The Construction of the Jews as the External Other

Othering sometimes creates a synthetic and deceptive boundary between the moral conduct of one group and another. Such constructions of difference are too often internalized and accepted as natural. This phenomenon of othering based on evaluating one group's behavior as inferior, or even demonic, to another group occurs often between proximate others inside the same collective. Many ethnic or cultural groups identify an other within their collective who is marginalized and rendered as categorically other. This happens when one segment of the group desires to distance or disassociate itself from another segment that it disdains and does not want to be identified with. Such otherness is sometimes manifested in contemporary society as classism. Some Whites identify other whites of lower socioeconomic status as "white trash," considering them ethically, morally, and culturally depraved. Some blacks identify other blacks as "niggers" because they are perceived as ignorant, morally diminished, and misrepresentative of the race.[1] Of course, in each case the reverse also occurs.

This same social and cultural phenomenon of intra-group othering gets inscribed onto texts, both secular and religious. When this othering is etched in texts we regard as sacred, we tend to overlook and/or discursively reinscribe it in our teaching, preaching, writing, and other public discourse and interactions. We uncritically appropriate and impose the inscribed image of the other on ourselves and on others. For many Christians, the Pharisees constitute categorically the eternal nega-

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1. The two labels "nigger" and "white trash," of course, have historically, and continue to be, used pejoratively by some whites as a label for blacks and by some blacks to label whites.

tively ostentatious other against whom we measure piety. The Jewish people are the legalistic other who serve as a perennial reminder of how not to reject Jesus.

In this chapter I analyze Luke's othering of *the Jews* (*hoi Ioudaioi*) in Acts.[2] *The Jews* in Acts are also proximate others in relation to the approved intermediaries of the gospel. Luke ultimately discursively constructs *the Jews* as the external other. He accomplishes this in several ways. *The Jews* are consistently characterized as the stereotypical and synthetic other.[3] The gospel increases and is successful in spite of consistent and homogeneous opposition from *the Jews*. While *the Jews* actively oppose the Gentile mission, the approved intermediaries are portrayed as relatively passive objects of aggression. Thematic and/or stereotypical characterization of *the Jews* functions organically in the narrative; it contributes to the meaning of the text as a whole.

Luke's depiction of *the Jews* as highly active and negative eclipses positive representations of other Jewish people in Acts. *The Jews* are depicted as "the most violent opponents of the Christian community."[4] Because Luke repetitively depicts *the Jews* as hostile and fiercely opposed to Paul's gospel, some readers will compartmentalize the missionary successes among the Jewish people throughout Acts. As a result, Jewish people that are depicted as receptive to the apostles' message can be read as exceptional or are ignored altogether. And the negatively portrayed Jews become representative of all Jewish people in the minds of many readers;[5] all Jewish people become the dangerous external other.

2. From this point forward, when the term *the Jews* refers to the presence of the Greek plural with the definite article of *ho Ioudios* (*hoi Ioudaioi*) in Acts, it is italicized.

3. Luke does not expressly demonize *the Jews* in Acts as happens in the Johannine literature (John 8:44; 1 John 3:10). Pagels (*Origin of Satan*, 105) demonstrates how the Gospel of John, similar to the other Gospels, links the mythological character of Satan with particular human opposition when it implicates Judas Iscariot, the Jewish authorities, and then the Jews collectively. Some of the many works on the Jews in John's Gospel include: Reinhartz, "Building Skyscrapers"; idem, "'Jews' and Jews"; Pippin, "'For Fear of the Jews'"; Smith, "Judaism and the Gospel of John"; Culpepper, "Gospel of John and the Jews"; Cook, "Gospel of John and the Jews"; Townsend, "Gospel of John and the Jews"; Brown, *Community of the Beloved Disciple*.

4. Barbi ("[*Hoi*] *Ioudaioi* in Acts," 141) argues that *the Jews* are a model by which Luke shows "the ongoing rupture among Jews in relation to the gospel."

5. Tyson, "Problem of Jewish Rejection"; Sanders, "Jewish People in Luke-Acts"; idem, *Jews in Luke-Acts*, 303. See also Juel, *Luke-Acts*; Wilson, *Gentiles*; Haenchen, *Acts*, 729; Cook, "Mission to the Jews"; Tyson, *Images of Judaism*, 188. Also, Gilbert, "Disappearance of the Gentiles"; Sandmel, *Anti-Semitism*.

