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THE

SOCIAL

WORLD

OF LUKE-ACTS

MODELS FOR INTERPRETATION

The cover depicts a scene from the frieze of the Dionysiac Mysteries from the Villa of the Mysteries, Pompeii (1st century BC). It appears here courtesy of the Museo Nazionale/National Archaeological Museum in Naples, Italy, and is used with permission.

11 THE SOCIAL LOCATION OF THE IMPLIED AUTHOR OF LUKE–ACTS

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1.0 INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL LOCATION

In the tradition of literary-historical interpretation, the social setting of Luke–Acts is highly debated. Susan Garrett recently asserted:

> Interpreters of biblical texts cannot question their authors. Further, because very little is known about the social setting in which some of the biblical documents were produced, interpreters often do not even know for certain which culture or cultures are relevant to a given text. Was "Luke" a second-generation Christian, or third-? What was his ethnic origin? Was he an inhabitant of country, town, or city, and in what part of the empire? What was the character of his and his community's relationship to Jews and to pagans in that locale? (Garrett 1989:12)

Despite debate about such questions, explicit inquiry about the context in which we interpret Luke–Acts contributes to our understanding of it in the milieu of first-century Mediterranean Christianity.

Yet it would not be enough to know the social context in which an author produced Luke–Acts. We often assume that once we know this, it would then be a simple task to trace correlations between that context and an author's thought. For example, if the author of Luke–Acts was urban, we assume that he might think like other urbanites we know about from the first century. If Gentile, he probably shares a way of thinking typical of that world.

Tracing correlations between thought and social context, however, is a notoriously difficult task in the sociology of knowledge. We can never assume that all persons in a given context thought alike. Nor is there any necessary causality linking context and ideas. It is much more likely that a range of ideas will appear as plausible alternatives to people who share a given social location. In a positive sense, therefore, our task is to show that Luke's ideas are within the range that would seem plausible in a particular context. Negatively we can show that the ideas are unlikely in the context we imagine for the author. Identifying such a range of ideas is never an easy task. Hence, our search for the context of Luke–Acts will have to be both indirect and hypothetical.

1.1 Defining Social Location

We use the term "social location" because "context" is too broad for our purposes. A "social location" is a position in a social system which reflects a world view, or what Peter Berger calls "a socially constructed province of meaning": a perception of how things work, what is real, where things belong, and how they fit together (Berger and Luckmann 1966:24–25; Rohrbaugh 1987a:109).

Of course, understanding a social location assumes that there is a relation between thought and the social conditions under which it occurs. There is a so-called social base — what Karl Mannheim first termed an "existential base" (Mannheim 1968) — underlying any particular way of thinking, as if a substructure of social conditions were the foundation on which the superstructure of thought can be said to rest. We must also ask of what this social base for knowledge or belief consists and how it is to be identified. What characteristics qualify a group or process as a social location of thought?

1.2 Social Base of Knowledge

Marxist theorists see social class as the key social location of thought. Important as class may be, other locations are important as well. R. K. Merton, for example, notes that not only groups, but also social processes, such as social position, class, ethnicity, and mobility, can themselves provide a social base for certain types of thinking (Merton 1968:514).

Obviously some social locations are easier to specify than others. For example, groups designated by gender tend to have clear and identifiable boundaries. Similarly sharp boundaries can be found in distinctions such as citizen/non-citizen, Jew/Gentile, and slave/free.

As New Testament scholars think about additional social groups and social locations, however, particularly those which do not fall as neatly together as do gender or race, how are we to know what counts as a group? How do we handle the complexities created by the overlapping

character of group participation? We need criteria to designate a social location of thought in a clear and distinct way. In laying these out, we recognize what a social location is and what it is not. It is what Peter Berger calls a "plausibility structure," a socially constructed province of meaning (Berger and Luckmann 1966:24–25). It is not reducible to the material conditions of life because it is itself a mental construct, a socially produced and maintained picture of the world.

This means that the social base is not the cause of other ideas, but the context in which other ideas are interpreted and understood as realistic possibilities. Social locations are heuristic constructs, not explanatory ones.

To begin to say what social locations are, it is necessary to sharpen the way we use the terms "group" and "social location," particularly insofar as the term group is commonly used in a non-technical sense. A generation, for example, may be a social location of thought, but it is not a group. It is not an organization or association. Members of a generation, class, or any other social location may never get to know each other, may have no physical association whatsoever, but nonetheless live, so to speak, at the same location and hence share similar experience. Thus a generation lives through the same historical period. A class shares the same relation to the means of production. Common position or structural location in a social system thus provides the key.

It is not that certain experiences produce certain beliefs, but given certain experiences, a limited range of beliefs should be plausible options for most of those who share the social location (see Abercrombie 1980:38). And for our purposes, description of such limited ranges of experience should help us understand the way a set of ideas were taken by those who adopted them.

In sum, then, the common structural position occupied by a number of individuals in relation to a larger social whole entails a social location. Specification of a social location would ideally designate the limited range of experience a position implies (showing how it is distinctive), together with the process by which that position comes to be occupied. If we could reach some agreement about the social location of the thought in Luke–Acts, it might be possible to correlate the ideas with plausible social contexts in the Mediterranean world.

2.0 LANGUAGE AND SOCIO-RHETORICAL CRITICISM

We must now reckon with the nature of language in the documents we are analyzing, and for this we draw on insights from sociolinguistics discussed by Malina in this volume (see Halliday 1978; Fowler 1981). We use them, however, in the context of a method called socio-rhetorical criticism (Robbins 1984, 1987). Some of its presuppositions are as follows:

(a) Language is constitutive of social communication.

(b) Language signifies social functions.

(c) Statements in a document are intratextual functions that presuppose extra-textual systems of social interaction.

(d) Some of the major issues of socio-rhetorical criticism concern the relation of information to patterns of activity in various arenas of the social system presupposed by the intratextual phenomena. For example, what is the relation of the information and functions in the social arena of beliefs and ideologies to information and functions in other social arenas, such as culture, technology, and population structure?

At the beginning, the interpreter must be aware that language signifies social functions. Any understanding of the signs in a document presupposes social arenas that provide meanings for human beings. Since understanding is a present activity, all knowledge is contemporary knowledge, even what we call knowledge of the past. This means that every person, at whatever time, reads a document through envisioned social arenas. What differs considerably are the conceptual frameworks and technologies people develop to investigate documents from the past.

