
Narrative Characterizations of Peter and Paul in Early Christianity

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Characterization in the book of Acts is interesting for several reasons. Scholars have long noted how the characterization of Paul and his message in Acts varies significantly from the image of Paul developed from his authentic letters. Although investigations into the theological differences between the Paul of Acts and the Paul of the letters has long interested scholars and has therefore generated a significant amount of research,¹ I wish investigate two less traveled avenues of research. First, rather than comparing the Paul of Acts with the Paul of the letters, I want to broaden the inquiry to investigate the characterization of both Peter and Paul in a broader collection of early Christian narratives. I will compare the Peter and the Paul of the canonical Acts with the Peter and the Paul of the non-canonical, apocryphal Acts.² Second, rather than investigating theological aspects of characterization in the canonical and apocryphal Acts, I wish to investigate economic aspects of the characterizations of Peter and Paul in these documents. As a result of this investigation, I hope to illustrate how a better understanding of Peter's and Paul's economic, social and temporal locations within Christian narratives is conducive to a better understanding of early Christianity itself.

Peter and Paul in the Canonical Acts

In the canonical Acts of the Apostles, the characterizations of the economic situations of Peter and of Paul are strikingly different. On the

one hand, according to Acts, Peter participates in the Jerusalem community's highly structured system of caring for the needy within its ranks (2:42-45). Peter is apparently without significant financial resources of his own; he has no silver or gold (3:6) and he never serves as a benefactor in his own right. He does temporarily serve as an agent in charge of distributing the community's benefactions (4:32-35; 5:1-11), but he soon relinquishes even this role as inconsistent with his apostolic calling (6:1-6). Thus, Peter is characterized as an apostle, a Christian leader, who is, by his own choice, impoverished and the beneficiary of other persons' generosity. On the other hand, Paul claims to have supported both himself and his traveling companions (20:34). Whereas Peter, as an apostle, has gifts laid at his feet, Paul was a benefactor who distributed funds that he had earned with his own hands (20:35). He is not merely an agent in charge of the community's benefactions. Paul is characterized as a self-supporting benefactor, whose final trip to Jerusalem was motivated by the desire to give offerings and alms to his people (24:17). In fact, Paul was apparently in possession of significant financial resources because he could underwrite the considerable costs associated with the fulfillment of a Nazarite vow (21:23-26), could give the wealthy Roman governor Felix reason to hope for a bribe (24:26), and could support himself throughout his two year Roman imprisonment (28:30). Thus, Paul is characterized as a self-supporting and generous person with a considerable amount of money at his disposal. This characterization of Paul stands in stark contrast to the characterization of Peter as one who lived within a community which was sustained by the generosity of others and as one who possessed no economic resources of his own.

In light of this interesting contrast in the canonical Acts, this article will examine the economic characterizations of Peter and of Paul in the second and third century apocryphal Acts in an attempt to discover if this contrast between the economic characterizations of Peter and of Paul in the canonical Acts was a consistent feature of early Christian narratives regarding these two individuals. It will also attempt to discern what significance the traditions about Peter and Paul in the canonical and apocryphal Acts have for understanding the status of Paul within early Christianity. This paper will also briefly offer some possi-

ble historical explanations for the various characterizations of Peter and Paul.

Peter and Paul in the Apocryphal Acts

Scholarly work on the apocryphal Acts (AA) is still at a very elementary stage. Until recently, the AA were commonly viewed as popular second and third century novels which were of little value for gaining insight into the church of the first one hundred fifty years. This view of the AA was often accompanied by a view which regarded the canonical Acts (CA) as superior to the AA both in theological insight and historical reliability.³ This simplistic contrast between the AA and CA, and the facile approach to the AA which accompanied it, have been eroded under pressure from more careful and nuanced treatments of the origin, content and genre of the AA.⁴

Although the full litany of questions surrounding both the genre of the AA and the origin of their underlying traditions cannot be answered here, this paper will proceed on the basis of two generally accepted assumptions about the AA.