But throughout Acts, we notice a continual dialogue between the Jewish people and the Gentile mission. This dialogue is poignantly apparent in the context that gives rise to Paul's three declarations about turning to the Gentiles (13:46; 18:6; 28:28). I argue that these three declarations function as one element in the dialectic of discursive turning toward the Gentiles and an ontological remaining with *the Jews* and the Jewish people. It constitutes a dialectic between the language of abandonment and the practice of remaining in dialogue with the synagogue and the Jewish people.[6]

In spite of the language of abandonment (of *the Jews*) or turning toward the Gentiles, Jews *and* Gentiles continually join the Jesus movement in Acts. Daniel Marguerat argues that although the two images of Jewish persons (believing and unbelieving) stand in tension with one another, we do not have to choose a rejectionist reading over a more positive one. We can overcome the impasse if we assume one *and* the other, for they signal that "in Luke's work it is not reduced to one simple equation" (*dans l'oeuvre de Luc ne se reduit pas a une equation simple*).[7] The tension created by *le visage du judaisme* ("the face of Judaism") in Acts is peculiar to the text itself. Rather than reduce the tension, Marguerat interprets it theologically. He argues, like Jacob Jervell, that Luke wants to demonstrate historical continuity *and* discontinuity with Israel. If Luke, Marguerat asks, simply wished to establish the *ekklēsia* in place of Israel and to present a pro-Christian and anti-Jewish God, why would he go to lengths to compose such a complex narrative?[8] It is the continuity that forms the basis of proximity between *the Jews* and the apostles (and the mission). It is the discursive construction of discontinuity or disjuncture between *the Jews* and the mission that contributes to the othering of *the Jews* as the external other.

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6. Regarding the continued relevance of the gospel for the Jewish people, see Jervell, *Luke and the People of God*. Also, Brawley, *Luke-Acts and the Jews;* Tannehill, "Rejection by Jews"; Tannehill, "Israel in Luke-Acts"; Trocmé, "Jews as Seen." Also, Fusco, "Luke-Acts."

7 Marguerat, "Juifs et chrétiens selon Luc-Actes," 156.

8. Ibid., 155–57.

The Problematic Proximate Other:
The Jews in Narrative Instabilities

The expression *the Jews* (*hoi Ioudaioi*) occurs seventy-nine times in Acts,[9] and these occurrences are mostly negative.[10] *The Jews* first appears at 9:22 as the apostles' opponents.[11] Prior to this, any reference to Jewish people is signified grammatically by the noun without the definite article or anarthrously. After 9:22, Luke's use of the expression *the Jews* and the progression of the narrative constitute interdependent phenomena. Narrative progression refers to how authors narrate their stories so as to engender, maintain, develop, and resolve readers' attention. The narrative as a dynamic event moves in its relating of the story; it progresses diachronically in its reception. An author can achieve this movement using narrative instabilities.[12]

Narrative instabilities involving *the Jews* are situations where Luke portrays Paul as doing or saying something that produces a negative reaction from *the Jews*. Luke's repetition of narrative instabilities between *the Jews* and the apostle Paul (and his companions) creates and maintains suspense. It makes for a dynamic story, particularly since *the Jews* often chase Paul out of their cities and from city to city.

Although instabilities between *the Jews* and the apostle Paul begin in Acts 9 and continue throughout the narrative from Jerusalem and towards Rome,[13] we encounter similar instabilities in the first half of Acts, prior to chapter 9. Luke has arranged the material so as to show correspondences between the activities of the *ekklēsia* in Jerusalem in chapters 1–7 and Paul's mission in the diaspora in the second half of Acts.[14] In the first seven chapters, the Jewish people that believe in the gospel are contrasted with the unbelieving religious leaders in Jerusalem. The Jewish believers are loyal observers of the Jewish customs and laws, par-

9. As to the Gospel of John, Culpepper ("Gospel of John and the Jews") counts seventy, and Pippin ("'Fear of the Jews'") counts seventy-one references to the Jews.

10. Rese, "Jews in Luke-Acts."

11. Tyson, *Images of Judaism*, 119.

12. Phelan, *Reading People*, 8.

13. Historically, some used the term *Jew* both as a self-designation and to distinguish the ethnic and religious communities of Jews outside of Judea. Cohen, *Beginnings of Jewishness*.