If a reader wishes to interpret ancient Mediterranean literature through techniques that contextualize literature in pre-industrial society during the time of the Roman Empire, then it is necessary to find conceptual frameworks and scenarios designed to position our modern knowledge in pre-industrial social contexts. Malina's essay on reading theory in this volume indicates that because language is constitutive of social communication, we use social scenarios to contextualize what we read, and this contextualization produces the meanings we perceive in the text. If we can identify the arenas of the social system presupposed by various phenomena in the text, and if we can delineate the location, role, and competencies certain phenomena exhibit within different arenas of the social system, then we can make some progress toward identifying the social location of the thought within the entire document.

3.0 A MODEL OF THE SOCIAL LOCATION OF NARRATIVE DISCOURSE

Previous discussions of the social context of Luke–Acts have lacked a systematic framework for the investigation. One of the contributions from the social sciences is its use of carefully constructed and empirically tested conceptual models to provide a framework which orients modern readers toward arenas within pre-industrial social systems (Carney 1975:xiii–ix, 1–43).

3.1 Social Science Model of Social Location

The present study uses a conceptual model for analyzing the social location of Luke–Acts. A comprehensive framework for investigating phenomena in Mediterranean society during the time of the Roman Empire is available in the works of T. F. Carney (1975:246) and J. H. Elliott (1986:14). In Figure 11-1 the nine basic arenas of a social system are listed in the column on the left of the model: previous events, natural environment and resources, population structure, technology, socialization and personality, culture, foreign affairs, belief systems and ideologies, and the political-military-legal system. Our model can help us to identify the social framework for documents written in Mediterranean society during the Roman Empire. Once we have itemized this social framework, our next challenge is to determine the intratextual phenomena that should be placed in the narrative function column. What can be said about these nine categories from the document Luke–Acts?

3.2 Narrative Discourse Model

Since Luke–Acts is narrative discourse, we must develop a second part of our model, namely, a comprehensive list of four intratextual functions from narrative communication. This study uses intratextual categories from Seymour Chatman's narrative-communication model as modified by Jeff Staley (1988:21–49). Accordingly, we give special attention to four aspects of intratextual functions in Luke–Acts:

(1) characters and their audiences
(2) narrator and narratee
(3) inscribed author and inscribed reader
(4) implied author and implied reader

By analyzing intratextual functions in Luke–Acts in light of the social systems in Mediterranean society during the Roman Empire, we hope to be able to identify aspects of the social location of thought within Luke's two volumes.

3.2.1 Characters and Audiences. A "character" is "a category of existents which inhabit the story world of a narrative and mimic human beings. . . . These characters . . . can . . . tell stories, becoming narrators . . . " (Staley 1988:47). Characters have an audience or a sequence of audiences as they speak and act. Because these audiences signify socially perceived contexts for speech and action, consideration of them contributes to our analysis. A full study of the characters in Luke–Acts observes both the presence (and absence) of certain characters and their limited range of knowledge. We select here those characters in Luke–Acts who appear to function prominently in one or another social arena in the Mediterranean world.

THE SOCIAL LOCATION OF LUKE-ACTS:
A TWO-PART MODEL
Figure 11-1

2. NARRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Characters/Audiences

Narrator/Narratee

Inscribed Author/Inscribed Reader

Implied Author/Implied Reader

1. ARENAS OF THE SOCIAL SYSTEM

1. Previous Events
2. Natural Environment
   and Resources
3. Population Structure
4. Technology
5. Socialization and
   Personality
6. Culture
7. Foreign Affairs
8. Belief Systems
   and Ideologies
9. Political-Military-
   Legal System

3.2.2 Narrator. Since Luke–Acts is by internal definition a narrative (Luke 1:1), the discourse has a narrator. The narrator, or "the teller of a story" (Staley 1988:37), presents the characters and the situations in which they speak and act. Although it is tempting to think that the narrator speaks directly to us the readers, we must be on our guard. Since we are self-reflective readers, we see both ourselves reading the text and the narrator speaking intratextually to an imagined counterpart. This imagined counterpart is called the narratee, the figure "to whom narrators address comments; and like narrators, they are always intratextual" (Staley 1988:43).

3.2.3 Inscribed Author and Inscribed Reader. In Luke–Acts, a narrator speaking in third person presents the characters in their situations. But in the prefaces and sea voyages of Luke–Acts the narrator speaks in a first person mode. We will call this narrator the inscribed author, whose counterpart is the inscribed reader. The narrator in Luke–Acts never gives the inscribed author a name. Since Christian tradition attributes the two volumes to Luke, the associate of Paul, readers regularly perceive this inscribed author to be a male named Luke.

The inscribed author addresses an inscribed reader named Theophilus. From what the inscribed author says to Theophilus, we see that an inscribed reader may have prior knowledge of some of the characters and events in the story. In Luke–Acts the inscribed author wants to give more accurate information concerning the things of which Theophilus has already "been informed" (Luke 1:4). The inscribed author reappears in the sea-voyages in Acts through the medium of first person plural narration, but here the inscribed reader Theophilus is only implied.

3.2.4 Implied Author and Implied Reader. Of all the intratextual functions, the most pervasive and important is that of the implied author, whose counterpart is the implied reader. The implied author is "that singular consciousness which the reader constructs from the words of a text; a consciousness which knows the story backward and forward . . . the static, overarching view of a text that a reader might develop from multiple readings" (Staley 1988:29). Since "the implied author in the text . . . operates within a closed medium (print) whose linguistic signifiers (Koine Greek) open up into the much broader social world of the first century CE" (Staley 1988:30), our primary goal is to identify the social location of the implied author as constituted in the language, ideology, and social relations in the text (see Wolff 1981:136).

The implied author has the competencies of all the characters plus the competencies of the narrator and inscribed author. Thus the implied author transcends the limitations of any one of the characters or other

actants in the text by also possessing the competencies of the forms, styles, strategies, and manipulative ploys of the narrative discourse (see Staley 1988:29). Thus, the social location of the implied author lies in all the competencies that signify certain kinds of relations to and activities within processes at work in various arenas of Mediterranean society.

Implied authors address implied readers. A text's implied reader is

> the affective quality of a text. It is an entity evoked and continually nurtured by the text . . . the "moving toward the gradual revelation," the text's "linearity." . . . The implied reader only has knowledge of what has been read up to the given moment . . . is limited by its temporal status. An implied reader must also gain all its knowledge of the story from the narrative medium itself, even if the general outline of the story is known in a culture (Staley 1988:33–35).

