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CHAPTER VII

Ancient Astrological Geography and Acts 2:9-11

Bruce M. Metzger

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According to the book of Acts, on the day of Pentecost after the Holy Spirit had come upon the disciples and they began to speak in other tongues, the multitude of the Jewish pilgrims in Jerusalem were amazed and wondered, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God" (2:7-11). This passage has given rise to several questions that have perplexed commentators. Why, for example, are these and no other countries specified? And if these countries, why are they cited in the order in which they now stand?

In 1948 more or less satisfactory answers to both these questions seemed to be supplied in a brief article by Stefan Weinstock published in a British journal of the classics, in which the author drew attention to a somewhat similar list of names of countries in an astrological treatise compiled by Paulus Alexandrinus, who lived in the latter part of the fourth Christian century.¹ In this treatise Paulus assigns to the several signs of the zodiac a dozen or more lands and nations, whose similarity to the list in Acts struck Weinstock as remarkable. Consequently Weinstock concluded that the author of Acts, "however strange his list is, meant in fact to say 'the whole world' ... [i.e.] all nations who live under the twelve signs of the

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zodiac received the gift to understand [the apostles'] preaching immediately."

¹ "The Geographical Catalogue in Acts II, 9-11," *JRS*, 38 (1948), pp. 43-46. Weinstock indicates that his attention was drawn to the similarity between the lists when he came upon F. C. Burkitt's copy of an off-print of Franz Cumont's article, "La plus ancienne géographique astrologique" (*Klio* 9 [1909], pp. 263-73), in the margin of which Burkitt had pencilled the names of the countries and lands of Acts 2:9-11 opposite the text of Paulus. Burkitt himself expressed no opinion concerning the relationship between the two lists.

Actually Weinstock was not the first to publish a discussion concerning the similarity between the list of countries in Paulus Alexandrinus and in Acts; at the beginning of the twentieth century Joseph Halévy included a brief discussion of the data in his little-known article entitled "Nouvelles considerations sur le cycle turc des animaux", published in the journal *T'oung Pao, sér. II*, 7 (1906), pp. 270-95, especially 279 ff. Halévy argues that the priority belongs to the list in Acts, which was excerpted later by a Christian astrologer (a view rejected by Boll, see below).

Bruce M. Metzger, "Ancient Astrological Geography and Acts 2:9-11," W. Ward Gasque & Ralph P. Martin, eds., *Apostolic History and the Gospel. Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F.F. Bruce*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1970. Hbk. ISBN: 085364098X. pp.123-133.

Soon Weinstock's article began to be quoted by commentators on Acts: one of the first to do so was Professor F. F. Bruce, whose interest and competence in the classics are well known. After presenting a brief summary of Weinstock's argument, Bruce concluded, "Whatever may be the literary affinities of Luke's catalogue, we take leave to doubt the presence of astrological considerations in his mind."²

It seems to be appropriate in a *Festschrift* in honour of Professor Bruce to give renewed attention to the comparison between Acts 2:9-11 and Paulus; first, because there is now available a critically established text of the astrological treatise of Paulus Alexandrinus, based on forty-eight manuscripts³ (the only previous edition is the sixteenth-century *editio princeps* prepared by Andrew Schato,⁴ based upon a single manuscript); and, secondly, because several recent commentators on Acts have made rather extravagant statements concerning the degree of similarity thought to exist between the list in Acts and the list in Paulus⁵ — statements that tend to mislead those who have no ready access to the text of Paulus Alexandrinus.

I

Before we consider Paulus's assignment of countries and lands to the signs of the zodiac, it will be useful to mention several details concerning Paulus and other ancient astrologers.⁶

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² *Commentary on the Book of the Acts; the English text with Introduction, Exposition and Notes* London, 1959), p. 61, note 20.

³ Παύλου Ἀλεξανδρέως Εἰσαγωγικά, *Pauli Alexandrini Elementa Apotelesmatica*, edidit Æ[milie] Boer, *Interpretationes astronomicas addidit O. Neugebauer* (Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana; Leipzig, 1958).

