THE AREOPAGUS AS ECHO CHAMBER:
MIMESIS AND INTERTEXTUALITY IN ACTS 17

David M. Reis
Wells College

> "Although you are not yet a Socrates, you should live
> as someone who at least wants to be a Socrates."
> —Epictetus *Ench.* 51.3

The book of Acts has a flair for the dramatic: its pages are filled with fantastic stories such as the appearance of the resurrected Jesus and the descent of the Holy Spirit, the apostles' ability to perform miracles and magic, and a relentless missionary zeal that leads to imprisonments, trials, and martyrdoms. Out of all of these spectacular events, however, it is Paul's visit to Athens and his Areopagus speech (Acts 17:16-34), a rather mundane event by Luke's standards, that has captured much of the scholarly attention.[1] The interest in this episode has centered on questions such as the speech's historical accuracy, its theological background, and its relationship to Paul's own letters. These discussions have been advanced by a variety of methodological tools,[2] but despite this diversity all of these

---

[1] Fred Veltman, "The Defense Speeches of Paul in Acts," in *Perspectives on Luke-Acts*, ed. Charles H. Talbert (Edinbugh: T. & T. Clark, 1978), 243; F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1981), 353; Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 511.

[2] Historical accuracy: Colin J. Hemer, "The Speeches of Acts II. The Areopagus Address," *Tyndale Bulletin* 40 (1989): 239-259; idem, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1989); David Gill, "Dionysios and Damaris: A Note on Acts 17:34," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 61 (1999): 483-490; literary criticism: Hans Conzelmann, "The Address of Paul on the Areopagus," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, eds. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 217-230; Dean Zweck, "The *Exordium* of the Areopagus Speech, Acts 17.22, 23," *New Testament Studies* 35 (1989): 94-103; Karl Olav Sandnes, "Paul and Socrates: The Aim of Paul's Areopagus Speech," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 50 (1993): 13-26; Mark D. Given, "Not Either/Or but Both/And in Paul's Areopagus Speech," *Biblical Interpretation* 3 (1995): 356-372; idem, "The Unknown Paul: Philosophers and Sophists in Acts 17," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 343-351; history of religions: Martin Dibelius, "Paul on the Areopagus," in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Heinrich Green (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), 26-77; L. Legrand, "The Unknown God of Athens: Acts 17 and the Religion of the Gentiles," *Indian Journal of Theology* 30 (1981): 158-167;

studies point in the same direction, namely, to understand and contextualize Luke (or Paul) within early Christianity.

What has gone unnoticed, however, is the idea that the influence of the Areopagus speech may be multidirectional, that it may say something not only about Luke or Paul but about Socrates as well. This paper will pursue this line of thought by drawing on the insights of *mimesis* and intertextuality, two models that explore how the relationship between texts produces "tones" that resonate in new and often unexpected ways. These theories will provide the foundation for showing how the Areopagus speech acts as an echo chamber in which the tones of the text reverberate in two directions. While Luke gives his readers the opportunity to imagine Paul as Socrates, he also invites later readers to "re-hear" Socrates as Paul. Justin Martyr accepts this invitation by using the Areopagus speech to detail Socrates' trial and death and to identify him as a Christian philosopher and martyr.

<div align="center">

Mimesis and Intertextuality
(Let the Reader Understand)

</div>

*M*imesis and intertextuality are especially well-equipped to uncover the polyphonic qualities of the Areopagus speech because they both begin with the observation that texts are not isolated literary units but complex productions that exist in relation to other texts. Through these relationships texts do not retain a uniform meaning but are constantly resignified by readers who approach the material from new perspectives. It is this dynamic process of re-hearing how texts relate to one another that *mimesis* and intertextuality seek to decode.

Joel Marcus, "Paul at the Areopagus: Window on the Hellenistic World," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 18 (1988): 143-148; David L. Balch, "The Areopagus Speech: An Appeal to the Stoic Historian Posidonius Against Later Stoics and the Epicureans," in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, eds. David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 52-79; Jerome H. Neyrey, "Acts 17, Epicureans, and Theodicy: A Study in Stereotypes," in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*, eds. David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 118-134; Bruce W. Winter, "On Introducing New Gods to Athens: An Alternative Reading of Acts 17:18-20," *Tyndale Bulletin* 47 (1996): 71-90; N. Clayton Croy, "Hellenistic Philosophies and the Preaching of the Resurrection (Acts 17:18, 32)," *Novum Testamentum* 39 (1997): 21-39; theological hermeneutics: Daniel T. Jenkins, "Paul Before the Areopagus," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin* 64 (1971): 86-89.

Mimesis

Recent studies on *mimesis* have shown that, in its most advanced forms, imitative literature did not slavishly reproduce copies of earlier works but rather interacted with these sources in complex and creative ways.[3] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for instance, refers to this type of *mimesis* as occurring as "a natural result of being for a long time in close contact with the model and living with it."[4] This sentiment is echoed by Seneca, who describes the mimetic task as an "absorption" and "digestion" of various models that lead to a new synthesis.[5] Longinus extends these organic metaphors by comparing the practice of imitation to prophetic inspiration.[6] For these and other ancient rhetoricians, then, imitation was a subtle art in which a writer internalized and transformed his models so that they spoke to a new situation.[7]

These insights, which attest to the flexibility of *mimesis*, are particularly helpful when analyzing the imitative traditions surrounding Socrates. While he was alive Socrates had already attracted numerous imitators who sought to emulate everything from his dress and style to his dialectical skill and dedication to knowledge.[8] After his death, the fascination and reverence for Socrates inspired the systematic production of literary works based upon his teachings. These writings, which Aristotle coined "Socratic dialogues" (Σωκρατικοὶ λόγοι) and classified with other mimetic works, were produced by his closest associates as a way to disseminate their teacher's ideas. Each author naturally had a

---

[3] Elaine Fantham, "Imitation and Evolution: The Discussion of Rhetorical Imitation in Cicero *De oratore* 2. 87-97 and Some Related Problems of Ciceronian Theory," *Classical Philology* 73 (1978): 1-16; idem, "Imitation and Decline: Rhetorical Theory and Practice in the First Century After Christ," *Classical Philology* 73 (1978): 102-116; Thomas M. Greene, *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 54-80; Thomas Louis Brodie, "Greco-Roman Imitation of Texts as a Partial Guide to Luke's Use of Sources," in *Luke-Acts: New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature Seminar*, ed. Charles H. Talbert (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1984), 17-46; Dennis Ronald MacDonald, ed. *Mimesis and Inter-textuality in Antiquity and Christianity* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001); Stephen Halliwell, *The Aesthetics of Mimesis: Ancient Texts and Modern Problems* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 15-22.