Let us recall that we, the real readers, provide the meanings that the characters, narrator, inscribed author, and implied author communicate to their intratextual counterparts. We supply these meanings by means of the scenarios we envision for their interaction. If our scenarios are twentieth-century situations and contexts in industrialized society, then we will supply these meanings to their interaction. But if we use scenarios introduced in other chapters in this volume to envision the meanings, we may take some steps toward an interpretation of Luke–Acts in a social location of thought in pre-industrialized Mediterranean society.

4.0 THE MODEL APPLIED TO LUKE–ACTS

We simply cannot explore all aspects of the social location of the implied author of Luke–Acts. Our strategy, then, is to make sorties through the text according to the basic arenas of a social system (see Figure 11-1).

4.1 Previous Events

A common social location may arise from a common relation to previous events. For example, today a generation of people in the United States has a relation to the Vietnam War. People born after it may have a relation to the war through discourse of one kind or another about it. Narrative accounts of previous events are one kind of discourse about it, and a particular selection and way of telling the stories evokes a common social location.

Luke–Acts is narrative discourse about previous events. Throughout Luke–Acts a particular selection of characters from Israel's heritage and Roman history appears in the narrative. On the one hand, the nar-

rator selects events associated with Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Solomon, Elijah, and Elisha from previous biblical history (Acts 7:2–47; Luke 4:25–27). In other words, characters from biblical history come from the "great traditions" of Israel located in the Torah and the Prophets. From the perspective of the narrator, events from the great traditions of Israel lead to Christian events in an environment of Jewish-Roman rule.

On the other hand, we do not find events associated with great moments in Greco-Roman culture and history prior to Caesar Augustus. For example, no reference is made to Homeric literature, Alexander the Great, or the Punic Wars. There is a reference to Zeus and Hermes in Acts 14:12–13, but otherwise Luke–Acts is generally silent about Greco-Roman history.

Beginning with Caesar Augustus and Herod the Great, the events in Luke–Acts occur in an environment of Jewish-Roman history through the reign of Tiberius Caesar (14–37 CE; Luke 3:1), Gaius Caligula (37–41 CE), and Claudius (41–54 CE; Acts 11:28; 18:2), ending during the reign of the emperor Nero (54–68 CE), which overlaps the reign of Herod Agrippa II (53–ca. 100 CE; Acts 25:13–26:32). Luke–Acts contains no reference to Nero by name, but various people refer to him either as Caesar (Acts 25:8, 10–12, 21; 26:32; 27:24; 28:19) or Sebastos [Augustus] (Acts 25:21, 25).

Within this framework, Luke–Acts selects events that begin with Zechariah the priest, of the division of Abijah (1 Chron 24:10), and his wife Elizabeth (Luke 1:5–67); Joseph, of the house of King David, and his wife Mary (Luke 1:26–56; 2:1–51); John the Baptizer (Luke 1:57–66); the righteous and devout Simeon (Luke 2:22–35); the prophetess Anna (Luke 2:36–38); and Jesus of Nazareth (Luke 2:4–52). Then major additional people appear through twelve disciples who become apostles (Luke 6:13–16); seventy (or seventy-two) additional people who go into mission; seven Hellenists who serve their widows (Acts 6:1–6). Saul/Paul, who appears at the death of Stephen (Acts 8:1), becomes a member of the Christian movement after being encountered by the risen Lord (Acts 9:1–19) and begins to preach in the name of Jesus (Acts 9:27). Events surrounding Paul's activities occupy Acts from chapter 13 to the end of the narrative. All of these events occur as previous events in Luke–Acts. As a result, the social location evoked by previous events is complex but limited in striking ways to biblical heritage and to Jewish-Roman history from the time of Caesar Augustus and Herod to Nero and Herod Agrippa II. The special events within this Jewish-Roman environment concern John the Baptizer, Jesus, and their followers.

But the events recounted in Luke–Acts do not simply have the nature of events that lay outside the text. Rather, the implied author has produced previous events in the form of a social product, a product to be read.

As a beginning point, a number of characters in Luke–Acts recall previous events for particular social reasons. Jesus presents events associated with Elijah and Elisha to show healings of Gentiles (Luke 4:25–27), and Stephen recounts actions of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, and Solomon to criticize the "temple made with hands" (Acts 7:2–47). The Pharisee Gamaliel, in the presence of the Jerusalem council, refers to earlier revolutionary activity by Theudas and Judas the Galilean to recall their deaths and the scattering of their followers (Acts 5:36–37); and Paul recounts to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Acts 22:4–21) and to King Agrippa (Acts 26:9–20) previous events in his life to try and change their perceptions and allegiances.

Not only do certain characters recount previous events, but at one point the narrator intrudes to refer to Herod Agrippa I's killing of James the brother of John (Acts 12:2) and to Agrippa I's death shortly thereafter (12:20–22). In Luke–Acts, therefore, both the narrator and the characters produce previous events for audiences in a manner that shows special interest in biblical heritage, healing of Gentiles, criticism of the Jerusalem temple, recruitment into activities and beliefs associated with Jesus, persecution of people whom public authorities consider to be dangerous, and death administered to specific people for various reasons.

Beyond the narrator and the characters, the inscribed author refers to previous events where eyewitnesses and ministers of the account (or "word") have transmitted information, and "many" have compiled a narrative of the things he himself is narrating (Luke 1:1–2). The inscribed author, then, performs a specialized function of finding accounts of previous events from both oral and written discourse and producing previous events as a social product. The inscribed author refers to his own writing of the document (Luke 1:4), then refers to the writing of the first volume as a previous event (Acts 1:1). The "ordered" fashion (Luke 1:3) in which the inscribed author produces the events indicates that special goals and values are at stake. Moreover, the inscribed author's presentation of the previous events to an inscribed reader with the Roman name Theophilus evokes a social location similar to Josephus, who also exhibits a knowledge of events in biblical heritage and post-biblical Jewish history, and addresses an inscribed reader with a Roman name.

4.2 Natural Environment and Resources

The arena of natural environment, which concerns geographical space, can take us a step further in defining social location. The resources perceived as really or potentially present within a geographical space depend on the perspective of the person viewing that space.

The implied author of Luke–Acts envisions a geographical space that extends from Ethiopia (Acts 8:26–39) and Cyrenaica (Acts 2:10) at the southern and southwesternmost point around the eastern Mediterranean

to Rome at the northwesternmost point. Yet the primary geographical space lies between Jerusalem and Rome. From the point of view of Luke–Acts, this space contains land, the Great Sea, one river called the Jordan, and one lake called Gennesareth (Luke 5:1), which the other Gospel writers call the Sea of Galilee. The implied author of Luke–Acts will not call any inland body of water a sea; this terminology is reserved for the great Mediterranean Sea (Robbins 1978).