- 1) The genre of AA is close enough to the genre of the CA to allow for some meaningful comparison of content.⁵
- 2) The age of the traditions contained within the AA is close enough in time to the traditions contained in the CA to allow for some meaningful comparison of content.⁶

These assumptions presuppose neither that the AA and the CA are identical in genre nor that the traditions behind the various documents originated in the same generation of Christianity, only that the genres are similar and the traditions originated within a few generations of one another.⁷

The Acts of Peter

Although perhaps as much as one third of *The Acts of Peter* (APt) has been lost, enough of the document remains for us to determine how

wealth functions in the narrative of this second century document and how Peter relates to wealth.⁸ Unfortunately, Paul's character appears only briefly in the narrative and the financial status of his character is scarcely developed. My discussion will, therefore, focus most closely on the economic issues associated with Peter and his converts.

A recurring pattern is found in which Peter's converts are wealthy persons who make generous gifts to the community upon their conversion. Peter, who produces converts via preaching sermons and working miracles, serves as the agent who relays his converts' gifts to the community.

Much of the document relates the story of an extended contest between Peter and a magician named Simon. When Peter first encounters him, Simon is residing at the home of Marcellus, a Roman Senator who had recently turned from the Christian faith under Simon's influence.⁹ Marcellus's apostasy is described to Peter in largely economic terms:

And they [the Christian community] said, "Believe us, brother Peter; no one was so wise among men as this Marcellus. All the widows who hoped in Christ found refuge with him; all the orphans were fed by him. And what more, brother? All the poor called Marcellus their patron, and his house was called (the house) of pilgrims and of the poor.... We have this in view, brother Peter, and warn you that all that man's great charity has turned to blasphemy.... This Marcellus is now enraged and repents of his good deeds, and says, 'All this wealth I have spent in all this time, vainly believing that I paid it for the knowledge of God.'" (*NTApo*, 2: 294-95)

In the course of the narrative, Peter empowers a dog to pronounce an audible rebuke against the demonic Simon. This "great and marvelous wonder" prompts Marcellus to throw himself down at Peter's feet in repentance and to place his "whole fortune" at the community's disposal (*NTApo*, 2: 296-97).¹⁰ Marcellus followed up on his commitment to care for the community's needs by providing a piece of gold for everyone in the Roman Christian community (*NTApo*, 2: 303), by housing the community's widows in his own home (*NTApo*, 2: 311), and by providing for Peter's burial expenses (*NTApo*, 2: 316).

Peter's second Roman convert,¹¹ Eubula, fits the same pattern of miracle, conversion and generous benefaction. Eubula is introduced as "a woman of some distinction in this world, who possessed much gold and pearls of no little value" (*NTApo*, 2: 300). Her victimization at the thieving hands of the sorcerer Simon served as the occasion for Peter's performance of another faith awakening miracle.¹² Peter had a vision which enabled him to identify Simon's accomplices, who then helped Peter and Eubula to capture Simon and recover the stolen property (*NTApo*, 2: 300-02). The story closes with an account of Eubula's benefaction:

But Eubula having recovered all her property gave it for the care of the poor; she believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and was strengthened (in the faith); and despising and renouncing this world she gave (alms) to the widows and orphans and clothed the poor.... (*NTApo*, 2: 302)

The narratives concerning Peter's third and fourth Roman converts, a nameless widow and her son, Nicostratus, also fit into this pattern of miracle, conversion, and generosity. Nicostratus, who was killed by Simon as a demonstration of his miraculous powers, was raised from the dead by Peter. After Nicostratus's restoration to life, he and his widowed mother sought out Peter at the home of Marcellus where both the widow and her son each made generous gifts to the Christian community. The widow

came to Marcellus' house bringing Peter two thousand pieces of gold and saying to Peter, "Divide these among the virgins of Christ who serve him." But when the boy who had risen from the dead saw that he had given nothing to anyone, he went home and opened the chest and himself brought four thousand gold pieces, saying to Peter, "Look, I myself, who am restored to life, am bringing a double offering, and (present) myself as a speaking sacrifice to God from this day on." (*NTApo*, 2: 311)¹³

