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## By Land and By Sea: The We-Passages and Ancient Sea Voyages

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The accounts of Paul's travels throughout the Mediterranean world begin in Acts 13. Prior to this chapter Paul (Saul) was present at Stephen's death (8:1), temporarily blinded and permanently converted on the road to Damascus (9:1-9), blessed and baptized by Ananias (9:17-19), and transported by night out of Damascus so the Jewish residents could not kill him (9:20-30). After some time Barnabas took Paul to Antioch where they spent a year together with the Christian community (11:25-26). When Barnabas and Paul were selected to take relief offerings to Jerusalem (11:29-30), they brought John Mark with them on their return (12:25).

Throughout all of this, Paul travels on land. In fact, in all of Luke and Acts 1-12 no one travels on the sea. In contrast to Mark and Matthew where Jesus frequently travels on the Sea of Galilee, in Luke Jesus never even goes alongside the sea (παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν).<sup>1</sup> On two occasions Jesus gets into a boat and goes onto or across "the lake" (ἡ λίμνη: 5:1, 2; 8:22, 23, 33). This "lake" is called Gennesaret in 5:1; never in Luke does Jesus go to or across "the Sea of Galilee." The author's choice of vocabulary indicates that he distinguishes between "the lake" and "the sea." "The lake" is a body of inland water on the eastern edge of Galilee. A person can sail across this lake (or "down" it, καταπλεύω: 8:26) to the land of the Gergesenes (or Gerasenes or Gadarenes) that lies opposite Galilee

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<sup>1</sup> θάλασσα occurs 18 times in Mark, 17 times in Matthew, and 3 times in Luke. Each of the occurrences in Luke is in a saying rather than narration: Luke 17:2, 6; 21:25.

(ἀντιπέρα τῆς Γαλιλαίας: 8:26). In contrast, "the sea" is that expanse of water which can take you to Cyprus, Macedonia, Achaia, Crete, or Italy. Jesus sets a precedent for sea travel on the lake, but Jesus himself never travels or voyages on the sea. Even Peter and John never travel on the sea. Only Paul and his associates face the challenge, adventure, and destiny of voyaging across the sea.

Sea travel appears for the first time in Acts 13. Paul and his company sail from Seleucia to the island of Cyprus, then from Cyprus to Pamphylia (13:4,13). This sea travel holds little adventure or danger. Only two short clauses relate the means of travel; all the narrated episodes occur on land. Two more short clauses recount sea transportation in this section of Acts. Paul and Barnabas are taken back to Syrian Antioch in a boat (14:26), and Barnabas and John Mark go to Cyprus in a boat after the disagreement with Paul (15:39). Still, however, no detailed sea voyage occurs. Only in chapter 15 do extended sea voyages begin, and when they occur, the narration moves into first person plural "we."

The coincidence of sea voyages and first person plural narration in Acts is striking. There are four we-sections in Acts: 16:10-17; 20:5-15; 21:1-18; 27:1-28:16. In each instance, a sea voyage begins as the first person plural narration emerges. While this observation can lead the interpreter in various directions, it points vividly to accounts of sea voyages in antiquity. Sea voyages are often couched in first person narration. Either the author narrates it as a participant (I sailed to Byblos ... ) or the author stages a participant recounting the voyage (he then said, "As I was sailing to Byblos ...."). Sea voyage narratives in Greek and Roman literature, however, become a distinct genre. One of the features of this genre is the presence of first person plural narration. Undoubtedly the impetus for this is sociological: on a sea voyage a person has accepted a setting with other people, and cooperation among all the members is essential for a successful voyage. Therefore, at the point where the voyage begins, the narration moves to first person plural.

The author of Luke-Acts employs the sea voyage genre with great skill. His narrative builds toward a conclusion that is reached through a dramatic sea voyage. First plural narration emerges in the sections that present "mission by sea." There is evidence to suggest that Paul's voyages across the sea were in view during the composition of the first volume of the work. To explain the role of the we-passages in Acts, we will undertake six steps of analysis. (1) Since the we-passages in Acts present sea voyages, a survey is made of narrative style that accompanies sea voyages in Greek and Roman literature; (2) since third person narrative style surrounds the we-passages in Acts, an investigation follows concerning historiographical literature that is pervaded by third person narrative; (3) since there are other texts that alternate between third person and first person plural narration, Greek literature that reflects the same style of narration as Acts is presented; (4) on the basis of the survey, the primary features of the sea voyage genre are explored, and the we-passages are examined for the presence of these features; (5) the position of the we-passages in the structure of Acts is investigated; and (6) we posit a conclusion regarding the function of the we-passages in the purpose of Luke-Acts. These explorations are intended to suggest that the author of Luke-Acts is a versatile Hellenistic writer who is an intelligent participant in the literary arena of Mediterranean culture. The author has employed first person plural narration for the sea

voyages, because it was conventional generic style within Hellenistic literature. This style contributes directly to the author's scheme of participation in history through narration of its dramatic episodes.

### Narrative Style in Ancient Sea Voyages

There is a natural propensity for portraying sea voyages through the medium of first person narration. This style for narrating voyages extends as far back as the most ancient Mediterranean literature known to us. Two Egyptian tales, *The Story of Sinuhe* (1800 B.C.) and *The Journey of Wen-Amon to Phoenicia* (11 cent. B.C.), recount sea voyages through first person singular narration.<sup>2</sup> Also Utnapishtim, in the Akkadian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, recounts his voyage upon the waters in first person *singular*.<sup>3</sup> In the Egyptian and Mesopotamian accounts the narrator uses first person singular "I," even when others are present with him on the voyage.<sup>4</sup> Homer's *Odyssey*, in contrast, contains the earliest example among Mediterranean literature of a sea voyage that employs first person *plural* narration.

In books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*, the travels and adventures of Odysseus are recounted to the Phaeacians at a banquet. The reader therefore hears about the breath-taking episodes from the lips of Odysseus himself. This narrative technique allows the dynamics of traveling on the sea and encountering strange, new peoples to emerge directly through personal narration. When Alcinous, king of the Phaeacians, asks Odysseus to recount his adventures, he begins, after the initial formalities, with:

From Ilios the wind bore me and brought me to the Cicones, to Ismarus. There I sacked the city and slew the men .... (9.39-41).<sup>5</sup>

Here, first person *singular* narration begins the account, and first person *singular* narration occurs frequently throughout these four books of the *Odyssey*. However, first person *plural* narration becomes a formulaic means for launching the ship, sailing for a number of days, and beaching the ship at the end of a voyage. Therefore, first person *plural* formulaic clauses unify the sailing accounts. Five times, voyages begin with all or part of the following first person *plural* formula:

From there we sailed on, grieved at heart, glad to have escaped death, though we had lost our dear comrades ...<sup>6</sup>

Twice, the length of a voyage is recounted in another first person plural pattern:

For nine (six) days we sailed, night and day alike ...<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), 18-22, 25-9.

<sup>3</sup> Tablet XI, in *ibid.*, 92-7.

<sup>4</sup> See *Wen-Amon* 10, where he refers to "a man of my ship," and *Gilgamesh* XI: 84, where he recounts that he made all his family and kin go aboard the ship.

<sup>5</sup> The quotations from the NT are taken from the Revised Standard Version; unless otherwise indicated, the quotations from Greek and Latin literature are from the Loeb Classical Library edition of the work.

<sup>6</sup> "Ἐνθεν δὲ προτέρω πλέομεν ἀκαχήμενοι ἦτορ, ἄσμενοι ἐκ θανάτοιο, φίλους ὀλέσαντες ἑταίρους. These two lines occur at 9.62-63; 9.565-566; 10.133-134. The first line occurs further at 9.105; 10.77. The variant ἔνθα κατεπλέομεν occurs at 9.142.

<sup>7</sup> 10.28;10.80. Ἐνῆμαρ (ἑξῆμαρ) μὲν ὁμῶς πλέομεν νύκτας τε καὶ ἡμαρ.

The voyage ending is captured in first person plural clauses that depict the beaching of the ship:

Then, on coming thither, we beached our ship on the sands, and ourselves went forth upon the shore of the sea.<sup>8</sup>

In Homeric literature, therefore, first person narration transfers the excitement and anxiety of a sea voyage in the most vivid narrative technique available to the pen. Homeric couplets perpetuate the dynamics in poetic form, and first person plural narration becomes as familiar as the *Odyssey* itself:

From there we sailed on, grieved at heart, glad to have escaped death, though we had lost our dear comrades ...<sup>9</sup>

The same technique is used by Vergil (70-19 B.C.) in books 2-3 of the *Aeneid*. Since the structure of the *Aeneid* imitates the *Odyssey*, Vergil's use of first person narration results directly from Homeric influence.<sup>10</sup> Aeneas himself recounts the destruction of Troy and the voyage that ends in a shipwreck offshore Carthage. In book 3, his first person account to Dido turns from the sack of Troy (book 2) to his subsequent travels that have brought him to Carthage. With the launching of the boat, first person *plural* narration becomes commonplace:

With Asian power and Priam's tribe uprooted,  
though blameless, by heaven's decree; with Ilium's pride  
fallen, and Neptune's Troy all smoke and ash,  
God's oracles drove us on to exile, on  
to distant, lonely lands. We built a fleet  
down to Antander and Ida's Phrygian peaks,  
uncertain which way Fate led or where to stop.  
We marshaled our men. When summer first came on,  
Anchises bade us trust our sails to fate (3.1 -9).<sup>11</sup>

These two examples come from the prestigious epic literature of Greek and Roman culture. Their influence was pervasive in the literature of the Mediterranean world. Sea voyages are not only adventurous but lead to the founding of new cities and the establishment of new leaders. Shipwrecks create the setting for man's display of strength and take the passengers, unplanned, to famous islands and cities of the Mediterranean world. Through these voyages, destiny unfolds and the ways of the gods with men are displayed.