For the implied author, the major resource on land are ports (Acts 27:2), cities, and towns. And the major resource in ports, cities, and towns are houses where people receive hospitality. Alternative social locations of thought could perceive major resources on land to be wild animals to be hunted, gold, copper, or iron to be mined, or pyramids to be plundered; not so in Luke–Acts.

The perception of houses within cities locates the thought within human-made culture rather than undeveloped natural environment. This presupposes, therefore, the amassing of material goods that support the hospitality that occurs in houses. The implied author has in view barns full of grain, flocks of sheep, and vineyards, but these are simply presupposed as sources for the presence of the resources in the ports, cities, and towns. Also, the thought of the implied author is located at points of receiving hospitality rather than giving hospitality. There is never any criticism of a person who accepts hospitality. But the thought in the document criticizes or commends ways in which people offer hospitality to those who, it is presupposed, should receive it. The implied author also has in view houses in which people are kept under guard. In some instances, people who experience this kind of imprisoned hospitality may invite others to visit them in these houses (Acts 28:16–29).

Where, then, is the social location of the implied author? The implied author both produces previous events as a social product among persons who live in cities and towns and implies that the natural environment of land and sea is a place of travel, and thus of hospitability to the traveler. Accordingly, one of the highest values of the implied author is hospitality. In the geographical space between Jerusalem and Rome, the implied author evokes a social location seeking hospitality in the midst of a heritage that merges biblical, Jewish, Roman, and Christian events in a particular way.

4.3 Population Structure

Population structure opens the issues of age, gender, level of health and resources, and location in country, village, town, or city (Carney 1975:88–89). Our analysis already points to a social location within cities, and Rohrbaugh, Oakman, and Moxnes have chapters in this volume which analyze aspects of city/country and poverty/wealth. Therefore, we will not discuss location in country, village, town, or city, or repeat pre-

vious materials on poverty and wealth here. In addition, with Pilch's chapter on illness, we need not pursue levels of health. This section, then, will focus on age, gender, and the mixed population in view in Luke–Acts.

With respect to young people in Luke, John the Baptizer and Jesus appear at birth (Luke 1:57; 2:7), then Jesus amazes the teachers in the Jerusalem temple when he is twelve years old. The adult Jesus uses a child to illustrate greatness (Luke 9:47–8) and insists that small children be allowed to come to him (Luke 18:16–17). Jesus heals a demonized boy (Luke 9:38–42) and a girl who is about twelve years old (Luke 8:41–42, 49–56). There are but a few old people in Luke. Zechariah and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptizer, are advanced in years (Luke 1:7). The righteous and devout Simeon is approaching death (Luke 1:25–35), and the prophetess Anna is more than eighty-four years old. Beyond this, however, there is little emphasis on advanced age in Luke.

In contrast to Luke, there are no young children in sight in Acts. A slave girl (Acts 16:16–18) and four unmarried daughters (Acts 21:9) appear, but they are engaged in adult, not children's activity. The implied author views the world in which Christianity spreads from Jerusalem to Rome as an adult domain.

We are told of a large number of females in the adult world of Luke–Acts (Finley 1969). Elizabeth and Mary have prominent roles in the setting of the birth and infancy of John and Jesus (Luke 1:24–2:35). The prophetess Anna, sees Jesus and praises God for the redemption of Israel (Luke 2:36–38). Then throughout Luke, the narrator either refers to or presents a significant number of named and unnamed women: Herodias (3:19); a widow of Zarephath (4:26); Simon's mother-in-law (4:38); a widow (7:13); a woman of the city (7:37–50); Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna (8:3); Jesus' mother (8:19–20); Martha and her sister Mary (10:38–42); an unnamed woman (11:27–28); the queen of the South (11:31); a woman with an eighteen-year infirmity (13:11–13); Lot's wife (17:32); a widow (18:1–8); a poor widow (21:1–4); a maid (22:56–57); a great multitude of women (23:27–31); and women from Galilee (23:49, 55; 24:10).

Also throughout Acts the narrator either refers to or presents a significant number of women: Sapphira (5:1–11); widows (6:1); Candace, queen of the Ethiopians (8:27); widows (9:39, 41); Dorcas [Tabitha] (9:36–41); Mary, mother of John Mark (12:12); a maid named Rhoda (12:13); Lydia, a seller of purple goods (16:14, 40); a slave girl with a spirit of divination (16:16–18); leading women (17:4); Greek women of high standing (17:12); Damaris (17:34); Priscilla, a tentmaker (18:2–3, 18, 26); four unmarried daughters who prophesied (21:9); Drusilla, wife of Felix (24:24); and Bernice, wife of King Agrippa (25:13, 23; 26:30).

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of population structure, however, is the ethnic variety the narrator of Acts presents among members

of the Christian movement. The variety comes into view in Acts through three related motifs: (1) gathering in cities; (2) scattering as a result of persecution; and (3) traveling. Through these motifs, people with different native languages and identities programmatically join the Christian movement sanctioned by God.

On the one hand, a representative mixture of all peoples and areas join the Christian movement as a result of their presence in cities. In the narrative sequence of Acts, this motif begins with Pentecost. From the narrator's point of view, the people gathered in Jerusalem were "Jews from every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5). The narrator identifies Galileans (2:7), Parthians, Medes, Elamites (2:9), Cretans, Arabs, and Romans (2:11) in a manner that appears to be based on race, language, or dialect. The narrator identifies others on the basis of geography: those who dwell in Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene (2:9). In addition, the narrator identifies both Jews and proselytes among the Romans staying in Jerusalem (2:10–11). From the narrator's perspective, when Peter preached to this mixed population of Jews in Jerusalem, three thousand of them joined the Christian movement, and additional ones joined day by day after this (2:41, 47). At the end of this episode, then, more than three thousand Jews or proselytes representing a wide mixture of native languages and identities joined the Christian movement in its initial stages. A few chapters later, an Ethiopian eunuch who had come to Jerusalem to pray becomes a member of the Christian movement. Thus, the view of the narrator is that "Jews from every nation under heaven" gather in Jerusalem, and since the Christian movement begins with a large number of people from this group, Christianity is constituted by a wide mixture of people with different native languages, locations, and identities.

Through the related motif of scattering (van Unnik 1980:242–47), people of still different varieties join Christianity. Among the Christians in Jerusalem were Hellenists and Hebrews (6:1). The stoning of Stephen (7:58), one of the Hellenist deacons, led to the scattering of Christians from Jerusalem (8:1, 4; 11:19). As a result, Samaritans (8:12), a Gentile centurion Cornelius with his kinsmen and close friends (10:1–8, 44–48), Jews from Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch (11:19), and Greeks at Antioch (11:20) joined the Christian movement. The acceptance of Gentiles is a shock to Peter and other leaders from Jewish heritage (Acts 10), but the presence of wide diversity within Judaism itself prepares the implied reader for this move. As a result of the gathering and the scattering that occurs in the first eleven chapters of Acts, Christianity begins as a highly mixed population.