⁴ Pauli Alexandrini, *Rudimenta, in doctrinam de praedictis natalitiis* (Wittenberg, 1586; second, corrected ed., 1588). Nothing is known of Schato beyond the fact that he produced the first printed edition of Paulus's Greek text, accompanied by a Latin translation; in fact, it is not altogether certain how his name should be spelled, whether Schato, Schaton, or Schatus.

⁵ E.g., C. S. C. Williams implies that eleven-twelfths of the names of the countries in the list in Acts agree with those in Paulus Alexandrinus (*Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* [London and New York, 1957], p. 64); G. W. H. Lampe finds that Paulus's list "strikingly resembles Luke's list in order and content" (in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, ed. by M. Black and H. H. Rowley [London and New York, 1962], p. 888); and R. P. C. Hanson declares the list in Acts to be "almost exactly the same as an astrological list, known from other writers, in which each land corresponded to a sign of the Zodiac (only *Judea* is out of place; it was not, after all, a foreign land; Luke may have made it replace another name)" (*The Acts in the Revised Standard Version, with Introduction and Commentary* [Oxford, 1967], p. 64). Likewise J. A. Brinkman, S. J., in his article "The Literary Background of the 'Catalogue of the Nations' (Acts 2:9-11)," *CBQ* 25 (1963), pp. 418-27, thinks that "the two lists are too similar in both contents and sequence not to have come from the same tradition" (p. 423).

⁶ For a conveniently arranged list of almost a score of ancient astrological authors and anonymous treatises, see Hans Georg Gundel, *Weitbilde and Astrologie in den griechischen Zauberpapyri* (= *Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antike Rechtsgeschichte*, 53) (Munich, 1968), pp. 74-78.

It is appropriate to mention at this point that the present writer is deeply indebted to Prof. David Pingree of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, with whom he discussed the first draft of this paper. Besides confirming the general point of the paper, Prof. Pingree saved me from making more than one egregious blunder concerning the intricacies of ancient astrological lore.

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Of Paulus Alexandrinus very little is known other than that which can be gleaned from his *Rudiments of Astrology*.⁷ He is reasonably called Alexandrinus because many of his astronomical data fit the latitude of Alexandria only; and this is supported by his use of the Egyptian names of the months and the four-year Egyptian period with an intercalary day. That he flourished in the second half of the fourth century of the Christian era seems to be a fair deduction from his reference in chap. 20, where to illustrate an argument he uses the 20th day of the month Mecheir in the 94th year of the Diocletian era (i.e. Feb. 20, A.D. 378).⁸ Paulus was not a Christian, for he believed the planets to be the abode of gods.⁹

Paulus's *Rudiments* found early and general acceptance, and became the subject of a commentary, written, as it has been thought, by a certain Heliodorus,¹⁰ who had been a pupil of Proclus in Athens and who made astronomical observations at Alexandria between 498 and 509.¹¹ Considerably shorter than the celebrated *Tetrabiblos* of Claudius Ptolemy,¹² who

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flourished about the middle of the second Christian century, Paulus's work appears to be a synopsis of elements of ancient astrology. It opens with a summary of the properties of the twelve signs of the zodiac, explains terms and techniques employed by astrologers,¹³ and then discusses horoscopes and climacterics.¹⁴

⁷ The title of the work varies in the manuscripts; some read Εἰσαγωγικά (which is adopted by Boer); others read Εἰσαγωγικαὶ μέθεδοι, which is expanded in still others by the addition of εἰς τὴν ἀποτελεσμαρικὴν ἐπιστήμην.

⁸ Cf. Franz Cumont in *Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum* 1 (Brussels, 1898), p. 57, n.1, and 5 (1904), pp. 194ff.

⁹ Cf. e.g. the title of chap. 20, Περὶ τοῦ γνῶναι ἐκάστην ἡμέραν, τίνοσ τῶν θεῶν ἐστίν, and other passages mentioned by Wilhelm Gundel in his article on Paulus in *PW*, XVIII, 4 (1949), col. 2377. Several of the manuscripts of Paulus occasionally reflect modifications presumably introduced by Christian scribes in the interest of removing polytheistic expressions.