From the seventh century B.C. onwards, Greek poetry contained sea voyage imagery, and it is not unusual for the lines that contain this imagery to be formulated in first person plural style. Two poems by the lyric poet Alcaeus (b. ca. 620 B.C.) reflect this style. Both poems were cited by Heraclitus (1 cent. A.D.) as

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<sup>8</sup> 9.546-547; 12.5-7: νῆα μὲν ἔνθ' ἐλθόντες ἐκέλαμεν ἐν ψαμάθοισιν, ἐκ δὲ καὶ αὐτοὶ βῆμεν ἐπὶ ῥηγμῖνι θαλάσσης. Variations of this pattern occur at 9.149-151; 9.169. Cf. 9.85; 10.56; 11.20.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Werner Suerbaum, "Die Ich-Erzählungen des Odysseus," *Poetica* 2 (1968): 176-7, n. 58. Also W. J. Woodhouse, *The Composition of Homer's Odyssey* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1930), 44: "The sea-stories proper constitute the content of a comparatively short portion of the life of the hero... in the string of adventures supposed to be narrated by Odysseus himself at the court of king Alkinoos, Homer has raised these age-old stories to a power of illusive reality, to an artistic and ethical level, that together give this portion of the *Odyssey* its own special undying quality."

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Brooks Otis, *Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1963), 215-312.

<sup>11</sup> Vergil, *The Aeneid* (trans. Frank O. Copley; New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), 49.

allegories of political trouble in the state.<sup>12</sup> Alcaeus 6 maintains first person plural throughout the scene of sailing on dangerous waters:

This wave again comes [like?] the one before:  
it will give us much labour to bale out,  
when it enters the vessel's [...]  
[...] let us fortify the [...] with all speed,  
and run into a secure harbour.

And let not unmanly hesitance take hold of any one [of us]:  
a great [...] is clear before us.  
Remember our [toils] of yesterday:  
now let each prove himself a steadfast man.

And let us not disgrace [by cowardice]  
our noble fathers lying under the earth ...<sup>13</sup>

Alcaeus 326 alternates between first person singular and plural as the poet captures the anxiety that attends the injury inflicted on a ship in a storm:

I cannot tell where the wind lies;  
one wave rolls from this side,  
one from that, and we in their midst  
are borne along with our black vessel

Toiling in a tempest passing great.  
The bilge is up over the masthold,  
all the sail lets the daylight through already,  
and there are great rents along it,

And the woodings are slackening,  
the rudders ... both feet stay [entangled]  
In the sheets: that alone it is that [saves] me;  
the cargo ... is carried away above ...<sup>14</sup>

Theognis (fl. 544-541 B.C.) continues this imagery and style of narration in the section of his lyric poetry that treats the city-state metaphorically as a ship on a turbulent sea:

Now we are borne along with white sails, casting about on the open sea near  
Melos through the dark night; The crew does not want to bale; and the sea casts  
over us on both sides of the ship . . . (671-674).<sup>15</sup>

The metaphor of the city-state as a ship on the sea also appears in tragic poetry. In *Seven Against Thebes*, Aeschylus (525/4-456 B.C.) has a messenger announce the successful defense of the city against its aggressors in these

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<sup>12</sup> *Allegories of Homer 5*; available in Felix Buffiere, *Heraclite: Allegories d'Homere* (Paris: Societe d'edition 'Les Belles Lettres,' 1962), 4-5.

<sup>13</sup> Alcaeus 6 (Diehle)/A6 (Lobel and Page); this translation is from Denys L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), 183.

<sup>14</sup> Alcaeus 326 (Diehle)/Z2 (Lobel and Page); translation from *ibid.*, 186.

<sup>15</sup> Author's translation; for the text with commentary, see David A. Campbell, *Greek Lyric Poetry* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 85-6, 368-70. Pindar (518-438 B.C.) used sea voyage imagery metaphorically to describe the process of writing an ode; see Gogo Lieberg, "Seefahrt und Werk," *Giornale Italiano di Filologia* 21 (1969): 209-13. Nemea 4.36-8 is especially interesting for its use of first person plural; for analysis of this passage, see Jacques Peron, *Les Images maritimes de Pindare* (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1974), 90-100. For a detailed study of first person in Pindar, see Mary R. Lefkowitz, "'ΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΕΓΩ' The First Person in Pindar," *HSCP* 67 (1963): 177-253.

words:

Both in fair weather and in the many blows of the surging  
sea the city has not shipped water.  
The bastion is water-tight  
and we have bulwarked her ports with champions  
who in single-handed fight have redeemed their pledge  
(795-798).<sup>16</sup>

The attack on the city is like a storm that threatens to destroy a ship at sea. With disciplined effort and gradual abatement of the storm, the ship is successfully kept afloat. Aeschylus also uses sea voyage imagery in a speech by Electra in *The Libation-Bearers*:

But the gods whom we invoke, know  
by what storms we are tossed like sailors.  
Yet, if it is our fate to win safety,  
from a little seed may spring a mighty stock (201 -203).

The difficult situation faced by Electra and her companions calls forth the danger of sailing on the sea. Mortals have little choice but to turn their petitions to heaven and hope for a successful outcome. First person plural narration attends this imagery in epic, lyric, and tragic poetry. During later centuries, this literature is copied, quoted, and read, and its influence is found in widespread sectors of Hellenistic and Roman civilization.

In his *Menippean Satires*, Varro (116-27 B.C.) provides evidence that first person style persists in voyage imagery during the first century B.C.<sup>17</sup> Fragments 276 and 473, preserved by Nonius Marcellus (early 4th cent. A.D.), read respectively:

276:

Here at the crossroads we boarded a swampboat,  
which the barge boys pulled along through the  
sedge with a rope.

473:

Wherever we wanted to go, the wind blew against us.<sup>18</sup>

Nonius also recounts that Varro knew a two-book satire entitled *Periplous* (Voyage),<sup>19</sup> and fragment 418, from book 2, contains the first person plural narration.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See the translation and commentary in Howard D. Cameron, *Studies on the Seven Against Thebes of Aeschylus* (Paris: Mouton, 1971), 63.

<sup>17</sup> See Eduard Norden, *Agnostos Theos* (Leipzig: Tuebner, 1913), 313. I have been informed at many places in this paper by his appendix, "Zur Komposition der Acta Apostolorum," pp. 311 - 32.

<sup>18</sup> These fragments are most readily available in *Petronii Sarturae* (ed. F. Buecheler; Berlin: Weidmann, 1904), 193, 214:

276: *hic in ambivio naven conscendimus palustrem, quam nautici quisones per ulvam ducerent loro.*

473: *quocumque ire vellemus, obuius flare.*

I am indebted to my colleague, Professor David F. Bright, for the translations of the material from Buecheler.

<sup>19</sup> See M. Terenti Varronis, *Saturarum Menippearum* (ed. Alexander Riese; Leipzig: Tuebner, 1865), 197-8.

<sup>20</sup> Beucheler, *Petronii Sarturae*, 208: "... lest we wander, that there were many bypaths, and that the way was quite safe, but slow going." *et ne erraremus, ectropas esse multas, omnio tutum, esse sed spissum iter.*

By the first century A.D., sea voyages, interrupted by storms, were an established part of Mediterranean literature outside of epic. And first person narration of voyages appears to be not only fashionable but preferred. Dio Chrysostom (A.D. 40-after 112), from whom portions of 78 discourses are extant, most frequently recounts tales in third person narration. But in the seventh discourse, when a sea voyage, which ends in a shipwreck and a journey, is recounted, he uses first person narration:

... at the close of the summer season I was crossing from Chios with some fisherman in a very small boat, when such a storm arose that we had great difficulty in reaching the Hollows of Euboea in safety (7.2).

After a short while on shore, a hunter invites him to travel with him. The narrative thus continues:

As we proceeded on our way, he told me of his circumstances and how he lived with his wife and children . . . (7.10).

Dio's use of first person narration for this tale of voyage and adventure suggests that he was responding to the genre itself. This style had established itself within the cultural milieu, and writers found it natural to respond to this convention.

Within sea voyage accounts, the shipwreck became an increasingly attractive feature. Petronius (1st cent. A.D.) exhibits this interest in shipwreck accounts and also shows the natural propensity for first person narration in them. It only seemed proper to recount the dangerous episode with first person plural:

While we talked over this matter and others, the sea rose, clouds gathered from every quarter, and overwhelmed the day in darkness .... One moment the wind set towards Sicily, very often the north wind blew off the Italian coast, mastered the ship and twisted her in every direction; and what was more dangerous than any squall, such thick darkness had suddenly blotted out the light that the steersman could not even see the whole prow . . . (ch. 114).

Even the Jewish historian Josephus mentions a sea voyage and a shipwreck in his biography. And little surprise it is that he shifts from first person singular to first person plural as he recounts it:

I reached Rome after being in great jeopardy at sea. For our ship foundered in the midst of the sea of Adria, and our company of some six hundred souls had to swim all that night. About daybreak, through God's good providence, we sighted a ship of Cyrene, and I and certain others, about eighty in all, outstripped the others and were taken on board (3; sections 14-16).

By the first century A.D. the sea voyage, threatened by shipwreck, had established itself as a distinct genre. An essential feature of this genre was first person narration. The status of the genre provided the possibility for authors to employ the situation of a sea voyage to interpret many situations in life. Thus Ovid, in *Tristia* 1.2.31-34 (composed A.D. 8-9), compares his life in exile to a sea voyage threatened by shipwreck:

The helmsman is confused nor can he find what to avoid or what to seek; his very skill is numbed by the baffling perils. We are surely lost, there is no hope of safety. . .

Being in exile is like being thrown on a ship that starts on a voyage. One is dependent upon the crew for the outcome, but even the crew cannot predict the fortune of the journey. Together they face the peril of the sea, and when the wind becomes a storm and the waves begin to threaten, every occupant of the ship faces the same jeopardy. Together they experience the confusion, the fear, and

the hope that all is not lost. As Ovid uses this situation on the sea to explain his experience in exile, he expresses the anguish in first person plural: "We are surely lost, there is no hope of safety. . . ."

In the second century A.D., Lucian (A.D. 125-180) wrote a sea voyage parody entitled *A True Story*. If Ovid's use of a sea voyage to interpret his exile leaves any doubt with regard to the status of this genre, Lucian's parody gives even firmer evidence. In his work Lucian recounts a fantastic voyage with tongue in cheek. His parody reveals the essential features of the sea voyage genre. He narrates the voyage as Odysseus, Aeneas, Dio Chrysostom and Josephus narrate theirs. He begins in first person singular and shifts to first person plural at the embarkation.