14. Talbert, *Literary Patterns*, 29, 98–99. Talbert divides Acts between chs. 12 and 13.

ticipate in the unity of the believing community, and share in the common fellowship. On the other hand, the Jewish leaders initiate conflict and oppose the apostles and the believers[15] (4:1–4; 5:17; 6:12).

The Jews as a collective are not a necessary phenomenon in the first half of Acts. They emerge only when the Gentile mission begins. However, the narrative conflict that arises between some synagogue Jews and Stephen (one of the seven Hellenists, 6:1–7) foreshadows the narrative instabilities concerning *the Jews* whom Luke later depicts as Paul's opponents:

> Some men from the so-called synagogue of the Libertines—Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia—rose up [*anthistēmi*] and disputed with Stephen. But they could not stand up against [*anthistēmi*] the wisdom and spirit with which he spoke. So they secretly enlisted men to say that they heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God. They incited [*sunkineō*] the people [*laos*], the elders, and the scribes. And they seized [Stephen] and carried him to the Sanhedrin. (6:9–12)

The behavior of these synagogue members prefigures the behavior of *the Jews* who become Paul's opponents:[16] they dispute, incite others, seize Stephen, and are ultimately implicated in Stephen's death. Nevertheless, Luke adeptly refrains from referring to this group as *the Jews*. He reserves this definite plural noun, *the Jews*, for the opponents of the Gentile mission. Stephen's opponents are identified as an ethnically mixed and geographically diverse group recruited by the synagogue members, the elders and the scribes. Stephen's opponents incite the people (*laos*),[17] whereas Paul's opposition arouses the crowds (*ochloi*). Otherwise, their behavior is identical to that of *the Jews* who subsequently emerge. Both Stephen and Paul's opponents come from various geographical areas, but Luke lumps Stephen's opponents together in one

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15. Thompson, "Believers and Religious Leaders." Also, Tyson, *Images of Judaism*, 109–11.

16. Matson (*Household Conversion*, 101) places the culpability on the synagogue, rather than on *the Jews*. I do not consider the synagogues and *the Jews* as equivalent, even though *the Jews* are associated with the synagogues.

17. Jervell (*Theology of the Acts*, 23) asserts that *laos* occurs 142 times in the NT, and Luke alone uses it 84 times (60 percent of all occurrences). The "unqualified" use of the term refers to Israel as a name, but sometimes it is a synonym for the Greek word *ochlos* indicating a crowd of Jews.

episode. This is because of Stephen's anticipated and forthcoming death. Stephen's opponents kill him at the end of the episode where we meet the apostle Paul for the first time.

The Jews oppose and instigate violence against Paul (and others) primarily when Paul visits cities that have not been previously evangelized by approved intermediaries (i.e., Damascus, Psidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Thessaloniki, Berea, Corinth). The places where no one, not even *the Jews*, oppose Paul are cities where other missionaries have preceded him. For example, when persecution erupted after Stephen was martyred, the Jerusalem *ekklēsia* dispersed (all except the apostles).[18] Members of the *ekklēsia* fled to Syrian Antioch, Phoenicia, and Cyprus, preaching only to Jewish persons (11:19–20). Some Cypriots and Cyrenians were among the scattered members of the *ekklēsia*, and they preached to the *Hellenistas* in Syrian Antioch (cf. 6:1; 9:29).[19] The reception of the message in cities where the "scattered ones" migrated to was positive (11:20–21). Paul visits Syrian Antioch, Phoenicia, and Cyprus after "the scattered ones" had already preached there, and he receives a positive Jewish response, but no opposition from *the Jews*. Syrian Antioch also served as the base from which the Antiochene *ekklēsia* commissioned Paul and Barnabas (13:2–3).

Paul preaches in the synagogue of *the Jews* in Salamis (Cyprus) and no trouble erupts. The lack of trouble in Salamis may again be attributed to the groundwork already laid by the scattered ones. Paul does not preach publicly in Paphos (Cyprus) (13:6–7), but he has a private audience with the proconsul. Paul passes through Perga on his way from Cyprus to Psidian Antioch (13:13), but Luke records no preaching there. Paul preaches in the city of Derbe, making disciples, but any activity in the Jewish synagogue is not mentioned, and therefore Luke reports no opposition by *the Jews* there (14:21). As for Phrygia,

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18. These scattered women and men were likely the pioneers of the Gentile mission. Käsemann, "Paul and Nascent Catholicism."

