenistic-Roman Period', *JBL* 98 (1979) 45; cf. J.N. Sevenster, *The Roots of Pagan Anti-Semitism in the Ancient World*, *NovTSup* 41. Leiden: Brill, 1975; A.N. Sherwin-White, *Racial Prejudice in Imperial Rome*, Cambridge: CUP, 1970, 86-101; J.G.



As a result, it is quite difficult to fix the extent of anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, one may survey the literature on the anti-Semitic sentiment in Alexandria since this is especially essential for our analysis of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* as a foundational comparison with the narratives of Acts.

#### 4.4.1. Anti-Semitism in Alexandria of Egypt

Egypt was the most important centre for the Jewish Diaspora and the focus of its literary activity.<sup>35</sup> In particular, Alexandria in Egypt is the centre of a lengthy struggle between the Jews and the Greeks over civil rights. Ancient texts from the area show signs of anti-Jewish activity among the Egyptian population. Anti-Semitism in literature began as early as the reigns of the first Ptolemies. The first work in which the Jews were subjected to anti-Semitic hatred was not written by a Greek, but by a scholarly Egyptian priest, Manetho (3rd century B.C.E.) who wrote under the patronage of the Ptolemaic court. Possibly, the anti-Jewish bias of Manetho<sup>36</sup> "supplied a literary base for the many-storied structures of anti-Jewish literature."<sup>37</sup> M.H. Gelber recognizes the importance of Manetho as the first literary exponent of the anti-Jewish trend in early Roman Egypt:

Manetho's contribution to the history of anti-semitism, then, consists of two accounts related to the Jewish exodus from Egypt, which attribute opprobrious origins to the Jewish people by designating them outcasts, lepers, and idolaters. In the first account, Manetho identifies the Jewish nation with the ignoble, cruel, and barbaric Hyksos. In the second account, the Jews are identified as lepers and polluted persons who ravaged Egypt and desecrated its temples.<sup>38</sup>

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Gager, *Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1972; I. Heinemann, 'Antisemitismus', *PW Sup* 5 (1929) 3-43; L.L. Grabbe (1994) 409-41.

<sup>35</sup> cf. J.D. Newsome, *Greeks, Romans, Jews: Currents of Culture and Belief in the New Testament World*, Philadelphia: TPI, 1992, 65. Newsome points out that "it is doubtless not accidental that the richest collection of literature from the Hellenistic Diaspora, the Septuagint, should have close ties to the literary and cultural centre of Hellenistic life, Alexandria."

<sup>36</sup> We have to ask this, "is it possible that it might be true?" Because Manetho reports an "alternative historical tradition to Exodus".

<sup>37</sup> cf. A. Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, TSAJ 7, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1985, 327-32. The most ancient examples of anti-Jewish propaganda were composed by Manetho and cited by Josephus in *c. Ap.* (1. 26-31).

<sup>38</sup> M.H. Gelber, 'What is Literary Antisemitism?' *JSS* 47 (1985) 2; cf. J.L. Daniel (1979) 50.

On this point, in opposition to the notion of "chosen people", Manetho introduced the Jewish people as a contemptible rabble of aliens (Hyksos)<sup>39</sup> who join with the leprous, diseased and maimed among the Egyptians. In other words, "they are a foul bunch that the country must disgorge as it is religiously purified."<sup>40</sup>

At this juncture, we must observe the Jewish community in Alexandria. The controversial and unique status of the Jewish community in Alexandria during the Hellenistic period definitely figures in an important way in any understanding of Alexandrian anti-Semitism. Also, anti-Semitism existed more widely in both the Greek and Roman world.<sup>41</sup> A major cause of anti-Semitism was the nature of the social structure of those societies. Greek city-states were autonomous political institutions composed of citizens, foreign residents (metics), and slaves.<sup>42</sup> If this is so, what is the status of the Jews in Alexandria? Smallwood states on their civic status:

The Jews of Alexandria, like other foreign groups constituted as *politeumata* in Greek cities, were 'citizens' only in relation to each other as members of the *politeuma*. Their status vis-à-vis the Greeks was that of metics, aliens with the right of domicile. They occupied an intermediate position between the Greek citizens of Alexandria and the wholly unprivileged Egyptians, who lacked any sort of franchise.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, one might assume that although the Alexandrian Jews did not have full Greek citizenship, they could also enjoy their own privileges under the protection of Rome. However, as will be discussed later, the imposition of a poll-tax by Augustus may feasibly make a turning point for the Jewish problem in Alexandria.

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<sup>39</sup> cf. M. Whittaker, *Jews and Christians: Graeco-Roman Views*, Cambridge: CUP, 1984, 40. Hyksos means "foreign princes" in the Egyptian word.

<sup>40</sup> cf. *c. Ap.* 1.26.

<sup>41</sup> cf. Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1966, vol.I 194. Baron suggests that "almost every note in the cacophony of medieval and modern anti-semitism was sounded by the chorus of ancient writers."

<sup>42</sup> cf. N. Lewis, *Life in Egypt under Roman Rule*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983, 18-35.

<sup>43</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 230.



#### 4.4.2. Anti-Semitism and citizenship as a means of showing anti-Romanism in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

J.G. Gager<sup>44</sup> illustrates the political features, which are included in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, that reveal tensions whose beginnings go back to the first appearance of Roman power in Egypt. These tensions come to a head in the anti-Jewish riots of 38 C.E., during Flaccus's reign as prefect of Egypt. The long-standing causes of the riots were the fervent anti-Romanism of certain Alexandrian patriots and the efforts by some Jews to obtain full Alexandrian citizenship,<sup>45</sup> efforts prompted no doubt by Augustus's imposition of a poll tax, the *laographia*, on all non-citizens in Egypt. On this point, A.N. Sherwin-White describes the historical environment of the tensions between the Jews and the other people as follows:

In the Roman empire the pattern of exclusiveness is dominant. The Jews were disliked because of their refusal to cooperate in the Hellenistic civilization, while coexisting in large groups inside the Greek cities. But it is somewhat surprising that so much happens if there was no element of competition at all... Equally, by their very exclusiveness the resident Jewish aliens in Greek cities were not able to compete for political power and office at the expense of the Greeks. Their desire was to live a closed communal life under the authority of their local ethnarchs. But there is an obscure exception to this. It is well documented that at Alexandria the Jewish residents tried to infiltrate into the local Greek citizenship, to which they were not entitled.<sup>46</sup>

Scholars generally accept that there are various levels of citizenship in Alexandria in Philo's time.<sup>47</sup> Even though the citizens of a Greek city are largely drawn from the Greek community, a few Jews are also citizens, such as the Alabarchs, Alexander (Philo's brother) and Demetrius.<sup>48</sup> However, according to R. Barraclough,<sup>49</sup> these citizens were participants in the public religious observances and had entered the *ἐφηβία* which chiefly involves Greek athletic training. However, according to J.C. Lentz, "Jews possessed certain civic rights which allowed them to follow their own customs and not

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<sup>44</sup> cf. J.G. Gager (1986) 108.

<sup>45</sup> cf. R. Barraclough (1984) 424. He points out that Jewish claims to citizenship worsened the situation.; H.I. Bell (1941) 1. "A controversy has long raged over the question whether the Jews were citizens of Alexandria."

<sup>46</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White (1967) 93

<sup>47</sup> cf. R. Barraclough (1984) 424; H.A. Wolfson, 'Philo on Jewish citizenship in Alexandria', *JBL* 63 (1944) 165-8.

<sup>48</sup> cf. *Ant* xx.147.

<sup>49</sup> R. Barraclough (1984) 424.



participate in the celebrations of the city. But these particular charters of special civic status do not necessarily prove full citizenship."<sup>50</sup>

The following letters inform us of the meaning of citizens' status in Greek cities during Roman Egypt. Pliny in his correspondence with Trajan referred to this Alexandrian citizenship, and distinguished it from the Roman citizenship thus:

Thank you, Sir, for your promptitude in granting full citizenship to the freedwomen of my relative Anatonina, and Roman citizenship to my therapist Arpocras. But when I was supplying his age and property according to your instructions, I was reminded by people more experienced than I am that, since the man is an Egyptian, I ought not to have asked for Roman citizenship for him before he became a citizen of Alexandria. I have not realized that there was any distinction between Egyptians and other aliens, so I had thought it sufficient to inform you only that he had been given his freedom by an alien and that his patron had died some time ago. I shall not regret my ignorance if it means that I can be further indebted to you on behalf of the same person; I pray you therefore to make him a citizen of Alexandria too so that I may lawfully enjoy the favour you have conferred. To prevent any further delay to your generous interest I have given the details of his age and property to your freedman, as instructed.<sup>51</sup>

The letter is a reply to the request of citizenship from Trajan to Pliny:

Following the rule of my predecessors, I do not intend to grant Alexandrian citizenship except in special cases; but as you have already obtained Roman citizenship for your medical therapist Arpocras, I cannot refuse this further request. You must inform me of the man's district so that I can write you a letter for my friend Pompeius Planta, the prefect of Egypt.<sup>52</sup>

The exchange of these letters shows that the system of social status in Roman Egypt was a structure similar to a pyramid. N. Lewis suggests that "the tip is, of course, a small number of Roman citizens and below them is a larger segment of lesser privilege, the urban Greeks and - till their fall from favour - Jews."<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, the Jews in Alexandria would not have Alexandrian citizenship.<sup>54</sup>

The rest of the city's population is made up of ethnic groups and the native Egyptians. The ethnic groups are usually organized as *πολιτεύματα*, which is a form of self-government enjoyed by Jews and non-Jews alike in many Hellenistic cities. On the

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<sup>50</sup> J.C. Lentz, *Luke's Portrait of Paul*, Cambridge: CUP, 1993, 25; cf. T. Rajak, 'Was There a Roman Charter for the Jews?' *JRS* 74 (1984) 107-123.

<sup>51</sup> Pliny, *Ep.* 10. 6.

<sup>52</sup> Pliny, *Ep.* 10. 7.

<sup>53</sup> N. Lewis (1983) 18.

<sup>54</sup> cf. V.A. Tcherikover/A. Fuks (*CPJ*, Vol. I, 39) suggest that "it is obvious that belonging to the Jewish community of Alexandria did not involve belonging to the Greek *polis* of Alexandria, since a community and a *polis* were, considered juridically, two distinct political bodies."



basis of this structure they can be said to have citizen's rights.<sup>55</sup> A. Kasher, however, suggests the idea that the Jews in Alexandria want to be conceived as equal parts of two separate political bodies, the Jewish community (*πολιτεῦμα*) and the Greek *polis*.<sup>56</sup> On the struggle for equal rights between the Jews and the Alexandrian Greeks, he suggests that the Jews fought for the right of self-organization within the city of Alexandria, on an equal footing with the Greeks, this right being dependent on the central government rather than the *polis*. Kasher concludes that the Greeks attempted to prevent this from happening and sought to bring the authority of the *polis* to bear on all the inhabitants of Alexandria.<sup>57</sup> P.R. Trebilco criticizes the suggestion that this was the general constitutional form of organisation for Diaspora Jewish communities:

However, this generalisation cannot be justified. The communities where we have evidence for *politeumata* were long-established large communities. Small communities, or those with a shorter history, probably had a different organisational form.<sup>58</sup>

In any event, one may conclude that the term "Alexandrian"<sup>59</sup> as a reference to Jews did not denote Alexandrian citizenship.<sup>60</sup> As El-Abbadi points out, it is apparent that "the enigma of Alexandrian citizenship has remained so far an annoying question in the history of the Greek city in the Hellenistic and Roman periods."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> cf. R. Barraclough (1984) 425. Thus the claims to have citizen-rights (*πολιτεία*) may well be linked to the existence of these *πολιτεύματα* and not to the higher status of Alexandrian citizenship.; cf. P. R. Trebilco, *Jewish Communities in Asia Minor*, SNTSMS 69, Cambridge: CUP, 1991, 170.

<sup>56</sup> A. Kasher insists<sup>on</sup> this opinion throughout his whole book, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1985; The original version of this book was a doctoral dissertation of Tel-Aviv University in 1972; cf. A. Kasher, 'the Jewish Attitude to the Alexandrian Gymnasium in the First Century A.D.', *AJAH* 1 (1976) 148-61; L.L. Grabbe (1994) 405-409. Here Grabbe offers valuable discussion about the issue of the Jewish community.; cf. S. Applebaum, 'The legal status of the Jewish communities in the diaspora', and 'The Organization of the Jewish communities in the diaspora', in S. Safrai, M. Stern, D. Flusser and W.C. van Unnik (eds.), *Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum*, Section I: *The Jewish People in the First century*, Vol. I, Assen: Van Gorcum & Comp. B.V., 1974, 420-63, 464-503.

<sup>57</sup> See A. Kasher (1985) 356-7

<sup>58</sup> P. R. Trebilco (1991) 171.

<sup>59</sup> *Leg.* 194; cf. The controversy over the status of the Jews at Alexandria seems to be resolved by the letter of Claudius, which shows that Josephus' representation of them as full citizens of the Greek city is false or exaggerated. cf. *BJ* 7.3.3; A. Kasher (1985, 310-326), however, rejects effective agreement that the tone of the warning to the Jews according to the letter of Claudius was sharper in regard to the Jews than their adversaries.

<sup>60</sup> M.A.H. El-Abbadi, 'The Alexandrian Citizenship', *JEA* 48 (1962) 106-23.

<sup>61</sup> M.A.H. El-Abbadi (1962) 106; cf. R. Barraclough (1984) 426.

As we have seen in our discussion on the cause of anti-Jewish riots of 38 C.E., the Jews wanted to obtain the status of citizens in Alexandria. For, as V. Tcherikover and A. Fuks point out, "the only way of avoiding the unpleasant situation created by the introduction of the poll-tax, and of maintaining the high standards achieved during the Ptolemaic period, was to obtain Alexandrian citizenship."<sup>62</sup> It is very clear that the issue of citizenship became the main reason for the tension between the Greeks and the Jews at the time. On this point, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* originated at the time when the Greeks prevented Jews from obtaining civic rights as citizens with the result being that the Jews tried even harder to get it.

As will be seen later, most texts of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* intend to awaken and reinforce anti-Semitism which constantly threatens to erupt into action. Nevertheless, anti-Semitism is only a minor theme of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* with anti-Romanism being emphasised more strongly in the literature. In other words, the Alexandrian Greeks suspect that the Jews enjoy the favours of the Roman empire and desire citizens' status. Along the same lines, the Alexandrian Greeks believe that the Roman emperor is regarded as a protector of Jews in Alexandria.<sup>63</sup> Though the Jews in fact received some favour from Rome, at the same time Rome imposed a poll-tax on them which was charged only to non-citizens like Egyptians.

#### 4.5. Conclusion

Until now, we have discussed the social and historico-political background which shapes the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. It is worth noting Rome, with its policy of supporting the special status of Jews, created the political conflicts in which anti-Semitism in Alexandria emerged. Since the status of Jews was that of non-Greeks and non-Egyptians, it seems that their civic status must have been assured by a strong connection with the Roman state. On the Roman side, it is feasible that Augustus officially

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<sup>62</sup> *CPJ*, Vol. I. 61; cf. D. Delia, *Alexandrian Citizenship During the Roman Principate*, *American Classical Studies* 23, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991, 28. Delia agrees that citizens can claim full exemption from payment of the poll-tax.

<sup>63</sup> Also Acts includes similar parallels on Roman favours to Jews in 24:27, 25:9.



confirmed the rights and privileges of Jews in Alexandria. At the same time, as in the Ptolemaic period, the Roman empire needed to establish itself as a guardian of the Jews in Egypt. However, apparently, the Roman policy dealing with the Jews was very contradictory because Augustus imposed a poll-tax (*laographia*) on the non-citizens including a large number of Jews in Egypt. Seemingly, the privilege of full exemptions was granted only to the Alexandrian Greek citizens. As a result, the impact on the Alexandrian Jews was quite considerable because it meant that Jews were classified openly with the native Egyptians who were regarded as subhuman. Nonetheless, unexpected circumstances made it possible for Jews to obtain civil privileges like Alexandrian Greek citizenship. J.G. Gager, therefore, points out it in the following manner:

These two Roman actions, the one designed to protect Jewish privileges and the other to raise taxes among non-citizens, set the scene for the wave of anti-Semitism that was to engulf Roman Egypt beginning with the riots of 38-41 C.E. In other words, two basic sources of the violence were (1) the fervent anti-Romanism of a group described by Tcherikover as "hot-headed Alexandrian patriots,"<sup>64</sup> a group which could hardly confront Rome directly but which 'could make indirect attacks on Rome through her protégés the Jews, who were at hand and far more vulnerable' and (2) the efforts of numerous Jews to obtain citizenship by enrolling as students in the gymnasium, efforts which met with strenuous resistance from Alexandrians as well as Roman officials. The radical Alexandrians made use of Judaism's special status to attack the Jews and through them to express their resentment of Rome's presence in Egypt.<sup>65</sup>

In summary, it can be concluded that the Alexandrian Greeks took advantage of the Jews' special status granted by the Roman government because they wished to attack the Jews and ultimately aimed to express their displeasure to the Roman empire. On this same point, the ideology of anti-Semitism motivated by the Alexandrian Greeks would be purposefully employed as an agent of political propaganda for anti-Romanism with the Caesars being friends of the Jews. Needless to say, the main sources of this study, the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, are rooted in the soil of conflicts between the Alexandrian Greeks against Rome and the Jews.

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<sup>64</sup> CPJ. Vol. I. 48.

<sup>65</sup> J.G. Gager (1983) 44.

## Chapter 5

### Literary analysis of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

This chapter is a literary introduction to the *Acta Alexandrinorum*<sup>1</sup> which will briefly outline the literary characteristics of each text. The *Acta Alexandrinorum* emphasise the heroism of the Alexandrian Greek "martyrs" or "nationalists" and the "independence of spirit" revealed by some patriotic Alexandrian Greeks in their hostility towards Roman rule.<sup>2</sup> Our survey of the historico-political background of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* (Ch. 4) has shown that there was a political catalyst to bring about conflict between the Jews and the Alexandrian Greeks: the Alexandrian Greeks wanted to protect their civic status, but the Jews wanted to gain equal status with the Alexandrian Greeks. In this context, the issue of citizenship is very important naturally. Thus, this chapter will be the groundwork for comprehensively understanding the function of Paul's citizenship in Acts. Therefore, this chapter will be limited to an analysis of the papyri which mostly describe trial scenes in the presence of the Roman emperors.

The trials portrayed in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are set in the period ranging approximately from the reign of Augustus (27 BCE-14 CE) down to the reign of Commodus (176-192 CE). This must be distinguished from the *actual* date of the papyrus documents in which the *Acta Alexandrinorum* were transcribed. Most scholars<sup>3</sup> agree that these fragments date from the end of the 2nd or the beginning of

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<sup>1</sup> The *Acta Alexandrinorum* were not published in antiquity as a single "collection", but the title reflects a modern name for the texts.

<sup>2</sup> cf. L.L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, London: SCM Press, 1994, 399-401; M. Hadas, *Hellenistic Culture: Fusion and Diffusion*, London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959, 180f.; A. Kasher, *The Jews in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt*, TSAJ 7, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1985, 342-5.

<sup>3</sup> cf. R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1966, 85; E.M. Smallwood, 'Acts of the Pagan Martyrs', in N.G.L. Hammond and H.H. Scullard (2nd edn. eds.), *OCD*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970, 7; *eadem*, *The Jews Under Roman Rule*, Leiden: Brill, 1976, 250-5; J.G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity*, Oxford: OUP, 1985, 53; S. Sandmel, *Philo of Alexandria: An Introduction*, Oxford: OUP, 1979, 173.



the 3rd century CE. Some texts<sup>4</sup> (but not all) of the documents appear to be in protocol-form, that is, the record of official trials.<sup>5</sup>

We will analyse the main theme of each text, and will then ask questions about the dramatic situation described in the text: What is happening?; Who are the *dramatis personae*?; and How long is each text? The literary analysis will focus particularly on the literary forms used in the text (narrative, dialogue, and speech). The analysis will also attempt to clarify the attitude of each protagonist towards Rome, particularly concerning matters which we believe can be described in terms of "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism". However, it will be clear that anti-Semitism is only an incidental purpose, and the writers of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* intended ultimately to propagandize anti-Romanism. As R. MacMullen points out, "anti-Romanism took the form of cultural snobbery, accusations of injustice, or charges of fiscal oppression or dishonesty,"<sup>6</sup> which may be the final intention of the author(s) who created each text of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

## 5.1. The analysis of the papyri<sup>7</sup>

### 5.1.1. P.S.I. 1160 : The 'Boule -Papyrus' <sup>8</sup>

This papyrus can be dated early, making it older than most of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The date of this papyrus, however, is in dispute.<sup>9</sup> However, most

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<sup>4</sup> cf. *Recension B* (P.Lond. 2785) of the *Acta Isidori* and the *Acta Maximi II*.

<sup>5</sup> See a recent study on the protocol of official court proceedings; B. Winter, 'Official Proceedings and Forensic Speeches in Acts 24-26,' BAFCS vol. 1, *Ancient Literary Setting*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993, 306-336, esp. 306-9. Here Winter discusses the extant forensic speeches in many papyri of the protocol in early Roman empire.; cf. H. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs*, Oxford: OUP, 1972, 1-lvii, esp. li.

<sup>6</sup> R. MacMullen (1966) 85.

<sup>7</sup> The texts are taken from the edition of H.A. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs: Acta Alexandrinorum*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954.

<sup>8</sup> *Corpus Papyrorum Judaicarum* vol. II. (henceforth CPJ. vol. II) 25. (V.A. Tcherikover/ A. Fuks (eds.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960. 25; cf. A. Kasher (1985) 310-21.

<sup>9</sup> cf. CPJ. vol. II. 27. Here V.A. Tcherikover/A. Fuks point out that "No decisive reasons, therefore, either palaeographic or literary, can be put forward in favour of the association of the document with Claudius. On the other hand, an argument for Augustus is the fact that he alone is called in the Egyptian documents 'Caesar' (*Καίσαρ*) without further designation."; cf. Musurillo (1954, 86) cites H.I. Bell's comment that "this papyrus might still be an account of an audience with Claudius."



generally accept that it is set in the first half of the first century CE.<sup>10</sup> This text is composed of two columns with 46 lines altogether, but *col. i.* is too mutilated to grasp the meaning to the extent that we cannot tell its original length. However, the aim of this papyrus possibly was to make a claim before Augustus for the establishment of the city-council. Thus, this is called the '*Boule-Papyrus*' because it recounts the demand of the Alexandrians for a *Boule*.<sup>11</sup> In the document, an Alexandrian expresses the wish of his Greek fellow citizens to keep the Greek community undefiled by any foreign influence.<sup>12</sup> Although Jews are not named, the papyrus seems to presuppose a situation of conflict between the Alexandrian Greeks and Jews.<sup>13</sup> That is, an unnamed Alexandrian spokesman suspects that Rome might give favour to the Jews in the matter at hand:

It is necessary for us to speak at some length. I submit, then, that the Senate will see to it that none of those who are liable to enrolment for the poll-tax<sup>14</sup> (*λαογραφείσθαι*) diminish the revenue by being listed in the public records along with the *ephebi* for each year; and it will take care that the pure (?) citizen body of Alexandria (*τὸ πολίτευμα τῶν Ἀλεξανδρείων ἀκέραιον*) is not corrupted by men who are uncultured and uneducated.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Musurillo (1954) 83; cf. E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule From Pompey To Diocletian: A study in political relations*, Leiden: Brill, 1981, 232. "This papyrus must be assigned to Augustus rather than Claudius in the early Roman period."

<sup>11</sup> cf. A. Segré, 'Antisemitism in Hellenistic Alexandria,' *JSS* 8 (1946) 136. Here Segré observes that "the question of the Alexandrian city-council has an indirect connection with the antisemitic policy of the town."; cf. on the functions for a *boule* at Alexandria, A.K. Bowman/D. Rathbone, 'Cities and Administration in Roman Egypt,' *JRS* 82 (1992) 118.

<sup>12</sup> cf. According to A. Segré (1946, 136), "in *PSI* 1160 it is clearly stated that the *boule* would have prevented the infiltration of barbarian elements into the *politeuma*. In this way the imperial treasury could have been protected against the evasion of the poll-tax (*laographia*) by residents who claimed unjustly to be citizens."

<sup>13</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II, 27. "Who are these people who are trying to escape the *laographia* by getting themselves inscribed with the *epheboi* on the public records, if not Jews and Egyptians? And who are these 'uneducated and uncultured' people, who defile the immaculate community of the Alexandrians, if not, again, Jews and Egyptians? The Egyptians seem to have been less dangerous than the Jews, since their entry into the Greek community was never the cause of a political struggle; it is therefore likely that, in the opinion of the Alexandrian spokesman, the Jews were the principal enemy."; *contra*. H.I. Bell, 'The *Constitutio Antoniniana* and the Egyptian Poll-tax', *JRS* 37 (1947) 23. Bell suggests that "the poll-tax was not a political impost intended to mark the inferior status of the Egyptians but a regular part of the financial structure."

<sup>14</sup> cf. J.A.S. Evans, 'The Poll-tax in Egypt,' *Aeg* 37 (1957) 259. Here Evans explains that *laographia* is the common term for poll-tax in the Roman period, and it means literally "a registration of the *laos*." Evans (1957, 264) points out that "if Rome introduced an universal tax, and then made exemptions, she created a privileged class, whether that was her intention or not."

<sup>15</sup> *PSI* 1160 *Col.* 2-6; cf. V. Tcherikover, *Hellenistic Civilization and the Jews*, NY: Atheneum, 1975, 311-14; cf. *CPJ*. vol. II, 27. Here Tcherikover and Fuks suggest the political background of the Jewish question with four important conclusions: (1) the payers of the *laographia* and the *epheboi* are two mutually exclusive groups; (2) the struggle against the members of the first group, who are trying



Although this text has a trial-scene<sup>16</sup> which is representative of the *Acta*-literature, it does not use the "question and answer" style of dialogue.<sup>17</sup> Tcherikover and Fuks go further to suggest that "The *Acta* consist mostly of dialogues with, at least, a strong fictional colouring, whereas the present document is likely to be a fragment of a petition or of a letter... It is unlikely, then, that it belongs to the *Acta*."<sup>18</sup> Even though they do not agree that this papyrus belongs to the *Acta Alexandrinorum*,<sup>19</sup> they think that it may share one important feature with the *Acta Alexandrinorum* namely the "Jewish question in Alexandria."<sup>20</sup> The Alexandrian spokesman intended to show that the Greeks' demand for a *Boule* (*Col. ii. 14f.*) aims to express the view that the Roman emperor is unfair.<sup>21</sup> The underlying situation,

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to enter the privileged class, has a common interest for both the Roman authorities and the Greek city; the former are interested in an undisturbed income from the poll-tax, whereas the latter intend to free themselves from an increase in the number of unwelcome aliens among their citizens; it is as if the Alexandrian spokesman is saying to Augustus 'give us a Council, and we will look after your money'; (3) the very fact that the Alexandrians are pleading for a Council whose duty will be to keep watch against undesirable elements penetrating Greek society is a sufficient proof that such a penetration was often made, and that the Greek city, lacking its most powerful institution, was unable to change the course of affairs without the help of the Romans; (4) the characterizations 'uneducated and uncultured' are typical of the stand-point taken by the Greeks in Alexandria with reference to inhabitants of Jewish and Egyptian origin. 'Uneducated and uncultured' is identical with 'lacking the Greek *paideia*'; these are men of another race and another culture. For Greeks, as well as for Jews, the Jewish problem' was more than a question of political status: a cultural problem was involved."

<sup>16</sup> cf. E.G. Turner, '*Acta Alexandrinorum*', *CR* 5 (1955) 304.

<sup>17</sup> cf. So H.A. Musurillo (1954, 84-87) claims that this papyrus has the greater complexity.; *CPJ*. vol. II. 26. Here Tcherikover and Fuks point out that "the style of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is far more literary than that of the '*Boule-Papyrus*'"

<sup>18</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II, 26; cf. E.G. Turner, 'An Augustan Document Recovered', *JRS* 45 (1955) 119. Here Turner also agrees that "the text conveniently known as the '*Boule-Papyrus*', or *PSI* 1160 has been the centre of a furious controversy..... The text is not part of the literature of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, though it is not without interest that it should have been accessible to persons of the social class which later circulated that literature among its members."; Turner also raises a language problem of the original text in that "It can, I think, be demonstrated that *PSI* 1160 is a Greek translation of a Latin original."; cf. see Turner (1955) 304-5; *idem*, *CR* 13 (1963) 345-6.; contra. Musurillo (1954, 87), however, draws an opinion that "the papyrus might represent an early stage in the transmission of the various *Acta* texts."

<sup>19</sup> cf. *CPJ*. vol. II, 26.

<sup>20</sup> V.A. Tcherikover and A. Fuks (*CPJ*. vol. II, 25) regard the *Acta Alexandrinorum* as fragments including many important details concerning the civic status of Jews in Alexandria. In fact, according to them (*CPJ*. vol. II, 57.), "the first editors of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* believed that the main object of this curious literature was to spread anti-Semitic propaganda. There were sufficient reasons for such a view, since Jews in the "Acts of Alexandrian Martyrs" are described as the determined political enemies of the Alexandrian Greeks."

<sup>21</sup> cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981, 232 n. 52.) points out that "Alexandria had no *boulé* under Roman rule till the reign of Septimius Severus, and it was more probably abolished by one of the Ptolemies than by Augustus."



then, is the theme of conflict between the Alexandrian Greeks and Jews and Romans<sup>22</sup> in parallel with other documents of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

### 5.1.2. P. Oxy. 1089<sup>23</sup>

This papyrus describes events during the reign of Gaius (37-41 CE). It is composed of three columns, but only *Col.II* is preserved well enough to be understood. It has an unusual setting, the Alexandrian Serapeum.<sup>24</sup> Here an interview was arranged between Flaccus,<sup>25</sup> the Roman prefect in Egypt appointed by the Emperor Tiberius due to their friendship, and two leaders of the Alexandrian anti-Semites, Isidorus and Dionysius, who are also mentioned by Philo.<sup>26</sup> Flaccus arrives at the temple of Serapis,<sup>27</sup> and the other two arrive after him, accompanied by a woman, Aphrodisia.<sup>28</sup> In the Serapeum Dionysius meets an old man.<sup>29</sup> However, no legal action in the Serapeum is shown. This document lacks court protocol altogether, but it is a vivid narrative which shows the bribery of Flaccus, a

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<sup>22</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981, 232) explains more of its political background that "it was only natural for wealthy, Hellenized, educated Jews there to resent being equated with illiterate Egyptian peasants, to envy the Greeks their exemption, and to covet Greek citizenship, not only as an escape from a financial burden but as a sign of social and cultural recognition. They had a stronger incentive now than before to get their sons into the *ephebate* as the gateway to citizenship and exemption. It may be primarily to such Jews that reference is made in the 'boulé-papyrus'."

<sup>23</sup> cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981, 237 n. 67) observes that "P.Oxy. 1089 records a clandestine meeting of mysterious purpose between Flaccus and the nationalists Isidorus and Dionysius which may be part of these negotiations. But the Jews are not mentioned in the surviving fragment, and there is no certainty that they are involved."

<sup>24</sup> The Serapeum is the sanctuary of Serapis who is the Egyptian god of healing. Musurillo (1954, 97) claims that "the choice of the Serapeum as the scene of the negotiations might well have been a relic of an earlier legal custom."; cf. In *CPJ*. vol. II, 61, Tcherikover and Fuks suggest that the place of the action is unusual.; cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981) 237, n. 67.

<sup>25</sup> Flaccus is appointed by Tiberius (32 CE) and sentenced to death by Gaius (39 CE). cf. Philo, *Leg.* 160.

<sup>26</sup> P.Oxy. 1089 fits well into the context of Philo's *In Flaccum* and *De Legatione ad Gaium*. However, it is likely that the deeds and words of the *dramatis personae* are illuminated from quite a different angle.

<sup>27</sup> cf. C. Bradford Welles, 'The Discovery of Serapis and the Foundation of Alexandria' *Historia* 11 (1962) 296. "The picture of the origin and growth of the Alexandrian Serapeum is entirely consistent with what we know of other sanctuaries and cults in antiquity."

<sup>28</sup> Musurillo (1954, 98) suggests that "Aphrodisia may have been a nobly born lady of Isidorus' family or circle, and may have had no connexion with the interview at all."

<sup>29</sup> cf. Musurillo (1954, 100) suggests that the view that "the elder was a Jew must be abandoned, because the presence of a Jew in the Serapeum had always been a difficulty... he was most probably a member of the Alexandrian gerousia, and perhaps a relative or friend of Dionysius."; cf. Tcherikover and Fuks (*CPJ*. vol II. 60) suggest that "an 'old man' is likely to be a member of the Alexandrian *gerousia*."



Roman prefect, in the Serapeum.<sup>30</sup> Flaccus is faced with a political crisis at the accession of Gaius because Flaccus had taken part in the banishment of Gaius' mother. The political situation relating to Flaccus is given below:

Gaius' attacks on Tiberius' supporters increased his fears for his own safety; the fall of Macro<sup>31</sup> was particularly sinister, since Isidorus seems to have had a hand in it and might be expected to employ the same tactics again in revenge for his recent disgrace. In his preoccupation with his personal anxieties Flaccus allowed his administration to deteriorate. For example, when the Jewish *politeuma* passed a resolution in Gaius' honour, probably immediately after his accession, Flaccus promised to forward it to Rome together with a covering letter testifying to Jewish loyalty but in fact omitted to do so, and a year later the Jews discovered to their horror that it was still in his office in Alexandria. During the early part of 38 the Greek nationalists, with their ringleader Isidorus now back in the city, conceived the cunning plan of using Flaccus' fear and insecurity for their own purposes. Posing as his friends, they offered to protect him against the attack which he anticipated from Gaius by getting the city of Alexandria to "act as his advocate", but at the price of the "surrender" of the Jews. Flaccus, yielding to temptation, accepted the bargain, which was then clinched by the bestowal of civic honours on him.<sup>32</sup>

It seems clear that the two sides consisting of the Roman prefect Flaccus and the Alexandrian leaders, make a hidden bargain even choosing the sacred place of the Serapeum to do so. Even though it is unclear whether or not this papyrus reports the corruption of Flaccus regarding bribery, he at least negotiates some matters of political interest with the Alexandrian anti-Semites with the hint that he may be exploiting his office in dubious negotiations. Possibly, this is intended to disclose anti-Roman propaganda. As a result, this ideology will be useful for investigating the motif of the corruption of Roman officials who appear in the narratives of Acts (e.g. Lysias, Felix, and Festus).

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<sup>30</sup> cf. Tcherikover and Fuks (*CPJ*. vol II, 61) point out the fantastic feature of this story: "a secret interview between the highest official of Rome in Egypt and the leaders of the anti-Roman party in Alexandria, the place chosen for the interview, the enigmatic part played by a woman, the sudden appearance of a member of the *gerousia*, hidden, it would seem, in the temple, the enormous bribe (?) of five talents in gold exacted by the prefect - all these features point to the suggestion that the story is not the record of true historical events, but a 'novel' freely composed by someone far removed in time and spirit from the historical period with which he dealt."

<sup>31</sup> His full name is Q. Naevius Macro who was appointed to succeed Flaccus.

<sup>32</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 236-237.



### 5.1.3. *P. bibl. univ, Giss. 46: The 'Gerousia Acta'*

The date of this fragment is related to Gaius' reign (37-41 CE). The *dramatis personae* are the Emperor, Isidorus,<sup>33</sup> Eulaus, Arius and an unnamed foreigner. The papyrus is lengthy containing five long columns of 133 lines mainly composed of the speech of an unnamed accuser and the letter to Alexandria from Gaius.<sup>34</sup> However, "The fragment is in a very poor state of preservation, so that the readings are by no means certain."<sup>35</sup> The preserved portion of the 'Gerousia Acta' papyrus tells of a group of Alexandrian delegates, members of the *gerousia*<sup>36</sup> of the city, and their arrival in Rome by way of Ostia (Ὀστία), where, they are apparently detained. After they are greeted by a *cubicularius* (ὁ κοιτωνίτης) of Tiberius, the delegation finally has an interview with Gaius. This probably occurs after Tiberius' public funeral on 3 April 37.<sup>37</sup> Salutations are exchanged between the new emperor and the Alexandrian legates. An unnamed accuser (κατήγορος) who will be described as a foreigner (ξενικός) is mentioned.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately, the point of his accusation is not evident. There is no indication in this part of the text of any Greek-Jewish confrontation.<sup>39</sup> In *Col. iii. 20ff.*, he is condemned by Gaius to be burnt.<sup>40</sup> Then, a speech is delivered by Arius with the *captatio benevolentiae* stating that "the emperor is Lord of the world, Saviour and Benefactor."<sup>41</sup> Gaius then addresses a letter to Alexandria.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>33</sup> cf. *CPJ*. vol. II, 64. Here V.A. Tcherikover and A. Fuks call this text as "Isidorus before the emperor Gaius Caligula".

<sup>34</sup> Musurillo (1954) 8-17.

<sup>35</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II, 64. Here, as Tcherikover and Fuks point out, this papyrus, however, presents some useful information to the reader: "only very few items in the long document can be regarded as more and less authentic, such as the existence of a *gerousia* of 173 members in Alexandria and the appearance of an Alexandrian embassy before Gaius."; A.K. Bowman/D. Rathbone (1992, 119) note that "the *gerousia*, if it had only 173 members who mostly former magistrates, can only have reinforced the concentration of power and influence."; cf. H.A. Musurillo/G.M. Parassoglou, 'A New Fragment of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*', *ZPE* 15 (1974) 1-7.