¹⁰ Text of the Commentary, which has been transmitted in two forms, has been edited by Miss Æ. Boer in the Teubner series under the title, Εἰς τὸν Παῦλον <Ἡλιοδώρου>, *Heliodori, ut dicitur, in Paulum Alexandrinum Commentarium*, Interpretationes astronomicas addiderunt O. Neugebauer et D. Pingree (Leipzig, 1962). The authorship of the commentary remains doubtful; the name "Heliodorus" is properly attested by only the later of the two groups of manuscripts. The editor considers the name to be a Byzantine expansion, but thinks it may have been added on good authority, and so retains it, though with an expression of some doubt. On the Heliodorus whose astronomical observations between 498 and 509 are extant, see Boll in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 8 (1899), p. 525, Anm. 1, and in *PW* VIII, 1 (1912), cols. 18-19, and also Praechter, *ibid.*, col. 1305. On the other hand, for what can be said against the identification, see G. J. Toomer in *Gnomon* 35 (1963), p. 270.

According to information kindly supplied by Prof. Pingree, in an article to be published in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*. L. G. Westerink argues that "the commentary consists of notes taken by a student at a course of lectures delivered by Olympiodorus in the spring and summer of A.D. 565".

¹¹ The statement made by Wilhelm Gundel and Hans Georg Gundel (*Astrologumena; die astrologische Literatur in der Antike und ihre Geschichte [Sudhoffs Archiv; Vierteljahrsschrift für Geschichte der Medizin und der Naturwissenschaften der Pharmazie und der Mathematik, Beiheft 6]* [Wiesbaden, 1966], p. 239), that Paulus's influence extended even to India and that the *Paulīśasiddhānta*, which is no longer extant, was a commentary on his *Rudiments*, is apparently without foundation, resting upon a misapprehension; see David Pingree in *Isis* 54 (1963), p. 237, n. 63; cf. also *Gnomon* 40 (1968), p. 277.

¹² Edited and translated into English by F. E. Robbins in the Loeb Classical Library (London, 1940).

¹³ For an invaluable glossary of the technical terms used by ancient astrologers, see O. Neugebauer and H. B. Van Hoesen, *Greek Horoscopes (=Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society, 48)*

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A horoscope depicting the character of a person and prophesying (or describing) events in his life is made by preparing a diagram representing the heavens at the time of his birth, and showing the positions of the heavenly bodies with relation to one another and to the horizon. As a typical example among the nearly two hundred Greek horoscopes of individuals that have been preserved from antiquity, the following may be quoted:

Sun (and) Saturn in Capricorn, moon in Scorpio, Jupiter in Leo, Mars in Pisces, Venus (and) Mercury in Aquarius, Horoscopus in Virgo, the Lot of Fortune in Scorpio, the Daimon in Cancer. Then in opposition to the Daimon, which forecasts the intellectual and the spiritual, was Saturn, and he was in dominant aspect to the (preceding) full moon (in Cancer) and to the phase at that time, and the ruler of the Lot of Fortune (♃) was in opposition to the Horoscopus. Thus this person had in the fated places injury and tender feet and most of all he was lunatic.¹⁵

One aspect of ancient astrology treats of astrological geography,¹⁶ or the placing of lands and regions of the earth under the dominion of heavenly bodies. Although some scholars have argued that astrological geography originated in Meopotamia, perhaps as long ago as Sumerian times,¹⁷ the

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differences between Paulus and the Mesopotamian traditions are both numerous and decisive. For those who were acquainted with the Septuagint, the idea of the correlation of nations with heavenly bodies seemed to be countenanced by Deuteronomy 4:19.¹⁸

During the centuries various systems of astrological geography were developed, as more and more countries and lands came to be assigned to the several signs of the zodiac. Furthermore, differences among the lists arose not merely for, so to speak, numerical reasons, but also as the result of an effort to show that the assignment of countries was not aimless or arbitrary, and that reasons exist, at least in certain cases, for the association

(Philadelphia, 1959), pp. 191 ff. For a general introduction to what is commonly called judicial astrology (which deals with the supposed influences of the heavenly bodies upon the fortunes of men and nations), see Felix von Oefele, "Sun, Moon, and Stars (Introductory)" in *HERE* 12 (Edinburgh, 1922), pp. 48-62. The notes and commentary of H. W. Garrod on book II of Manilius's *Astronomicum* (Oxford, 1911) can be consulted with profit concerning ancient astronomy in general.