Thus the pattern of miracle, conversion and benefaction appears in the first four conversions in Peter's Roman ministry according to *APt*. The final story in which finance plays a prominent role records no miracle or clear statements about conversion. Peter is given 10,000

pieces of gold by “a very wealthy woman who bore the name Chryse (the golden), because every utensil of hers was made of gold” (*NTApo*, 2: 311). Upon learning of the gift, some of those present urged Peter to return the money because of the woman’s reputation for fornication.

But Peter, when he heard this, laughed and said to the brethren, “I do not know what this woman is as regards her usual way of life; but in taking this money I did not take it without reason; for she was bringing it as a debtor to Christ, and is giving it to Christ’s servants; for he himself has provided for them.” (*NTApo*, 2: 311-12)

Robert Stoops (1986; 1992) has argued that this passage is key to understanding *APt*’s attempt to redefine patronage. He argues that *APt* encourages the Christian community to accept the benefactions of wealthy persons on the fringe of the Christian community but without granting the donors the honour that was normally accorded to persons who provided such generous benefactions in the Greco-Roman world. The honour for any benefaction belonged to Christ alone who was the community’s true benefactor.¹⁴ Even though Stoops is correct to note the christological reinterpretation of patronage, this reinterpretation does not negate the emphasis which *APt* places upon benefactions as an important source of support for the community.

To summarize, in *APt*, Peter’s characterization in regard to finance is similar to that in the CA. (1) Peter generates converts (and other sympathetic parties) via his preaching and miracles;¹⁵ these converts (and sympathetic parties) then supply the community’s needs via generous gifts. (2) Peter personally receives some of the gifts, but the gifts are destined for the needy within the community. Peter serves only as a broker. (3) Peter does not have any economic resources of his own.¹⁶ Yet, in contrast to the CA, Peter does not specifically renounce his role as broker of the community’s resources. In regard to Paul, we learn only that the Christian community provided him with the provisions that he required for his sea voyage when leaving Rome, a portrayal that contradicts the portrayal of a financially independent Paul in the CA.¹⁷

The Acts of Paul

The Acts of Paul (*API*), like *APt*, was probably composed in the late second century using traditions of various ages, traditions which included *APt*.¹⁸ The text, which may originally have been nearly 25 percent longer than *CA*, has been only partially preserved and the original order of the text is merely conjectural.¹⁹ Yet in spite of the text's fragmentary condition, its characterization of Paul's financial status is quite clear.

Paul is poor, completely without monetary resources. At one point, he is forced to sell his coat in order to purchase food (*NTApo*, 2: 243). Not only is Paul impoverished, he also consistently preaches against the dangers of wealth. He berates those who have been "led astray and enslaved < . . . > by gold < . . . > silver and precious stones" (*NTApo*, 2: 251)²⁰ and warns Caesar that "neither riches nor the splendour of this present life will save thee" (*NTApo*, 2: 261). In another fragment, the reader learns that "<this> world is nothing, gold is <nothing>, all possessions are nothing" (*NTApo*, 2: 248).²¹ The negative characterization of wealth is reinforced when Demas and Hermogenes betray Paul to the wealthy Thamyras who has promised them "much money" (*NTApo*, 2: 241).²²

API's characterization of Paul and his message regarding wealth is hardly surprising given the highly ascetic tone of the entire document. Paul is frequently found fasting, sometimes for two or three or even "many days" at a time (see *NTApo*, 2: 243, 249, 256, 257, 258; at one point, Paul fell asleep because he was "fatigued by the fastings and the night watches with the brethren"). The most striking evidence of *API*'s ascetic concerns, however, is not the frequent fasting but rather the constant appeal for sexual abstinence. The content of Paul's message is summarized in a variety of formulas, but the theme of sexual abstinence is consistently included in these summaries. (On the relationship between the theme of continence in *API* and in Paul's letters, see Glenny 1990.) Paul is said to speak "the word of God concerning continence and the resurrection," to preach that one should "fear one sin-

gle God only, and live chastely,” and is accused of teaching that maidens should not marry (*NTApo*, 2: 239, 240, 241).