<sup>36</sup> cf. M.A.H. El-Abbadi, 'The *Gerousia* in Roman Egypt', *JEA* 50 (1964) 169. "The *gerousia* in Roman Egypt was essentially a social institution and had no legislative or official political status."

<sup>37</sup> Musurillo (1954) 110.

<sup>38</sup> *Col. iii. 21*; Musurillo (1954, 107) suggests that he would be either an Egyptian or perhaps merely not a citizen of Alexandria.

<sup>39</sup> In fact, Jews are never mentioned in this papyrus.

<sup>40</sup> V.A. Tcherikover/A. Fuks (*CPJ*. vol. II, 66. n. 25) suggest that "καῆναι may mean the cremation, or the branding of the criminal."; cf. Musurillo (1954, 107, n. 2) mentions that "*Calumniatores* according to Roman law might be branded with the letter K or suffer other penalties."

<sup>41</sup> *Col. ii. 33-35*. "Ἀρειος εἶπεν κύριε χαιρε....χάρις μὲν Ἀλεξανδρέων...ετα ... η σὺ ὁ τοῦ κόσμου."



In *Col.* iii. 33-35, the Alexandrians' demand by Isidorus is that "a certain group should not receive the crown of valour."<sup>43</sup>

This is quite different from the other papyri of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* in that the ideological sentiment here is mainly pro-Roman whereas the others are anti-Roman.<sup>44</sup> The *Acta Alexandrinorum* are usually propaganda directed in general against the Roman rulers; this papyrus, however, cannot be included in this category.<sup>45</sup> In fact, Gaius was familiar with Alexandria.<sup>46</sup> This text would therefore be a piece of propaganda to protect the citizens' privilege from the foreigners, which offers some information about the protection of citizens' privilege in Roman times. So the significance of citizenship is patent in this text.

#### 5.1.4. *Acta Isidori* <sup>47</sup>

*Acta Isidori* is composed of three recensions similar to the NT Synoptic Gospels.<sup>48</sup> The third recension is distinctive for its strong anti-Semitic sentiment on the poll-tax. The fact that three recensions of this lawsuit exist suggests that it was the most significant case for the Alexandrians' political tension against the Roman government which underlies most of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Also of importance is the fact that the document keeps strictly to the protocol form which is evidently a *cause célèbre*.

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<sup>42</sup> *Col.* iii. 27.

<sup>43</sup> cf. Musurillo (1954) 108.

<sup>44</sup> Musurillo (1954, 107), therefore, insists that "one gains the impression that this portion of the text at least was not written in a spirit of anti-Roman propaganda."; cf. A. Kasher (1985, 342-3) agrees with Musurillo on this point.

<sup>45</sup> *CPJ.* vol. II. 66. "Gaius was a 'philhellene' and had great sympathy with Alexandria; Isidorus, the leader of the Alexandrian patriots, was closely connected with him. So it may be that the author of this story was faced with problems other than those of other authors of the AAM. It would accord admirably with the general tendency of the AAM had Caligula, the half-mad hellenizer on the Roman throne, been the only Roman Caesar portrayed with the sympathy by the authors of the AAM."

<sup>46</sup> Suetonius, *Gaius*, 49. "Gaius moved the seat of government to Alexandria."

<sup>47</sup> cf. A. von Premerstein, 'Das datum des prozesses des Isidoros in den sogenannten Heidnischen Märtyrerakten', *Hermes* 67 (1932) 174-96.

<sup>48</sup> The first is divided into the Berlin and Cairo fragment and the second is the London fragment, which is a different papyrus containing two imperfect columns of the same text, purchased by H. I. Bell. and the third is another Berlin fragment, published by Uxkull-Gyllenband, which is containing portions of two columns, and which seems to refer to the same case but to a different point in the trial.

#### 5.1.4.1. *Recension A (Chrest. 14)*

The date of this document is the reign of Claudius (41-54 CE). The papyrus is composed of three columns of 55 lines which contain legal points including the setting, date, and attendants at this trial. The *dramatis personae* are Claudius Caesar Augustus, the Alexandrian envoys, Isidorus<sup>49</sup> and Lampon<sup>50</sup> the gymnasiarchs of Alexandria, 20 senators, 16 men of consular rank, and the women of the court. This text largely consists of a dialogue between Claudius and Isidorus. With regard to the trial scene, examples of "appeal to the emperor" by the protagonist are followed by the granting of an appeal by <sup>the</sup> emperor.

As Smallwood points out, "these accounts belong to a series of pamphlets emanating from extreme Greek nationalist circles."<sup>51</sup> The heated issue of the suffering of the glorious city of Alexandria is described in a resolute account by Isidorus and Lampon, a picture which emerges elsewhere in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Among the whole fragments of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, this fragment reveals strong anti-Semitic sentiment along with anti-Roman sentiment. It focuses categorically on the Jews rather than the Roman government, but its target certainly includes the Roman emperors. That is, it shows openly the strongest combined anti-Roman and anti-Semitic thrust.<sup>52</sup> Its language is also cynical in that the emperor, Claudius, is called a "son of a Jewish woman" by an Alexandrian Greek.

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<sup>49</sup> cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981) 235. Isidorus was a prominent gymnasiarch as an agitator and rabble-rouser, involved in the troubles of 38 CE in Alexandria.

<sup>50</sup> Philo, *Flacc.* 128; Lampon was coupled with Isidorus in the prosecution of Flaccus, governor of Egypt.; cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981) 235. His nickname is "poison-pen", for he was a secretary to the prefect by accepting bribes for the falsification of lawsuit records, who had been on trial for *maiestas* under Tiberius.

<sup>51</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 250.

<sup>52</sup> cf. J.G. Gager (1985, 49) points out that "the basic and recurrent charge against the emperors was that they were friends of the Jews."



#### 5.1.4.2. *Recension B (P. Lond. 2785)*

This recension's date is the same as that of *Recension A*. The difference from *Recension A* is that Agrippa appears, and is called a "twopenny-halfpenny Jew" (*Ἰουδαίου τριωβολείου*),<sup>53</sup> by Isidorus. The main question to examine is *which* Agrippa attended Isidorus' trial? The choice lies between Agrippa I (41-44 CE) and Agrippa II (50-100 CE).<sup>54</sup> Musurillo is inclined toward Agrippa II and the year 53: "following the presumption that the events and characters of the *Acta* are historical, we may say that the more probable date of the *Acta Isidori* is 30 April-1 May of the year 53."<sup>55</sup> However, E.M. Smallwood and L.L. Grabbe agree that the general historical probability points to the year 41 and therefore to Agrippa I.<sup>56</sup>

This recension is composed of two columns of 51 lines. Even though *Col.II* has 24 lines, a long column, it only names Claudius the emperor and Isidorus a gymnasiarch<sup>57</sup> and the cities of Rome and Alexandria. However, *Col.I* preserves enough subject-matter to enable us to understand the *cause célèbre*. On the whole, as *Recension A*, it is composed of dialogue, in the literary genre of court protocol,<sup>58</sup> between the emperor Claudius and Isidorus concerning the Alexandrian's nationalist and patriotic love of his home town. As Philo reports in his '*In Flaccum*' and '*De Legatione ad Gaium*', the *Acta Isidori* offer a greater impression of historical truth than most of the other texts. This fragment's anti-Semitic sentiment functions finally

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<sup>53</sup> cf. *LSJ* s.v., *τριωβολείου* originally means "the pay of the Athenian jurymen for a day's sitting in court." It is interesting that this word is used here in the setting of trial of Isidorus.

<sup>54</sup> See Musurillo (1954) 126-8; E.M. Smallwood (1981, 253) points out that the central problems of the *Acta Isidori* are the date of the trial and the identity of Agrippa.; M. Whittaker, *Jews & Christians: Graeco-Roman Views*, Cambridge: CUP, 1984, 111. Here Whittaker says of Agrippa II that "he had spent his youth at the court of Claudius, who gave him the principality of Chalcis 49/50. He proved himself a loyal supporter of Rome."

<sup>55</sup> Musurillo (1954) 124; cf. M. Whittaker (1984) 110.

<sup>56</sup> See, E.M. Smallwood (1981) 253; L.L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, London: SCM Press, 1994, 400.

<sup>57</sup> cf. M. Whittaker (1984, 111) claims that Isidorus had held the highest office possible for an Alexandrian.

<sup>58</sup> On the trials of Isidorus and Lampon, E.M. Smallwood (1981, 250) points out that "the episodes are almost certainly basically historical, but the accounts of them, though couched in the form of official protocols, are unlikely to be derived from documents in the Roman archives, which would have been inaccessible to Alexandrian Greeks."



to show the anti-Romanism of the Alexandrian Greeks, for it informs the reader that Claudius acts as a political guardian of the Jews<sup>59</sup> as demonstrated here:

Claudius Caesar: 'Say nothing ... against my friend. You have already done away with two of my friends, Theon the exegete and Naevius,<sup>60</sup> prefect of Egypt and prefect of the pretorian guard at Rome; and now you prosecute this man.'

Isidorus: 'My Lord Caesar, what do you care for a twopenny-halfpenny Jew like Agrippa (τί μέλει σοι ὑπὲρ Ἀγρίππου Ἰουδαίου τριωβολείου)?'

Claudius Caesar: 'What? You are the most insolent of men to speak (αὐθαδέστατος εἶ πάντων ἀνθρώπων)....'

Isidorus: '... I will not deny.... be quiet... beaten... Olympian Caesar (Ὀλύμπιε Καίσαρ)<sup>61</sup>

#### 5.1.4.3. *Recension C* (P. Berol. 8877)

This recension's date is the same as that of the former recensions. It is composed of two columns of 32 lines. The *dramatis personae* are Isidorus, Agrippa, and Balbillus,<sup>62</sup> a well-known and prominent figure of the time. This fragment contains the motifs of nationalistic propaganda in terms of pride in the native city and anti-Semitism. Isidorus' main accusation concerns the tax-problem relating to the Jews. This text is composed of a rhetorical speech based on Isidorus' critical accusation of the Jews that "I accuse them of wishing to stir up the entire world" (Col. ii. 5-7). A dialogue between Agrippa and Balbillus is presented in which the two fight out their opposing opinions. Here a great contrast between the Alexandrian Greeks and the Jews is stressed and Isidorus, on behalf of the Alexandrian Greeks, asserts that Jewish people are no different from the Egyptians.<sup>63</sup> Thus, we find a

<sup>59</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 250. As a result, "Isidorus and Lampon met their end at Claudius' hand, when they were executed as a result of a misguided attempt to impeach the Jewish king Agrippa."

<sup>60</sup> M. Whittaker (1984, 111) points out that "he is better known as Naevius Macro, a prominent adherent of the Emperor Gaius (37-41), but fell under suspicion and was forced to commit suicide. Perhaps the Alexandrian clique under Isidorus had contributed to Gaius' suspicions."

<sup>61</sup> cf. As Musurillo (1954, 132-3) points out, the title Ὀλύμπιος was not commonly used of the emperors until the reign of Hadrian, so Ὀλύμπιε Καίσαρ suggests that an important redaction of the *Acta Isidori* took place under Hadrian, possibly during the aftermath of the Jewish rising in Alexandria.

<sup>62</sup> See Musurillo (1954, 130-1),<sup>who</sup> questions "who is Balbillus?" 1) an astrologer 2) a prefect of Egypt under Nero 3) a tribune under Claudius and held various procuratorships at Alexandria 4) a friend of Claudius. However, M. Whittaker (1984, 112) says that "it is not necessary here to identify precisely this advocate for the Alexandrians."

<sup>63</sup> cf. R. MacMullen (1966, 85) points out that "actually, the audience for which these pieces were produced, the well-to-do Greeks of Alexandria, looked on the local Egyptians with scorn, the Jews with dislike rising to hatred, and the Roman emperor and his representatives at times with approval, at times with anger."



severe racism in that according to Isidorus' comment that the Jews may be regarded as the Egyptians: "they (sc. the Jews) live rather after the fashion of the Egyptians (*τρόπῳ δὲ Αἰγυπτίῳ*)."<sup>64</sup> Isidorus also argues with Agrippa that the Jews are not qualified for citizenship because they pay the same poll-tax as the Egyptians. Isidorus' remarks suggest that the Alexandrian Greeks feel racial rivalry which would become sharper, more violent, and more openly anti-Jewish. The racist interest is given a prominent note in this text.

#### 5.1.5. *P. Oxy. ined.: Acta Diogenis*

This papyrus' date is the reign of Vespasian (69-79 CE).<sup>65</sup> The papyrus is composed of five columns with 64 lines altogether. We cannot be sure of the subject-matter of *Col. I* because of the mutilated state of the text. It is likely that *Col. I* may hold important information about the dramatic date of this text (i.e. the name of an emperor). Fortunately, *Col. II* preserves an example where Diogenes criticizes an emperor. His targets of criticism are the wealthy and the people of noble rank.<sup>66</sup>

It is feasible that this is a fragment of a speech of prosecution against someone accused of spreading malicious rumours about the Roman emperors (ll. 20ff., 42ff.). In ll.41ff., a prosecutor appeals to Caesar to execute a man who tells lies about Caesar, since the emperor should protect his reputation. However, its classification is debatable with regard to the ideological aspect.<sup>67</sup> On this point, Musurillo claims:

The piece is hardly anti-Roman in character. However, because of its connexion with the criticism of Roman domination in the Greek-speaking world, we cannot be far wrong in associating it with the *Acta* literature. For if our interpretation is right, the *Acta Diogenis* would bring to light new evidence on Vespasian's

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<sup>64</sup> cf. *P. Berol.* 8877 ll. 26-27; See also below chapter 6.

<sup>65</sup> H.A. Musurillo (1954, 141) observes that "Allowing for the passage of the twelve years of ll. 19f., it would appear reasonable to suppose that the emperor before whom the speech was delivered is Vespasian."

<sup>66</sup> cf. So R. MacMullen (1966, 88) claims that "this has a thoroughly proletarian sound."

<sup>67</sup> Musurillo (1954, 144) observes that "certainly what we have does not suggest anything like an eulogy of Alexandrian patriotism; in fact, we do not even know which of the people concerned were Alexandrians."

conflict with Alexandria and possibly with a class that had been inspired by the slogans of Stoic-Cynic philosophers.<sup>68</sup>

### 5.1.6. *Acta Maximi*

#### 5.1.6.1. *Acta Maximi I (P. Oxy. 471)*<sup>69</sup>

This papyrus' date may be in the reign of Trajan (98-117 CE). It is composed of six columns with 162 lines altogether. However, the ends of the lines of *Col. I.* are faint. The content of this papyrus is quite different from the other papyri. This papyrus can be divided into several sections.<sup>70</sup> It allows us to perceive similar ideologies which can be found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* i.e. Alexandrian national patriotism and anti-Roman propaganda. Indeed, the "apostrophe to Maximus" reveals the severe patriotic challenge of the Alexandrian Greeks and Maximus' increasing corruption (*Col. iii. 4-12*). What was worse, Maximus was even accompanied by a seventeen-year-old lad in the seat of justice. The document seems to show anti-Roman feeling through the scandal of Maximus, similarly to the other fragments of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* which aim to reveal anti-Roman sentiment. This document is unique in that the anti-*Semitic* sentiment is never mentioned. The document relates the above sentiments through an interesting story about a personal scandal involving Maximus when he was in office. His corruption is constantly emphasised. On the one hand, "He forced people to pay him interest even for a period in which, in some cases, they had not as yet even received the loan (*τόκον κατέκρινεν ὑπὲρ οὗ*

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<sup>68</sup> Musurillo (1954) 144; cf. Musurillo (1954, 143-5) explains on the relations between Vespasian and Alexandria as such: "According to the reports of Cassius Dio and Tacitus, Vespasian visited Alexandria. The Alexandrians doubtless expected Vespasian to shower them with favours (Dio 56.8.1f.). The enthusiastic populace hail Vespasian as Serapis, Son of Ammon, Saviour and Benefactor. But such flattery was not destined to last, and their hymns of praise were soon to change to vicious lampoons. For their benefactor only increased the taxes; and by way of further economies he sold or leased a large section of the Royal Palace (Dio 56 8.4)."

<sup>69</sup> cf. Ronald Syme, 'C. Vibius Maximus, prefect of Egypt', *Historia* 6 (1957), 480-7.

<sup>70</sup> Musurillo (1954, 157) analyses this text: 2-5 (Address to the emperor) 5-8 (On Maximus' practice of usury) 8-11 (His suppression of Alexandrian letters of complaint) 11-15 (Citation from the records) 16-27 (his interest in an Alexandrian youth) 28-40 (His interference in the appointment of gymnasiarchs) 40-48 (Apostrophe to Maximus. He did not receive bribes, but gave them) 49-135 (Narrative: Maximus' corruption of the youth. Digression) 94-101, 106f. (instances of Maximus' cruelty in Egypt) 132-8 (Maximus' negligence in connexion with the *conventus*) 141 ff. (Charge connected with Callinicus, 'scholar of the Museum)



μηδέπω χρόνου λαβόντες ἔνιοι τὸ δάνειον ἦσαν)."<sup>71</sup> This demonstrates Maximus' trickery and astuteness during his public office as a Roman prefect.<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, it shows that Maximus loves a young boy. The implication that he misused his official post is made in a way that clearly expresses anti-Roman sentiment. As Musurillo points out, it is useful to understand this literary structure: "For *prima facie* it is a speech of prosecution against a Roman official and its main burden is obviously the proof of his malfeasance in office."<sup>73</sup>

#### 5.1.6.2. *Acta Maximi II*

This fragment's date is the same as that of the *Acta Maximi I*, that is, the reign of Trajan (98-117 CE). It is composed of four columns involving 82 lines. However, only 28 lines of *Col. III* can be read. It reports a protocol from the trial of three Greek *dramatis personae* who are Heraeus, Diodorus the gymnasiarch, and Eudaemon the archidicastes. Eudaemon's accusation (ll. 55ff.) reveals some interesting facts about the Alexandrian educational system. On this, Musurillo writes that "the context seems to suggest that there was at Alexandria, besides the division of ἔφηβοι, a younger group of παῖδες who were trained at the palaestra or the gymnasium, as they were in other Greek cities."<sup>74</sup> He also emphasizes the connection of *Acta Maximi I* and *Acta Maximi II*: "Maximus' interference in the training of the youth was connected with his alleged corruption of the young boy in *Max. I* (cf. esp. 110ff.)."<sup>75</sup> Even though the *Acta Maximi II* is quite a short papyrus, the Alexandrian leaders prosecute the Roman prefect in detail. As a result, both *Acta Maximi I* and *II* are intended to proclaim the Alexandrian Greeks' strong anti-Romanism.

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<sup>71</sup> *Col. ii.* 5-8.

<sup>72</sup> cf. P.A. Brunt, 'The Administrators of Roman Egypt', *JRS* 65 (1975) 124. Here Brunt observes that "the prefect of Egypt combined fiscal with military and judicial functions." He also points out that "the prefect was the managing director."

<sup>73</sup> Musurillo (1954) 150.

<sup>74</sup> Musurillo (1954) 160. "The normal age for beginning this training in the younger group seems to have been about 7 years, but there were cases where the time was postponed."

<sup>75</sup> Musurillo (1954) 160.

### 5.1.7. P. Oxy. 1242: *Acta Hermaisci*

This papyrus' dramatic date is the reign of Trajan (98-117 CE).<sup>76</sup> It has 77 lines arranged into 4 columns, but *Col. iv.* is impossible to read. R. Loewe points out that with "the sole text of the Acts of Hermaiscus being mutilated, it cannot be stated with certainty whether the hero was executed, or saved by the miraculous intervention of Sarapis. The general similarities to the other Alexandrian Acts, however, have led scholars to categorise it with them as a martyrology. Trajan's sarcastic reference to the apparent eagerness of Hermaiscus to court death is an adequate argument to justify this classification."<sup>77</sup>

*Col. I* and *Col. II* is a long narrative explaining the trial setting and the *dramatis personae*. *Col. III* is largely composed of a dialogue between the emperor Trajan and Hermaiscus.<sup>78</sup> *Col. i.* 16f. reports the journey to Rome: "they set sail, then, from the city, each party taking along its own gods (ἕκαστοι βαστάζοντες τοὺς ἰδίους θεούς)." In this text we can see a "sea journey motif" which may be comparable with the narratives of Acts.<sup>79</sup> On the Alexandrian deputation's gods, Smallwood suggests that "both parties sought to reinforce their chances of success with supernatural backing by taking 'their own gods' with them to the audience."<sup>80</sup> It is most likely that in the Greek side it was a bust of Sarapis, in the Jewish counterpart

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<sup>76</sup> cf. M. Whittaker (1984, 113) points out that "the date and occasion of this hearing before Trajan are unknown."

<sup>77</sup> cf. R. Loewe, 'A Jewish Counterpart to the Acts of the Alexandrians', *JJS* 12 (1961) 118. In fact, in ll. 40f., Trajan says that "You must be eager to die, having such contempt for death as to answer even me with insolence."

<sup>78</sup> cf. E.M. Smallwood (1981, 390) suggests that "the writer's interest is less in purveying historical facts than in giving the distorted picture of the emperor and his court characteristic of the genre, willing to give the Greek side a fair hearing, and the Greek leader as suffering excessively for his fearless and outspoken protest against imperial partiality."

<sup>79</sup> The motif of the "sea journey" may be compared with Acts.; cf. L.C.A. Alexander, "In Journeyings Often': Voyaging in the Acts of the Apostles and in Greek Romance', in C.M. Tuckett (ed.), *Luke's Literary Achievement: Collected Essays*, JSNTSS 116, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 17-49.

<sup>80</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 389-390; cf. R. Loewe (1961) 108; M. Whittaker (1984, 114) agrees that "it is clear from what follows in *col. 3* that the Alexandrians took with them a bust of Serapis. This Graeco-Egyptian god had a magnificent temple in Alexandria and was worshipped there with special reverence. It is inconceivable that the Jews have had an image, but possibly they took with them the Roll of the Law, which the Alexandrians assumed to be a cult-emblem."



the only possibility would seem to be a Torah roll, though this is not mentioned in the text.

Throughout our reading of this papyrus, some significant points can be found: The most important point is the accusation of Hermaiscus<sup>81</sup> stating that the imperial Privy Council (*τὸ συνέδριον σου*) is filled with impious Jews, a charge which Caesar denies (42f.).<sup>82</sup> This text has very a unusual motif<sup>83</sup> known as the "miracle of Serapis" in *Col.* iii. 12f.: "the bust of Serapis that they carried suddenly broke into a sweat."<sup>84</sup> Whittaker explains the sweat in that "Here it is adduced either to emphasize the power of Serapis as against that of Yahweh, or to show the disastrous effect he could have on the Roman people at large if the Alexandrian envoys were scorned."<sup>85</sup> Hermaiscus' accusation includes the two ideological motifs of anti-Semitism and ultimately anti-Romanism.

#### 5.1.8. *Acta Pauli et Antonini*

This text's date is the reign of Hadrian (118-130 CE).<sup>86</sup> Musurillo suggests that "the *Acta Pauli et Antonini* concerns the hearing of Greek and Jewish embassies

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<sup>81</sup> As to ll. 3ff., the deputation of Alexandria, together with Hermaiscus, is composed of Dionysius, Salvius, Julius Salvius, Timagenes, Pastor, Julius Phantias, Philoxenus, Sotion, Theon, Athenodorus, and Paulus of Tyre.; E.M. Smallwood (1981, 389) points out that otherwise is unknown to history except Hermaiscus.

<sup>82</sup> cf. M. Whittaker (1984, 114) suggests that "at the date Jews were certainly not members of the senate. The sneer probably reflects popular explanation at Alexandria of what they saw as imperial favouritism of the Jews."; cf. R. Loewe (1961, 117) points out that "the Jews are referred to by their opponent in conventionally opprobrious terms."

<sup>83</sup> It should be noted, however, that the Serapis miracle is not unique, because some Graeco-Roman writers report about miraculous phenomena: cf. Pliny (the Elder) *Natural History* 32.11; Tacitus *Hist.* 5.13.

<sup>84</sup> cf. Plutarch, *Caius Marcius Coriolanus* 38. 1f. we can find a familiar phenomenon: "These words were actually uttered twice, as the story runs, which would have us believe what is difficult of belief and probably never happened. For that statues have appeared to sweat, and shed tears, and exude something like drops of blood, is not impossible..." ; Plutarch, *Alexander* 14. 8-9. The image of Orpheus at Leibethra (it was made of cypress-wood) sweated profusely at about that time. Most people feared the sign.; cf. on the miracle of Serapis, Musurillo (1954) 163-4; *CPJ.* vol. II, 82. Here V.A. Tcherikover/A. Fuks stress the supernatural portrait of this text: "It may be that the end was the triumph of the Alexandrian god over the impious Caesar. The present fragment is the only one of the Acts of Alexandrian Martyrs which introduces supernatural features into political narrative."

<sup>85</sup> M. Whittaker (1984) 114.

<sup>86</sup> *CPJ.* vol. II, 88. Tcherikover and Fuks agree that Hadrian is more reliable than Commodus.



before Hadrian and sometime after the Jewish revolt of 115-117."<sup>87</sup> N. Lewis concludes concerning the revolt that "Its roots are doubtless to be found in the continuing hostility, tensions, and clashes between Greeks and Jews in Alexandria."<sup>88</sup> This fragment's condition is not good with the result that "due to the unfortunate state of the text, it must be admitted that the exact interpretation of the *Acta Pauli et Antonini* will continue to remain a mystery - at least until new evidence is uncovered."<sup>89</sup>

The papyrus' opening narrative shows that both Alexandrian Greeks and Jews were involved in the conflict described in the text:

Paulus (spoke) about the king, how they brought him forth and (mocked him?); and Theon read the edict of Lupus ordering them to lead him forth for Lupus to make fun of the king in the stage-mime. After we<sup>90</sup> had thus (testified?), the emperor took occasion to remark to Paulus and our people (τοὺς ἡμετέρους)<sup>91</sup> as follows: 'During such disturbances... during the Dacian wars...' (*Col. i.*)

Smallwood mentions the possibility of a stage and pantomime king:

During the hearing Paulus has an edict of Lupus read out instructing the Greeks (?) to produce this character 'for him to make fun of.' The emperor's reaction is illegal, but the explanation of this intriguing scrap may be that the Greeks have staged a theatrical farce ridiculing the messianic aspirations of the Jewish rebels, that the Jewish envoys had complained about the insult to Hadrian, and that the Greeks were trying to exonerate themselves by accusing the prefect of having officially ordered the performance. But such an action by a Roman official is highly improbable, and the edict may be a fabrication by the author of the *Acta*.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Musurillo (1954) 181 "This revolt caused by the Jews in Cyrene."; cf. Musurillo (1954 182-3) explains the Jewish rising of 115/17 that "Trajan's absence in the East in 115 was the occasion of the trouble which first began at Cyrene under the leadership of a certain Lukuas or Andreias, whom the Jews had chosen as their king. Whether or not Messianic aspirations had served as stimulus we do not know; but by the year 116, what had begun as a series of unconnected *στάσεις* in Cyrene, Alexandria, and the *chora*, soon became a *πόλεμος οὐ μικρός* (Eusebius)."

<sup>88</sup> N. Lewis, *Life in Egypt Under Roman Rule*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983, 30; cf. A.R.C. Leaney (1984, 141) observes that "the immediate causes are obscure, but it is probable that dissatisfaction with Vespasian's Jewish tax and hostility between Jew and Greek were permanent undercurrents of life here as elsewhere in the Diaspora."; cf. In E.M. Smallwood (1981, 403-4), "this revolt continued till the campaign of Q. Marcius Turbo sent by Trajan. Jewish resistance in Egypt and Cyrenaica had by then largely collapsed."

<sup>89</sup> Musurillo (1954) 181.; cf. Musurillo (1954, 179) points out that "scholars have recognized two recensions of this text." The representative examples of two *Acta* scholars is given in *CPJ*. vol. II. 88: 1. Wilcken: Recto: Col.I-II-III (Louvre)-IV (London), Verso: Col.V (London)-VI-VII-VIII (Louvre) 2. Premerstein: Recto: Col.VI (London)-Col.I-II-III (Louvre), Verso: Col.VI-VII-VIII (Louvre)-V (London)

<sup>90</sup> cf. *Col.* vii. 2. Tcherikover and Fuks (*CPJ*. vol. II. 88.) point out that "A curious peculiarity of this story is the use of the first person plural, attesting that the story was allegedly composed as a report made by members of an Alexandrian embassy."

<sup>91</sup> cf. on *ἡμετέρους*, Acts 24:6, 26:5.

<sup>92</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 407.



The function of this piece of fiction is probably to disclose the shortcomings of the Roman officials acting on behalf of the empire. The *Acta Pauli et Antonini* appears to be presented rather as the narrative of an eye-witness, possibly one or more of the Alexandrian ambassadors instead of a certain official protocol.<sup>93</sup> This text is surely regarded as a piece of political propaganda which records conflicts between the Alexandrian Greeks and Jews. In other words, it displays the colour of a religious-nationalistic rebellion against Rome<sup>94</sup> which is designed to support the anti-Romanism of the Alexandrian Greeks by means of anti-Semitism as part of the patent ideology of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

#### 5.1.9. P. Oxy. 2177: *Acta Athenodori*

This papyrus' date is the reign of Hadrian (118-138 CE). Even though it is composed of 83 lines in 4 fragments, fragments 2, 3 and 4 are almost mutilated. The *dramatis personae* are Caesar, Athamas, and Athenodorus. The dialogue is rendered:

Caesar: You are ambassadors of an alien city (*ὕμεις τῆς ἀλλοτρίας πρεσβευταί ἐστε*).'

Athamas: 'Not of an alien city, but of our own (*ἀλλὰ ἰδίας*). For the city is akin (*συνγενῆς*) (to ours).'

Caesar: 'Have someone summon Athenodorus for me.'

Athenodorus: 'Here I am, my Lord, to answer my own charge.'

Caesar: 'Is it true that the Athenians have the same laws as the Alexandrians?'

Athenodorus: 'It is; and they are stronger (*ἰσχυρότεροι*) than all other laws, having a happy admixture of clemency. (*Col. i. 4-18*)

According to this text, the identity and nationality of the *dramatis personae* is not certain. Our questions are: Who is Athamas? and Which city is his home town? On this point, it may be imagined that Athamas is related to Athens.<sup>95</sup> The emperor asked Athamas to clarify Alexandria's relationship to Athens which is supported by

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<sup>93</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II, 89. The narrative of an eye-witness contains three questions: "(1) the incident of a 'king of the scene and the mimos'; (2) the incident concerning some slaves who had broken out of custody; and (3) the settlement of Jews in Alexandria after the crushing of the revolt."

<sup>94</sup> cf. Adela Yarbro Collins, 'From Noble Death To Crucified Messiah', *NTS* 40 (1994) 495. Here Collins claims that "Paul, a non-Jewish citizen of Alexandria, says that the people of the city mocked a Jewish king by performing a mime. The setting is the reign of Hadrian and the king in question was probably the leader of the Jewish revolt in Cyrene."

<sup>95</sup> Musurillo (1954, 196) thinks that "Athamas and his companion are not citizens of the city which they are representing. Now, since the *Acta* are less likely to concern a case between Rome and Athens, the city in question must be Alexandria; and hence Athamas must be an Athenian."

the explanation of Athenodorus the Athenian (l. 15f.). This text gives an account of an Alexandrian embassy before Hadrian that is a petition for the exposure of the city's suffering.<sup>96</sup> The *Acta Alexandrinorum* frequently include details concerning civic status in Alexandria clearly designed to appeal to the Roman emperor. This text also reveals the exclusive pride of Alexandria in terms of the Alexandrians' noble birth.

#### 5.1.10. *Acta Appiani*

The *Acta Appiani* consist of two papyri where the main character is the Alexandrian gymnasiarch Appian. It is not known what crime was committed by Appian or why he was sentenced to death from the text. As Tcherikover and Fuks point out, "The story as preserved begins with this death-sentence; the main interest lies in the dialogue between the Emperor and the gymnasiarchos stressing, as usual, the intrepidity of the Alexandrian 'martyrs' and the dullness of the Roman Emperor."<sup>97</sup> Indeed, it is quite concrete that the portrayal of the Alexandrian gymnasiarch, Appian, shows him boldly resisting the Emperor Commodus to his face. Interestingly, Appian contrasts Commodus' avarice and dishonesty with the philosophic kindness of his father Marcus Aurelius.<sup>98</sup> Appian is urged by his fellow-prisoner Heliodorus to go forth calmly to his death because it would be his glory to lay down his life for Alexandria. Heliodorus said to Appian: "To whom can we speak, if we have no one who will listen? On, my son, go to your death. Yours shall be the glory of dying for your dearest native city."<sup>99</sup> The portrayal of Jews does not appear in the *Acta*, as E.M. Smallwood points out "there is nothing to

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<sup>96</sup> cf. Musurillo (1954, 197) suggests that "Alexandria calls on the Athenian envoys to bring a petition to Rome and to use their good offices with the emperor in order to secure certain concessions and to obtain the release of Alexandrians who had been imprisoned there."

<sup>97</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II. 100.

<sup>98</sup> cf. *P.Oxy.* 33, *Col.ii.* 7ff. cf. Musurillo (1954, 206) observes that "the expression *θεός ἄντωνελνός* (*P.Oxy.* 33. ii. 7f.) could, of course, refer either to Antoninus Pius or to Marcus Aurelius. However, most scholars have taken it to refer to Marcus."

<sup>99</sup> *P.Oxy.* 33. *Col. i.* 9-14.



suggest that the Jews played any part in that round of the conflict between Greek nationalism and Rome."<sup>100</sup>

#### 5.1.10.1. *P. Yale Inv. 1536*

This papyrus' date is the reign of Commodus (176-192 CE). The papyrus is composed of two columns of 29 lines. Even though the condition of *Col.I* is too mutilated to read, it is possible to perceive the subject-matter from *Col.II*. The main issue of the dialogue is that Appian accuses the emperor of corruption. Appian reports that the emperor sells the wheat (?) at four times (*τετραπλοῦ*) its cost price and takes a share of the profits.<sup>101</sup> Then, the emperor executes Appian, who notices Heraclianus' dead body and Appian calmly says, like the philosophers: "Ah, dead one (*ὦ νεκρέ*), when I go to my country, I shall tell Heraclianus."<sup>102</sup> This shows strongly the exclusive pride of Appian on behalf of the Alexandrian Greeks in their cultural heritage in his confrontation with boldness (*Παρρησία*).<sup>103</sup>

This fragment aims to highlight the Roman emperor's injustice. It reveals fervent anti-Roman sentiment because the dialogue between the emperor and Appian concerns the accusation of the emperor's corruption. Instead, the emperor's rapid sentence of death to Appian has a clear message for the Alexandrian Greeks, who believe that the Roman emperor is absolutely unjust. It functions ultimately as political propaganda against the Roman empire for the Alexandrian Greeks. However, this papyrus is unusual like the case of the two other documents<sup>104</sup> because we find nothing further of anti-Semitic sentiment.

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<sup>100</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 516.

<sup>101</sup> *P.Yale Inv. 1536. Col. ii. 1-6.*

<sup>102</sup> cf. Musurillo (1954, 214) suggests that "Appian is undoubtedly thinking of the transportation of his own body to Alexandria after execution for burial in the family grave."

<sup>103</sup> See chapter 7 *Παρρησία*

<sup>104</sup> cf. § 5.1.3. *P. bibl. univ, Giss. 46: The 'Gerousia Acta'* and § 5.1.6. *Acta Maximi*

### 5.1.10.2. *P. Oxy. 33*

This papyrus' date is the reign of Commodus (176-192 CE).<sup>105</sup> It is composed of five columns of 102 lines. It begins with a dialogue between the prisoners Appian and Heliodorus. It manifests the exclusive pride and strong patriotic nationalism of the Alexandrian Greeks. The scene is a dispute between the emperor and Appian in which Appian calls him a tyrant. Moreover, Appian compares the emperor with his father. When Caesar hears of Appian's severe criticism, the emperor immediately orders Appian to be led away to execution; Appian then appeals to Caesar. Here the Alexandrian pride of birth, boldness and the emperor's cultural snobbery are seen. At the same time, the emperor orders him to die. This shows the emperor to be the opposite of his father.<sup>106</sup> Then Appian appeals on the basis of his nobility and privileges (89f.). Here a parallel with the legal appeal of Graeco-Roman times can be found in Acts, regarding Paul's Roman citizenship. Appian makes two attempts to appeal to his noble rank and privileges in this text.<sup>107</sup> Thus, he gets the chance to be executed in his fillet and white shoes. There he shouts his disadvantage to the Roman crowd, who were complaining about the execution of Appian. So the emperor called him back for recognition of their complaint. Appian was not pleased

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<sup>105</sup> cf. Tcherikover and Fuks (*CPJ*. vol. II, 100) suggest that "the recto contains a registry-office roll, composed and dated under Commodus. Since the events narrated in the Acts of Appian also belong to the time of Commodus, it is obvious that these Acts, like the Acts of Paulus and Antoninus, were composed a short time after the events. Nevertheless, the veracity of the story is by no means beyond doubt."

<sup>106</sup> *P.Oxy. 33. Col. ii. 7-13*. Here Appian compares Commodus with his father Marcus Aurelius: "the divine Antoninus, was fit to be emperor. For, look you, first of all he was a philosopher; secondly, he was not avaricious; thirdly, he was good. But you have precisely the opposite qualities (*σοὶ τοῦτον τὰ ἐναντία ἔνκειται*): you are tyrannical, dishonest, crude (*ἀπαιδία*)."; cf. Tcherikover and Fuks (*CPJ*. vol. II, 105) note that "the characteristics of the late Emperor, especially the reference to 'philosophy', fit Marcus Aurelius, whereas the traits attributed by Appian to his son correspond very well to the cruel character of Commodus. The threefold division of the traits of character of Marcus and Commodus was intended to be parallel."; cf. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Emperor and his Virtues', *Historia* 30 (1981) 298. Here Wallace-Hadrill stresses the image of the Roman emperors as the charismatic ruler: "the essential requirement for the charismatic ruler is the possession (in his subject's eyes) of powers regarded as coming from outside, not from normal human nature." However, in *P.Oxy. 33*, we can find the greatest portrayal of any Roman emperor from Appian's tribute concerning Commodus' father.