Once the Christian movement has become a highly mixed population, additional varieties of people join the movement as a result of trav-

eling. Programmatically, people respond throughout Cyprus (13:4–12), Asia Minor, Macedonia (Acts 16:9–17:14), and Greece (Acts 17:15–18:17).

In sum, the implied author has in view people from as far south and west as Ethiopia and Cyrenaica, as far east as Arabia, Elam, Media, and Parthia, as far north as the southern coast of the Euxine Sea and the northern coastal region of the Aegean Sea, and as far west as Rome. Every kind of person living in this area, including many women, become fully-constituted members of Christianity. Yet, the implied reader observes the implied author's lack of vision west beyond Italy, north above the Euxine Sea, and east into India. Indeed, the social location of thought appears to lie among a cosmopolitan population mixture somewhere between the western coast of Asia Minor and Syria.

Thus, a look at the mixture of population in Luke–Acts suggests a social location of thought among the kind of mixed population found in cosmopolitan cities in the eastern Mediterranean. The limited boundaries of the implied author's vision suggest that the social location of thought in Luke–Acts does not lie in elite groups that have access to Gaul, Spain, and India, nor in ethnic groups that refuse to associate with a mixed population. Rather, the thought is located among networks of people in eastern Mediterranean cities representing a wide variety of native languages and geographical areas.

4.4 Technology

Technology is identifiable by the application of knowledge for practical ends. In our experience, a wide variety of technological phenomena signify vigorous activity in the spheres of written, spoken, and visual communication, medicine, agriculture, fabrics, travel, and many other areas. We live in a technological age, and the spheres where technology is present appear through the objects and procedures that come into view as we go from one situation to another.

According to T. F. Carney, "a lack of technological development is one of the most striking characteristics of the traditional societies of antiquity" (1975:106, 132–33). Since the dominant values of the ruling elite are anti-economic, expertise is built up in the areas of literature, the military, and administration, not in the areas of commerce and industry (Carney 1975:107).

Our search through Luke–Acts reveals technological activity in four spheres: administration, sea travel, writing, and crafts.

In the sphere of administration, we know of census taking, as well as tax collection. Also, geographical space has been divided into districts over which specific people have jurisdiction. In addition, the administrative aspects of the military are in view, though the major technology of warfare like stone-throwing machines or machines for

shooting spears or arrows are not in view. The reader sees only whips, swords, and crosses on which people are hung.

There is a surprising amount of technology of sea travel. Not only does the implied author exhibit knowledge of the storms and winds on the Great Sea but harbors, lees, and depths of the water at various places. In addition, the reader encounters data about kinds of anchors and techniques for sailing in rough weather (Acts 27:1–20).

The technological sphere of writing includes literary skills and rhetoric. Loveday Alexander (1986) recently made a breakthrough in analysis of this sphere in Luke–Acts. Her extensive search through Mediterranean literature for comparative analysis of the prefaces to Luke and Acts reveals a social location that is perhaps best described as "technical writer." The Lukan preface, which she identifies as "label + address," exhibits writing practices in a social location of technical or professional prose, which she calls "the scientific tradition." Writing within this social location reveals an appreciation for work of people in the artisan class, in contrast to the disdain elite writers hold for work performed by artisans. Using a detailed scheme for the syntactical structure of the prefaces, Alexander discovers the closest analogy to the Lukan prefaces in "middlebrow," technical literature, and the closest individual analogy to the first-century CE author, Hero the Engineer. Composition at this middlebrow level is "literate but not literary, a written language designed primarily for conveying factual information" (1986:61). She observes, in this regard, that the Lukan prefaces do not contain the "more flowery, 'Alexandrian' vocabulary" of the prefaces found in Hellenistic Jewish literature (1986:60).

It is important, however, to extend this kind of analysis beyond the prefaces. It is noticeable, as Alexander has observed, that the implied author changes from septuagintal style into other styles throughout the narrative (also Plumacher 1972; 1974; 1977; 1979). Moreover, as a recent study of the Beelzebul episode in Luke has shown (Mack and Robbins 1989:185–91), the author uses a strategy for developing rhetorical topics by adding sayings, fables, examples, analogies, and exhortations that exhibits a rather advanced level of writing. A similar strategy is at work in the well-known travel narrative in Luke which, through the addition of sayings and apophthegms, creates ten chapters of material as Jesus travels to Jerusalem. Also, the implied author exhibits a significantly competent rhetorical approach to defense speeches (Veltman 1975; Long 1983; Neyrey 1984) and sea voyages (Robbins 1978) in Acts.

What social location, then, does the implied author exhibit in the arena of technology? The implied author produces written accounts of previous events from a social perspective cordial to the production of tents (Acts 18:1–3), aware of the activities of silversmiths (Acts 19:23–24), and interested in the value of books written by people who practice

magical arts (Acts 19:19). There is a lack of interest in the production of the raw materials themselves, like the leather produced through the slaughter and skinning of sheep and goats, though the tanning of skins is in view with the mention of Simon the Tanner (Acts 10:32). The process of mining silver and bringing it to the city is not in view. But the plight of silversmiths significantly occupies the narrator as the narratee is told how certain patterns of buying and not buying influence their livelihood (Acts 19:23–41). As mentioned above, the narrator also refers to the specific value of books produced for magic arts as fifty thousand pieces of silver (Acts 19:19). Moreover, members of the Christian movement make friends with a woman named Lydia, a seller of purple goods, and receive hospitality from her (Acts 16:14). The point is that artisans performing their crafts and sellers of goods produced by artisans are significantly in view as a result of the social location of the thought of the implied author. Though technically skillful with writing and highly aware of administrative technology, the implied author does not locate his thought among the elite, who look with disdain upon the artisan class (see Hock 1980); neither is his thought located among the daily workers in the mines, fields, vineyards, or hillside grazing sheep and goats. Rather, the thought of the implied author is located near the artisan class, aware of the dynamics of life at this level of society, comfortable with working with one's hands at this level of production, and interested in friendship with sellers of goods and buyers of books that contain information about the practices of groups about which one may have only the most basic information.