To summarize, *API* portrays Paul as impoverished and hostile toward wealth (see Howe 1980). Although this hostility is part of a larger ascetic concern, *API*'s characterization of Paul as impoverished and hostile toward wealth is not consistent with the CA.

The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles

The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles (*APt12*), unlike the *APt* and *API*, has no external evidence for its existence. The single copy that we possess of this brief document is a Coptic translation from an original Greek version and is preserved in a codex that was manufactured in the fourth century. The document itself is, however, generally regarded as a second or third century creation.²³ The narrative has merged pre-existing Jewish traditions about an angel named Lithargoel, a mysterious physician, with Christian traditions about Jesus and the apostles.²⁴

In its present form, *APt12*'s characterization of the rich and poor is quite clear. The rich, in their arrogance, rejected the gift which the pearl merchant (Lithargoel = Jesus)²⁵ offered. The poor, in their humility, were freely given the pearl—much to their surprise. The rich were uninterested in the pearl; the poor assumed that they would not be able to afford to purchase it, reasoning that “since we are beggars, we also know that nobody gives a pearl to a beggar, but it is bread and money that are wont to receive” (see *NTApo*, 2: 421, 424). Only the poor can receive the pearl (i.e., “power to heal the sicknesses of the heart”) (*NTApo*, 2: 424).²⁶

Poverty is a prerequisite for accepting the free gift. When Lithargoel directs the disciples to the city where they may acquire the gift, he warns: “No one is able to go on that way if he does not renounce all his possessions and fast daily from one night's lodging to the next” (*NTApo*, 2: 421-22; Lithargoel warns against carrying bread, a costly garment, water, meat, or vegetables on the trip). After the doctor has revealed himself to be Jesus, he instructs the disciples to supply the needs of the poor. These instructions prompt Peter's protest:

Lord, you have taught us to renounce the world and all that is in it. We have abandoned them for your sake. The food for a single day is what we are concerned about. Where shall we be able to find what is needful, which you ask us to give to the poor? (*NTApo*, 2: 423)²⁷

Peter's protest, based upon his literal poverty, provided Jesus with an opportunity to remind Peter that the disciples alleviate spiritual poverty by dispersing "the wisdom of God [which is] worth more than gold and silver and precious stones" (*NTApo*, 2: 423).

Whereas poverty serves as the prerequisite for receiving the things of true worth in *APt12*, the possession of wealth is sufficient reason for exclusion from the church. Jesus explained that

the rich men of this city, those who did not even think it necessary to ask me who I am, but rejoiced in their riches and arrogance—with such as these do not eat with them in their houses, neither have fellowship with them at all, [and so it will] not befall you to show partiality to them; for many have (already) shown partiality to the rich! For (where there are rich people) in the churches, they sin themselves and also lead others astray into sinning. (*NTApo*, 2: 424)

Thus, according to *APt12*, Peter and the apostles are, as in the CA, personally impoverished, but such impoverishment is, unlike the CA, a precondition for accepting the Christian message. Also, unlike the CA, Peter never serves as a broker of the community's financial resources, because the brokering of financial resources is regarded as inconsistent with Peter's calling. Like the CA, however, Peter's primary calling is to serve as an agent in charge of dispersing the community's spiritual resources. To summarize, *APt12*'s insistence upon both Peter's poverty and the apostles' concern with matters of primary importance (i.e., dispersing the word of God) are consistent with the CA even if the intensity of *APt12*'s hostility toward those who possess financial resources is inconsistent with the traditions in the CA.