<sup>107</sup> We can get information about the impressive features of the Roman court: i.e. the appeal scheme of the accused and the judge's grant and hotly disputing dialogues.



to examine it again, instead he accuses the emperor. Appian is ready to meet in death the three Alexandrian heroes, Theon, Isidorus, and Lampon.<sup>108</sup>

This papyrus shows the close relationship between the Alexandrian patriotic Greeks. The fact that Appian is calling the emperor "a leader of gangsters" (*ὁ λήσταρχος*) is far superior in degree to the impertinence of Isidorus in the *Acta Isidori*.<sup>109</sup> This papyrus is a mixed document, with an opening narrative and three other narratives during the intervals between the dialogues. It shows a degree of anti-Romanism. Appian's cynical actions to the emperor provide a good example of the Alexandrian Greeks' anti-Roman view. Appian's references to his own noble rank and privileges also function as anti-Romanism because his pride in his own nobility places the Alexandrian Greeks' social status on a par with those who rank as first-class citizens in their own minds.

## 5.2. Conclusion

In this chapter, it seems clear from literary analysis that a comparison between Acts and the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is well worth pursuing. The dramatic date of each papyrus has been briefly mentioned with most of the papyri of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* relating to the first century CE. This chapter has aimed to focus on the subject-matter of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. We have surveyed the subject-matter and main issue of each papyrus. It is especially valuable that the heated issue of each papyrus leads us to focus on a comparison with the narratives of Acts.

The analysis of the literary category is needed to find the ideology of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Generally, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are the dramatic presentation of the trials of the patriotic Alexandrian Greeks with many of them following the

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<sup>108</sup> cf. R. MacMullen (1966) 87; see *P.Oxy.* 33. 75f. "When Appian had come in, he said: 'Who is it this time that called me back as I was about to greet Death again and those who died before me, Theon and Isidorus and Lampon? Was it the Senate or you, you brigand-chief?'"

<sup>109</sup> cf. *CPJ*. vol. II, 100; See § 5.1.4. The analysis of the *Acta Isidori*; cf. Jon A. Weatherly, *Jewish Responsibility for the Death of Jesus in Luke-Acts*, JSNTSS 106, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994, 260. Here Weatherly comments that "Appian's insulting words are to be understood not as negative instances of insolence but as the just accusations of a man falsely charged by a corrupt ruler. His innocence stands in bold relief against the background of his adversary's degeneracy."

protocol format. The literary structure of each text is composed of dialogue, narrative, and court-speech. We have also analysed the ideology of the texts which may be summarized in terms of two sentiments: anti-Semitism, anti-Romanism. However, even though anti-Semitism is frequently mentioned in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, it is only an incidental purpose, because the main purpose is to criticize the Roman emperors, as mentioned. It is to be assumed that anti-Semitism is employed as a literary tactic subsidiary to the main purpose. It is quite clear that the Alexandrian Greeks understand the Jewish problem of their political purpose in terms of the protection of their civic rights as first class citizens. This analysis of each papyrus of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* will form the groundwork for examining significant motifs of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* in the next chapter.



## Chapter 6

### Significant motifs in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

The papyrological and ideological profile of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* has been reviewed in the previous chapter. Clearly, from this preliminary exploration, at least, a comparison between the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and Acts will be well worth pursuing. In this chapter we shall present a brief analytical summary of individual motifs<sup>1</sup> in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

As can be seen when discussing the court hearings of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the principal motifs are clearly visible in the presentation of each trial. Thus, a review of the motifs provides a good starting-point for a comparative analysis with Acts, especially Paul's trial-scenes, because the motifs themselves suggest some literary parallels between the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and the narratives of Acts. This analysis of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* will allow us to appreciate fully the original purposes of Luke in Acts. For example, in the trial scenes of the papyri, we might find the emperor consulting a council made up of his friends as when "the tribune ordered the chiefs and the entire council to meet" (Acts 22:30). In Acts, Felix postpones the sentence as does the emperor of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and adjourns his judgement until "Lysias will come down" (Acts 24:22). If we understand the legal mechanism in the scene, the setting enables us to appreciate that the scenes are created by the author(s) in order to introduce suspense.

For convenience' sake, I have divided these motifs into three principal classes. Firstly, we shall examine the patriotic motifs in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* which fall into four categories:

- 1) *Amour-propre* of pedigree
- 2) Devotion to the Greek gods

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<sup>1</sup> cf. F. Martin (compiled and ed.), *Narrative Parallels to the New Testament*, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988, 13. Here Martin stresses the function of motif: "Motif often forms the basis for comparison since it is the element of meaning which travels most easily from one literary or traditional context to another. This quality makes motif a particularly apt means of establishing a connection through the use of literary allusion."

- 3) Love of home town (Alexandria)
- 4) Pride of Alexandrian office.

These four themes aim to reveal the pride of the Alexandrian Greeks: The "*Amour-propre* of pedigree" is important to bear in mind when we consider the role of the patriotic motifs in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* because it provides the possibility of patriotism. As the papyri make clear in a number of the main characters' voices, 'pure' Alexandrian citizenship is significant in the trial of Isidorus,<sup>2</sup> Appian,<sup>3</sup> and Hermaiscus<sup>4</sup> as are close relationships between Greeks of different cities.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, we also find the martyrdom motifs such as the "death motifs" and "injustice of the Romans". Among these motifs, the "injustice of the Romans" is often seen in the context of appeals by the Alexandrian Greeks in some papyri.<sup>6</sup> This can be shown by Lampon's remark in *Recension A* (*Chrest.* 14) of the *Acta Isidori*,<sup>7</sup> Heliodorus' despair in *P. Oxy.* 33 *Col.i.* 10f., Appian's appeal for his rights in the *Acta Appiani*, the apparently arbitrary punishment of Greeks in A. Maximi (*P. Oxy.* 471) and the torturing of Antoninus in the *Acta Pauli et Antonini Col.vi.* 28ff.

Lastly, it is absolutely clear that "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism" are the important underlying themes in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* both of which are found in several of the texts. These two ideologies are also integral to our work on the narratives of Acts. In the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, they are linked with the themes of the "Alexandrian patriotic nationalism" and "anti-Romanism".<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Chrest.* 14 *Col.iii.* 9f.; *P. Lond.* 2785. 34f.

<sup>3</sup> *P.Oxy.* 33. *Col.iii.* 3ff.

<sup>4</sup> *P.Oxy.* 1242. 44f.

<sup>5</sup> *P.Oxy.* 2177. 6ff.

<sup>6</sup> cf. below § 6.2.2.

<sup>7</sup> *Col.iii.* 13ff.

<sup>8</sup> H. A. Musurillo divides the *Acta Alexandrinorum* into three important motifs as patriotic motifs, pathetic or martyr-motifs and propaganda motifs. cf. H.A. Musurillo (1976), 'Christian and Political Martyrs in the Early Roman Empire: a Reconsideration', in D.M. Pippidi (ed.), *Assimilation Et Résistance à La Culture Greco-Romaine Dans Le Monde Ancien*, Paris: Société D'Édition Les Belles Lettres, 1976, 337. Here, Musurillo classifies the *Acta Alexandrinorum* as stemming from at least three factions: the radical anti-Roman party, the conservative/pro-Roman party, and the Greek-moderates. However, they shared a common love for Alexandria; and the fact of their co-operation is clear from their activity on various diplomatic missions as well as their common policy towards the Alexandrian Jews.



The inspiration for this work came about from Musurillo's well-analysed investigation<sup>9</sup> which makes his research on this subject especially valuable. In the following sections, the motifs will be divided into two parts: "patriotic motifs" and "martyrdom motifs". After the discussion, we will argue that the use of two motifs - "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism" - was for reasons of propaganda.

### 6.1. Patriotic motifs

The patriotic motifs are significant to the plots of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. One may even argue that political aspects are the central components of the documents. According to V.A. Tcherikover and A. Fuks, we may identify the patriotic motifs from the *Acta Alexandrinorum* as follows: "The heroes of these fragments were sentenced to death by Roman emperors and executed by Roman hangmen as representatives of Alexandria, and their tragic death was a result of their intrepid defence of the rights of the Alexandrian Greeks before the Caesars."<sup>10</sup> Therefore, as E.M. Smallwood also agrees, many scholars insist that the name "Alexandrian Martyrs" rather than "Pagan Martyrs" is the only one which fits the situation.<sup>11</sup>

#### 6.1.1. *Amour-propre* of pedigree<sup>12</sup>

"*Amour-propre* of pedigree", which means "pride of birth", is the most important representative of the patriotic motifs. "*Amour-propre* of pedigree" is a most useful clue when comparing the *Acta Alexandrinorum* with the narratives in Acts. What the Alexandrian Greeks aim to achieve when they appeal to Caesar or

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<sup>9</sup> H.A. Musurillo, *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs: Acta Alexandrinorum*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954.

<sup>10</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II, 55.

<sup>11</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II, 55; cf. E.M. Smallwood, *The Jews Under Roman Rule From Pompey To Diocletian: A study in political relations*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1981, 251, n. 116. Here Smallwood points out that "Alexandrian Martyrs is a more appropriate name than Pagan or Heathen Martyrs, since no question of religious faith was involved and the basis of the conflict was purely political."

<sup>12</sup> cf. Paulus of Tyre, 'voluntary' advocate in 10 of *P.Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermaisci*. The noble disciples of Heraeus in 56ff. of *P.Oxy. 2177: Acta Athenodori*.

when they send envoys to Rome is to keep their civil privilege in terms of Alexandrian citizenship. This patriotic motif is found in several texts. At first, Isidorus appears with his "*Amour-propre* of pedigree":

I am neither slave nor actress's son, but gymnasiarch of the glorious city of Alexandria. But you are the cast-off son of the Jewess Salome!<sup>13</sup>

Isidorus is also portrayed as a "gymnasiarch (*γυμνασίαρχος*) of Alexandria, fifty-six years old, a Greek...an orator".<sup>14</sup> Appian argues that the Emperor should allow him to die in a manner befitting his "*Amour-propre* of pedigree":

Appian: 'Grant that I may be executed in my noble insignia' (*κέλευσόν με ἐν τῇ εὐγενείᾳ μου ἀπαχθῆναι*).

The emperor: 'Granted.'

Appian (then) took his fillet and put it on his head and, putting his white shoes on his feet, he cried out in the middle of Rome: 'Come up, Romans, and see a unique spectacle, an Alexandrian gymnasiarch and ambassador led to execution!'<sup>15</sup>

He also appeals to his noble rank and privileges in *Col.iv. 13-Col.v. 8. of P. Oxy. 33:16*

Appian: 'By your *genius*, I am neither mad nor have I lost my sense of shame (*νῆ τὴν σὴν τύχην οὔτε μαίνομαι οὔτε ἀπομένομαι*). I am making an appeal on behalf of my noble rank and my privileges (*ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ εὐγενείας καὶ τῶν ἐμοὶ προσηκόντων ἀπαγγέλλω*)."

The emperor: 'How so?'

Appian: 'As one of noble rank (*εὐγενής*) and a gymnasiarch.'

The emperor: 'Do you suggest that I am not of noble rank (*ἀγενεῖς*)?'

Appian: 'That I know not; I am merely appealing on behalf of my own nobility and privileges'.

The motif of "*Amour-propre* of pedigree" is also demonstrated in a dialogue between Hermaiscus and a Caesar in *P. Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermaisci 44f.* where Caesar scoffs at the nobility of Hermaiscus:

Caesar said: 'This is the second time I am telling you, Hermaiscus: you are answering me insolently, taking advantage of your birth.' (*αὐθάδως ἀποκρίνη πεποιθῶς τῷ σεαυτοῦ γένει*).

"*Amour-propre* of pedigree" as a contrast between "pure" Alexandrian citizenship and the uncultured is also demonstrated in 5f. of *PSI 1160: The 'Boule'- Papyrus*:

<sup>13</sup> *Chrest. 14. Col.iii. 9f.*; see on the question of Salome, Musurillo (1954) 128-130.

<sup>14</sup> *Col. ii. 34f. of P. Lond. Inv. 2785.*

<sup>15</sup> *P.Oxy. 33. Col. iii. 3ff.*

<sup>16</sup> cf. Acts 22:24-30; 23:27; 25:6-12; 25:25; 26:32; 27:24.



It will take care that the pure (?) citizen body (*πολίτευμα*) of Alexandria is not corrupted by men who are uncultured and uneducated.

Clearly from these passages, the Alexandrian Greek citizens are worried about the abuse of their rights of pure citizenship by other people such as Jews and even Egyptians.

The close relationships between all Greeks of many different cities reinforces the "*Amour-propre* of pedigree" of Alexandrian Greeks. This is illustrated in 4ff. of *P. Oxy. 2177: Acta Athenodori* :

Caesar: 'You are ambassadors of an alien city (*ὕμεις τῆς ἀλλοτρίας πρεσβευταί ἐστε*).'

Athamas: 'Not of an alien city, but of our own. For the city is akin (to ours) (*καὶ γὰρ συγγενῆς ἡ πόλις*).

Caesar: 'Have someone summon Athenodorus for me.

Caesar: 'Is it true that the Athenians have the same laws as the Alexandrians?'

Athenodorus: 'It is; and they are stronger than all other laws, having a happy admixture of clemency.'

According to the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the motif of "*Amour-propre* of pedigree" shows initially that the nobility of Alexandrian Greeks is quite different from the other peoples in the city. The Alexandrian citizenship represents the cultured and the educated Greek in the Alexandrian Greek society. The importance of this motif suggests that it may provide a useful background for understanding the literary motif of Paul's citizenship in Acts.

### 6.1.2. Devotion to the Greek gods

One way in which the ideology of the texts is expressed is through religious attitudes. The "anti-Jewish tendency" of these texts reveals itself in devotion to the Greek gods and in a corresponding hostility to the Jewish God. As we shall further discuss, "anti-Semitism" also plays a secondary function in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* as a vehicle through which Greek criticism is expressed about the Roman empire.

The "reverence for Serapis" is representative of the "devotion to the Greek gods" in 30, 34, 47f. of *P.Oxy.1089*.<sup>17</sup> The documents reveal that Serapis

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<sup>17</sup> *P.Oxy. 1089* holds a peculiar point that the choice of Serapeum as the place of the negotiation itself typifies the devotion to the Greek gods.

definitely surpasses the God of the Jewish people.<sup>18</sup> Anti-Semitism is noticeably intensified in this papyrus. In 50ff. of *P. Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermaisci*, a similar miracle of Serapis is described: "When Hermaiscus was accusing Caesar whose Privy Council was filled with impious Jews, the bust of Serapis that they carried suddenly broke into a sweat, and Trajan the emperor was astonished at the miracle." This implies the absolute victory of Serapis over the Jewish God.

The "contempt for the Jewish God" as a mode of anti-Semitism appears in the line 32 of *P. Berol. 8877*.<sup>19</sup> Isidorus accuses the Jews of wishing to stir up the whole world (*ἐνκαλώ αὐτοῖς ὅτι καὶ ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην θέλουσι παράσσειν*). He adds that the Jews should pay the poll-tax like the Egyptians. However, Agrippa denies that any one has levied taxes on the Jews. At the same time, Balbillus ridicules the Jewish God. Isidorus does not neglect to say that "[The Jews] are not of the same temperament as the Alexandrians (*οὐκ εἰσιν Ἀλεξανδρεῦσιν ὁμοιοπαθεῖς*)." We, therefore, can confirm that the quoted passages hint at anti-Semitism through devout Greek piety. In addition, this implies anti-Roman sentiments because the Alexandrian Greeks strongly believe that the Roman rulers have become the patrons of Jewish people. In this way, the Jews are shown as trouble-agents between Alexandrians and Romans by using both anti-Jewish sentiments and anti-Roman sentiments.

### 6.1.3. Love of home town (Alexandria)

The *Acta Alexandrinorum* include the theme of "love/pride of home town" similarly to what we find in Acts 21:39 which describes Paul's pride in being from Tarsus. The *Acta Pauli et Antonini* represent Paulus and Antoninus' "love of Alexandria" in *Col. vi. 1ff.*, and 17f.:

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<sup>18</sup> cf. Musurillo (1954, 164) points out that "the author meant to imply the superiority of Serapis over Jahweh."

<sup>19</sup> It is *Recension C* of *Acta Isidori*.



Paulus: 'My only concern is for the grave in Alexandria which I expect to have. Advancing as I am towards this, I shall have no fear of telling you the truth.' (1ff.). ...

Antoninus: 'My Lord Caesar, I swear by your genius he speaks the truth as one who may not live another day. For when we were in such pressing circumstances and so many letters had been sent you saying that (the prefect) had ordered the impious Jews to transfer their residence to a place from which they could easily be attacked and ravage our well-named city (ἡμῶν πόλιν). (17f.)

In *P.Oxy. 33 of Col.i. 9-14. of the Acta Appiani*, Heliodorus says to Appian:

Heliodorus: 'To whom can we speak, if we have no one who will listen? On, my son, go to your death. Yours shall be the glory of dying for your dearest native city (κλέος σοί ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ τῆς γλυκυτάτης σου πατρίδος τελευτήσαι). Be not distressed;...'

Isidorus in the *Acta Isidori* says, "I am gymnasiarch of the glorious city of Alexandria (ἀλλὰ διασήμου πόλεως Ἀλεξανδρείας γυμνασίαρχος)."<sup>20</sup> Even though the fact that Alexandria is stressed in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* quite naturally, still the reader is struck by the fact that the texts reveal the appeal of the city of Alexandria in almost all fragments. The Alexandrian Greeks' "love of home town" is abundant in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

#### 6.1.4. Pride of Alexandrian office

As will be shown, the portraits of the Alexandrian Greek leaders serve mainly to confirm the sense of the identity of the patriotic leaders and the social group for which they work.<sup>21</sup> Quite clearly, among the Alexandrian Greek nationalistic patriots in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, Appian especially was very proud of his office as an Alexandrian gymnasiarch and ambassador as seen in *Col.iii. 5ff. of P.Oxy. 33:*

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Appian took his fillet and put it on his head, and putting his white shoes on his feet, he cried out in the middle of Rome: 'Come up, Romans, and see a unique spectacle, an Alexandrian gymnasiarch and ambassador led to execution!'

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<sup>20</sup> *Chrest. 14. Col.iii. 10-11*; cf. The following papyri show the Alexandrian's nationalistic features. *PSI 1160: 'The Boule-Papyrus'* 3ff.; *P.Oxy. 2177: Acta Athenodori* 15ff. - Alexandrian citizenship and laws.

<sup>21</sup> cf. Alan B. Lloyd, 'Nationalist Propaganda in Ptolemaic Egypt,' *Historia* 31 (1982) 35. Lloyd observes the importance of the propagandist's sense of insecurity which emerges in several ways.

<sup>22</sup> cf. We can find another example which is also stressing his noble rank and the office of gymnasiarch in v. 3f. of *P.Oxy. 33*.

In *Col.iii. 10 of Chrest. 14*<sup>23</sup> Isidorus also emphasizes his office as a gymnasiarch, not a slave or actress's son, of the glorious city of Alexandria.

We find an example of the pride of the legates from a dialogue between Caesar and Athamas in *P. Oxy. 2177: Acta Athen. 4ff.* When Athamas comes to support Athenodorus' innocence in the presence of Caesar, Athamas strongly denies that his city is a separate city. The dialogue between Caesar and Athamas starts with the contrary viewpoint as follows:

Caesar: 'You are ambassadors of an alien city.'

Athamas: 'Not of an alien city, but of our own. For the city is akin (to ours).'

When a group of envoys came to Rome to clear up the Jewish problems in Alexandria, they used their specific offices as the envoys to appeal on behalf of the Alexandrians' struggle against Caesar. These envoys are alluded to in *P. Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermiasci 3ff.:*

Dionysius, who had held many procuratorships, and Salvius, Julius Salvius, Timagenes, Pastor the gymnasiarch, Julius Phantias, Philoxenus the gymnasiarch-elect, Sotion the gymnasiarch, Theon, Athenodorus, and Paulus of Tyre, who offered his services as advocate for the Alexandrians.

In *Acta Maximi I (P.Oxy. 471)*, we also find the opposition to Maximus' interference in Alexandrian offices.

Even though the "pride of Alexandrian office" is rarely shown in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* among the patriotic-motifs, its function is integral to the plots of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The motif aims to proclaim the pride of Alexandrian Greek citizens. For instance, in the eyes of the Alexandrians there is no doubt that the office of gymnasiarch and ambassador of Alexandria is certainly a post of lower merit than the Roman emperor, but the Alexandrian Greek citizens were boldly confronting the emperor at the moment.

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<sup>23</sup> *Recension A* of the *Acta Isidori* ; cf. In *Recension B (P.Lond. Inv. 2785)* of the *Acta Isidori*, Isidorus mentions his official status as a gymnasiarch of Alexandria.



## 6.2. Martyrdom motifs

Martyrdom motifs, too, are essential to the narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. As argued, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are predominately intended for political propaganda against the Roman rulers. It is apparent that the *Acta Alexandrinorum* include numerous scenes on the suffering or death of the Alexandrian patriots for the cause of national destiny. Martyrdom motifs are composed of two sub-motifs: the "death motif" and the "injustice of the Romans". This is also a good starting point for comparison between the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and the narratives of Acts.

### 6.2.1. Death motif<sup>24</sup>

The death motif is a typical motif among the martyrdom-motifs. At first, Lampon speaks to Isidorus concerning his despair about death in *Col.iii. 2f.* of *Chrest. 14*: when he comments, 'I have looked upon death (ἐφείδον ἤδη τὸν θάνατον)....' Later, Lampon comments to Isidorus that he is no longer fearful for he calls Claudius Caesar a "crazy Emperor (ἡ παραφρονοῦντι βασιλεῖ)" (*Col. iii. ll. 14-15*). Lampon's proclamation is significant in that it shows his courage in confronting death. Similarly, Hermaiscus' obstinacy towards the Emperor Trajan is presented in *P. Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermaisci 40ff.* The following dialogue between the two main characters shows how the text highlights Hermaiscus' bravery and the fact that he is not worried about his death:

[Trajan:] 'You must be eager to die, having such contempt for death as to answer even me with insolence.'

Hermaiscus said: 'Why, it grieves us to see your Privy Council filled with impious Jews.'

Caesar said: 'This is the second time I am telling you, Hermaiscus: you are answering me insolently, take advantage of your birth.'

Hermaiscus said: 'What do you mean, I answer you insolently, greatest emperor? Explain this to me.'

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<sup>24</sup> cf. A.Y. Collins (1994) 495; D. Seeley, *The Noble Death: Graeco-Roman Martyrology and Paul's Concept of Salvation*, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990; A.J. Droge/J.D. Tabor, *A Noble Death: Suicide and Martyrdom Among Christians and Jews In Antiquity*, NY: Harper SanFrancisco, 1992.

Paulus is alluding to his death in the *Acta Pauli et Antonini Col.vi. 1ff.* by speaking of his Alexandrian grave. However, he boldly asks Caesar to listen to the truth as follows:

My only concern is for the grave (*τάφος*) in Alexandria which I expect to have. Advancing as I am towards this, I shall have no fear of telling you the truth. Listen to me then, Caesar, as to one who may not live beyond the morrow.

That is to say, the death motif is used to stress the Alexandrian's request to the emperor. Appian's remark to the corpse in *Col.ii. 27f.* of *P.Yale Inv. 1536* also presents a strong death motif:

As Appian was being taken off to execution he noticed a dead body (*νεκρόν*) and said: 'Ah, dead one (*ὦ νεκρέ*), when I go to my country, I shall tell Heraclianus.

The prisoner Heliodorus' misery is shown in *P.Oxy. 33<sup>25</sup> Col.i. 9f.* in the following manner:

Heliodorus: 'To whom can we speak, if we have no one who will listen? On, my son, go to your death (*τρέχε, τέκνον, τελεύτα*). Yours shall be the glory of dying for your dearest native city (*κλέος σοί ἐστίν ὑπὲρ τῆς γλυκυτάτης σου πατρίδος τελευτῆσαι*). Be not distressed.'

Heliodorus' remark about death makes it possible for Appian to be encouraged. Also this statement shows a sincere attitude towards death in which death is seen as the most valuable destiny of the Alexandrian Greeks.

What comes to light by these examples of the death motif is that the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are designed to propagandize the political innocence of Alexandrian Greeks and to praise the death of the Alexandrian patriotic nationalists. Therefore, this examination of the death motif in the papyri supports the general propaganda purpose for the Alexandrian Greek citizens. It is typical of the martyrdom motif which is intended predominately to propagate political propaganda.

### 6.2.2. Injustice of the Romans

We have discussed the point that the death of the Alexandrians is a representative and popular motif among the martyrdom motifs. Ironically the

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<sup>25</sup> This text is a part of the *Acta Appiani*.



Alexandrian Greeks confront Roman emperors in the court, but Jews always stand at the centre of the accusations against the Alexandrian leaders. The Alexandrians' allegations which criticize the Romans for favouring the Jews are often asserted in such a manner that the Alexandrian Greeks even claim that the hearings are influenced by the Jews. Feasibly, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* aim to express anti-Romanism through anti-Semitism.<sup>26</sup> The *Acta Alexandrinorum* intentionally focus on the shameful tricks of the Roman emperors who in cooperation with Jews intend to control the society of the Alexandrian Greek citizens and to promote the cessation of political hostilities in Alexandria.

Agrippa is a Jewish character who appears at the trial described in *P.Berol.* 8877. *Col. ii.* offering his support to the Jewish people. When Isidorus accuses the Jewish people of wishing to stir up the entire world in the presence of Augustus, he regards the Jews as the people who are absolutely on a level with those who pay the poll-tax. When Agrippa hears it, he immediately supports the Jews with "But no one has levied taxes on the Jews."<sup>27</sup> This strongly implies that Roman emperors who appear at the hearings in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* show favouritism towards the Jews, and that the emperor who adopts Agrippa, the Jewish king, intends also to manipulate the unjust trials in favour of the Jews. Lampon calls Claudius Caesar a crazy Emperor (*παραφρονοῦντι βασιλεῖ*) in *Chrest.* 14 *Col. iii.* 14ff. Appian criticizes Caesar who is "tyrannical, dishonest, and crude." The emperor immediately orders Appian to be led away to execution. This illegal verdict functions to accuse the Roman emperor of acting in a totally unjust fashion.

The appeal of Appian is shown in the *Acta Appiani P.Oxy.*33. Two main examples of legal appeal are presented here. The first is a representative example of the Roman legal appeal in the request for a specific grant:

Appian: 'Yes, I do: Appian speaks to a tyrant ( 'Αππιανὸς τυράννῳ).'  
The emperor: 'No, to an emperor.'

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<sup>26</sup> See further in section § 6.3.

<sup>27</sup> *P.Berol.* 8877. *Col.ii.* 11f.

Appian: 'Say not so! Your father, the divine Antoninus, was fit to be emperor. ... But you have precisely the opposite qualities (σοὶ τούτων τὰ ἐναντία ἔνκειται): you are tyrannical, dishonest, crude (τυραννία ἀφιλοκαγαθία ἀπαιδία)!'

Caesar (then) ordered him to be led away to execution. As Appian was being taken, he said: 'Grant (χάρισαι) me but one thing, my Lord Caesar.'

The emperor: 'What?'

Appian: 'Grant that I may be executed in my noble insignia (εὐγενεία μου).'

The emperor: 'Granted.' (Col.ii. 5-Col.iii. 4)

The second example of the Roman legal appeal concentrates on the status or rank of the accused as the basis for an appeal. Col.iv. 9f. states:

The emperor: 'Appian, I am accustomed to chasten those who rave and have lost all scene of shame. You speak only so long as I permit you to.'

Appian: 'By your genius, I am neither mad nor have I lost my sense of shame (νῆ τὴν σὴν τύχην οὔτε μαίνομαι οὔτε ἀπονευόημαι). I am making an appeal on behalf of my noble rank and my privileges (ἀλλ' ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ εὐγενείας καὶ τῶν ἐμοὶ προσηκόντων ἀπαγγέλλω).'

The emperor: 'How so?'

Appian: 'As one of noble rank and a gymnasiarch.'

The emperor: 'Do you suggest that I am not of noble rank?'

Appian: 'That I know not; I am merely appealing on behalf of my own nobility and privileges (ἐγὼ ὑπὲρ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ εὐγενείας καὶ τῶν ἐμοὶ προσηκόντων ἀπαγγέλλω).'

As we may imagine, on the one hand, the scheme of appeal in the court is a symbol for justice. However, on the other hand, the appeal system clearly perpetuates the injustice of the Roman court, especially the injustice of the emperors. The apparently arbitrary punishment of the Alexandrian Greeks is vigorously unveiled in the *Acta Max. I* (P.Oxy. 471), 94 ff. Effectively, the Alexandrian Greeks are dehumanized by their enemy here represented by Maximus. Some incredible episodes are described in *Acta Max. I* (P.Oxy. 471) as follows:

No, but if a beggar in poor clothing petitions you, you confiscate his property with that of his wife and friends (τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν ἀναλημφθῆναι κελεύεις). And the man that sat in the theatre without white garments you condemned to death (τὸν οὐκ ἐν λευκαῖς ἐσθῆσιν ἐν θεάτρῳ καθίσαντα παρέδωκας εἰς θάνατον). Yet this beardless and ..., yes, and handsome boy you kept in the Palace every day and would no longer send him to school or to those exercises which are proper for the young. How much more you would have blamed his father - and justly - for not training him in this respect!

According to the *Acta Max. I* (P.Oxy. 471), Maximus' cruelty in Egypt is possible because he has never taken care of any Alexandrian. He will not give to a beggar. Rather, he confiscates the poor person's property. The boy appearing in the above



passage is an Alexandrian youth who does not even go to school. This strongly indicates that the Maximus' image is especially poor, and his "lack of culture" is beyond conception. The cruelty of Maximus cannot be compared with any other cases of injustice of Roman authorities.

Another example of arbitrary punishment of the Greeks is seen when Paulus and Antoninus mention the political dilemma of Alexandrian society. However, the emperor's partial and unjust decision is only revealed in the torturing of Antoninus in the *Acta Pauli et Antonini Col.vi. 28ff.* as below:

Caesar: 'Let Paulus go; but have Antoninus bound (*Παῦλος μὲν ἀφείσθω Ἀντωννεῖνος δὲ*)'

The sacrifice of the Alexandrian patriotic nationalists is an example of the injustice of the Roman emperors which leads to a severe attack on the Roman empire. The Alexandrian Greeks are always portrayed as respectful to the emperors until provoked.<sup>28</sup> However, the Alexandrians severely criticize the Romans in the end, particularly the emperors of that time. This means that the *Acta Alexandrinorum's* exclusive aim is for the Alexandrian Greeks to spread nationalistic and patriotic propaganda so that the Roman emperors change their behaviour towards the Alexandrian Greek citizens. Thus, they highlight in the readers' mind a motif of the "injustice of the Romans".

### 6.3. The final intentions of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

This section looks like a repetition of earlier motifs. However, it allows us to bring out more clearly the underlying ideology behind the specific charges of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Smallwood in her compendium summarizes the gist of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*:

The episodes related, of which the dramatic dates range from the time of Augustus to that of Commodus, are probably basically historical and the accounts

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<sup>28</sup> See further *Chrest. 14 Col.ii. 10* (My Lord Caesar); *P.Oxy. 33. Col.iv. 13ff.* (By your *genius*, I am neither mad nor have I lost my sense of shame); *Acta Pauli et Antonini Col.vi. 8ff.* (My Lord Caesar, I swear by your genius he speaks the truths); *P.Oxy.1242: Acta Hermaischi 45f.* (I answer you insolently, greatest emperor?)

appear to be derived to some extent from official records. But they have been coloured up, more in some cases than in others, for propaganda purposes, to caricature the emperors, to stress the fearless outspokenness of the Alexandrians, who are sometimes surprisingly rude to the emperors, and to represent their punishment, usually execution, as martyrdom in the nationalist cause. This literature is in general bitterly hostile to Rome, reflecting the tensions between Alexandria and her overlord during the first two centuries of Roman rule. These included antagonism between the Alexandrian Greeks and Rome's protégés, the Jews, and three episodes concern their quarrels. But despite the violent hatred expressed by the Greeks for the Jews, anti-Semitism is only a subsidiary feature in these primarily anti-Roman compositions.<sup>29</sup>

In conclusion, it is possible that the patriotic motifs and the martyrdom motifs are used to reveal the two main ideologies of anti-Semitism and anti-Romanism.

### 6.3.1. Anti-Semitism<sup>30</sup>

It is clear that the *Acta Alexandrinorum* aim primarily to accuse the Roman emperors. To this end, the ideology of anti-Semitism is employed to support the criticism of Rome. This, as Tcherikover and Fuks point out, means:

The main object of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is to ridicule the Roman Caesar; the dialogue between him and the intrepid gymnasiarch has no other aim but that of showing how stupid and rude the Emperor is, and how readily influenced by others, especially in his attitude to the Alexandrians. As to the anti-Semitic tendency, its aim is to serve as additional proof of the hostile attitude of the emperors to the Alexandrians. This hatred of the Jews was a permanent feature in the political *credo* of the Alexandrians in the Roman period; it would be waste of time for an Alexandrian writer to explain to his fellow citizens why Jews ought to be hated. The anti-Semitic feeling of the Alexandrian population could, therefore, easily be used as a means of political propaganda for other purposes.<sup>31</sup>

That is to say, Jews remain under the threat of the Alexandrians because Alexandrian citizens think that the Jews enjoy favour from the Roman government. Therefore, the anti-Semitic tone of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is obvious and constant. Nevertheless, the anti-Semitism is only a secondary ideology. Always, the underlying purpose of the Alexandrian Greeks is to criticize the Roman empire. Thus, our reading of the

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<sup>29</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1970) 7.

<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 4 § 4.4; cf. On the term anti-Semitism, J.N. Sevenster, *The Roots of Pagan Anti-Semitism in the Ancient World*, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975, 1-35; J.G. Gager, *The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity*, Oxford: OUP, 1985; A.S. Maller, 'Anti-Semitism and Jewish Historiography', *Judaism* 21 (1972), 490; B. Lang, 'Anti-Semitism - A Jewish Question', *Judaism* 26 (1977).

<sup>31</sup> *CPJ*. vol. II, 57.



*Acta Alexandrinorum* clarifies the point that the Alexandrians' ultimate opponent is the Roman empire.

The criticism of J.N. Sevenster is convincing when he states that "when endeavouring to construct a picture of anti-Semitism in the ancient world from the literary and archeological data, it must naturally be kept in mind that the information is seldom neutral. Furthermore it is often difficult to distinguish between the truth and fabrication or exaggeration."<sup>32</sup> Naturally the *Acta Alexandrinorum* reveal the political interests of Alexandrian Greek society. So it can be assumed that the author(s) of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* eagerly created some literary motifs for disclosure of their own propaganda. In the same manner, the ideology of anti-Semitism was skilfully employed in the service of the original intention of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

In *Chrest.* 14 Col.iii. 7f. of the *Acta Isidori*, the reference to the Jewess Salome is the most revealing portion of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* regarding anti-Semitism. When Isidorus defends himself as not a low class person but a gymnasiarch, he calls Claudius Caesar a son of a Jewish woman:

Claudius Caesar: 'Isidorus, are you really the son of an actress (ἀσφαλῶς ἐκ μουσικῆς)?' Isidorus: 'I am neither slave nor actress's son, but gymnasiarch of the glorious city of Alexandria. But you are the cast-off son of the Jewess Salome (σὺ δὲ ἐκ Σαλώμης τῆς Ἰουδαίας υἱὸς ἀπόβλητος)!

In Isidorus' defence, Agrippa is regarded as a "worthless" Jew in *P.Lond.Inv.* 2785.17f.:

Isidorus: My Lord Caesar, what do you care for a twopenny-halfpenny Jew like Agrippa? (τί μέλει σοι ὑπὲρ Ἀγρίππου Ἰουδαίου τριωβολείου).

This is a criticism of Caesar because the Emperor always calls Agrippa to the court even though Agrippa is of no significance in the eyes of the Alexandrian citizens. We also find a cynical portrait of "impious" Jews in the papyri.<sup>33</sup> The "impious" Jews

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<sup>32</sup> J.N. Sevenster (1975) 19; cf. L.L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian*, London: SCM Press, 1992, 410.

<sup>33</sup> cf. *Acta Pauli et Antonini* Col.vi. 14.

are described in scenes of the Alexandrians' complaint to the Roman emperors.

Hermasiscus deplors the situation as such:

"Why, it grieves us to see your Privy Council filled with impious Jews (*ἀλλὰ λυπούμεθα ὅτι συνέδριόν σου ἐπλήσθη τῶν ἀνοσίων Ἰουδαίων*)."<sup>34</sup>

An exact parallel to Acts 24:5 is found in *P.Berol. 8877* of the *Acta Isidori* 22f.

where Jews are described as disturbers of the whole world:

I accuse Jews of wishing to stir up the entire world (*ἐνκαλῶ αὐτοῖς ὅτι καὶ ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην θέλουσι ταρασσείν*)... We must consider the entire mass.