[4] Dion. Hal. *Dinarchus* 7.

[5] Sen. *Ep.* 84.4-9

[6] Long. *On the Sublime* 13.2-3.

[7] Quintillian (10.5.5) argues that the imitation should not "restrict itself to the bare interpretation of the original: its duty is rather to rival and vie with the original in the expression of the same thoughts."

[8] Ar. *Birds* 1280-1283; Pl. *Apol.* 23c; Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.2-3.

different interpretation of these ideas,[9] so that the dialogues may say less about the "historical" Socrates and more about the spirited and contentious rivalry that existed among students who sought to stake a claim as the true transmitter of their master's teachings.[10] In this literary *agon*, the dialogues of Plato and Xenophon eventually managed to surpass the others in importance, so that by the late Hellenistic period they were routinely identified as exemplary models for aspiring authors to imitate.[11] Moreover, just as the earliest followers of Socrates vied with one another through their writing, so too did later philosophical schools draw on these authors' *Sokratikoi Logoi* as they jostled with one another in an attempt to claim the Socratic heritage as their own.[12]

Hellenistic philosophers who sought to prove their faithfulness to Socrates were thus engaged in a mimetic task that attempted to appropriate both his teachings and argumentative style. Because later writers credited Socrates with shifting philosophy from speculation on the cosmos to inquiries into human behavior, his ethical ideas are cited most often.[13] Yet the Stoics, for whom cosmology was a central concern, identified passages from Xenophon's *Memorabilia* that "proved" Socrates' ethical views were dependent on his belief that a providential God created, ordered, and maintained the world.[14] Complementing

---

[9] See Paul A. Vander Waerdt, "Introduction," in *The Socratic Movement*, ed. idem (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 11; Diskin Clay, "The Origins of the Socratic Dialogue," in *The Socratic Movement*, ed. Paul A. Vander Waerdt (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 26-33. Aristotle (*Poet.* 1147b) classifies the "Socratic dialogues" as mimetic works: "There is another art which imitates by means of language alone, and that either in prose or verse—which verse, again, may either combine different metres or consist of but one kind—but this has hitherto been without a name. For there is no common term we could apply to the mimes of Sophron and Xenarchus and the Socratic dialogues on the one hand; and, on the other, to poetic imitations in iambic, elegiac, or any similar metre."

[10] See Vander Waerdt, "Introduction," 3, n. 11.

[11] Both Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*On Imitation* 9.4.2) and Quintillian (10.1.81-82) rank Plato and Xenophon first among the philosophers worthy of imitation.

[12] A.A. Long, "Socrates in Hellenistic Philosophy," *Classical Quarterly* n.s. 38 (1988): 150-171; Vander Waerdt, "Introduction," 1-12; Clay, "Origins of the Socratic Dialogue," 23-47.

[13] Epictetus, for instance, applies the Socratic dictum that the unexamined life is not worth living to his discussion of the Stoic category of "assent" (συγκάταθεσις) (*Diss.* 3.12.14-15; cf. Pl. *Apol.* 38a).

[14] Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.2-18; 4.3.2-18; 4.4.1-25. On the Stoic appropriation of Xenophon's work, see Long, "Socrates," 162-164; Joseph DeFilippo and Phillip T.

this exercise of mining the dialogues in order to show a consistency with Socratic ideals was the practice of imitating his style, in particular his use of elenctic and protreptic discourse. For Socrates, cross-examination and exhortation were essential for uncovering sloppy thinking and encouraging a new way of thinking. In a similar manner, these styles become the twin pillars of Epictetus' philosophical agenda: "The person who can show an individual the conflict responsible for his error and clearly make him see how he is not doing what he wants to do and is doing what he does not want to do—that is the person who combines expertise in argument, exhortation and refutation" (προτρεπτικὸς καὶ ἐλεγκτικός).[15]

Intertextuality

At the heart of this mimetic enterprise was the desire to align one's thought with the Socratic tradition in order to gain credibility and attract potential adherents. In this process of imitating Socrates' teachings and style, these later philosophers would, in effect, become "Socratized." At the same time, however, their appropriation of his message effectively transformed Socrates into a "Hellenized" philosopher.[16] Studies that seek to examine how

---

Mitsis, "Socrates and Stoic Natural Law," in *The Socratic Movement*, ed. Paul A. Vander Waerdt (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 252-271. For the Stoic connection between cosmology and ethics, see, for instance, Mus. Ruf. frag. 42. See also 17: "of all the creatures on earth humans alone resemble God and have the same virtues ... prudence, justice, courage, and temperance." (cited in Cora E. Lutz, *Musonius Rufus: "The Roman Socrates"* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1947], 109). Musonius Rufus' pupil Epictetus (frag. 1) evinces a similar position. For this interpretation, see Long, *Epictetus*, 149-152.

[15] *Diss.* 2.26.4; cf. *Diss.* 3.23.34-37. On Epictetus' imitation of Socratic style, see A.A. Long, *Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 52-57. For Epictetus' use of Socratic sources, see Klaus Döring, "Sokrates bei Epiktet," in *Studia Platonica: Festschrift für Herman Gundert*, eds. Klaus Döring and Wolfgang Kullmann (Amsterdam: B.R. Grüner, 1974), 196-197.