Once upon a time, setting out from the Pillars of Hercules and heading for the western ocean with a fair wind, I went a-voyaging. . . . For a day and a night we sailed before the wind making very little offing, as land was still dimly in sight; but at sunrise on the second day the wind freshened, the sea rose, darkness came on, and before we knew it we could no longer even get our canvas in.... On the eightieth day the sun came out suddenly and at no great distance we saw a high, wooded island. . . . Putting in and going ashore, we lay on the ground for some time in consequence of our long misery . . . (1.5-6).

Even though Lucian made light of sea voyage accounts by presenting one of the most fantastic voyages imaginable, the sea voyage genre had a firm place within the literature of the culture. Thus Achilles Tatius (A.D. second century) includes a sea voyage in the *Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon*, and the appeal of the account is strengthened by first person narration:

. . . as we arrived at the harbour of Berytus, we found a ship just sailing, on the very point of casting loose: so we asked no questions as to her destination, but embarked all our belongings aboard . . . (2.31.6).

On the third day of our voyage, the perfect calm we had hitherto experienced was suddenly overcast by dark clouds and the daylight disappeared, a wind blew upwards from the sea full in the ship's face, and the helmsman bade the sailyard be slewed around . . . (3.1.1).

In 4.9.6. these adventures are summarized in first person plural:

We escaped the terrors that awaited us at home, only to suffer shipwreck; we were saved from the sea, . . . [lacuna]; we were rescued from the robbers, only to find madness waiting for us.

This style continues in the third century (A.D. 220-250) in Heliodorus' *Ethiopian Story* about Theagenes and Chariclea. The author has established third person style of narration up to this point, so he leads into the voyage with this style:

When they got on board the Phoenician vessel, he said, in their flight from Delphi, the beginning of their voyage was quite agreeable, as they were borne along by a following wind of moderate strength . . . (5.17).

But after only a few lines, Heliodorus turns the narrative over to Calasiris for a personal account of the voyage.

Calasiris then pursued his narrative thus: "We made our way through the strait, he said, "and when we had lost sight of the Pointed Isles, we fancied that we could distinguish the headland of Zacynthus creeping into our view like a dark



cloud . . ."(5.17).<sup>21</sup>

Since first person narration emerged naturally in relation to sea voyage literature, there could be no complete reversal of the trend. The dynamic of voyaging on the sea brings with it the experience of working with others to achieve a safe voyage and of sharing with others the fear and desperation when storm threatens to end the voyage in shipwreck. The social setting that emerges through a voyage on the sea gave rise to the sea voyage genre recounted with the personal plural dynamic: "We thought we were lost, we did what we could, and we made it through."

### Third Person Narration in Greek Literature

But now it is necessary to look at the genre where third person narration dominates. If the examples given thus far suggest a natural affinity between first person narration and sea voyages, they do not reveal the strong bias toward third person narration in Greek and Latin prose literature. At least as early as Thucydides (ca. 460-400 B.C.) a standard had been set for narrative historiography that included third person narrative style.

Thucydides carried this style through with remarkable candor, so that, beginning with book 4 of the *History of the Peloponnesian War*, he recounted his own activities in the army in third person narration. Thus he introduces himself into the narrative with these words:

... the opponents of the traitors... acting in concert with Eucles the general... sent to the other commander of the Thracian district, Thucydides son of Olorus, the author of this history, who was at Thasos, a Parian colony, about a half-day's sail from Amphipolis, and urged him to come to their aid. And he, on hearing this, sailed in haste with seven ships which happened to be at hand ... (4.104.4ff).

Thucydides, the objective, truthful narrator features himself in the narrative for a number of pages, never using first person narration. By this means Thucydides hopes to persuade his readers that his account is based on the finest evidence and presented in the most accurate manner (1.1.1 -2).

Xenophon (428/7-354 B.C.) used this same style for the *Anabasis* and the *Hellenica*. Therefore he introduces himself into the narrative in book 3 of the *Anabasis* in the following way:

There was a young man in the army named Xenophon, an Athenian, who was neither general nor captain nor private, but had accompanied the expedition because Proxenus, an old friend of his, had sent him at his home an invitation to go with him; Proxenus had also promised him that if he should go, he would make him a friend of Cyrus ... (3.1.4). Xenophon ... after offering the sacrifices to the gods that Apollo's oracle prescribed, set sail, overtook Proxenus and Cyrus at Sardis as they were on the point of beginning the upward march, and was introduced to Cyrus .... It was in this way, then, that Xenophon came to go on the expedition . . . (3.1.8).

From this point on Xenophon becomes a participant in the action and the dialogue. Never, however, does the author use first person narration for his own participation.<sup>22</sup> Both Thucydides and Xenophon consider third person narration

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<sup>21</sup> Heliodorus, *Ethiopian Story* (trans. Walter Lamb; New York: Dutton, 1961), 123-4.

<sup>22</sup> Xenophon, in contrast with Thucydides, does not even claim authorship of the *Anabasis*, evidently because he was a participant in it. Instead, he claims, in *Hellenica* 3.1.2., that the *Anabasis* was written by Themistogenes of Syracuse.

to be the proper historiographical style. They even recount sea voyages in this style.

From the same century as Xenophon's works, a sailing manual for mariners has been preserved.<sup>23</sup> This *Periplus of the Mediterranean Sea*, as it is entitled, is attributed to Scylax the Younger. The author starts the manual with first person singular: "I will begin [my description] from the Pillars of Hercules...." After this, the journalistic description of cities, people and distances is given in third person except for fourteen interjections where he says, "Now I will return to the coast, from which I turned away [in my description]."<sup>24</sup> This document is too non-literary to be influenced by the historiographical tradition. Yet it does represent sea voyage information in a third person informational style.

A similar manual tradition emerges in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (A.D. 50-95).<sup>25</sup> This document is a third person description of the harbors, cities and peoples along the coastline of the Indian Ocean. Even in this account, however, the propensity for first person plural is exhibited. When the author is describing a dangerous section of the coastline, he automatically slips into first person plural style.

Navigation is dangerous along this whole coast of Arabia, which is without harbors, with bad anchorages, foul, inaccessible because of breakers and rocks, and terrible in every way. Therefore we hold our course down the middle of the gulf and pass on as fast as possible by the country of Arabia until we come to the Burnt Island . . .<sup>26</sup>

Thus, even in third person manual *periploi*, first person is likely to intrude.

A rather forthright perpetuation of third person historiographical style appears in the works of Arrian (A.D. 96-ca. 180) who imitated Xenophon in his *Anabasis of Alexander* and Herodotus in his *Indica*.<sup>27</sup> Therefore his account of Nearchus' sea voyage in *Indica* 8.20.1 -8.36.9 is recounted in third person, though the reader is told that it is Nearchus' personal account.

On this Nearchus writes thus: Alexander had a vehement desire to sail the sea which stretches from India to Persia; but he disliked the length of the voyage and feared lest, meeting with some country desert or without roadstands, or not properly provided with the fruits of the earth, his whole fleet might be destroyed (8.20.1f). . . . And Nearchus says that Alexander discussed with him whom he should select to be admiral of his fleet (8.20.4).... At length Alexander accepted

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<sup>23</sup> Walter W. Hyde, *Ancient Greek Mariners* (New York: Oxford University press, 1947), 19, 116. Text in Karl Müller, *Geographi Graeci Minores* (2 vols.; Paris: Instituti Franciae, 1855-1861; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1965), 1:15-96.

<sup>24</sup> Ἐπάνειμι δὲ πάλιν ἐπὶ τὴν ἠπειρον, ὅθεν ἐξετραπόμην (with slight variation): 7, 13, 29, 34, 48, 53, 58, 67 (twice), 97, 98, 99 (twice), 103. In 21 he refers to νῆσοί ὧν ἔχω εἰπεῖν τὰ ὀνόματα ἀνδρῶν τοῦ ἠὲ ὁδοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐπὶ ἡμῶν θάλασσαν.

<sup>25</sup> Wilfred H. Schoff, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1912), 8-9. Text in Müller, *Geographi*, 1:257-305.

<sup>26</sup> Schoff, *Periplus*, 30. Also in 57, first person emerges: κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν, ἐτησίῳ ἐν τῷ Ἰνδικῷ πελάγει ὁ λιβόντος φαίνεται ἵππαλοῦ προσονομάζεσθαι ἀπὸ τῆς προσηγορίας τοῦ πρῶτως ἐξευρηκότος τὸν διάπλουον].

<sup>27</sup> See Lionel Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great* (London: American Philological Association, 1960), 112. A similar style is perpetuated by Apollonius of Rhodes in *Argonautica*.

Nearchus' willing spirit, and appointed him admiral of the entire fleet (8.20.7). ... Now when the trade winds had sunk to rest . . . they put to sea . . . (8.21.1).

Arrian, however, is credited with a *Periplus of the Euxine Sea*. Because the author formulated the account as a letter to Hadrian, he was able to recount the voyage in first person plural.<sup>28</sup>

While Arrian perpetuated the third person historiographical style as employed by Xenophon, Caesar (1st cent. B.C.) allowed first person plural comments within a third person narrative style. Most frequently, in the *Gallic Wars*, first person plural emerges in accounts of battle. But in at least one voyage account the author allows first person plural to intrude.

When the ships had been beached and the camp thoroughly well entrenched, Caesar left the same forces as before to guard the ships. ... Here in mid-channel is an island called Man; ... some have written that in midwinter, night there lasts for thirty whole days. We could discover nothing about this by inquiries; but by exact measurements, we observed that the nights were shorter than on the continent (5.11).

In Caesar's account, therefore, an autobiographical feature is allowed within historiography, especially in battles and a voyage. Is it too much to suggest that this becomes a characteristic typology for historiography in the 1st century B.C. and A.D., and that the writer of Luke-Acts construes his narrative in relation to this typology?

This survey has been designed to show two things: (a) the genre of sea voyage narrative within Greek literature uses first person plural narration; (b) the standards of historiography brought in a necessity for third person narration, but, in spite of this, first person plural narration emerges in accounts of battles and voyages.

### Parallels to the Voyages in Acts

But if the we-passages in Acts are to be understood in relation to these features in narrative literature, are there not more precise parallels? In Acts the narration shifts from third person to first person plural, and the narrator is not the main actor. A precise parallel exists in the *Voyage of Hanno the Carthaginian*.<sup>29</sup> This document exists in Greek and was written down between 350-125 B.C. It reflects the convergence of the historiographical tradition and sea voyage tradition as it appears in Acts. Some interpreters suggest it was translated from Punic into Greek under the influence of the historian Polybius; others suggest the influence of Herodotus.<sup>30</sup> This three page account begins with third person

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<sup>28</sup> Text in Müller, *Geographi*, 370-401. On the letter form as a technique for presenting the account as a personal voyage, see Henry Chotard, *Le Périphe de la Mer Noire par Arrien* (Paris: Remquet, 1860), 3-7.