19. Here, I understand *Hellenistas* to mean Gentiles that were either Godfearers or proselytes (cf. 6:5). According to Metzger (*Textual Commentary*, 342) *Hellenistas* refers to "'Greek-speaking, persons,' meaning thereby the mixed population of Antioch in contrast to the *Ioudaioi* of ver. 19." Moule ("Once More, Who Were the Hellenists?"), Hellenists were Jews and Jewish Christians who spoke only Greek. Also, Wilson, *Gentiles and the Gentile Mission*. Juel (*Luke-Acts*, 69) says they were probably both Greek-speaking and Aramaic-speaking Jews. Tyson ("Acts 6:1–7") argues that the Hellenists were Gentiles. Also, Cadbury, "Hellenists."

the narrator says that the Holy Spirit prevented Paul from preaching in Asia[20] (16:6). At the beginning of his ministry Paul does not witness in Caesarea Maritima. He only passes through Caesarea Maritima on his way to Tarsus (9:30), possibly because the Antiochene *ekklēsia* had not yet officially commissioned him. But Luke places Peter in Caesarea Maritima ahead of Paul so that it is Peter who converts, arguably, the first Gentile—Cornelius and his household (10–11). To repeat, *the Jews* oppose Paul primarily in cities where Paul is the first to preach the gospel, i.e., in towns where no other approved intermediaries have already preached. This way Luke constructs an identity for Paul (and other apostles) exclusively over against certain proximate others.

As we shall see, the narrative instabilities occur between *the Jews* and Paul because of his apparent success among the Gentiles to whom salvation is extended without circumcision. These instabilities remain unresolved in the narrative. At the end of Acts, these collective unresolved instabilities result in tension between the narrator and some readers. The author creates tensions throughout Acts with discursive evaluations or ethical judgments. Ethical tensions encourage readers to accept certain evaluations, form judgments, and establish expectations.[21] For example, Gamaliel predicts that the Jesus movement would fizzle out as did those of Judas and Theudas (5:36–38). If the Jesus movement does not decline, its opponents are to be understood as ultimately opposing God. This prediction serves to positively evaluate the *ekklēsia* and the apostles as the approved intermediaries of the gospel; in spite of opposition, they are successful. As the narrative unfolds, it is *the Jews* who actively and unsuccessfully oppose the Gentile mission and may be construed as fighting against God.

It is historically unlikely that *the Jews* as Paul's opponents emerged mainly in places where Paul was the first to preach and that each time *the Jews* acted in very similar ways (or even identically). Luke's negative portrayal of *the Jews* consists of some synthetic dimensions. According to Phelan, synthetic attributes are always present in characterization.[22] Some aspects of characterization will inevitably constitute fabrications since authors cannot replicate exactly the situations or individuals to

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20. Conzelmann, *Acts*, 126. In Luke's day part of the territory of Phrygia lay in the province of Asia and part in Galatia.

21. Phelan, *Reading People*, 8.

22. Ibid., 14, 91.

which they refer. Characterizations are not absolute images of the reality that they signify. This does not mean that there is a total absence of historicity in such literary constructions of character. But it is unlikely that *the Jews* existed as a monolithic stereotypical collective oppositional group in the exact manner that Luke constructed them in Acts.

The Construction of Difference and Sameness: The Stereotypical Other

Luke constructs *the Jews* so as to give readers the impression that they are an authentically ubiquitous group that acts harmoniously, homogeneously, and violently to oppose the Gentile mission. Luke depicts *the Jews* as different from those who accept the gospel (Jewish and Gentile believers), and this difference is always the same *everywhere*. Lawrence Wills has noted the "stylized" way that Luke negatively portrays *the Jews*, and he attributes this depiction to an apologetic "imperial sociology" motif. This motif asserts that the masses are naturally inclined toward rioting and insurrection. Because of the constant fear of revolt, the Roman ruling classes must keep the crowds under control. Wills further argues that *the Jews* in Acts are seditious while the "Christians" are orderly. *The Jews* are involved in riot scenes in Acts that "reflect common Roman assumptions about the nature of the masses and insurrection, which appear especially in Roman historical writing."[23] According to Wills, a theory of society is at work in Acts where "the good order of the empire is taken as an ideal, and the lower classes are perceived as potentially seditious." But he also acknowledges that all opposition does not stem from *the Jews*, and that the crowds whom *the Jews* incite are not necessarily from the lower classes.[24]