[16] An analysis of a passage from Epictetus on the nature of the true Cynic serves as an example of this interplay between the Socratic and Stoic traditions. In Diss. 3.22.26, Epictetus exclaims: "O people, where are you bound for? O miserable ones, what are you doing? You reel up and down, like the blind. You have left the real path and are going off into another one. You are looking for serenity and happiness in the wrong place, where it does not exist, and you do not believe when someone shows you. Why do you seek it in externals (ἔξω)? It does not exist in the body." This passage echoes Pl. *Cleit.* 407a-b: "O people, where are you bound for? You act in ignorance of everything you should know, giving all your attention to securing wealth, and as far as your sons, your heirs, are concerned, you fail to find moral tutors so that they may learn how to use it justly."

this reciprocity functions often turn to intertextual theory for support.[17] Minimally, this theory begins with the assumption all texts interact with a larger web or network of other texts, so that no text may be viewed as an isolated or independent construction.[18] Every text is thus a "mosaic of quotations" in which no author creates anything that is entirely original.[19] Moreover, intertextuality asserts that when a text draws upon another text (the "already said") the influence is not channeled in only one direction. On the contrary, the current travels in both directions, causing a resignification of both. If texts are fundamentally relational, then it becomes impossible to speak of a fixed or stable meaning for any text. The "echo" metaphor is often used to

---

The relationship between these two texts reveals that Epictetus has elaborated and transformed the meaning of the Platonic passage. While Socrates criticizes his contemporaries for their excessive interest in gaining wealth and their failure to educate their children to manage their possessions with justice, Epictetus alters this meaning so that the speech becomes a meditation on the futility of finding happiness in all "externals" and a call to focus on the cultivation of the true self. In this interaction, Epictetus becomes "Socratized" to the extent that he echoes Socrates' words, but Socrates' position as a voice for Epictetus means that he has become "Stoicized."

[17] For recent studies on intertextuality, see Thaïs E. Morgan, "Is There An Intertext to This Text?: Literary and Interdisciplinary Approaches to Intertextuality," *American Journal of Semiotics* 3 (1985): 1-40; Sipke Draisma, ed., *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in Honour of Bas van Iersel* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1989); M. Worten, and J. Still, eds., *Intertextuality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990); J. Clayton and E. Rothstein, eds., *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991); Heinrich F. Plett, ed., *Intertextuality* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1991); Danna Nolan Fewell, ed., *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992); George Aichele and Gary A. Phillips, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," *Semeia* 69-70 (1995): 7-18; Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 96-143; Craig A. Evans and Shemaryahu Talmon, eds., *The Quest for Context and Meaning: Studies in Biblical Intertextuality in Honor of James A. Sanders* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1997); Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (New York: Routledge, 2000); Michael Fishbane, "Types of Biblical Intertextuality," in *Congress Volume: Oslo 1998*, eds. A. Lemaire and M. Sabø (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2000), 39-44.

[18] Daniel Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington, IN: University of Indiana Press, 1990), 14: "every text is constrained by the literary system of which it is a part and that every text is ultimately dialogical in that it cannot but record the traces of its contentions and doubling of earlier discourses."

[19] Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, trans. Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 66. According to Roland Barthes (*Image—Music—Text*, trans. Stephen Heath [London: Fontana, 1977], 146): "We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multidimesional space in which varieties of writings, none of them original, blend and clash."

illustrate this instability. At its most basic level, the literary echo denotes the re-production of a previous concept or thought in another text. Studying how this echo operates in its context can reveal how the author understood and transformed an earlier idea. Yet the tones of the echo can lead the reader to re-hear the source, to absorb and transform its meaning.[20] The resulting collision generates "sound waves" that create opportunities to discern how the echo might cause a mutual re-signification of both texts: the older literature "continues to speak in and through later texts that both depend on and transform the earlier."[21]

Echoes do more, however, than simply point the reader to a specific source text. They can also open up larger fields of interplay between texts, acting like signs that trigger any number of associations between a text and its model(s). As Richard Hays has argued, "When a literary echo links the text in which it occurs to an earlier text, the figurative effect of the echo can lie in the unstated or suppressed (transumed) points of resonance between the two texts."[22] This feature, which Hays calls metalepsis, points to the malleable nature of texts: the echo can evoke connections beyond the immediate literary link, and in so doing, it "places the reader within a field of whispered or unstated correspondences."[23] The echo may thus point beyond the immediate literary source and allow the reader to enter into a wider field of texts that provide myriad opportunities for further interpretation.

---

[20] Kristeva, *Desire in Language*, 66.

[21] Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 14. An illustration of this process in Revelation has been detailed by Steve Moyise, "Intertextuality and the Study of the Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The Old Testament in the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J.L. North*, ed. idem (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 26-32. Moyise, shows, on the one hand, that when John uses the lion to make a statement about messianic power (5:5-6), he is drawing on Genesis 49:9 and the traditional Jewish exegetical move to associate this figure with the messiah. On the other hand, his identification of the conqueror as a lamb forces these earlier formulations of messianic power to be re-considered. Thus, while John allows the reader to think of Jesus as a lion, the victorious actions of the lamb necessitate a revaluation of this traditional understanding, so that whenever the word "lion" appears one should think "lamb." Consequently, the author "wishes to encourage mutual interpretation. The images of power inform our understanding of the Lamb and the image of the 'Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered' provides a new context for the Old Testament messianic texts" (30).

[22] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 31.

[23] Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 20.