Summary of Apocryphal Acts

In all three of the AA Peter is portrayed as lacking financial resources of his own. In this respect, the AA both agree among themselves and are consistent with the CA. The AA do, however, differ in their portrayal of Peter's relationship to community resources. On the one hand, *APt* consistently characterizes Peter as the generator of extensive revenue via his converts' gifts to the community and often characterizes him as the broker who distributes that revenue to needy individuals within the community. Thus *APt* could be viewed as representing an accelerated version of the traditions contained in chapters 2 and 4 of the CA, where Peter and the apostles serve as brokers who distribute the benefactions from the community's patrons to the needy—although on a less grandiose scale than in *APt*. On the other hand, *APt12* characterizes Peter as one who avoids all involvement with economic resources because of his unique calling. Peter's role within the community, according to *APt12*, is to provide for the community's spiritual needs, a ministry that completely overwhelms any concern for a ministry of providing for physical needs. This characterization of Peter's role within the community could be understood as an accelerated version of the CA's traditions regarding Peter's lack of money and abundance of spiritual resources (3:1-10) and regarding his insistence that an apostle's primary responsibility was not to serve physical needs but rather to preach the word (6:1-6).

For his part, Paul is characterized as impoverished in the two AA in which he appears and is even portrayed as being dependent upon the community for support in *APt*. Paul does not possess sufficient resources to be financially independent in the AA. Thus the portrayal of an impoverished Paul in the AA is not consistent with the portrayal of a financially independent Paul in the CA. The portrayal of Paul's financial status in the AA is closer to the CA's portrayal of Peter's financial status than to the portrayal of Paul's financial status.²⁸

This tendency of the AA to portray both Peter and Paul as lacking any independent economic resources (in spite of the AA's occasional willingness to portray other Christian believers as possessing such resources) raises an interesting question: What is the significance of the

CA's general agreement with the AA's characterization of Peter as economically impoverished on the one hand and its general disagreement with the traditions preserved in the AA about Paul's economic characterization on the other hand?

Revisiting Peter and Paul in the CA

One possible answer to this question may be found in the temporal location of Paul in the CA. In the CA, Paul stands in post-apostolic times with the narrator and the reader. From the beginning of the third gospel when the narrator spoke of what was "handed down to us" (1:2), the narrator has stood with the reader in a time subsequent to the events being narrated. The narrator maintained this distinction between the time of the narrative and the time of his writing until after the apostles made their final appearance in the narrative (Acts 16:4). When the apostles are active within the narrative, the narrator speaks of events which other persons experienced and handed down to him. As soon as the apostles leave the narrative, the narrator begins to speak in the first person of events that he himself has experienced. The narrator, who used the preface of each book (Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1-2) to separate himself and the reader from the time of the events being narrated, enters the narrative at 16:10 by using first person narration ("we") for the first time outside of his prefaces. The positioning of this first person narration is significant because the narrator is cautious to avoid participating in the narrative until after the apostles have departed from the narrative. Thus the narrator does not appear in the narrative until the apostles (and Barnabas) have fallen completely out of the narrative. The apostles' sanctioning of the Gentile mission in the "apostolic conference" of Acts 15 marked their last appearance in the narrative of Acts. Then the narrator begins experiencing the narrative immediately after the "apostolic conference," while the news of the apostles' final decision (the "apostolic decree" of Acts 15:23-29) was being disseminated to the Christian communities (16:4). For Acts, therefore, the "apostolic conference" marks a generational change within the Christian community. The apostles, the protagonists of the first half of Acts, are mentioned 30 times before the implied author

introduces himself into the narrative, but they are never mentioned again after the narrator enters the narrative. In this manner, therefore, the implied author separates himself from the time of the apostles and places himself with Paul in post-apostolic times.²⁹