4.5 Socialization and Personality

If an exploration of technology within the thought of the implied author suggests significant association with artisan workers in cities in the eastern Mediterranean, perhaps analysis of socialization and personality can give us even clearer definition. The inscribed author claims to be an insider to the story and has "followed all things closely for some time past" (Luke 1:3). As an insider, the inscribed author seeks to communicate with a person who has been informed (kathēchēthēs) but who, in the inscribed author's terms, needs accurate, secure (asphaleia) knowledge. It is not clear why the inscribed reader needs this information about the Christian movement. The inscribed author simply says that "inasmuch as" others have compiled a narrative, it "seemed good" for him also to write an orderly account and to make it available to the one whom he addresses as "most excellent Theophilus." The pretense, real or fictive, is that this true information is a gift. The implied reader is left to wonder why. Is the implied reader to suppose that Theophilus already is a patron of this writer, that this patron is wavering in his support or

expressing uncertainty because someone has suggested that the movement is politically or otherwise problematic? Or is the implied reader to see in this prologue competition with other Christians who present a theologically or politically different story of Christianity? The social location of the thought of the implied author contains an upward-looking stance but also a competitive stance toward Christians who have produced narratives of some sort about Jesus and/or early Christians. In any case, the social posture of the inscribed author is to evoke a friend or patron who has in the past, is currently, or will be expected in the future to reciprocate in some manner for the honor bestowed by the dedication of this work and the gift of this information.

The lack of certainty concerning whether Theophilus is a genuine patron requires that we interpret the prologues with great caution (Robbins 1979). But whether the relation to Theophilus is fictive or real, the inscribed author knows the kind of social location experienced by a friend writing for a friend or a client writing for a patron. If writing as a friend to a friend, he evokes a status for himself among those with social rank in Mediterranean society. If writing as a client to a patron, he issues a fictive or real challenge for patronage present or future.

If the inscribed author knows about such social locations and has the resources to adopt the persona of one of these in a written document, then we have uncovered an important aspect of the social location of the thought of the implied author. A social location is "a structural term describing a position in a social system" (Rohrbaugh 1987:114). Our inscribed author is in a social location that allows time and materials for writing and for adopting a persona either of a friend of social rank writing to another friend of social rank, or of client to patron. The length of the two documents testifies to this, since, whatever the location is, it has sustained itself long enough to produce two volumes of the work.

The narrator in Luke and Acts addresses Theophilus as "most excellent," analogously to Josephus' address to Epaphroditus (*Life* 430; *AgApion* 1.1). Thus the person producing Luke–Acts does not have the inscribed author adopt a position of equality with the one whom he addresses, as Plutarch does to Socius and Polycrates (see *Theseus* 1.3; *Demosthenes* 1.3; *Dion* 1.3), but a subordinate position, as Josephus does to his patron Epaphroditus. It surely is informative that the inscribed author of Luke–Acts has used the same form of address in the prologues that subordinates use for their Roman superiors in the stories in Acts.

Outside the prologues, a tribune displays the use of the honorific appellation "most excellent" in a letter to the governor (Acts 23:26), a spokesman for the high priest, Tertullus addresses the governor in the same manner (Acts 24:2), and Paul addresses the governor Festus in this manner in a formal trial before the king (Acts 24:24). From the narrator's point of view, subordinates address superiors in the Roman hierarchy

as "most excellent," and Paul does not adopt this subordinate position before the governors except in a formal trial setting when the king is present (Acts 26:2, 7, 19; cf. Acts 25:8, 10, 11).

In contrast to all of this, people in Luke–Acts do not use forms of honorific address when they speak to subordinates, and political leaders of high rank do not use honorific appellations when they address each other. Thus, Paul addresses the crewmen on the ship that is taking him to Rome as "men" (andres; Acts 27:10, 21), and local Jewish leaders in Rome who come to him as "men, brothers" (andres adelphoi; Acts 27:17). In turn, the Jewish leaders use no special form of address when speaking to Paul (Acts 28:21). Also, the governor Felix uses no honorific form of address when he speaks to Paul, whom he perceives to be below him in social and political rank (Acts 23:35; 24:22, 25; 25:5, 9, 12); and neither the governor Festus nor King Agrippa employ honorific appellations when they talk to each other (Acts 25:14–22, 31–32) or to Paul (Acts 26:1, 24, 28).

These data suggest that our inscribed author addresses Theophilus in a mode associated with a person who is willingly or unwillingly in a subordinate position to a person of rank in Roman society. We know this form of address was used for a procurator of the equestrian order from the time of the emperor Septimius Severus on (after 193 CE). As the equivalent of the Latin *optimus*, it is attested to in first-century documents in reference to any official (Fitzmyer 1981:300). It is likely we are getting an important look into the social location of the thought of the implied author when we see this data.

There is a possibility, as mentioned at the outset, that the address to Theophilus is fictive, that there is no real individual person to whom Luke and Acts are addressed. In this case, one or more unseen patrons, matrons, or associates are supporting the production of these documents by providing daily sustenance, shelter, freedom from labor, and the economic ability to acquire materials and time. The prologue to Acts, which refers to the first volume, implies that the support continues for a significant amount of time. But the challenge to Theophilus somehow facilitates the production of the documents. The inclusion of "most excellent" suggests a social location where one or more persons either seek to communicate with people who possess some prestige in Roman society or seek the image of communicating with such people. The inscribed author is adopting a stance subordinate to the one with whom he wishes to communicate. Two possibilities, therefore, already can be excluded — the inscribed author does not evoke a social location which communicates downward to people with lower social ranking, and it is not considered wise to communicate as though there were equality in social rank. The social location of the thought of the implied author suggests it is advantageous to adopt a stance of respect that evokes a social

location slightly below but in communication with people who have higher status in the social structure. Thus, although the thought of the implied author is near the artisan class, and holds no disdain for artisan labor, there is a social posture of communicating upwards in the social order rather than downward to artisans or peasants.

4.6 Culture

Culture is a humanly constructed arena of artistic, literary, historical, and aesthetic competencies. Since writing itself constitutes a basic cultural product, when we examine the conception of reading and writing in Luke–Acts, we gain a further definition of the location of the thought in the two volumes. Let us begin in the arena of the characters.