This idea presents the interpreter with an immediate difficulty: if intertextuality resists closed or univocal readings, the variety of connections between texts is boundless—everything from the "general text" of culture is theoretically "in play." The interpretive task of the reader, however, is to make sense of this "indeterminate *surplus* of meaningful possibilities,"[24] to draw boundaries that make interpretation possible.[25] The image of the "echo-chamber" establishes just such boundaries, for echoes need parameters or "walls" in order to be heard.[26] By identifying echoes, the interpreter can therefore establish a perimeter to view the dialogic action between texts. Because of the numerous Socratic echoes in Acts 17, the following analysis will draw Socratic boundaries around the text. In order to make a convincing case for this reading, it will be important to show 1) that Socratic echoes exist, 2) that Luke could have been aware of sources behind the echoes and have intended them as such, 3) that they cohere with the larger argument of the text, and 4) that other interpreters have heard the same echoes.[27]

Acts 17: Paul in the Image of Socrates

Studies on *mimesis* and intertextuality in the New Testament, and Luke in particular, have focused almost exclusively on how the Christian authors echo Old Testa-

---

[24] Timothy K. Beal, "Ideology and Intertextuality: Surplus of Meaning and Controlling the Means of Production," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Danna Nolan Fewell (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 31.

[25] As Jonathan Culler ("Presupposition and Intertextuality," *Modern Language Notes* 91 [1976], 1384) notes, "it is difficult to make [the] universe as such the object of attention." See also Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 99.

[26] Timothy K. Beal, "Glossary," in *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Danna Nolan Fewell (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992), 21; Moyise, "Intertextuality," 32.

[27] Hays (*Echoes of Scripture*, 29-32) constructs a list of seven criteria for identifying echoes: availability (was the source available to the reader?), volume (what is the level of literary correspondence?), recurrence (is the echo found elsewhere?), thematic coherence (how well does the echo fit into the overall argument?), historical plausibility (could the author have intended the echo?), history of interpretation (have other readers heard the same echo?), and satisfaction (does the proposed reading make sense?). For a similar list, see also Dennis Ronald MacDonald, *Christianizing Homer: The Odyssey, Plato, and the Acts of Andrew* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 302-316. For a critique of Hays's arguments, see Craig A. Evans and James A. Sanders, eds., *Paul and the Scriptures of Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 42-96.

ment ideas or patterns.[28] The echo chambers established in these instances are thus determined to a great extent by the New Testament's repeated allusions to Jewish literature. Yet there is good reason to suspect that the writers of the New Testament did not operate exclusively, or even primarily, within such narrow parameters established by the Jewish scriptures.[29] That texts outside of the confines of the Judeo-Christian tradition may have served as models for imitation and as intertexts is especially intriguing in the case of Luke, who appears to have mastered the fundamental aspects of Greco-Roman rhetoric and who likely wrote for a primarily Hellenistic audience.[30] It is therefore important to widen the boundaries of the echo chamber to determine if any tones inspired by texts other than the Old Testament can be heard. Acts 17 serves as a test case for this examination, for in this chapter Paul enters Athens, the cultural and intellectual center of the Greco-Roman world, and engages in a debate with representatives of the Hellenistic philosophical tradition.

The prologue to this story contains numerous references that suggest that Luke was interested in constructing an idealized portrait of the city of Athens and its intellectual traditions from the classical period.[31] The description of the city as "full of idols"

---

[28] See, for instance, Gail R. O'Day, "Jeremiah 9:22-23 and 1 Corinthians 1:26-31: A Study in Intertextuality," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (1990): 259-267; David E. Aune, "Intertextuality and the Genre of the Apocalypse," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 142-160; Robert L. Brawley, "Canon and Community: Intertextuality, Canon, Interpretation, Christology, Theology, and Persuasive Rhetoric in Luke 4:1-13," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1992 Seminar Papers*, ed. Eugene H. Lovering, Jr. (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 419-434; Thomas L. Brodie, "Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37: A Study of Luke's Use of Rhetorical Imitation," *Biblica* 64 (1983): 457-485; idem, "Towards Unraveling the Rhetorical Imitation of Sources in Acts: 2 Kgs 5 as One Component of Acts 8,9-40," *Biblica* 67 (1986): 41-67. For critiques on the focus on the Old Testament as the intertext for the New Testament, see Aichele and Phillips, "Introduction," 7-8; Robbins, *Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse*, 96-102, 108-110. For a critique of recent work on *mimesis* in Luke, see Gert J. Steyn, "Luke's Use of ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ?: Re-Opening the Debate," in *The Scriptures in the Gospels*, ed. C.M. Tuckett (Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1997), 551-557.

[29] See, for instance, Abraham J. Malherbe, "'Gentle as a Nurse': The Lyric Background to 1 Thess ii," *Novum Testamentum* 12 (1970): 203-217; MacDonald, *Christianizing Homer, passim*.

[30] On Luke's rhetorical skills, see William S. Kurz, "Hellenistic Rhetoric in the Christological Proof of Luke-Acts," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 42 (1980): 184-195. See also Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1971), 72-81.

[31] Conzelmann ("Address of Paul," 217-218) has observed that such classical portraits of Greek culture are characteristic of Luke.

and its citizens as religiously zealous and incessantly curious were all commonplaces that stem from classical authors.[32] Luke's reference to Stoic and Epicurean philosophers also introduces the reader to the city's philosophical heritage, a connection that is made more forcefully through a number of echoes that link Paul with the figure of Socrates. Like his fifth-century counterpart, Paul "argued" (διελέγετο) "in the marketplace" (ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ) and was thought to be "a proclaimer of foreign divinities" (ξένων δαιμονίων ... καταγγελεύς) who was "introducing strange things" (ξενίζοντα ... εἰσφέρεις) to the Athenian populace.[33] Luke further underscores the link between Paul and Socrates by beginning Paul's speech with the phrase "men of Athens" (ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι), the same utterance that Socrates employs in his opening address to the Athenian jury and no less than thirty-four times thereafter.[34]

The popularity and prominence that Socrates and Athens held in the consciousness of antiquity make it difficult to think that Luke's audience would not have detected the volume and density of these echoes.[35] Before Paul even begins to speak, then, Luke has begun to mold him into a Socratic philosopher: he is a skilled dialectician whose novel ideas lead to disputes in the public arena. When Paul addresses the Athenians, however, he shifts from an argumentative to a hortatory style. Instead of cross-examining his audience, Paul criticizes their idolatrous practices and boldly "proclaims" (καταγγέλλω) the reality of the

---

[32] Regarding the classical references in the prologue, Haenchen (*Acts of the Apostles*, 527) states that "The narrative framework is composed of a number of motifs which at that time every half-educated person recognized as specifically Athenian." For pagan references to these motifs, see Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 138-140.

