Research Article

Albert L. A. Hogeterp*

Reading Stephen's Speech as a Counter-Cultural Discourse on Migration and Dislocation

<https://doi.org/10.1515/opth-2020-0162>

received March 13, 2021; accepted June 21, 2021

Abstract: The speech of Stephen in Acts 7:2–53 contains a wealth of references to biblical migration narratives, but their significance for understanding the message of Luke–Acts has been understudied. This is partly due to a recurrent focus on either accusations against Stephen (Acts 6:8–15) or the polemical conclusion of the speech (Acts 7:47–50.51–53). It also partly relates to a teleological interest in early Christian mission narrative. This article reads Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse on migration and dislocation. It provides a close reading of its biblical story-telling in conjunction with its polemical upshot, and further compares Lucan narrative choices with early Jewish and Jewish Hellenistic literary cycles about patriarchal and Mosaic discourse. It applies a critical lens to the use of ancient narratives of migration and dislocation in discussions about identity, ethnicity, and "othering;" this is of further importance for contemporary identity politics around migration. Through comparing the speech with intra-Jewish dimensions and Graeco-Roman contexts, Stephen emerges as a counter-cultural speaker whose discourse appeals to human–divine intersectionality, specifically regarding the cause of justice for the ill-treated stranger; at the same time, it avoids cultural stereotyping through categories of Hebrews vs Hellenists, Jews vs Christians, Graeco-Roman elite standards vs supposedly "non-European" profiles.

Keywords: biblical migration narratives, ethnicity, identity, othering, patriarchal and Mosaic discourse

1 Introduction

Stephen's speech in Acts 7:2–53 is full of references to Israel's history of migration and dislocation. These range from Abraham's migration from Mesopotamia to Haran (Acts 7:2–4) to his posterity's alien status in a foreign land for four hundred years (Acts 7:5–6); Joseph being sold into slavery and his family migrating to Egypt (Acts 7:9–15); Moses' flight to the land of Midian as an exile upon realizing his identity as a non-Egyptian (Acts 7:23–29); his return as ruler and deliverer of the Israelites in their exodus out of Egypt (Acts 7:30–38); the vicissitudes of a congregation in the wilderness (Acts 7:38–43); and ancestral reminiscences, in the form of the tent of witness, of the time in the wilderness until the days of David (Acts 7:44–46).

Nevertheless, migration and dislocation are understudied aspects of Stephen's speech.¹ Instead, many studies have focused on either the setting of accusations against Stephen – that he would speak against the

¹ Stenschke, "Migration and Mission. According to the Book of Acts," 133–6 at 136, on Stephen's speech as "an often neglected theological foundation of the impending Christian mission to the ends of the world." The studies in the recent volume by Von

* Corresponding author: Albert L. A. Hogeterp, Department for Old and New Testament Studies, Faculty of Theology, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa, e-mail: ahogeterp@hotmail.com

Temple and the law (Acts 6:11–14)² – or the upshot of the polemics in the latter part of this speech (Acts 7:47–50.51–53).³ The latter part of Stephen’s speech has often been read as Luke’s account of the beginning of Christianity’s break from its Jewish matrix⁴ and as a Hellenistic criticism of the Jerusalem Temple cult.⁵ There are problems with these hypotheses, despite their influence, and there remain further intra-Jewish dimensions that should be explored. Stephen’s speech should not only be viewed teleologically, in relation to subsequent early Christian mission; rather, its discourse also addresses the dispositions of its intra-narrative audiences’ minds, which should be compared to Jewish and Jewish-Hellenistic discourses on biblical migration narratives. Indeed, questions have arisen as to whether Stephen’s speech is as much leveled against the Jerusalem Temple cult as has sometimes been asserted.⁶ Since the 1990s, scholarship of early Christianity has also moved away from a Judaism/Hellenism divide based on Acts 6–7.⁷ Nevertheless, the question of whether or not Hebrews and Hellenists (Acts 6:1) were ideologically distinguishable groups remains contested, diverging between advocates of this viewpoint⁸ and those who deem it a scholarly construct with major historical difficulties.⁹ This article will not take up an either/or perspective, as does (for example) Barrett’s commentary, which opts for an exclusively Hellenistic context, arrayed against the Qumran sectarian texts.¹⁰ Our understanding of the Dead Sea Scrolls has broadened beyond this point since the 1990s.

Bendemmann and Tiwald, eds., *Migrationsprozesse im ältesten Christentum*, do not specifically focus on Stephen’s speech but include references to Aquila and Priscilla in Acts.

2 Cf. Hengel, “Between Jesus and Paul,” 29.

3 For instance, Larsson, “Temple-Criticism and the Jewish Heritage: Some Reflexions on Acts 6–7,” 379–95, paid much attention to the setting of accusation in Acts 6:11–14 (382–84) and to the polemical conclusion of the speech in Acts 7:46.47–50, in particular vv. 46–47 (388–95), concluding that “supersession” of the Jerusalem temple by the coming of Jesus “is, of course, self-evident to Luke” (395). Yet, Larsson’s analysis was less concerned with the main body of the speech in Acts 7:2–43/(45) (385–88). Over against Christian supersessionism or its counterpart of early Christian continuity *within* the history of Israel, Marguerat, “Luc-Actes entre Jérusalem et Rome,” 70–2, has proposed a judicious alternative of a “double appartenance culturelle et religieuse” (72). For an extensive history of scholarship on Acts 6–7, see Penner, *In Praise of Christian Origins*, 1–59.

4 Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 368.

5 Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 339. Cf. the influential classic study by Simon, *St. Stephen and the Hellenists*, who interpreted Stephen’s speech as basically representing the “Hellenist tradition of thought” (40), which would also move toward “disjoining Christianity from the Jerusalem cult” (111).

6 Kucicki, *The Function of the Speeches in the Acts of the Apostles*, 87–100 on Stephen’s speech (Acts 7:2–53.56.59–60), concluding “in our opinion the idea that the speech’s purpose is a criticism of the Temple or of the Law does not find support in the content of the speech;” Sweeney, “Stephen’s Speech (Acts 7:2–53),” 185–210. Cf. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1A), 2.d III (The Temple), “Excursus: Views about the Temple,” “Certainly, Stephen could express dissatisfaction with the temple yet remain part of a movement that worshiped there.”

7 Since the 1990s, Hill, *Hebrews and Hellenists*, has represented a significant revision of the recurring and influential hypothesis by F. C. Baur, who identified them as “distinctive ideological groups.” Cf. Meeks, “Judaism, Hellenism, and the Birth of Christianity,” 18–20 on Acts 6–7 at 6:1 in the Tübingen School tradition as a controversy between “Jewish Christianity” and “Gentile Christianity,” who insightfully commented that “‘Judaism’ and ‘Hellenism’ here are obviously code words for complex sets of ideas masquerading as historical entities;” Penner, *In Praise of Christian Origins*, 8–28 on scholarship since F. C. Baur.

8 Pate, “Appendix 1: A Critique of Craig C. Hill’s *Hellenists and Hebrews*,” 429–34; Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 43, who argues for an “overall context of Luke’s storyline” in which “the Hellenists’ conflict with their Hebrew co-religionists effects a significant turning point, serving to demarcate the Law-observant mission to the Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 1–5) from the Law-free mission in Samaria (Acts 8:1–40) and Syrian Antioch (Acts 11:10–26).” Cf. Zugmann, “*Hellenisten*” in *der Apostelgeschichte*, 300–406 (“Zum theologischen Profil der judenchristlichen Hellenisten”), who returns to older views of temple criticism of Jerusalemite Hellenists in his summary treatment of Acts 6:8–14, Mark 14:58, and Acts 7:48–50 at 371–77, even turning to a comparative discussion of Romans 3:25–26a regarding pre-existent Christology, ecclesiology, Gentile mission, and Torah criticism at 377–403. This concatenation of Pauline and Lucan perspectives yields such a theological profile of the Hellenists, but in my view this digression appears at risk of reading too much into the sparse evidence about the “Hellenists” and their outlook in Acts 6:1, 9:29, and 11:19, and the Pauline “Christ as *hilasterion* (expiation)” (Rom 3:25) is not even part of Luke’s Greek vocabulary. Cf. the discussion of *Hellenistai* in Section 2.

9 For example, Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*, 210–14, in support of Hill’s study.

10 Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 339, who affirms H. Braun against O. Cullmann and C. Spicq.

This article proposes a reading of Stephen's speech that differs from previous approaches, which have understood it as "crucial junction in the narrative" relative to subsequent Christian mission.¹¹ A recent study by Meiken Antje Buchholz interpreted the speech as a template for "followers of Christ," providing them "with a new hermeneutics for their experience of displacement and life in culturally diverse societies."¹² Such readings entail a teleological focus on the speech's function in the life of the early Church, with its itinerant, missionary exposure to multicultural social contexts. They leave questions concerning the multicultural settings of Christianity's Jewish origins unanswered. These are at the heart of Stephen's speech and will be addressed here. Thus: What do migration and dislocation stand for in the speech's immediate setting, in which the Jew Stephen is depicted as addressing a Jewish audience? How do these issues and their interpretation affect Jewish-Christian dialogue? If the representation of Israel's history in terms of migration and dislocation is integral to Stephen's speech, it cannot have been an exclusively Christian historical template; it must have meant something in the discursive space between Christianity and the Judaism from which it was emerging. Interpreting Stephen's speech as a confrontational address, I seek to highlight what it reveals about the position of the Jerusalem church among early Judaism's varied contexts, in order to rethink the discursive setting of the violent conflict narrated in Acts. I explore what this speech has to say regarding the tension between exile, migration, and mobility, on the one hand, and habitation, settled existence, and establishment, on the other. A close reading of the speech in relation to biblical story-telling will reassess what is – and is not – the main thrust of the speech.

Stephen's speech is not an isolated discourse. In view of its hostile setting (Acts 6:8–15) and the narration of hostile reactions to the speech (Acts 7:54–8:1), leading in turn to Stephen's martyrdom and a "great persecution" (Acts 8:1), it stands to reason that Acts frames Stephen's speech as a counter-discourse. A counter-discourse stands in opposition to the presupposed and dominant discourse; according to Carol Newsom's discussion of early Jewish "communities of discourse," the latter is "precisely what goes without saying [...], as the practices of the establishment."¹³ Stephen's speech constitutes a lengthy yet selective review of the biblical past (Acts 7:2–46), which is then pitted against a perceived situation in the present (Acts 7:47–50.51–53).

The study of Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse therefore requires a close reading of the narrative, to examine the narrator's choices regarding what is told about the past, and how. Ideally, this entails comparison with other, similar reviews of biblical past, first of all the biblical tradition, but also other early Jewish literature, such as the diverse cycles of patriarchal and Mosaic discourse among the Dead Sea Scrolls. Previous studies of Acts 6–7 did not incorporate such comparative study, but these other traditions may highlight where Lucan narrative choices follow a broader pattern and where they oppose other patterns of story-telling.¹⁴ The speech's migration and dislocation discourse may also be contextualized within biblical and early Jewish forms of migration discourse; these have recently received comparative archaeological attention.¹⁵ These diverse contexts illuminate the location of Stephen's speech in the larger picture.

¹¹ Stenschke, "Migration and Mission. According to the Book of Acts," 131.

¹² Buchholz, "Considerations about the Theological Meaning of Migration in the Book of Acts," 87–117 at 87. At 94–105, Buchholz discusses Stephen's sermon, interpreting its narration of Israel's history as a directive for the early Church "to regard living as 'aliens' as the place where God is present and reveals himself" (100); referring to Joseph in Acts 7:9–16 as "a role model for the Christians in Jerusalem, who face imminent dispersion (*diaspeirō*; 8:1b, 4; 11:19)" (102); and understanding Abraham, Joseph, and Moses as "God's tools in his history of salvation," whose "lineage continues with the persecuted Christians, who become the core of the universal Church (8:4)" (105). Yet, this teleological understanding may be part of the speech's early Christian afterlife rather than the Lucan Stephen's intra-Jewish discourse. The Lucan Stephen did not anticipate his martyrdom and dispersion of the early Church in his speech. In my view, Stephen's identity as a (Hellenistic) Jew places him somewhere between the Jewish soil of the Jesus movement and emerging Christianity, rather than exclusively within the "universal Church."

¹³ Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space*, 1–21, at 17.

¹⁴ Simon, *St. Stephen and the Hellenists*, discussed prophetic cult criticism (2 Sam 7), but also the *Sibylline Oracles* and Qumran sectarian literature then known (90–91); Penner, *In Praise of Christian Origins*, 223–61, investigated Hellenistic Jewish apologetic historiography as a comparative context.

¹⁵ See "Digs 2018: Migration and Immigration in Ancient Israel" (*BAR* Jan/Feb 2018; biblicalarchaeology.org).

In addition, my reading of Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse on migration and dislocation aims to reflect on the biblical background of strangers and their treatment by dominant cultures, by addressing how perceptions of ethnicity and cultural identity are reflected in the narrative. Stephen's speech conveys divine concern for vulnerable Israelites in a position of "otherness" as a result of residence among other peoples, taking up their cause for deliverance. The speech repeatedly focuses on divine concern for the ill-treatment and harm of people in a land not their own, coming to the rescue of their cause (Acts 7:6.19.2.34). This merits attention in relation to the message of Luke–Acts, within which there is a broader attention to hospitality to strangers, in a social world conceived as composed of guests and hosts. The Lucan Jesus has even been portrayed as a "homeless stranger."¹⁶ In this respect, my rereading of Stephen's speech is an experimental reading, which takes interpretation beyond the "enclosure" of Christianity – as an established religion with a teleological missionary perspective – by retracing Stephen's speech in its immediate setting of disturbance and alienation, aiming to fine-tune our understanding of the confrontation framed by Stephen's speech.¹⁷

This article also aims to explore some of the implications of this reading for contemporary discussions, especially discussions of narrative as a representation of collective memory amid a multiplicity of narrative constructions of ethnic identity.¹⁸ I will take into account different ways of arguing about migration and ethnicity in relation to biblical sources, seeking to keep an eye on current scholarly biases, as have been discerned in nineteenth and early twentieth century historiography about "Volkerwanderungen" in the ancient Near East.¹⁹ The article also evaluates how its reading of Stephen's speech affects the common understanding of Acts 6–7 as a narrative of conflict, especially with regard to Jewish–Christian dialogue.

Contemporary discussions of ethnicity – including the role of shared ancestry, shared interests, and shared institutions in defining ethnic boundaries and enabling a group "to achieve their interests, practice their culture, and maintain their group identity," as well as the significance of "ascription by outsiders"²⁰ – also have a bearing on Stephen's speech. A claim to shared ancestry occurs in the patriarchal and Mosaic narratives of Stephen's speech ("our fathers," Acts 7:12.15.19.38.39.44.45), while its opposite, a distancing from shared ancestry, occurs in the polemical conclusion ("your fathers," Acts 7:51.52).²¹ A claim to shared interests may concern the covenant with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Acts 7:8–9.17.32.34.38.44), represented as God's gift of the covenant of circumcision (Acts 7:8). As for shared institutions, the alleged point of conflict is the Jerusalem Temple and its leadership. Yet, Acts indicates neither an absolute disjunction with priests, many of whom reportedly were among followers of the Jesus-movement (Acts 6:7),²² nor dissonance from a native place of worship ("And after that they shall come out and worship me *in this place*," Acts 7:7, RSV). It remains to be seen how Stephen's speech relates to this Jewish institutional environment, when read as a counter-cultural discourse on migration and dislocation.

In what follows, I will address methodological issues concerning the settings of Stephen's speech within discussions of Christian beginnings, with special attention to whether the "Hellenists" were a social reality and/or an interpretive construct, and lay out the theoretical framework for what follows (Section 2).