¹⁴ According to astrological lore the climacteric years, or critical periods of a person's life, are the years ending the third, fifth, seventh, and ninth period of seven years, to which some add the eighty-first year. The sixty-third year was called the *grand* or *great climacteric*. It was believed that each of these periods is attended by some remarkable change in respect of health, life, or fortune.

¹⁵ Preserved by Vettius Valens in his *Anthologiarum libri*, II, 36 (ed. Wilhelm Kroll, p. 113, lines 3-10). According to the computations of Neugebauer and Van Hoesen, whose English translation is given here, the horoscope leads to A.D. 106, January 16, about 10 p.m. (*op. cit.*, p. 103).

¹⁶ Instead of "geography", Auguste Bouché-Leclercq prefers the expression "chorography"; cf. his contribution "Chorographie astrologique", in *Mélanges Graux*; *Recueil de travaux d'érudition classique dédié à la mémoire de Charles Graux* (Paris, 1884), pp. 341-51, and his magisterial monograph, *L'Astrologie grecque* (Paris, 1899; reprinted, Brussels, 1963), pp. 328 ff.

¹⁷ Cf. B. L. van der Waerden, "History of the Zodiac", *Archiv für Orientforschung* 16 (1952-53), pp. 216-30, and Eckhard Unger, "Fata Morgana as geisteswissenschaftliches Phänomen im alten Orient", *Rivista degli studi orientali* 33 (1958), pp. 1-51, especially pp. 4 ff.

¹⁸ In the Septuagint Dt. 4:19 reads ἰδὼν τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὴν σελήνην καὶ τοὺς ἀστέρας....., ἃ ἀμένειμεν κύριος ὁ θεὸς σου αὐτὰ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν τοῖς ὑποκάτω τοῦ οὐρανοῦ (cf. Boll in *PW Suppl.* iv [1929], col. 654 Anm.).

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of land and sign. Among the several systems, that preserved by Paulus Alexandrinus is the simplest, and for this reason has been regarded by some scholars as the oldest (although this view can be disputed). According to Housman, "it was devised when the world was small and nothing mattered much beyond the eastern Mediterranean and the west of Asia. The west and north of Europe are unknown to it; there is no Scythia nor even any Ethiopia or Arabia; the only far distant land which enters its circle is India."¹⁹

More complicated lists are those of (a) Dorotheus Sidonius (third quarter of first century A.D.), who assigns some thirty countries to the twelve signs of the zodiac, (b) Manilius (end of first century B.C. and beginning of first century A.D.), who has close to fifty to dispose of, and (c) Ptolemy (second century A.D.), who, with more than seventy countries, follows Eratosthenes of Cyrene (who, in the second century B.C., computed with remarkable accuracy the circumference of the earth) and divides the inhabited earth into four quadrants by drawing lines from west to east and from north to south roughly corresponding to the parallel and meridian of Rhodes. The lands within each quadrant are assigned to a zodiacal trigon (i.e. three signs); furthermore, lands situated at the inner angle of a quadrant have affinity with the trigon ruling the quadrant diametrically opposite.²⁰ Still other systems were devised, accommodated to the progress of history, by which countries are allotted not to signs but to portions of signs and to planets.²¹

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II

Turning now to Paulus Alexandrinus and his *Rudiments*, one observes that the subject of astrological geography occupies only a marginal part of his attention. At the beginning of his compendium the reader finds a compact statement concerning the astrological powers and the significance of each of the twelve signs of the zodiac. After giving brief and succinct accounts of the twelve signs Paulus provides summaries of information arranged according to topic; for example, all of the signs that are regarded as male are gathered in one group, and all that are female in another group. Among such summarizing paragraphs is one that deals with astrological geography. It is as follows:²²

Προσπαθεῖ δὲ ταῖς χώραις τὰ ζώδια· ὁ μὲν Κριὸς τῆ Περσίδι, ὁ δὲ Ταῦρος τῆ Βαβυλῶνι, οἱ δὲ Δίδυμοι τῆ Καππαδοκίᾳ, ὁ δὲ Καρκίνος τῆ Ἀρμενίᾳ, ὁ δὲ Λέων τῆ Ἀσίᾳ, ἡ δὲ Παρθένος τῆ Ἑλλάδι, ὁ δὲ Ζυγὸς τῆ Λιβύῃ, ὁ δὲ Σκορπίος τῆ Ἰταλίᾳ, ὁ δὲ Τοξότης τῆ Κρήτῃ, τοῦ Αἰγοκέρωτος τῆ Συρίᾳ ἀπονενεμημένου, τοῦ Ὑδροχόου τὴν Αἴγυπτον λαχόντος, τῶν Ἰχθύων τὴν Ἰνδικὴν χώραν προσφκειωμένων.