[33] Acts 17:16-18, 20. On Socrates' penchant for dialectical argument, see Pl. *Apol.* 19d; 21c; 33b; 37a; 38a; 39e; 41c; cf. 29e; Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.33, 35; 1.3.1; 1.7.5; 4.8.4; cf. 1.4.1; D.L. 2.20. For Socrates' activity in the marketplace, see Pl. *Apol.* 17c; Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.10; D.L. 2.21. On the accusation that Socrates introduced new divinities, see Pl. *Apol.* 24b-c; 26b; Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.1; Xen. *Apol.* 10-11; D.L. 2.40. For scholarly commentary on the connection between Paul and Socrates, see Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles*, 517-531; Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, and Donald H. Juel (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 139; Karl Olav Sandes, "Paul and Socrates: The Aim of Paul's Areopagus Speech," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 50 (1993): 20-22; Mark D. Given, "The Unknown Paul: Philosophers and Sophists in Acts 17," in *Society for Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 343-351.

[34] Acts 17:22; Pl. *Apol.* 17a.

[35] Haenchen (*Acts of the Apostles*, 527) concludes that "every half-educated person" would have recognized these allusions as specifically Athenian.

unknown God, who "commands" (παραγγέλλει) all people "to repent" (μετανοεῖν).[36] Luke, like Epictetus, has thus woven together the two primary features of Socratic discourse, elenctic and protreptic. With his initial allusion to Paul's dialectical argumentation framing the rest of the episode, Luke has Paul deliver a missionary speech in which he exhorts the crowd to turn away from its idolatrous practices in preparation for Jesus' future judgment.

In addition to Luke's use of Socratic echoes and his appropriation of Socrates' style, the structure of Paul's speech provides a further link to the Athenian philosopher. In the speech, Paul explicitly calls on the crowd to abandon its current beliefs and practices and reorient itself to a new way of living. According to the apostle, the true God is "unknown," neither residing in shrines nor in idols.[37] Furthermore, contrary to common opinion, he needs nothing from humans but has instead given them places to live as well as "life and breath and everything."[38] Although God is transcendent, he cares for humanity and remains near, so that it is appropriate to think of humans as his "offspring" (γένος).[39] Thus, Paul concludes, humans are responsible for maintaining this proper knowledge of God so that they might exhibit behavior that will allow them to be saved at the judgment.[40]

With the exception of this final point, the content of Paul's exhortation has parallels in the discourses of both Plato and Xenophon. For example, in Plato's *Apology* Socrates makes it clear that his entire life has been devoted to encouraging his fellow citizens to abandon the desire for wealth and power and focus instead on acquiring "wisdom and truth and the perfection of the soul."[41] Furthermore, the Xenophontic Socrates makes it clear that a correct understanding of the nature of God and his action in the world is a prerequisite for attaining this virtue. In these passages, which the Stoics popularized and Clement of Alexandria quoted,[42] Socrates argues that God is invisible, omniscient, and benevolent: although he himself is "unseen"

---

[36] Acts 17:23, 30-31.

[37] Acts 17:23, 29.

[38] Acts 17:25.

[39] Acts 17:25-28.

[40] Acts 17:30-31.

[41] Pl. *Apol.* 29e: "φρονήσεως δὲ καὶ ἀληθείας καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς." See also *Apol.* 30a-b; 36c.

[42] Clem. Alex. *Protr.* 6. See also n. 14.

(ἀόρατος) by humans, he nevertheless "sees all things and hears all things alike, and is present in all places and heedful of all things."[43] His care for the created world manifests itself in his special relationship with humans. This is proved first through his creation of the human body, into which he implanted the soul, which "more than all else that is human partakes of the divine [and] reigns manifestly within us."[44] It is also expressed, on a more general level, through his decision to legislate moral laws to guide human behavior.[45] Because God has shown such care toward humanity, Socrates states that humans should honor him, for it is through these expressions of reverence that they will attain virtues such as "piety" (εὐσεβεστέρους), "prudence" (σωφρο-νεστέρους) and "justice" (δικαιοτέρους).[46]

If the literary and structural parallels between Luke's text and the Socratic literary tradition are accepted, then it becomes possible to view the former as a work of *mimesis* based upon the latter. Luke has, of course, approached his models in a creative way. For instance, when he reports that the Stoics and Epicureans "took" (ἐπιλαβόμενοι) Paul to the Areopagus, it is possible to imagine that the apostle had been placed under arrest and put on trial. Indeed, elsewhere in Acts the verb *epilambano* refers to formal arrests,[47] while the Areopagus was well-known as an Athenian judicial council. Yet the legal overtones of these terms do not correspond well with Paul's subsequent speech, which is usually classified as deliberative rather than forensic rhetoric.[48] In addition, the Areopagus is itself an ambiguous term, and could refer to a physical location instead of the judicial body. While Luke shows an interest in casting Paul as Socrates, he does not feel compelled to follow the generic style that would fit the scene of a formal arrest and trial. On the contrary, he appears simply to evoke the image of trial and arrest, allowing it to resonate in the

---

[43] Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.13; 1.4.18: "πάντα ὁρᾶν καὶ πάντα ἀκούειν καὶ πανταχοῦ παρεῖναι καὶ ἅμα πάντων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι."

[44] Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.14: "ψυξή, ἣ εἴπερ τι καὶ ἄλλο τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων τοῦ θείου μετέχει, ὅτι μὲν βασιλεύει ἐν ἡμῖν φανερόν."