In support of his argument, Wills cites an excerpt from Tacitus (*Annals* 1.16), which Erich Auerbach treats as an example of antique historiography. Auerbach notes the biased nature of this piece of historiography, and he argues that it demonstrates no interest in the contemporary sociohistorical forces that motivated the revolt. Tacitus does not discuss the grievances in detail. He does not discuss whether the soldiers are justified, or how the Roman soldiers' situation had evolved

23. Wills, "Depiction of the Jews," 634–35, 647.
24. Ibid., 635, 644.

since the period of the Republic. Tacitus presents the soldiers' griev-ances as those of the ringleader Percennius. Auerbach further asserts that Tacitus is more interested in presenting his own perspective, which is that "the whole thing is merely a matter of mob effrontery and lack of discipline."[25] So in Acts, Luke presents a one-dimensional view of *the Jews* as "ringleaders" of baseless and violent opposition against the *ekklēsia*.

Unlike Tacitus and Luke, some ancient writers betray some sympa-thy for opposition parties rather than simply casting them as the fren-zied mob. Diodorus of Sicily reports that Thrasybulus (one of four sons of a certain Deinomenes) succeeded two of his brothers (Gelon and Hieron) as ruler in Sicily and over the Syracusans. Thrasybulus acted more avariciously and violently than any of his sibling predecessors. In fact, many subjects had wished to revolt (*aphistasthai boulomenoi*) under Hieron, but, remembering Gelon's good reputation (*doxan*), they restrain themselves (*parakateschon tas idias hormas*). According to Diodorus, Thrasybulus' many crimes included unjust killings, exile based on false charges, and seizure of property to enrich the royal trea-sury. Eventually, Thrasybulus' actions compelled the victims to revolt (*tous adikoumenous apostenai*) in order to destroy the tyranny.[26]

Significantly, Luke does not accuse *the Jews* of sedition or *stasis* (revolt) in Acts. In Acts, *stasis* signifies disputes between individuals and civil revolts, as in other ancient literature.[27] In fact, *stasis* occurs four times in Acts, but never to refer to *the Jews* as the instigators: (a) in Asia, the town clerk admonishes the popular assembly (*ekklēsia*) that they are in danger of being charged with *stasis* (19:40); (b) when some people from Judea arrive at Syrian Antioch teaching the brothers they must be circumcised to be saved, a significant *stasis* breaks out between Paul (and Barnabas) and the Judeans (15:1–2); (c) the rhetor Tertullus

25. Auerbach, *Mimesis*, esp. 33–40. The ancients did not "see forces [socio-histori-cal] [but] . . . vices and virtues, successes and mistakes" (38). For a more recent work on mimesis, see GeBauer and Wulf, *Mimesis*.

26. Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historia* 11.67.1–7. Diodorus also reports a case in which a man's daughter is unjustly sold into slavery (ibid., 12.25.3–12). Rather than allow his daughter to suffer the fate of a slave, the man kills her. He then instigates the army to revolt against the Roman government on account of his daughter. Again, Diodorus seems sympathetic to the revolutionaries.

27. Plutarch (*Sulla* 6.1.1) reports a stasis that occurred between the Roman general Sulla (first century BCE) and Marius.

accuses *Paul* of being a pest and of stirring up a *stasis* among all *the Jews* throughout the known world (24:5); and (d) in Jerusalem, Paul causes a *stasis* to erupt between the Pharisees and the Sadducees over the issue of the resurrection of the dead (23:7). The military tribune feared a great *stasis* would result from this dispute (23:10).[28]

Modern historians, according to Martin Goodman, have expressed an interconnection between Judaism as a unique religion and exceptional Jewish rebelliousness under the Roman Empire. Contrary to modern scholarly opinion, which has been "concocted from systematically biased evidence," the Jewish people were not historically any more committed to starting revolts than any other conquered peoples in the Roman provinces in the first century CE. Historical sources report the immediate cause of revolts to be the levying of taxes or extortion of taxation. Different subjugated groups invoked religious ideas to stoke the fires of dissent after a revolt commenced.[29]