The fact that history, from the implied author's point of view, turns a page after the "apostolic conference" explains the perplexing incongruity between the characterizations of the financial status of Peter and Paul in the CA. "Back then," in the time of the apostles (including Peter), things were different. Poverty, vocational abandonment, and dependence upon the community were the norm then. "But now," in the time of the implied author (and Paul), the temporary stringencies of apostolic times are past. Although Paul had no contact with Jesus before his resurrection and therefore failed to meet the requirements for apostleship in Acts (1:21-22),³⁰ Paul does serve as the primary witness to Christ in the post-apostolic church and therefore becomes a role model for post-apostolic Christians. (On Paul as a "witness" to Christ in Acts, see Mather 1985.) The reader, who stands with Paul and the implied author in post-apostolic times, should imitate the hard working, financially independent and generous Paul. The time of apostles is gone and the economic norms of their time and calling are also past. The narrator and reader stand in post-apostolic times with Paul and have his example of hard work, financial independence and generosity as their model.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that the characterizations of the economic status of Peter and of Paul are different in the CA. Peter is characterized without any financial resources of his own, but Paul is characterized with significant financial resources of his own. I have further argued that this distinction between the financial status of Peter and of Paul is not maintained in the AA even though the other traditions regarding the finances of Peter can be interpreted as accelerated versions of the traditions in the CA. I have suggested that the reason for the CA's unique characterization of Paul's financial status was due to the fact that the CA characterizes Paul as standing in post-apostolic times

and that the CA's characterization of Paul's financial life was presented in a manner consistent with the expectations of how believers were to conduct themselves in post-apostolic times.

Finally, I would also suggest the *possibilities* that: (1) Luke, the author of the third gospel and Acts, was aware of growing traditions on two sides. Luke may have been aware of traditions that were developing with tendencies to treat extreme asceticism as an ethical ideal (like the traditions preserved in *APl* and *APt12*) on the one hand and with tendencies to give preferential treatment to the wealthy as potential community benefactors (like the traditions preserved in *APt*) on the other hand. (2) Luke may have deliberately incorporated some of these developing traditions into his two volumes (e.g., Luke 5:1-11; 9:1-6; 10:1-12; 18:18-30; Acts 2:44-45; 3:1-10; 4:32-35; 5:1-11), but then placed them within a historical framework which suppressed their normative claims on his own time by promoting the image of a hard working, generous and financially independent Paul as the model for his own time.

Notes

¹ For the classic investigation of this issue, see Paul Vielhauser 1966.

² When this paper refers to the apocryphal Acts, it means the five writings traditionally placed within this category (i.e., *The Acts of the Peter*, *The Acts of Paul*, *The Acts of Andrew*, *The Acts of John* and *The Acts of Thomas*) and the slightly later *Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*. All references to these documents will be cited from Wilhelm Schneemelcher, ed., *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2: *Writings Relating to the Apostles: Apocalypses and Related Subjects* (1992). *NTApo* hereafter. This paper will focus upon *The Acts of Paul*, *The Acts of Peter* and *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*, because only these apocryphal Acts contain more than a passing reference to Peter or Paul or both. (Paul does not appear in *The Acts of John*, *The Acts of Andrew* and *The Acts of Thomas*, and Peter appears only in the "disciple lists" of these other AA.)

³ For a traditional comparison between the theological and historical value of the AA and the CA see Metzger 1945.

⁴ For a survey of scholarship on the AA, see Rordorf 1993; Stoops 1993; and Jones 1993.

⁵ No scholarly consensus exists on the genre of the AA, see del Carro 1993; Boughton 1991; and Burrus 1987. Also see Pervo 1987; Pao 1995; Molinari 2000, 53-92; and Aubin 1998.

⁶ No scholarly consensus exists regarding the relationship between the CA and AA. Most interpreters regard the traditions in the AA either as competing traditions which are roughly contemporary with the traditions in the CA (e.g., Czachesz 1996; MacDonald 1983 and 1990) or as fictionalized traditions which seek to extend the traditions in the CA (e.g., Bauckham 1993 and Stoops 1994), or as marginalized traditions which are significantly later than the traditions in the CA (e.g., Guthrie 1970).