[45] Xen. *Mem.* 4.3.2-18; 4.4.1-25.

[46] Xen. *Mem.* 1.4.19; 4.3.2, 18; 4.4.25.

[47] Acts 16:19; 18:17; 21:30, 33; cf. 9:27.

[48] For arguments against a forensic setting for the episode, see Conzelmann, "Address of Paul," 219; Veltman, "Defense Speeches of Paul," 243-256; Sandes, "Paul and Socrates," 15.

reader's mind without feeling the need to make the connection explicit.

The ambiguities presented by the quasi-legal terminology suggest that the Socratic echoes bear a metaleptic quality that places the reader within a matrix of "whispered and unstated correspondences." Investigating these secondary traces expands the field of signification and explains how the Socratic Paul might resonate in the book of Acts as a whole.[49] In other words, if Acts 17 provides an impetus to substitute "Socrates" for "Paul," then this formulation can affect the reader's understanding of the apostle both after *and* before his experience in Athens. Following this line of thought, a number of parallels begin to emerge. For example, both Socrates and Paul experienced life-transforming events that brought them into intimate contact with the divine.[50] This supernatural force then directs and focuses their actions throughout the rest of their lives: Socrates speaks to anyone in his search for wisdom while Paul missionizes first to the Jews and then the Gentiles.[51] Despite (or perhaps because of) this special status, both appear as a threat to the social order and consequently suffer for their loyalty.[52] Even so, neither exhibits any fear for his life when confronted with arrest, imprisonment, trial, and, eventually, death.[53] Finally, Socrates' hopeful optimism

---

[49] This track represents a departure from the traditional comparison of Paul and Jesus. For a bibliography on this thesis, see Dennis Ronald MacDonald, "Apocryphal and Canonical Narratives about Paul," in *Paul and the Legacies of Paul*, ed. William S. Babcock (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1990), 64, n. 39.

[50] Socrates: Pl. *Apol.* 31c-d; 32a; 33c; Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.2; Paul: Acts 9:1-22; 22:6-16; 26:12-18.

[51] Socrates: Pl. *Apol.* 22a; 23b; 33a-b; cf. 29d; Xen. *Apol.* 12; Paul: Acts 13:46; 18:6; 19:21; 28:28. In contrast to Socrates, who is always obedient to his *daimon*, Paul's desire to return to Jerusalem (Acts 21:7-14) shows an unwillingness to remain obedient to Jesus, who had commanded him to flee from the city after his conversion experience (Acts 22:17-21).

[52] On divine guidance: Socrates: Pl. *Apol.* 28e-29a; 30a; 30e-31b; 31d; 33c; 37e; 40a-c; Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.4; Paul: Acts 9:15; 22:18, 21; 26:22. On opposing forces: Socrates: Pl. *Apol.* 20c; 21c-e; 22e-23a; 23e-24a; 26e; 28a; Paul: Acts 16:20-21; 17:6; 23:12. On suffering: Socrates: 22a; 23b-c; 31b; Paul: Acts 9:16; 17:6. Neither Socrates (Pl. *Apol.* 19d-e; 31b-c; 33b) nor Paul (Acts 20:33-34) claim to have profited from his teachings. Ernst Haenchen ("The Book of Acts as Source Material for the History of Early Christianity," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, eds. Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966], 262) has argued that a Socratic echo (Pl. *Apol.* 29d) can also be found in Acts 4:19 and 5:29, where Peter and John profess their allegiance to God rather than humans.

[53] On fearlessness: Socrates: Pl. *Apol.* 28b-c; 29d; 32b-d; 34c; Xen. *Apol.* 22-23; Paul: Acts 9:16; 20:24. Although Paul does not die at the end of Acts, the text

regarding his fate after death is amplified by Paul's bold proclamation of the resurrection, the cornerstone of his theology in Acts.[54]

Whether or not Luke intended for his readers to make all of these connections, an intertextual reading of the echoes in Acts 17 opens the text to new and creative interpretations.[55] Of course, the number of correspondences detected is limited only by the reader's own background: it might be possible, for instance, for a more literate reader to think of Paul's conversion experience on the road to Damascus within the context of Socrates' discussion of the philosopher's movement from darkness to light in the "Allegory of the Cave."[56] However, what is more important is whether Socratic echoes exist in Luke's story and whether Luke could have had access to the traditions in which they are embedded. From the foregoing it appears that both questions can be answered affirmatively. While the volume and density of the echoes suggest that the Socratic literary tradition acts as the intertext for Luke, it may not be necessary, however, to think that the evangelist had manuscripts of either Plato or Xenophon on hand. Rather, because the vocabulary used the episode would have been easily recognized as pertaining to Socrates, it is perhaps more likely that Luke, as ancient rhetoricians advised, had "internalized" or "absorbed" the discourses of his model; in other words, that he had simply "recalled" Socratic vocabulary from antiquity's "general text."

What, then, is to be gained by casting Paul in the shadow of Socrates? Considering Acts 17 alone, it would appear that the Areopagus speech should be placed alongside other late ancient philosophical writings that attempted to claim the Athenian as the mouthpiece for later philosophical and theological positions. In this case, Luke constructs a Socratic Paul who deftly nego-tiates among his enemies with rhetorical skill, first by developing an argument for the reality of the one true God based on common Hellenistic philosophical principles,[57] and then by proclaiming

---

repeatedly alludes to it, as MacDonald ("Apocryphal and Canonical Narratives," 64-66) has argued.

[54] Pl. *Apol.* 40a-42a; Paul: Acts 17:18, 32; 23:6; 24:15, 21.

[55] Many intertextual studies have eliminated or de-emphasized the role of the author. See Allen, *Intertextuality*, 13-14, 24, 40.

[56] Pl. *Rep.* 514a-518d.