In the social location of the Jerusalem temple, a male named Zechariah, a member of the social class of priests, with a defined status in the division of Abijah, was fulfilling his role of burning incense when an angel of the Lord addressed him about his social role as husband (Luke 1:5–17). In the domain of culture, special interest arises when the angel speaks to him in poetic verse (1:14–17). This is not the poetic verse of Homer, Greek tragedy, or Greek lyric poetry, but poetry in the style of Septuagint Greek. Six months later, when the angel Gabriel speaks to Mary, a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, a member of the royal family of David, this angel speaks in a similar septuagintal style of poetic verse (1:32–33, 35). When Mary visits Elizabeth, the now pregnant wife of the priest Zechariah, Mary speaks in even lengthier septuagintal-styled poetic verse (1:46–55). Then, after Elizabeth gives birth to John, Zechariah, the priestly father of John, first writes the name of John on a tablet, then produces extended prophetic speech in the style of septuagintal verse (1:67–79). Zechariah's ability to speak in this manner and to write reminds us that he comes from a priestly family that nurtures at least basic educational skills. After an angel of the Lord speaks in short septuagintal-styled verse to shepherds in the field (2:14), a righteous and devout man named Simeon also speaks in this stylized manner as he blesses God (2:29–32) and speaks to Mary about her son (2:34–35).

A very interesting social location begins to exhibit itself. The implied reader observes that the father of John, the mother of Jesus, the righteous and devout man Simeon, and angels of the Lord, including Gabriel, display a social location within Jewish culture that gives them the competence to produce poetic verse that imitates Septuagint Greek. And the implied reader sees that the father of John can write at least basic information on a tablet.

After the first two chapters the status of poetic verse styled according to the Septuagint verse changes. Prior to chapter 3, the poetic verse is produced either by heavenly beings or humans upon whom the Holy

Spirit has come (Mary—2:35; Zechariah—1:67; Simeon—2:27). This speech is characterized as prophetic (1:67; 2:26), and the impression is that it is being composed in the setting of oral performance rather than being quoted from a written document. In the ideology of the implied author, then, the poetic verse is "divine, spirit-inspired, prophetic speech" (which the inscribed author has now written). After Luke 1–2 and throughout Acts, all the poetic speech is said to be from a written document, and this speech occurs in two intratextual arenas. First, the narrator quotes septuagintal verse "written in a book of words of Isaiah the prophet" in Luke 3:4–6 and Acts 8:32–33. The words have the style of septuagintal poetic verse, like the poetic verse that was performed orally in Luke 1–2. With these quotations, the narratee sees that the narrator can find and read passages from Isaiah. Second, a large number of characters quote written poetic verse. After Jesus' response to his mother in the temple at twelve years of age (2:49), he responds to all three temptations by the devil by quoting scripture (4:4, 8, 12). But the devil also can quote from these written materials (4:10–11). In a Jewish cultural environment, Jesus has skillfully defeated the devil, since he quoted each time from the Torah (Deut 9:9; 8:3; 6:16), while the devil quoted only from the Writings (Ps. 91:11–12). But the narrator does not tell the narratee this, and we can not know for certain that the implied author is aware of it. At this point, the implied reader knows that Jesus has the ability to recite verses of written scripture orally, but the implied reader cannot be absolutely sure, yet, that Jesus can read these verses from a written document. Perhaps, Jesus simply has heard them so often that he can reproduce them orally.

When Jesus goes to the synagogue at Nazareth on the sabbath, he opens the book of Isaiah, finds a specific passage, and reads the passage with rhetorical grace (4:16–22). The implied reader will notice that this is the same book from which the narrator quoted in 3:4–6, but this reader will not yet know that the narrator will quote again from this book in Acts 8:32–33. Jesus, then, like the narrator, has access to a book of Isaiah's words. We never see Jesus carry this book, but he has access to it in the Nazareth synagogue. Like the narrator and the implied author, Jesus has the competence to find a specific passage in this book. When Jesus continues by telling about the days of Elijah and Elisha (4:24–27), the implied reader probably concludes that Jesus reads about these things in some other book that tells about Elijah and Elisha. But no one indicates where these stories could be found.

Jesus' social location, then, appears to be somewhat different from that of Zechariah, Mary, and Simeon, since he is a reader and oral performer of scripture, while they were oral performers of spirit-inspired poetic verse which no one claims was written before our implied author scripted it. Therefore, Jesus, as presented in Luke–Acts, is located

within the social sphere of reading culture. This view of Jesus' social location is further supported by his quotation from the book of Psalms in Luke 20:17, 42–44, his specific reference to the passage in the Torah about the bush (Luke 20:37), and his interpretation of the things concerning himself "beginning with Moses and all the prophets" (Luke 24:27). Jesus, then, occupies a social location of reading literacy within Jewish culture. He has a reading knowledge of the Torah, the prophet Isaiah, and the Psalms.

In Acts, the implied reader sees Peter, John, Stephen, and James orally reciting passages from the Jewish writings, but only the Ethiopian eunuch is portrayed as possessing a book (Isaiah) and reading it. In fact, it surely is instructive about the social location of Luke–Acts that every major character quotes (often lengthy passages) verbatim from the Jewish scriptures very soon after being introduced to the implied reader (Peter—Acts 1:20; 2:16–21, 25–28, 34–35; 3:22–23; 4:11; other apostles—4:25–26; Stephen—7:3, 26–28, 32–34, 35, 37, 40, 42–43, 48–50; James—Acts 15:15–18). In his inaugural speech (Acts 13:33, 33–35, 41, 47) and likewise at the end of his career (28:25–27) Paul quotes extensively from the Jewish writings. But for Paul there is more.

In Athens Paul quotes from both Epimenides and Aratus' *Phaenomena* (Acts 17:28). Culturally Paul is thus exhibited in a social location that reaches beyond Jewish writing into Greek poetry. It is possible that Peter and the apostles also have some ability in the sphere of Greek sayings, since Acts 5:29 may be a saying associated with Socrates (Pervo 1987:169).

Every competence the characters exhibit to the implied reader reveals an aspect of the competence of the implied author. Thus, the implied author is not limited to septuagintal poetic verse, but also has competence, though perhaps quite limited, with Greek poetry. To these things, however, we must add the implied author's competence in the prologues to Luke and Acts, the defense speeches of Paul in Acts, the sea voyage narratives, and the kind of historical biography and novelistic monograph the implied reader sees in Luke and Acts. Thus, the implied author occupies a social location within Jewish culture which is not limited to knowledge of the Septuagint. There is no attempt, however, to write a dactylic hexameter line of Homer or a poetic line of tragedy, and there are no references to these written works alongside written Jewish scripture.