Jews are accused of being mere tax-payers like the Egyptians.<sup>35</sup> In addition, the Alexandrian Balbillus' contempt for the Jewish God is shown in the same papyrus.<sup>36</sup> The Alexandrians' harsh treatment of the Jews is clearly expressed in the *Acta Pauli et Antonini Col.ii*. A reference to the illegal admission of Jews as poll-tax payers into the *ephebate* tends to maximize anti-Semitism in Alexandria in *PSI 1160: The Boule-Papyrus* 2ff. as follows:

It is necessary for us to speak at some length. I submit, then, that the Senate will see to it that none of those who are liable to enrolment for the poll-tax diminish the revenue by being listed in the public records along with the *ephebi* for each year (*φημι γὰρ ταύτην φρ[ο]ντιεῖν ἵνα μή τι τῶν τινές λαογραφείσθαι, τοῖς κατ' ἔτος ἐφήβοις συνεγγραφόμενοι ἐπὶ τὴν δημοσίαν γραφήν*).

Likewise, the Jews in Alexandria appear as trouble-makers. Despite the Jews' payment of the poll-tax, the Alexandrian Greeks divulge the likely fact that the Jews are protected under the benevolent umbrella of the Roman government which the Alexandrians use to their own advantages in the propaganda war against the Roman emperors and their laws. Musurillo, therefore, claims that the sentiments of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are anti-Roman rather than anti-Semitic:

The acrimony of the Greeks towards the Jewish community should not be allowed to obscure the central focus of most of these documents, that is, opposition against Roman domination and control.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *P.Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermasisci* 41ff

<sup>35</sup> *P.Berol. 8877. 27-28*. "They are not of the same temperament as the Alexandrians (*οὐκ εἰσιν Ἀλεξανδρεῦσιν ὁμοιοπαθεῖς*), but live rather after the fashion of the Egyptians (*τρόπῳ δὲ Αἰγυπτίων*)."

<sup>36</sup> *P.Berol. 8877. 32*. (Balbillus says, 'Look to what extremes of insolence either his god or ...')

<sup>37</sup> Musurillo (1976) 336.



In *P.Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermaisci*, as Musurillo claims, "Hermaiscus' accusation that Trajan's Privy Council was filled with Jews obviously reflects Alexandrian propaganda: it was a popular explanation for Rome's policy *vis-à-vis* the Alexandrian Greeks and her favouritism towards the Jews."<sup>38</sup> There the point is that Plotina<sup>39</sup> had Jewish sympathies, and she was able to persuade the Senators to support Jews while opposing the Alexandrians' petition:

Plotina approached (?) the senators in order that they might oppose the Alexandrians and support the Jews (*Πλωτεΐνα ἀπαντᾷ τοὺς συνκλητικούς παραγενέσθαι κατὰ Ἀλεξανδρέων καὶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις βοηθῆσαι*). Now the Jews, who were the first to enter, greeted Emperor Trajan, and the emperor returned their greeting most cordially, having already been won over by Plotina.<sup>40</sup>

By way of summary, the ultimate intention of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* must be anti-Romanism than rather anti-Semitism. By using anti-Semitic arguments, the Alexandrians are attacking the injustice of the Roman empire. That is to say, Jewish people seem to appear as the victims of the conflicts between the Roman and the Alexandrian Greeks.<sup>41</sup>

### 6.3.2. Anti-Romanism

Without a doubt, the ideological colour of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is essentially anti-Roman. Even though the *Acta Alexandrinorum* contain the motif of anti-Semitism, this is only secondary to the primary motif of anti-Romanism. Anti-Semitism is a vehicle by which the writers point out the emperors' wrong deeds in terms of their favouritism towards Jews. To understand this more fully, we need to

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<sup>38</sup> Musurillo (1954) 168.

<sup>39</sup> cf. M.P.B. Zeev, 'Greek Attacks against Alexandrian Jews during Emperor Trajan's Reign', *JSJ* 20 (1989) 40. n. 16. "At all events, interest in the 'woman factor' is a recurrent theme in the Acts of the Alexandrian Martyrs."; E.M. Smallwood (1981, 391) points out the fictional character of this: "Plotina is not known to have had any cause to favour the Jews and moreover was no Agrippina, meddling in political matters."; cf. J.H. Oliver, 'The Empress Plotina and the Sacred Thymelic Synod', *Historia* 24 (1975) 125-128.

<sup>40</sup> *P.Oxy. 1242*. 26ff.

<sup>41</sup> See Chapter 4 on the historico-political background of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

distinguish between the injustice of the Romans<sup>42</sup> and the portrayal of the Roman "tyrants" who frequently appear as the supporters of Jews in several papyri.

First, the following examples illustrate the Roman emperors as tyrants of low birth and lacking in culture. The eulogy of Greek law in the *Acta Athenodori* 15f. implies a Greek pride which aims to look down on Rome.<sup>43</sup> In *P.Oxy.* 33 *Col.ii.* 5f., the dialogue between Appian and an emperor is found as follows:

Appian: 'Yes, I do: Appian speaks to a tyrant.'  
The emperor: 'No, to an emperor.'

In *Chrest.* 14 *Col.iii.* 14f., the political nuance of a tyrant can be read in Lampon's description of Claudius as a crazy emperor. The bias of the Roman emperors is particularly shown by the postponement of decisions in the cases of Appian, Isidorus<sup>44</sup> and Hermaiscus.<sup>45</sup> The "arbitrary changes of decision" allegedly influenced by the Jews in the *Acta Pauli et Antonini* *Col.* vi. 28f.<sup>46</sup> may be included here also as a bad reflection on Roman justice.

Maximus appears as a target of the Alexandrians' complaints in the *Acta Maximi I* (*P. Oxy.* 471). Maximus' apparent neglect of duty and his joining with the seventeen-year-old lad in the seat of justice (*ἀγοραίου κριτηρίου βῆμα*) in the *Acta Maximi I*<sup>47</sup> also lend support to criticism of the Roman government. The charges against Maximus with regard to the Alexandrian youth are recorded in some detail.<sup>48</sup> The papyrus alleges an improper relationship between Maximus and the boy:

Now the last document clearly sets a seal on the devotion and love he felt for the boy (*καὶ τὸν ἔρωτα τὸν πρὸς τὸ μειράκιον*). While we are being oppressed (*θλιβομένων γὰρ ἡμῶν*), whenever he leaves the province (*ἐπειδὴν ἀπαλλαγῆι τῆς ἐπαρχείας*) (?)...<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> cf. See Chapter 6 § 6.2.2. above; cf. P.D.A. Garnsey/C.R. Whittaker (eds.) *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, Cambridge: CUP, 1978.

<sup>43</sup> Caesar: 'Is it true that the Athenians have the same laws as the Alexandrians?' Athenodorus: 'It is; and they are stronger (*ἰσχυρότεροι*) than all other laws, having a happy admixture of clemency.'

<sup>44</sup> *Chrest.* 14. *Col.i.* 16f.; 'The Alexandrian envoys were summoned and the emperor postponed (*μετετάξατο*) their hearing until the following day.'

<sup>45</sup> *P.Oxy.* 1242: *Acta Hermaisci* 34.

<sup>46</sup> Caesar: 'Let Paulus go; but have Antoninus bound. ...'

<sup>47</sup> *P.Oxy.* 471.

<sup>48</sup> See § 5.1.6.1. *Acta Maximi I* (*P.Oxy.* 471)

<sup>49</sup> *Acta Maximi I* (*P.Oxy.* 471) *Col. ii.* 16-27.



The following statement explains the improper relationship between Maximus and the boy in terms of a "homo-sexual motif" as below:

Further, a seventeen-year-old boy used to dine with you every day (ἑπτακαιδεκαετῆς παῖς πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἐδείπνει παρὰ σοί). Everyone of these men here, whenever they were invited to partake of a banquet (and you did not share these favours easily, once you had attained your regal rank) - everyone of these men would see the lad at your drinking-party, sometimes with his father and sometimes alone. They would see, too, the shameful glances and shameful behaviour of these male lovers (ἑώρακε δὲ καὶ βλέμμα ἀναίσχυντον καὶ διαπομπὰς ἀναισχύντους ἐραστῶν δασείων).<sup>50</sup>

The accusation of the emperors' ignoble birth in *Chrest.* 14 *Col.iii.* 11f.<sup>51</sup> and *P.Oxy.* 33 *Col.v.* 4f.<sup>52</sup> manifests the most negative anti-Roman feeling. The documents emphasize that the emperors have become rulers by political means despite their low birth.

Second, the portrait of the Roman emperors further illustrates the immorality of the Roman government and its officials. *P.Yale Inv.* 1536 *Col.ii.* 4f.<sup>53</sup> in addition to *Acta Max.I,* 5ff.<sup>54</sup> especially demonstrate Roman unfairness.<sup>55</sup> In *P.Oxy.* 1089 51f. Flaccus is involved in a business of which the payment is five gold talents. "Dionysius said: 'Never... to count out five talents all in gold, as we proposed, in the middle of the sanctuary". This text portrays Flaccus as a notorious Roman official representing the unjust Roman empire.

The hearings influenced by freedmen are revealed in the *Acta Appiani.* There is also an example of a bad image of Roman government in *P. Oxy.* 1242. 26ff. where the *Acta Hermaisci* imply that the influence of Plotina the empress means the death of the justice and law. The trials influenced by the "women of the court"<sup>56</sup> like

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<sup>50</sup> *Acta Maximi I* (*P.Oxy.* 471) *Col. iii.* 49f.

<sup>51</sup> Isidorus says to Claudius, "you are the cast-off son of the Jewess Salome!"

<sup>52</sup> The emperor rather asks his origin of Appian the accused as follows: "Do you suggest that I am not of noble rank?"

<sup>53</sup> There Appian accuses the emperor of selling the wheat (?) to other cities at four times. Appian acknowledges that it is a fact which is patent to the public.

<sup>54</sup> This papyrus reports that Maximus forced people to pay him interest even for a period in which, in some cases, they had not as yet even received the loan.

<sup>55</sup> Musurillo (1954, 256) suggests that the whole of '*P.Oxy.* 1089: The Interview with Flaccus' perhaps is an accusation against Roman avarice.

<sup>56</sup> cf. *Chrest.* 14 of the *Acta Isidori*

Salome<sup>57</sup> and Plotina<sup>58</sup> explicitly unveil the weakness and injustice of the unjust Roman emperors. The frailty of the Roman people themselves is made apparent by their consternation at the Serapis miracle in *P. Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermaisci* 51f. Their confusion and murmuring is clearly shown in *P. Oxy. 33 Col.iii. 13f.*<sup>59</sup>

From these examples, it is evident that the *Acta Alexandrinorum* convey an anti-Roman ideology by the Alexandrian nationalistic Greeks towards the Roman emperors.

#### 6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, as we have analysed the various motifs of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, we have begun to build a case for comparing the *Acta Alexandrinorum* with Paul's trial narratives in Acts. In analyzing the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, we have discussed two types of motifs: "patriotic motifs" and "martyrdom motifs." Of the patriotic motifs, the "*Amour-propre* of pedigree" represented by the national patriots of the Alexandrian Greek citizenship should provide the greatest point of comparison with Paul's citizenship in the narratives of Acts though the parallels are not exact. Just as Greek citizenship appears as a major element in the narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, so also Paul's Roman and Tarsian citizenship play a major role in Paul's trial narratives. In addition, we have analyzed anti-Semitic and anti-Roman elements particularly in the trial narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* which will be used as a basis for a comparative analysis between the *Acta Alexandrinorum* papyri and Paul's trial narratives in Acts.

The motifs found in the analysis of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* may be able to reinforce a new interpretation of the narratives in Acts. This comparative work hopefully will shed new light on Luke's original purpose in the Pauline trial narratives in Acts. Particularly, by comparison of the narratives of Acts and the *Acta*

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<sup>57</sup> See on full explanation about Salome, Musurillo (1954) 128-30.

<sup>58</sup> *P. Oxy. 1242*

<sup>59</sup> However, on the contrary the bold Appian the Alexandrian is compared with the Romans in the same papyrus *P. Oxy. 33 Col.iv. 3-6*.



*Alexandrinorum*, we may be able to make sense of the function of citizenship and its meaning in the narratives of the two documents. For example, after we have compared the two narratives, we will be in a position to ask the question: What is the political and religious alignment of the Acts-narratives? This question will provide new perspectives for understanding Acts. It means that we may be able to shed new light on Luke's genuine purpose by the comparison of the two narratives.

## Chapter 7 Παρησία

In the previous chapter, we have analysed "patriotic motifs," "martyrdom motifs" and the final intention of the author(s), namely the "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism," as found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Although these motifs and intentions offer some points of comparison between the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and Acts, it is also worth noting the way in which the Alexandrian leaders' attitude towards the Roman emperors is presented with their own typical boldness. As will be analysed, this *Παρησία* is constantly emphasized throughout all the narratives under consideration. However, the term is particularly dominant in the narratives which demonstrate the "martyrdom motifs" of "death" and "injustice of the Romans." Even to the end of their lives, the Alexandrian leaders accused or insulted the Roman emperors with *Παρησία*. That is to say, they achieved their aim which is to propagate their position as honourable Greek citizens of Alexandria though disadvantaged under Roman emperors.

Likewise, *Παρησία* is found in Paul's portrait in Acts. This chapter will attempt to discuss the value of *Παρησία* in Acts as well as in other texts of the New Testament and in classical scholarship. For this analysis, it will be useful to reflect on the function of *Παρησία* in the narratives of Acts. Indeed, although several scholars have explored the notion of *Παρησία*,<sup>1</sup> the concept has been investigated surprisingly little within Acts scholarship. However, this chapter will demonstrate that *Παρησία* plays a significant role in Acts, particularly in Paul's trial narratives.

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<sup>1</sup> See. John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts*, Louisville, Ky.: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992, 147-68; R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire*, London: Routledge, 1967, 88; E.M. Smallwood, 'Acts of the Pagan Martyrs, in N.G. L. Hammond and H. H. Scullard (2nd edn. eds.), *OCD*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970, 7; cf. *P.Lond. Inv.* 2785. 11; cf. In the next chapter, it will be compared with some examples in the Acts, 4:23-31; 9:27f.; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31.



### 7.1. Importance of *Παρησία* 2

W.C. van Unnik emphasizes the significance of *Παρησία* as one of the key words when he says that "Freedom of speech has a prominent place in Acts."<sup>3</sup> The examples of *Παρησία* in the Acts are: 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27, 28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31. The number of occurrences in the whole of the New Testament is as follows:

	Mk	Jn	Acts	2Cor	Eph	Phil	Col	1Tim	Philem	1Thess	Heb	1Jn	Total
Noun	1	9	5	2	2	1	1	1	1		4	4	31
Verb			7		1					1			9

The frequency with which *Παρησία* occurs in Acts exceeds its usage elsewhere in the New Testament. The word appears in the New Testament as a noun 31 times and as a verb nine times. Apart from two occasions,<sup>4</sup> Acts contains all the occurrences of the verb in the New Testament. "It is closely connected with the proclamation of the Gospel; it denotes the freedom with which it is proclaimed by him who himself is there on trial. It is, however, not the profession in the law-court, but the missionary activity that is carried out with all clearness and without outward hindrance."<sup>5</sup> In the case of the noun, the word always refers to boldness except for 2:29 where it is best translated "with confidence." All cases of the verb *Παρησιαζόμαι*, however, can be translated "to speak boldly."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See on *Παρησία*: H. Schlier, '*Παρησία*', *TDNT*, vol. v, 871-86; D. Russell Scott, 'Boldness (Christian)', in J. Hastings, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ii, Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1909, 785-6; H. -C. Hahn, 'Openness, Frankness, Boldness', *NIDNTT*, vol. ii, 734-7; H.A. Fischel, 'Martyr and Prophet', *JQR* 37 (1946-7) 265-80 and 363-86, esp. 384; H. Jaeger, '*Παρησία* et fiducia', in K. Aland/F.L. Cross (eds.), *Studia Patristica* vol. i, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957, 221-39; T. Spidlik, 'PARRHESIA', in Angelo Di Berardino, *Encyclopedia of the early Church*, Cambridge: James Clarke & Co., 1992, vol. II, 652; S.B. Marrow, '*Parrhesia* and the New Testament', *CBQ* 44 (1982) 431-46; W. Jaeger, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, Oxford: OUP, 1967, vol. I, 364; A.J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians: The Philosophic Tradition of Pastoral Care*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987, *et al*; *idem*, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989, *et al*; John A. Darr (1992) 147-68; R. MacMullen (1967) 88; cf. *P.Lond. Inv.* 2785. 11.

<sup>3</sup> W.C. van Unnik, 'The Semitic Background of ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ in the New Testament', *NovTSup* 30 (1980) 279.

<sup>4</sup> The two exceptions are Eph. 6:20 and 1 Thess. 2:2.

<sup>5</sup> W.C. van Unnik (1980) 279.

<sup>6</sup> cf. H. Jaeger (1957) 222.

Several scholars have explored the notion of *Παρησία* in the New Testament. For example, a Festschrift was published in 1966 titled "*ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ*".<sup>7</sup> H. Schlier's article<sup>8</sup> is the most valuable starting point for the researcher pursuing the term *Παρησία*. H. Schlier analyzes in great detail the data which includes usages of *παρησία* in "the Greek World and Hellenism", "the Septuagint and Hellenistic Jewish Literature", "the New Testament", and "the Martyr Literature".

Among English-language contributions, van Unnik should be mentioned for his valuable analysis of the meaning and function of "The Christian's Freedom of Speech in the New Testament" based on the use of *Παρησία* in the first T.W. Manson Memorial Lecture.<sup>9</sup> Van Unnik comments on *Παρησία* that "it became an important element in the Christian vocabulary, an element whose full significance has not yet been adequately explored."<sup>10</sup> Van Unnik particularly takes into account the Semitic background of the expression.<sup>11</sup> As van Unnik points out, and as remains the case, New Testament scholarship has given little consideration to *Παρησία*.

S.B. Marrow attempts to review the background of *Παρησία* in classical and biblical scholarship. Marrow also describes the lack of studies on this word by stating, "Though its occurrence in the NT is not infrequent, and its function there far from insignificant, *parrhesia* has attracted scant attention in the vast literature of NT word studies".<sup>12</sup> Marrow's study is too wide-ranging to allow a thorough analysis of *Παρησία* within the scope of his article. Van Unnik and Marrow together recognize that the use of *Παρησία* has not been explored sufficiently within a narrow biblical theological perspective.

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<sup>7</sup> E. Busch/J. Fangmeier/M Geiger (eds.), *ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ*: Karl Barth zum achtzigsten Geburtstag am 10. Mai 1966, Zürich: EVZ-Verlag, 1966. This volume is divided into two sections: one is *Die Freiheit des Wortes Gottes* (10 articles) and the other is *Freiheit zur Antwort* (11 articles).

<sup>8</sup> H. Schlier's original contained <sup>in the</sup> *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* was published in 1954; H. Schlier, 871-86.

<sup>9</sup> The lecture is delivered in the University of Manchester on 28 November 1961. W.C. van Unnik, 'The Christian's Freedom of Speech in the New Testament', *BJRL* 44 (1962) 466-88. This also appeared in *Sparsa Collecta: The Collected Essays, Part Two, NovTSup* 30, Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980, 269-89.

<sup>10</sup> W.C. van Unnik (1980) 306.

<sup>11</sup> W.C. van Unnik (1980) 290-306. It was originally published in Dutch in 1962.

<sup>12</sup> S.B. Marrow (1982) 431.



B. Rapske has recently published a book entitled *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*,<sup>13</sup> in which he has thoroughly studied Paul's trial and imprisonment in Acts. His research adopts the mechanism of "honour and shame" from B.J. Malina.<sup>14</sup> There he compares *Παρρησία* with the "shame of bonds". He suggests that *Παρρησία* as a mode of Paul's missionary work is a counter concept to the shame of imprisonment in first century Mediterranean culture.<sup>15</sup> Rapske's inquiry brings stimulating motivation to New Testament scholarship on *Παρρησία*.

## 7.2. Uses of *Παρρησία*

### 7.2.1. Dictionary definitions by lexicographers

The research of some lexicographers will be used to clarify the exact meaning and usage of *Παρρησία*. According to LSJ,<sup>16</sup> *Παρρησία* means "licence of tongue" with a negative connotation. However, it originally meant "outspokenness", "frankness" and "freedom of speech."<sup>17</sup> J.H. Moulton and G. Milligan comment on the meaning:

In accordance with its etymology *Παρρησία* is used especially of "freedom," "boldness in speech", but it readily passes into the more general meaning "confidence".<sup>18</sup>

G.W.H. Lampe divides the patristic Greek meaning of *Παρρησία* into five parts.<sup>19</sup>

- (1) freedom of speech
- (2) confidence, boldness, liberty of approach in relationship between God and man, and boldness, liberty of speech in relationship of men with one another.
- (3) confidence, trust
- (4) authority of speech
- (5) openness

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<sup>13</sup> cf. chapter 2 § 2.2.3; B. Rapske, *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*, BAFCS, vol. 3, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994.

<sup>14</sup> B.J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, Atlanta: John Knox, 1981.

<sup>15</sup> cf. B. Rapske (1994) 283-312.

<sup>16</sup> H.G. Liddell/R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, H.S. Jones (rev. 9th edn.) Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940, s.v.

<sup>17</sup> They give a typical example from Euripides, *Hippolytus* 422.

<sup>18</sup> J.H. Moulton/G. Milligan (eds.), *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and other Non-literary Sources*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1914-1929, 497.

<sup>19</sup> G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961, 1044-5.

The lexicographers have rightly explained that the etymological meaning of *Παρρησία* is "boldness" or "outspokenness." However, the definition offered by W. Bauer is far more valuable than the previous definitions when analyzing the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and the narratives of Acts. W. Bauer stresses that it means "courage or boldness especially in the presence of persons of high rank."<sup>20</sup> This suggests that *Παρρησία* has one usage which is particularly significant for our purposes; that is, boldness and freedom of speech of the accused, e.g. apostles, martyrs or philosophers, in the presence of high ranking officials or the Roman emperor.

## 7.2.2. Contexts in which the word is used

### 7.2.2.1. In a civic context

*Παρρησία* is originally a political concept, denoting openness and the right to say anything particularly in public. This is a right which the *δοῦλος* or *φυγάς* did not possess (Eur. *Phoen.* 390ff.).<sup>21</sup> M. Radin also explains that Greek pride can be explained according to the political aspects of *Παρρησία*: "Athenians, indeed, boasted that in this respect they were an unique people. They had freedom of speech. They took their reputation for *Παρρησία* as seriously as Englishmen have taken their reputation for personal and domestic inviolability".<sup>22</sup> A. Momigliano, therefore, defines freedom of speech as a feature of the Greeks:

It is interesting that in the fifth century the Greeks had two words for freedom of speech: one (*parrhesia*) emphasized the right to say everything, the other (*isegoria*) the equality of the freedom of speech within a certain sphere, which might even include slaves. The term *parrhesia* spread from Athens.<sup>23</sup>

That is to say, the word implies the democratic right to speak freely and openly. Euripides firstly used *παρρησία* in the late fifth century BCE.<sup>24</sup> We may be able to find several clear examples of *Παρρησία* as seen below:

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<sup>20</sup> BAGD 630-1.

<sup>21</sup> R. Bultmann, *The Second Letter to the Corinthians*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1985, 84.

<sup>22</sup> M. Radin, 'Freedom of Speech in Ancient Athens', *AJP* 48 (1927) 215-220, esp. 215.

<sup>23</sup> A. Momigliano, 'The social structure of the ancient city', in S.C. Humphreys (ed.), *Anthropology and the Greeks*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978, 185; cf. G.E.M. de Ste Croix (1983) 285.

<sup>24</sup> cf. G.E.M. de Ste. Croix (1983) 600.



Me - friends, 'tis even this dooms me to die,  
 That never I be found to shame my lord,  
 Nor the sons whom I bare: but free, with tongues  
Unfettered (παρρησία), flourish they, their home yon burg  
 of glorious Athens, blushing ne'er for me.<sup>25</sup>

If one prayer be vouchsafed,  
 Of Athens' daughters may my mother be,  
 That by my mother may free speech be mine.  
 The alien who entereth a burg  
 Of pure blood, burgher though he be in name,  
 Hath not free speech; he bears a bondman's tongue.<sup>26</sup>

This most of all - a curb is on the tongue (οὐκ ἔχει παρρησίαν).<sup>27</sup>

It can be shown from the above examples that *Παρρησία* applies to bold or free speech in the ancient classical texts. Moreover, Schlier stresses the political sphere of *Παρρησία* from three points of view:<sup>28</sup>

1. The element of the right to say anything may be emphasised in *Παρρησία*. The full citizen of the Greek *polis* has the objective right to manifest himself in the *logos*. *Παρρησία* here is close to *ἐξουσία*.
2. But stress may be placed on the fact that in *Παρρησία* the actuality of things is stated, so that there is a close relationship to truth.
3. The term *Παρρησία* may also have in view the fact that obstacles may be posed to the right and openness of full freedom of speech by those to whom *Παρρησία* applies. In face of such obstacles *Παρρησία* is the courage of openness, i.e., candour.

However, according to Marrow, clearly, "the abuse of *parrhesia* can become something risible."<sup>29</sup> A ridiculous example of this can be found in Plato, *Symposium* 222 C where Alcibiades' *παρρησία* was greeted by laughter rather than by applause.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> *Hippolytus*, 419-23.

<sup>26</sup> *Ion*, 670-5.

<sup>27</sup> *Phenician Maidens*, 391.

<sup>28</sup> cf. H. Schlier, 872-3.

<sup>29</sup> S.B. Marrow (1982) 433.

<sup>30</sup> cf. Plato, *Phaedr.* 240E, *Isoc. Or.* 11.40.

### 7.2.2.2. In the private sphere: philosophical morality

The meaning of *Παρησία* shifts from the political to the private sphere when one moves into the realm of philosophical morality.<sup>31</sup> This shift in meaning is found in Aristotle when he discusses the features of the generous person who "must be open both in love and in hate and care more for the truth<sup>than</sup> for what people will think; and speak and act openly, since as he despises other men he is outspoken (*παρησιαστής*)".<sup>32</sup>

Schlier states that "*παρησία* serves the truth and is thus profitable, Socrates is a good example of this *παρησία*".<sup>33</sup> When Diogenes of Sinope is asked what the most beautiful thing in the world was, he replied "*παρησία*".<sup>34</sup> According to the Cynic's understanding of *παρησία*, it is "a moral virtue," "a property of the wise," who is "the friend of the gods and to whom all things belong."<sup>35</sup> Therefore, it would be attested that *Παρησία* was a prime moral virtue in ancient Mediterranean society.

### 7.2.2.3. In the context of friendship: characteristic of personal relations

*Παρησία* can also be used in the private sphere with a rather different force. Plutarch in his "How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend" retains the word as a correlate of friendship.<sup>36</sup> A.J. Malherbe also points out that "The Epicurean communities were highly structured and their members were assiduous in self-criticism and in exhorting and instructing one another. It was regarded as of the utmost importance that the Epicurean friends be frank (*parresiazesthai*) with each other, and the responses to this outspokenness that are described by the philosophers reveal the conditions or states of recent converts".<sup>37</sup> Aristotle also says that "towards comrades

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<sup>31</sup> cf. H. Schlier, 873-4; S.B. Marrow (1982) 433.

<sup>32</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 4.3, 28.

<sup>33</sup> H. Schlier, 873.

<sup>34</sup> Diogenes Laertius, *Lives.* 6.69.

<sup>35</sup> Diogenes Laertius, *Lives.* 6.72.

<sup>36</sup> Plutarch, *Adulat.* 48E-66E, 66E-74E; cf. S.B. Marrow (1982) 436.

<sup>37</sup> A.J. Malherbe (1987) 42.



and brothers... we should use frankness of speech (*παρρησίαν*), and share all our possessions with them."<sup>38</sup>

Marrow sets the question, "Is not friendship itself just such an art?" This frankness of speech (*παρρησία*) is, according to Plutarch, particularly the language of friendship, and by the same token, lack of frankness (*ἀπαρρησία*) is unfriendly and ignoble.<sup>39</sup> Plutarch suggests that frankness of speech is a fine art when he writes, "This is the reason why it is necessary to treat frankness as a fine art, inasmuch as it is the greatest and most potent medicine in friendship, always needing, however, all care to hit the right occasion, and a tempering with moderation."<sup>40</sup>

### 7.3. Uses in New Testament

#### 7.3.1. In Acts<sup>41</sup>

The word *Παρρησία* appears first in 2:29 when Peter speaks boldly at Pentecost. *Παρρησία* appears again in 4:1ff. where Luke reports that Peter and John demonstrate their *Παρρησία* before the Sanhedrin who realize that Peter and John are uneducated, ordinary men who were companions of Jesus. Even though Acts 4:23ff. reports how fearlessly the apostles stood before the Jews and the Gentiles, "in Acts it is typical that this *Παρρησία* is always mentioned in connection with preaching in the synagogues and to the Jews."<sup>42</sup> In fact, the usages of *παρρησία* in Acts imply a Jewish setting where the prime civic responsibilities of the apostles lie.

1John 5:14 includes *Παρρησία* in the Christian believer's prayer, but in Acts 4:23-31 the Christian community prays for *Παρρησία* where it is regarded as an outcome of prayer.<sup>43</sup> Unlike 1John, Acts 4:23-31 indicates that for Luke *Παρρησία* is exercised on earth instead of in heaven as the quality of relationship between

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<sup>38</sup> Aristotle, *Eth. Nic.* 9.2.9.

<sup>39</sup> Plutarch, *Adulat.* 51C.

<sup>40</sup> Plutarch, *Adulat.* 74D.

<sup>41</sup> A very stimulating question might be raised here, why Luke does not use this term in the Gospel. Perhaps because he associates it with the world of cities which is more appropriate to Acts.

<sup>42</sup> W.C. van Unnik (1980) 280.

<sup>43</sup> cf. J.A. Darr (1992) 166-8.

human beings rather than as the quality of relationship with God.<sup>44</sup> In particular, *Παρρησία* functions as an outcome of prayer to preserve and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus on earth in Acts 4:27-30. The dramatic situation of the prayer is depicted:

For in this city, in fact, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness (*παρρησία*), while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus. (4:27-30)

Acts 26:24-26 shows the use of *παρρησία* in the passage in relation to Festus, a Roman governor. Festus exclaims, "You are out of your mind, Paul! Too much learning is driving you insane!" Paul replies, "I am not out of my mind, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking the sober truth...I speak freely (*παρρησιαζόμενος*)." According to Malherbe,

When Paul describes his speech to Agrippa as bold he uses a word that had come to be associated with the philosopher's boldness of speech. The philosopher's outspokenness showed a fearlessness in pointing out human shortcomings; it also reflected the speaker's confidence in his rights to do so. Every philosopher's *παρρησία* should therefore be backed by character, especially when he attempts to bring other people to their senses (*σωφροσύνη*).<sup>45</sup>

This dialogue between Festus, a Roman governor, and Paul, a Roman prisoner, explicitly proves that *Παρρησία* appears in confrontation with the Roman authority. B. Rapske stresses Paul's great courage in that "This *παρρησία* of the prisoner Paul comes shortly before his self-conscious reference to his wearing chains (Acts 26:29)".<sup>46</sup>

Acts 28:31 presents a typical model of the closing of a book by concluding with a description of his/her purpose. "The importance of this theme is clear from the fact that Acts closes with the statement that Paul, though under house arrest in Rome, was 'preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus with all *Παρρησία*, unhindered'."<sup>47</sup> The Greek states:

<sup>44</sup> See, R.J. Cassidy, *Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles*, NY: Orbis Books, 1988, 130-5. Here Cassidy suggests that this setting is evidently political.

<sup>45</sup> A.J. Malherbe (1989) 160.

<sup>46</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 312.

<sup>47</sup> S. Mason, *Josephus and the New Testament*, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1992, 219.



κηρύσσω τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ διδάσκω τὰ περὶ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάσης παρρησίας ἀκωλύτως.<sup>48</sup> (Acts 28:31)

Even though Paul meets Jewish people under custody in Rome, obviously, he is still a prisoner of the Roman empire. Therefore, this setting is portrayed with Roman colour. The implications presented by the narrator is that *Παρρησία* becomes the trade mark of the Lukan Paul as a great follower of Jesus Christ. S. Mason, therefore, points out that "Just as Jesus appeared in the Gospel of Luke as a tenacious critic of the wealthy and powerful, so his followers now appear as a fearless but persecuted, truth-loving minority."<sup>49</sup> It is enough to note that *Παρρησία* plays an important role *prima facie* in the Acts narratives which is central to the author's belief that the gospel of Jesus should be spread throughout the entire Roman empire.

### 7.3.2. In the rest of New Testament

The term *Παρρησία* occasionally appears in the rest of the New Testament outside the narratives of Acts. The occurrences are classified according to their contextual meaning:

i) The Gospel of John contains nine occurrences of the noun. It is atypical that *Παρρησία* does not appear before John 7:14. Mark, Philippians, Colossians, 1Thessalonians, Philemon, and 1Timothy have just one occurrence each. As becomes obvious after an analysis of the texts, the term is always related to Jesus' works and preaching. H. Schlier comments on Jesus' public ministry :

In the Gospel *Παρρησία* is distinctively linked with the work of Jesus and has a place in the Johannine dialectic of the revelation of Jesus. A mark of Jesus as Revealer is that He works publicly, Jn. 18:20f.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> cf. R.J. Cassidy (1988) 134-5; It is also unique that the last word *ἀκωλύτως* means 'without hindrance' which appears only here in Acts among the writings of the NT.; cf. M.C. Parsons/R.I. Pervo, *Rethinking the Unity of Luke and Acts*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993, 110; They suggest that Lukan anthropology deals with the totality of human potential, with the prospect of the almost limitless possibilities available to those who claim their divine heritage.; H.J. Hauser, 'Strukturen der Abschlusserzählung der Apostelgeschichte (Apg 28,16-31)', *AnBib* 86, Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1979, 203.

<sup>49</sup> S. Mason (1992) 219.

<sup>50</sup> H. Schlier, 879.

Van Unnik also observes that *Παρρησία* has something to do with Jesus' revelation in the heart of Judaism.<sup>51</sup> Marrow perceives that the term is used in the Fourth Gospel to describe the work of Jesus as the Redeemer.<sup>52</sup> Jesus' work as the Redeemer appears in several verses:

For no one who wants to be openly (*παρρησία*) known acts in secret. If you do these things, show yourself to the world<sup>53</sup>. (7:4)

So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, 'How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are Messiah, tell us plainly (*παρρησία*).' (10:24)

ii) In Hebrews we find contrasting examples. Van Unnik's explanation below is useful in understanding the function of *Παρρησία*:

This admonition is addressed to Christians who are in danger of apostasy, because their faith is flagging and the outward oppression heavy. The author tries to keep them back by reminding them of the fearful majesty of God and the unique and final way He has given to be in communion with Him. This epistle is a warning, the negative side of which is outshone by the positive one, the incomparable gift of God's grace in His Son Jesus Christ. In Him the way foreshadowed in the O.T. revelation was opened once for all. In this context the author mentions the idea of *Παρρησία* four times, and it is a significant element, as may be seen from the fact that it appears twice in the passage which deals with the concrete situation (10:19, 35).<sup>54</sup>

From our reading of Hebrews, it can be concluded that the term means "courage" or "confidence", which is at the heart of the Christian faith, as seen in the following passages:

Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with confidence (*Παρρησία*), so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need (4:16).

Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence (*παρρησία*) to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus (10:19).

Here *Παρρησία* is exercised in the Christian faith before the heavenly King. Hebrews teaches that the Christian community must keep their faith and hope in *Παρρησία*.

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<sup>51</sup> W.C. van Unnik (1980) 284.

<sup>52</sup> S.B. Marrow (1982) 441, 444.

<sup>53</sup> cf. In John's Gospel the 'world' means the Jewish world in several verses (15:18-16:2; 18:20). Here *Παρρησία* is exercised within the sphere of Judaism.

<sup>54</sup> W.C. van Unnik (1980) 285-6.



iii) 1John presents a different situation from that in Hebrews. The Christian community's pressure or tension does not come from the outside but from within the church itself. W.G. Kümmel states that the aim of 1John is that:

1John is seeking to warn against false teachers who have arisen in the Christian communities (2:18f, 26; 3:7). Many false prophets have gone out into the world (4:1); 1 John calls them Antichrists (2:18, cf. 4:3).<sup>55</sup>

To encourage the Christian community, 1John emphasizes three types of *Παρησία*:

- a. *Παρησία* for <sup>α</sup>person's openness to God: 3:21; 5:14.
- b. *Παρησία* in Christian believer's prayer: 5:14.
- c. Eschatological *Παρησία*:<sup>56</sup> 2:28; 4:17.

*Παρησία*, as it appears in 1 John, functions largely in connection with assurance before God. Van Unnik briefly views the function of *παρησία*:

It is striking that this conception of *παρησία* is completely different from that in the gospel. There it was always used with regard to the revelation and was a "freedom of speech" towards men; here it is directed towards God. There it was never eschatological: here it is the expression of the most intimate relation between God and man, now and for the future, even in the critical day of judgement. Here "freedom of speech" is not found in the wise who has a good conscience, but in everyone who is cleansed by Jesus Christ.<sup>57</sup>

iv) In the letters of Paul, *Παρησία*, the noun, occurs twice in 2Cor. 3:12 and 7:4. There Paul uses *Παρησία* to describe his relationship with the church:

Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness (*Παρησία*) (3:12).

Great is my boldness of speech (*παρησία*) toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am overjoyed in all our affliction (7:4).

Among the rest of the Pauline letters, generally the term means "boldness or openness (noun)/speak boldly (verb)". *Παρησία* assists the apostle Paul in his mission. See the table at 7.1. for the details of the occurrence of *Παρησία*.

Clearly in the New Testament *Παρησία* has two different usages as demonstrated above. On the one hand, *Παρησία* means "a mode of Christians' faith" as used in Paul's letters and Hebrews. On the other hand, *Παρησία* is "a

<sup>55</sup> W.G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1975, 441.