[57] This background has been explored most recently by Balch ("Areopagus Speech," 52-79) and Neyrey ("Acts 17, Epicureans, and Theodicy," 118-134).

the decidedly Christian teaching about the resurrection and judgment, which elicits among his audience consternation, intrigue, and conversion.[58] From the perspective of Acts as a whole, thinking of Paul as a Socratic figure allows the reader to place the apostle within both the philosophical and martyrological currents of late antiquity. As the later church fathers show, establishing these areas of correspondence with the Greco-Roman world was crucial in their attempts to make Christianity intelligible to its larger audience. Early Christians who extolled Socrates as an exemplar of these currents[59] could thus imagine that the Lukan Paul, who displays a philosophical sophistication and proclaims the *kerygma* despite his approaching death, was cut from the same cloth as his Athenian forerunner.

Acts 17 and Justin Martyr: Socrates in the Image of Paul

As Christianity began to face Roman persecution, many early writers appealed to Hellenistic philosophy as a way to explicate their faith. In the figure of Socrates they found an advantageous model, one whose intellectual insights and composure prior to death were worthy of imitation. Justin Martyr develops both of these themes in his treatment of Socrates, a figure who becomes a paradigm for his Christian audience. For instance, in his discussion of Christ as the Logos, Justin states that all of the philosophers who sought to "contemplate and investigate reality" prior to the incarnation of Christ

> were brought before tribunals (δικαστήρια) as impious persons and busybodies. And Socrates, who was more forcible in this direction than all of them, was accused of the very same crimes as ourselves. For they said that he was introducing new divinities (καινὰ δαιμόνια εἰσφέρειν), and did not consider those to be gods whom the state recognized. But he cast out from the state both Homer and the rest of the poets, and taught people to reject wicked demons ... and he exhorted them to become acquainted with the God who was to them unknown, by means

---

[58] Acts 17:32-34. On the verbal ambiguities of the Areopagus Speech, see Given, "Not Either/Or but Both/And," 363-371; idem, "Unknown Paul," 343-351.

[59] On this point, see E. Benz, "Christus und Sokrates in der alten Kirche," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 43 (1950-1951): 195-223; Arthur J. Droge and James D. Tabor, *A Noble Death: Suicide and Martyrdom among Jews and Christians in the Ancient World* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1991).

of investigation of reason (πρὸς θεοῦ δὲ τοῦ ἀγνώστου αὐτοῖς διὰ λόγου ζητήσεως ἐπίγνωσιν προὐτρέπετο).[60]

In this passage, Justin underscores Socrates' intellectual superiority: although the Athenians considered him a nuisance for his religious critique, the philosopher encouraged them to "seek" after the "unknown God." Not only does Luke relate the same things about Paul during his stay in Athens, but the shared vocabulary leaves little doubt that Justin's text echoes Acts 17: Paul and Socrates introduce foreign or new divinities, criticize the gods of the city, and promote instead the reality of the transcendent, "unknown God." Moreover, the reference to the "accusations" and "tribunal" that Socrates faced evokes Paul's summons to the Areopagus.[61]

In addition to lending credibility to the hypothesis that Luke's audience could have heard the Socratic echoes in Acts 17,[62] Justin's presentation effectively Christianizes, or more accurately, "Paulinizes" Socrates. Placing Socrates within the framework of Christianity contributes to Justin's larger goal of presenting Christianity as a philosophy that, because of its commitment to reason, is well equipped to confront its current persecutions with courage. The philosophical nature of Christianity is based

---

[60] *2 Apol.* 10.4-6.

[61] This has been noticed or assumed by Benz, "Christus und Sokrates," 206-207; Ragnar Holte, "Logos Spermatikos: Christianity and Ancient Philosophy According to St. Justin's Apologies," *Studia Theologica* 12 (1958): 109-168; Henry Chadwick, "Justin Martyr's Defence of Christianity," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 47 (1965): 295; Oskar Skarsaune, "Judaism and Hellenism in Justin Martyr, Elucidated from His Portrait of Socrates," in *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. Hubert Cancik, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Peter Schäfer (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1996), 590-591; Michel Fédou, "La figure de Socrate selon Justin," in *Les apologistes chrétiens et la culture grecque*, eds. Bernard Pouderon and Joseph Doré (Paris: Beauchesne, 1998), 61. On Justin's use of other passages in Acts, see Eric Francis Osborn, *Justin Martyr* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1973), 135.

[62] On Justin's background in Platonic philosophy, see Arthur J. Droge, "Justin Martyr and the Restoration of Philosophy," *Church History* 56 (1987): 303-319; M.J. Edwards, "On the Platonic Schooling of Justin Martyr," *Journal of Theological Studies* 42 (1991): 17-34; Charles Nahm, "The Debate on the 'Platonism' of Justin Martyr," *Second Century* 9 (1992): 129-151. Edwards argues that "Platonism at this time was in the mouth of every wandering pedagogue, every sophist, every speculator of whatever professed allegiance" (21). The interest in philosophy at this popular level would suggest that it is unnecessary to think that only those with rigorous school training would have heard the Socratic echoes in Acts. Rather, anyone with a modicum of knowledge of Greco-Roman cultural traditions would likely have heard them as well.

primarily on Justin's understanding of the *logos*.[63] According to his teaching, prior to the incarnation of Jesus, the Logos was partially revealed in the world through those who lived in harmony with it. Among those living prior to Jesus, Justin ranks Socrates first because of his dedication to the exercise of reason and his insistence on speaking the truth even when confronted by hostile human or demonic forces.[64] Justin claims for Christians the same unwavering dedication to reason: not only do they have divinely-implanted "rational powers" (λογικῶν δυνάμεων) that lead them to a reasoned understanding of God, but through the incarnation of the Logos they have been given teachings that seek to overturn current irrational beliefs and practices and restore the human race.[65]