¹⁶ Cf. Denaux, "The Theme of Divine Visits and Human (In)hospitality in Luke–Acts," 71–92; and Denaux, "A Stranger in the City," 93–110 at 97–98 on Lk 2:4.7.39.49 and other passages in comparative Synoptic respect.

¹⁷ Cf. the important study by Nancy, *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity*, 10, observing that "Christianity designates nothing other [...] than the demand to open in this world an alterity or an unconditional alienation." This takes emerging Christianity beyond the confines of the enclosing practices of dominant culture.

¹⁸ See Spickard and Burroughs, eds., *We Are a People*, 1–22.

¹⁹ Wiedemann, *Am Anfang war Migration*, on colonial, racist, and anti-Semitic plots underlying historiographical discourses in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; cf. Wiedemann, "Völkerwellen und Kulturbringer," 105–28.

²⁰ Spickard and Burroughs, *We Are a People*, 1, 8, 10.

²¹ Yet note Maertens, "'Vos pères' ou 'nos pères'," 408, 412, 415, on variant readings in Codex Bezae for Acts 7:51, "the fathers," and Acts 7:52, "they," which would rather suggest approximation instead of distance regarding the ethnic identification with the ancestors of the Jewish people.

²² This verse, Acts 6:7, is not given attention by Haacker, *Stephanus. Verleumdet, Verehrt, Verkannt*, 13–22, when he discusses Acts 6:1–7 as the early church's "crisis management" ("Ein Krisenmanagement der Urgemeinde"). Haacker, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 131, refers to Acts 6:7 as "Wachstumsnotiz" but does not comment on the significance of *priests* as Christ followers, even though this is a conspicuous group just before the Stephen episode.

I then turn to the speech proper, providing a close reading of its biblical story-telling in comparative perspective, exploring its relationships to migration narratives in biblical and early Jewish literature (Section 3). I evaluate the speech as a counter-cultural discourse (Section 4), address the contemporary implications of these discussions of ancient narratives of migration and dislocation (Section 5), and draw some final conclusions (Section 6).

2 Methodological reflections on settings and approach

Stephen's speech needs to be grounded in the speech's cultural settings and in theoretical models. Here, I address the cultural context of the early Jesus movement in relation to Judaism, as well as the specific settings of the Hebrews and Hellenists in Acts 6:1–6 and the antagonism in Acts 6:8–15.

The influential interpretation of the Stephen episode as “the beginning of Luke's account of the break of Christianity from its Jewish matrix” has already been noted.²³ Yet, current scholarship exhibits various modes of thought regarding the relationship of emerging Christianity to early Judaism, with models ranging from a “parting of the ways” between 70 and 135 CE²⁴ to “ways that never parted;”²⁵ the latter problematizes the idea of an established religion of Christianity in the first century CE, wholly distinct from Judaism.²⁶ Heike Braun has emphasized that the question of whether the Stephen episode in Acts 6:1–8:3 represents a “symbol of separation” (“Symbol der Trennung”) depends on how and to what extent it is surrounded by Christian identity discourse.²⁷

The Jesus movement in Jerusalem is characterized as a Christ-believing community, but in the narrative of Acts its members' appellation as *Christianoi* is unrelated to the Jerusalem church. It is retrospectively applied, as an “ascription by outsiders,” to followers of the missionary Jesus movement in Syrian Antioch: “and in Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians” (Acts 11:26, RSV). The contacts of those scattered after the “persecution that arose over Stephen” (Acts 11:19, RSV), with Jews and Greeks alike in Antioch (Acts 11:20), may indicate no more than a difference in the socio-religious environment in Syrian Antioch, compared with Jerusalem. Flavius Josephus writes that the Antiochian Jewish community had interested great numbers of Greeks in their religious ceremonies (*J.W.* 7.45). This suggests that the social conduct described in Acts 11:19–20 was not incongruous with the socio-religious environment of the Jewish community in Antioch. The construal of a “Law-free mission” in Antioch (Acts 11:20–26) as the outcome of a supposed conflict between Hellenists and Hebrews²⁸ (Acts 6:1) is an unwarranted, teleological reading of

²³ Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 368. See note 4.

²⁴ Dunn, ed., *Jews and Christians. The Parting of the Ways A.D. 70 to 135*.

²⁵ Becker and Reed, eds., *The Ways that Never Parted*.

²⁶ As early as the 1970s, the issue of religious definition was raised by Malina, “Jewish Christianity or Christian Judaism,” 46–57. See also Bardet, *Le Testimonium Flavianum*, on whose hypothesis Josephus' reference to the *Christianoi* (*Ant.* 18.64) would not denote “Christians” but a “messianizing” group within Judaism, referring to Josephus' view of *Christos* in *Ant.* 18.63 as “agitateur à prétensions messianiques,” “un agitateur juif” (231). Cf. Wendel, *Scriptural Interpretation and Community Self-Definition*, 20–21, on scholarly reservations against a juxtaposition of “Judaism” and “Christianity” as monolithic entities. See also Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1a), 3 (“Stephen's Countercharge” [7:2–53]) a (Introduction), at n. 368, who cautions against anachronistic readings of later Christian anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism into the Lucan speech of Stephen, emphasizing intra-Jewish characteristics of Stephen's polemic.

²⁷ Braun, *Geschichte des Gottesvolkes und christliche Identität*, 464–65, “Inwiefern Stephanus in Apg 6,1–8,3 als ‘Symbol der Trennung’ zwischen Judentum und Christentum dargestellt wird, lässt sich also and der Art und Weise ablesen, in der die Stephanusepisode um christliche Identität ringt.” Cf. 468 for an understanding of the priority of Israel in “ways of salvation” in Stephen's speech (Acts 7:2–8.9–16.17), underlining that “Gott trotz des Abfalls Israels für dieses bleibend präsent ist.”

²⁸ In fact, the Hebrews and the Hellenists were divided about social roles and services within the Jerusalem church, which they settled by the appointment of seven men, Stephen among them (Acts 6:1–6), but the narrative does not state that the Hebrews would be in conflict with Stephen's preaching. Instead, Acts 6:9 is very explicit about a different group, which disputed with Stephen: “some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia” (RSV). The Hebrews were equally persecuted, as indicated by the repeated arrests of the apostles (Acts 4:1–31, 5:12–42, 12:3–19) and the execution of James, brother of John (Acts 12:1–2).

the Acts narrative to this point.²⁹ Only in Acts 15 does the narrative turn to controversy over admission of Gentiles. Even there, Acts 15:5 relates the insistence on observance of the law by Gentile converts not to Peter and James as “Hebrews,” but to Pharisaic believers. In sum, the early Jesus movement should not be construed as experiencing a radical break from Judaism immediately after Stephen’s martyrdom.

The identity of the Hebrews and Hellenists in the Jerusalem church also merits attention (Acts 6:1). “Hebrews” is ubiquitous in the ancient sources, conveying genealogy and ancestry (e.g., Phil 3:5, 2 Cor 11:22), ethnic allegiance (e.g., 4 Macc 4.11), language (e.g., Josephus, *Ant.* 3.32), and religious identity (“the God of the Hebrews,” e.g., LXX Exod 3:18). But, as for the “Hellenists” – who are they? Should one assume a social reality beyond the text of Acts, in which the Hellenists formed an identifiable group from the Greek-speaking Diaspora, with Greek “ways of thinking and habits of life” and a Hellenistic theology critical of law and Temple?³⁰ As a matter of fact, *Hellenistai* does not occur in contemporary Greek parlance outside Luke–Acts.³¹ The related verb, *hellenizein*, does occur in several contexts, but many of those refer to “speaking Greek” or “expressing oneself in Greek.”³² While there may be cultural connotations to *hellenizein/Hellenistai*,³³ explicitly cultural inflections regarding the adoption of a specifically Greek way of life are absent from Acts 6:1, never mind a specific “Hellenistic theology.”³⁴ *Hellenistai* in Acts 6:1 appears to be a Lucan neologism,³⁵ describing the diversity of the Jerusalem church in terms of language, Graeco-Semitic bilingualism of “Hebraic” and “Greek” speech communities, and cultural backgrounds, including a proselyte from as far as Antioch (Acts 6:5). To understand Stephen’s speech as “Hellenistic” criticism of the Jerusalem Temple cult probably demands more than this term can carry.³⁶ Whether a Judaism/Hellenism divide is tenable depends on analysis of Stephen’s speech in its intertextual, interdiscursive, and contextual aspects, by which one may accurately assess its polemical tenor.

The appearance of Stephen’s speech following the antagonism in Acts 6:8–15 merits some attention, especially with a view to comparative contexts. The setting has sometimes been characterized as a judicial

²⁹ Contra Elmer, *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers*, 43. See the quote in note 8. Paradoxically, Zugmann, “*Hellenisten*” in *der Apostelgeschichte*, 169–81, allows ample space for describing the Jewish Diaspora community at Syrian Antioch, including its appeal to non-Jews, but as yet returns to a conventional conclusion that the “Hellenists” had a theological profile as founders of a Christian congregation in Antioch, being engaged in the Gentile gospel mission and distinctly known for relativizing Jewish Law and criticizing the Temple cult (402–3).

³⁰ See Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 308–09, and 339–40, who left a critical note from Luke’s use of “Hellenists” in three different senses (Acts 6:1, 9:29, 11:20) that “Luke had no precise understanding of a party of ‘Hellenists’ in the primitive church.” Cf. Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 216 on “Hellenists” and “Hebrews,” “Es geht zunächst um einen sprachlichen Unterschied,” of Greek-speaking vs Aramaic-speaking Jews as followers of the Jesus movement; Zugmann, “*Hellenisten*” in *der Apostelgeschichte*, 21, on *Hellenistai* as “griechischsprachige Nichtgriechen; Haacker, *Stephanus. Verleumdet, Verehrt, Verkannt*, 15, on “Hellenists,” over against “Hellenes,” as non-Greeks who affiliated with Greeks in some way, in any case by speaking Greek.

³¹ Apart from Acts 6:1, 9:29, 11:20, the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae yields no other results for the Greek term *Hellenistes* that antedate the third–fourth centuries CE, and search of documentary Greek at www.papyri.info yields only one fourth-century attestation, *P. Kell.* 1. 66 (300–325 CE) ll. 20–21.

³² Cf. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, 665.

³³ Balch, “Foreword. Acts as Epideictic History,” xii–xiii, refers to 2 Macc 4:10.13 and to pseudo-Dio Chrysostom, *Oration* 37 26–27 for *hellenikon/Hellenismos/hellenizein*, meaning something more than “speaking Greek,” including “political support” or the adoption of “social customs.” However, the terse context of Acts 6:1–6 does not allow for ascertaining whether a polemical context of culture clash is in view as in the Maccabean literature. For another understanding of Stephen’s speech, see my discussion in the main text.

³⁴ See also Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1–12)*, 208: “Opposé à *hebraioi* («ceux qui parlent hébreu»), *Hellenistai* ne vise pas un courant théologique, mais qualifie les judéo-chrétiens de l’église de Jérusalem hellénisés dans leur langage et leur culture.”

³⁵ Cf. Zugmann, “*Hellenisten*” in *der Apostelgeschichte*, 11, who observed that, in view of the absence of parallels “in der profanen Gräzität” up to the turn of the common era, “Ἑλληνιστής wirkt also zunächst wie eine *Neubildung*.”

³⁶ Cf. Hogeterp, *Paul and God’s Temple*, 6, on the supposed Hellenistic Jewish distance from the Temple cult being unwarranted, in view of Philo of Alexandria’s references to pilgrimage to the Jerusalem Temple (*Spec. Laws* 1.66–70) and his embassy to the Roman emperor Caligula to dissuade him from setting up his statue in the Temple (*Embassy to Gaius*). The discussion of Ἑλληνισμός under Emperor Julian as “*Weltanschauungskampf*” by Zugmann, “*Hellenisten*” in *der Apostelgeschichte*, 23, should indeed be left to “Nachgeschichte,” perhaps even to scholarly nomenclature from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, yet unrelated to Luke’s *Hellenistai*.

council hearing, prompting discussion of how the speech is best characterized. Invoking classical rhetorical theory, scholarship has been divided as to whether Stephen's speech is a judicial, forensic speech in a court setting³⁷ or an epideictic speech with apologetic interests.³⁸ This line of reasoning has recently been criticized, noting that Luke was no classical orator but a storyteller³⁹ and that Stephen's speech, which narrates mighty deeds of God, should follow Hebrew rhetorical practice, not Greek.⁴⁰ Nor is there any formal legal accusation in Acts 6:8–15, in contrast to the narratives about Paul in Jerusalem (Acts 22:30–23:10) and Caesarea (Acts 23:23–26:32). The narrative in Acts 6 instead uses language of dispute (Acts 6:9) and (secret) instigation (Acts 6:11), referring to stirring up commotion in order to seize Stephen and bring him before the council (Acts 6:12). The objections to Stephen are also variously worded: blasphemy against Moses and God (Acts 6:11), against the/holy place and the law (Acts 6:13), and declarations that "Jesus of Nazareth would destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses delivered to us" (Acts 6:14, RSV). The end of the council hearing does not refer to a specified decision, either. Instead, Acts 7:54–8:1 refers to a third-person plural group of "witnesses" (Acts 7:58) – perhaps the same group who set up "false witnesses" (Acts 6:13) and become enraged to the point of stoning Stephen outside the city. Another group of "devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him" (Acts 8:2, RSV).

Finally, I wish to highlight the way in which Acts represents the antagonism between the Jerusalem church and Jewish religious authorities in Jerusalem. On the part of the Jesus movement, Acts narrates an increasingly accusatory tone. A speech from Peter charges the Jerusalemite religious leadership with the rejection and killing of "the holy and righteous one" (Acts 3:14–15), representing this as a misdeed committed "in ignorance" (Acts 3:17). Stephen's address of his audience as "traitors and murderers" of the "righteous one" evolves from this (Acts 7:52). The narrative indicates an intensifying outcry against injustice, focusing on Jesus Christ as the crucified and risen righteous one, and suggests that this rhetoric was moving from accusations of ignorance to accusations of intentional complicity.

As for the Jerusalemite religious leadership, the narrative up to Acts 6 reflects a vacillating policy between arrest and release of the apostles (Acts 4:1–31, 5:12–42), including division between a Sadducean faction led by the high priest that sought to be pro-active regarding arrests (Acts 5:17–18) and a more cautious Pharisaic faction represented by Gamaliel (Acts 5:33–39). This picture may be compared with external sources. In *Jewish War* 6.300–309, Flavius Josephus provides an example of how Jerusalemite authorities would deal with a prophet of doom, as he relates the case of Jesus, son of Ananias, who spoke words against Jerusalem and the Temple in 62 CE. He was treated by the city's esteemed citizens as a prophet of doom, deserving of physical abuse, and considered by city authorities to be a demoniac who should be handed over to the Roman governor. Yet, in the absence of articulate speech, Jesus son of Ananias was ultimately deemed out of his mind and released, left alive by authorities (but later killed during the siege of Jerusalem).

★

Having made these preliminary observations, it is time to outline the theoretical framework of my approach. In view of recent skepticism of situating Luke–Acts against a background of Graeco-Roman elite education,⁴¹ this article will not be concerned with elaborate comparison of Stephen's speech with Graeco-Roman rhetorical theory. It will instead turn to more broadly conceived literary analysis and

³⁷ Penner, *In Praise of Christian Origins*, xxv, referred to discussion with Margaret Mitchell about Stephen's speech being "judicial" rather than "epideictic;" Kucicki, *The Function of the Speeches in the Acts of the Apostles*, 90 on Acts 7:2–53.56.59–60, as an "offensive forensic speech." Cf. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 1, 258–319 at 263, who refers to a "forensic setting and conclusion" to Stephen's speech in Acts 7:2–53, "answering and reversing the charges, convicting his accusers (7:51–53)," while leaving some room for deliberative purposes.