<sup>29</sup> Text in Müller, *Geographi*, 1 -14. At this point I must express my sincere gratitude to Professor Emeritus John L. Heller who called my attention to this document. His conversation with me about the shift from third person to first person plural in this voyage account inspired this entire investigation.

<sup>30</sup> W. Aly, "Die Entdeckung des Westens," *Hermes* 62 (1927): 317-339, suggests Polybian influence; G. Germain, "Qu'est-ce que le Périphe d'Hannon? Document, amplification littéraire ou faux intégral?" *Hesperis* 44 (1957): 205-48, suggests that a later writer was influenced by Herodotus' style.

narration and shifts into first person narration in the following manner:

It pleased the Carthaginians that Hanno should voyage outside the Pillars of Hercules, and found cities of the Libyphoenicians. And he set forth with sixty ships of fifty oars, and a multitude of men and women, to the number of thirty thousand, and with wheat and other provisions. After passing through the Pillars we went on and sailed for two days' journey beyond, where we founded the first city.... Having set up an altar to Neptune, we proceeded again, going toward the east for half the day...(1-3).<sup>31</sup>

First person plural narration continues to the end of the document, where, on account of the lack of further supplies, they return to Carthage.

Another parallel to the style of narration in Acts is present in a four-column papyrus dated ca. 246 B.C., which is best entitled *Episodes from the Third Syrian War*.<sup>32</sup> I.1-II.11 contains third person narration. In II.12 the narration shifts to first person plural as a sea voyage is recounted:

... Arzibazos, the satrap in Cilicia, intended to send [the captured money] to Ephesus for Laodice's group, but when the people of Soli and the satraps immediately agreed among themselves, and the associates of Pythagoras and Aristocles vigorously helped, and all were good men, it happened that the money was kept and both the city and the citadel became ours. But when Arzibazos escaped and reached the passes of the Tauros and some of the inhabitants cut him off at the entrance, he went back to Antioch. Then we (made ready) the things on the ships, and, when the first watch began, we embarked in as many ships as the harbor of Seleucia (at Orontes) was likely to hold and sailed to a port called Poseidon and we anchored ourselves at the eighth hour. Then, getting away from there in the morning, we went to Seleucia. And the priest and rulers and other citizens and officers and soldiers, crowned with wreaths, met us ... (2.6-25).<sup>33</sup>

In second and third century Christianity, two documents of the Acts-genre contain first person plural in relation to sea voyages. Undoubtedly the first century Acts of the Apostles has influenced these documents. It is informative, however, to observe first person plural narration in the midst of sea voyage material. In the *Antiochene Acts of the Martyrdom of Ignatius*, third person narration shifts unannounced to first person plural as the author gives a summary of the voyage:

... passing through Philippi he [Ignatius] journeyed by land across Macedonia and the part of Epirus which lies by Epidamnus. And here on the sea coast he took ship and sailed across the Hadriatic sea, and thence entering the Tyrrhene and passing by islands and cities, the holy man when he came in view of Puteoli was eager himself to disembark, desiring to tread in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul; but forasmuch as a stiff breeze springing up prevented it, the ship being driven by a stern wind, he commended the love of the brethren in that place, and so sailed by. Thus in one single day and night, meeting with favourable winds, we ourselves were carried forward against our will, mourning over the separation which must soon come between ourselves and this righteous man...<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Wilfred H. Schoff, *The Periplus of Hanno* (Philadelphia: Commercial Museum, 1913), 3.

<sup>32</sup> The first edition of the text is found in John P. Mahaffy, *The Flinders Petri Papyri* (3 vols.; Dublin: Academy House, 1891-1905), XLV (2:145-9), CXLIV (3:334-8). The re-edited text is available in L. Mitteis and U. Wilcken, *Grundzüge und Chrestomathie der Papyrskunde*, Vol. 1, Part 2 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1912), 1-7.

<sup>33</sup> Translation by the author, consulting Mahaffy.

<sup>34</sup> J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers* (5 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1885-1890), 2:577.

In these three texts and the book of Acts, third person narration is established as the style for recounting the events that occur. However, when a sea voyage begins the narration shifts, without explanation, to first person plural.

Yet another text holds interest for this study, although it does not represent an exact parallel to the narrative style of Acts. In *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*, Nag Hammadi codex VI.1, the narrative alternates between first person and third person narration. Unfortunately, the first part of the text has been destroyed, so that it is impossible to know if the document began with first person or third person narrative style. The extant portion begins with a scene in which Peter and the apostles covenant with one another to take a special voyage on the sea. Immediately after this scene, they go down to the sea and begin their venture. First person plural narration governs the composition of the two episodes.

[...] which [...] purpose [...] after... us [...] apostles [...]. We sailed [...] of the body. [Others] were not anxious in [their hearts]. And in our hearts, we were united. We agreed to fulfill the ministry to which the Lord appointed us. And we made a covenant with each other.

We went down to the sea at an opportune moment, which came to us from the Lord. We found a ship moored at the shore ready to embark, and we spoke with the sailors of the ship about our coming aboard with them. They showed great kindness toward us as was ordained by the Lord. And after we had embarked, we sailed a day and a night. After that, a wind came up behind the ship and brought us to a small city in the midst of the sea (VI.1.1-29).<sup>35</sup>

The first person plural narrative style shifts to first person singular when the boat arrives at the dock.

And I, Peter, inquired about the name of this city from residents who were standing on the dock. [A man] among [them] answered, [saying, "The name] of this [city is Habitation, that is], Foundation [. . .] endurance." And the leader [among them ... holding] the palm branch at the edge of [the dock]. And after we had gone ashore [with the] baggage, I [went] into [the] city, to seek [advice] about the lodging (VI.1.30-2.10).

At this point it appears that the narrative is recounted entirely in first person with Peter telling the story. A little further on, however, Peter is presented, without comment, through narration by the author in third person style.

[The men asked Peter] about the hardships. Peter answered [that it was impossible to tell] those things that he had heard about the hardships off [the] way, because [interpreters were] difficult [. . .] in their ministry.

He said to the man who sells this pearl, "I want to know your name and the hardships of the way to your city because we are strangers and servants of God. It is necessary for us to spread the word of God in every city harmoniously." He answered and said, "If you seek my name, Lithargoel is my name, the interpretation of which is, the light, gazelle-like stone" (VI.5.2-19).

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<sup>35</sup> The quotations from *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles* are taken from *The Nag Hammadi Library in English* (ed. James M. Robinson; trans. Douglas M. Parrott and R. McL. Wilson; New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 454-9 and are used by permission of Harper and Row. I am grateful to Professor George W. MacRae, Harvard University, for calling these references to my attention.

As the story continues, the narrative style alternates, without explanation between first person and third person narration. Sometimes, in other words, Peter is telling the story, and at other times Peter is talked about in third person as a participant in the events. Finally, the document ends with a third person account of "the Lord" with the disciples (VI.10.14-12.22).

For the purposes of this study, it would be informative to know if *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles* began, as well as concluded, with third person narration. There is a possibility that it began with third person narrative style adopted first person narrative style in the context of the sea voyage, then returned to third person style at the end of the account. Without further evidence, it is impossible to know. It does seem fair to conclude that this document probably written during the latter part of the second century<sup>36</sup> has been influenced both by the sea voyage material in the canonical book of Acts and by first person narrative style in romance literature.<sup>37</sup> Among the apocryphal Acts material, it attracts special interest because of the coincidence of first plural narration with a sea voyage. During the second and third centuries, however, first person narrative style influenced the apocryphal material beyond the context of sea voyages.<sup>38</sup>

In conclusion, there are three texts, in addition to the book of Acts, where third person narrative style shifts to first person plural when a sea voyage is initiated. In a fourth text, *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*, the narration shifts freely among first person plural, first person singular, and third person narration.

It may be well to notice a feature of Luke-Acts that has not yet been mentioned. The author begins his narrative with a first person singular preface to Luke and another at the beginning of Acts. Therefore, the author uses first person narration in the prefaces, third person narration in the basic text, and first person plural narration in the accounts of sea voyages. Luke evidently adapts his style to the content that he presents. The we-passages fit the genre of sea voyage narratives. Such accounts would be expected to contain first person narration, whether or not the author was an actual participant in the voyage. Without first person narration the account would limp. By the first century A.D., a sea voyage recounted in third person narration would be considered out of vogue, especially if a shipwreck or other amazing events were recounted. For this reason an alert writer like Luke would place himself on the journey by using first person plural.

### **The We-Passages as Sea Voyage Literature**

The we-passages in Acts have captivated interpreters from Irenaeus<sup>39</sup> to the present.<sup>40</sup> And, for the most part, Irenaeus' shadow has fallen over the whole

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of first person narration in romance literature, see Ben E. Perry, "Appendix III: The Ego-Narrative in Comic Stories," in *The Ancient Romances* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 325-9.

<sup>38</sup> See, e.g., *Acts of John and Acts of Thomas 1*, in *The Apocryphal New Testament* (ed. and trans. M. R. James; Oxford: Clarendon, 1953), 228-70, 365.

<sup>39</sup> *Against Heresies* 3.14.1.

<sup>40</sup> See Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (trans. R. McL. Wilson et al.; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) and Ward Gasque, *A History of Criticism of the Acts of the Apostles* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1975).

enterprise. For Irenaeus, the we-passages demonstrated that the author of Luke-Acts was a companion of Paul. Many interpreters since Irenaeus have left the impression that an author who used first person plural narration in his account must, by necessity, have been a participant in those events or must have used a diary of a participant.

Internally, however, the we-passages are not a unity. The variation from "we," which includes Paul, to "Paul and us" (16:17; 21:18) exhibits the use of first person plural as a stylistic device by the author himself. Also, the tension between "we" and "they" in Acts 27:1-44 reflects the author's employment of first person plural for sea voyaging even when it is difficult to sustain the personal narration in the context of the events that occur on the voyage.