Although the *logos* has been present in all ages, Justin maintains that those who have possessed it have traditionally suffered persecution and death.[66] Socrates' case is a prime example, for when he "tried, by true reasoning and definite evidence (λόγῳ ἀληθεῖ καὶ ἐξεταστικῶς), to [enlighten humanity], and deliver people from the demons, then the demons themselves, by means of people who rejoiced in wickedness, compassed his death, as an atheist and an impious person, on the charge of introducing new divinities."[67] The fact that Christians, who possess an even fuller understanding of the Logos than Socrates, are subject to the same charges indicates for Justin that the demons who attacked Socrates are still at work persecuting those who live according to the Logos.[68] Just as Christians have been accused of the same crimes as Socrates and have endured a similar fate, so too do they exhibit Socrates' rational approach to death. Indeed, while he was studying Platonic philosophy, Justin recounts how he had marveled at Christians who were slandered but remained "fearless of death."[69] Because God is "the just

---

[63] For a full discussion of this issue, see Holte, "Logos Spermatikos," 109-168.

[64] *1 Apol.* 5.3-4; 46.3; *2 Apol.* 3.6-7; 7.3-4; 13.1-6.

[65] *1 Apol.* 10.4; 12.8-9; 21.5-6; 23.1-3.

[66] Skarsaune, "Judaism and Hellenism," 599.

[67] *1 Apol.* 5.3.

[68] *1 Apol.* 5.3: "in our case they [the demons] show a similar activity" (καὶ ὁμοίως ἐφ' ἡμῶν τὸ αὐτὸ ἐνήργησαν). See also *2 Apol.* 10.5; Athen. *Plea Regarding Christians* 31. In their discussion of Christian martyrdom, Droge and Tabor (*Noble Death*, 139) assert that "The analogy with Socrates is one that Christians themselves were quick to notice."

[69] *2 Apol.* 12.

observer of all," Justin imagines a Christian defense that continues to uncover and expose injustice while at the same time exhorting the wicked to "be converted [and to] become wise."[70]

This philosophical approach to death can be found at the beginning of the *First Apology*, as Justin insists that "no evil can be done to us, unless we are proved evildoers, or shown to be wicked." He then assures the emperor, in characteristically Socratic fashion: "You are able to kill us, but not to hurt us."[71] As an example of the proper behavior toward enemies, Justin outlines his own response to the Cynic philosopher Crescens. Facing charges of impiety and atheism, Justin recalls that when he confronted his accuser about Christian beliefs he "questioned him and found most convincingly that he truly knows nothing."[72] From Crescens' responses he is left to conclude that his opponent is not a philosopher but a lover of vainglory, for "a man must in no way be honored before the truth."[73] Like Socrates, Justin has used elenchus to uncover the ignorance of his opponent, proving once again that the best defense against one's enemies is a good offense, and the best offense is that which is grounded in the *logos*.[74] It is through the manifestation of their reason, then, that Christians prove their superiority to the irrational forces that inhabit the world: like those who previously displayed the *logos*, they have chosen the path of Virtue over Vice.[75] Through death, then, the Christian martyr is a philosopher *par excellence*, for martyrdom is "the mark of the truly rational worshipper of God."[76]

---

[70] *2 Apol.* 12.

[71] *1 Apol.* 1-2; cf. Pl. *Apol.* 30c-d.

[72] 2 *Apol.* 3.4: "Καὶ γάρ προθέντα με καὶ ἐρωτήσαντα αὐτὸν ἐρωτήσεις τινὰς τοιαύτας καὶ μαθεῖν καὶ ἐλέγξαι ὅτι ἀληθῶς μηδὲν ἐπίσταται."
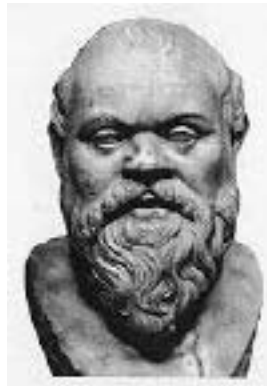
[73] *2 Apol.* 3.6; Pl. *Rep.* 595c.

[74] Fédou, "La figure de Socrate," 58-59: "le témoignage de Socrate—sa μαρτυρία—annonçait prophétiquement le témoignage que des chrétiens comme Justin seraient conduits à rendre face à leurs propres accusateurs. Sans doute est-il d'ailleurs significatif que, sur les cinq passages des *Apologies* qui font explicitement référence à Socrate, trois figurent dans ce qu'on appelle d'habitude la *Seconde apologie*, c'est-à-dire dans ces quelques chapitres qui sont directement introduits par le rappel des récentes persécutions contre les chrétiens et qui font état des accusations proférées par le philosophe Crescens."

[75] *2 Apol.* 11; cf. Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.21-34.

[76] Skarsaune, "Judaism and Hellenism," 598. According to Justin (*1 Apol.* 21.6), "only those are deified who have lived near to God in holiness and virtue" (ἀπαθανατίζεσθαι ... μόνους ... τοὺς ὁσίως καὶ ἐναρέτως ἐγγὺς θεῷ βιοῦντας).

Conclusion

Acts 17 thus reverberates in many directions. By incorporating Socratic echoes into this chapter, Luke gives his readers the opportunity to think that Paul's activity in Athens paralleled that of the greatest philosopher from antiquity. The metaleptic function of these echoes also provides an impetus for re-hearing the entire career of the apostle within a Socratic context, albeit as a Christian missionary proclaiming resurrection and judgment. With this final proclamation, Luke stakes a claim to the Socratic tradition by intimating that his "Socratized" Paul has in effect "Paulinized" Socrates. This textual interplay therefore leads to a mutual resignification of both figures, a point that Justin clearly perceived. In his *Second Apology*, the Areopagus address serves to link Socrates to Christianity, and more specifically, to contribute to his development of a Christian identity based on philosophy and martyrdom. Although Tertullian would have been dismayed with this conclusion, for both Luke and Justin Athens does indeed have something to do with Jerusalem.

———————————————— † ————————————————

Socrates