³⁸ Penner, *In Praise of Christian Origins*, 223–61, on comparison with Jewish apologetic historiography.

³⁹ Dinkler, "The Politics of Stephen's Storytelling," 33–64, who favors a narratological approach over against a classical rhetorical approach. Cf. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 1, 259–61 ("Elite Rhetoric versus Acts' Speeches"), with a caveat against comparing the concise speeches in Acts with "the sort of eloquence typical of the historians' speeches."

⁴⁰ Olbricht, "The Structure and Content of Stephen's Speech compared to Old Testament Credo," 455, who refers to biblical texts (Deut 6:20–25, 26:5–9; Josh 24:2–13; 1 Sam 12:6–15; Neh 9; Pss 78, 105, 106, 135, 136; Jer 32:16–25; Ezek 20:5–26) as well as to apocrypha (Sir 44–50; Bar 1:15–2:35) for comparison with Stephen's speech regarding its discourse structure.

⁴¹ Padilla, "Hellenistic *paideia* and Luke's Education," 416–37.

contextualization, with a view to comparative literature. Since Stephen's speech elaborates extensively on biblical narrative, it makes particular sense to draw on a narratological approach. In a close reading of interpretive choices in biblical story-telling, with a view to intertextuality and interdiscursivity, I draw attention to both Jewish Hellenistic contexts of thought and Jewish cycles of patriarchal and Mosaic literature.

Since my focus is on Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse on migration and dislocation, I also draw on insights from the field of migration studies. The fact that Stephen's speech pays such elaborate attention to biblical migration narratives should alert us that it is not only about a distant past but rather aimed to address its audiences regarding ethnic identification as well as a broader cultural phenomenon. There has been a recent upsurge in attention to migration and mobility in the Roman world⁴² and in early Judaism and emerging Christianity.⁴³ Migration theory highlights how the phenomenon of migration involves dimensions of many disciplines, including cultural and ethnic identity (anthropology); the composite picture of populations (demography); push and pull effects (economics); narratives of migrants' experiences (history); societal regulation of migratory movements (law and political sciences); and issues of incorporation (sociology).⁴⁴

Stephen's speech relates specifically to biblical narratives about Abraham's migration from Mesopotamia (Acts 7:2–4); his posterity's centuries-long sojourn in Egypt (Acts 7:5–7a.9–16); the exodus from Egypt at the time of Moses (Acts 7:35); and exile to Babylon (Acts 7:43). The ancient Near Eastern context of these migration narratives is visible in the study of historiography, as noted above (n. 19). In what follows, I also trace how the study of past migration narratives impacts contemporary discussions, with a particular view to ethnicity and "othering."⁴⁵ As Felix Wiedemann has shown with regard to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historiography of migration in the ancient Near East, mutual relations between the use of an "ethnographic window" for the study of the past and an "archaeological window" for the study of the present indicate the significance of representations of past migration for contemporary identity politics.⁴⁶ This also touches on Jewish–Christian relations; regarding nineteenth-century studies of the ancient Middle East, Wiedemann notes the impact of Christian identity concerns on Old Testament studies, as well as Jewish counter-identifications.⁴⁷

3 A comparative overview of biblical story-telling in Acts 7:2–53

In what follows, I highlight the major contours of biblical story-telling in Stephen's speech, examining its selection of biblical stories and discourses, especially its choice of details, and putting this in comparative perspective. This section includes comparative attention to migration and dislocation in the biblical and early Jewish tradition, in order to lay the foundations for rereading the speech as a counter-cultural discourse (Section 4).

After the high priest has asked Stephen whether the allegations against him are true (Acts 7:1), Stephen begins his speech with a remarkably respectful tone, addressing his audience as "brothers and fathers"

⁴² Cf. the volumes by De Ligt and Tacoma, eds., *Migration and Mobility in the Early Roman Empire*; and by Yoo et al., eds., *Migration and Migrant Identities in the Near East from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*.

⁴³ Cf. e.g. Gruen, "Jewish Migration, Antiquity," 1–5; Halvorson-Taylor, "Displacement and Diaspora in Biblical Narrative," 498–506; Hezser, ed., *Jewish Travel in Antiquity*; Von Bendemann and Tiwald, eds., *Migrationsprozesse im ältesten Christentum*.

⁴⁴ See Brettell and Hollifield, eds., *Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines*, 3.

⁴⁵ See also Spickard and Burroughs, eds., *We Are a People*, 1–22, on narrative and the construction of identities among migrant, indigenous, and multiethnic peoples.

⁴⁶ Wiedemann, *Am Anfang war Migration*, 8–9.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 9, n. 35 with further bibliography.

(Acts 7:2), that is, as “fellow Jews.”⁴⁸ His subsequent narration of the ancestral stories of Abraham, the patriarchs, Moses, and further Israelite history sets the scene as an intra-Jewish one, involving the Jerusalem church's antagonism toward Jerusalemite religious authorities.

The story begins with Abraham in the foreground (Acts 7:2–8) and concludes with his role as father of Isaac and grandfather of Jacob, who became father of the “twelve patriarchs” (Acts 7:8). The ancestral story of Joseph (Acts 7:9–16) follows, concluding with the death and burial of the patriarchs (Acts 7:15–16). Moses and the Israelites' exodus from Egypt (Acts 7:17–34) are connected to the preceding patriarchal narrative as the drawing near of “the time of the promise,” “which God had granted to Abraham” (Acts 7:17 RSV). This looks back on God's promise to Abraham regarding posterity, as articulated in Acts 7:5–7. The narrative then turns to Moses' leadership during the forty years in the wilderness (Acts 7:35–38) and the people's temptation to idolatry (Acts 7:39–41); the speech connects this with Amos 5:25–27 regarding idolatry in the wilderness, as well as the later exile beyond Babylon (Acts 7:42–43). From Joshua until the days of David, reminiscences of the time in the wilderness remained in the form of the “tent of witness” (Acts 7:45–46).

The polemical conclusion to Stephen's speech begins with a transition from the days of David to Solomon's building of a house for the God of Jacob (Acts 7:47). Stephen's speech opposes the idea of God dwelling in “houses made with hands,” referring to Isaiah 66:1–2a (Acts 7:48–50), and concludes with a vehement condemnation of the disposition and behavior of Stephen's addressees (Acts 7:51–53). Their hostile attitude to Stephen (Acts 7:54) culminates in physical aggression and his martyrdom (Acts 7:57–8:1a), after he experiences a vision of Jesus as the Son of Man at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55–56). I will return to this polemical shift below (Section 4).

Two general points stand out regarding the speech's biblical story-telling: the exceptionally large proportion of patriarchal and Mosaic narratives (Acts 7:2–16, 17–41) compared to the subsequent Israelite past (Acts 7:42–47); and the direct shift from Solomon's building of a house for God to the polemical conclusion (Acts 7:47–50, 51–53). The detailed attention to patriarchal and Mosaic narratives may be partly grounded in the fact that they are part of the Pentateuch, the “law of Moses” most revered in Judaism.⁴⁹ Stephen had to defend himself against allegations of blasphemy and undermining the “customs which Moses delivered to us” (Acts 6:11, 14 RSV), and his speech apparently unfolds his own understanding of these Scriptures. Yet, within this extended biblical story-telling, the migration narratives are conspicuously accentuated, as we will see below.⁵⁰ Regarding the direct shift from Solomon's days to the time of Stephen and his addressees, this seemingly involves a time gap of a thousand years. However, the polemic may concern a much more contemporary rhetorical distancing from the religious and political leadership that had appropriated the Solomonic legacy of the Temple.⁵¹

⁴⁸ On this address as a rhetorical *captatio benevolentiae*, see Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 369; cf. Braun, *Geschichte des Gottesvolkes und christliche Identität*, 167 on Acts 7:2, as expression of “die Zusammengehörigkeit des Redners Stephanus und seiner Hörer in einer Glaubensgemeinschaft und damit ihre Gleichstellung,” further identified by Braun at 167–68 as Diaspora Jewish accusers (Acts 6:9–11), the whole people (Acts 6:12a), and the council (Acts 6:12, 15); Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres* (1–12), 239, “S'adresser à des «frères» postule l'appartenance à une même foi et à une même histoire; s'adresser à des «pères» revient à reconnaître l'autorité des membres du sanhédrin.” Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 1, 307, appears more skeptical of inferring much from this address (“men, brothers”), considering it among features of stylistic unity in the speeches of Acts (1:16, 2:29, 37, 7:2, 26, 13:15, 26, 38, 15:7, 13, 22:1, 23:1, 6, 28:17), “regardless of the speaker.” Yet, this broader application of the address does not negate a certain respect for the audience in Acts 7:2, placing speaker and hearer(s) on an equal footing in their communication.

⁴⁹ Cf. *Ag. Ap.* 2.175 on the Law of Moses as “the most excellent and necessary form of instruction,” with the express stipulation for Jews “that every week men should desert their other occupations and assemble to listen to the Law and to obtain a thorough and accurate knowledge of it” (translation from Thackeray, *Josephus. The Life. Against Apion*, 363).

⁵⁰ In this regard, my rereading diverges from the general contours of Lucan “selection criteria” regarding the retelling of biblical narrative as characterized by Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1a), 3 (Stephen's Countercharge [7:2–53]) a.II (Use of Scripture) (2) “Luke's Selection Criteria,” as “fairly conservative” choices which stay “closer to the basic content of the biblical narrative more than do most of his contemporaries.” Stephen's Lucan speech does include exegetical choices to accentuate migration.

⁵¹ This point has been argued by Hogeterp, “King Solomon in the New Testament and Jewish Tradition,” 143–63 at 146, on the Herodian appropriation of the Solomonic legacy with the architectural enclosure project of King Herod I (Josephus, *Ant.*

Michael R. Whitenton has noted that, like early Jewish traditions of Abraham and Joseph, Acts 7:2–16 censors details from the biblical narrative that could render the positive portrayal of these patriarchs more ambiguous.⁵² Whitenton notes three occasions on which Acts cites the biblical text verbatim: LXX Gen 12:1 in Acts 7:3; LXX Genesis 48:4, 17:8 in Acts 7:5; and LXX Gen 15:13 (cf. Exod 2:22, 3:12) in Acts 7:6.⁵³ These citations concern the divine imperative for Abraham to depart his land and go into a promised land (Acts 7:3); the promise of inheritance to Abraham's posterity (Acts 7:5); and this posterity's long predicament as strangers (Acts 7:6).

Attention to Lucan biblical story-telling about migration and dislocation reveals more. First, Acts 7:2.4 – the frame for the quotation of LXX Gen 12:1 in Acts 7:3 – repeatedly refers to the act of settling (*katoikein*) in a new land, Haran. In addition, it is God who “transfers” (*metoikizein*) Abraham into the land “in which you are now living” in Acts 7:4 (RSV), directly addressing the audience of Stephen's speech. This parallels the divine imperative quoted in Acts 7:3, but goes beyond it: the verb *metoikizein* – which denotes the act of transferring, moving to another place, resettling, or (e)migrating⁵⁴ – does not occur in the Septuagint text. Thus, the Lucan narration further accentuates the theme of migration.

The Lucan narration emphatically denies that Abraham immediately receives the land as inheritance: “yet he gave him no inheritance in it, not even a foot's length” (Acts 7:5a, RSV). The latter phrase, “not even a foot's length,” is in verbatim agreement with LXX Deuteronomy 2:5.⁵⁵ This implies that the Lucan narration reworks Pentateuchal narrative to accentuate the patriarchs as strangers in a foreign land, beginning with Abraham, even though the divine promise does envision eventual possession of the land for Abraham's posterity (Acts 7:5b). However, Acts 7:5b leaves out the promise of “eternal” (*aionios*) possession, which appears in LXX Gen 17:8; 48:4 (“for a perpetual holding,” NETS). This perhaps parallels LXX Deut 32:49, which refers to the land of Canaan as God's gift to the Israelites “as a possession.” The practice of combining passages from various parts of the Pentateuch into one narrative is paralleled by Jewish Reworked Pentateuch traditions in the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q158, 4Q364–367).⁵⁶ The Lucan narration confronts a teleological understanding of Abrahamic descent as definitive possession and inheritance, insisting on the complete lack of immediate materialization of the divine promise at the time of Abraham and the patriarchs.

The promise of inheritance for Abraham's posterity is further complicated by a divinely envisioned intermediate period in Acts 7:6. This verse partly cites LXX Gen 15:13, substituting “a land not your own” (as in LXX Exod 2:22) for LXX Gen 15:13's “a foreign land:”

15.398–402) and on details of “spoils taken from the barbarians” fixed in the Temple (*Ant.* 15.402). Such material dimensions of spoils in the Temple may not be unrelated to the injunction in the *Damascus Document* to “abstain from wicked wealth which defiles, either by promise or by vow, and from the *wealth of the temple*” (CD-A 6.15–16; translation from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 1, 559).

52 Whitenton, “Rewriting Abraham and Joseph,” 151 on Acts 7:2–16, 153 on *Jub.* 11.14–23.7 (Abraham cycle), 154 on *Jub.* 34, 39–46 (Joseph cycle), 155–56 on Philo, *Abr.* 60–61 (Abraham), and *Ios.* 5–6, 14, 106, 169, 269 (Joseph), 156–57 on Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities* (L.A.B.) 8, 158–59, on Josephus, *Ant.* 1.154–57 (Abraham), and *Ant.* 2.9–167, 189–93, 198–200 (Joseph cycle). At 160–61, Whitenton turns to rabbinic sources of late antique date, yet his survey does not cover evidence of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

53 *Ibid.*, 150, with further reference to Lucan “interpretive paraphrase,” which he aligns with Hellenistic Jewish tradition on Abraham's calling in Chaldea, referring to Josephus, Philo, Ps-Eupolemus, and Acts (yet cf. Neh 9:7), and on Terah's death before Abraham's emigration to Canaan (Philo, Samaritan Pentateuch, Acts) at 166–67. Yet, the Samaritan Pentateuch is not part of Hellenistic Jewish tradition, so that the tradition–historical picture may be more heterogeneous than supposed by “interpretive traditions of Hellenistic Judaism” (167).

54 BDAG, ³2000, 643; Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, 1336. Cf. Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres* (1–12), 240 on the Lucan use of the two verbs, *katoikein* and *metoikizein*, in the direction of a “theocentric formula.”

55 Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 371, “Stephen's phraseology echoes that of Deut 2:5, which actually has nothing to do with Abraham.” Yet, the Qumran *Genesis Apocryphon* represents Abram as one who emphatically distances himself from “a thread or a sandal thong or anything of what belongs to” the king of Sodom (1QapGen ar 22.21–22); he simultaneously worries about his own death as a point when he will “go naked and without sons. One of my servants will inherit from me” (1QapGen ar 22.33), which God counters in Abram's vision. Translation from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 1, 49.

56 For example, Num 20:17–18, Deut 2:8–14 in 4Q364 frg. 23a–b i; Num 29:32–30:1, Deut 16:13–14 in 4Q366 frg. 4 i.

And God spoke to this effect, that his posterity would be aliens in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and ill-treat them four hundred years. (Acts 7:6, RSV)

This statement also connects the Abraham episode (Acts 7:2–8) with Joseph (Acts 7:9–16), who initiates the period in Egypt, and Moses (7:17–41), whose birth is marked as the time when the divine promise to Abraham drew near (Acts 7:17). This refers to the exodus from Egypt, led by Moses as ruler and deliverer.