Nevertheless, Wills correctly argues that the potential for the arousal of crowds is central to Acts.[30] Even though *the Jews* easily arouse the Gentile crowds to collude with them against Paul, he continually succeeds in converting both diaspora Jews and large numbers of Godfearing Gentiles. Since the conflict between *the Jews* and Paul concerns whether or not the Gentiles/Godfearers should be allowed to participate with the Jewish people in God's salvation without submission to circumcision (Acts 15; cf. Gal 2), it is logical that Luke should construct *the Jews* as the primary opponents. Circumcision is central to Jewish covenant identity as the people of God. Literary characterization is to some degree always an artificial construct in both fictional and nonfictional works. I hope to bring the synthetic, mimetic, and thematic characterization of *the Jews* into greater relief with transitivity analysis. Such an analysis is useful since Luke obfuscates the synthetic aspects of his story. One way he accomplishes this obfuscation is by preempting any suspicion about the complete authenticity and truthfulness of the reality constructed in Acts. He has claimed to write an accurate chronology superior to previously written accounts (Luke 1:1–4; cf. Acts

28. At other times, Roman officials are nonchalant about *the Jews'* accusations against Paul, since they do not concern Roman law (e.g., Gallio, 18:12–17).

29. Goodman, "Opponents of Rome," 222, 228–30, 237–38. See also Goodman, *Ruling Class of Judaea.*

30. Wills, "Depiction of the Jews."

26:26). As the single canonical text that functions as a witness to the beginnings of a Holy Spirit-empowered and guided *ekklēsia*, Acts does not invite critical reflection on characterization.

Transitivity Analysis and the Foregrounding of the Jews

Transitivity patterns help reveal foregrounding in Acts. Foregrounding is motivated prominence. This means that foregrounding strategically contributes to "the meaning of the text as a whole." In foregrounding, transitivity patterns as syntax are a part of the story.[31] A transitivity or linguistic analysis can bring into relief how starkly Luke contrasts *the Jews* with other participants in Acts.[32] Luke differentiates *the Jews* from others, particularly the apostles, and he maintains this project of differentiation throughout Acts. A transitivity analysis of the grammatical clauses elucidates how Luke subtly portrays the apostles as participant-objects in grammatical clauses. Conversely, a transitivity analysis demonstrates how Luke systematically portrays *the Jews* as participant-actors or -subjects in material process clauses in which they are doing something to someone or something else. Paul and his traveling companions, in contrast, are rarely participant-actors in material processes. The low degree of transitivity and causal agency displayed by the apostles renders prominent the high degree of transitivity and agency of *the Jews*. And the high degree of transitivity displayed by *the Jews* highlights the apostles' low degree of casual agency. Paradoxically, Paul is primarily a passive participant-object in grammatical clauses, but his mission activities among the Gentiles succeeds in spite of the violent opposition of *the Jews*.

I have examined seventeen episodes in which *the Jews* are participants. In the majority of these episodes, *the Jews* are participant-actors. However, Paul and his companions (Barnabas, Silas, and Timothy) are primarily the participant-objects in these same episodes. The episodes are: (1) Damascus, 9:19b–25; (2) Psidian Antioch, 13:14–52; (3) Iconium, 14:1–7; (4) Lystra, 14:8–20a; (5) Thessaloniki, 17:1–10a; (6) Berea, 17:10b–15; (7) Corinth, 18:1–11; (8) before the Proconsul Gallio

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31. Halliday, "Studies in Linguistics," 98, 120.

32. Sanders (*Jews in Luke-Acts*, 38) argues that the inconsistencies in Luke's portrait of *the Jews* show that he depicts them in "subtle shades," rather than in "vividly contrasting colours."

of Achaia [Corinth] 18:12–17; (9) Ephesus, 18:19–23; (10) Asia/Ephesus, 19:28–41; (11) Hellas, 20:1–3; (12) arrest in Jerusalem after performing purification rites in the Temple, 21:27–36; (13) between Jerusalem and Caesarea, 23:12–35; (14) Caesarea, 24:1–27; (15) Jerusalem, 25:1–5; (16) Caesarea, 25:6–12; and (17) Rome, 28:17–31.