¹⁹ A. E. Housman, *M. Manilii Astronomicon, liber quartus* (London, 1920), p. xiii.

²⁰ For a list of the seventy-two (or seventy-three) countries that Ptolemy assigned to the twelve signs of the zodiac, see his *Tetrabiblos* II, 3 (73).

²¹ For an account of these various schemes, see Bouché-Leclercq, *L'Astrologie grecque*, pp. 332 ff.; Housman, *op. cit.*, pp. xiii ff.; and, more briefly, Boll in *PW Suppi.* IV (1929), col. 656 Anm. For a convenient collection of the Greek texts relating to astrological geography, drawn from Ptolemy, Paulus, Dorotheus, Valens, and other ancient writers, see Arthur Ludwich, *Maximus et Ammonis Carminum de actionum auspicii reliquiae* (Leipzig, 1877), "Anecdota astrologica," Αἱ χῶραι συνοικειούμεναι τοῖς ἰβ ζῴδιαις, pp. 112-19.

²² Chap. 2 *fin.* (p. 10, lines 1-8, ed. Boer).

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When the items in this paragraph (called hereafter Paulus II) are compared with the variety of specifications that Paulus had assigned earlier in his treatise to each zodiacal sign, four differences are apparent, all of them involving slightly fuller descriptions of geographical areas that are assigned to the individual signs (called hereafter Paulus I). Thus, to Virgo are allotted Greece *and Ionia*; to Libra, Libya *and Cyrene*; to Sagittarius, Cilicia *and Crete*; to Pisces, *the Red Sea and the land of India*. Let us now examine the two lists from Paulus set side by side with the list from Acts 2: 9-11 (see the table on p. 129).

III

The problem raised by an examination of these lists is whether the degree of similarity or dissimilarity between the list in Acts and one or the other list derived from Paulus is such as to make it probable (a) that Paulus drew upon the book of Acts; or (b) that Paulus reproduced a much older list, pre-Christian in origin, upon which Luke also was somehow dependent for his list in Acts; or (c) that there is, in fact, no discernible relation between Acts and the sources used by Paulus.

The view of Halévy (see p. 123 footnote 1) that Paulus depended, directly or indirectly, on the list in Acts, is altogether improbable.²³ Not

²³ Cf. Franz Boll in *T'oung Pao*, sér. II, 13 (1912), p. 715.

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	PAULUS I	PAULUS II	ACTS 2 : 9-11
1. Aries (♈), the Ram	Περσίς	Περσίς	Πάρθοι καὶ Μῆδοι καὶ Ἑλαμίται.
2. Taurus (♉), the Bull	Βαβυλών	Βαβυλών	καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες τὴν Μεσοποταμίαν,
3. Gemini (♊), the Twins	Καππαδοκία	Καππαδοκία	Ἰουδαίαν τε καὶ Καππαδοκίαν,
4. Cancer (♋), the Crab	Ἄρμενία	Ἄρμενία	Πόντον
5. Leo (♌), the Lion	Ἄσια	Ἄσια	καὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν.
6. Virgo (♍), the Virgin	Ἑλλάς καὶ Ἰωνία	Ἑλλάς	Φρυγίαν τε καὶ Παυφυλίαν,
7. Libra (♎), the Balance	Λιβύη καὶ Κυρήνη	Λιβύη	Αἴγυπτον καὶ τὰ μέρη τῆς Λιβύης τῆς κατὰ Κυρήνην
8. Scorpio (♏), the Scorpion	Ἰταλία	Ἰταλία	καὶ οἱ ἐπιδημοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι, Ἰουδαῖοί τε καὶ προσήλυτοι
9. Sagittarius (♐), the Archer	Κιλικία καὶ Κρήτη	Κρήτη	Κρήτες
10. Capricorn (♑), the Goat	Συρία	Συρία	
11. Aquarius (♒), the Water Bearer	Αἴγυπτος	Αἴγυπτος	
12. Pisces (♓), the Fishes	Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα καὶ Ἰνδικὴ χώρα	Ἰνδικὴ χώρα	καὶ Ἄραβες

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only does Paulus show no (other) acquaintance with the New Testament, but the way in which he incorporates the geographical data one by one in his series of paragraphs describing the powers of the twelve signs, as well as the differences between the two lists, stands firmly against such a supposition.