<sup>56</sup> cf. Wis. 5:1; 4 Esr. 7:98.

<sup>57</sup> W.C. van Unnik (1980) 288.

mode of Christians' action" as demonstrated when the Lukan Paul speaks to a Roman governor.

#### 7.4. Evidence of *Παρρησία* in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

In analyzing the narratives of the *dramatis personae* of the *Acta Alexandrinorum en masse*, we will also refer to similar usages of *Παρρησία* in other texts. The use of the term can be paralleled with philosophers' tension of the first century. According to Mason, "One of the goals of philosophers was bold, fearless, frank speech. This frequently got them into trouble, especially if their audience included a humorless emperor. Several famous philosophers in the later first century, especially under Nero and the Flavian dynasty, faced death or exile."<sup>58</sup> Similarly, some implications of *Παρρησία* are shown in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The boldness of the Alexandrian Greek martyrs is illustrated from the speeches brought about by *Παρρησία* in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Some examples vividly describe "really fearless behaviour of the martyrs" appearing as a *dramatis personae* in terms of their own "pride of birth" or home town. They speak with acrimony to cruel Roman emperors. Even though the *Acta Alexandrinorum* does not use the word *Παρρησία*, the following examples are heavily coloured by the idea of *Παρρησία*.

In *Chrest* 14 *Col.iii* 10f. of the *Acta Isidori*, we find an example of an Alexandrian's bold behaviour that shows the "pride of Alexandrian office":

I'm gymnasiarch of the glorious city of Alexandria. But you are the cast-off son of the Jewess Salome! (σὺ δὲ ἐκ Σαλώμης τῆς Ἰουδαίας υἱὸς ἀπόβλητος)

*P. Oxy. Ined.: Acta Diogenis*. 41f. is a good example of the same case, pointing out the emperor's guilt:

[my Lord] your heroic spirit; turn your mind to this consideration: it is your life that is being attacked; your throne(?) that is being indicted. The man who thus tells lies about you should not continue to live. For no longer do we honour your reputation - even if we excuse you for old-fashioned ways (οὐκέτι σου τιμῶμεν τὰς ἀκοάς, οὐδ' εἰ φειδόμεθά σου τῆς τῶν ἡθῶν ἀρχαιότητος.).

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<sup>58</sup> S. Mason (1992) 219.



In *Acta Maximi I*,<sup>59</sup> there is an apparent "homosexual-motif" between the governor and a young boy (see 6.3.2.). This motif pictures the governor to be totally corrupt in contrast to the Alexandrian Greeks. It might be suggested that this accusation arises from the Alexandrian's *Παρρησία*. In *P. Oxy. 1242: Acta Hermaisci* 40f., Hermaiscus also defies Trajan with "bold speech":

Hermaiscus said: 'Why, it grieves us to see your Privy Council filled with impious Jews.'

Caesar said: 'This is the second time I am telling you...'

Hermaiscus said: 'What do you mean, I answer you insolently, greatest emperor? Explain this to me.'

Caesar said: 'Pretending that my Council is filled with Jews.'

Hermaiscus: 'So, then, the word "Jew" is offensive to you? In that case you rather ought to help your own people and not play the advocate for the impious Jews.'

We also find the tone of Alexandrian boldness in most of the *Acta Appiani* as below<sup>60</sup>:

Appian: '... who sending the wheat (?) to the other cities, sell it at four times its price, so as to recover their expenses.'

The emperor said: 'And who receives this money?'

Appian said: 'You do.' (*P.Yale ii.3 f.*)

A typical example of extreme Greek *Παρρησία* is made public even at the risk of death as illustrated in *Acta Appiani, P.Oxy. 33*:

Heliodorus said: 'To whom can we speak, if we have no one who will listen? On, my son, go to your death. Yours shall be the glory of dying for your dearest native city. Be not distressed; ...' (*Col.III. 9f.*)

In the following dialogue of *P.Oxy. 33*, Appian the gymnasiarch of Alexandria is portrayed as boldly resisting the emperor to his face in a masterful example of

*Παρρησία*:

The emperor (then) recalled Appian. The emperor said: 'Now you know whom you are speaking to, don't you?'

Appian: 'Yes, I do: Appian speaks to a tyrant (*Ἀππιανὸς τυράννῳ*).'

The emperor: 'No, to an emperor (*οὐκ ἀλλὰ βασιλεῖ*).'

Appian: 'Say not so! Your father, the divine Antoninus, was fit to be emperor (*αὐτοκρατορεύειν*). For, look you, first of all he was a philosopher; secondly, he was not avaricious; thirdly, he was good. But you have precisely the opposite

<sup>59</sup> *P.Oxy. 471.*

<sup>60</sup> cf. *P.Oxy. 2177: Acta Athenodori*, 34 - 'θρασυτολμία (licence of speech, insolence). The insolence (*i.e.* boldness) of the *dramatis personae* of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is frequently noted.; cf. R. MacMullen (1967) 88.

qualities (*έναντία ένκειται*): you are tyrannical (*τυραννία*) dishonest (*άφιλοκαγαθία*), crude (*άπαιδία*). (*Col.II. 1f.*)

In 80f. of *P.Oxy. 33*, Appian calls the emperor "a leader of gangsters" (*ό λήσταρχος*). This clearly demonstrates that Appian represents patriotic heroism on behalf of the Alexandrian nationalistic Greeks.

The purpose of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is to spread political propaganda, and the author(s) of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* aim to reveal the political innocence of the Alexandrian patriotic nationalists by portraying the Alexandrian Greek citizens as persons of *Παρρησία*. The aim of guaranteeing the law-abiding struggle of the Alexandrian nationalistic movement is accomplished by demonstrating Greek *Παρρησία*, especially in the presence of persons of high rank. This is important because the Alexandrian Greeks believed that they were not only morally right but also right in a way which is characteristically "Greek".

We can confirm, as a result of this analysis, that the word *Παρρησία* is not used in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The concept of *Παρρησία*, however, underlies the presentations of the Alexandrian Greek martyrs. At the same time, in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the evidence of behaviour which fits in with the Greek civic concept of *Παρρησία* does function in both negative and positive ways. In a negative respect, the Roman emperors view this as "insolence". In a positive respect, the Alexandrian Greek martyrs are very proud of this behaviour. We, therefore, may suggest that the explanation for this lies in the Greek concept of *Παρρησία* as a characteristic of free Greek citizens.

### 7.5. Significance for Acts

Which usage is most helpful in coming to an understanding of *Παρρησία* in Acts? *Παρρησία* is used by Luke in the Greek sense primarily as a civic virtue which is exercised in the political sphere. However, its usage in Acts is almost completely though not quite limited to the sphere of trial and debate within a Jewish context. However, Paul also shows the same quality when on trial before the



Romans. This suggests that, as Luke sees the matter, the primary political confrontation for the apostles lies in the sphere of the Jewish *πολίτευμα*, whether in Jerusalem (the *πόλις* of Jews) or in the Diaspora. However, *Παρρησία* also makes its appearance when Paul is depicted as a captive in a Roman setting.

*Παρρησία* as a political mechanism is used in matters relating to the Athenian *polis*. In the Athenian *polis*, *Παρρησία* functions as the democratic/political concept by which one speaks boldly to defend one's status or right. As for personal boldness, the change of sphere from "Athenian *polis*" to "Jewish people" is especially significant in the narratives of Acts. As Rapske points out, *Παρρησία* overcomes the negative effects of suffering, particularly the shame of bondage.<sup>61</sup> With this in mind, *Παρρησία* becomes the foundation for religious speech or defence speech against the accuser in the trial setting in the narratives of Acts. In Acts, the significance of the shift in meaning is vividly portrayed in that Paul realizes that his *Παρρησία* is not created by himself, but it is given by the heavenly God and should not be used for his own interest or safety. *Παρρησία* always confronts both the Jewish and Roman authorities in the narratives of Acts. In this manner, *Παρρησία* functions as an important mode of Christian action and attitude by the accused, Paul, in the narratives of Acts which is on the surface similar to, but upon close examination different from, that in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

The term *Παρρησία* in the narratives of Acts focuses on the world in that the Gospel of Jesus should spread to the whole area of Roman empire to include a gentile as declared by the last verse, Acts 28:31. B. Rapske's explanation on this point is quite valuable:

The fact that Luke tells the reader in some detail about the physical conditions of Paul's Roman imprisonment at the end of Acts - including his being chained and under guard - and that these custody arrangements lasted for two full years must be taken as significant and determinative for our understanding of *παρρησία* at Acts 28:31. Luke is indicating to his readers that the usual shame connotations associated with chains and incarceration did not apply, being more than satisfactorily met in the provision of God. Far from withdrawing from all preaching and teaching out of the stigma of his circumstances, or perhaps holding

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<sup>61</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 311.

back as he sensed himself under the scrutiny of believers and unbelievers who saw or came to see him, the prisoner Paul preached and taught not just boldly but with all boldness (*μετὰ πάσης παρρησίας*).<sup>62</sup>

Even though there is no mention of Paul's fate, Luke's focus on the *Παρρησία* of Paul convincingly stresses the possibility and the necessity that the Gospel of Jesus must spread throughout the Roman empire. According to the analysis of the narratives of Acts, one might come to the conclusion that *Παρρησία*, as in confrontation, with both the Jewish community and the Roman empire is the most significant issue of the Lukan trial narratives. However, Acts 28:31 clearly demonstrates that Luke specifically wants to tell the readers of the triumph of the Gospel of Jesus caused by the *Παρρησία* divinely given to the prisoner Paul. Therefore, the closing passage of Acts is not an abrupt ending,<sup>63</sup> since Luke reaches his own purpose using *Παρρησία*. As a result, we may conclude that *Παρρησία* plays an important role in the narratives of Acts, both in the trial of Paul and in his continued life and work.

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<sup>62</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 312.

<sup>63</sup> H.J. Hauser (1979) 146.



## Chapter 8

### The analysis of Paul's citizenship and its function in the narratives of Acts according to the motifs of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*

As we saw in our earlier review of recent study<sup>1</sup> on Paul's citizenship, the political relationship between Christianity and the Roman empire is often discussed in terms of "political apologetic." Luke-Acts scholars generally agree that Luke has been regarded as the most pro-Roman of the NT writers. I suggest that if we start reading from the end of Acts and work backwards, we may discover an anti-Roman point of view in Acts. This provides a completely different approach to understanding Acts from the one that is traditionally taken. Although Luke ends his second volume without any indication of Paul's fate as a Roman prisoner (Acts 28:31),<sup>2</sup> Paul is shown to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all boldness (*παρρησία*) and without hindrance (*ἀκωλύτως*). However, it should be emphasized that he *still* remains under Roman custody. This means that Luke is not writing a "political apologetic" with the intention of securing freedom for the Christian Church to evangelize within the Roman empire.

One of the current main critical issues in Luke-Acts is whether Luke's political stance is "anti" or "pro" Roman or "anti" or "pro" Jewish. Even though some Luke-Acts scholars<sup>3</sup> who have studied the Jewish problem think this is the most crucial

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<sup>1</sup> See chapter 2, "A Review of Research on Paul's Citizenship: the historical debate and the literary debate"

<sup>2</sup> cf. Philip Davies, 'The Ending of Acts,' *ExpTim* 94 (1983) 334-5. Here Davies suggests that Luke is following a scripture model: Luke's Paul is similar to the Judaeen king Jehoiachin in captivity in the ending of the book of 2Kings.

<sup>3</sup> cf. J. Jervell, *Luke and the People of God: A New Look at Luke-Acts*, Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1972; R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982; M.J. Cook, 'Anti-Judaism in the New Testament,' *USQR* 38 (1983) 125-37; E. Trocmé, 'The Jews as Seen by Paul and Luke', in J. Neusner/E.S. Frerichs (eds.), *To See Ourselves as Others See Us": Christians, Jews, "Others" Late Antiquity*, Chico, Cal.: Scholars Press, 1985, 145-161; R.C. Tannehill, 'Israel in Luke-Acts: A Tragic Story,' *JBL* 104 (1985) 69-85; L. Gaston, 'Anti-Judaism and the Passion Narrative in Luke and Acts', in P. Richardson/D. Granskou (eds.), *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity*, Vol. I. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986, 127-153; D. Slingerland, 'The Jews in the Pauline portion of Acts,' *JAAR* 54 (1986) 305-21; J.T. Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987; M. Lowe, 'Real and Imagined anti-Jewish elements in the Synoptic Gospels and Acts,' *JES* 24 (1987) 267-84; R.L. Brawley, *Luke-Acts and the Jews: Conflicts, Apology, and Conciliation*, Atlanta: Scholars

point for interpreting Luke-Acts afresh, the opinions are equally divided. Concerning the anti-Judaistic view point, Lloyd Gaston points out, "Luke-Acts is one of the most pro-Jewish and one of the most anti-Jewish writings in the New Testament."<sup>4</sup> As a result, it is very difficult to estimate whether any passage's sentiment is "anti" or "pro"-Jewish. However, this thesis will argue that Lukan Paul's trial narratives are based on the ideology of "anti-Judaism".

Therefore, we may make an assumption here: If we consider the portrayal of Paul as a Roman and a Tarsian citizen in the narratives of Acts, we may be able to understand the political ideology of Acts more clearly, since Paul's trial narratives offer some important glimpses of Luke's political stance in Acts. Indeed, a critical study of the Acts narratives which gives particular attention to the issue of Paul's citizenship should provide enough evidence to shed some light on the ideological issues regarding Jews and the Roman empire in Acts. Acts portrays Paul as a "loyal Jew", a "Tarsian citizen", and a "Roman citizen". This portrayal has led many readers to conclude that Luke's stance is "pro-Jewish" and "pro-Roman". On the contrary, I am arguing that there are significant elements in Luke's narrative characterization which reveal hostility both towards Judaism and towards the representatives of the Roman empire. Paul's origins are applied exclusively to his mission in Acts in order to encourage the support of Judaism and the legal protection it has under the Roman government rather than to gain any advantage or protection for himself personally. Thus, from the point of view of Acts, Paul's Jewish and Roman origins are used only for the purposes of the Gospel and are not valued in themselves.

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Press, 1987; J.B. Tyson (ed.), *Luke-Acts and the Jewish People: Eight Critical Perspectives*, Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1988; F.Ó. Fearghail, 'Israel in Luke-Acts,' *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 11 (1988) 23-43; F.J. Matera, 'Responsibility for the death of Jesus according to the Acts of the Apostles,' *JSNT* 39 (1990) 77-93; R.F. O'Toole, 'Reflections on Luke's Treatment of Jews in Luke-Acts,' *Bib* 74 (1993) 529-555; D. Ravens, *Luke and the Restoration of Israel*, JSNTSS 119, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> Lloyd Gaston (1986) 153; cf. J.B. Tyson (1992, 188) who also claims that "it is incorrect to maintain that Luke is simply pro-Jewish or simply anti-Jewish. He is both."



On the one hand, Paul's Jewish origins are a tool for understanding God's *Heilsgeschichte* when the Lukan Paul proclaims his origins and how that fits into the overall scheme in the presence of Jewish people on an occasion when he meets some trouble in the Christian mission. Additionally, the Lukan Paul uses his Jewish origins for his defence in Acts 23:6f. such that he gains the support of some Pharisees. On the other hand, his origins as a Roman citizen and a Tarsian citizen protect him from dangerous political situations. Is Paul, as a strict Jew, in a better position to criticize Judaism than non-Jewish people? Is he, as a Roman citizen, able to oppose the Roman government more strongly than a non-Roman citizen?<sup>5</sup> Answers to these questions tend to inform us of the position of Paul, the protagonist, as a Jew and a Roman citizen in Acts.

The final chapters of Acts are entirely about Paul's trials and imprisonment, and the movement of the narrative is governed to a large extent by Paul's dual citizenship. In this manner, Luke's Paul, as a Roman prisoner, is always in control in the narratives to the end of Acts so that his claims of citizenship has the function of leading him to his ultimate destination, Rome. Had Paul not announced his status as a Roman citizen in order to appeal to Caesar, his arrival in Rome would never have come about. Admittedly, Paul's Tarsian citizenship plays a much more minor part in the narratives than his Roman citizenship. Nevertheless, Tarsian citizenship enters the equation by protecting Paul from being mistaken as an Egyptian terrorist (21:39). Otherwise, the outcome might have been very different. Thus, interest in Paul's dual citizenship is largely related to his Roman citizenship in the majority of scholarly work.<sup>6</sup>

As this study proceeds, it will build a case by which to compare the structure of Lukan Paul's trial narratives with the trial scenes in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* using the issue of citizenship as a point of reference and comparison though even here there

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<sup>5</sup> I.H. Marshall, 'Luke's View of Paul,' *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 33 (1990) 50. Here Marshall notes that "the picture of Paul contains the two basic features of his missionary work and his conflict with both the Jews and the Roman government."

<sup>6</sup> cf. chapter 2. "A Review of Research on Paul's Citizenship"

are significant differences.<sup>7</sup> For example, Acts does not use a protocol format and it contains much more narrative description than the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Even so, similarities in the dating and the structure of both documents provide strong parallels for examination. Both sets of texts refer to incidents whose dramatic date is the mid-first century although the *Acta Alexandrinorum* also include material from later centuries (e.g. Commodus). This provides a comparable set of relationships between Jews and the Roman empire:

*Acta* : Jewish people ----- Alexandrian Greek citizens ----- Roman empire  
 Acts: Jewish people --- Paul [a loyal Jew, a citizen of Rome and Tarsus] --- Roman empire

The whole of the texts of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* illustrate the heroism of the Alexandrian Greek patriots who were the main characters opposing the Romans and the Jews in Alexandria. The Roman emperors allegedly acted in full support of the Jews and were influenced by them in the trial narratives. The Alexandrian Greeks appear to see this as a great disadvantage for themselves, since they were placed at a disadvantage in appeals before the emperors. How does this compare with the situation in Acts? This is one of the questions which this chapter aims to answer.

The literary structure of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*<sup>8</sup> is primarily that of a trial narrative which is composed of extensive trial reports, a wide cast of characters, court-room scenes, court speeches, and conversational dialogues including propagandic use of "anti-Semitism" and "anti-Romanism". This literary category of trial narrative is comparable to the trial scenes at the end of Acts<sup>9</sup> as well as trial scenes in novels<sup>10</sup> such as book five of Chariton's novel.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> As studied in chapter 4, this conflict is initially related to the issue of citizenship in Alexandrian society.

<sup>8</sup> See chapter 5 on the analysis of the literary category of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

<sup>9</sup> cf. S.M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts*, JSNTSS 72, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992.

<sup>10</sup> cf. R.I. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987, 47. Here Pervo points out that "the dramatic structure of Luke's work would make good sense to the readers of ancient novels."

<sup>11</sup> B.P. Reardon (trans.), 'Charition, Chaereas and Callirhoe,' in *Idem* (ed.), *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, Berkeley: University of California, 1989. 21-124. On the author, in Chaereas and Callirhoe 1.1, little is known apart from the narrator's introduction of himself as 'Chariton of Aphrodisias, clerk to the attorney Athenagoras. On the date, B.P. Reardon (1989, p. 5) suggests, it belongs to the mid-first century A.D.; Also see, B. Egger, 'Looking at Chariton's Callirhoe,' in J.R. Morgan & R. Stoneman (eds.), *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context*, London: Routledge, 1994, 31.



The extensive trial narratives in Acts 21:27-26:32 are full of dramatic elements as observed by Pervo:

After eight chapters (Acts 21-28) focused upon Paul's legal problems, the reader no longer understands why he is under arrest, of what he is really charged, why he appealed in the first place, or why he did not withdraw his appeal later. As an apology for Paul and for the faith, and as a stirring and appealing narrative, the last third of Acts leaves little to be desired. Here Luke lavished his attention and skill, but it is also here that he will receive some of his worst marks as a historian. He appears by a historical criterion to be doing his worst when at his best. The criterion may be at fault.<sup>12</sup>

Within the court-room setting Luke describes the procedure for bringing charges by the Jewish people, and their examination by the Roman authorities including several legal elements such as "trials," "legal actions," and "punishment."<sup>13</sup> Typically, the trial narratives of Acts include a wide cast of characters including the Roman governors and the Jewish king Agrippa before whom the court speeches are presented and who represent the Roman emperor.<sup>14</sup> These speeches can be compared with the *Acta Alexandrinorum*: in recension C of the *Acta Isidori*. Both Isidorus' speech (*Col. ii. 1f.*) and Tertullus's speech before Felix in Acts<sup>15</sup> contain the *captatio benevolentiae* though the Acts speech is much more lengthy. Both play an important role in presenting the charges brought against the accused.<sup>16</sup> In addition, like most of the narratives in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the Acts narratives are also composed of dialogues between the *dramatis personae*. However, Acts does not use protocol form and contains much more narrative description. Thus, we are justified in arguing that the trial narratives in Acts are comparable with the trial

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"Chariton's Callirhoe is the earliest of the five Greek romances that have survived entire."; L.C.A. Alexander, "In Journeyings Often: Voyaging in the Acts of the Apostles and in Greek Romance", in C.M. Tuckett (ed.), *Luke's Literary Achievement: Collected Essays*, JSNTSS 116, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 17-49; cf. Douglas R. Edwards, 'Surviving the Web of Roman Power: Religion and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles, Josephus, and Chariton's Chaereas and Callirhoe,' in L.C.A. Alexander (ed.), *Images of Empire*, JSOTSS 122, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991, 179-201.

<sup>12</sup> R.I. Pervo (1987) 46-7.

<sup>13</sup> cf. Pervo (1987) 42-50.

<sup>14</sup> In Paul's case, it is largely divided into three court speeches: 1. in the Sanhedrin (22:1-21) 2. in the presence of Felix (24:10-21) 3. in the presence of Agrippa (26:2-23); cf. M.L. Soards, *The Speeches in Acts: Their Content, Context, and Concerns*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994.

<sup>15</sup> cf. the *captatio benevolentiae* also found in *Acta Pauli et Antonini col. vi. 8f.* (My Lord Caesar, I swear by your genius...) and Acts 24:2-4, 10; 25:24-27.

<sup>16</sup> cf. B. Winter, 'Official Proceedings and Forensic Speeches in Acts 24-26,' BAFCS vol. 1, *Ancient Literary Setting*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993, 306-309.

narratives in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. In this light, Paul's trial narratives in Acts will be fully analysed by a comparative study with the *Acta Alexandrinorum* taking into account also the issue of citizenship.

### 8.1. Acts 16:16-40

**8.1.1. General description:** Significantly Acts 16:16-40 which is set in Philippi mentions Paul's Roman citizenship for the first time and therefore deserves some consideration at this point. Also, the two main ideological issues,<sup>17</sup> "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Roman" elements as examined in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* can be also found in this narrative.

The Acts passage is divided largely into four scenes: The first scene is from verses 16 to 19, the second is from 20 to 24, the third is from 25 to 34, and the fourth is 35 to 40. In verses 19-21, even though the owners accuse Paul and Silas wrongly, the explicit reason for their **accusation** is that the owners of the slave girl have lost hope of making money. Unfortunately, the **inquiry** at the core of each accusation is omitted by the narrator. Instead, the magistrate immediately **sentences** Paul and Silas to flogging and imprisonment. As a result of the unexpected earthquake, however, Paul and Silas are released from imprisonment. Significantly, Paul's and Silas' Roman citizenship is not used in order to rescue them. They do not pray for their release. They are simply described as singing hymns at midnight (16:25). In this setting they are saved by a miracle (16:26). This shows comprehensively the all-powerful protection of God for the work of Paul and Silas as Christian missionaries. However, the issue of Roman citizenship allows the reader to explore the feasibility of an "anti-Roman reading" in that the weakness of the Roman authorities is clearly highlighted when these authorities hear that Paul and Silas are Roman citizens.

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<sup>17</sup> cf. Ch. 6. § 6.3. "The final intentions of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*"



**8.1.2. Narrative critical analysis:** After a description of the circumstances of Paul's missionary journey from Antioch to Philippi (15:36-16:12), Luke briefly recounts the first happening in Philippi in 16:16-19. The starting point is the conflict between the owners of the slave girl and Paul and Silas (v. 18). Since Paul's action of casting out an inferior spirit from the girl, it is impossible for her owners to profit any further by exploiting her prophecies. Naturally, the owners become very angry with Paul and Silas and trouble ensues.

The second scene in v. 20-24 is significant because Luke exploits the latent anti-Semitism and inter-community conflict within Graeco-Roman society. The owners accuse Paul and Silas as Jews of disturbing the city (v. 20). C.S.C. Williams claims that in this verse, "The anti-Semitic tone of the accusation is remarkable; new religions were tolerated by the Romans, so long as there was no moral scandal or seditious disturbance in which case the technical charge of proselytizing for Judaism in a colony, i.e. among citizens, would lie."<sup>18</sup> According to J.B. Polhill,

The owners of the slave girl were careful in their charges to avoid the real issue of her healing and their resulting loss of profit. Basically their charges were threefold. The first was calculated to awaken latent prejudices in the crowd: "These men are Jews." The second was nebulous but would have evoked the attention of the magistrates, who were responsible for "law and order": they are "throwing our city into an uproar." The last charge seems to be the only one with any substance: They are "advocating customs unlawful for us Romans." This is generally interpreted as illegal proselytizing for Judaism, but the evidence is that Jews were not forbidden to proselytize until the time of Hadrian, well into the second century.<sup>19</sup>

That is to say, although their charges are not valid, they have their effect because the appeal to anti-Jewish sentiments and to patriotic Roman pride wins the crowd over (v. 22). As a result, the *captatio benevolentiae* of a threat to civil order evidently sways the opinion of the Roman magistrates (v. 23).

Verse 22 states that "the crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods."

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<sup>18</sup> C.S.C. Williams, *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1964, 195.

<sup>19</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 353.

According to L.T. Johnson, this incident in verse 22 shows that "the rabble-rousing character of the slave-owners' complaint is obvious from the crowd's response. They have raised the sort of charges that would guarantee local resentment against a population that resided within a *polis* without fully participating in its civic life."<sup>20</sup>

Pervo agrees with the point made by Johnson:

The fickle crowd of the ancient Mediterranean is never far offstage in Acts. Whether to flood the streets or fill a synagogue, to listen to a sermon or conduct a lynching, the masses stand ready. Where they exist, the crowds represent the potential for riot, disorder that will reduce Roman rule to chaos.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, in verse 22 the Roman magistrates order Paul and Silas to be beaten with rods. These details, when examined as a whole as a mixture of anti-Semitism and inter-community conflict, underline the dramatic suspense of the scene. This is even more the case when the trial scene of Appian in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is taken into account as a similar example.<sup>22</sup> In both instances, the anti-Roman effect on the readers is heightened by the Romans' uncultured behaviour. Even though Paul and Silas do not mention their status as Roman citizens at this point, obviously they are not treated properly as Roman citizens. An element of irony presents itself in that Paul and Silas suffer here as Jews at the hands of Romans, whereas later on the Romans will appear as the rescuers of Paul from the "Jews" of Jerusalem.

From another perspective, some Acts scholars have been concerned about the legal problem of this narrative. Significantly, Paul does not mention his Roman citizenship until verse 24. Possibly, Paul himself was culpable for not proclaiming it even at this point. In any case, the fact that Paul does not claim Roman citizenship in this scene suggest that questions about Roman law should be raised.<sup>23</sup> According to Tajra, this account strongly points out the injustice of the Romans:

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<sup>20</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 295; cf. In *Col. iii. 5f.* of *P.Oxy. 33*, Appian shouts out his illegal execution to the Romans, and at the same time he appeals to the crowd for support. In Luke's narrative the crowd adopts a more negative position towards Paul.

<sup>21</sup> Pervo (1987) 34-5.

<sup>22</sup> *P.Oxy. 33 Col. iii. 8f.*

<sup>23</sup> See on Paul's trial according to Roman law, K. Lake/H.J. Cadbury, 'English Translation and Commentary', *BC IV*. 200-1; A.N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963, 78f.; H.W. Tajra (1989) 3-29; J.C. Lentz, Jr., *Luke's portrait of Paul*, Cambridge: CUP, 1993, 97-9, 130-8, 169.



Luke, in any case, is unambiguous in his depiction of the *Duoviri* as unjust and inequitable magistrates - a rather atypical portrayal of Roman officials in the Lucan narrative. Luke's pro-Roman stance gives way here to a grimly realistic fact: the apostles were indeed victims of magisterial brutality which the author makes no effort to conceal in his account. The treatment inflicted on Paul and Silas was that normally meted out to vagrants or the worst elements of society. Their feet were put into stocks and they were flung into prison under military guard. The apostles are considered as itinerant Jews and treated as *humiliores*.<sup>24</sup>

The Roman authorities are vividly portrayed as being frightened of the situation created by the announcement of Paul's and Silas's Roman citizenship in 16:38. Their alarm shows the "Achilles' heel" of the Roman empire, thus providing an anti-Roman perspective. Lentz, therefore, agrees with the observation of Tajra about the anti-Roman tone of this scene as follows: "The one occurrence of his being beaten is portrayed as an abuse of power and a mistake".<sup>25</sup> Several cases in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are comparable to this misuse of Roman authoritative power and function as propaganda for an anti-Roman ideology.<sup>26</sup> In conclusion, even though to propagandize anti-Roman ideology is not the ultimate purpose of Luke, feasibly Luke intends to demonstrate to the reader some anti-Roman sentiment in this account.

The third scene in verses 25-34 describes a sudden accident caused by an earthquake in the prison at Philippi where Paul and Silas in their imprisonment pray and sing hymns to God. Luke here portrays Paul and Silas as representatives of *Imitatio Christi*. As Jesus prayed at the time of crisis,<sup>27</sup> so too do Paul and Silas. Perhaps, also prison is the place where their commitment to Jesus is tested recalling the scene in Gethsemane. As Johnson claims, "the imprisonment enables the other prisoners to perceive the philosophical calm of the apostles as they pray with the singing of hymns".<sup>28</sup> Suddenly, there is a great earthquake (v. 26). The "earthquake motif" is a recurring pattern and is dramatized as a sign of theophany in Hellenistic literature.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 25-6.

<sup>25</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 107.

<sup>26</sup> See ch. 6. § 6.2.2. "Injustice of the Romans"

<sup>27</sup> cf. Lk. 22:41-46.

<sup>28</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 303-4.

<sup>29</sup> cf. F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 363; see, Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 15. 668-678. Here "Scarce had they ceased to

The fourth scene in verses 27-28 is designed to show a considerable contrast between Paul/Silas and the jailer. The figure of the jailer who was ready to kill himself when he discovers the unexpected accident shows an anti-Roman element. Even though the jailer was responsible for safeguarding the prisoners, he intended to escape from his charge one way or another. Johnson points out that this potential suicide is a popular element of first century's literature: "A prominent theme in Hellenistic Novels, and in the Apocryphal Acts which so much resemble them, is the threat or deed of suicide in the face of disappointment, loss, and especially shame or dishonor."<sup>30</sup>

Despite the fact that Paul and Silas were able to escape the prison, they did not do so. Here, it seems that this prison miracle story has an unexpected purpose: This account describes Paul and Silas as protectors of the jailer. Unlike the plot's expected development, Paul and Silas encourage the jailer not to kill himself. However, the manner in which the Roman jailer falls down trembling (*ἐντρομος*) before Paul and Silas in verse 29<sup>31</sup> is comparable with the portrayal of the emperor in *Acta Appiani*,<sup>32</sup> where in both instances we are presented with a weak portrait of a Roman official.

The jailer, as an advanced watch dog of the *Pax Romana*, appears as a cowardly person. In fact, the jailer and his family convert to Christianity in verses 33-34 so that their conversion seems to show a total surrender in the presence of the Gospel of Jesus. Thus, the result leads the reader to take for granted the complete

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speak when the golden god, in the form of a serpent with high crest, uttered hissing warnings of his presence, and at his coming the statue, altars, doors, the marble pavement and gilded roof, all rocked. Then, raised breast-high in the temple's midst, he stood and gazed about with eyes flashing fire. The terrified multitude quaked with fear; but the priest, with his scared locks bound with a white fillet, recognized the divinity and cried: "The god! behold the god! Think holy thoughts and stand in reverent silence, all ye who are in this presence."; cf. Lucian, *The Lover of Lies* 22.

<sup>30</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 300; cf. Chariton, 3,1,1; Xenophon of Ephesus, *The Ephesian Tale* 2,4,6; Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* 6.12, 17.

<sup>31</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992, 300) points out that "The jailer is clearly the subject of this new sentence. His reactions appear extreme, but fit the fashion of the Hellenistic Novel, where strong emotions are always being extravagantly displayed."; cf. Plutarch, *Fabius Maximus* 3.1. Here "But, as Flaminius himself sprang upon his horse, for no apparent reason, and unaccountably, the animal was seized with quivering fright, and he was thrown and fell head foremost to the ground."

<sup>32</sup> cf. *P.Oxy.* 33. col. iii. 14-5. Here it is likely that the emperor was trembling because of the crowd's complaint about the execution of Appian the Alexandrian gymnasiarch.



submission of the jailer (and his family) to the Gospel of Jesus. It is quite ironical, as Polhill suggests, that "the miracle served not to deliver them but rather to deliver the jailer. It served as the basis for Paul and Silas's witness to him and for his conversion."<sup>33</sup> Therefore, it would be enough to say that *Pax Romana* is totally taken over by *Pax Christi* at that moment. Luke wants to convey the message that the Roman empire, the great power of the time, cannot but surrender to the power of the Gospel of Jesus. In this way, Luke intends to demonstrate that the Gospel of Jesus has enough power to destroy the pseudo-peace of the *Pax Romana*.<sup>34</sup>

Similarly, this episode's last scene also aims to demonstrate an anti-Roman sentiment to the reader. When it is day-time, the magistrates send the police to say, "Release these men." The jailer gives Paul the message, "The magistrates have sent to let you go; therefore come out now and go in peace". When Paul hears this message, the tension continues still:

But Paul replied, "They have beaten us in public, uncondemned, men who are Roman citizens, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they going to discharge us in secret? Certainly not! Let them come and take us out themselves." The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Roman citizens; so they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city. (vv. 37-39)

This passage implies that "The shame of Paul's flogging is reversed by the humble apologies of the magistrates."<sup>35</sup> Immediately, one asks why Paul and Silas have not mentioned their Roman citizenship at the beginning when they are being made to suffer by the magistrates. As we have seen,<sup>36</sup> according to the *Lex Valeria* and the *Lex Porcia* Roman citizens are exempt from flogging. This means that Roman citizenship protects all Roman citizens against magisterial legal abuse.<sup>37</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White suggests that the *Lex Iulia* is applied:

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<sup>33</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 354. Here Polhill divides this story into two parts: Paul and Silas's deliverance (vv. 25-28) and the conversion of the jailer and his household (vv. 29-34).

<sup>34</sup> cf. K. Wengst, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ*, London: SCM Press, 1987.

<sup>35</sup> F.G. Downing, 'Theophilus's First Reading of Luke-Acts,' in C.M. Tuckett (ed.), *Luke's Literary Achievement: Collected Essays*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995, 106.

<sup>36</sup> See also on the rights of the Roman citizens, Chapter 3. § 3.5.4.

<sup>37</sup> K. Lake/H.J. Cadbury, *BC IV*, 200; C.S.C. Williams(1964) 195.



According to the text of the *lex Iulia*, the Roman citizen might not be beaten or bound by a magistrate *adversus provocationem* or by any other person in any circumstances. This should be substantially correct, because the meaning of these texts is so different from the general doctrine of the classical lawyers, for whom immunity from flogging was limited to the class of the *honestiores*. The narrative of Acts agrees with the *lex Iulia* except that it adds the qualification 'uncondemned'. This implies that the provincial authority might administer a flogging after sentence, presumably in a case in which a Roman citizen had not exercised his right of appeal, or alternately in a special category of cases at present unknown in which the *lex Iulia* did not apply.<sup>38</sup>

Therefore, W. Stegemann insists that the possession of Roman citizenship is a valuable privilege not only in Rome itself, but also in the provinces.<sup>39</sup> In the light of the classical texts cited previously,<sup>40</sup> the narratives of Paul and Silas concerning Roman citizenship reflect the social circumstances during Roman times. To conclude that Paul's and Silas' treatment is simply due to not mentioning their citizenship is wrong though this kind of case is possible. There are other possibilities which will be examined by looking at Luke's literary technique.

Acts scholars like E. Haenchen suggest literary suspense as a solution to this dilemma.<sup>41</sup> L.C.A. Alexander also stresses the literary function of Roman citizenship in the trial narrative of Luke's Paul.<sup>42</sup> J.C. Lentz is interested in the author's literary intention in the way he uses Paul's and Silas' Roman citizenship:

From the investigation of the various legal issues involved, there would have been no reason for the fear of the magistrates unless they discovered that the citizen who was before them was also one who would have influence with the governor, or could exact revenge. The declaration of citizenship is a dramatic insertion in order to make a distinctive contrast between Paul and the magistrates and Roman citizens of Philippi.<sup>43</sup>

A comment of R.L. Brawley helps us to understand the point at issue. According to Brawley, "Suspense pulls readers forward in narrative like the proverbial carrot

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<sup>38</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 71-2.

<sup>39</sup> W. Stegemann, 'War der Apostel Paulus ein römischer Bürger?', *ZNW* 78 (1987) 213.

<sup>40</sup> See Chapter 2. § 2.1.1. G. Lüdemann.

<sup>41</sup> cf. E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971, 504. "The author's freedom, which we encounter here, is strange to the modern reader. But it did not occur to any of the great Roman historians simply to say 'how it actually happened'. They all wanted to inform, influence and motivate. Luke would not have broken the tradition of great Roman historical writing when he narrated the history of the mission in Philippi in his own fashion. The difference between *facta* and *ficta* has not been the same in all ages."