Eduard Norden was aware that the we-passages in Acts represent the sea voyage genre.<sup>41</sup> Henry J. Cadbury read Norden's work and knew that these sections were a different genre from the other material in Acts.<sup>42</sup> He mentioned that it was a "regular custom for the *periplous*, as the account of a coasting voyage was called, to be written in first person ..."<sup>43</sup> but he did not take the next step. He concluded that the abrupt shift from third person narration to "we" was "peculiar and unexplained."<sup>44</sup>

The evidence within contemporary Mediterranean literature suggests that the author of Luke-Acts used "we" narration as a stylistic device. The influence for this lies in the Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman literary milieu.<sup>45</sup> This first plural technique is simply a feature of the sea voyage genre in Mediterranean antiquity. All of the features of this genre arise out of the dynamics of sailing on the sea, landing in unfamiliar places, and hoping to establish an amiable relationship with the people in the area where the landing occurs.<sup>46</sup> During the short stay on land, before resuming the voyage, two kinds of episodes are especially frequent. First, an event often occurs in which some people of the area are friendly toward the voyagers. This event usually leads to an invitation to stay at someone's home.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Eduard Norden, *Agnostos Theos*, 313-27.

<sup>42</sup> Henry J. Cadbury, *The Making of Luke-Acts* (New York: Macmillan, 1927), 60-1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 358.

<sup>45</sup> During this time period, Semitic voyages do not use first person plural narrative style. Neither the biblical accounts of Noah nor Jonah use this technique. The voyage of Jonah raises the most interesting possibilities because of its widespread popularity. Beginning with the end of the third century A.D., Jonah's voyage appears frequently in sarcophagi. For this information, see Cornelia C. Coulter, "The 'Great Fish' in Ancient and Medieval Story," *TAPA* 57 (1926): 32-50; Joseph Engemann, *Untersuchungen zur Sepulkral-symbolik der späteren römischen Kaiserzeit* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1973), 70-4. First person plural narration does appear in the Islamic account of Jonah's voyage: Koran Sura 37:139-141; see Richard Delbrueck, *Probleme der Lipsanotek in Brescia* (Bonn: P. Hanstein, 1952), 22-3. For a study of the Jonah traditions in the NT, see Richard A. Edwards, *The Sign of Jonah* (Naperville: Allenson, 1971).

<sup>46</sup> For all kinds of information about ships and sea travel on and around the Mediterranean, including information about Paul's voyages, see the four works by Lionel Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964); *idem*, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971); *idem*, *The Ancient Mariners* (New York: Macmillan, 1959); *idem*, *Illustrated History of Ships and Boats* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1964). For an account of the search for the remains of ancient ships, and the estimates regarding the number of ships that traveled the Mediterranean and went down in the deep, see Willard Bascom, *Deep Water, Ancient Ships* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *Voyage of Hanno* 6; Vergil, *Aeneid* 3.80-83, 306-355; Dio Chrysostom 7.3-5; Lucian, *A True Story* 1.33; 2.34; Achilles Tatius 2.33; Heliodorus, *Ethiopian Story* 5.18.

The voyagers seldom remain neutral visitors in a locale where they land. Thus a second event will divide the people of the area over whether or not these voyagers are to be trusted. Usually the leader of the voyage will become involved in a major episode in which his extraordinary abilities are displayed. Often he will speak eloquently and perform some unusual feat.<sup>48</sup> If the voyagers are not driven forcibly from the place where they have landed, an emotional farewell scene occurs in which the people bring provisions and other gifts to the boat.<sup>49</sup>

A sea voyage account often opens with a statement regarding the purpose of the voyage, a comment about preparations for it, and a list of some of the participants in it.<sup>50</sup> When the voyage is under way, there is an account of the places by which the voyagers sail, and frequently short descriptive comments are given about the places. Also, the length of time it takes to sail from one place to another usually is indicated, and frequently the span of time is linked with the direction and force of the wind.<sup>51</sup> Gods are portrayed as determining the fate of the voyage. Visits of the gods, and signs and portents, frequently attend the voyage. In response, prayers are offered, altars are built, and sacred rituals are enacted.<sup>52</sup> At some point, almost every good sea voyage account portrays a storm that threatens or actually ends in a shipwreck.<sup>53</sup>

Virtually all of the features of ancient sea voyage literature are present in the we-passages in Acts. The first we-section, 16:10-17, begins in response to a vision which occurs during the night. In this vision a Macedonian says to Paul, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (16:9). The narrator interprets this summons to mean that God is calling them to this area to preach the gospel (16:10). The success of this venture is assured by divine destiny no matter what obstacles threaten to undo it. Especially the sea voyages of Odysseus and Aeneas established visions, signs, and portents as a characteristic feature of this kind of literature. The first we-section emerges in the narrative of Acts with a dynamic that is well-known in Mediterranean sea voyage literature.

As first person plural narration begins and the boat is launched for Macedonia, the narrator recounts the places by which they sail and the time it takes to sail the distance (16:11-12). This is the first instance of a detailed account of a voyage in Acts, and it includes a comment about the prestige and role of Philippi -- a typical feature in a sea voyage account. The narration of the voyage ends with the statement: "We remained in this city some days." This is a customary clause at the end of a paragraph in a voyage manual.<sup>54</sup>

Once they land at Philippi, a series of events occur that lead to the

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<sup>48</sup> Cf. *Odyssey* 9.43-61, 195-470.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Vergil, *Aeneid* 3.463-505; Lucian, *A True Story* 2.27; Achilles Tatius 2.32.2.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Voyage of Hanno 1; Lucian, *A True Story* 1.5.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. *Voyage of Hanno* 2-6, 8-17; Vergil *Aeneid* 3.124-127, 692-708.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *Voyage of Hanno* 4; Vergil, *Aeneid* 3.4-5, 19-21, 26-48, 84-120, 147-178, 358-460, 373-376, 528-529; Lucian, *A True Story* 2.47; Achilles Tatius 2.32.2; 3.5.1 -4; 3.10.1-6.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. *Odyssey* 9.67-73; Vergil, *Aeneid* 3.192-208; Dio Chrysostom 7.2; Lucian, *A True Story* 2.40; 2.47; Achilles Tatius 3.1.1 -3.5.6; Heliodorus, *Ethiopian Story* 5.27.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. *Voyage of Hanno* 6: παρ' οἷς ἐμείναμεν ἄχρι τινός, φίλοι γενόμενοι.



imprisonment and spectacular release of Paul and Silas. Only the first two events are narrated in first person plural. In the first event (16:13-15) the voyagers meet some women and begin to talk to them. A woman named Lydia "opens her heart" so that she invites them to come to her house and stay. This scene is a typical component of voyage narratives, and it contains first plural narrative style.

The second event (16:16-18) begins with first person plural narration but makes a transition to third person narration in 16:17. This event has a dynamic that is often present in sea voyage accounts. Paul performs an extraordinary act of power, and this act causes a disturbance among the local people. In this instance, Paul drives a spirit of divination out of a slave girl who brings money to her owners by soothsaying. As the episode develops into a detailed event in the city, first plural narration is left behind. With the re-emergence of third person narrative style, the events move from the sea to "the land." The next series of events does not conclude with a return to the boat; Paul and his company travel to Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica on foot (17:1).

The transition from first plural to third person narration is achieved through the phrase "Paul and us" (16:10). This phrase is a signal to the reader that the events lead away from the boat to the land and its challenges. The same technique appears at the end of the third we-passage (21:18). At the end of the final we-passage, the transition is made by indicating that Paul was permitted to remain "by himself" with only the soldier guarding him (28:16). In all three instances the transition takes the event away from the sea; third person narration centers on Paul's influential activity on land.

The second we-section, 20:5-15, is the first half of a sea voyage to Jerusalem. First person plural narration emerges at the conclusion of a list of people who accompany Paul on the voyage (20:4). As in the first we-section, the voyage opens with a detailed account of the places to which they sailed and the duration of time. This introduction ends with the comment that they stayed in Troas for seven days (20:5-6). Again, first person plural narration begins as a boat is launched on the sea, and the opening verses are a typical beginning for a sea voyage account.

An event is recounted at Troas before the voyage continues, and it is narrated in first plural style (20:7-12). The episode begins as a farewell scene (20:7), but it ends as a spectacular event performed by Paul. When Paul's speech lasts far into the night, and a young man falls out of a third story window and is dead, Paul embraces him and revives him. This miraculous event is placed on the first day of the week, and Paul appears to "break bread" both before and after he brings the young man back to life. This setting for the event is not interpreted by the narrator, but it creates a context similar to the one created by the vision at the outset of the first voyage. This voyage is in the hands of God. Paul carefully follows the religious rites of the Christian community, and the power of God works through him. The reader knows (19:21) that Paul is headed for Jerusalem, and the reader also knows what happened to Jesus at Jerusalem. As the danger of taking this voyage to Jerusalem becomes prominent in the narrative, the will of God for Paul to go to Rome (19:21) becomes increasingly important. If Paul truly is an apostle through God's will, then he will fulfill the proper religious rites and receive the benefits of God's favor. For a person in the Hellenistic world, this feature is a natural part of a sea voyage account. It was the will of Zeus/Jupiter that both Odysseus and Aeneas complete their voyages without suffering death. All the

delays, hardships, and apparent reversals of the decision are overcome by the rituals the voyagers perform and the destiny the supreme gods refuse to alter.

The final part of the second we-section (20:13-16) contains a typical detailed account of sailing from place to place and meeting people to take them on board. It ends by thematizing the purpose of the voyage: Paul "was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost" (20:16). At this point there is an interlude in the voyage. They have sailed as far as Miletus, and Paul summons the elders of the church at Ephesus to come to him there. This event features Paul giving a speech, and third person narration is used to recount Paul's meeting with these church leaders (20:17-38).

The third we-section begins as soon as the Ephesian elders bring Paul back to the ship. The parting scene depicts them kneeling in prayer and bidding Paul farewell with weeping, embracing, and kissing. As the first person plural narration resumes, again there is a detailed account of the voyage that ends with a remark about the length of their stay in the city where they landed (21:1-4). This opening part reiterates the purpose of the voyage as the disciples tell Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.