Cumont attempted to carry the prototype of Paulus's list back to the time of the Persian Empire, pointing out that (a) the list is headed by Persia and (b) each of the three pairs of countries (included in Paulus I) involves a free country and a satrapy.²⁴ It is open to question, however, whether these facts have any significant bearing on the date of the composition of the list.

Boll suggested that Paulus's list was known to Teucros the Babylonian, who flourished about 10 B.C.²⁵ Since, however, Teucros survives only in the writings of a sixth-century editor, Rhetorius the Egyptian, who was familiar also with Paulus's treatise, it is possible that Rhetorius took over the material from Paulus rather than Teucros.²⁶

Those who attempt to trace the ancestry of Paulus' astrological geography to a pre-Christian date usually assume that because Paulus mentions fewer countries than those included in lists compiled by other authors, his material represents an earlier stage than theirs. This assumption must be challenged. Apart from the question whether it is likely that a fourth-century astrologer would have wished to preserve what was, on this theory, an archaic astrological list, it is more to the point to observe that Paulus is not concerned to provide fully consistent lists of countries assigned to the signs of the zodiac. The fact that Paulus does not include in his summary tabulation (ch. 2 *fin.*) more than one country for each zodiacal sign, whereas in previous paragraphs he includes a pair of regions under each of four of the twelve signs, gives us a hint that his intention was to provide an epitome of astrological lore. This hint becomes even more significant when one observes how numerous are the countries listed by such writers as Hipparchus, Dorotheus, Vettius Valens, Ptolemy, and other

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²⁴ Franz Cumont, "La plus ancienne géographie astrologique," *Klio* 9 (1909), pp. 263-73. Cumont also reports (p. 273) a suggestion communicated to him by F. C. Burkitt, to the effect that an early date is supported by the circumstance that in Dan. 8:20 f., a ram, representing the king of the Medes and Persians, is attacked by a he-goat (=Capricorn), representing the king of the Greeks, and thus the author or redactor of the book of Daniel must have been familiar with the list. According to Paulus, however, the Capricorn is assigned to Syria, not Greece, and it is precarious to argue, as Cumont attempts to do, that this assignment merely shows that the motif was earlier than the Seleucids, and thus the nucleus of the list may still belong to the Persian period of the fourth century B.C.

One may also compare Cicero's comment in *de Divinitate* 1, 121 (53): "[The Divine Will] sends us signs, of which history has preserved numerous examples. We find the following ones recorded: 'When just before sunrise the moon was eclipsed in the sign of Leo, this indicated that Darius and the Persians would be overcome in battle by the Macedonians under Alexander, and that Darius would die...'" (Loeb ed., trans. by William A. Falconer).

²⁵ Cf. Franz Boll, *Sphaera; neue griechische Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Sternbilder* (Leipzig, 1903), pp. 5 ff., and Weinstock, *op. cit.*

²⁶ Cf. Cumont, *op. cit.*, pp. 264 f., and Brinkman, *op. cit.* p. 423, note 14.

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ancient astrologers, some of whom would have been known to Paulus.²⁷ For example, under the second zodiacal sign, that of Taurus the Bull, Hipparchus lists Media, Scythia, Armenia, Cyprus; Dorotheus lists Media, Arabia, Egypt; Vettius Valens lists Media, Babylonia, Scythia, Cyprus, Arabia, Persia, Caucasus, Ethiopia, Elymais, Carchedonia, Armenia, India, Germany; and Ptolemy lists Parthia, Media, Persis, Cyclades, Cyprus, Asia Minor; — while Paulus gives merely Babylonia.²⁸ In view of such data as these it seems to be both hopeless and meaningless to debate, as Weinstock, Brinkman, and others do, in which respects Luke or Paulus preserves more accurately the "original" assignment of an individual land or country to a given zodiacal sign.