The *ill-treatment* of strangers in a foreign land is a significant recurring motif. It is part of the divine speech (Acts 7:6, *kakosousin*); related to the evil acts of the Egyptian king not known by Joseph (Acts 7:19, *ekakosen*); exemplified in the struggle between an Egyptian and an oppressed Israelite (Acts 7:24, *adikoumenon*, *kataponoumenon*); and part of the divine speech about God having seen his people's mistreatment (*kakosis*) and taking up their cause to deliver them (Acts 7:34).

In God's communication with Abraham in Acts 7:2–8, verses 2–6 emphasize the unsettled implications of the divine promise to Abraham – he is to go into a land not yet his – and the delay in its fulfillment, beyond centuries in which Abraham's posterity will live as strangers in a foreign land. Yet, verses 7–8 affirm that God will act on behalf of Abraham's posterity and recall the institution of the divine covenant of circumcision, starting with Abraham.

These details are not necessarily standard ingredients for narrative discourses about Abraham and the patriarchs. There was a choice in what to tell and what not to tell. That the inclusion or exclusion of migration and dislocation elements was a conscious choice may best be illustrated by paying comparative attention to early Jewish traditions about the patriarchs.

Two examples in which migration and dislocation are excluded may be highlighted. First, as part of his "hymn to the fathers" (Sir 44–50), Sirach 44:19–23 devotes five verses to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, referring to the covenant, the multiplication of Abraham's posterity, and their blessing and inheritance. Yet, this passage makes no reference to the lack of an immediate inheritance or the patriarchs' prolonged alien status, as does Acts 7:5–6. Second, the *Damascus Document*, CD-A III 1–12a, refers to the sons of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and to Jacob's sons and descendants in Egypt and the wilderness, up to the time of kings and warriors. The review is concerned mainly with juxtaposing those who were faithful to the precepts of God – "friends of God" and "members of the covenant" – and those who followed the desires of their own spirit in the "stubbornness of their heart," against the "voice of their creator." It refers neither to the migrations of the patriarchs nor characterizes the people descended from Abraham as "stranger(s) in a foreign land."⁵⁷

However, there are Jewish traditions that include references to migration and to the alien status of Abraham's posterity. Narrating a timespan from Abram's birth to Abraham's death and burial, *Jubilees* 11:14–23:7 refers to Abram's migration (*Jub.* 12.22) and notes that Abraham's seed will be "strangers in an alien land" (*Jub.* 14.13). The fragmentary Qumran text *4QExposition on the Patriarchs* quotes Genesis 15:13 on the status of Abraham's posterity as foreigners in a land not theirs (4Q464 3 ii 3–4). The re-telling of biblical narrative in Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities* also refers to Abram's migration to Canaan (*LAB* 7.4) and to his posterity's alien status and bondage "in a land not their own" (Gen 15:13) for 400 years (*LAB* 9.3).

Philo of Alexandria and Flavius Josephus provide different narrative accents regarding migration and the cultural status of the patriarchs. Philo refers to Abraham's migration in his treatise *On Abraham* 62, but characterizes it very differently than Acts 7:6:

He being impressed by an oracle by which he was commanded to leave his country, and his kindred, and his father's house, and to emigrate like a man returning from a foreign land to his own country, and not like one who was about to set out from his own land to settle in a foreign district, hastened eagerly on, thinking to do with promptness what he was commanded to do was equivalent to perfecting the matter.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1a), 3.f ("Moses, Prototype of the Rejected Deliverer [7:35–43]") IV ("Preferring Egypt's Idols to Moses's Law [7:38–40]), observed that "Israel's disobedience in the wilderness is portrayed no less harshly in CD III, 6–12." Yet, differently from Stephen's speech (Acts 7:2–8.39–41), CD-A III 1–12a does not provide a major focus on migration and dislocation ("in the wilderness") as a narrative theme by itself.

⁵⁸ Translation from <http://www.earlyjewishwritings.com/text/philo/book22.html>

Philo characterizes Abraham not as a migrant to a new land on divine commission, but as one commanded to emigrate *like a man returning from a foreign land to his own country*. This accentuates not the otherness of a migrant-foreigner but its opposite: Abraham's cultural identification with his environment. Josephus even refers to the collective migration (*metoikizontai pantes*) of Terach, his family, and household. He thereby highlights not only the divine imperative to Abraham to remove to Canaan and to settle there (*Ant.* 1.154), but also the prior migration of Abraham and his family, which entailed the loss of one of Abraham's brothers, Aran in Ur of the Chaldees (*Ant.* 1.152). In Josephus' *Biblical Antiquities*, Abraham's posterity is portrayed not as an "alien in a foreign land" (Acts 7:6) but as having found "evil neighbours in Egypt" (*Jewish Antiquities* 1.185).⁵⁹

As for the concluding part of the Abraham episode in Acts 7:7–8, it is important to emphasize the extent to which Stephen's speech is based on shared Jewish ideas of theodicy and covenant. Acts 7:7–8 concludes its description of the ill-treatment of Abraham's posterity with the following words:

"But I will judge the nation which they serve," said God, "and after that they shall come out and worship me in this place." And he gave him the covenant of circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs. (Acts 7:7–8, RSV)

What does "in this place" (Acts 7:7) mean? Various options have been put forward: Canaan, the promised land, Jerusalem, or even the Temple.⁶⁰ The wording resembles a similar formulation referring to Jerusalem in Acts 6:13.14 – "this (holy) place"⁶¹ – but Canaan has not yet been mentioned at this point of the speech in Acts 7. In addition, Acts 7:3–4.6 consistently uses "land" when larger territory is in view. If "this place" in Acts 7:7 stands for Jerusalem, then it implies that Stephen was not against priestly service in Jerusalem, as such, but rather against a certain disposition of the mind, as though God could be fixed and encompassed by a man-made structure.⁶² The fleeting temporariness of circumstances, not predetermined by a fixed inheritance but by God's promise (Acts 7:5), stands at the foreground in the Lucan retelling of the patriarchs' biblical past. "This place" gives firm ground to a place of worship for the people descended from the patriarchs – yet it does not go so far as to predetermine an elaborate structure for this worship.

Acts 7:9–16 tells the story of Joseph with some different narrative accents than the biblical text, and without using verbatim biblical quotations. Acts agrees with the biblical narrative of divine providence, with God granting Joseph favor and wisdom before Pharaoh (Acts 7:10; cf. Gen 39:4.21, 41:39).⁶³ Yet, the speech also accentuates the human causes of the migration into Egypt. After recounting Joseph's lot in Egypt, having been sold there because of the other patriarchs' jealousy, Acts 7:11–12 mentions famine (cf. LXX Gen 41:54, 42:5), paying particular attention to its effects:

Now there came a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find no food. But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent forth our fathers the first time. (RSV)

⁵⁹ The Lucan term for "alien" (*paroikos*), which is also attested in LXX Gen 15:13 and LXX Exod 2:22, occurs only three times in Josephus' works, in *Ant.* 7.335, 8.59, and 14.213, which have their historical setting in times from David's kingship onward.

⁶⁰ Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 345; Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 372; cf. Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1–12)*, 242: "C'est dans le pays promis qu'Israël pourra servir son Dieu; les modalités, le domicile de ce culte seront problématisés plus tard (7,44–50)."

⁶¹ Cf. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 52, "Sinai is replaced by Jerusalem or the Temple (these two meaning the same thing). Compare 6:13–14."

⁶² Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1a), 3 ("Stephen's Countercharge [7:2–53]) a (Introduction), observes "With regard to the temple, it emphasizes that God is not localized (Abraham, Joseph, and Moses; 7:2, 5–6, 10, 14–15, 22, 29–30, 33–34, 36, 48–50)." Yet, Keener here passes over Acts 7:7–8, where God allows his people to localize a place of worship, even though the upshot of the speech does polemicize against man-made appropriation of the divine by the politico-religious leadership of the Jerusalem Temple.

⁶³ Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 373; Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 347, argued that "Luke has added *wisdom*," but this could well be an interpretive rendering of Pharaoh's qualification of Joseph, saying "there is no person more sensitive and intelligent than you" (LXX Gen 41:39, NETS).

A number of details differ from the biblical narrative. The reference to “great affliction” (*thlipsis megale*) does not occur in the biblical narrative, which only mentions affliction in the interaction between Joseph and his brothers addressing the brothers’ previous betrayal (LXX Gen 42:21).⁶⁴ Further, Acts 7:11 uses a word for “food” (*chortasmata*) that the biblical narrative only employs with regard to fodder for donkeys, once the patriarchs are with Joseph in Egypt (LXX Gen 42:27, 43:24). This detail has received divergent interpretations, ranging from an emphasis on the patriarchs as “grazers” of cattle⁶⁵ to dramatizing the effects of the famine – there was no food, not even for cattle.⁶⁶ Compared to this scarcity (Acts 7:11), Jacob’s realization that there was grain – literally “dough” for making bread (*sitia*)⁶⁷ – in Egypt (7:12) presents a starker contrast than the biblical narrative.⁶⁸ Whereas the patriarchs in Canaan are left without even animal fodder, Egypt has grain. The Lucan eye for detail highlights the humanitarian plight behind migration, while also emphasizing an image of God rescuing Joseph “out of all his afflictions” (Acts 7:10, RSV) and leading his family into Egypt. Joseph’s deliverance from his afflictions is a prequel to the patriarchs’ deliverance from great affliction, since Joseph is the pivotal figure through whom divine providence is manifested.

The idea of Joseph as a pivotal figure – one who intercedes for divine providence for the Israelites as strangers in a foreign land – is not without parallel in early Jewish tradition. Yet, the Qumran *Apocryphon of Joseph*^{a-c} (4Q371–373) curiously surrounds the Joseph tradition with a cultural antagonism more characteristic of later, Mosaic times.⁶⁹ Joseph and Moses are kept separate in Stephen’s speech, which concludes the Joseph episode with the death and burial of Jacob and “our fathers” in a tomb bought by Abraham at Shechem (Acts 7:15–16).

The story of Moses and the ultimate exodus of the Israelites from Egypt into the wilderness for forty years (Acts 7:17–38) are connected with the preceding episodes through references to the divine promise to Abraham (Acts 7:17) and to the rise of an Egyptian king not known by Joseph (Acts 7:18, citing LXX Exod 1:8). Whereas Joseph’s family (*genos*) was known to Pharaoh (Acts 7:13), the king not known by Joseph “dealt craftily with our race (*genos*) and force[d] our fathers to expose their infants, that they might not be kept alive” (Acts 7:19). Despite the dark circumstances, this time is characterized in terms of the nearness of the “time of the promise,” “which God had granted to Abraham” (Acts 7:17). This is because of the birth of Moses (Acts 7:20), who would become ruler and deliverer of the Israelites (Acts 7:35). The connection of the divine promise (*epangelia*) – with its evocation of divine deliverance – with the birth of Moses has no literal parallel in the biblical narrative of Exodus, though the Lucan narrative elaborates on traditions in Genesis.⁷⁰ Early Jewish tradition, however, includes the idea of divine intervention through human agency in the interest of preserving posterity,⁷¹ as well as the sapiential injunction in *4QInstruction* to grasp the “birth-times of salvation” (4Q417 1 i 11//4Q416 2 i 6).

In Acts, the adopted and assimilated Moses (Acts 7:20–21), having been “instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” (Acts 7:22 RSV), only gradually takes up his role as “ruler and deliverer” for the Israelites (Acts 7:35 RSV). This is long after Moses discovers that he is considered an outsider; he puts himself outside

⁶⁴ Cf. Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 348, who calls it “Luke’s own summarizing phrase.”

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 348.

⁶⁶ Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1–12)*, 245.

⁶⁷ Cf. BDAG, ³2000, 925; Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, 1919.

⁶⁸ Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 348–49, contrasted the Lucan diminutive *sitia* (Acts 7:12) to Septuagintal wording, *prasis*, “sale” (LXX Gen 42:1), but LXX Gen 42:2 relates Jacob’s hearsay “that there is grain (*sitos*) in Egypt” (NETS).

⁶⁹ 4Q372 (4QapocrJoseph^b) frg. 1 10–11, “Joseph was thrown into lands which he did not kn[ow ...] among a foreign people (*goy nekhar*), and they were scattered in the whole world” (translation from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 2, 737). This fragment further narrates a sequel, with Joseph’s prayer addressing a God of mercy and compassion and appealing for divine justice not to abandon Joseph into the hands of gentiles (frg. 1 l. 16), to preserve the poor and afflicted (frg. 1 l. 17), and to deliver “all the sons of your beloved Jacob” from annihilation by an enemy people (*am oyev*) (4Q372 frg. 1 ll. 20–22).

⁷⁰ Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 374, with reference to Gen 12:7, 13:15, 15:18–20, 17:8, 24:7, 48:4.

⁷¹ Cf. CD-A 2.11–13, “And in all of them (ages) he raised up men of renown for himself, to leave a remnant for the land and in order to fill the face of the world with their offspring. *Blank* And he taught them by the hand of <the anointed ones> with his holy spirit and through seers of the truth, and their names were established with precision” (translation from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 1, 553).

the order of Egyptian acculturation when he actively seeks to vindicate a fellow Israelite by killing an Egyptian (Acts 7:23–24). Yet, he also remains an outsider to the Israelites, who question his role as ruler and judge (Acts 7:25–28 at vv. 27–28, citing LXX Exod 2:14). In narrating this episode, Luke adds emphases to the biblical narrative: the description of the Israelite man as wronged (*adikoumenon*) and oppressed (*kataponoumenon*) (Acts 7:24) are details absent from LXX Exod 2:11–12, which refers to the Israelites' toil (*ponos*) only with verbs denoting physical acts of beating (*tuptein*) and striking (*patassein*). The Lucan perspective vindicates the ill-treated stranger – the Israelite – as part of its concern with justice for Israelites when they are strangers in a foreign land.

Paradoxically, the Israelites' initial response to Moses causes him to flee, turning him into an exile, *paroikos*, in Midian (Acts 7:29). Moses himself must be a stranger before he can fulfill his divinely ordained role. Even though Acts 7:25 describes Moses' belief that God had destined him to deliver the Israelites (*soteria*), their lack of understanding should not necessarily be understood typologically, as an analogy to the rejection of Jesus.⁷² Rather, it implies that they do not understand Moses's role; the latter depends also on the divine revelation to Moses concerning his return to Egypt to deliver the Israelites (Acts 7:30–34). The Lucan narration closely follows biblical narrative, citing parts of LXX Exod 3:6, 3:5, and 3:7–8a.10a in Acts 7:32, 7:33, and 7:34, respectively.⁷³

Acts 7:35–38 then turns to Moses' responsibility to lead the Israelites out of their oppression in Egypt. He performs signs and wonders (Acts 7:36) and leads the congregation into the wilderness, promising a prophetic succession of leaders (Acts 7:37, citing LXX Deut 18:15) and communicating living oracles (Acts 7:38). This passage emphasizes Moses's roles with repetitive formulae (“this (one),” 7:35.36; “this is he who,” Acts 7:37.38). It has sometimes been suggested that Acts 7:35–43 concerns Israelite idolatry during the exodus,⁷⁴ but this appears only in Acts 7:39–43.⁷⁵ Acts 7:35 concerns only the Israelites' prior refusal of Moses as ruler and judge, reiterating the quotation of LXX Exod 2:14 in Acts 7:27. The reformulation of Moses' role in Acts 7:35 assigns him the divine role of “deliverer” (*lutrotes*), otherwise related to God (LXX Ps 18:15, 77:35).⁷⁶

There is no exact parallel for this description of Moses as “deliverer” (*lutrotes*) in Jewish Hellenistic literature.⁷⁷ In early Jewish tradition, Moses may be described as “his anointed one” (4Q377 [4QapocrPent B] frg. 1 r ii l. 5), “the man of God” (4Q377 frg. 1 r ii l. 10; 4Q378 [4QapocrJoshua^a] frg. 26 l. 2), “a man of the pious ones” (4Q377 frg. 1 r ii l. 12; 4Q378 frg. 26 l. 6), or as “a just and great man” (4Q378 3 ii + 4 6).⁷⁸ This

⁷² Pace Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres* (1–12), 249, “c’est ainsi que le narrateur explique le drame du malentendu entre Dieu et les siens, culminant dans le rejet de Jésus;” Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 54, on a supposed Jesus–Moses typology starting in Acts 7:35; Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 1, 266, who interprets the theology of Stephen’s speech as including “the history of Israel’s rejection of their divinely appointed leaders (7:2–53; 28:25–27), which helps explain Israel’s current failure to embrace Jesus,” which, together with his understanding of Acts 7:2–53 as “salvation history for Israel,” amounts to a broader typological reading of Acts 7:2–53. See also Keener, *Acts*, 247 (“Moses, Prototype of the Rejected Deliverer (7:35–43)”). Yet cf. Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 358, “The case of Moses is developed at greater length and is treated in such detail as to suggest that the speaker thinks of him as a type of Jesus; this point however is never made in the speech.” In my view, another line of thought – that of tension between a biblical cause of justice for the ill-treated stranger and persecution of a movement that expected fulfillment in the coming of the righteous one – may be overlooked in an overly Christological reading of a Moses–Jesus typology in Acts 7:2–53.