Most often *the Jews* are participant-actors in material processes (acting on someone or something outside of themselves). Luke employs a variety of synonymous verbs and grammatical constructions to express those processes.[33] The most frequently occurring material processes in which *the Jews* are participant-actors are the following: (a) twelve times *the Jews* incite/arouse crowds or form a mob;[34] (b) twelve times *the Jews* mistreat, seize, cast out, drag, attack, beat, or stone (the apostles or other individuals);[35] (c) five times *the Jews* make a plot, conspire or attempt to kill Paul;[36] (d) four times *the Jews* accuse Paul, inform someone about him, or bring him before the tribunal; (e) once *the Jews* mock (*chleuazō*) Paul; they embitter (*kakoō*) the Gentiles against Paul; and they make an oath (*anathematizō*) to harm Paul. In addition, on two occasions *the Jews* oppose (*antilegō, antitassō*) either what Paul preaches or Paul himself. Significantly, these two occasions occur in the context of Paul's first and second declarations about turning to the Gentiles (13:45; 18:6), as noted below. These two verbs (*antilegō, antitassō*) provoke the dialectic of discursive *abandonment* or turning toward the Gentiles and the ontological *remaining* or returning to the synagogues to dialogue with the Jewish people, as more fully addressed below.

Immediately one notices that most often Luke constructed *the Jews* to behave violently. *The Jews* instigate, act violently, and plot more often than they simply oppose or dispute the apostles' message. However, when Luke characterizes *the Jews* as simply opposing the apostles, some readers view, consciously or unconsciously, the less violent character-

33. Cadbury, "Four Features of Lukan Style," 92. The combination of similarity and variation is numerous in Luke-Acts. The story of Ananias and Sapphira is a perfect example (5:1–11).

34. The equivalent Greeks verbs are: *saleuō, parotrunō, epegeirō, sygcheō, thorubeō, tarassō, peithō, ochlopoieō, proslambanō.*

35. The equivalent Greek verbs are: *hubrizō, epiballō, ephistēmi, epilambanomai, katephistēmi, ekballō, syrō, synepitithēmi, tuptō, lithoboleō.*

36. The equivalent Greek verbs are: *ginomai, epiboulē, systrophē poieō, enedra, parapēreō, analuō, symbouleuō.*

izations as part of an overall pattern as inscribed in the text. Some readers aware of the more violent characterizations of Jewish persons (as angry murderous mob types, both in Acts and in the Gospels) see single disparate snapshots as part of a behavioral pattern ascribed to *the Jews*.

What might Luke's use of different but semantically similar Greek verbs to describe the most violent behaviors of *the Jews* accomplish? It is not enough to say that Luke has a penchant for variety. Luke's pattern of lexical variation constitutes a foregrounding norm in this case. Foregrounding that is based on a pattern of deviation is referred to as "congruence of foregrounding."[37] The fact that the semantically similar Greek verbs are not cognates reinforces the text's message that *the Jews* are many groups, from many distinct places, but they behave in similar or identical ways. Although *the Jews* come from different areas throughout the diaspora, they act predictably and in harmony (*homothymadon*).[38] They are all opponents of the Gentile mission as Paul represents it. This polymorphic linguistic imagery emphasizes the distinct localism and the sameness of *the Jews*. This linguistic pattern gives the impression, as the Jewish leaders in Rome state, that distinct groups of Jews everywhere have opposed the mission (28:22).

In metanarratives (and in speeches) Luke reinforces this negative construction of *the Jews* (22:6–21; 26:2–23; 28:17b–20). For example, Claudias writes a letter to Felix, which is intertextually inserted into the story. In that letter Claudias informs Felix about events that happened earlier in Acts: *the Jews* seized Paul, were about to kill him, accused Paul concerning matters of their Law, and plotted against him (23:27–30; cf. 21:27–36; 23:12). This metanarrative restates and reinscribes previous narrative constructions of *the Jews*. And when Luke recontextualizes the negative and violent literary construction of *the Jews* by placing it in an official letter, he credibly establishes and reifies that pejorative characterization. Luke thus maintains continuity between the narratives and the metanarratives portraying *the Jews* as highly active and aggressive opponents of Paul on both literary levels.

37. Halliday, "Studies in Linguistics," 98, 120.

38. In other ancient literature the Greek adverb *homothymadon* refers to an intentional united group effort in response to potential or actual perceived deprivation, threats of violence, or abuse and suffering inflicted on a group by external forces. For example, see Josephus, *Ant.* 15.277, 19.357; idem, *Ag. Ap.*, 1.242; Philo, *Mos.* 1.72; Philo, *Flacc.* 121, 122; Cyprian, *Test.*, "Covenant of Nephtali," 6.10; *Ps.-Clem.*, *Epitome Prior* §172, *Epitome Altera* §180.