The next two verses contain another typical parting scene. All the disciples, with their wives and children, accompany the voyagers to the beach, pray with them, and bid them farewell (21:5-6). After this, typical voyage narration occurs until they reach Caesarea (21:7-8). At Caesarea a prophet enacts a scene that foretells Paul's arrest and delivery to the Gentiles when he reached Jerusalem (21:8-14). In the sphere of literature in the Hellenistic world, this scene is like Odysseus' encounter with the prophet Teiresias in *Odyssey* 11.90-137. Both the reader and the protagonist in the story know the dangers that lie ahead and the outcome. For the moment, however, Paul forgets that "he must go to Rome" (19:21). He is ready "not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem" (21:13). The destination at Jerusalem is the sole concern of the voyage, and scenes that are typical components of sea voyage literature are used to emphasize the danger that lurks at the end of the voyage.<sup>55</sup>

The final verses of the third we-section describe the trek from Caesarea to Jerusalem (21:15-18). Since the destination of the sea voyage is Jerusalem, first person plural narration continues until Paul goes in to James and the elders (21:18). At this point the events are committed to land, and the narration moves back to third person style. As the first we-section stopped once Paul and his company began the activity which brought them before the leaders of the city (16:17), so the second and third we-sections stop once Paul and his company begin the consultation with James and the elders at Jerusalem. The trials that ensue are Paul's mission on land once he has voyaged to this area.

The fourth we-section, 27:1 -28:16, presents the final, climactic sea voyage of Paul and his company. There is a dramatic progression in the length and drama of the we-sections in Acts. The first we-section is brief (16:10-17), and it takes Paul and his associates on a straight sailing course from Troas to Philippi (16:11). The drama of the voyage arises from the vision at the outset, the invitation to stay at Lydia's house, and the encounter with the slave girl who has a spirit of divination. The second and third we-sections are longer (20:5-15; 21:1-18), and

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<sup>55</sup> Cf. the danger that awaits Odysseus when he returns to Ithaca.

they take Paul and his company on an episodic, tearful voyage that systematically moves to Jerusalem. The drama of the voyage emerges through the farewell speech that develops into a miraculous event when Paul revives a young man (20:7-12), the farewell speech and scene with the Ephesian elders at Miletus (20:17-38), the farewell scene at Tyre (21:5-6), and the prophetic enactment at Caesarea of Paul's imprisonment and delivery to the Gentiles (21:8-14). The fourth we-section is longer yet, and more dramatic.

As Paul is taken to the boat to sail for Rome, first plural narrative again emerges in Acts (27:1). The opening part contains the typical information about sailing from port to port, and passing islands and other places (27:1-8). Beginning with 27:4, the narrator introduces the dynamic that furnishes the drama for this voyage. The wind is against them, and the sailing becomes more and more difficult. The second part of the section thematizes the danger that is increasing and features Paul in conversation with the people in charge about their plight (27:9-12). Paul's advice that the voyage temporarily be aborted is overruled by a majority of the people on the boat. The narration of the increasing danger impels the action to the next part with skill. The wind grows into the fury of a storm, and the detailed portrayal of the inability to control the ship, the necessity of throwing the cargo overboard, and the absence of sun and stars for many days takes the reader to the heart of the sea voyage narratives (21:13-20). Paul knows the divine destiny of the voyage that includes storm and shipwreck, just as Odysseus knows what will happen when the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis threaten to kill every mortal on board including himself (*Odyssey* 12.35-126). Therefore, Paul tells them they should have listened to him, and he tells them what the outcome of this storm will be (27:21-26). As Paul predicts, the ship runs aground as the crew attempts to beach it, and everyone is forced to abandon ship and escape to the island of Malta (27:27-44). The detailed description of the maneuvering of the ship by the sailors, the sounding for fathoms, the casting of anchors, and the manning of ropes and sails ranks this account among the most exciting depictions of storms and shipwrecks in the sphere of Greek and Roman literature. In the midst of it Paul takes bread, gives thanks to God, breaks it in the presence of all, and begins to eat (27:35). As all the members of the ship eat, the sacred ritual for receiving God's favor is performed. Everyone escapes safely to land, in spite of plans by the crew to abandon the ship (27:30) and intentions by the soldiers to kill the prisoners (27:42). Divine destiny holds the controlling hand when storm and shipwreck dash ships and mortals back and forth upon the sea.

The storm and shipwreck take the voyagers to the island of Malta. The opening scene portrays the islanders as unusually friendly (28:1-6), and the islanders become even more kindly disposed before the voyagers depart. When a viper bites Paul and he does not fall down dead, the islanders perceive Paul as every bit as godlike as Odysseus or Aeneas (28:6). The warm relationship between the islanders and Paul grows even more when Paul heals the father of the chief man of the island. Not only does the chief man receive them and entertain them for three days, but the scene develops into a general healing episode after which the islanders bid them farewell by bringing gifts and provisions to the boat (28:7-10). These events on the island are narrated in typical sea voyage style. All detail is suppressed except the information that highlights the welcome to the island, the spectacular abilities of the protagonist on the voyage, and the farewell scene.

The final part of the voyage contains the customary sailing information as the boat proceeds from Malta to Rome (28:11-16). Details about putting in at ports and staying for a few days are included; the favorable winds and the warm receptions at the harbors also receive attention. As the boat lands, Paul offers the proper prayer to God and takes courage that the voyage has concluded with God's favor still upon him (28:15). The voyage is ended, and third person narration emerges once again as Paul turns toward his new mission on land (28:18).

The final we-section in Acts represents the sea voyage genre par excellence. Each time a we-section begins, the drama heightens; movement through space becomes a voyage across the sea. The final voyage takes the gospel to ports and islands far away, and the adventure, danger, and fear bring "Paul and us" to Rome with thanksgiving.

### **The We-Passages in the Structure of Luke-Acts**

If the dynamic of sea voyaging is crucial for understanding the we-sections in Acts, the place of the passages in the arrangement of this two volume work is as important. There are two perspectives from which the arrangement is important for interpretation. First, the we-sections occur in the last half of Acts. Comparison of Luke with Acts indicates that both volumes contain a long travel narrative that leads into the concluding scenes. This feature suggests that the volumes contain some type of parallel structure. Second, the portion of Acts in which the we-sections occur represents the last fourth of this two volume narrative. In this final segment, Paul's travels spread the gospel "to the end of the earth" (1:8; 13:47). It will be important to discover the techniques by which the author has brought the entire narrative to its dramatic conclusion. The first aspect of the arrangement will be discussed here; the second aspect will be discussed in the next section.

The we-sections occur in a portion of Acts that shows significant points of relation with Luke. The journey narrative in Luke 9:51-19:28 is a distinctive feature of the Lukan narrative,<sup>56</sup> and the journeys of Paul in Acts 13:1-28:16 comprise the highpoint of the narrative of Acts. In general terms, Jesus' journey in Luke corresponds to Paul's journey in Acts. The journeys reflect the movement through time and space that is a central feature of Luke-Acts.

Closer observation reveals that specific architectonic parallels exist between the journeys in Luke and Acts.<sup>57</sup> There are three sections in Acts that correspond to three sections in the Lukan travel narrative. Paul's mission to the churches in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece (Acts 13:1-19:20) corresponds to the mission of the seventy (Luke 10:1-24).<sup>58</sup> Paul's journey to Jerusalem (Acts 19:21-21:26) corresponds to Jesus' journey to Jerusalem (Luke 13:22-19:46). Agrippa's handing over of Paul to a centurion to be escorted to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:16) corresponds to Pilate's handing over of Jesus to the chief priests, rulers, and

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<sup>56</sup> Cf. Hans Conzelmann, *The Theology of St. Luke* (trans. G. Buswell; New York: Harpers, 1960), 60-73.

<sup>57</sup> For an explanation of architectonic structure and the correspondences between Luke and Acts, see Charles H. Talbert, *Literary Patterns, Theological Themes and the Genre of Luke-Acts* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press), esp. 1-65.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

people to be crucified (Luke 23:26-49). Because of these correspondences, this study could include detailed analysis of Luke as well as Acts. Our immediate goal, however, is to interpret the role of the we-sections in the overall setting of Paul's journeys. Therefore, having noticed this parallel architectonic structure, we will proceed with analysis in Acts only. In the next section, more features of Luke will come into the discussion.

All three sections of Paul's journeys contain we-passages, and the length of the we-sections increases as the end of the narrative draws near. The first journey section (13:1-19:20) only contains eight verses of first plural narration. (16:10-17). The second journey section (19:21-21:26) contains twenty-nine verses of first plural narrative style, and the third journey section (27:1-28:16) is entirely a we-section (60 verses). Of course, the increasing amount of first plural narration is linked with the increasing amount of sea travel. The increasing length of sea voyage material affects the structure of Acts 13-28.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the structure in the journey sections is the chiasmic arrangement that unifies the first and second sections. The second half of the first section (15:1-19:20) and the second section (19:21-21:26) represent a generally balanced chiasmic structure.<sup>59</sup> The perimeters of the chiasmus are the Jerusalem council in 15:1-33 and Paul's return visit to Jerusalem in 21:15-26. The inside of the chiasmus is filled out by three balancing units and a series of episodes at the center. The travel and imprisonment in 15:36-17:15 is balanced by the travel and prophecy of arrest and imprisonment in 21:1-14. The speech at Athens in 17:16-24 is balanced by the speech at Ephesus in 20:17-38. The assembly at Corinth and subsequent travel in 18:1-23 is balanced by the assembly at Ephesus and subsequent travel in 19:21-20:16. The center of the chiasmic structure is found in 18:24-19:20. This, therefore, is the chiasmic outline:

A 15:1-34 Jerusalem council	A' 21:15-26 Report to Jerusalem Leaders
B 15:36-17:15 Travel and Imprisonment	B' 21:1-14 Travel and Scene of Binding
C 17:16-24 Speech at Athens	C' 20:17-38 Speech at Ephesus
D 18:1-23 Assembly at Corinth and Travel	D' 19:21-20:16 Assembly at Ephesus and Travel
E 18:24-19:20 Spreading the Gospel Throughout Asia from Ephesus	

The center of a chiasmic structure, in relation to the outside portions, reveals the essential dynamic of the literary arrangement.<sup>60</sup> Events at Ephesus where Paul corrects inadequate or improper understanding of the gospel stand at the center. Paul's encounters with the authoritative leaders at Jerusalem stand on the perimeters of the structure. The literary arrangement presents an interplay between Jerusalem and Ephesus as centers for spreading the gospel. Ephesus is the center for preaching the gospel to all residents of Asia, both Jews and

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-8. Our analysis varies some from Talbert's, though agreement with regard to the extent of the chiasmus exists.