⁷³ One difference yet concerns the wording “groaning” in Acts 7:34 against “outcry” related to the Israelites’ “pain” in LXX Exod 3:7. Cf. Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 362, on the Lucan word deriving from LXX Exod 2:24 and 6:5.

⁷⁴ Pace Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres* (1–12), 231, 253.

⁷⁵ Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 365, who posits a transition in terms of “rejection of Moses led to idolatry” in vv. 39–40.

⁷⁶ Cf. Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 364, “Moses can be described as *lutrotes* because he is the agent of the redeeming God;” Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 378, on Moses in Acts 7:35 as “God’s commissioned agent.”

⁷⁷ Search of the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae on *lutrotes* only yields its use relating to redeemed property in LXX Lev 25:31.32, cited in Philo, *Sacrifices*, 7; as a divine epithet in LXX Ps 18:15, 77:35; in Acts 7:35; and in subsequent early Christian literature. Cf. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1a), 3.d. VIII (“A Rejected Deliverer [7:25–28]”) on *lutrotes* in Acts 7:35 as “a NT hapax legomenon used in the LXX for God (...) though not exclusively (Lev 25:31–32).”

⁷⁸ García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*, 2, 745, 747.

Jewish background concerning Moses' proximity to God would perhaps make Moses' divinely commissioned role as "deliverer" recognizable to the Lucan audience, since it was through Moses' agency that the Israelites were told that God would deliver them from slavery and redeem them (LXX Exod 6:6, 15:13).

The subsequent episode involving idolatry in the wilderness (Acts 7:39–41) closely follows the biblical narrative. Acts 7:39 alludes to LXX Numbers 14:2–3 regarding disobedience, repudiation,⁷⁹ and the backward orientation toward Egypt. Acts 7:40 cites LXX Exodus 32:1.23 regarding the proposal to make gods in the absence of Moses. Acts 7:41 alludes to LXX Exodus 32:4.8 in its description of the sacrifice to an idolatrous calf. The Israelites' rejoicing "in the works of their hands" (Acts 7:41) does not immediately echo the biblical narrative, but has been appropriately compared to the description of idolatry in LXX Ps 113:12, "the idols of the nations are silver and gold, works of human hands" (NETS).⁸⁰ The dislocation in the wilderness here constitutes the narrative setting for the Israelites' clinging to the wrong type of cultural belonging: the backward orientation toward Egypt, which amounts to idolatry.

Acts 7:42–43 proceeds to connect the idolatry in the wilderness with Amos 5:26–27, a prophetic oracle concerning the temptation to idolatry for forty years in the wilderness that equates it with later periods of idolatry and exile. After a nearly verbatim quotation of LXX Amos 5:25–27, Acts 7:43 reorients the prophetic oracle – originally concerned with the northern kingdom's deportation beyond Damascus – toward deportation beyond Babylon.⁸¹ The Babylonian exile would have concerned the collective memory of a Judean and Jerusalemite audience more pervasively than the Assyrian deportations of the ten tribes of Israel.

The narrative of Acts 7:44–46 continues to invoke the period in the wilderness from the time of Joshua up to the days of David. This period recollects the dislocation in the wilderness through continuity of worship focused on the tent of wilderness.

At this point, it may be instructive to recapitulate recurrent migration and dislocation motifs in the narrative discourse of Acts 7:2–46. There is a recurrent concern with justice for the cause of the ill-treated stranger (Acts 7:6.19.24.34), taken up by divine providence and enacted by human agency. Two pivotal characters, Abraham and Moses – who represent the collective concerns of the Israelite people – are typified with a view to Abraham's posterity as *paroikos*, a stranger in a foreign land (Acts 7:6.29). Acts 7:2–46 narrates human migration in the biblical past with an eye for both human causes and divine intervention. The latter especially concerns the imperative to Abraham (Acts 7:4), the ancestral paragon of covenant relationship with God (Acts 7:8). Yet, in the case of idolatry, Acts 7:43 envisions removal beyond Babylon.

The theme of *dislocation* also recurs throughout the various contexts of narration in Acts 7:2–46, in the ill-treatment of Abraham's posterity as strangers in a foreign land (Acts 7:6); in Joseph being sold into slavery in Egypt (Acts 7:9–10); in famine and affliction as the occasion for dislocation (Acts 7:11–15a), interrupted only temporarily by the burial of the patriarchs at Shechem (Acts 7:15b–16); the deterioration from co-existence to suppression of the Israelite people in Egypt (Acts 7:17–22); Moses' flight to Midian (Acts 7:23–29); Moses' commission to lead the Israelites out of Egypt (Acts 7:30–34); dislocation in the wilderness (Acts 7:35–38); idolatry in the wilderness, prophetically associated with exile (Acts 7:39–43); and reminiscences of the dislocation through worship centered around the tent of wilderness until the days of David (Acts 7:44–46).

This theme of dislocation in foreign contexts and reminiscences of the wilderness period ends with the building of a house for God by Solomon (Acts 7:47). At this point, Stephen begins a sharp anti-establishment polemic against his Jerusalemite addressees (Acts 7:47–53). The biblical story-telling, which concerned a major part of the speech (Acts 7:2–46), also ends here. The speech then shifts into antagonistic discourse with reference to Isaiah 66:1–2a (Acts 7:47–50) and into outright polemic directly addressing the audience of the speech (Acts 7:51–53).

⁷⁹ The translation "thrust him aside" for *aposanto* in Acts 7:39 (RSV) may be too physical in view of Moses' perceived absence (Acts 7:40). Cf. BDAG, ³2000, 126, on *apothéo* meaning "reject, repudiate" in Acts 7:39.

⁸⁰ Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres* (1–12), 257.

⁸¹ Cf. Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 371, on divergent possibilities ranging from "a more accurate statement," to adaptation to later times, or "a lapse of memory."

Having surveyed biblical story-telling in comparative respect, Section 4 will explore how the narrative attention to migration and dislocation in Acts 7:2–46 can be understood in conjunction with the polemical turn in Acts 7:47–50.51–53.

4 Rereading Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse

Before rereading Acts 7:2–53 as a counter-cultural discourse, it is important to make some observations on migration and dislocation in the cultural discourses of biblical and early Jewish tradition, independent of Stephen's speech. The Pentateuch reflects on migration in many places. The Covenant Code (Exod 20:22–23:33) contains recurrent injunctions not to oppress the stranger in one's midst, in view of the Israelites' affliction in Egypt (Exod 22:20, 23:9).⁸² As part of the presentation of first fruits (Deut 26:1–11), a priestly liturgy (Deut 26:5–9) refers to Jacob as a wandering Aramean and the Israelites' deliverance from affliction in Egypt via the exodus to the promised land.⁸³

Migration and immigration in ancient Israel have been the object of recent archaeological study, with particular reference to descriptions of the land of Israel in the Pentateuch as a land of migration and immigration, based on Pentateuchal readings (Gen 11:31; Exod 3:8, 32:13, 33:1, 34:12; Deut 8:1, 12:5, 14:23–25, 16:2, 31:16). There are examples throughout the Hebrew Bible of special divine attention to justice for the foreigner (Deut 10:18–19; Ps 146:9), injunctions not to oppress the foreigner (Jer 7:6), and inheritance for resident aliens in the land (Ezek 47:21–22).⁸⁴ The idea of human and divine protection of the stranger from oppression has a long biblical tradition.

However, foreign domination of the land of Israel up to the time of the Maccabees and in the early Roman period also led to other images of the stranger. The Dead Sea Scrolls express varying attitudes, including references to the divine sonship of Israel “in the sight of all the peoples” (4Q504 [4QWords of the Luminaries^a] 1–2 iii 5), thanksgiving to the Lord “because you did not desert me when I stayed among a for [eign] people” (1QH^a 13.5); a request that God “not give our inheritance to foreigners, nor our produce to the sons of foreigners” (4Q501 [4QApocryphal Lamentations B] l. 1);⁸⁵ visions of war against an evil empire of Belial (1QM col. 1; 4QpIsa^a frgs. 8–10); and sectarian cultural perspectives on “those looking for easy interpretations” as advisers of foreigners attempting to enter Jerusalem (4Q169 [4QNahum Pesher] 3 + 4 i 2–3).⁸⁶

In view of these perspectives, it is time to revisit Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse. In the introduction, I noted the long scholarly tradition of interpreting Stephen's speech as Hellenistic discourse against the Jerusalem Temple cult, at a critical junction in the Acts narrative that ultimately turns to an allegedly Law-free mission to the Gentiles. But is it Stephen who critiques “this holy place and the law” (Acts 6:13) – otherwise framed as the utterance of “blasphemous words against Moses and God” (Acts 6:11) – or is it Stephen's opponents and accusers who pull his message in that direction?

A reconsideration of Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse on migration and dislocation reinterprets its biblical story-telling in conjunction with the polemical turn in Acts 7:47–50.51–53. Stephen's critique cannot have been directed against ancestral traditions of cultic worship of God *tout court*, for Acts 7:7 refers to the divine imperative to Abraham's posterity to “worship me in this place.” Further, Acts 6:7 recounts that “many of the priests” were among the followers of the Jesus movement. If its appeal proved

⁸² On Exod 22:20 in particular regarding the theme of migration, cf. Gärtner, “‘denn ihr seid Fremde gewesen im Land Ägypten’ (Ex 22,20). Überlegungen zu Migration im Alten Testament,” 3–13. Cf. Crüsemann, “‘Ihr kennt die Seele des Fremden’: Eine Erinnerung an die Tora angesichts von neuem Nationalismus und Fremdenhaß,” 339–47.

⁸³ On Deut 26:5, cf. Hubmann, “‘Mein Vater war ein heimatloser Aramäer ... (Dtn 26,5)’. Gedanken zu Migration in der Bibel,” 211–15.

⁸⁴ “Digs 2018: Migration and Immigration in Ancient Israel” (BAR Jan/Feb 2018; biblicalarchaeology.org).

⁸⁵ Translations of texts from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 1, 171, and *Study Edition*. 2, 993 and 1015.

⁸⁶ On this subject, cf. Hogeterp, “Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Dead Sea Scrolls” (forthcoming).

“provocative” to the “high priest’s camp,”⁸⁷ this indicates that the social ethos and religious orientation of the Jesus movement were not fundamentally at odds with the social world of the Jerusalem Temple cult priests; rather it was in conflict with certain circles of leadership. Stephen’s critique concerns state of mind, disposition, and behavior, rather than the ancestral tradition *per se*. Stephen’s speech depicts the worship of Israel’s God as part of an ongoing tradition of living oracles inherited from Moses (Acts 7:37–38). This representation of the biblical past accepts that God cannot be contained in a fixed structure and that divine communication was experienced in worship centered around the tent of witness, up to the days of David (Acts 7:44–46). The setting of this biblical story-telling recollects the human fragility of the Israelites in contexts of migration and dislocation, whose cause is taken up by divine providence. How does the polemical turn in Stephen’s speech (Acts 7:47–50.51–53) then address this setting?

Starting with Acts 7:47–50, Stephen’s speech proposes a disjunction between the ancestral traditions of the tent of witness in the wilderness (Acts 7:44) and Solomon’s temple (Acts 7:47). The biblical tradition of the inauguration of the temple acknowledges that God, creator of heaven and earth, cannot be contained in an earthly structure: “But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!” (1 Kgs 8:27, RSV). It is thus presented as a house of prayer, directed toward God in his heavenly dwelling place (1 Kgs 8:28–30), with a marked inclusivity regarding the prayers of foreigners (1 Kgs 8:41–43). Stephen’s polemic in Acts 7:48–50 relies not on these ancient times but on the prophecy of Isaiah 66:1–2a, which bolsters his point that God does not dwell in “houses made with hands” (Acts 7:48) when it asks, “What house will you build for me, says the Lord, or what is the place of my rest? Did not my hands make all these things?” (Isa 66:1b–2a in Acts 7:49b–50, RSV).

This juxtaposition of “houses made with hands” (Acts 7:48) and God’s activity as creator, whose “hands made all these things” (Acts 7:50) is not so much about human architecture as it is about the appropriation of divine work by human hands. The biblical background of the language of “hands,” which denotes not just a body part but also “power,”⁸⁸ suggests a tension between *cheiropoiotos* – as human appropriation of the divine – and the divine power of creation (*he cheir mou epoiesen*, Acts 7:50). Solomon’s building of a “house for God,” as noted in Acts 7:47, may thus concern the sense of “house” as a dynasty gifted with power – an established “structure” of Jerusalemite religious leadership. If it were merely the architectural legacy of Solomon’s Temple targeted by Stephen’s polemic, and if the so-called Hellenists supposedly represented in the speech in fact abhorred the Jerusalem Temple cult – why would they have been there in the first place? Acts 3:1.11 and 5:12 narrate a gathering of the Jesus movement at the outer court of the Temple complex in conjunction with liturgical activities, “at the hour of prayer” (Acts 3:1, RSV).⁸⁹ In this light, Stephen’s disjunction between the tent of witness (Acts 7:44) and Solomon’s building of a house for God (Acts 7:47) should be considered a “simultaneous identification-with and division-from.”⁹⁰

The disjunction between tent and temple, followed by a direct verbal attack in Acts 7:51–53, would not have been self-evident from contemporary Jewish discourse. Two examples, one from the Dead Sea Scrolls and the other from Philo of Alexandria, are illustrative. The Qumran text 4Q365 (4Q*Reworked Pentateuch*^c) fragment 23 combines the Levitical provisions for all natives of Israel to celebrate Sukkot, in remembrance of their ancestors’ exodus from Egypt, with the following injunction:

⁸⁷ Gaventa, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 116. Cf. Fiensy, “The Composition of the Jerusalem Church,” 228, who distinguishes these (ordinary) priests from the (aristocratic) “High Priestly family” who “actively persecuted the church (Acts 4:1–21; 5:17–42);” Jervell, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, 221, on the activity of the Jesus movement in the Temple as well as Lucan concerns to demonstrate “dass die Christen aus den ‘echten’ Juden, den gesetzestreuen, herkommen” as reasons for their appeal to priests; Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*, 2, Part 3, § 4.e II (“Conversion of Priests”), “Because of priests’ association with the temple, Luke can also show the falsehood of the charge against Stephen at Acts 6:13–14.”