<sup>42</sup> L.C.A. Alexander, 'Early Christian attitudes to Rome', *ABD*, New York: Doubleday, 1992, V, 837.

<sup>43</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 169.



before the horse. Readers make sense of narrative by anticipating the outcome and then constantly revising their expectations as the narrative unfolds."<sup>44</sup> What then is the intentional purpose of this narrative in Philippi? Is it to show the conversion of the jailer and his family as Gentiles or does it emphasize the sacrificial witness of Paul and Silas? Possibly, Luke is also using the "motif of suspense" for the purpose of showing an anti-Roman effect to readers. If this is the case, Paul and Silas's Roman citizenship is held to the end to create suspense. In this case, the late claim of Roman citizenship creates the possibility for the reader to recognize that their status is noble and the mission is not illegal.

As we have already examined above, Roman citizenship is seen as possessing an almost magical power to save its holders in times of emergency. Yet, there is more to the matter as demonstrated above and as will be discussed later in this chapter. After working through the details of the passage, we conclude that Luke uses Paul's and Silas's Roman citizenship in this narrative for the purpose of creating an anti-Roman effect. As will be realised, Luke intends to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus in the Empire, but ironically he adopts the motif of "anti-Romanism" especially in regard to the Roman authorities for Paul's missionary work. This ideology is related to several texts of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. As has been discussed, the Roman citizenship of Paul and Silas is an element in the literary creation of Luke's purpose in this episode.

## 8.2. Acts 21:27-39

**8.2.1. General description:** In Paul's trial narratives, the primary incident related to his citizenship happens in Jerusalem as described in 21:27-39. The significance of the passage is pointed out by J. Drury when he comments, "Jerusalem is the geographical magnet which determines the movement and the action of the whole two-volume work up till Paul's departure for Rome."<sup>45</sup> In fact, this incident

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<sup>44</sup> R.L. Brawley, *Centering on God*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990, 34.

<sup>45</sup> J. Drury, *Tradition & Design in Luke's Gospel: A Study in Early Christian Historiography*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1976, 52.

is truly the starting point for Paul's journey to Rome, Luke's designed terminus. The Jews' accusation against Paul is divided into five scenes comprising the charge, arrest, first and second inquiry, sentence, and discharge.

**8.2.2. Narrative critical analysis:** First of all, the Jewish charge at the beginning of this event is shown in verses 27-28:

When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews (*Ἰουδαῖοι*) from Asia, who had seen him in the temple, stirred up (*συνέχεον*) the whole crowd. They seized him, shouting (*κράζοντες*),<sup>46</sup> 'Fellow Israelites (*Ἰσραηλίται*), help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against our people, our law, and this place; more than that, he has actually brought Greeks (*Ἕλληνας*) into the temple and has defiled this holy place.'

In fact, this allegation is already mentioned from the information of the Jerusalem leaders, especially James, in 21:21: "They [the believing Jews] have been told about you that you teach all the Jews living among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs". Although the believing Jews (v.21) and the Asian Jews (v. 27) are not necessarily the same, this scene is enough to suggest that the relationship between Paul and the Jews will become worse. Regardless of their identity as Diaspora or Jerusalem Jews, believing or non-believing, there is no proof that the Lukan Paul does break any Jewish customs or that he encourages Jewish Christians to abandon the Jewish law or practice. To the contrary, Lukan Paul had his helper Timothy circumcised (16:3) and takes a Jewish Nazarite vow (18:18). Moreover, verse 29 suggests that the Jewish charge is in fact false and that the Jews are confused about Paul's bringing Trophimus the Ephesian into the temple area when, in fact, he had only been in the city with Paul. Although Luke tells us it was fellow-Christians who caused the trouble by spreading these rumours about Paul, the charge also hints at an "anti-Judaistic" tone. Paul is presented in the narrative as distinct from the different groups of "Jews" who oppose him harshly in verses 27-8 as emphasized by Luke's repeated

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<sup>46</sup> cf. *P.Oxy.* 33. col. iii. 7f. "Appian cried out in the middle of Rome: Come up, Romans, and see a unique spectacle, an Alexandrian gymnasiarch and ambassador led to execution!"



use of *'Ιουδαίοι*. As J.B. Tyson points out, "the images of the Jewish people in this section are overwhelmingly negative".<sup>47</sup>

Next follows the scene of Paul's arrest. This scene contains suspense and thrill:

While the Jews were trying to kill Paul, word came to the tribune of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Immediately he took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. When they saw the tribune (*χιλίαρχος*) and the soldiers (*στρατιώτας*), they stopped beating (*τύπτοντες*) Paul. Then the tribune came, arrested him, and ordered him to be bound with two chains. (31-33a)

Tajra points out that "Lysias intervened in the fray as it was his duty to quell any disorders in the city and to do all he could to maintain public order".<sup>48</sup> The tribune is, in general, under the control of the procurator. This suggests that the action of the tribune in this scene, by contrast to the action of the Jews is quite valid and in accordance with his office because he is the chief Roman authority in Jerusalem holding military and administrative responsibilities.<sup>49</sup> Thus, his action may be viewed as an example of positive support for Paul. As T. Seland points out, "because of the Roman anxiety over further upheavals, [Paul] was taken out of the hands of the Jews to be kept in custody and interrogated by the Romans themselves."<sup>50</sup> Further, one may conclude that the kind of Roman assistance from Gallio in Corinth (18:12-7) and from the tribune (21:33f.; 23:12-32) suggest an interpretation in line with "political apologetic."<sup>51</sup> However, the complete disruption of the inquiry by the uproar of the Jews may be used as evidence that the tribune is incompetent as a symbol of Roman law and order.

From this perspective, his action represents the unconcealed incompetence of the Roman empire. Further, the narrative of the tribune's action here shows an "anti-

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<sup>47</sup> J.B. Tyson, *Images of Judaism in Luke-Acts*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1992, 159.

<sup>48</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 67.

<sup>49</sup> cf. T.R.S. Broughton, "The Roman Army", *BC V*, 428.

<sup>50</sup> T. Seland, *Establishment Violence in Philo & Luke: A Study of Non-Conformity to the Torah & Jewish Vigilante Reactions*, Biblical Interpretation Series, vol. 15, Leiden: Brill, 1995, 286.

<sup>51</sup> See ch. 2. esp. § 2.2.1.; H. Conzelmann, *The Theology of St Luke*, London: SCM Press, 1982, 138-44; *Contra*, R.J. Cassidy, *Jesus, Politics and Society: A Study of St. Luke's Gospel*, New York: Orbis Books, 1978; *idem* (1988); R.J. Cassidy/P.J. Scharper (1983) 146-67; P.W. Walaskay, *And so we came to Rome: The Political Perspective of St Luke*, Cambridge: CUP, 1983, 50-67.

Roman" function. Even the timely arrest of Paul which saves Paul's life, cannot disguise the Roman weakness and the lack of general control in this scene. Moreover, an "anti-Jewish" sentiment is also present, since "when the Jews saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul". This suggests an "anti-Jewish" tone because if the Jews' claim was right, they could constantly insist on their own blamelessness even though it might seem to be unrealistic. According to verse 34, the Jews are divided into several different opinions though some would argue for a singular "Jewish view". J.B. Tyson portrays the Jews of this scene in the following manner which is in keeping with an "anti-Jewish" perspective.

Thus the narratives about Paul in Jerusalem provide us with an almost totally negative image of the Jewish people. They are unruly, seditious, and fanatical. The role of the Jewish people here is consistent with that of Paul's Jewish opponents in the Diaspora. They are bloodthirsty, violent, loud, confused, and obdurate.<sup>52</sup>

The first short inquiry is shown in verses 33b to 34. The tribune orders Paul to be brought into the barracks because of the uproar. The *dramatis personae* in this scene are the Roman authorities and Jews. Here also the action of the Romans reveals their weakness and injustice. As Tajra points out, even though it is impossible in the midst of the tumult to learn for certain of the victim's identity,<sup>53</sup> Paul is obviously treated as a *humilior*. This is a literary mechanism to maximize suspense and to emphasize anti-Roman sentiments.<sup>54</sup> The anger of the Jewish crowd is revealed in verses 35-6 where they shout, "Away with him!" This is also an example of "anti-Jewish" sentiments especially when one considers that the reason for the attack against Paul is invalid as emphasized in Paul's defence (21:37-22:21).

The next scene begins with a private conversation between the tribune and Paul:

The tribune replied, "Do you know Greek? Then you are not the Egyptian who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand assassins (*σικαρίων*) out into the wilderness?" Paul replied, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen

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<sup>52</sup> J.B. Tyson (1992) 160.

<sup>53</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 68.

<sup>54</sup> cf. H. Conzelmann, *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987, 183.



of no mean city (οὐκ ἀσήμου πόλεως πολίτης); I beg you, let me speak to the people." (vv. 37-9)

In reply to the tribune's inquiries concerning Paul's ability to speak Greek and his identity as an Egyptian, Paul offers his reply. Why does the tribune think Paul is the Egyptian? and why does Paul respond to the tribune not as a Roman citizen, but a Tarsian? Until now, in general, Acts scholars agree that the most likely answer is to be found in parallels in Josephus.<sup>55</sup> H.J. Cadbury explains:

Perhaps also Paul's reply represents more than a linguistic correction. Does it not also voice a proud superiority over the Egyptians felt by the well-born Tarsian apostle, or at least on his behalf by an equally aristocratic biographer? That the native Egyptian was thought little of by the Jews we know well from Josephus. The Romans also scorned him, and Claudius Lysias may well have shared and shown this feeling. Josephus again in a somewhat exaggerated way speaks of the Egyptians as the only people to whom the Romans, now lords of the universe, have refused admission to any citizen rights whatever. Of the Greek attitude to Egyptians I may quote a phrase of protest by a Greek writing to other Greeks, 'You are, my brothers, perhaps considering me a barbarian or an inhuman Egyptian.'<sup>56</sup>

J.C. Lentz briefly explains the relationship between the Greeks and the Egyptians in the following manner:

The reaction of Paul to his mistaken identity is representative of Luke's sensitivity to the issue of Paul's social status throughout these last chapters in Acts. Being mistaken for an Egyptian was an immense social slur. Jews who lived in Alexandria resented being identified as Greek citizens although they were not as a group given the franchise. The Greek citizens maintained their social distance from the larger Egyptian population through their tax exemptions and other privileges. These perquisites were sought after, but not gained, by the higher-status Jews of Alexandria.<sup>57</sup>

More to the point, the narrator appears to exploit the latent inter-communal violence of the East-Mediterranean world in order to heighten the drama. Perhaps, this suggests social and political reasons for Paul's claim here. Moreover, according to the "anti-Roman" perspective, the ambition of the tribune is to catch the Egyptian, the agitator,

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<sup>55</sup> BJ 2.254-63; AJ, 20.160-172; cf. G.E. Sterling, *Historiography and Self-Definition. Josephus, Luke-Acts and Apologetic Historiography*, Leiden: Brill, 1992; C.J. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1989, 94-9; I.H. Marshall (1980) 351; W. Neil, *The Acts of the Apostles: The New Century Bible Commentary*, London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott Publ. Ltd., 1981, 222; F.F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek text with Introduction and Commentary*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990, 452; G.A. Krodel, *Acts: Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament*, Minneapolis: Augsburg publishing House, 1986; H. Conzelmann (1987) 184; see on the historical differences between Luke and Josephus from C.J. Hemer (1989) 97-8.

<sup>56</sup> H.J. Cadbury (1955) 33; cf. *P.Oxy.* 1681.

<sup>57</sup> Lentz (1993) 29; cf. The previous chapters (esp. § 5.1.1, 6.1.1, and 6.3.1.) on the relationship and privileges among the Greeks, the Jews, the Egyptians, and the Romans in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.



rather than keeping order in Jerusalem, so he wants to know whether Paul's status/citizenship is applicable to this achievement. W. Neil, therefore, points out "Claudius Lysias thinks that he has now caught Paul as the Egyptian."<sup>58</sup> The tribune simply wishes to get an honourable position even at Paul's expense. Although it would not be unjust if he was the Egyptian, still the tribune's action finally cannot be right. This suggests that the tribune has a plot in his mind which in the end has nothing to do with Paul or his circumstances. Thus, Paul's trial narrative exposes the tribune as a weak character.

From another perspective, this passage strongly aims to demonstrate Paul's boldness, his pride of birth, and love of Tarsus his home city all of which find parallels in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.<sup>59</sup> The Alexandrian Greek patriotic leaders always disclose their own *Amour-propre* of pedigree. Likewise, Paul, as a defendant, quite fearlessly proclaims himself to be 'a citizen of no mean city', a statement which is particularly expressive of Greek pride.<sup>60</sup> R.B. Rackham points out, "The apostle had not wholly lost the patriotic pride of the Greek citizen nor the human satisfaction in good birth."<sup>61</sup> Rackham also claims that, "Even though he could not but spend his energy because of mob violence, Paul's spirit was indeed unquenchable, his courage invincible."<sup>62</sup> As E. Haenchen points out, Paul's request to the tribune is spoken with elaborate politeness.<sup>63</sup> This also demonstrates Paul's pride of birth and noble status in terms of a Tarsian Greek citizen. Johnson reflects on its significance: "Paul is fully conscious of his rights and is willing to take

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<sup>58</sup> W. Neil (1981) 222.

<sup>59</sup> cf. chapter 6. "Significant motifs in *Acta Alexandrinorum*" esp. § 6.1.3. "Love of home town (Alexandria)"

<sup>60</sup> H.J. Cadbury, *The Book of Acts in History*, London: Adam and Charles Black, 1955, 32-3; K. Lake/H.J. Cadbury, *BC IV*, 278.

<sup>61</sup> R.B. Rackham, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Exposition*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1910, 420; cf. R.J. Cassidy, *Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987, 101. Here "readers of Acts can only be astounded by Luke's report that Paul said nothing about his Roman citizenship at this juncture but emphasized instead his pride at being a citizen of Tarsus."

<sup>62</sup> Rackham (1910) 420.

<sup>63</sup> E. Haenchen (1971) 619; J.C. Lentz (1993) 28-43.



advantage of them: he is by no means shy about his heritage or the privileges that accompany it - both from the Greek and from the Jewish side".<sup>64</sup>

### 8.3. Acts 21:40-22:29

**8.3.1. General description:** Throughout his long defence speech (21:40-22:21), Paul uses the standard tripartite biographical formula to speak about his birth, upbringing and educational background (22:3-5).<sup>65</sup> Then follows Paul's conversion or calling (22:6-16) and his defense with reference to his commission by God to the Gentile mission (22:17-21).<sup>66</sup> The narrative ends with interruption of Paul's speech by the crowd, the tribune's order for the examination of the reason for the response of the crowd, and the proclamation of Paul's Roman citizenship (vv. 22-29). Interestingly, Paul saves the announcement of his Roman citizenship until he meets alone with the Romans while in his speech to the crowd he reveals his Tarsian citizenship. Therefore, it is unclear whether the Jews know that Paul is a Roman citizen. However, the narrator uses this narrative as a whole to express his strong "anti-Jewish" sentiment in that the Jews' rejection of Paul will lead finally to an appeal to Caesar and the spread of the Gospel throughout the Roman empire.

**8.3.2. Narrative critical analysis:** When the Jewish crowd listen to Paul's declaration about his mission to the Gentiles, they are not persuaded. Rather, Paul's speech makes the Jews angry when he states in verse 21 that he is not to be a witness to Jews but only to Gentiles.<sup>67</sup> Seemingly, the suggestion that his mission is to preach to the Gentiles is the last straw for the mob.<sup>68</sup> In a dramatic and

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<sup>64</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 385.

<sup>65</sup> See § 3.3; cf. L.T. Johnson (1992) 387; W.C. van Unnik, *Tarsus or Jerusalem? The City of Paul's Youth*, London: Epworth, 1962.

<sup>66</sup> cf. B.J. Hubbard, 'The Role of Commissioning Accounts in Acts', in Charles H. Talbert (ed.), *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1978, 187-198. Here Hubbard points out that "In the same speech at Jerusalem, Paul describes his temple Christophany. While praying there after his return to the city, Paul is told to leave because his testimony about Jesus would not be accepted in Jerusalem. He objects on the basis of his past record of persecuting Christians. Nonetheless he is told to "depart" (*poreuou*) for the mission to the Gentiles (22:21). So this commissioning account provided additional authentication for Paul's mission (as well as for the shape of Christianity in Luke's time)".

<sup>67</sup> cf. J.B. Tyson (1992) 164; G. Lüdemann (1987) 238.

<sup>68</sup> K. Lake/ H.J. Cadbury (1933) *BC IV*, 281

suspense-filled<sup>69</sup> sequence of events, the great uproar causes the tribune to protect Paul once again. Perhaps, the tumult made it possible for Paul to reveal his Roman citizenship as supported by verses 22-24:

Up to this point they listened to him, but then they shouted, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he should not be allowed to live." And while they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and tossing dust into the air, the tribune directed that he was to be brought into the barracks, and ordered him to be examined by flogging, to find out the reason for this outcry against him. (vv. 22-24)

The narrator expresses an "anti-Jewish" sentiment by portraying the Jewish mob as uncultured by the way they act and react. When looking at other "crowd" characters which appear in Acts, one observes that Paul has experienced the same happening at Antioch (13:45) and at Thessalonica (17:5f.). In both cases, when the Jews hear Paul's speech of salvation to the Gentiles, their envy and hostility is aroused. Another "crowd" scene can be found in the *Acta Hermaisici*<sup>70</sup> where Caesar says to the Alexandrian Greeks that "You must be eager to die, having such contempt for death as to answer even me with insolence", Hermaiscus accuses Caesar of filling his Privy Council with Jews. At the same time, the bust of Serapis suddenly breaks into a sweat. Then tumultuous crowds gather in Rome and numerous shouts ring forth. The gathering of the crowds in Rome emphasizes Hermaiscus' mal-treatment by the emperor. Likewise, in Acts the Jews' collective drastic and extravagant actions against Paul demonstrate the violent nature of community politics. Interestingly, if Paul had done what the Jews think he has done, they are legally correct in desiring the death-sentence for him. However, as G. Lüdemann points out, "Paul's speech was a failure"<sup>71</sup> because the Jews' furious reaction caused Paul to interrupt speaking for his defence.

The main part of this analysis will now consider Paul's Roman citizenship as revealed in verses 23ff. The specific narrative segment (22: 23-29) dealing with Paul's Roman citizenship contains a declaration of Paul's Roman citizenship within a

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<sup>69</sup> cf. J.B. Polhill (1992) 463.

<sup>70</sup> *P.Oxy.* 1242 ll. 40ff.

<sup>71</sup> G. Lüdemann (1987) 238.



punishment scene and a private dialogue between the tribune and Paul, as the accused, concerning the basis of Roman citizenship for each man. In verse 24 the tribune orders Paul to be taken to the barracks and to be punished by flogging in order to find out the reason for this outcry against him. Perhaps, the motivation for this action is to satisfy the Jewish crowd, perhaps to further his own ends or perhaps to illustrate once again an "anti-Roman" sentiment (see comments on 21:31-33).

In any case, the soldiers are preparing to tie Paul up with thongs at the point where Paul reveals his Roman citizenship. G. Lüdemann points out in relation to the *dramatis personae* that "the cruelty of the Roman authorities is contrasted with their fear when they discover that Paul is a Roman citizen."<sup>72</sup> This suggests that the original reason why Paul reveals his Roman citizenship relates to the reaction by the Jews to his speech and the ensuing reaction of the tribune. Generally scholars have argued Roman citizenship made it possible for Paul to receive the protection of the Roman state against the Jewish action of violence. E. Haenchen also points out the Roman flavour in this narrative:

Hence Luke reserved the Roman citizenship for a later scene, in which he attests the correctness of the Roman authorities and at the same time creates a situation of unprecedented tension.<sup>73</sup>

However, this study argues that the real reason why Paul reveals his Roman citizenship is that it drives the narrative forward to the ultimate climax in 28:31 where Paul preaches the Kingdom of God boldly and without hindrance in Rome. In addition, the knowledge of Paul's Roman citizenship provides another illustration of an "anti-Roman" perspective. This section of the narrative reveals that the Roman authorities are weak and unjust. A. Ehrhardt also suggests a negative viewpoint of Rome when he says that "it was St. Luke's intention here to criticize the Roman system".<sup>74</sup> When the Romans know that Paul is a Roman citizen, they are afraid of

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<sup>72</sup> G. Lüdemann (1988) 238-9.

<sup>73</sup> E. Haenchen (1971) 635.

<sup>74</sup> A. Ehrhardt, *The Acts of the Apostles: Ten lectures*, Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1969, 111.

their fault and stop scourging him. It is convincing that the more they treat the Roman unlawfully, the more they are afraid of their deeds.

The second portion of this narrative segment contains a private dialogue between the tribune and Paul where the tribune asks, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" (v. 27) His question reflects his present attitude in that he does not want to confront unjustly a Roman citizen like Paul. Thus, when he knows that Paul has the status of a Roman citizen, he is quite willing to ask Paul about it again. The tribune's fear is similar to the centurion's fear in this scene. Although these illegal actions against Paul come about without any information concerning Paul's status, the tribune is extremely alarmed. Thus, the Roman official's portrait is contrasted considerably with the boldness of Paul, the accused.

This narrative sufficiently provides the reader with an "anti-Roman" perspective, since the Roman authorities are negatively portrayed as weak people. As the main characters of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* consistently insist on the opponent's weakness, here in Acts the weakness of the tribune is contrasted with the Lukan Paul's boldness. In the *Acta Alexandrinorum* all Alexandrian Greek nationalistic leaders act with boldness (*παρρησία*) whenever they confront Roman emperors with their Alexandrian complaints. We have already discussed in some detail the Alexandrian Greeks' idea of "bold behaviour."<sup>75</sup> A further hint of anti-Roman sentiment in this narrative is found in the Roman tribune's reply in v. 28: "It cost me a large sum of money (*κεφαλαίου*) to get my citizenship" thus revealing his ignoble birth. Although *κεφαλαίου* originally means main thing or main point, here it implies financial capital, that is to say "a sum of money."<sup>76</sup> The money which is regarded as a bribe, therefore, might be given to all the Roman provincial authorities up to the emperors.<sup>77</sup> As a result, it can be imagined that the tribune's case is an example of the official corruption referred to above. The fact that Paul responds to the tribune,

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<sup>75</sup> See chapter 7. "*Παρρησία*" esp. § 7.4.

<sup>76</sup> BAGD 429-430; cf. *Ant* 12.30; *Letter of Aristeas* 24.

<sup>77</sup> See § 3.5.1. "What is the role of the provincial governor?"



"But I was born a citizen," shows Paul's own *Amour-propre* of pedigree which provides the possibility for the reader to understand that birth from Roman parents is the most impressive method of acquiring a Roman citizenship. Concerning these questions, R.P.C. Hanson writes:

When Claudius Lysias said 'I bought this citizenship for a large sum' (Acts 22:28), he was not referring to any formal fee which he had to pay for the privilege, for there was none, but to the money he had to expend on bribes to clerks and officials in order to get his name on the appropriate list of those who were to receive citizenship. It is known that under the Emperor Claudius many people obtained Roman citizenship by means of bribing the relevant officials. In the time of his successor, Nero, this scandal was discovered, the people responsible for it were punished, and as far as is known, it did not recur. Now Claudius Lysias must have obtained his citizenship under the Emperor Claudius, for he took his name; and he is supposed to be speaking just at the end of Claudius' reign (or, less probably, at the beginning of Nero's). Either the author of Acts has a surprising capacity for historical research and an historical imagination equalling that of Walter Scott and Robert Graves, or he lived near to the events he is relating, or he is using sources which derive from a time near to those events.<sup>78</sup>

As J.G. Gager points out, "the basic criteria for determining social class were birth and legal status, rather than wealth, education, or ethnic origin. For example, freedmen were sometimes wealthier than either equestrians or senators, but by law they could not become senators."<sup>79</sup> "[Paul] even precedes the tribune in Romanness, having been born a citizen"<sup>80</sup> which demonstrates Paul's superior position in relation to the tribune. From Dio Cassius' Roman History, clearly both Dio and Luke share the same rather discreditable perception, that Roman citizenship could be "bought" during the time of Claudius.<sup>81</sup> Whether or not this was actually the case is not something that we need to determine here. Also, similar evidence is found in Tacitus, where Nero was enraged to find out one of his senators who was selling "the right to official promotion".<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> R.P.C. Hanson, *The Acts: New Clarendon Bible*, Oxford: OUP, 1967, 10-1.

<sup>79</sup> J.G. Gager, 'Religion and Social Class in the early Roman Empire', in S. Benko/J.J. O'Rourke (eds.), *The Roman Empire as the setting of Primitive Christianity*, London: Oliphants, 1972, 100.

<sup>80</sup> cf. R.C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, vol. 2: *The Acts of the Apostles*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990, 284.

<sup>81</sup> cf. Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 60.17.5. Here Dio reports that Roman citizen's privilege later become so cheapened, so a man could become a citizen by giving the right person some bits of broken glass.

<sup>82</sup> Tacitus, *Annals*, 14.50.1; cf. A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 155.



Apart from the historical rights or wrongs of the case, the tribune's mention of his Roman citizenship is enough to provide an "anti-Roman" perspective for the readers, for his origin is portrayed as decisively inferior to Paul's high civic status. Therefore, in verse 28, Paul proclaims his pride of birth and in contrast the pride of birth of the tribune. Verse 29 continues this sentiment. Verse 29 is the most jocular part of this narrative. As with the Roman soldiers, so also the Roman authorities drew back from Paul. The tribune himself was afraid of their wrongdoing. C.S.C. Williams rightly points out that "There is humour in Luke's description of the torturers' exit".<sup>83</sup> Like verse 28, verse 29 is also an ideal example of anti-Roman sentiment in terms of "weakness of the Romans". As has been surveyed, this narrative which is dominated by Paul's Roman citizenship is full of "anti-Roman" sentiment. Luke particularly intended to disclose anti-Romanism through the contrast between the different values of citizenship of Luke's Paul and the tribune.

#### **8.4. Acts 22:30-23:22**

**8.4.1. General description:** This narrative is composed of Paul's long defence speech before the Sanhedrin, and the Jewish plans to kill Paul. It begins with the fact that the tribune is afraid (22:29) because he has ordered Paul to be bound (22:29). However, unusually — Paul is not released until the next day.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, the tribune assembles the Sanhedrin<sup>85</sup> in order to find out the real issue behind the Jews' accusation against Paul. In 23:1 the legal proceedings against Paul begin strangely because Paul's long defence speech contains only religious matters.

The first part of this narrative is related to a religious point delivered from Paul's speech: "I have lived my life with a clear conscience before God." (23:3)

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<sup>83</sup> C.S.C. Williams (1964) 246.

<sup>84</sup> cf. E. Haenchen (1971) 639. "This section shows Luke's manner of working and his point of view especially clearly. If we read it as an historical report then the persons act very strangely in an improbable and incomprehensible manner."; H. Conzelmann (1987, 191) also points out that "This incident is historically impossible: the tribune is afraid because he has seized a Roman citizen, but he leaves him overnight in chains; he does not interrogate Paul himself, but rather allows the Roman citizen to be presented before Jewish authorities."

<sup>85</sup> Luke uses this term only once in the Gospel (22:66), but 14 times in Acts, 4:15; 5:21, 27, 34, 41; 6:12, 15; 22:30; 23:1, 6, 15, 20, 28; 24:20.



There, the High Priest and Paul have a dispute over a Jewish dogmatic issue. The narrative continues with a heated controversy about the resurrection of the dead between Sadducees and Pharisees which is instigated by Paul. The intent of the narrator is to create trouble between the two parties in order to create a diversion which saves Lukan Paul from dangerous circumstances (v. 6-9). As a result, the plot develops into a dangerous situation: "When the dissension became violent, the tribune, fearing that they would tear Paul to pieces, ordered the soldiers to go down, take him by force, and bring him into the barracks." (v. 10) In 23:12-22, we are told of a conspiracy where some Jews have joined together to plot Paul's death. Fortunately, Paul's nephew informs the tribune, and, thus, Paul is able to escape from the Sanhedrin to Felix.

**8.4.2. Narrative critical analysis:** According to 22:30, the tribune wants to know the real reason why Paul is being accused by the Jews. Even though the tribune fully understands that Paul is a Roman citizen from the previous narrative (22:22-29), and he had supreme power in Palestine with the ability to grant releases,<sup>86</sup> he still does not want to release Paul. The tribune has full knowledge that the angry Jews are accusing Paul and they are plotting to kill him. If he discharges Paul, the Jews will certainly complain to him at the very least. Thus, the tribune does not acquit Paul at this moment. The attitude of the tribune and his action, or lack of action, creates the possibility for a "anti-Roman" attitude in the narrative yet again. That is to say, the narrator intends to show the weakness of the Romans by the tribune's absurd action and the uproar of the Jews which frightens him into being less conscious of the just Roman legal procedure. If anything, the tribune's action is politically motivated for the sustaining of his official position. In fact, from 23:10 we might misunderstand the tribune's veiled intention. Therefore, it could be agreed that

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<sup>86</sup> cf. T. Seland (1995, 283) observes that "The procurator was nevertheless a supreme authority in the land of Israel. He could intervene in Jewish matters on all levels at any time, and did so several times. As a supreme authority he had the right of *ius gladii*: capital punishment."

the tribune's treatment of the awkward Paul is totally subordinated to the undergirding of his official position.

Ironically, however, Paul has been existing primarily not under the Roman protection, but by the divine plan throughout the narrative.<sup>87</sup> Clearly, in the text Paul's mission has been controlled by divine power. Furthermore, according to the analysis of the speeches, P. Schubert insists that the "*βουλή τοῦ θεοῦ*" can be seen in terms of divine fulfilment.<sup>88</sup> So J.T. Squires stresses that the 'plan of God' plays a central role in Paul's trial narratives: "In the final section of Acts - Paul's arrest, trials and journey to Rome - Luke persists with this theme"<sup>89</sup> as illustrated by this narrative. The view that Paul stays under the Roman protective custody of the Roman tribune is a literary device to promote the underlying divine plan.

Paul's following defence speech begins with strong language:

Brothers, up to this day I have lived my life with a clear conscience before God'. Then the high priest Ananias ordered those standing near him to strike him on the mouth. At this Paul said to him, 'God will strike you, you whitewashed wall (*τοῖχε κεκοιανμένε*)! Are you sitting there to judge me according to the law, and yet in violation of the law (*παρανομῶν*) you order me to be struck?' Those standing nearby said, 'Do you dare to insult God's high priest? (23:1-4)

Acts 23:1 tells us that this defence speech is in response to the Jewish accusation. Verses 2-3 demonstrates the narrator's anti-Jewish view point in that they show an uncultured aspect of contemporary Judaism as seen in the high priest's pompous manner and "tyrant" accusation. The high priest's behaviour may be contrasted with that of Gamaliel in Acts 5:34-9. However, Paul defends himself with boldness (*παρρησία*) against the high priest's arrogance which is represented by the application of the law. The *Acta Alexandrinorum* provide several examples of the

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<sup>87</sup> cf. Lk. 1:66, 23:46, Acts. 4:30, 11:21, 13:11; C.H. Cosgrove, 'The Divine *ΔΕΙ* in Luke-Acts', *NovT* 26 (1984) 168-190, esp. 184; cf. J.T. Squires, *The Plan of God in Luke-Acts*, SNTSMS 76, Cambridge: CUP, 1993. Here Squires divides the 'plan of God' in Luke-Acts into five categories: 1. Providence: God at work in human history 2. Portents: signs of divine action in human history 3. Epiphanies: inspired indications of the plan of God 4. Prophecy: foretelling and fulfilling the plan of God 5. Fate: the necessity of the plan of God.

<sup>88</sup> P. Schubert, 'The Final Cycle of Speeches in the Book of Acts', *JBL* 87 (1968) 1-16.

<sup>89</sup> J.T. Squires (1993) 187; cf. E. Richard, 'The Divine Purpose: The Jews and the Gentile Mission (Acts 15)', in C.H. Talbert (ed.), *Luke-Acts: New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature Seminar*, New York: Crossroad, 1984, 192.



element of Alexandrian Greeks' bold behaviour by which to compare Paul's speech here. Among the examples in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the accusation of Isidorus to the emperor Claudius is quite typical:

I'm gymnasiarch of the glorious city of Alexandria. But you are the cast-off son of the Jewess Salome!<sup>90</sup>

Here the emperor is not recognised as the emperor because he is not acting like an emperor. Paul's "boldness" reveals his extreme conviction in God's *Heilsgeschichte*. The illegal action of the High Priest makes a big difference to Paul's achievement. Verse 5 says that "And Paul said, 'I did not realize, brothers, that he was high priest'; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a leader of your people.'" Paul's reply shows his humorous outlook,<sup>91</sup> an outlook which Paul does not forget even as a prisoner. J.B. Tyson points out Paul's reliance on Torah in that "We learn from Paul's quotation of Exod 22:28 that it is necessary to obey Torah even when calling attention to an injustice by a Jewish leader."<sup>92</sup> This means that Paul is totally committed to Torah during his missionary work. However, despite Paul's loyalty to Jewish law, he has responded negatively to the High Priest who functions to reveal his bold attitude. As Johnson points out, "the chief priest's behaviour was not in accord with his status and function. Far from an 'apology' for a mistake, Paul's statement is another prophetic criticism of the chief priest, whose behaviour makes him 'unrecognizable'".<sup>93</sup> This makes also it possible for the reader to appreciate an anti-Jewish effect by virtue of Paul's boldness against the High Priest.

In verse 6, Paul shouts out (*ἐκραζεν*)<sup>94</sup> in the Sanhedrin in a manner which implicitly reveals his boldness. Moreover, when Paul says to the Jews, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial concerning the hope of the

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<sup>90</sup> *Chrest.* 14 *Col.* iii. 11f.

<sup>91</sup> See some solutions concerning on the reason why Paul was not able to recognize the High Priest, E. Haenchen (1971) 640. 1. Paul was short-sighted. 2. In the confusion of voices Paul could not ascertain who gave the command to strike him on the mouth. (Jacquier) 3. A more elegant solution is offered by Zahn, who sees Paul here 'swinging the lash of irony'.

<sup>92</sup> J.B. Tyson (1992) 167.

<sup>93</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 397.

<sup>94</sup> cf. Acts 14:14; 21:28; 23:6. This term is mostly used for Paul's emergent or unavoidable situation.

resurrection of the dead" (v. 6), an argument begins between the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the assembly is divided (v. 7). The great clamour continues as far as verse 10. This kind of portrait of the Jews provokes heavy criticism of a divided Judaism and reinforces an "anti-Jewish" sentiment. J. Munck reinforces the point: "There is no difference between the conduct of the mob and that of the Sanhedrin whenever this man [Paul] appeared."<sup>95</sup> At the same time, there is also a comic effect in the narrative in that the split into two groups causes the reader to burst out laughing.<sup>96</sup> Here, this incident shows a realistic portrayal of community conflict. Paul's cleverness is recognized in the way he outwits his accusers which indeed has a ring much more like "Romance" than political polemic. R.I. Pervo poignantly claims: "Luke is willing to say nearly anything to make the Sanhedrin look like a pack of jackals. His treatment of trials resembles that of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*".<sup>97</sup> That is to say, the Jews' pandemonium and the confrontation between the Pharisees and the Sadducees make use of humour in a manner which symbolizes an "anti-Jewish" tone in the trial narratives.

However, as Tajra points out, "It is deeply significant that the Pharisaic party in the Sanhedrin found Paul guiltless of any transgression of the law and allowed the possibility that his religious activities might be due to divine directives."<sup>98</sup> The narrator goes on to bring those divine directions to light. Thus, Paul's legitimacy is finally guaranteed by the narrator's account, through explicit divine support for the mission of Paul in Rome:

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<sup>95</sup> J. Munck, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 31, Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1981, 222; cf. E. Bammel, 'Jewish Activity against Christians in Palestine,' *BAFCS*, vol. 4, Palestinian Setting, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 360. Here Bammel says that "they (Jews) actually harass Paul wherever he goes."

<sup>96</sup> cf. S. Mason, 'Chief Priest, Sadducees, Pharisees and Sanhedrin,' in R. Bauckham (ed.), *BAFCS*, vol. 4, Palestinian Setting, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 153. Here Mason claims that "the story is filled with irony and sarcasm."

<sup>97</sup> R.I. Pervo, *Profit with Delight: The Literary Genre of the Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987, 64. Within my knowledge, I can only find this one comment of R.I. Pervo on the similarity between Acts and the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, however Pervo never quotes any examples from the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

<sup>98</sup> H.W. Tajra (1989) 97.



That night the Lord stood near him and said, "Keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must (*δει*) bear witness also in Rome. (v. 11)

Johnson observes: "It indicates that the form of Paul's witness in Rome will be as it is here, in captivity."<sup>99</sup>

The next morning, according to verses 12-22, Paul's trial takes a new turn. The intrigue of the Jews becomes dormant, and the place of the trial is about to be transferred from Jerusalem to Caesarea. This passage is important because it is full of "anti-Jewish" sentiments:

In the morning the Jews joined in a conspiracy and bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. There were more than forty who joined in this conspiracy. They went to the chief priests and elders and said, 'We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food until we have killed Paul. Now then, you and the council must notify the tribune to bring him down to you, on the pretext that you want to make a more thorough examination of his case. And we are ready to do away with him before he arrives.' (23:12-15)

How does Luke know about this plot by the Jews? It is not clear from this narrative.

Although it cannot be proved whether it is based on reliability or not, significantly for our purposes Luke is prepared to use it as a literary technique. Later, Luke intends to tell the reader about his belief in the accuracy of the information.<sup>100</sup> This clarifies the

truth of the matter: The Jews' zeal is not for the Jewish Law but for their conspiracy.