IV

At this point it is appropriate to raise the fundamental issue that most scholars have taken for granted: are, in fact, the similarities between the list in Acts and those in Paulus significant enough to warrant tracing both back to a common origin? Or, are the two lists no closer than would be expected if two ancient authors independently drew up lists comprising a dozen or fifteen representative countries and peoples?

In any attempt to analyse the points of contact between Luke and Paulus, it is obviously not licit to rearrange the order of the list in Acts (as Weinstock and, following him, Brinkman have done) by moving Egypt from the seventh to the eleventh place, thus increasing the similarity between the two lists. Not only does the position of Egypt differ in the two lists, but the generally accepted text of Acts has nothing corresponding to Syria in Paulus's list (on this point see the Textual Addendum below). Furthermore, it seems impossible, despite many ingenious and sometimes farfetched arguments, to correlate Paulus's Greece and Ionia with Luke's Phrygia and Pamphylia, or Paulus's Armenia with Luke's Pontus.

In the light of such obvious differences one is struck also by the paucity of actual similarities between the lists. When one seeks for precise equivalents between Acts and either one of Paulus's lists, the results are meagre enough. Of sixteen names of countries or peoples in Acts, only five are identical with those in Paulus: namely, Cappadocia, Asia, Libya, Crete, and Egypt. Certainly it is misleading in the extreme to represent the lists as "almost exactly the same" (see p. 124, footnote 5). In fact, all that can be said without distorting the picture is that both Luke and Paulus start from countries or peoples in the upper part of the Fertile Crescent and then move generally westward, turning eventually south and finally

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²⁷ Professor Pingree has given me permission to say that, in his view, Paulus drew upon a fuller stock of astrological lore, but that it is "meaningless to take [his list] as a document earlier than the fourth century A.D."

²⁸ Cf. Ludwich, *op. cit.*, pp. 113 f., supplemented by information from Hipparchus.

Bruce M. Metzger, "Ancient Astrological Geography and Acts 2:9-11," W. Ward Gasque & Ralph P. Martin, eds., *Apostolic History and the Gospel. Biblical and Historical Essays Presented to F.F. Bruce*. Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1970. Hbk. ISBN: 085364098X. pp.123-133.

south-eastward — though each list departs more than once from a strict sequence.²⁹ That there are, out of the sixteen countries or peoples mentioned in the list in Acts, five which are mentioned also by Paulus, is perhaps not so remarkable after all.³⁰

V

The main point of this paper has been made, namely to assess the degree of similarity between the lists of countries in Acts and in Paulus, a similarity that appears to be far less striking than has sometimes been thought. A much more constructive approach to the list in Acts, as it seems to the present writer, will be the analysis of the sequence of names in terms of the inner dynamic of the catalogue itself. As has been pointed out recently by an author in *Theologische Zeitschrift*,³¹ the sequence of names in Acts 2 exhibits a lively and spontaneous form of expression³² with its own rhythm and structure, disclosed partly by the author's use of connectives (καὶ and τε καὶ). Even the "coda" at the close, "Cretans and Arabians,"³³ which at first sight seems to be merely an afterthought, has many parallels in other examples of what can be called the catalogue-form. How far Luke may have been influenced in his choice of countries that he included in the list by following a list kept by leaders of the church in Antioch of lands to which Christian missions had been sent prior to about the year A.D. 50 is an interesting speculation proposed by Reicke,³⁴ but which need not be pursued here. Enough has been said, it is hoped, to set in more sober perspective the very dubious connexion thought by Weinstock and others

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to exist between the list in Acts 2 and the astrological speculations eventually incorporated in Paulus of Alexandria's *Rudiments of Astrology*.

²⁹ Pingree has kindly called to my attention the *Dimensuratio provinciarum* of pseudo-Jerome (in *Geographi latini minores*, ed. Alexander Reise [Heilbronn, 1878], pp. 9-14), which follows a pattern of listing areas of Asia Major, Europe, and Africa, though again with a few exceptions of countries that stand outside this sequence (e.g. the list closes with Britannia). In comparison with such a scheme one thinks of Eusebius's account of the work of the Apostles who evangelized the whole world, from Persia to Britain (*Dem. Evang.* III, ~ [=Migne, *PG* XXII, col. 204A]).