⁸⁸ On the biblical Hebrew background of Septuagintal Greek *cheir*, literally “hand,” as a physiognomical expression, cf. Thackeray, *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek*, 42; Lust et al., *Greek–English Lexicon of the Septuagint*, 661, on *cheir* denoting “hand, power, control; rule, dominion.”

⁸⁹ For an overview, cf. Barrett, “Attitudes to the Temple in Acts,” 345–67.

⁹⁰ Dinkler, “The Politics of Stephen’s Storytelling,” 60 and n. 84; citing Conley, *Toward a Rhetoric of Insult*, 46.

When you enter the land which I will give you as an inheritance, and you live safely in it, you will offer wood for the holocaust and for all the work [of the ho]use ([*hab*]ayit) which you are to build for me in the land. (4Q365 frg. 23 ll. 4–6)⁹¹

According to Molly Zahn, this fragment of rewritten scripture indicates that “the provision of wood for the sanctuary is not associated with the wilderness Tabernacle but directly with the future Temple in the land.”⁹² In 4Q365 fragment 23 lines 4–12, Zahn identifies echoes of Deuteronomy 26:1–11 (wood offering) and 12:9–11 (dwelling in surety), as well as 1 Kings 5:5.15 (the people’s dwelling in surety “all the days of Solomon”).⁹³

In his *Life of Moses* 2.88–89, Philo describes the preparation of building materials for the tabernacle as a “temple made by hands (*cheiropoiotos*) for the Father and Ruler of the universe,” likening the tabernacle to a “holy temple.” There is no contrast between a tabernacle and a temple, nor any problem with the fact that the temple is “made with (human) hands.” Indeed, depending on the context, “made with hands” can be unproblematic – as in relation to the tabernacle (*Life of Moses* 2.88–89) – or problematic – as when it concerns idols “made with hands” (*Life of Moses* 1.303).⁹⁴

Moreover, Acts 7:51–53 concludes the polemical turn by voicing a direct invective:

You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it. (Acts 7:51–53, RSV)

Stephen’s polemic, then, concerns a man-made structure (vv. 47–50) that does not administer holiness; its leadership is accused of resistance against the Holy Spirit, treason, murder, and not keeping the law (vv. 51–53). The point is not to polemicize against an autochthonous place of worship for the God who seeks deliverance for his people. It is, rather, against a mindset that no longer imagines Israel as a migrant people, as the emphasis on dislocation and subjection in Acts 7:2–46 seeks to foreground.

This closed-mindedness, characterizing “your fathers” and “you” (Acts 7:51b) as “stiff-necked” and “uncircumcised in heart and ears” (Acts 7:51a), appears in tension with the preceding sections (before Acts 7:47), wherein the retelling of the biblical narrative refers consistently to “our fathers” (Acts 7:12.15.19.38.39.44.45). While the preceding sections sometimes find fault with the patriarchs (Acts 7:9) and “our fathers” (Acts 7:39–43), they still identified with Israel’s deliverance from ill-treatment (Acts 7:34) and with favor in the sight of God (Acts 7:46). The *dis*-identification of the Acts 7:51–53 polemic goes far beyond any previous discourse about “our fathers” being disobedient.⁹⁵ It accuses “your fathers and you” of killing divine messengers, the prophets, and of betraying and killing “the Righteous One” (a designation for Jesus which partly repeats Acts 3:14). The accusation also partly reiterates the Lucan Jesus tradition that accuses Jerusalem of killing its prophets (Lk 13:34). The narrative of Luke–Acts begins with a presentation of Jesus as a “homeless stranger;”⁹⁶ his followers on the road to Emmaus even address the risen Jesus as an isolated “visitor (*paroikeis*) to Jerusalem” (Lk 24:18 RSV). Jesus’ proclamation as the “Righteous One” also conveys his status as the ill-treated stranger.

While Acts 7:2–46 reviews a shared ancestral narrative of “our fathers,” Acts 7:47–53 introduces a sharp accusation against the Jerusalemite addressees. The prior narrative, concerned with divine justice for Israelites who suffered injustice and harm as strangers in a foreign land (Acts 7:6.19.24.34), now appears to turn ferociously against the Jerusalemites, accusing them of persecution and killing the “Righteous One” (Acts 7:52). Yet, against whom exactly is this polemic directed, and what does the inverse polemic do?

⁹¹ Translation from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 2 (4Q274–11Q31), 723.

⁹² Zahn, *Rethinking Rewritten Scripture*, 104.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 102–4.

⁹⁴ This Philonic evidence should caution against an overly schematic association of *cheiropoiotos* with idolatry in early Jewish interpretation history; *pace* Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1a), 3.g. IV (“Not in Humanly Built Temples [7:48]”), on LXX usage and the idea that “subsequent Jewish writers also applied this language to the folly of idolatry.”

⁹⁵ Cf. Dinkler, “The Politics of Stephen’s Storytelling,” 60, who conceives of it “at the level of self-reflexive storytelling, (as) a mechanism of disowning.”

⁹⁶ Cf. Denaux, “A Stranger in the City,” 93–110 at 97–8.

In the polemic of Acts 7:51–53, Stephen's accusers stand accused themselves. Stephen's speech does not refer to Jesus' saying about destroying this place, nor to any change in Mosaic custom, as alleged by his accusers (Acts 6:13–14). In fact, Stephen's speech affirms the divine promise that the people may worship God "in this place" (Acts 7:7), as well as the covenant of circumcision (Acts 7:8). Instead, Stephen accuses his opponents of not keeping the law (Acts 7:53), charging them with resistance to the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51b) and calling them traitors and murderers of the righteous one (Acts 7:52b–c). The tipping point that leads toward physical aggression against Stephen, and ultimately his stoning, is his words regarding the heavenly vindication of Jesus as the Son of Man (Acts 7:55–56).

Stephen's polemic contains theologically loaded terminology⁹⁷ that should be distinguished from a historical fate of the biblical prophets.⁹⁸ The first-century CE *Lives of the Prophets* claims that some of the biblical prophets were killed (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Micah, Amos, Zechariah son of Jehoiada), while others died in peace – or at least did not meet a violent death (Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Nathan, Elijah, Elisha). Early Jewish perceptions of Jerusalem's treatment of its prophets could also vary widely. For instance, the "Apostrophe to Zion" in the Psalms Scroll from Qumran cave 11 (11QPs^a 22.1–15) refers to "the loyalty of your prophets" (lines 5–6) and to "dreams of prophets requested for (Zion)" (line 14). Perhaps the accusation, "which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute?" (Acts 7:52a, RSV), strikes a general tone at the same time that it may relate more specifically to the prophets cited in the speech, Amos (Acts 7:42–43) and Isaiah (Acts 7:49–50). The general point may be directed against the general disposition of Stephen's accusers.

Anti-establishment discourse against institutional closed-mindedness – described in terms of being "stiff-necked," "uncircumcised in heart and ears," and resistant to the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51) – has parallels in early Jewish tradition. In Qumran literature, commentators note 1QpHab 11.13 and 1QS 5.5;⁹⁹ 1QS 4.11 includes "stiffness of neck" among the dispositions of the spirit of deceit. Yet, this rhetoric goes beyond the sectarian rule and pesher texts.

"Stiff-necked" and "uncircumcised in heart" (Acts 7:51a) occur in various early Jewish contexts – prayer, benediction, poetry, and wisdom literature. They recur in the petitionary language addressing God in 4Q504 (*4QWords of the Luminaries*^a) fragment 4 lines 6–7 and 11: "[and do not ho]ld against us the iniquities of the forefathers in all their wic[ked] behaviour, [nor that they were stiff]-necked" and "Circumcise the foreskin of [our heart]."¹⁰⁰ In *4QWords of the Luminaries*^a, a "we" perspective on "our fathers" runs consistently throughout the text (4Q504 1–2 ii 8, 1–2 vi 5–6), in contrast to the polemical "your fathers" in Acts 7:51–52. 4Q436 (*4QBless, Oh my Soul*^c) 1 ii 2 uses "stiff-necked" in the context of benediction: "[st]ubbornness (*orev kasheh*) you sent away from me, and you turned it into humility."¹⁰¹ The Hebrew literally means a "neck being stiff," viz. "stubbornness." 4Q301 (*4QMysteries*^c (?) fragment 1 lines 3–4 also uses the term: "those who walk in foolishness and men of thought for all service of deeds of [... stiff]-necked."¹⁰² In view of this early Jewish context, Stephen's polemic appears to address a disposition of the mind that is offensive to proper human worship of God, associating the addressees with wicked behavior in particular. Stephen's polemic even steps outside the "we" perspective of "our fathers."

⁹⁷ Cf. Dunn, "The Question of Anti-Semitism in the New Testament Writings of the Period," 177–211, includes references to the anti-Jerusalemite polemic at the end of Stephen's speech, "in the prophetic-style denunciation of 7:51–53" (190), which "deliberately draws on OT language," referring to Exod 33:3,5; Lev 26:41; Num 27:14; Isa 63:10; Jer 6:10; 9:26 (210).

⁹⁸ Hogeterp, *Paul and God's Temple*, 190, on the accusation of Stephen in Acts 7:52 as "a theological *topos* rather than having a connection with history," thereby referring to Steck, *Gott in der Zeit entdecken*. Cf. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2, Part 3, Stephen (6:8–8:1a), 3.h.IV ("Killing Prophets [7:52]), who calls this "hyperbole" which yet has a biblical parallel in Neh 9:26 addressing the Lord regarding Israel's killing of "your prophets."

⁹⁹ Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles*, 56; Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 376; Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 385; Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1–12)*, 265 n. 169.

¹⁰⁰ Translations from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 2, 1011.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 917.

¹⁰² Ibid., 665.

Stephen's charge of resistance against the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51b) may be compared to the prophetic discourse on Israel's biblical past in Isaiah 63:10.¹⁰³ Early Jewish literature provides a general parallel to this type of invective against contemporary opponents. The *Damascus Document* (CD-A V 11–13) refers to opponents who defile “their holy spirit” by speaking abomination against the statutes of God's covenant.

The climax of Stephen's polemic is the charge of betraying and killing the righteous one (Acts 7:52b–c). Literally translated, this may be rendered as “of whom you have now become traitors and murderers” (Acts 7:52c, own translation). This focus on Jesus as the betrayed and killed righteous one is unique to the early Jesus movement. However, the theme of the suffering righteous, whose life hangs in the balance, is a recurrent topic in prophetic¹⁰⁴ and early Jewish apocalyptic literature. For instance, the *Damascus Document* attests to the eschatological expectations of one who teaches righteousness (CD-A 6.10–11), as well as polemics against the misdeeds of a “congregation of traitors” “who stray from the path” (CD-A 1.12–13), including the act of banding “together against the life of the just man (*nefesh tsadik*)” (CD-A 1.20). Qumran sectarian literature also includes a recurring association between bloodshed and evil, as in God's hatred of generations “on account of blood(shed) (*midam*)” (CD-A 2.8) and the identification of bloodshed (*damim*) with Belial's presence among the sectarians' opponents, “when their destructive inclination becomes apparent” (1QH^a 15.3–4).¹⁰⁵ Enochic apocalyptic woes also condemn bloodshed: “woe to you, stiff-necked and heart of heart, who do evil and consume blood” (1 *Enoch* 98.11).¹⁰⁶

In Stephen's speech, the murder charge refers back to Jesus' passion and crucifixion (Lk 23)¹⁰⁷ and to Peter's prior speech (Acts 3:14). A turn to external sources further allows the charge of murder (*phoneis*) to be situated more specifically in view of the body politic in Jerusalem. In *Jewish Antiquities* 18.8, Josephus charges the “fourth philosophy” with the murder of fellow citizens (*phonos politikos*) for their theocratic cause; their popular appeal “filled the body politic (*politeia*) immediately with tumult” (*Ant.* 18.9).¹⁰⁸ Josephus further attributes exceptional savagery to the Sadducean contingent of Jerusalem's religious leadership when he describes the stoning of James, the brother of Jesus, instigated by the high priest Ananus by 62 CE (*Ant.* 20.200).¹⁰⁹ Acts 5:17 suggests that the high priest who ordered the arrest of the apostles was also a Sadducee, whereas Gamaliel, a Pharisee, cautioned against violent suppression of the Jesus movement (Acts 5:34–39).

In this wider comparative perspective, Stephen appears as a counter-cultural speaker, who does not polemicize against the ancestral institutions of the Temple and the law *per se*. Rather, Stephen targets the disposition and behavior of his accusers as being an altogether different perspective on ancestral tradition (“your fathers,” Acts 7:51.52), starkly contrasted with his own perspective (“our fathers,” Acts 7:12.15.19.38.39.44.45). Specifically, Stephen charges his opponents with opposing the tradition of divine justice for the ill-treated stranger. Rather than uphold this tradition, they resist the Holy Spirit, betraying and killing the righteous one. Stephen's polemic targets the enclosed system in which the power of his opponents resides, accusing those opponents of dislocating righteousness from their midst.

5 Ancient migration narratives and ethnic “othering”

Having re-read Stephen's speech as a counter-cultural discourse on justice for the ill-treated stranger – and for Jesus as the ultimate such stranger – on the basis of its ancient background in Jewish narratives of

¹⁰³ Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 385.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. the Servant Songs in Isaiah 42:1–4, 49:1–6, 50:4–11, 52:13–53:12, which are yet the object of divergent interpretations, ranging from individual to collective identifications.

¹⁰⁵ Translations from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*, 1, 177, 553.

¹⁰⁶ Translation from Nickelsburg and VanderKam, 1 *Enoch*, A New Translation, 150.

¹⁰⁷ Lk 23:4.14–15.22 thrice relates a Roman perception of Jesus having done no crime deserving death.

¹⁰⁸ Translation from Feldman, *Josephus. Jewish Antiquities Books XVIII–XIX*, 9.

¹⁰⁹ Feldman, *Josephus. Jewish Antiquities Book XX*, 108 n. a, observed that “unlike the passage on Jesus (*Ant.* xviii. 64), few have doubted the genuineness of this passage on James.”

migration and dislocation, it is appropriate to ask what the Stephen episode reveals about the framing of Stephen's speech in relation to early Judaism and Christianity, as well as asking about the implications of the study of these ancient contexts for understanding ethnicity and "othering."

Regarding the framing of Stephen's position in relation to early Judaism and Christianity, this article has highlighted the complexity involved in ancient identities, and that they cannot be reduced to simple antitheses between "Hebrews" and "Hellenists." The accusations leveled against Stephen (Acts 6:8–15) cannot simply be identified with Stephen's position in his speech (Acts 7:2–53), nor can his own accusations (Acts 7:47–50.51–53) be equated neatly with the accusations against him. In fact, Stephen affirms multiple key aspects of Jewish identity. His speech highlights the divine promise of Abrahamic settlement "into this land in which you are now living" (Acts 7:4, RSV), the Abrahamic covenant of circumcision (Acts 7:7), and the worship of the one God in Judaism's traditional location ("in this place," Acts 7:8). Rather than a simple or blanket anti-Judaism, Stephen's polemic appears to be directed against a specific religio-political milieu – situated somewhere between the Sadducean high-priestly faction and the "fourth philosophy" described by Josephus – which dislocates human values and justice from the center where Stephen argues they belong. These values were divinely sanctioned in biblical migration narratives, as related in the preceding sections of Stephen's speech: repeatedly, God took up the cause of Israelites ill-treated as strangers in foreign lands (Acts 7:6.19.24.34–35).