⁷ In reality, both the CA and the AA probably contain traditions from different and overlapping generations of Christians. The situation that Jacob Jervell envisages behind the CA, I also envisage behind the AA. He explains that, "there is nothing which justly can be called *tradition* in the first Christian century. What we have are traditions, various, manifold, and many-sided. Is the word *tradition* in the singular at all useful and meaningful when talking about the Paul of Acts? Luke's problem was the incessant, ever-growing crop of sayings, rumors, gossip, apologetic, polemic, veneration, admiration, declaration of aversion, etc., from Paul's foes and friends, and from Paul himself" (emphasis Jervell's) (1984, 69). Also see Thomas 1992.

⁸ According to the Stichometry of Nicephorus, *APt* originally consisted of 2750 lines (about 150 lines longer than the third gospel, the longest NT book). About one third of the *APt* is now lost. Tertullian's late second century reference to *APt* indicates that the book was written before 190 C.E. See *NTApo*, 2: 271-83. For a more complete discussion of textual issues, see Hilhorst 1998.

⁹ On the possibility that the dispute between Simon Magus and Peter reflects a christological debate within the Christian community, see Hanig 1997. Also see Adamik 1998.

¹⁰ Marcellus temporarily wavered in his faith when a statue of Caesar was disfigured, but its miraculous restoration by Marcellus's own hand (under Peter's direction) shored up his wavering faith. The episode closed with an affirmation of the sincerity of Marcellus's faith: "Marcellus also was uplifted in his spirit, because this first miracle was done by his hands; and he therefore believed with his whole heart in the name of Jesus Christ the Son of God."

¹¹ Two conversions occur in *APt* before Peter arrives in Rome. The first, the conversion of a "rich man named Ptolemeus," is only partially preserved. In the extant text, we learn that upon his death Ptolemeus bequeathed a piece of land to Peter, who sold it and "gave all the money to the poor." In the second account, a ship captain named Theon, is converted after having heard a miraculous voice from heaven. Subsequent to his conversion and baptism, Theon sold the ship's cargo and followed Peter to Rome. The text is ambiguous, but

seems to imply that the proceeds from sale of the ship were placed at Peter's disposal ("Theon for his part handed over all his ship's cargo to be sold for its fair price [German: to those who came as buyers] and followed Peter to Rome..."). The pattern of miracle, conversion, and benefaction, although less prominent, appears in these accounts also. See *NTApo*, 2: 286, 291-93.

¹² Upon learning of Eubula's loss of property to Simon's thievery, Peter explains that, "this event will cause many to believe in the name of the Lord" (*NTApo*, 2: 301).

¹³ Earlier, as soon as the boy was raised, the mother had given the money set aside for the boy's funeral expenses to Peter for distribution to widows (310). The 2,000 pieces of gold donated in this account were added to the widow's earlier gift. The widow's generosity and access to considerable wealth are in apparent contradiction to the basis of her original appeal for Peter to raise her son. She claimed that his income was her only source of livelihood, explaining that, "I had only one son; he provided my food with his hands..." (307).

¹⁴ "Peter offers the wealthy a chance to become true patrons by putting their money to working the right way. But as we shall see, Peter denies patrons the honor and loyalty they might have expected to receive in return for their gifts. Honor is due Christ alone. No donor becomes a leader in the community" (Stoops 1986, 95).

¹⁵ Although the role of miracles is emphasized more strongly in the AA than in the CA, miracles serve to inspire faith in the CA also (e.g., 9:32-35). Jervell (1984, 86) argues that preaching of the word and performing of miracles "cannot be separated" as the means of inspiring conversions in the CA.

¹⁶ When Peter boarded the ship that would bear him to Rome, he embarked without provisions. The captain, Theon, offered to supply Peter's needs, but Peter refused, preferring to fast. Peter accepted food from Theon only after Theon had been baptized. See *NTApo*, 2: 291-92.

¹⁷ When Paul left Rome, *APt* tells us that the Christian community "prayed together with Paul and brought him gifts and put on the ship whatever he needed." See *NTApo*, 2: 289.