³⁰ It cannot be denied that in antiquity there may well have been some remote connexion between geography and astrology, revealed perhaps in the custom of beginning to enumerate a list of lands and countries starting in the East (at the rising of the sun). At the same time, however, it is doubtful whether the average cultured Greek and Roman writers were any more conscious of such a connexion than the modern Englishman is aware of the astrological matrix from which the word "disaster" arose.

³¹ Johannes Thomas, "Formgesetze des Begriffs-Katalogs im N.T.," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 24 (1968), pp. 15-28.

³² It goes without saying that what is referred to is Luke's form of expression, not that of the speakers whose words he is professedly reporting.

³³ On this pair of names, see Otto Eissfeldt, "Kreter and Araber," *ThLZ* 72 (1947), cols. 207-12.

³⁴ Bo Reicke, *Glaube und Leben der Urgemeinde. Bemerkungen zu Apg. 1-7* (= *Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments*, 32) (Zürich, 1957), pp. 32-37. Although Reicke supposes that the list in the Antiochian church was originally drawn up with one eye, so to speak, on an assumed prototype of Paulus's astrological geography, this hypothesis is not a necessary part of his main speculation. For a negative reaction to Reicke, see E. Haenchen's remarks in his *Apostelgeschichte*⁵ (Göttingen, 1965), pp. 133 f., Anm. 3.

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Textual Addendum to Acts 2:9

The problem that confronts the textual critic at Acts 2:9 is the almost total unanimity of external evidence supporting the traditional reading Ἰουδαίων over against a variety of internal difficulties — difficulties which various scholars have sought to remove by emendation. The inclusion of Ἰουδαίων in a catalogue of Diaspora Jews has seemed to many commentators to be altogether inappropriate in the following respects: (a) the word stands in an unusual sequence in the list (between Mesopotamia in the east and Cappadocia in the north); (b) it is properly an adjective and therefore when used substantively (as in Acts 2:9) it ought to be preceded by the definite article;³⁵ and (c) it involves the curious anomaly that inhabitants of Judea should be amazed to hear the apostles speak their own language (Acts 2:6).

In view of such difficulties, the names of other countries have been proposed. Thus, Tertullian and Augustine (once) substitute *Armeniam*, Jerome substitutes (*habitantes in*) *Syria*, and Chrysostom Ἰνδίων. Modern scholars have suggested a wide variety of conjectures in place of Ἰουδαίων including Idumaea (Caspar, Spitta, Lagercranz), Ionia (Cheyne), Bithynia (Hemsterhuis, Valckenaer), Cilicia (Mangey), Lydia (Bentley, Bryant), India ([following Chrysostom] Erasmus, Schmid), Gordyaea (Greve, Burkitt), Yaudi (Gunkel), Adiabene (Eberhard Nestle), and Aramaea (Hatch).³⁶ Others, including Eusebius, von Harnack, and C. S. C. Williams, omit Ἰουδαίων altogether, considering it a scribal gloss. Perhaps the least violent conjecture is the proposal made by Hilgenfeld³⁷ to Μεσοποταμίαν (though why Mesopotamia should deserve to be called "Judean" is not easily explained).³⁸

Amid such diversity among proposed conjectures, no one of which has gained general approval, probably the least unsatisfactory solution to an admittedly difficult problem is to accept the reading attested by the overwhelming weight of witnesses.

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³⁵ According to Blass-Debrunner "anarthrous Ἰουδαίων is certainly corrupt" (§ 261, 4).

³⁶ For discussions of the last two proposals, see Eberhard Nestle, *ZNTW* 9 (1908), pp. 253 f., and W. H. P. Hatch, *ibid.*, pp. 255 f. (the latter cites most of the conjectures that are mentioned above).

³⁷ Adolf Hilgenfeld, *Acta Apostolorum, graece et latine* (Berlin, 1899), pp. 260, n. 1.

³⁸ For an attempt to explain the collocation, see Ernst von Dobschütz ("Zu der Volkerliste Act. 2, 9-11," *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 45 [1902], pp. 407-10), who adduces several somewhat similar expressions in rabbinical sources.