The biblical migration narratives incorporated in Stephen's speech can and should be related to discussions about geography, ethnicity, and "othering." The issue is exemplified in David L. Balch's foreword to Todd Penner's *In Praise of Christian Origins* (2004), a study on Stephen and the Hellenists. Addressing the question of how Luke–Acts would have related to perspectives on language, geography, and ethnicity in Graeco-Roman literature, Balch observes that

Dionysius of Halicarnassus would have disdained Luke–Acts as "Asian." Heroes in the narrative are Jews – Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mary, Stephen, Paul, many of whom speak Septuagintal Greek and are *not European*, neo-Attic Greeks or Romans who are better morally or politically more powerful than the barbarians.¹¹⁰

Yet, paradoxically, ancient Greek mythology traced the etymology of *Europa* to the name of the daughter of a Phoenician king at Tyre.¹¹¹ Dura-Europos, a Macedonian colony situated west of the Euphrates, was called *Europos* by the ancient Greeks, according to Isidorus of Charax (*Parthian Stations* 1); the adjective *Europaioi* is also attested in several Greek papyri containing documentary texts.¹¹²

What would "Asian" and "European" have signified in contemporary Graeco-Roman discourse? It is a recurring *topos* in classical Greek literature that Europe is distinct from the "barbarian" Asian continent beyond the Hellespont, especially in the context of the wars between the Greeks and the Persians.¹¹³ This does not necessarily mean that Greek and Roman discourse disdained everything east of the Hellespont merely for being non-European. Dionysius of Halicarnassus cites "works of the mind" from the Ionians and the Dorians, who had left Europe and settled in Asia Minor, noting their mutual concord in wars against "neighbouring barbarians" in the sixth century BCE (*Rom. ant.* 4.25.3–6). "Asian" and "European" ethnic and cultural identification is thus clearly more complicated in Dionysius' historiography than supposed by Balch. Indeed, fully fledged assertions of neo-Attic elite standards may be situated somewhat later than Dionysius' time, in the second century CE Second Sophistic movement, including the lexical works of Phrynichus and Moeris.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Balch, "Foreword. Acts as Epideictic History," xvi. Italics are mine.

¹¹¹ This etiological tale occurs across ancient Greek literature, such as Euripides (Frg. 4721. 1; *Fragmenta papyracea* frg. 79 l.1; *Fragmenta Hypsipyles* frg. I, iii l. 22), Herodotus' *Histories* 1.2.1; and Moschus, *Europa*.

¹¹² *P. Dura 15* (2nd c. BCE) frg. A l. 3; *P. Dura 17* (180 CE) B ll. 12, 13, C ll. 21, 29; *P. Dura 18* (87 CE) r, int l. 1 and r, ext ll. 14, 15, 17; *P. Dura 19* (88–89 CE) l. 3; *P. Dura 22* (133–134 CE) ll. 3, 5; *P. Dura 24* (159–160 CE) int ll. 3, 12, ext l. 23; *P. Dura 25* (180 CE) int l. 4, ext l. 21; *P. Dura 32* (254 CE) ext, r l. 4.

¹¹³ Aeschylus, *Persae*, 798–9; Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* 1.89.2; Herodotus, *Histories* 1.4.4.

¹¹⁴ On New Testament vocabulary as compared with Attic standards of Moeris and Phrynichus, cf. Caragounis, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament*, 120–40; Cf. Kemezis, "Greek Ethnicity and the Second Sophistic," 392, who dates the writings of the Second Sophistic as "elite Greek pagan literature produced between about 50 and 250 CE," which postdates the first-century BCE works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

The Hellenistic Greek prose fiction of Chariton's *Callirhoe* provides further information concerning Greek perceptions of the Levant. This novel, composed sometime between 25 BCE and 50 CE,¹¹⁵ communicates the following perspective of the Syracusan¹¹⁶ Greek woman Callirhoe:

As far as Syria and Cilicia Callirhoe readily put up with the journey, for she still heard Greek spoken and could look upon the sea which led to Syracuse. But when she arrived at the River Euphrates, the starting point of the Great King's empire, beyond which lies the vast continent, then she was filled with longing for her home and family and despaired of ever returning again. (Chariton, *Callirhoe* 5.1.3)¹¹⁷

This is followed by a revealing statement about the differences among Miletus, Ionia, and the next destination, the court of the Persian king Artaxerxes in Babylon:

There the land which you gave me, though foreign, was still Greek, and I had the great consolation of living by the sea. But now you cast me forth from familiar surroundings and I am separated from my home by a whole world. This time you take Miletus from me, as before you took Syracuse. Carried off beyond the Euphrates, I, an islander born, am enclosed in the depths of a barbarian continent where no sea exists. (*Callirhoe* 5.1.5–6)¹¹⁸

This passage depicts the boundary, as perceived by a Greek-speaking character, between familiarity and alienation, between the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. This and the preceding passage further imply Greek alienation in their depiction of the interior of Asia as a “barbarian continent,” distinct from the (partly) Greek-speaking Eastern Mediterranean coastal regions.¹¹⁹ This cultural geography differentiates between “foreign” (*xenos*) and yet Greek(-speaking), on the one hand, and “barbarian,” on the other.

Luke's own perspective on the Jews in Jerusalem for Pentecost (Acts 2:1.5) is certainly not in keeping with supposedly Graeco-Roman “disdain” for an Asian, Levantine, Middle Eastern, or otherwise non-European orientation. In fact, Acts 2:5 describes them as “devout men from every nation under heaven” (RSV). Acts 2:9–11 is unrestrained in its enumeration of the regions whence these visitors come: “Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians” (RSV). Acts 2:5 characterizes these diverse participants in normative terms of devotion (“devout men”).¹²⁰ Acts 6:8–15 further narrates a Jerusalemite setting of those who dispute with Stephen and instigate his arraignment before the council, identified as “those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia” (Acts 6:9, RSV). When the Stephen episode concludes with his martyrdom, “devout men” buried and “made great lamentation over him” (Acts 8:2, RSV). It is curious that these “devout men” are sometimes identified as “sympathetic Christians” rather than Jews,¹²¹ even though, according to Acts 8:1, a great persecution had caused the scattering of all, except apparently the apostles, beyond Jerusalem.¹²²

¹¹⁵ Goold, *Chariton. Callirhoe*, 2.

¹¹⁶ Syracuse is not alien to Lucan geography, for it occurs in Acts 28:12 as a place of sojourn for three days, as part of a “we” passage (Acts 27:1–28:16) on the itinerary of the Lucan Paul and fellow travelers to Rome.

¹¹⁷ Translation from Goold, *Chariton. Callirhoe*, 233.

¹¹⁸ Translation from *ibid.*

¹¹⁹ This notion also seems to cohere with Josephus' reference to his prior composition of the *Jewish War* “in my vernacular tongue,” which he “sent to the *barbarians in the interior*” (*J.W.* 1.3; translation from Thackeray, *Josephus. The Jewish War. Books I–II*, 3 and 5).

¹²⁰ In Luke's Greek, the adjective *eulabes*, “devout,” consecutively characterizes the Jerusalemite man Simeon, “righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him” (Lk 2:25, RSV), the visitors of the pilgrim festival of Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2:5), those who bury Stephen and make great lamentation over him (Acts 8:2), and Ananias, a disciple of the Jesus-movement at Damascus, described by the Lucan Paul as “a devout man according to the law, well spoken of by all the Jews” (Acts 22:12).

¹²¹ Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 397, who yet interpreted *eulabes*, “devout” in Acts 2:5 as “‘men holding fast,’ i.e., observant of Jewish traditions” (239).

Finally, some observations about ancient contexts and contemporary implications regarding the subject of migration and dislocation are worthwhile. Stephen's biblical story-telling highlights both human and divine causes of migration. The speech focalizes human factors such as famine and great affliction (Acts 7:11) but also ill-treatment, oppression, enslavement, and infanticide (Acts 7:19, 24). In today's terms, Stephen's story concerns political refugees fleeing oppression as well as migrants dislocated by humanitarian disasters such as famine and hunger. In Acts 7:2–46, these biblical migration narratives are consistently told from the perspective of a shared ancestry ("our fathers").

Divine providence is also of major interest in Stephen's speech, which mentions the divine imperative that triggers Abraham's migration (Acts 7:2–4); the divine promise regarding Abraham's posterity (Acts 7:5–7); "the time of the promise" (Acts 7:17); the divine visitation of Moses (Acts 7:30–34) that prompts him to return to the Israelites as ruler and deliverer (Acts 7:35); divine visitation of idolatry, referring to a prophecy of exile (Acts 7:39–43); and the presence of the tent of meeting among the Israelites up to David's time (Acts 7:44–46).

This intersectionality between human and divine aspects of migration narratives was common to both Jewish and Graeco-Roman audiences. Deuteronomy 10:18–19, for instance, evokes God as the deliverer of the fatherless, the widow, and the stranger, reminding Israel of their biblical past as sojourners in the land of Egypt. On the Graeco-Roman side, the prose fiction of *Callirhoe* cites the *Odyssey* 17.485, 487 as Homeric teaching: "Oft in the guise of strangers from distant lands the gods watch human insolence and righteousness."¹²³

6 Conclusion

Stephen's speech refers to two major biblical migration narratives: Abraham's, which is intimately intertwined with the divine promise regarding his posterity, and the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, led by Moses as ruler and deliverer. These two traditions have been central to Western historiographic traditions; as Felix Wiedemann observes in his survey of racial and anti-Semitic biases in some nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historical–archaeological and ethnographic discussions,

Nicht zuletzt aber rührte die Relevanz des Themas von der Zentralität des Wanderungsmotivs im Alten Testament her, und so hatten die Erzählungen von der Einwanderung Abrahams aus Mesopotamien oder vom Auszug der Israeliten aus Ägypten im Laufe der Jahrhunderte diverse Spekulationen über deren historisch-ethnologischen Hintergrund angeregt. Im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert jedoch glaubte man, entsprechende Fragen nicht mehr nur spekulativ, sondern empirisch beantworten zu können.¹²⁴

The fact that interest in these biblical migration narratives intersects with Western traditions of historiography concerning migration in the ancient Near East rings a cautionary note with regard to the construction of the cultural context of Stephen's speech.

This article has sought to contribute to the deconstruction of a number of problematic elements in earlier scholarship on the cultural context of Stephen's speech. Reified juxtapositions of "Jews" vs "Christians," "Hebrews" vs "Hellenists," and Graeco-Romans vs "non-European" perspectives stand in the way of a proper understanding of Stephen's role in the history of emerging Christianity, and obscure the main thrust of his speech's interest in migration and dislocation.

The juxtaposition of "Jews" vs "Christians" as monolithic entities has begun to be problematized by other scholars,¹²⁵ and the preceding analysis has built on such work. It has further emphasized the intra-

¹²² Cf. Barrett, *Acts 1–14*, 392, on *andres eulabeis* in Acts 8:2 as Luke's word for "'good' Jews who if not already Christians are ready to be persuaded;" Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1–12)*, 278, "*eulabes (pieux, qui a la crainte de Dieu)* ne désigne en Lc–Ac que des juifs (...) le narrateur ne les type pas comme chrétiens."

¹²³ Chariton, *Callirhoe* 2.3.7. Goold, *Chariton. Callirhoe*, 99.

¹²⁴ Wiedemann, "Völkerwellen und Kulturbringer," 105–28 at 109.

Jewish dimensions of Stephen's speech, including its relationship to early Jewish parameters of identity, the land (Acts 7:4), the place of worship (Acts 7:7), and the covenant of circumcision (Acts 7:8). A further aspect of this may be the speech's references to shared ancestry ("our fathers," Acts 7:12.15.19.38.39.44.45). Moreover, the polemical use of "you" and "your fathers" in Acts 7:51–53 may not be a "mechanism of disowning" but an indication of clashing perspectives concerning ancestral traditions and their appropriation. Stephen polemicizes not against the architectural legacy of the Solomonic Temple itself but against the disposition and behavior of his accusers. This article's reconstruction of the speech as a narrative of conflict is based on a reading that understands the speech's polemical conclusion (Acts 7:47–50.51–53) in conjunction with its prior biblical story-telling (Acts 7:2–46).

Stephen's biblical story-telling repeatedly emphasizes God's interest in justice for the ill-treated stranger, then turns this divine concern against his opponents (Acts 7:47–50.51–53). The polemical conclusion charges Stephen's accusers with opposition to the Holy Spirit and the prophets; accuses them of killing the righteous one instead of heeding God's imperatives to seek justice for the ill-treated stranger; and blames them for not keeping the law. Though vehement, this polemic is not a generalized anti-Jewish narrative; rather, it operates in the specific political and religious milieu of early Jewish historiography, somewhere between the "slaughter of fellow citizens" (*phonos politikos*) of the "fourth philosophy" and the savagery of the Sadducean high-priestly faction.

The speech's interest in Moses and the exodus (Acts 7:17–38), especially the biblical narrative's identification of oppression as a cause of migration, should thus be understood as a form of intra-Jewish discourse. The motif of oppression-induced migration also occurs, for example, in a fragmentary Aramaic Qumran text, 4Q568 (4Q*Aramaic K*) line 1: "judgements in their times. And he will go, and will be oppressed, and he will say: 'Let me go to the ends of the earth [...]'." The comment, "to the ends of the earth," is akin to Acts 1:8, which concerns the followers of Jesus bearing witnesses even "to the end of the earth."¹²⁶ As such, the parallel warns against any overly schematized, teleological reading of Acts – including Stephen's speech – that views this narrative merely in terms of the Jesus movement's break from Judaism, as it moves in the direction of a law-free mission to Gentiles. While the itineraries of the missionary Jesus movement range between forms of migration and mobility,¹²⁷ Paul's speeches repeatedly emphasize that he stands on trial for the "hope of Israel," all the way up to the very end of Acts (Acts 23:6–8, 26:6–8, 28:20). Paul's commitment to Israel, like Stephen's speech, underscores the extent to which Acts is engaged in an intra-Jewish discourse.

In keeping with this point, this article supports those who problematize the common reading of the Stephen episode as a conflict between "Hebrews" and "Hellenists." As we have seen, the label "Hellenists" does not exist outside of Acts 6:1, 9:29, and 11:20, where Luke uses the neologism to convey Graeco-Semitic bilingualism and cultural diversity in the Jerusalem church. The complexity of Luke's narrative really does not allow for the construction of an ideological contrast between "Hebrews" and "Hellenists." Indeed, Stephen's accusers reportedly belong to Jewish synagogues of the Hellenistic Diaspora (Acts 6:9)! The first half of Acts narrates the persecution of both Hebrews and Hellenists (Acts 4:1–31, 5:12–42, 8:1, 12:1–5), while its latter part includes indications of the ominous third-party influence of a radicalized segment of the population in Jerusalem (Acts 21:38, 23:12–16).¹²⁸ The so-called "we" passages in Acts 16:10–17, 20:5–21:18, and 27:1–28:16 add to the complexity: these cannot be reduced to a simple contrast between "Hebrews"

¹²⁵ See note 23. Cf. Dunn, "The Question of Anti-Semitism in the New Testament Writings of the Period," at 182, who notes the highest frequency of "the Jews" being attested in Acts (79 times) among other New Testament writings, and 187–95 on the question "Is Acts 'anti-semitic'?", concluding against Sanders, *The Jews in Luke-Acts*, that it is "much more in Sanders' reading of the text than in the text itself" (195).

¹²⁶ Translation from García Martínez and Tigchelaar, *Study Edition*. 2, 1121. The general parallel between Acts 1:8 and 4Q568 has also been noted by Hogeterp, *Expectations of the End*, 233–34.

¹²⁷ Cf. Von Bendemann and Tiwald, eds. *Migrationsprozesse im ältesten Christentum*.

¹²⁸ Cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 2.254–257.258–260.261–265 on *sicarii* as murderers in the city, false prophets, an Egyptian impostor, and other brigands under Felix as Roman procurator of Judaea (52–60 CE).

and “Hellenists,” as their first-person plural perspective includes observance of Jewish traditions (Acts 16:13.16, 20:6.16).