¹⁸ It is widely agreed that *API* used traditions from *APt*. On the literary relationships between the AA, see Lalleman 1998; Rodorf 1998; Jones 1993, 485-505; MacDonald 1993; and Perkins 1993.

¹⁹ See *NTApo*, 2: 213-37. The authorship of *API* has traditionally been traced to an Asian presbyter whom Tertullian (*de Baptismo* 17) claims wrote the document "out of love for Paul." This view has been called into question, but a late second century date of authorship is generally accepted, as is the assumption that the author compiled existing traditions. On the connection between *API* and Tertullian, see Hilhorst 1998; Davies 1986; and Souter 1924.

²⁰ Paul lists enslavement to money along with enslavement to adultery and drunkenness.

²¹ Although the fragmentary state of the text makes it difficult to determine the speaker, it appears that the speaker is Hermippus, Paul's persecutor turned disciple. These statements appear to sum up the new outlook that Hermippus adopted as a Christian. The statements are entirely consistent with the ascetic views of *API*.

²² Bribery occurs on two other occasions in *API*. First, one of Paul's guards accepts a bribe from Thecla so that she may visit Paul in prison. Second, Paul is offered a bribe to cease instructing Thecla. Of course, Paul does not accept the bribe. See *NTApo*, 2: 242-43.

²³ "We ought by all means to reckon with the possibility that ActPt [*Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*] could already have come into being in the 2nd century" (Schenke, in *NTApo* 2: 414). For a sustained argument, placing the origin of APt12 in the wake of the Decian persecution (249-51 C.E.), see Molinari 2000.

²⁴ Schenke, in *NTApo* 2: 417-18, argues that the document was created by the merger of three different kinds of texts: (1) "the legendary narrative of a marvelous voyage by Peter and the other apostles, which brings them out of time and space to an imaginary small island;" (2) "the description of a vision (by Peter?) of the appearance of a mysterious pearl-merchant named Lithargoel in a strange city, and the reaction of the rich and poor to his offer;" and (3) "an Easter and Pentecost story...where the eleven disciples under Peter's leadership were to meet the risen Jesus." Although this reconstruction is plausible, it is difficult to know if the document was created by the merger of different texts, or merely by the merger of different oral traditions.

²⁵ The protagonist's character is progressively revealed. He begins as a nameless pearl merchant who eventually reveals himself to be Lithargoel. He then takes on the form of a physician with a medical pouch. Finally, he reveals himself to be Jesus Christ.

²⁶ The text never explicitly identifies what the pearl symbolizes, but the pearl is replaced by a medical pouch in the narrative, and the medical pouch symbolizes the "power to heal the sicknesses of the heart."

²⁷ This pericope and the one that follows have the greatest claim to being specifically Christian traditions without any pre-existing Jewish basis. Both the characters and the subject are familiar from Christian tradition. In this pericope, the characters are "Peter" and the "Lord" and the subject is voluntary poverty. In the subsequent pericope, the reference to the "churches" indicates a specifically Christian tradition.

²⁸ In this regard, the AA are also closer to the portrayal of Paul which is found in his letters than is the CA.

²⁹ In the AA, the narrators never participate in the narrative. The narrators cannot participate in the events because both Peter and Paul stand in the distant past, in apostolic times. In the AA, unlike the CA, Paul is an apostle in the same manner as the twelve. Thus, in his speech to Peter in *APt*, Marcellus explained to Peter what he had learned from "Paul, your fellow-apostle" (*NTApo*, 2: 286). Similarly, in *API*, Paul's teaching is regarded as apostolic. See *NTApo*, 2: 254-55.

³⁰ Paul is called an apostle only one time in Acts (14:14; cf. 14:4) and then only in conjunction with Barnabas, whose name appears before Paul's name. Regardless of the reason for this one reference to Paul as an apostle, the subsequent need for Paul and Barnabas to "go up to Jerusalem to the apostles" (15:2) demonstrates that Paul and Barnabas were not apostles in the same sense as the twelve. See Menoud 1978.

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