<sup>60</sup> For an excellent analysis of chiasmic structure see Joanna Dewey, "The Literary Structure of Controversy Stories in Mark 2:1-3:6," *JBL* 92 (1973): 394-401.

Greeks (19:10). This assertion stands at the heart of the Ephesus events Jerusalem is the locale from which Paul's mission to Jews and Gentiles is authorized.

The relation of the we-passages to the chiasmic arrangement introduces another dimension of this portion of Acts. There are no we-passages in the first half of the initial travel section (13:1-14:28), and this part of the first section is not a segment of the chiasmus. In other words, all of the we-sections except for the final dramatic voyage are included in the material that has been given a chiasmic structure. This means that only with the chiasmus is mission "by land" and "by sea" emphasized.

With regard to structure, therefore, the initial travel section (13:1-19:20) has two halves. The Jerusalem council (Acts 15) stands between the first and second half. The first half portrays Paul establishing and nurturing churches in Galatia and Cyprus. This mission is inaugurated by the Holy Spirit who says, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."<sup>61</sup> After the prophets and teachers at Antioch fast and pray, they lay their hands on Barnabas and Saul and send them off (13:2-3). The Barnabas and Saul mission occurs in 13:1-14:28. This mission does not have the blessings of the Jerusalem leaders and it does not take Paul "to the other side of the sea." Travel by boat is included in this first half (13:4, 13; 14:26), and "Saul" becomes "Paul" after he has "sailed" to Cyprus (13:9). Paul and Barnabas travel by boat, but their mission occurs prior to the Jerusalem council and is limited to the easternmost portion of the Mediterranean Sea.

With the Jerusalem council (15:1-35) a new phase enters into Paul's mission activity. He no longer travels with Barnabas, and his mission is not limited to the environs of the eastern portion of the Mediterranean. Beginning with the Jerusalem council, the material is balanced chiasmically, and after this council there is an interplay of mission "by land" and "by sea."

Paul's authoritative mission "by land" begins in Acts 15:36. Severing his relation with Barnabas, Paul chooses Silas and establishes a valid mission to the churches in Syria and Cilicia by delivering to them "the decisions which had been reached by the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem" (16:4). But Paul does not stop with this; his mission by land is on the move in a way it could not be before the Jerusalem council. Paul and Silas travel through Phrygia and Galatia and would appear to have "a clear road ahead." But then the mission by land is temporarily hindered. The Holy Spirit will not allow Paul and Silas to speak the word in Asia, so they are forced to go down to Troas (16:6-7).

The apparent hindrance to Paul's mission by land inaugurates a new phase: mission "by sea." The first we-section introduces this phase (16:10-17). In contrast to the previous sea travel by Paul (13:4, 13; 14:26), now the destination lies "on the other side" of the sea. In a night vision a man of Macedonia says to Paul, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (16:9). In response, the first true sea voyage is launched, first plural narration emerges, and a new mission area opens to Paul and Silas.

Once Paul and Silas have reached Macedonia, their mission spreads "by

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<sup>61</sup> For the relation of statements by the Holy Spirit and prophets, see Haenchen, *Acts of the Apostles*, 395.

land" (16:19-17:13). When Paul goes to another new area, Achaia,<sup>62</sup> again he goes "by sea" (17:14-15). The effort of the author to assert this mode of opening the mission at Athens has created an unusual grammatical construction in 17:14. The verse states that the brethren at Beroea sent Paul out "to go as far as upon the sea" (πορεύεσθαι ἕως ἐπὶ τὴν θάλασσαν). The peculiarity of ἕως and ἐπὶ in sequence caused copyists either to omit ἕως or replace it with ὡς.<sup>63</sup> The problem evidently arises because Beroea is not a coastal city, and the author wanted to indicate that Paul went to Athens "by sea." The meaning is clear, because the verse is constructed in parallel with 17:15a: οἱ δὲ καθιστάνοντες τὸν Παῦλον ἤγαγον ἕως Ἀθηνῶν ("those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens"). In like manner, the brethren at Beroea sent Paul out to go (by land) as far as "upon the sea." The narrator distinguishes between spreading the gospel "by land" and "by sea." The gospel spreads to new areas, e.g., Macedonia and Achaia, "by sea." Once Paul and his company arrive at a new area, the gospel spreads "by land." Later in the narrative, Paul travels "by land" between Achaia and Macedonia (20:2), but the initial mission is "by sea."

The irony of the chiasmic structure is that mission "by sea" to Macedonia is balanced with mission "by sea" to Jerusalem. It would be wrong to think this is accidental. The voyage that takes Paul and Silas to Philippi where they are imprisoned and miraculously released (16:10-40) is balanced by the sea voyage that takes Paul to Caesarea where the prophet Agabus symbolically enacts the binding of Paul and his delivery to the Gentiles (21:1-14). Both voyages are we-sections, and Paul's voyage to Jerusalem is mission "by sea." Prior to this Paul has not had an opportunity to spread the gospel in Jerusalem. This area was closed to him. Now he goes to Jerusalem "ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (21:13). His voyage to Jerusalem opens up an extensive mission "by land" from Jerusalem to Caesarea. Paul spreads the gospel not only to the people in Jerusalem (22:1-21) but also to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem (23:1-10), the governor Felix in Caesarea (24:10-21), and to King Agrippa (26:1-29). Mission by sea has taken Paul not only to Macedonia and Achaia; it has taken Paul to Jerusalem itself and the political leaders who rule the area. Counterbalanced we-sections open both areas of mission to Paul "by sea."

As Paul's mission by sea to Macedonia provides the base for mission by sea to Jerusalem, so Paul's mission by sea to Jerusalem provides the base for mission by sea to Rome. All three missions are by sea, and all three missions are inaugurated by we-sections. The long, dramatic voyage to Rome (27:1-28:16) stands in notable contrast with the circumscribed beginnings of Paul's mission in the easternmost part of the Mediterranean Sea (13:1-14:28). On the way to Rome Paul even has a mission "upon the sea." When the voyage becomes dangerous, Paul begins conversation with the people in charge (27:10), and when a storm

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<sup>62</sup> During the first century, Achaia included the areas in which both Athens and Corinth were located, but it did not include the area in which Philippi and Thessalonica were located.

<sup>63</sup> Evidently the reading with ἕως would mean that they sent Paul away pretending that he would go by sea but actually going by land: "as though to go upon the sea" or "to go as it were upon the sea." See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), 455.

begins to hurl them mercilessly about on the sea, Paul has the opportunity to tell the people on the ship about the God to whom he belongs and whom he worships (27:21-26). The foreknowledge of events that he received from an angel of his God not only proves to be accurate, but it provides the opportunity for Paul to take bread, give thanks to God in the presence of all, and eat (27:35). And, says the narrator, "they all were encouraged and ate some food themselves" (27:36). This imagery will certainly not be missed by the reader; Paul has "broken bread" with the entire group on the ship. But this still is not enough. Paul's mission on the sea is made complete by miracles that attend his leadership.<sup>64</sup> When he sustains a viper bite, the natives on the island of Malta think he is a god (28:3-7); and when Paul heals the father of the chief man, Publius, all the diseased come to him and are cured (28:7-10). This mission "upon the sea" takes Paul to Rome. The remaining part of Acts presents Paul's mission by land in and around Rome.

The we-sections play a decisive role in the section in Acts that narrates the journeys of Paul. These sections add mission by sea to mission by land. By careful structuring throughout chapters 13-28, the author includes sections of sea voyage material that open new areas until the gospel spreads "to the end of the earth." By composing the journeys in three sections (13:1-19:20; 19:21-21:26; 27:1-28:16), the author develops a linear schema that portrays the spreading of the gospel from the land east of the Mediterranean to Italy. By a chiasmic arrangement of the episodes from the Jerusalem council to Paul's return to Jerusalem (15:1-21:26), the author counterbalances the mission "to Macedonia and Achaia" with the mission "to Jerusalem and its environs." The first person plural sea voyages furnish the dynamic for the movement through space, and the careful structuring of the episodes relates Paul's mission to Jerusalem and Rome.

### **The Function of the We-Passages in Luke-Acts**

Analysis of the structure of Acts 13-28 indicates that the author uses the we-sections to create a special role for mission by sea. In this section of the paper the analysis moves a step further. Three aggregates of information suggest that the entire two volume work is designed to replace the Sea of Galilee, which dominates Mark, with the Mediterranean Sea. The we-passages systematically increase in length to focus all attention on the Great Sea that lies between Jerusalem and Rome. We recall that Paul's journeys in Acts 13:1-28:16 correspond to the long journey of Jesus in Luke 9:51-19:46. This suggests that the travel sections in Acts were designed to bring Lukan themes and actions to a dramatic conclusion. Our interest is to find any relationship between Luke and Acts that illumines the role of the we-passages.

The first items of importance are found in the vocabulary of Luke and Acts. The author never allows Jesus to go alongside or onto a "sea" (θάλασσα) in Luke. This stands in notable contrast to Matthew and Mark where Jesus does both many times.<sup>65</sup> This difference arises, because the Sea of Galilee is never mentioned in Luke; it does not seem to exist in Lukan geography. Instead, there is a place on the eastern edge of Galilee which the author calls "the lake" (ἡ

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. Acts 19:11-20.

<sup>65</sup> See n. 1.



λίμνη: Luke 5:1, 2; 8:22, 23, 33). Once this lake is called the Lake of Gennesaret (5:1).

The existence of "the lake" but not "the sea" in Luke appears to relate to the overall purpose of the author. It is designed to limit Jesus' activity in a particular way. Jesus is allowed to go to the lake only twice in Luke. All other occasions when Jesus went to the Sea of Galilee in Mark are omitted. On the first occasion, Jesus goes out in a boat with Simon, and James and John, the sons of Zebedee (5:1-11). The entire episode moves toward the conclusion in which the three fishermen become disciples of Jesus and turn to "catching men" (5:10-11). On the second occasion, Jesus gets in a boat and sails to the other side of the lake (8:22). This setting allows for the inclusion of the accounts of the calming of the storm and the healing of the demoniac in the country of the Gerasenes (8:22-39).