This rereading of Stephen's speech thereby also prompts a rethinking of the relationships between the Stephen episode (Acts 6:8–8:1a) and the preceding (Acts 1:1–6:7) and following (Acts 8:1b–28:31) parts of Acts' narrative. It has often been suggested that the Stephen episode stands at a critical juncture: between a period of gradual growth in the Jerusalem church, up to its inclusion of Hebrew and Hellenist, and the beginnings of the Gentile mission, in the wake of persecution.¹²⁹ Yet, the movement's relationship with Gentiles goes back to the Lucan Jesus tradition (e.g., Lk 7:1–10). The “seven,” among whom Stephen was numbered, also remain visible in the Lucan narrative, at a junction when Paul wishes to return to Jerusalem: Philip the evangelist, “who was one of the seven” (Acts 21:8 RSV), emerges as host at Caesarea in the “we” passages. Stephen's speech suggests that dialogue with biblical narratives about the past offered discursive space for reflection on migration and dislocation – but in the Jewish soil of emerging Christianity, rather than (exclusively) at the missionary ends of the early Church.¹³⁰ Moreover, this discursive space does not conclude with a transition to Gentile mission in the Diaspora. All the way up to the end of Acts, the Lucan Paul is talking with the local leaders of the Jews in Rome, welcoming all who came to him – including Gentiles – and conversing with them about “this deliverance brought about by God” (Acts 28:17–28 at v. 29). Having traveled to the capital of the Empire, Paul addresses the local Jewish leaders, saying that “it is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain” (Acts 28:20, RSV). Despite the bitter disagreements between Paul and these Jewish leaders (Acts 28:23–29), the end of Acts seems more like an unfinished discussion than a definitive parting of the ways.¹³¹

Acknowledgements: Acknowledgements are due to the feedback of peer reviewers, to the editor, Prof. Carly Crouch, and to Ms Makenzi Crouch for copy editing, as well as to Ms Katarzyna Tempczyk for careful proofreading of this article.

Funding information: Funding for open access has been provided by the University of the Free State.

Conflict of interest: Author states no conflict of interest.

References

- Balch, David L. “Foreword. Acts as Epideictic History. A Recommendation of and Response to Todd Penner.” In *In Praise of Christian Origins: Stephen and the Hellenists in Lukan Apologetic Historiography*, authored by Todd Penner, xi–xxi. New York: T&T Clark International, 2004.
- Bardet, Serge. *Le Testimonium Flavianum. Examen Historique, Considérations Historiographiques*. Paris: Cerf, 2002.

¹²⁹ Cf. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 418, on Acts 9:1–14:28 as concerning the subject “The Word Is Carried Further: Testimony Even to Gentiles;” Schnabel, *Acts*, whose outline of the structure of Acts situates “The Beginnings of the Mission to Gentiles” in Acts 8:4–12:25; Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2, Part 3, on “The Hellenist Expansion (6:1–9:31)” as “transition between the Jerusalem church and the beginning of the Gentile mission.”

¹³⁰ Pace Buchholz, “Considerations about the Theological Meaning of Migration in the Book of Acts,” 110, who states: “The migratory and multicultural context of the early Christian communities can be regarded as the soil which let the crucial theological insights grow up” and further assigns this “new theological meaning” to Stephen's sermon for “church-planting in multicultural contexts” (113).

¹³¹ By the way, in Flavian Rome, in the shadow of the Jewish war against Rome (66–70 CE) – which usually temporally precedes scholarly chronologies of dating the composition of Acts (cf. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 51–5), being “bound with a chain (*halusis*)” could have bitter overtones for hundreds of Jewish prisoners of war transported to Italy and to Rome for a Flavian victory march (cf. Josephus, *J.W.* 7.20, 7.118, 7.142–62). Josephus was exceptionally freed from his chain (*halusis*) because of his prediction that Vespasian would become emperor (*J.W.* 4.628–29), but this is a subject beyond the scope of this article.

- Barrett, C. K. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. 1. Preliminary Introduction and Commentary on Acts I–XIV*. London: T&T Clark, 1994.
- Barrett, C. K. “Attitudes to the Temple in Acts.” In *Templum Amicitiae. Essays on the Second Temple presented to Ernst Bammel*, edited by William Horbury, 345–67. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991.
- Becker, Adam H. and Annette Yoshiko Reed, eds. *The Ways that Never Parted. Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003.
- Bendemann, Reinhard von and Markus Tiwald, eds. *Migrationsprozesse im ältesten Christentum*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2018.
- Braun, Heike. *Geschichte des Gottesvolkes und christliche Identität. Eine kanonisch-intertextuelle Auslegung der Stephanusepisode Apg 6,1–8,3*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.
- Brettell, Caroline, and James Frank Hollifield. *Migration Theory: Talking Across Disciplines*. Third Edition. New York: Routledge, 2015.
- Buchholz, Meiken Antje. “Considerations about the Theological Meaning of Migration in the Book of Acts.” *European Journal of Theology* 30:1 (2021) 87–117.
- Caragounis, Chrys C. *The Development of Greek and the New Testament. Morphology, Syntax, Phonology, and Textual Transmission*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004.
- Conley, Thomas. *Toward a Rhetoric of Insult*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Conzelmann, Hans. *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. Translated by James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel, Donald H. Juel; edited by Eldon Jay Epp and Christoph R. Matthews. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.
- Crüsemann, Frank. “‘Ihr kennt die Seele des Fremden’: Eine Erinnerung an die Tora angesichts von neuem Nationalismus und Fremdenhaß,” *Concilium* 29:4 (1993) 339–47.
- Denaux, Adelbert. “A Stranger in the City. A Contribution to the Study of the Narrative Christology in Luke’s Gospel,” *Louvain Studies* 30 (2005) 255–75. Reprinted in *Studies in the Gospel of Luke. Structure, Language and Theology*, by Adelbert Denaux, 93–110. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2010.
- Denaux, Adelbert. “The Theme of Divine Visits and Human (In)Hospitality in Luke–Acts. Its Old Testament and Graeco-Roman Antecedents.” In *The Unity of Luke–Acts*, edited by Joseph Verheyden, 255–79. Reprinted in *Studies in the Gospel of Luke. Structure, Language and Theology*, by Adelbert Denaux, 71–92. Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2010.
- Dinkler, Michal Beth. “The Politics of Stephen’s Storytelling: Narrative Rhetoric and Reflexivity in Acts 7:2–53.” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 111:1 (2020) 33–64.
- Dunn, James D. G. *Jews and Christians. The Parting of the Ways A.D. 70 to 135*. Originally published 1992 by Mohr Siebeck. This edition, with new English translations, published at Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Dunn, James D. G. “The Question of Anti-Semitism in the New Testament Writings of the Period.” In *Jews and Christians. The Parting of the Ways A.D. 70 to 135*, edited by James D. G. Dunn, 177–211. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Elmer, Ian J. *Paul, Jerusalem and the Judaizers: The Galatians Crisis in Its Broadest Historical Context*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.
- Feldman, Louis H. *Josephus. Jewish Antiquities. Books XVIII–XIX*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965.
- Feldman, Louis H. *Josephus. Jewish Antiquities. Book XX. General Index*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965.
- Fiensy, David A. “The Composition of the Jerusalem Church.” In *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting. 4. The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Setting*, edited by Richard Bauckham, 213–36. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans – Carlisle, Paternoster Press, 1995.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Acts of the Apostles. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday, 1998.
- Gärtner, Judith. “[...] denn ihr seid Fremde gewesen im Land Ägypten’ (Ex 22,20). Überlegungen zu Migration im Alten Testament,” *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik und Theologie* 69:1 (2017) 3–13.
- García Martínez, Florentino and Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition. 1. (1Q1–4Q273). 2. (4Q274–11Q31)*. Leiden: Brill – Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.
- Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003.
- Goold, G. P. *Chariton. Callirhoe*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Gruen, Erich S. “Jewish Migration, Antiquity.” In *The Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration*, edited by Emmanuel Ness, 1–5. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Online Library, 2013. doi: 10.1002/9781444351071.
- Haacker, Klaus. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2019.
- Haacker, Klaus. *Stephanus. Verleumdet, Verehrt, Verkannt*. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2014.
- Halvorson-Taylor, M. A. “Displacement and Diaspora in Biblical Narrative.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Narrative*, edited by Danna Nolan Fewell, 498–506. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015/2016.
- Hengel, Martin. “Between Jesus and Paul: The ‘Hellenists’, the ‘Seven’, and Stephen (Acts 6:1–15, 7:54–8:3).” In *Between Jesus and Paul: Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity*, translated by J. Bowden, 1–29. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.
- Hezser, Catherine. *Jewish Travel in Antiquity*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011.
- Hill, Craig C. *Hellenists and Hebrews: Reappraising Division Within the Earliest Church*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.
- Hogeterp, Albert. “Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Dead Sea Scrolls: The End as Qumran Counter-Cultural Discourse on Society and Creation.” In *Eschatology and Antiquity*, edited by Hilary Marlow, Helen Van Noorden, and Karla Pollmann. London: Routledge, forthcoming 2021.

- Hogeterp, Albert. "King Solomon in the New Testament and Jewish Tradition." In *The Figure of Solomon in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Tradition*, edited by Joseph Verheyden, 143–63. Leiden: Brill, 2013.
- Hogeterp, Albert. *Expectations of the End. A Comparative Traditio-Historical Study of Eschatological, Apocalyptic and Messianic Ideas in the Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 2009.
- Hogeterp, Albert. *Paul and God's Temple. A Historical Interpretation of Cultic Imagery in the Corinthian Correspondence*. Leuven: Peeters, 2006.
- Hubmann, Franz D. "'Mein Vater war ein heimatloser Aramäer ... (Dtn 26,5)'. Gedanken zu Migration in der Bibel," *Christlich-pädagogische Blätter* 124:4 (2011) 211–15.
- Hurtado, Larry W. *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Jervell, Jacob. *Die Apostelgeschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998.
- Keener, Craig S. *Acts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.
- Keener, Craig S. *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 2. 3:1–14:28. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker 2013.
- Keener, Craig S. *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. 1. Introduction and 1:1–2:47, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2012.
- Kemezis, Adam M. "Greek Ethnicity and the Second Sophistic." In *A Companion to Ethnicity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, edited by Jeremy McInerney, 390–404. Malden, Mass.: John Wiley & Sons, 2014.
- Kucicki, Janusz. *The Function of the Speeches in the Acts of the Apostles. A Key to Interpretation of Luke's Use of Speeches in Acts*. 'Analysis of the Topical Speeches', 57–251, at 'C The Speech of Stephen (Ac 7,2–53.56.59–60). Leiden: Brill, 2017.
- Larsson, Edvin. "Temple-Criticism and the Jewish Heritage: Some Reflexions on Acts 6–7." *New Testament Studies* 39:3 (1993) 379–95.
- de Ligt, Luuk, and Laurens Ernst Tacoma, eds. *Migration and Mobility in the Early Roman Empire*. Leiden: Brill, 2016.
- Lust, Johan, Erik Eynikel, and Katrin Hauspie. *Greek–English Lexicon of the Septuagint. Revised Edition*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2003.
- Maertens, Philip. "'Vos pères' ou 'nos pères': la question de l'appartenance ethnique dans le texte grec du livre des Actes du Codex Bezae (D 05)." *New Testament Studies* 58:3 (2012) 401–15.
- Malina, Bruce J. "Jewish Christianity or Christian Judaism: Toward a Hypothetical Definition." *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 7 (1976) 46–57.
- Marguerat, Daniel. *Les Actes des Apôtres (1–12)*. Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2007.
- Marguerat, Daniel. "Luc–Actes entre Jérusalem et Rome. Un procédé lucanien de double signification." *New Testament Studies* 45:1 (1999) 70–87.
- Meeks, Wayne A. "Judaism, Hellenism, and the Birth of Christianity." In *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide*, edited by Troels Engberg-Pedersen, 17–27. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001.
- Montanari, Franco. *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Dis-Enclosure: The Deconstruction of Christianity. Translation of La Déclosion: Déconstruction du christianisme 1* (Paris: Galilée, 2005) by Bettina Bergo, Gabriel Malenfant, and Michael B. Smith. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.
- Newsom, Carol A. "Communities of Discourse." Chapter 1 in *The Self as Symbolic Space. Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran*, 1–21. Leiden: Brill, 2004.
- Nielsburg, George W. E. and James C. VanderKam. *1 Enoch. A New Translation*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004.
- Olbricht, Thomas H. "The Structure and Content of Stephen's Speech compared to Old Testament Credo." In *The Language and Literature of the New Testament*, edited by Lois Fuller Dow, Craig A. Evans, and Andrew W. Pitts, eds., 455–70. Leiden: Brill, 2016.
- Padilla, Oscar. "Hellenistic *paideia* and Luke's Education: A Critique of Recent Approaches." *New Testament Studies* 55 (2009) 416–37.
- Pate, C. Marvin. "Appendix 1: A Critique of Craig C. Hill's *Hellenists and Hebrews*." In *The Reverse of the Curse. Paul, Wisdom, and the Law*, 429–34. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000.
- Penner, Todd. *In Praise of Christian Origins: Stephen and the Hellenists in Lukan Apologetic Historiography*. New York: T&T Clark International, 2004.
- Sanders, J. T. *The Jews in Luke–Acts*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987.
- Schnabel, Eckhard J. *Acts*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2012.
- Simon, Marcel. *St. Stephen and the Hellenists*. London: Longman, Green and Company, 1958.
- Spickard, Paul and W. Jeffrey Burroughs, eds. *We Are a People. Narrative and Multiplicity in Constructing Ethnic Identity*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000.
- Steck, O. H. *Gott in der Zeit entdecken: Die Prophetenbücher des Alten Testaments als Vorbild für Theologie und Kirche*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2001.
- Stenschke, Christoph. "Migration and Mission. According to the Book of Acts." *Missionalia (online)*. 44:2 (2016) 129–51. doi: 10.7832/44-2-99.
- Sweeney, James P. "Stephen's Speech (Acts 7:2–53): Is It as Anti-Temple as is frequently alleged?" *Trinity Journal* 23:2 (2002) 185–210.
- Thackeray, H. St. J. *Josephus. The Life. Against Apion*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926.

- Thackeray, H. St. J. *Josephus. The Jewish War. Books I–II*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927. Three-volume edition 1997.
- Thackeray, H. St. J. *A Grammar of the Old Testament in Greek according to the Septuagint*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909.
- Wendel, Susan. *Scriptural Interpretation and Community Self-Definition in Luke–Acts and the Writings of Justin Martyr*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- Whitenton, Michael R. “Rewriting Abraham and Joseph: Stephen’s Speech (Acts 7:2–16) and Jewish Exegetical Traditions.” *Novum Testamentum* 54:2 (2012) 149–67.
- Wiedemann, Felix. *Am Anfang war Migration. Wanderungsnarrative in den Wissenschaften vom Alten Orient im 19. und Frühen 20. Jahrhundert*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020.
- Wiedemann, Felix. “Völkerwellen und Kulturbringer. Herkunfts- und Wanderungsnarrative in historisch-archäologischen Interpretationen des Vorderen Orients um 1900.” *Ethnographisch-Archäologische Zeitschrift* 51:1–2 (2010) 105–128.
- Yoo, Justin, Andrea Zerbini, and Caroline Barron, eds. *Migration and Migrant Identities in the Near East from Antiquity to the Middle Ages*. London: Routledge, 2018.
- Zahn, Molly M. *Rethinking Rewritten Scripture. Composition and Exegesis in the 4QReworked Pentateuch Manuscripts*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- Zugmann, M. “Hellenisten” in der Apostelgeschichte: Historische und exegetische Untersuchungen zu Apg 6,1; 9,19; 11,20. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009.