As Johnson claims,<sup>101</sup> "In verse 12 *συστροφή* has a sense of "gathering", especially for seditious purposes<sup>102</sup> and in verse 13 *συνωμοσία* has the political nuance of a "league bound by oath".<sup>103</sup> Hanson points out that "A violent oath of this sort is characteristic of the fanaticism allied with terrorist tactics which was becoming more and more a feature of life in Jerusalem at the time, and which was shortly to lead to the outbreak of the Jewish revolt against the Romans and the wresting of leadership

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<sup>99</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 399. For the use of visions to advance and interpret the narrative in Hellenistic novels, see Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 2. 26-7; Chariton, 2.9.6; Pseudo-Callisthenes, *Life of Alexander of Macedon* 1. 5, 30, 33.

<sup>100</sup> Luke speaks here as an omniscient narrator.

<sup>101</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 403.

<sup>102</sup> cf. Herodotus, *The Histories* 7:9; LXX. Ps. 63:3 (*ἐσκέπασάς με ἀπὸ συστροφῆς πονηρευομένων*)

<sup>103</sup> cf. Plato, *Apology* 36b.

of the Jewish nation out of the hands of both Sadducees and Pharisees by men inspired with this fanaticism."<sup>104</sup>

In the next scene the intrigue of the plot by the Jewish people is divulged by Paul's nephew:

Now the son of Paul's sister heard about the ambush; so he went and gained entrance to the barracks and told Paul. Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man (*νεανίαν*) to the tribune, for he has something to report to him." So he took him, brought him to the tribune, and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you; he has something to tell you." The tribune took him by the hand, drew him aside privately, and asked, "What is it that you have to report to me?" He answered, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more thoroughly into his case. But do not be persuaded by them (*μὴ πεισθῆς αὐτοῖς*), for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him (*ἐνεδρεύουσιν<sup>105</sup> γὰρ αὐτὸν*). They have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink until they kill him. They are ready now and are waiting for your consent (*προσδεχόμενοι τὴν ἀπὸ σοῦ ἐπαγγελίαν<sup>106</sup>*)." So the tribune dismissed the young man, ordering him, "Tell no one that you have informed me of this." (23: 16-22)

F.F. Bruce points out, "The sudden introduction of Paul's nephew, evidently resident in Jerusalem, is interesting".<sup>107</sup> As for the role of Paul's nephew, Johnson stresses, "Hellenistic Romances frequently use family members or slaves to communicate messages between central characters."<sup>108</sup> Bruce notes, "Paul was kept in honorable custody, as befitted an unconvicted Roman citizen; he was allowed to receive visitors and (as appears from v.17) could give instructions to a centurion."<sup>109</sup> B. Rapske also points out, "Paul received visitors quite freely as a further concession to his dignity as a Roman."<sup>110</sup> In fact, access to Paul as a

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<sup>104</sup> R.P.C. Hanson (1967) 222.

<sup>105</sup> It only appears in Lk. 11:54 and here Acts 23:21 throughout NT.

<sup>106</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992, 404) points out that the term *epangelia* usually refers to a "promise" in Luke-Acts, but here it refers simply to a message (or "the promise he was coming")"

<sup>107</sup> F.F. Bruce (1990) 469.

<sup>108</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 404; cf. Xenophon, *Ephesiaca* 2.3.2-8; Chariton, 3.1.1-3.

<sup>109</sup> F.F. Bruce (1990) 469.

<sup>110</sup> B. Rapske, *The Book of Acts and Paul in Roman Custody*, BAFCS 3, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1994, 148; cf. Concerning the way to gain access of Paul's nephew and helpers, *Idem* (1994) 148-9, 369-92.



prisoner by friends, brothers who are the local leaders of the Jews or visitors is shown elsewhere.<sup>111</sup>

The appearance of Paul's nephew "as a teenager"<sup>112</sup> may be used to create suspense leading to the next scene, since his information causes Paul to be sent to Caesarea as a result of the decision of the tribune. Even though it does not function in the same way as Paul's Roman citizenship, the leading role of Paul's nephew in the narrative is quite powerful. This incident supports Paul's status as being of noble birth as explained clearly by Lentz:

According to Luke, Paul's nephew visited him with no reported interference. This suggests that Paul was held in light custody more for his protection than for punishment (23:16). That Paul ordered the centurion who was guarding him to take his nephew to the tribune is just one more instance, of which there are many, of Paul's assuming control and ordering Roman officers to follow his directions. Although not explicitly stated, the portrait created by Luke shows that Paul was waited on by the Roman soldiers rather than guarded by them.<sup>113</sup>

As is shown above, "Paul's status has gradually been elevated as the story has progressed. He "summons" the centurion and sends him on an errand! The following verses have the combination of repetition with minor variations that Luke obviously enjoys using."<sup>114</sup> At the moment, Paul is portrayed not as a prisoner but as a VIP.<sup>115</sup> This is consistent with Paul's pride of birth as a Roman and a Tarsian citizen. In addition, this also shows his authority as an apostle and a Servant of God. Finally, the description of Paul's action functions as a contrast between the bold Paul and the weak Roman authorities, thus projecting "anti-Roman" sentiments on the reader.

According to verse 18, it clearly shows that Paul is almost all-powerful by comparison to the centurion who is very weak. The centurion only played the role of

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<sup>111</sup> Acts 24: 23; 28:17, 30; cf. Onesiphorus and Epaphroditus as the comforters of Paul the prisoner who appear in 2Tim. 1:16-7; Phil. 2:25.

<sup>112</sup> R.P.C. Hanson (1967) 222; cf. Bruce (1990, 469) suggests that "*νεανίαν* gives but little clue to his age (it covers a range between 20 and 40 years of age), but the diminutive form *νεανίσκος* (vv. 18, 22) and the fact that the tribune took him by the hand to a place where they could have privacy may point to the younger end of its range".

<sup>113</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 163.

<sup>114</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 404.

<sup>115</sup> cf. R.I. Pervo (1987) 33.

messenger for Paul. In verse 19, the relationship between the tribune and Paul's nephew is somewhat familiar. In verse 21, Paul's nephew even gives an order to the tribune. Verse 22 shows that the tribune is anxious about Jews' agitation, so he says to Paul's nephew, "Tell no one that you told these things to me." As Polhill reflects,

Verses 20-21 repeat the content of vv. 12-15. From the perspective of information, they contribute nothing new. The repetition, however, increases the dramatic effect considerably. With each new reference to the plot, the threat to Paul's life becomes more ominous. The dramatic effect is continued in v. 22 as Lysias continued the note of strict confidence. It was of utmost importance that the whole matter be kept strictly secret. No one was to know the tribune was aware of the plot.<sup>116</sup>

Therefore, it is likely that this episode functions to reveal Luke's "anti-Roman" stance in terms of the weakness and fear of the Roman authorities of the Jewish people.

## 8.5. Acts 24:1-27

**8.5.1. General description:** As pointed out, Paul's Roman citizenship is significant for the interpretation of his trial narratives. However, its importance has been ignored when scholars analyze the narratives of Acts. According to 23:23-35, the tribune makes preparations for Paul's immediate transfer to Caesarea and writes a letter to Felix the governor all because the Roman tribune knows Paul to be a Roman citizen (23:27).<sup>117</sup> The tribune prepares the military force consisting of two hundred armed soldiers under their centurions, together with seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen. The total number is 470 soldiers as the escort for Paul to Caesarea. This, as Conzelmann acknowledges, shows Paul's pride of birth in that "the display intends to illustrate the importance of the prisoner."<sup>118</sup> From another point of view, R.B. Rackham stresses the weakness of the tribune in that "Paul was a Roman citizen, and Lysias wanted to get rid of the responsibility. The obvious course was to send him at once to the procurator Felix at Caesarea."<sup>119</sup> Both

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<sup>116</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 473.

<sup>117</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992, 407) observes that "the tribune seeks to save Paul's life simply on the basis of Paul's Roman citizenship... and commits himself and his resources to securing Paul safely within the Roman legal system".

<sup>118</sup> H. Conzelmann (1987) 194.

<sup>119</sup> R.B. Rackham (1910) 439.



suggestions claim that Paul's Roman citizenship reveals powerfully his pride of birth and, at the same time, the Roman tribune's weakness. The letter of the tribune to the governor Felix says the tribune's name is Claudius Lysias.<sup>120</sup> He describes the importance of Paul the prisoner as a Roman citizen. The significance of Paul's case stated in the tribune's letter is as follows:

- (1) The tribune rescues Paul from the moment when he is about to be killed by Jews.<sup>121</sup>
- (2) The tribune wants to support him as a Roman citizen who must be protected by the Roman laws.
- (3) The tribune's enquiry shows that while Paul is accused about questions of their law, he is innocent of charges deserving death or imprisonment.

The soldiers bring Paul during the night to Antipatris. The next day they turn back to the barracks, allowing the horsemen to depart with Paul. These horsemen enter Caesarea and hand over the letter to the governor. They also present Paul to him. From this point onwards, Paul's trial is properly investigated by the governor in Caesarea. Paul's trial in Caesarea is composed largely of four parts:

- (1) The accusation by Tertullus commissioned by the high priest Ananias and some elders (24:1-9)
- (2) Paul's defence (vv. 10-21)
- (3) Postponement of the trial (vv. 22-3)
- (4) The custody of Paul (vv. 24-7).

Contemporary legal proceedings are shown: the "accusation of the accuser", the "defence of the accused" and the "judgment and sentence by the chief judge", in this case, Felix.

**8.5.2. Narrative critical analysis:** From now on, Paul the prisoner will live in not Jerusalem but Caesarea. The history of Caesarea's importance in these matters is:

Ten years after the death of Herod, Caesarea came under direct Roman rule (A.D. 6) and apart from the reign of Agrippa I (A.D. 37-44), remained under that rule

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<sup>120</sup> cf. § 7.3.2; The tribune's name might suggest the time of his purchase during the reign of Claudius (41-54 C.E.).

<sup>121</sup> However, according to 21:31-34, this is not true, because the tribune's action is actually not protection but arrest. This letter to Felix is coloured by the tribune in a way that creates more irony and humour.

for over six hundred years. During this period it was the administrative and military center of Palestine. The residence of the procurators was there.<sup>122</sup>

According to Tajra, "Caesarea is the capital of the province of Judaea and a port of strategic importance. Although a large number of Jews lived there, the city had no real Jewish character....The scene of Paul's trial moves from a Jewish to a Hellenistic setting."<sup>123</sup> At Caesarea the Jews, who were the high priest Ananias and some elders, employed an advocate (*ρόήτωρ*), Tertullus.<sup>124</sup> According to his accusation, presented with *captatio benevolentiae*, Paul is a pestilent fellow, an agitator among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect (*αἰρέσεως*)<sup>125</sup> of the Nazarenes (24:5). The indictment of Tertullus is critical. G.A. Krodel, therefore, clarifies the implication of his charge:

Tertullus places the Jews firmly on the side of Roman law and order, social health, and communal well-being. The common enemy of Jews and Romans is Paul, 'the plague'. Unless he is stopped, the health of the life of the empire will be destroyed. Indirectly, Tertullus confirmed the tremendous effect of Paul's mission. Next, he specified in what way Paul functioned as plague among Jews. He is an agitator among all the Jews throughout the world... Sedition and riots were threats to the *Pax Romana*, the peace of Rome which every governor must uphold. All riots found in Acts are blamed on Paul and receive a political order. But how could Paul have such power? Because he is the ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.<sup>126</sup>

That is to say, Paul is regarded as a seditious or terrorist who is against the Roman empire. This kind of "sedition" motif is paralleled in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.<sup>127</sup>

Among the *Acta*, *P.Berol.* 8877 of the *Acta Isidori* 22f. is a representative example:

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<sup>122</sup> R.J. Bull, 'Caesarea', *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Supplementary Vol., Nashville: Abingdon, 1976, 120.

<sup>123</sup> cf. H.W. Tajra (1989) 109.

<sup>124</sup> B.W. Winter, 'Official Proceedings and the Forensic Speeches in Acts 24-26,' *BAFCS* vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993, 305-336; It normally means public speaker/orator, however is sometimes used for a speaker in court/advocate. Also see, A.A. Trites, 'The Importance of Legal Scenes and Language in the Book of Acts,' *NovT* 16 (1974) 282; cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Orations* 76.4; *Ant* 17.226.

<sup>125</sup> cf. S. Mason, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees: A Composition-Critical Study*, Leiden: Brill, 1991, 128. Mason understands that *αἰρέσεις* is a term normally used of philosophical schools.; *Idem*, 'Chief Priests, Sadducees, Pharisees and Sanhedrin,' in R. Bauckham (ed.), *BAFCS* vol. 4, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 154. Here Mason writes that "Luke has Tertullus call Christianity a school (*αἰρέσεις*) alongside the other Jewish schools: Paul is 'a ringleader of the school of the Nazarenes'."

<sup>126</sup> G.A. Krodel, *Acts: Proclamation Commentaries*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981, 436.

<sup>127</sup> cf. see ch. 6 [§ 6.3.] about the information of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. There can be found many anti-Jewish and anti-Roman sentiments.



I accuse them<sup>128</sup> of wishing to stir up the entire world (*ἐνκαλω αὐτοῖς ὅτι καὶ ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην θέλουσι ταρασσείν*). We must (*δεῖ*) consider the entire mass. They are not a same temperament as the Alexandrians, but live rather after the fashion of the Egyptians. Are they not on a level with those who pay the poll-tax?

In this papyrus, the Jews are clearly characterized as the "firebrands of the whole world". According to the above papyrus, Jews are paralleled with Egyptians who are regarded as sub-human.<sup>129</sup> Tertullus implies the charge that Paul is a character like the Jews of the papyrus. According to his accusation, the Jews joined in the charge by asserting that all of Tertullus' charges are true (24:9). This is a concrete example of "anti-Jewish" sentiment, because this allegation is overthrown by Paul's defence.

The following scene (24:10f.) contains Paul's defence speech. The speech begins with a *captatio benevolentiae*<sup>130</sup> which stresses the falsity of the Jewish charges against Paul. Paul denies the specific charge by the Jews that he profaned the Temple. Paul goes on to emphasize his character as an observant Jew who was purified when he entered the Temple and who did not stir up a mob either in the synagogues or in Jerusalem (24:18). Paul insists that he is only concerned with Jewish religious matters (v. 21). Throughout the long defence speech, Paul shows that he does not break the community's laws.

Although his status is that of a Roman prisoner, Paul's extraordinary boldness and assurance are revealed in 24:13 when he says that "Neither can they prove to you the charge that they now bring against me". In particular, the narrator wants to demonstrate Paul's innocence against the Jews by highlighting the "anti-Jewish" elements, particularly, Paul's sense of justice contrasted with the Jews' charge. Also, the narrator employs Paul's religious belief as repeatedly spoken of in 24:15-21 to highlight "anti-Jewish" sentiments as well as his own innocence.

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<sup>128</sup> In this papyrus, they mean Jewish people. As pointed out, anti-Semitic sentiment is secondary motif, however it ultimately purposes anti-Roman *Tendenz*.

<sup>129</sup> D. Delia, *Alexandrian Citizenship During the Roman Principate*, American Classical Studies 23, Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991, 43. Here Delia claims Egyptians' features: "in literature, Egyptians were portrayed as seditious, fickle, cowardly and lazy. Characterized as impulsive and easily stirred to passionate anger, they were said to carry on like madmen".

<sup>130</sup> cf. L.T. Johnson (1992) 416; H. Conzelmann (1987) 199; J.B. Tyson (1992) 169; Paul is compared with Tertullus, for Paul's case is limited to an appeal to just Felix's judicature. On the contrary, Tertullus is presented as a flatterer.

Clearly, from this speech Paul believes in the ancestral God of the Jews and he claims his innocence by his religious confession.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, one can accept that the Jewish accusation against Paul is wrong from the narrator's point of view. Paul is assuredly defending himself on the grounds of fidelity to Judaism.

After Paul's defence speech has finished, Felix **adjourns**<sup>132</sup> his judgement till the arrival of Lysias. Here the narrator uses the literary device of the "postponement motif" to further illustrate the "anti-Roman" sentiment of the narrative. Felix postpones the trial as mentioned in verses 22-23 and further elaborated in verses 25-27, in an attempt to gain the Jews' favour and with some hope that Paul will offer him a bribe, both being illustrations of corruption. However, despite Felix's postponement, Claudius Lysias, the tribune, does not appear again in Paul's trial. Although this is a literary device<sup>133</sup> which serves to give time for the encounters between Paul and Felix and Paul and Festus, Felix's postponement simultaneously serves the function of "anti-Romanism" in terms of the weakness of the Roman governor.

Likewise, the "postponement motif", which demonstrates the weakness of the Roman governor in Acts, is also found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. Firstly, the *Acta Isidori* inform a similar literary pattern of postponement:

The Alexandrian envoys were summoned and the emperor postponed (*μετετάξατο*) their hearing until the following day.<sup>134</sup>

Secondly, the *Acta Hermaisci* also contain a "postponement motif": "when the bust of Serapis breaks into a sweat in the process of the hearing, accordingly everyone begins to flee to the highest parts of the hills."<sup>135</sup> This happening naturally causes

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<sup>131</sup> cf. G. Lüdemann (1989, 248) observes that "Verses 20-22 stress Paul's innocence yet again: neither the Asiatic Jews (of ch. 21) nor the Jews present can demonstrate that Paul had done wrong. Verse 21 refers back to the (first) negotiation before the Sanhedrin. At the time (23.6) Paul had already said that he was being accused over the resurrection".

<sup>132</sup> cf. *amplius pronuntiaretur*; Cicero, *Against Verres*, 2.1.29,74 where it means further enquiry for the trial.

<sup>133</sup> cf. M. Dibelius, *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, London: SCM, 1956, 211. It could function as a great "Ritardando" in the decision of Paul's case.

<sup>134</sup> *Recension A (Chrest. 14) Col. i. 16f.*

<sup>135</sup> *P.Oxy. 1242. Ll. 50ff.*



the hearing to be postponed, a postponement which is much feared. According to Philo, the postponement or delay of a trial is more painful than death:

Lampo had been put on his trial for impiety to Tiberius Caesar and as the trial had dragged on for two years<sup>136</sup> he had broken down under it (*καὶ ἐπὶ διετίαν τριβομένου τοῦ πράγματος ἀπειρηκώς*). For the ill-will of his judge had concocted postponements and delays, as he wished, even if he was acquitted on the charge, to keep hanging over him for as long as possible the fear of the uncertain future, and so render his life more painful than death.<sup>137</sup>

When considering the possibility of acquittal B. Rapske comments: "Acquitting Paul could raise great political trouble for Felix with the plaintiffs. They were the indigenous spiritual and political powerbrokers of his province. Their co-operation was essential to a relatively smooth Roman overlordship. Moreover, Felix need not have strained himself to think of specific instances of compelling Jewish political pressure."<sup>138</sup> Instead Felix permits Paul some liberty which indirectly attests to Paul's innocence. Although the storyline makes it clear that Paul is still a prisoner, Luke's narrative portrays him rather as a Christian missionary. In this way, Paul is able to enjoy his freedom in custody (24:23). This setting is comparable to the last scene of Acts (28:30-1) where Paul has the benefit of free speaking.

From another perspective, Felix's hidden and private intentions concerning Paul's custody are revealed in a rather striking manner:

Some days later when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him speak concerning faith in Christ Jesus. And as he discussed justice (*δικαιοσύνης*), self-control (*ἐγκρατείας*), and the coming judgment (*κρίματος*), Felix became frightened and said, 'Go away for the present; when I have an opportunity, I will send for you.' At the same time he hoped that money (*χρήματα*) would be given him by Paul, and for that reason he used to send for him very often and converse with him. And two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and since he wanted to grant the Jews a favour, Felix left Paul in prison. (vv. 24-7)

This passage is quite revealing in the amount of detail which it offers of multiple examples of anti-Roman sentiment. The weakness and corruption of the Roman governor, Felix, is presented boldly through the examples of the presence of

<sup>136</sup> cf. Acts 28:30. Paul remained for two years at his own expense (*Ἐνέμεινεν δὲ διετίαν ὄλην ἐν ἰδίῳ μισθώματι*).

<sup>137</sup> Philo, *Flacc.* 128-129.

<sup>138</sup> B. Rapske (1994) 165; See on Jewish political pressure on Felix; cf. *Ant* 20.114-117 and *BJ* 2.228-231.



Drusilla, Felix's worries relating to Paul's speech and his wish to obtain a bribe from Paul when they meet together and the mention of him granting favours to the Jews. In the first of these examples of "anti-Roman" sentiment Felix is accompanied by his wife Drusilla<sup>139</sup> as "a woman of the court," who is also Jewish.

Gill comments, "Felix's procuratorship illustrates the links between the Roman administration and the Jewish ruling elite. Felix brought his wife Drusilla, 'a Jewess', to hear Paul."<sup>140</sup> In 24:24, the readers are first introduced to Felix's Jewish wife, Drusilla.<sup>141</sup> As discussed,<sup>142</sup> in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* women in major political families, e.g. wives of Jewish kings or Roman emperors, are commonly associated with "Jewish support" as Drusilla is here. This absolutely bespeaks injustice within the Roman legal order. With this in mind, Haenchen points out that "οὔση Ἰουδαία seems to provide the motive for Drusilla's interest in (the pious Jew!) Paul."<sup>143</sup> Although Drusilla intends only to give her interest to a loyal Jew, the Lukan Paul, her position as a 'woman of court' indicates the possibility of the injustice of Roman legal proceedings. The *Acta Alexandrinorum*, in the *Recension A* (Chrest. 14) also shows "the women of the court". There "the women of the court" function to witness favourably on behalf of the Jews in the trial of Isidorus. Plotina also appears as "a woman of the court" in the trial narrative of Hermaiscus.<sup>144</sup> Here Plotina clearly provides a casting vote for the Jews:

And Plotina approached (?) the senators in order that they might oppose the Alexandrians and support the Jews. Now the Jews, who were the first to enter, greeted Emperor Trajan, and the emperor returned their greeting most cordially, having already been won over by Plotina. After them the Alexandrian envoys entered and greeted the emperor. He, however, did not go to meet them, but said:

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<sup>139</sup> Josephus (*Ant.* 19.354) reports that She was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I.; Josephus (*Ant.* 20.141-143) says that Drusilla transgressed the ancestral laws and remarried Felix.

<sup>140</sup> D.W.J. Gill, 'Acts and Roman Policy in Judaea,' *BAFCS*, vol. 4, Palestinian Setting, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 24; cf. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987, 201. "The interest in Christianity shown by those in high places is a Lukan theme. Women of high rank play a prominent role in the apocryphal acts of apostles."

<sup>141</sup> See Drusilla's scandalous topic in *Ant* 20.141-144. Here Josephus related the unusual character of Felix's marriage to Drusilla who is strikingly beautiful woman.

<sup>142</sup> See ch. 6. § 6.3.2. There can be found the motif of the "women of the court".

<sup>143</sup> Haenchen (1971) 660.

<sup>144</sup> *P.Oxy.* 1242. 26-35.



'You say "hail" to me as though you deserved to receive a greeting- after what you have dared to do to the Jews!...'

When Felix's wife, Drusilla, a Jewish woman, is compared with "the women of the court" from the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, Drusilla's appearance in the trial narrative of Acts comes into bold relief when one considers her position of influence. Thus, the image of Drusilla ultimately functions to suggest the injustice of the Roman court.

The second example in this segment of the narrative which takes up "anti-Roman" sentiments is found in verse 25. Unsurprisingly, when Felix and his wife hear about justice, self-control and judgment from Paul, they grow alarmed. In fact, "in the eyes of Luke, Felix never exhibited the authority and self-control consonant with his appointment."<sup>145</sup> L.T. Johnson points out the anti-Roman sentiment in verse 25:

It is possible to interpret this in two ways. First, it can be understood as a sort of ethical translation of "messianic faith" for Gentile ears, in which "righteousness" (*δικαιοσύνη*) is defined in terms of virtue, which in turn is enacted by "self-control", with an eye toward God's future judgment. Paul's discourse would focus on a subject dear to other Hellenistic moralists. Second, it can be understood as having a more direct narrative function of rebuking the sexual irregularities of the royal couple. In this case, *enkrateia* would be understood in the narrower sense of *sexual* self-control. The difficulty of this interpretation is that it presupposes in the readers a knowledge of these characters that the narrative itself does not supply. On the other hand, it would account for the "alarm" experienced by Felix and the dismissal of Paul.<sup>146</sup>

In the third example of "anti-Roman" sentiment in this section of narrative, Felix indirectly hopes for a bribe from Paul. Johnson explains this on the grounds that "The reader begins to suspect that Felix's devotion to justice is not absolute: he keeps Paul on a string in the hopes of getting a bribe, and fails to call Lysias down to confirm Paul's story".<sup>147</sup> Lentz claims that "Felix, although in a position of high political status, did not possess a prestigious pedigree."<sup>148</sup> Tacitus vividly reports that "Antonius Felix practiced every kind of cruelty and lust, wielding the power of king with all the instincts of a slave."<sup>149</sup> Also, C. Wells claims, to suspect the

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<sup>145</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 17.

<sup>146</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 419.

<sup>147</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 419.

<sup>148</sup> J.C. Lentz (1993) 95.

<sup>149</sup> Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.9; Felix also receives a villainous character from Suetonius (*Claud.* 28) and Josephus (*Ant* 20. 162f.).

governor of expecting a bribe is perfectly natural.<sup>150</sup> That is to say, the corruption of Felix clearly shows a portrait of a weak and unjust Roman empire in terms of Roman avarice<sup>151</sup> and an "anti-Roman" sentiment.

The "bribe motif" is also found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. In the *Acta Maximi I* (P.Oxy. 471) a Roman prefect receives a bribe. In the *Acta Appiani* (P.Yale Inv. 1536) Appian accuses the emperor of selling the wheat (?) to other cities for his own personal profit.

The fourth example of "anti-Roman" sentiment found in this section comes in verse 27 in which Felix wants to "give a favour to the Jews" (24:27). Clearly, the hearings of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are full of favouritism towards the Jews. According to several examples of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the Roman emperors' favouritism to the Jews is quite strong. In the *Recension B* (P.Lond.Inv. 2785), Isidorus accuses Claudius of favouritism when he asks, "What do you care for a twopenny-halfpenny Jew like Agrippa?" In addition, as mentioned above, the emperor favourably acts for the Jews because of Plotina's influence in the *Acta Hermaisici*. As pointed out earlier in this study, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* contain numerous ideological elements which propagandise the Roman emperors' one-sided favour to Jews and which tend to emphasize the injustice of the Roman empire.

In summary, the kind of favourable deeds done for the Jews, like Felix's in Acts and the emperors' of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, illustrate for the reader in a stark manner the injustice of the Roman empire. On the basis of this discussion, Luke does not write an *apologia pro-imperio*. That is to say, Luke does not intend to make friendly relationships between Christianity and the Roman empire. From the examples cited above, Luke's political stance is most likely "anti-Roman".

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<sup>150</sup> C. Wells (1992) 143; cf. Pliny *Ep.* 4.9. Here Pliny admits that Julius Bassus was guilty of taking presents that "These his prosecutors called thefts and plunder, while he declared they were presents."

<sup>151</sup> Lentz (1993, 95) thus observes that "Felix represents an antithesis of the Pauline character."; cf. C. Wells (1992, 135) points out on the basis of the evidences from Tacitus and Pliny that "there are forty attested trials for maladministration and extortion in the period from Augustus to Trajan."



## 8.6. Acts 25:1-26:32

**8.6.1. General description:** These two chapters are significant in that they contain the conclusion of the trial narratives to Rome. However, there is no final verdict on Paul's case even at the end of Acts. As Chapter 25 opens Porcius Festus has just arrived in the province of Caesarea to take up his new post. Paul's trial before Festus is composed of three parts:

- (1) Festus' visit to Jerusalem after arriving in Caesarea (25:1-5).
- (2) Paul's trial before Festus and his appeal to Caesar (25:6-12).
- (3) Paul's appearance before Agrippa and Bernice (25:13-26:32).

This describes the last scene of Paul's trial in Caesarea. In addition and unexpectedly, Paul's case is again delivered in front of Agrippa and his wife before Paul is sent to Rome. As will be discussed, the following passages can be compared with similar motifs from the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

**8.6.2. Narrative critical analysis:** Paul's trial before Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice in chapters 25-26 begins with Festus's visit to Jerusalem:

Three days after Festus had arrived in the province (*ἐπιβὰς τῇ ἐπαρχείῳ*), he went up from Caesarea to Jerusalem where the chief priests and the leaders of the Jews gave him a report against Paul. They appealed to him and requested, as a favour (*αἰτούμενοι χάριν*) to them against Paul, to have him transferred to Jerusalem. They were, in fact, planning an ambush to kill him along the way. (25:1-3)

This passage undoubtedly has an "anti-Jewish" effect as illustrated by the Jews' secret plan to ambush and assassinate Paul. As with 23:14-15, this plan demonstrates that Luke wants to reveal the wickedness of the Jews. The fact that the Jews want to slay Paul in secret shows that the Jews' anger towards him is no different from the situation of two years previously (24:27). Festus refuses to send Paul to Jerusalem at the request of the Jews, but he tells them that they should go to Caesarea because Paul is being kept there, and he, Festus, intends to go there shortly. Johnson suggests, "Festus can demonstrate a stronger position against rabble-rousers and bandits than his predecessor had done."<sup>152</sup> According to 25:6, after Festus has stayed in Jerusalem for several days, he goes down to Caesarea. The next day after

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<sup>152</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 420; cf. D.W.J. Gill (1995) 25.

he returns to Caesarea he takes his seat on the tribunal (*καθίσας ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος*) and orders Paul to be brought before him. When Paul appears at the court, the Jews from Jerusalem surround (*περιέστησαν*) him bringing many serious charges against him which they cannot prove (*ἀποδείξαι*) (25:7). Furthermore, according to verse 8, Paul defends his innocent conduct with boldness in terms of "religious" (Law/Temple) and the "political" (Caesar) elements.<sup>153</sup> Paul's denial enables the reader to produce a verdict of "not guilty".

As Paul defends his innocence, Festus asks him, "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me on these charges?" (25:9). The narrator gives the reason that the motivation behind Festus' question is that Festus also wishes to do the Jews a favour.<sup>154</sup> The 'motif of favouritism towards the Jews' at this point in the narrative is ascribed to Festus as it has been to Felix previously. Thus, Johnson stresses, "Even though Festus declares that Paul would be heard by Festus himself rather than the Sanhedrin, Paul no longer sees any safety in Jerusalem, especially since his imprisonment to this point has been the result of another "favor" to the Jews by Felix (24:27)."<sup>155</sup> Paul, however, replies to Festus:

I am standing before Caesar's bench, where I must (*δεῖ*) be tried. I have done no harm to the Jews as you also well know. If therefore I am a wrongdoer and am worthy of death, I do not seek to be excused (*παραιτούμαι*) from dying. But if there is nothing in these things of which these people accuse me, no one is able to deliver me to them as a favour. I appeal to Caesar! (*Καίσαρα ἐπικαλοῦμαι*) (25: 10-11).

Verse 11 contains a hint of a "martyrdom motif" in terms of Paul's bold declaration that he is ready for death. The "martyrdom motif" stresses Paul's common ideal and goal "to be 'witness' to a truth and to lay down his life for its sake".<sup>156</sup> Johnson rightly points out, "Luke wants the reader to perceive Paul's

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<sup>153</sup> Paul has normally been accused of religious wrongdoing, however here is a new political declaration about Caesar. cf. Acts 17:7 says that "they are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus". Acts 17:1-9 account Paul's mission in Thessalonica, however verse 7 is not related to Paul.

<sup>154</sup> cf. W. Stegemann (1987, 211-212) enquires "how does author know the secret intention of Festus? The secret intention of the procurator means that there is no historical credibility."

<sup>155</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 421.

<sup>156</sup> cf. H.A. Fischel, 'Martyr and Prophet', *JQR* 37 (1947) 266.



legal maneuvering not as cowardice, but as a way of fulfilling the commission of the Lord to witness in Rome (23:11); like Socrates,<sup>157</sup> he is not afraid of death if it should come to that".<sup>158</sup> The text implies in an overall sense that, "Roman power always works within the context of the Christian God's purposes."<sup>159</sup>

As previously mentioned, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* hold several significant motifs like the "martyrdom motifs" which serve as a point of comparison with Paul's trial narratives in Acts. According to the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the Alexandrian Greek patriots who chose death voluntarily do not fear death or martyrdom because it is for the sake of their country's destiny. Rather, they express with boldness their own requests for Alexandria in the presence of the Roman emperors.<sup>160</sup>

Polhill suggests, "Paul knew that he would have no hope if he surrendered to Jewish jurisdiction. It was only under a Roman tribunal that he could hope for any shred of justice".<sup>161</sup> However, according to verse 11, perhaps Paul realises the emerging situation where the Roman governor, as his predecessor before him, seeks the "favour of the Jews" instead of justice. In his disadvantaged position, Paul appeals to Caesar. Even though there is no consensus of opinion among scholars as to the details of the appeals procedure,<sup>162</sup> there is no doubt that only Roman citizens are able to appeal to Caesar at the time of Paul. However, an appeal to Caesar is never made unless the accused feels that s/he is being unfairly treated by the Roman legal authority. In Paul's case, a dilemma is created in the Roman legal justice system

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<sup>157</sup> cf. Plato, *Apology* 29a; 35a-b; see on a Socratic reading of Acts, L.C.A. Alexander, 'Acts and Ancient Intellectual Biography,' *BAFCS* vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993, 31-63.

<sup>158</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 421.

<sup>159</sup> D.R. Edwards, 'Surviving the Web of Roman Power: Religion and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles, Josephus, and Chariton's Chaereas and Callirhoe,' in L.C.A. Alexander (ed.), *Images of Empire*, *JSOTSS* 22, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991, 188.

<sup>160</sup> cf. *Chrest.* 14. *Col.* iii. 2f.; *P.Oxy.* 1242: *Acta Hermaisci.* 40ff.; *Acta Pauli et Antonini.* *Col.* vi. 1ff.; *P.Yal.* *Col.* ii. 13f.; *P.Oxy.* 33. *Col.* i. 9f.

<sup>161</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 491.

<sup>162</sup> See chapter 3. § 3.5.4. "What was the appeals procedure?"

because the "unfairness" issue, as the basis for an appeal, is based upon the impending overtures of Jewish favouritism rather than Roman jurisdiction per se.<sup>163</sup>

The *Acta Appiani* contain some representative examples of Roman legal appeal by the Alexandrian Greeks.<sup>164</sup> Appian appeals by asserting his noble rank and privileges.<sup>165</sup> Although Greek citizenship rather than Roman citizenship is mentioned in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, Paul's appeal to Caesar in Acts may be compared with this example because both Greek and Roman citizenship signify high status. Thus, the narrator employs Paul's appeal as a literary device to bring the expression of "anti-Roman" sentiments to their climax in the text via the "Jewish favouritism motif" and ultimately to bring to light the theological purpose of taking the Gospel to Rome. Thus, Paul convincingly sets himself in opposition to the Roman governor, and an unjust element in the Roman judicial system namely, the injustice of Jewish favouritism.

According to 25:13-21, king Agrippa and Bernice, certainly a pro-Roman family, visit Caesarea to welcome Festus to his new position. This passage, which includes an element of the Roman legal pride (25:16-17),<sup>166</sup> shows that Festus explains to Agrippa and Bernice<sup>167</sup> the substance of Paul's trial which has been in progress prior to his arrival in Caesarea. Possibly, at this point, the fact that the Roman authorities, especially Festus, seem to take a particular interest in Paul's case, is generally favourable to Paul as is shown in verse 21. Festus intends to transfer his charge to Agrippa the Jewish king, since, as expressed in 25:19, the issue was

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<sup>163</sup> cf. J.C. Lentz (1993) 152. "This scene attests to the fact that Paul is a man in control in the law court as well as on the high seas. In addition, Luke's account indicates that Festus was a man who gave in to the mob, despite the innocence of the accused."

<sup>164</sup> See on the appeal, ch. 5 § 5.1.10. and ch. 6 esp. § 6.2.2.

<sup>165</sup> See § 6.1.4. Pride of Alexandrian office; cf. *P.Oxy.* 33. *Col. ii.* 12f; Some examples are shown like these; As Appian was being taken, he said: '*Grant* me but one thing, my Lord Caesar.' The emperor: 'What?' Appian: '*Grant* that I may be executed in my noble insignia.' The emperor: '*Granted.*'

<sup>166</sup> cf. H. Conzelmann (1987, 206) observes that the literary purpose of this passage is that "it serves to illuminate the legal situation from the Roman viewpoint more sharply, and to cause it to be more flexible from the Jewish viewpoint (by means of a Jewish authority who did not belong to the Jewish establishment in Jerusalem)."