Each of the occasions when Jesus is linked with the lake in Luke has a twofold dimension in Luke-Acts. On the one hand, the occasions set a precedent for later action in the narrative. When Jesus goes onto the lake in 5:1-11, circles around, and comes back, he evokes the image of the disciple as one who travels on water and fishes for men. It appears to be important that he does not go "across" the lake. This episode set a precedent that corresponds to the situation in Acts 13:1-14:28. We recall that this section in Acts presents the first instance of sea travel. The Holy Spirit calls Barnabas and Saul to "the work" to which they have been called (13:2), and they sail out from Antioch in a circle to Cyprus, then to Pamphylia, and back to Antioch (13:4, 13; 14:26). When Paul and Barnabas return, they are sent to Jerusalem where they are sanctioned as apostles to the Gentiles (15:23-29). Paul and Barnabas have traveled on the sea; therefore they "have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ" (15:26). Paul has been called to his work as the disciples are called to their work in Luke 5:1-11. But Paul does not go "across" the sea until after the Jerusalem council.

In Luke 8:22-39 Jesus sets the precedent for "crossing over" the sea that occurs for the first time in the initial we-section (Acts 16:10-17). In the Lukan episode, Jesus gets into the boat and announces, "Let us go across to the other side of the lake" (8:22). This corresponds to the Macedonian's call to Paul, "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (Acts 16:9). With the voyage across the body of water, God's work is spread to a new region. The author of Luke revises Markan vocabulary in the account of the storm on the lake to orient the story toward the climactic voyage and storm in which Paul participates at the end of Acts. Jesus and the disciples "set out from shore" (ἀνήχθησαν: Luke 8:22), just as Paul and his company "set out" on a boat many times.<sup>66</sup> As they are "sailing along" (πλέοντων αὐτῶν: Luke 8:23), Jesus falls asleep. References to sailing are frequent in the voyages of Paul.<sup>67</sup> The revision of Markan vocabulary suggests that the author already has the sea voyages of Paul in view as he composes.

The other dimension of these two episodes in Luke has already been mentioned, but it must be recalled as we move to the next reference to "the sea" in episodes with Jesus and the disciples. Only Paul and his company voyage on the sea. In the first episode not only Jesus but Simon Peter is in the boat. But Peter never voyages on the sea in Luke-Acts; he was called to his work by sailing

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. Acts 13:13; 16:11; 18:21; 20:3, 13; 21:1, 2; 27:2, 4, 12, 21; 28:10, 11.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Acts 21:3; 27:2, 6, 24.

in a boat on "the lake" (Luke 5:1, 2). Likewise, the author suppresses any reference to "the sea" in the storm episode. Instead of saying the wind and sea obey Jesus (Mark 4:41), the disciples refer to the winds and "the water" (Luke 8:25).

The selection of vocabulary in the first volume suggests that the author is setting precedents during the time of Jesus which become the major challenge during the time of the church. In order to do this, the author presents corresponding episodes in Luke and Acts, and he suppresses certain features in the account in Luke so these features can be more dramatically carried out during the time of the church.<sup>68</sup>

This vocabulary usage grows in importance when other information is added to it. Although the author never depicts Jesus on or alongside a "sea," he betrays special interest in "the sea" in sayings of Jesus. He does not refrain from including the saying about being cast into the sea with a millstone around one's neck (Luke 17:2) and the saying about the sycamine tree that can be rooted up and planted in the sea by faith (Luke 17:6). Luke is the only gospel that refers to the "distress of nations in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves" in the apocalyptic discourse (Luke 21:25). The sea has a special place in his theology even in the gospel of Luke, but the author will not link Jesus directly with it. The sea is linked with Paul's mission to new regions around the Mediterranean. This conception is further indicated by the references to God "who made the heaven and the earth *and the sea*" in Acts 4:24 and 14:15. Also it is probably not accidental that Simon Peter is associated with "Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea" in the dramatic sequence of episodes in which the Gentile Cornelius is converted and blessed by Simon Peter (10:6, 32). Mission on the sea presupposes mission to Gentiles as well as Jews, and the author systematically builds toward mission by sea in Luke and Acts 1-12.

Perhaps the most important piece of information which indicates that the author is composing toward a dramatic finish that is achieved through sea voyages is "the great omission" in Luke.<sup>69</sup> Luke shows dependence upon Mark as a source for most of the material in Mark 1-6:44. But beginning with Mark 6:45, and continuing through Mark 8:26, Markan material is not recounted in Luke. The proposal in this paper is that the manuscript of Mark that the author of Luke-Acts used contained Mark 6:45-8:26. He omitted this section of Mark because it took the ministry of Jesus too far into the type of mission that he wanted to portray for Paul.

As Luke used the material in Mark 1-6:44, he systematically omitted references to the sea.<sup>70</sup> As we have just previously noticed, Luke places the call of the disciples (Mark 1:16-20), the stilling of the storm (Mark 4:35-41), and the healing of the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5:1-20) on "the lake." In this way he avoids reference to the sea. But when he gets to Mark 6:45, the mission of Jesus

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<sup>68</sup> For a well known example of the technique in Luke-Acts, cf. Mark 14:62 with Luke 22:69 and Acts 7:56.

<sup>69</sup> For a summary of discussions of the great omission, see Walter E. Bundy, *Jesus and the First Three Gospels* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), 265-7. He concludes that "there is no satisfactory explanation for this omission" (p. 265).

<sup>70</sup> Mark used θάλασσα 12 times in 1:1-6:44.

develops into a mission all around the Sea of Galilee and deep into Gentile territory. Precisely with the episode where Jesus walks on the sea (Mark 6:45-52), the author begins to omit all of the material. After this episode, Jesus and his disciples cross the sea again (Mark 6:53-56), a rationale for Gentile mission is established (Mark 7:1-23), then Jesus travels through Tyre and Sidon (7:24-37). Since the boat and the sea continue to play an important role through 8:21, the author of Luke omits all the episodes in the section from the walking on the sea (Mark 6:45-52) until the confession of Peter in 8:27-33. By omitting this material, the author narrates an uninterrupted ministry of Jesus in Galilee without excursions into Tyre and Sidon and other Gentile territory. Also, the author keeps Jesus out of a boat and off a body of water that may begin to play a major role in his ministry.

In sum, the vocabulary of Luke, the two episodes where Jesus goes onto the lake, and the great omission indicate that the two volume work of Luke-Acts has been designed to replace the Sea of Galilee with the Mediterranean Sea. The role of the we-passages is to orient early Christianity toward the sea that lies between Jerusalem and Rome. The author disapproves of the emphasis upon the Sea of Galilee in Mark. No inland body of water in Palestine should be called "the sea." The sea that explains the history of early Christianity is the Great Sea that extends to the end of the earth.

### **Conclusion**

Why, then, does the author use first plural "we" as he narrates those voyages that move the Christian church "across the sea?" First, it appears that the natural tendency to employ first person plural style within the sea voyage genre was a major factor. The second reason appears in the preface to Luke. As the author, a member of the church, pens his narrative sitting in Rome, the question is how "we" got here when we started out in Jerusalem. This author feels a strong sense of union with the early Christian leaders about whom he writes. He says that all of the things about which he writes have been accomplished "among us" (Luke 1:1). This includes all of the events he recounts in the gospel of Luke as well as the narrative of Acts. For him, the conception and birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-80) is an example of an event that happened "among us." The author participates in these events even when they are transmitted to him by others (Luke 1:2). Therefore, he can say both that these things happened among us and that they were delivered to us. As he sits in Rome, he participates in the events of the Christian church, and explains to "Theophilus" how his community of believers got to be where they are (Luke 1:3-4). A Christian in Rome who knows the events well enough to pen them as this author does becomes a full participant in them. This is true even if he has experienced these events only through oral transmission and the written page. Thus he can say in his preface that the activities of Jesus, the disciples, and the apostles happened "among us." As Paul voyaged across the sea, "we" got here.

If we think it would be impossible for an author who did not participate in the events to compose in this style, we need to entertain one more piece of information. Xenophon, we recall, used third person narration throughout the *Anabasis*, even for scenes in which he depicts himself as a participant. A later copyist of the *Anabasis*, obviously not a participant in the events, wrote a

concluding summary which he attached to the narrative. From his pen flowed these words:

The governors of all the king's territories that we traversed were as follows: Artimas of Lydia, Artacamas of Phrygia, Mithradates of Lycaonia and Cappadocia, Syennesis of Cilicia .... The length of the entire journey, upward and downward, was two hundred and fifteen stages, one thousand, one hundred and fifty parasangs, or thirty-four thousand, two hundred and fifty-five stadia; and the length in time, upward and downward, a year and three months (7.8.25-26).<sup>71</sup>

This copyist, and many writers, entered into the narrative as a participant even though later analysts can see that the style of narration does not comply with the rest of the document. Perhaps we should suggest that Luke participated in the sea voyages precisely in this way.

If the author felt such a close relation to all of the events he wrote about, why did he not use first person plural all the way through? Why did he use it only in the we-sections? He did not use first person plural only in the we-sections. He used it in the two settings where it is eminently appropriate if the author construes his work in the genre of historical biography in the Hellenistic milieu toward the end of the first century A.D. These two settings are prefaces and sea voyages.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> "Ἀρχοντες δὲ οἶδε τῆς βασιλείως χώρας ὅσην ἐπήλθομεν. Λυδίας Ἀρτίμας, Φρυγίας Ἀρτακάμας, Λυκαονίας καὶ Καππαδοκίας Μιθραδάτης, Κιλικίας Συέννεσις. ... Ἀριθμὸς συμπάσης τῆς ὁδοῦ τῆς ἀναβάσεως καὶ καταβάσεως σταθμοὶ διακόσιοι δεκαπέντε, παρασάγγαι χίλιοι ἑκατὸν πενήκοντα, στάδια τρισμῦρια τετρακισχίλια διακόσια πενήκοντα πέντε. χρόνου πλήθος τῆς ἀναβάσεως καὶ καταβάσεως ἑνιαυτὸς καὶ τρεῖς μῆνες.

<sup>72</sup> I am grateful to the University of Illinois Research Board at the Urbana-Champaign campus for funds that facilitated the final production of this study. See my study of the prefaces to Luke and Acts in "Prefaces in Greco-Roman Biography and Luke-Acts," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 6 (1979): 94-108 = *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*, Vol. 2, ed. P. J. Achtemeier (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978): 193-207.