<sup>167</sup> It would be likely that the official visit of Agrippa and Bernice who are a thoroughly pro-Roman family would establish a good relationship with the new governor.



initially related to Jewish religion, especially the issue of resurrection. However, as Sherwin-White points out, "Festus was naturally only too glad, politically, to rid himself of the prisoner."<sup>168</sup> In addition, as E. Haenchen states, this passage also reveals the evasion of duty by Festus as a Roman governor:

Here Luke ties the threads together, and indeed very skilfully. He does not make Paul immediately come in touch with Agrippa but prepares for it in a special scene. When the government business has been discussed, Festus tells his guest about his interesting prisoner who is causing him so much trouble. Luke uses this opportunity to simplify the description of the trial and at the same time to exonerate Rome. For we cannot get away with the idea that Festus wanted to clear himself before Agrippa; there is no source relating their private conversation.<sup>169</sup>

That is, Luke shows totally the political manipulation of Festus by a literary device.<sup>170</sup> Haenchen suggests that Luke wants to exonerate Rome. Thus, in fact, Luke provides enough evidence within his narrative to subvert this apparently "pro-Roman" picture by portraying Festus as a devious character. However, we would argue that the narrator presents primarily an "anti-Roman" sentiment, rather than, a "pro-Roman" or "anti-Jewish" sentiments. On the devious intention of Festus, Polhill is critical:

Festus's reference to the resurrection is intriguing. It shows how incomprehensible to a pagan the whole concept must have been (cf. 26:24). And this was the whole point. Festus was not competent to try the case, as he himself admitted (v. 20a). It was an internal Jewish religious discussion, which in no way involved Roman law. Why, then, did Festus wish to continue the case by transferring it to Jerusalem (v. 20b) if he already had determined that no Roman law had been broken? Why did he not throw it out of court like Gallio (18:15)? Luke has given us the answer: he wanted "to do the Jews a favor" (v. 9). Festus was simply not the sterling example of Roman justice he claimed to be (v. 16) and, that, at least implicitly, by his own admission.<sup>171</sup>

Although Jewish matters are apparent here, Festus, the Roman governor, intends to escape his mission. In the Acts narratives generally and at this point in the narrative particularly, there is an "anti-Jewish" function. By contrast, however, both in Acts and in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* "anti-Roman" ideology plays the primary part.

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<sup>168</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 65.

<sup>169</sup> E. Haenchen (1971) 674.

<sup>170</sup> H. Conzelmann (1987, 206) suggests that "this scene is also a free literary composition. It appears to be superfluous."

<sup>171</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 492.

In the following narrative (25:24-7), Festus reports to king Agrippa the details of Paul's trial:

King Agrippa and all here present with us, you see this man about whom the whole Jewish community petitioned me, both in Jerusalem and here, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. But I found that he had done nothing deserving death (v. 25) and when he appealed to his Imperial Majesty, I decided to send him. But I have nothing definite to write to our sovereign about him... Therefore I have brought him before all of you, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that, after we have examined him, I may have something to write, for it seems to me unreasonable to send a prisoner without indicating the charges against him.

"Anti-Roman" sentiments again surface when the narrative suggests that Festus is a weak Roman governor in terms of his arbitrary change of decision. According to verse 25, Festus definitely proclaims Paul's innocence, but in verse 27 he still calls Paul a prisoner, and he still seeks to find charges against Paul.

According to several papyri of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, clearly the *Acta* convey "anti-Roman" sentiments by describing the Roman emperors' apparent arbitrary punishment or partial and unjust decision against the Alexandrian Greek patriots.<sup>172</sup> A faultless example is presented in *Acta Pauli et Antonini* where Paulus and Antoninus are accused with the same charge. Then, the emperor makes an unfair decision.<sup>173</sup>

After Paul's case is mentioned to Agrippa, the questioning (vv. 23-27) is continued the next day. Here, Festus again insists that Paul's case is only related to religious matters. In the conversation Festus presents himself as an impeccable Roman governor on the basis that he is logical and law-enforcing. However, the narrative suggests a different picture of the governor: Festus was planning to escape his duty. Johnson observes, "Festus decided that the issue between Paul and the Jewish leaders concerned 'their own superstition', was in fact just another party dispute like that between the Pharisees and Sadducees, unworthy of Roman

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<sup>172</sup> See ch. 6 esp. § 6.2.2. "Injustice of the Romans"

<sup>173</sup> *Acta Pauli et Antonini Col. vi. 28ff*: The emperor judges that "Caesar: 'Let Paulus go; but have Antoninus bound. ...'"



attention."<sup>174</sup> Clearly, Festus does not want to take on Paul's case here. Therefore, the burden of the situation rests more and more on Agrippa.

According to 26:1, Agrippa the Jewish king says to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." Then, Paul makes a hand gesture and begins to defend (*ἀπελογεῖτο*) himself.<sup>175</sup> Paul's defence speech in Chapter 26 marks his final effort. It is composed of three parts:

- (1) Paul's religious defence (vv. 2-11)
- (2) Paul's description of his conversion (vv. 12-18)
- (3) Paul's activity as a servant and witness to the resurrection (vv. 19-23)

This is the most important defence speech for Paul because it is the last scene of legal enquiry in Paul's trial. The grandeur of this last scene is the prelude leading Paul to Rome. Throughout his defence speech, Paul summarizes his *curriculum vitae* as a servant of Christ (26:4-18). As in earlier speeches, Paul again mentions the background of religious teaching according to the Law, the Scriptures. He speaks of the resurrection of Christ, and he claims that his mission is a fulfilment of Moses and the prophets (26:19-23). In verse 22 Paul's proclamation underlines the basis of his work: "To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place". This means, as R.L. Brawley points out, "Divine providence confirms Paul's boldness, and, in turn, Paul's boldness confirms the fulfilment of his divine commission".<sup>176</sup>

When Paul finishes his defence speech before Agrippa and Festus, Festus shouts, "You are out of your mind (*μαίνῃ*), Paul! Too much learning is driving you insane (*τὰ πολλά σε γράμματα εἰς μανίαν περιτρέπει!*)" (v. 24) Clearly from

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<sup>174</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 429.

<sup>175</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992, 499) suggests that "Luke described Paul as beginning his defence. It was not a defence in the sense of a formal trial. The occasion was not a trial but only a hearing to assist Festus in drawing up his report to Caesar (25:27). Paul was not defending himself before charges but rather offering his apologia, his personal testimony for his life as a Christian".

<sup>176</sup> R.L. Brawley, *Centering on God: Method and Message in Luke-Acts*, Louisville: Westminster/John Know Press, 1990, 151.

Festus' unexpected behaviour, Luke aims to show the "lack of culture" of Festus.<sup>177</sup> H. Conzelmann points out the Roman ignorance on Jewish religious matters, that "this time actually a demonstration of the Roman's incomprehension (25:19); in this way Paul's learning is acknowledged and the incompetence of the authorities is certified".<sup>178</sup> At this point, according to A.J. Malherbe, "Luke achieves two things: an acknowledgment of Paul's learning by the Roman Festus and an occasion for Paul to claim that he had been conducting his mission in a manner befitting a responsible philosopher".<sup>179</sup>

The *Acta Isidori* also shows the "lack of culture" motif in a dialogue between Isidorus and Claudius Caesar:

Isidorus: 'My Lord Caesar, what do you care for a twopenny-halfpenny Jew like Agrippa?'

Claudius Caesar: 'What? You are the most insolent of men to speak....'<sup>180</sup>

As Claudius declares that Isidorus is most insolent, so Festus, despite his ignorance on religious truth, calls Paul insane. Naturally Festus, the governor, is the representative high official of Roman government in Palestine and comes from noble rank. However, his response in no way reflects this fact. Ultimately, this scene functions to convey an "anti-Roman" sentiment.

According to verses 25-26, Paul rejects Festus and proclaims his sanity with boldness :

I am not out of my mind (*οὐ μαίνομαι*), most excellent Festus, but I am speaking words of truth and good sense (*ἀληθείας καὶ σωφροσύνης ῥήματα*). Indeed the king knows about these things, and to him I speak freely (*παρρησιαζόμενος λαλῶ*); for I am certain that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this was not done in a corner (*οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐν γωνίᾳ πεπραγμένον*).

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<sup>177</sup> cf. E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971, 688. "Luke shows that the Roman official and the Roman state which he represents are not capable of dealing with these theological questions -as the Jew Agrippa was."; L.T. Johnson (1992, 439) suggests that "Festus is befuddled by the *arcana* of Jewish messianism and replies as the bluff Roman administrator".

<sup>178</sup> H. Conzelmann (1987) 212.

<sup>179</sup> A.J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989, 159; cf. C.H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts*, SBLMS 20, Missoula: Scholars Press, 1974, 89-99.

<sup>180</sup> *Recension B* (P.Lond. 2785) Col. i. 17f.



This passage makes it possible for the reader to perceive the motif of *Παρρησία* from Paul's bold behaviour.<sup>181</sup> The comment of H.A. Fischel on the prophetic martyr's *Παρρησία* is especially valuable for our purpose: "The martyr's *Παρρησία* has here prophetic qualities in the sense of presage or powerful conviction of faith."<sup>182</sup> This parallels the reply of Appian to the emperor:

The emperor: 'Appian, I am accustomed to chasten those who rave and have lost all sense of shame. You speak only so long as I permit you to.'

Appian: 'By your *genius*, I am neither mad nor have I lost my sense of shame (*νή τήν σήν τύχην οὔτε μαίνομαι οὔτε ἀπονενόημαι*). I am making an appeal on behalf of my noble rank and my privileges (*ἀλλ' ὑπέρ τῆς ἐμαυτοῦ εὐγενείας καὶ τῶν ἐμοὶ προσηκόντων ἀπαγγέλλω*).'<sup>183</sup>

The reply of Paul to Festus would suggest a pattern of "philosopher versus tyrant in Greco-Roman culture."<sup>184</sup> As Johnson rightly reflects, the narrator also presents Paul as a philosopher/prophet who speaks with boldness: "He therefore speaks with boldness, showing himself in this respect once again thoroughly the philosopher/prophet, who even before hostility and skepticism proclaims his convictions".<sup>185</sup> Malherbe agrees with the philosophical picture of Paul: "Luke has Paul, like the moral philosophers, claim divine guidance (26:16-17, 22), deny that his activity has been confined to a corner (26:26), speak fearlessly to rulers (26:26), and offer himself as an example to all (26:29). Luke's apologetic aim in this scene, to present Christianity in Paul's person as philosophical, would seem to be clear."<sup>186</sup> Additionally, J.A. Darr points out that the pattern of "prophet versus king in Israel's history" is implied in Paul's response to Festus.<sup>187</sup> Darr attempts to explain the structure of prophet versus king:

<sup>181</sup> See Ch. 7 "*Παρρησία*" Acts portrays Paul as bold servant of Christ by mentioning of several examples on *Παρρησία* (2:29, 4:13, 29, 31, 9:27, 28, 13:46, 14:3, 18:26, 19:8, 26:26, 28:31).

<sup>182</sup> H.A. Fischel (1947) 370.

<sup>183</sup> *P.Oxy.* 33 *Col. iv* 9-15; cf. Lentz (1993) 88-89.

<sup>184</sup> cf. J.A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts*, Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992, 156.

<sup>185</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 439; cf. J.C. Lentz (1993) 83-91.

<sup>186</sup> A.J. Malherbe (1989) 158; In fact, as is discussed in Ch. 7 *Παρρησία*, Paul's boldness is associated with the philosopher's boldness of speech.

<sup>187</sup> cf. J.A. Darr (1992) 155.

The ubiquity of this pattern is underscored by a short listing of the more famous antagonists: Moses/Pharaoh, Samuel/Saul, Nathan/David, Elijah/Ahab; Micaiah ben Imlah/Ahab, and Jeremiah/Jehoiakim. This convention is most noticeable in the Deuteronomistic History with its stark alternatives - Yahwism or idolatry.<sup>188</sup>

Darr concludes that "both the Septuagintal 'prophet versus king' pattern and the Graeco-Roman 'philosopher versus tyrant' convention pit charismatics against wicked rulers in ways that showcase and idealize the charismatic's gifts and/or message.... As Hellenism increasingly influenced Judaism, the ancient prophets came to be seen by some Jews as martyred philosophers, a notion that finds a certain corroboration in the tales about their resistance to evil kings. In both traditions the litmus test of the charismatic was a confrontation with a hostile ruler."<sup>189</sup>

The *Acta Alexandrinorum* also include a similar pattern to that of "philosopher versus tyrant" or "prophet versus king". Nearly all the *dramatis personae* of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* appear as philosophers or rhetoricians in the narratives.<sup>190</sup> They are gymnasiarchs of Alexandria who include Isidorus, Lampon, Theon, Dionysius, and Appian.<sup>191</sup> The case of Appian is representative: Appian is portrayed as a philosopher or prophet in *P.Oxy. 33, Col. ii. 1*.

In summary, in the narrative of 26:24-26, Festus is portrayed as a Roman high official whose abusive language discloses his "lack of culture." By contrast, Paul is seen as the "bold" Servant of God who is the philosopher/prophet.<sup>192</sup>

Finally, according to the comments of Agrippa to Festus in 26:30-32, Paul should not be a prisoner because Agrippa admits that Paul has done nothing to deserve death or imprisonment. According to Johnson,

The assembled worthies agree with the conclusion previously reached by the tribune (23:29), and by the governor Festus (25:25). Like Jesus, who was declared innocent three times by the Roman authority Pontius Pilate (Luke 23:4, 14, 22) with the agreement of the Tetrarch Herod (23:5), so is Paul three times

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<sup>188</sup> J.A. Darr (1992) 155; cf. H.A. Fischel (1947, 270) also points out that the idea that a prophet may suffer for his beliefs or actions is implicit in earlier biblical writings, describing the fate of Micaiah, Uriah, Elijah, Amos, Jeremiah and others.

<sup>189</sup> J.A. Darr (1992) 158.

<sup>190</sup> See Ch. 7. § 7.4. This has been fully discussed regarding the motif of *Παρησια*.

<sup>191</sup> See the chapters. 5 and 6 on discussion of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

<sup>192</sup> cf. L.T. Johnson (1992) 439.



declared innocent of the charge against him by Roman authorities with the agreement of a representative of the Herodian family.<sup>193</sup>

E. Haenchen suggests, "That is the general conviction. But why then is Paul not set free? V. 32 gives the answer."<sup>194</sup> Agrippa's comment in verse 32 is most likely the last decision concerning Paul's trial in Acts.<sup>195</sup> Even though the reader awaits the final judgment of Paul's trial, the result is not delivered in Acts. Two observations here emerge: on the one hand, the Jewish allegation about Paul is invalid. On the other hand, clearly, the Roman officials are irresolute. Although they have already admitted Paul's innocence, they wish to do the Jews a favour. Eventually, the Roman empire prefers political stability in Palestine rather than legal justice in the tribunal.

From the point of view of literary style, perhaps the narrator has a literary reason for Paul's continuing imprisonment, since the narrative logic is becoming incoherent at this point. Perhaps, the literary device of irony is used to highlight the situation which now faces Paul. In any case, the reason Paul cannot be freed from the given circumstance is contradictorily related to the legal injustice of Roman authorities.<sup>196</sup> From Agrippa's point of view, Paul is innocent and deserves to be free except for the appeal. However, if Paul had not felt any danger in his present situation, he would not have appealed to Caesar. This is a rather paradoxical relationship between Paul's appeal and his declared innocence. As Sherwin-White points out, "The appeal was automatically valid,"<sup>197</sup> and would only be used in a situation where the defendant felt himself to be in danger if he stayed in his present situation. This means that Paul sees Festus as inadequate to protect him, despite his innocence. Therefore, it could also function against the Roman empire. Polhill points out,

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<sup>193</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992) 440.

<sup>194</sup> E. Haenchen (1971) 690.

<sup>195</sup> E. Haenchen (1971, 690) points out that "This imaginary acquittal is the highest recognition of Paul and his innocence (and hence that of Christianity!) which is possible in these circumstances."

<sup>196</sup> The appeal process is to protect the rights of Roman citizen, however it is only used in the circumstances of danger or displeasure.

<sup>197</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 65. However, the appeal should remain *extra ordinem* (outside ordinary law).

This is now the fifth time Paul's innocence had been declared: first by the Pharisee (23:9), then by the Roman tribune Lysias (23:29), then twice by the governor Festus (25:18f., 25). In a private conversation with Festus, Agrippa went even further: If Paul had not made his appeal to Caesar, he could have been released (v. 32).<sup>198</sup>

In any case, Paul remains under the Roman custody.

In addition, probably Luke aims to propagandize the strong power of the Gospel through imprisonment, since Paul's appeal functions to cause him *not* to be released from the jail but to cause him to be sent to Rome (26:32). Regardless of the genuine purpose of Luke in verse 32, Paul cannot but go to Rome, since he has already appealed to Caesar. Bruce observes that "Paul's appeal to Caesar was not simply an act in the past, but had put him in a special position in the eyes of the law, in which it was no longer competent for the procurator to discharge him."<sup>199</sup> Here Paul is shown as a good Christian who controls his trial according to the Lord, because God said to Paul, "Keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome." (23:11)

Although there are some differences between the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and Acts, both take place in a legal context. In verse 32, Agrippa potentially play a major role as a Jewish spokesman who is able to proclaim that Christianity is not wrong. It is also interesting that a similar character appears in both narratives in the person of the Jewish "king" Agrippa.<sup>200</sup> In Acts, although in 26:32, he is shown as a potential arbiter between Paul and the Jews, in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* he appears as a Jewish supporter accused by the Alexandrian Greeks, especially Isidorus and Lampon. This also supports a literary reason for Paul's continuing imprisonment - namely, the use of irony. Thus, E.M. Smallwood claims that "Isidorus and Lampo(n) met their end at Claudius' hands, when they were executed as a result of a

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<sup>198</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 510.

<sup>199</sup> F.F. Bruce (1990) 507; cf. A.N. Sherwin-White (1963) 65.

<sup>200</sup> However, there is a problem about the identity of Agrippa in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and in Acts; Some think it is the same person, but most seem to think the Agrippa in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* is Agrippa I.; cf. L.L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyprus to Hadrian*, London: SCM Press, 1994, 400; See § 5.1.4.2. *Recension B* (P.Lond. 2785) Here we can find the appearance of Agrippa who is called a "twopenny-halfpenny Jew" by Isidorus.



misguided attempt to impeach the Jewish king Agrippa."<sup>201</sup> *Recension B* of the *Acta Isidori* reports Isidorus' accusation towards Caesar in relation to Agrippa: "My Lord Caesar, what do you care for a twopenny-halfpenny Jew like Agrippa." Isidorus also criticizes Agrippa in *Recension C*: "But to you, Agrippa, I wish to retort in connexion with the points you bring up about the Jews. I accuse them of wishing to stir up the entire world... We must consider the entire mass." It is interesting to speculate what is going on in these texts. Luke knows of the death of Agrippa I (Acts 12:20-23), but he consistently uses the name "Herod" for this character. As D.R. Schwartz points out, this suggests that the name is being used typologically: "Already the name it uses for Agrippa, "Herod," which is not documented elsewhere, testifies that the king is being viewed typologically, as another persecutor in the Church's Judaeian history, following Herod, Herod Antipas, Herodias and the Herodians, who figure as persecutors in the Gospel stories."<sup>202</sup> We might suggest that the name "Agrippa" is also being used typologically in line with the known role of Agrippa I as *king*, which seems to have involved acting in some kind of ambassadorial role to smooth relationships between Rome and the Diaspora communities.<sup>203</sup> Whether or not Luke was fully aware of the identity of these characters is not clear, but the use of the name Agrippa in this trial scene provides a clear parallel with the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

Finally, Paul arrives in Rome (28:14), the ultimate goal of the narrative, where Paul works for the gospel of Jesus. Indeed, Paul devotes himself to the Gospel of Jesus throughout Acts with boldness. Although Paul is still a Roman prisoner in the narrative, Luke portrays Paul rather as a triumphant servant of Jesus Christ. Paul rents his lodging at his own expense where he stayed for "two entire years"<sup>204</sup> to welcome all who come to him. (28:30) A Roman soldier (28:16) merely

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<sup>201</sup> E.M. Smallwood (1981) 250; Also see § 5.1.4. on analysis of the *Acta Isidori*.

<sup>202</sup> D.R. Schwartz, *Agrippa I: The Last King of Judaea*, TSAJ 23, Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1990, 120.

<sup>203</sup> D.R. Schwartz (1990) 96-106, esp. 97. According to Schwartz, Agrippa appears as the advocate of Diaspora Jewry. "There is a good bit of evidence for Agrippa I serving in this capacity, but none for Agrippa II."

<sup>204</sup> cf. Philo, *Flacc.* 128; Pliny, *Ep.* 10.56.

appears as a guard to help Paul's witness under free custody. However, as Polhill points out, "The presence of the soldier reminds us that it was a witness in *chains*."<sup>205</sup> The presence of the soldier is a reminder of the "anti-Roman" sentiment within the narrative in that he represents a weak Roman empire which is taken over by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The reader should never forget the status of Paul as a Roman prisoner, but he is a sincere servant of God for the Gospel of Jesus.<sup>206</sup> However, as Polhill claims, "The word of God in Christ - not Peter, not Paul - is the real hero of Acts."<sup>207</sup> Therefore, Luke closes his work with the last verse: "He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance" (28:31).

On the basis of "reading backwards from the end of Acts," this study has shown that Luke intends to reveal *Pax Christi* which is a God-made peace given by the Gospel of Jesus rather than the false peace of the *Pax Romana*. Paul worked for this from Jerusalem to Rome as a free Roman and Tarsian citizen and as a prisoner. That is to say, even though Luke's primary aim is not to propagandize "anti-Roman" sentiments, he strongly aims to show that *Pax Romana* is an object to be conquered by the Gospel of Jesus.

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<sup>205</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 537.

<sup>206</sup> L.T. Johnson (1992, 467) calls Paul "an acknowledged representative of the messianic movement."

<sup>207</sup> J.B. Polhill (1992) 548.



## Chapter 9 Conclusions

The aim of this concluding chapter is two-fold: (1) to summarize the study's comparison of the key findings regarding the issue of Paul's dual citizenship in the narratives of Acts and in Paul's letters, to summarize the literary characteristics and significant motifs of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and to summarize the comparison of the two documents; and (2) to explore briefly the contribution of this study to the ongoing issue of Paul's dual citizenship. While the first aim will be derived directly from the discussion of the previous chapters, the second must remain more tentative, since it will have to rest on suggestions from this study.

### 9.1. Summary

The purpose of this thesis has been to elucidate how Paul's dual citizenship, the Roman and Tarsian citizenship, functions in the narratives of Acts. The process of this study has been divided largely into three stages. The first stage questions the evidence of Acts and Paul's letters concerning Paul's dual citizenship. The second stage discusses the narratives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The third stage analyses the narratives of Acts according to Paul's dual citizenship with the aid of examples of significant motifs from the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

In chapter 2 we have reviewed recent scholarship on Acts according to the historical and the literary debate on Paul's dual citizenship. We have found that scholarly debates have generally not considered the narrative significance of Paul's citizenship. As argued, the historical debate has reached an impasse as W. Stegemann<sup>1</sup> has stated because Paul's dual citizenship cannot be proved to be historically accurate. The literary debate, however, provides further insight where the historical debate has faltered. In the literary debate, some scholars have analysed Luke's political attitude towards Rome. The fact that Luke sustains a "pro-Roman"

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<sup>1</sup> See § 2.1.2, W. Stegemann, 'War der Apostel Paulus ein römischer Bürger?', *ZNW* 78 (1987), 200-229.

attitude in Luke-Acts is generally accepted.<sup>2</sup> However, R.J. Cassidy has rejected the traditional suggestion that Luke-Acts is a political apologetic to the Roman empire. This thesis, on the other hand, has shared much of Cassidy's opinion which stresses Luke's "anti-Roman" stance.<sup>3</sup>

J.C. Lentz, B. Rapske, and Marie-Eloise Rosenblatt analyse the narratives of Acts according to their particular concerns. Firstly, Lentz suggests that Paul's dual citizenship represents his "high social status" and rich "moral virtue" such that Luke aims to advertise the attraction of Christianity to his readers with Paul as a person of high status. Although his opinion is much criticised,<sup>4</sup> it still offers a suggestion. Secondly, by using an example of "honour" and "shame,"<sup>5</sup> B. Rapske suggests that Paul is shown as a prisoner-missionary with his "un-Roman" behaviour. That is to say, he points out that, despite his shame, Paul as a Christian missionary is eager to work for the Gospel of Jesus. Thirdly, Marie-Eloise Rosenblatt is concerned with the portrayal of Paul as the accused. According to her observation, Paul, the "accused," means Paul, the "witness." In this manner, Paul's citizenship functions to help him as a witness of the Gospel of Jesus.

Throughout this brief review of recent study, we presuppose that Paul's trial narratives show the significance of Paul's citizenship in the legal proceedings from Jerusalem to Rome. Even though the citizenship issue does not always appear in the narratives, its effect, nonetheless, is powerfully present. More directly, citizenship is the vehicle which carries Paul to Rome, the final destination of Acts. This is the case because Paul's Roman citizenship, particularly, makes it possible for him to appeal to Caesar and thus be sent to Rome. However, the significance of Paul's citizenship, as a plot motive, has not been fully appreciated by recent scholarship. Therefore, this study hopefully provides a springboard for the study of Acts.

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<sup>2</sup> See chapter 2 § 2.2.1. H. Conzelmann, P.W. Walaskay, K. Wengst, P.F. Esler.

<sup>3</sup> See chapter 2 § 2.2.1.4.

<sup>4</sup> See chapter 2 § 2.2.2.

<sup>5</sup> B. Rapske adapts it from B.J. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, Atlanta: John Knox, 1981.



In chapter 3, we have questioned several issues concerning Paul's origins in Acts and Paul's letters. The first problem is that Acts alone reports Paul's citizenship. Citizenship is not mentioned anywhere in Paul's epistles. Suggestions have been made that Acts and the epistles are simply inconsistent on the matter. On this basis the suggestion has been made that Paul's dual citizenship is a literary technique. The study goes on to ask if the letters are generally compatible with Paul being a Roman citizen. We have examined passages in the epistles to look for hints on the matter. Romans 13:1-2 is just such an example in that Paul is able to urge Christians to obey worldly authorities on the basis that he is regarded to be a Roman citizen. However, this is not enough evidence to confirm whether Paul is a Roman citizen.

Just as Paul stresses his Jewish pride in the letters, Acts also insists on his Jewish upbringing with numerous examples<sup>6</sup> which are enough to verify Paul's pure Jewishness. However, the problem which arises in Acts is that his dual citizenship is only mentioned in Acts. His Tarsian citizenship is divulged in 21:39 and his Roman citizenship is given as a prerequisite for the legal appeal to Caesar in 16:37 and 22:25.<sup>7</sup> Paul's dual citizenship raises the question of internal consistency within the narrative of Acts itself. There are two related issues here: Firstly, is a *πολίτης* of Tarsus able to be both a "Pharisee" and a "son of Pharisees"? A possible explanation is that "son of Pharisees" means "disciple" and does not refer to a family relationship. Also, Luke may not be using *πολίτης* in a technically exact fashion in Acts 21:39. For example, elsewhere Luke uses the word *πολίτης* of small villages in Palestine, which suggests that he is not using it with the exact Greek technical sense. However, clearly there is a real problem in the combination of Tarsian citizenship and Jewish upbringing ascribed to Paul in Acts. Secondly, how has Paul's Jewish family obtained Roman citizenship? How and why do Paul's parents or ancestors come to

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<sup>6</sup> See Chapter 3 "The Quest of Paul's dual citizenship in Acts and Paul's Epistles"

<sup>7</sup> cf. Appeal to Caesar as the benefit of Roman citizenship is itself depicted in 23:27, 25:8-12, 21, 26:32, 27:24.

Tarsus? Frankly speaking, we do not know the answers. Like his Tarsian citizenship, the origin of Paul's Roman citizenship is an unsettled issue. Without conclusive evidence on the background of Paul's citizenship, his dual citizenship is even more questionable.

With the uncertainties of internal consistency regarding Paul's origins as described in Acts, this investigation turns to the literary debate in order to explore further the issue of Paul's citizenship. As some scholars have attempted to find a way out of the historical impasse of research on Paul's dual citizenship, so also this comparative discussion aims to resolve the "blind-alley" problem of Paul's citizenship.

In chapters 4 to 7 we have analysed the historico-political situation and the narrative function of significant motifs and ideologies in the papyri of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The motifs found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are divided into two types: Firstly, "patriotic motifs" which are composed of "Amour-propre of pedigree," "devotion to the Greek gods," "love of home town (Alexandria)," "Παρησιία," and "pride of Alexandrian office;" and secondly, "martyrdom motifs," including "death motifs" and "injustice of the Romans." The use of the two sets of motifs demonstrate the ideologies of "anti-Semitism" (which itself is actually an expression of "anti-Romanism") and "anti-Romanism."

A comparative study of Acts with the *Acta Alexandrinorum* provides another more fruitful perspective in order to resolve the impasse on the citizenship issue. As observed by this research, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* find their roots in the issue of citizenship. Because of this, the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and Paul's trial narratives in Acts contain many parallel motifs and ideologies concerning the issue of citizenship within a legal trial setting which may be compared. Although this study is mainly concerned with the narrative function of citizenship, the other motifs of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are latent in the narratives of Acts. Thus, though the issue of citizenship is important for both narratives, the interest of this study is not restricted exclusively to citizenship. The citizenship issue provides the catalyst for an



examination of the related motifs and ideologies listed above and elaborated below. With this in mind, this work also discusses Paul's trial narratives by comparing the motifs found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* with those found in the Lukan text.

The question of Luke's attitude towards the Jews is a highly debated point in recent study of Acts.<sup>8</sup> Luke's ideology is not clearly expressed as either to decide whether Luke is simply "pro-Jewish" or "anti"-Jewish. However, this study proposes that Paul's trial narratives at least offer a convincing "anti-Jewish" sentiment to the reader. Indeed, ironically even though Paul himself is a Jew, his contemporary antagonists are also Jews. Legal and political points of the *Acta Alexandrinorum* are comparable with Paul's trial narratives including his Tarsian and Roman citizenship in Acts. As C. Bradford Welles points out, "To the Alexandrines, opposition to Rome became identified with anti-semitism, and both ideological elements, though not always both together, form the leading motives of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*."<sup>9</sup> The Greeks in Alexandria have much to protect in terms of privileges of citizenship in relation to their superior status both in relation to the Jews and the Egyptians. In the *Acta Alexandrinorum*, the Alexandrian Greek citizens complained about both sides: the Jews and the Roman emperors. The Alexandrian Greeks were very worried that the Jews would receive equal civic status. At the same time, they think that the Roman emperors wished to do the Jews a favour. Therefore, by accusing the Jewish people, the Alexandrian Greeks intend to criticise the Roman emperors. In the *Acta Alexandrinorum* the Jews function only as "trouble-agents" which is quite similar to the function of the Jews in Acts. Acts reports that the Jewish people make accusations against Paul who is working as a Christian missionary and whose status is that of a Tarsian and a Roman citizen. Also, the Roman legal representatives wish to gain the Jews' "favour." Combined together, these factors create considerable tension in the narratives of Acts similar to that found in the *Acta Alexandrinorum*.

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<sup>8</sup> cf. R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982, 42-46; D.L. Allen, 'Acts Studies in the 1990'S: Unity and Diversity,' *CTR* 5 (1990) 11.

<sup>9</sup> C. Bradford Welles, 'A Yale Fragment of the Acts of Appian', *Transaction and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 67 (1936) 9.

Thus, the Jews' role in Acts as "trouble-makers" is similar to that of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. In consequence, this thesis has tried to show that Luke's work reveals two ideologies: One is "anti-Jewish" according to a religious viewpoint while the other is "anti-Roman" according to a political viewpoint.

At the same time, by employing the literary category of "reverse reading," references to "anti-Roman" sentiments are also found in the Lukan trial narratives. Furthermore, Paul's portrayal as a prisoner in the narratives (16:22-4, 37-40; 21:39; 22:22-9; 25:1-12; 26:24-32) also sheds light on both "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Roman" sentiments. As argued already, these two ideological sentiments are significantly displayed in Paul's trial-narratives. For example, Paul is a *Roman prisoner*,<sup>10</sup> not because he is guilty but because of the influence of the "Jewish favouritism" motif which is an expression of "anti-Roman" sentiments. Luke intends to maximise the feeling of "anti-Romanism" as described in this research. However, this "anti-Roman" sentiment combined with the significance of Roman citizenship for legal appeals is used for the advantage of travel eventually to Rome for further evangelization work by Paul, the Roman citizen and prisoner. That Roman citizenship and "anti-Romanism" is related in this way is ironical. However, Luke still stresses the power of the Gospel rather than citizenship in the narrative as the theological source for Paul's mission in Rome, but citizenship is the literary catalyst for movement to the theological end. In this setting, Paul, the Roman and Tarsian citizen, boldly plays the role of the servant of God. Parallels in the *Acta Alexandrinorum* lend further support to this observation. Representative examples are found in the main character(s) who are also prisoners within a trial setting. Here, too, "anti-Jewish" sentiments ultimately become "anti-Roman" sentiments.

Paul's arrival in Rome makes the reader realise the power of the Gospel of Jesus. It reveals that the *Pax Romana* is far inferior to the *Pax Christi*. At the same time, a human-made peace like the *Pax Romana* should be totally conquered by the

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<sup>10</sup> R. Maddox (1982, 67) points out that "when we read Acts as a whole, rather than selectively, it is Paul the prisoner even more than Paul the missionary whom we are meant to remember."



God-made peace of the *Pax Christi*.<sup>11</sup> Thus, this thesis suggests that through "re-reading" from the *end* to the *beginning* of Acts in terms of "reverse reading," Luke's political stance is implicitly "anti-Roman." The citizenship motif plays an important role in this re-reading. Luke's so-called "pro-Jewish" and "pro-Roman" stance is transformed into an "anti-Jewish" and an "anti-Roman" stance. As has been argued, the "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Roman" are an integral part of Paul's trial narratives.

It should be emphasised that the propaganda of "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Roman" sentiments is not Luke's ultimate purpose. The more central purpose is to find the best way to spread the Gospel of Jesus. For his intention, Luke employs both anti-Jewish and anti-Roman ideology. Therefore, he depicts Paul's trials with the ideology of "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Roman" sentiments. However, the proclamation of the Gospel is the central theme of Acts from 1:8 to 28:31. Therefore, it is apparent that Luke's main purpose is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus as the ultimate expectation within the narrative. In particular, Paul's Roman citizenship as an essential element for the legal appeal is regarded as a literary technique for his "appeal to Caesar." Thus, citizenship which gives Paul the possibility of appeal to Caesar is employed as "a stratagem for the spread of the Christianity."<sup>12</sup>

## 9.2. Paul's dual citizenship: Literary invention or Historical report or both?

After analysing Paul's dual citizenship in Acts, some conclusions can now be drawn. In chapter 2, our study has attempted to survey the historical debate as well as the literary debate demonstrating the result that the historical quest of Paul's dual citizenship reaches an impasse as some scholars have discussed. Now, we should ask again: Is Paul's dual citizenship purely invented by Luke? Even though Luke uses Paul's citizenship as a literary device, is this citizenship based on a factual

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<sup>11</sup> Some of Luke's references to "peace" support this point: Lk 1:52, 2:11, 14, 19:38, 22:35, Acts 1:4-11; Also cf. K. Wengst, *Pax Romana and the Peace of Jesus Christ*, London: SCM Press, 1987, 89-105, esp. 103-5.

<sup>12</sup> cf. Alexander, L.C.A. 'Rome, Early Christian attitudes to', in D. N. Freedman (ed.), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, New York: Doubleday, 1992, V, 837.

evidence? Despite the sceptical view that Luke's own hand has been preponderantly at work, there is a substantial body of opinion which recognises the historical reliability of the Acts narratives generally and of Paul's dual citizenship particularly.<sup>13</sup> Although some have suspected that Paul cannot be a Roman and a Tarsian citizen simultaneously, it is difficult to believe that Luke completely invented it. However, scholars are equally divided on this issue. Admittedly, the exact examination of the issue of Paul's dual citizenship will continue to remain a mystery - at least until new, more credible evidence is uncovered. Nonetheless, there is clear and consistent agreement that Luke has proposed a literary plan to propagate the Gospel of Jesus. Thus, feasibly Paul, the main character, is depicted as a Roman and a Tarsian citizen in the service of Luke's original intention.

As has been discussed at length, Paul's trial narratives have been compared with the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The *Acta Alexandrinorum's* propagandic motifs are especially valuable for the analysis of Paul's trial narratives. By means of comparative analysis, we have concluded that Luke's attitude towards the Roman empire is negative. However, unlike previous Acts studies, this thesis suggests that even though Luke did not intend to show specifically politically "anti-Roman" sentiments, he has taken an "anti-Roman" stance. In contrast to the *Acta Alexandrinorum* which attempt to propagandise "anti-Roman" sentiments by using an ideology of "anti-Jewish" sentiments as its central aim, Paul's trial narratives use "anti-Jewish" and "anti-Roman" sentiments as a means to a more central end which is to proclaim the power of Gospel of Jesus. Even though Luke's purpose has been described in a variety of ways,<sup>14</sup> we may conclude here that Luke intends to portray

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<sup>13</sup> Even though some Acts scholars have said that Paul's citizenship is unprovable, the opinions are however equally divided. see Chapter 2 esp. § 2.1. G. Lüdemann, H.W. Tajra, and more recently, Simon Légasse, 'Paul's Pre-Christian Career according to Acts,' *Palestinian Setting*, BAFCS, vol. 4, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995, 365-390.

<sup>14</sup> Luke's purpose still remains in dispute.; see. R. Maddox, *The Purpose of Luke-Acts*, Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982; R.F. O'Toole, 'Why did Luke Write Acts (Lk-Acts)?' *BTB* 7 (1977) 66-76; D.L. Allen, 'Acts Studies in the 1990'S: Unity and Diversity,' *CTR* 5 (1990) 3-13; M.A. Powell, 'Luke's Second Volume: Three Basic Issues in Contemporary Studies of Acts,' *TSR* 13 (1991) 69-81.



the Roman empire as an object to be taken over by the Gospel of Jesus. Thus, Luke ultimately aims to proclaim a victory of the Gospel in Rome.

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<sup>1</sup> This selective bibliography includes generally those works consulted which have primary significance for the issue of Paul's dual citizenship and the understanding of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*. The classical references quoted in this thesis have come from the *Loeb Classical Library*.



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