What does this mean in terms of social location? Perhaps we can get a clearer view if we compare Luke–Acts with the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*. On three different occasions in *Infancy Thomas*, teachers agree to educate Jesus, that is, to teach him "letters." The first two times Jesus resists the presupposition that proper knowledge and behavior comes through learning how to read and write (*InThom* 6:2–6; 14:1–3). The third

time (15:1–2) he takes a book lying on the reading desk and, without reading any of the letters in it, opens his mouth and by the Holy Spirit teaches the law to people who are standing by. To understand this we must know that *Infancy Thomas* is rejecting the concept that "all knowledge" can be taught through letters, that is "Greek letters." The teachers try to teach Jesus the Greek alphabet, which is the basis of *paideia*—the education that makes people truly learned. In contrast to the portrayal in Luke, the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* exhibits a social location that depicts Jesus refusing to learn from people who teach reading and writing. Along with this social location, the author of *Infancy Thomas* presents no quotations from scripture in the entire document. For reasons beyond the scope of this study, the social location of the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* reflects a position against people who teach reading and writing in Greek. In contrast, Luke presents Jesus as a person comfortable with and trained in written scripture, and both the Gospel and Acts exhibit a high facility with scripture written in Greek language.

Also, Paul can quote brief lines from some ancient Greek poets (Acts 17:28) and produce articulate speeches that exhibit knowledge and skill. But in one of the speeches Paul makes it clear that he is an urban Jew who received a proper education under a tutor named Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Thus, his learning came from Jewish culture, and this learning gives him competence even with some Greek poetry.

With this analysis of reading and writing culture in Luke–Acts, we see an interest in presenting Jesus and his followers as "lettered," but it is a literacy based on Jewish culture. The thought of the implied author, therefore, is emphatically bicultural: grounded in Jewish culture but competent in Greco-Roman culture. This biculturality also produces problems for this kind of Christianity. Festus recognizes Paul's "great learning" (*ta polla grammata*), but fears that his pursuit of truth is turning him mad (Acts 26:24). However, the high priestly family of Jerusalem perceives Peter and John to be uneducated and ungifted men (Acts 4:13). People in the narrative, then, can label the competencies of its characters as "unlettered" or "lettered," and they may describe the people themselves as "ungifted" or "mad."

4.7 Foreign Affairs

Once we see the attempt of the implied author to communicate upward from a bicultural location, our investigation of foreign affairs produces interesting results. In truth there are few foreign affairs in view in Luke–Acts. There are references to Roman emperors in two historical synchronisms: Caesar Augustus decreed that the inhabited world should be counted (Luke 2:1); and John began baptizing in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar (Luke 3:1). In addition, the Emperor Claudius is known to have commanded all Jews to leave Rome (Acts 18:2).

Since the reign and decrees of the Caesars are essentially foreign to the history of Syria, Judea, Galilee, Iturea, Trachonitis, and Abilene, the thought of the implied author is located where the decrees of the emperors are perceived to be foreign history.

But what is the meaning of foreign? The first people who appear to be foreign are the Samaritans who will not welcome Jesus (9:52). Yet soon after, Jesus presents a Samaritan as a model neighbor (10:29–37). And later, when Jesus heals ten lepers it is the Samaritan, who is called a foreigner (17:18), who appropriately gives praise to God for his cleansing. Then in Acts 8:1–24, the people of Samaria, at one point called the "nation" of Samaria (8:9), respond positively to the preaching among them.

The people in Acts 2 who are gathered together begin to speak in their own native languages: Parthians, Medes, Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, Rome, and Cretans and Arabians. When these "foreigners" join Christianity, the Christian community begins to be constituted by foreigners. Next, the church is "scattered" throughout many regions. People in Athens call Paul a "babbler" and "preacher of foreign deities" (17:28).

It depends on where a person is located as to whether he or she is a foreigner, and the thought in Luke–Acts appears to exhibit a location of "inverted" foreignness. Christians appear to be the primary foreigners. In other words, the affairs recounted in Luke–Acts are the true foreign affairs. The thought of the implied author is located in a bicultural environment that has brought a self-consciousness of foreignness among people established in cities throughout the eastern Mediterranean. But the implied author has a solution to the anxiety this foreign identity produces. The "foreign" affairs of Christians must be narrated to people above them in the social order. In other words, some kind of advantage is to be obtained by admitting that the affairs of the Christian community are foreign events to established people in Roman society and by arguing that it is important for them to have a well-ordered, detailed account of these foreign affairs. Thus, the implied author is located socially in a position where he wants the foreign affairs that lie within his biculturality to find an accepted place within the affairs of Rome.

4.8 Belief Systems and Ideologies

The basic ideology of Luke–Acts appears to be the belief that God has ordained a place for the "foreign affairs" of Christianity within the affairs of the Roman Empire. This aspect of Luke–Acts regularly has been pursued under the rubric of an apologia for Christianity that shows that Christians are not guilty of illegal activity under Roman law (see Walasky 1983). The ideology of Luke–Acts, however, moves much beyond this goal.

The implied author wishes to show that God has "cleansed" a widely divergent and mixed group of peoples within a movement inaugurated by Jesus of Nazareth. The word "cleansed" challenges the purity system of Judaism at its center. As Elliott shows in this volume, Luke–Acts replaces the centric ideology of the temple with the distribution ideology of the household. One of the major aspects of this change is a transformation of the purity system of Judaism (Douglas 1966; Malina 1981:122–52; Neyrey 1988b).

Luke–Acts replicates the distributive economic approach within the realm of purity. As food is distributed to people of every social rank, so every social rank and ethnically divergent person may be "cleansed by God" through baptism into the Christian movement. The key verse occurs in Acts 10:15: "What God has cleansed, you must not call common." This ideology is exhibited through the cleansing of lepers, which includes Samaritans and Namaan the Syrian (Luke 4:27; 5:12, 13; 7:22; 17:14, 17). Also it emerges in a discussion with Pharisees, where Jesus tells them that God has made not only the outside but also the inside, and therefore giving for alms those things which are within will cleanse everything for them (Luke 11:40–1). This change of purity systems coheres with the ideology that God has cleansed a wide variety mixed together (Acts 11:9), which includes Gentiles whose hearts God cleanses by faith (Acts 15:9). Purity, then, is to be found within the mixed and diverse social and ethnic groups in the Christian movement. God's cleansing activity is exhibited in the devoutness (Luke 2:25; Acts 2:5; 3:12; 8:2; 10:2, 7; 17:23; 22:12) and righteousness or innocence (Luke 1:6, 17; 2:25; 5:32; 12:57; 14:14; 15:17; 18:9; 20:20; 23:47, 50; Acts 3:14; 4:19; 7:52; 10:22; 22:14; 24:15) of people associated with Christianity. When disagreements arise between Jews and Christians over precise practices, the implied author suggests that these disagreements are simply a matter of inconsistency within some people's thinking about how God has cleansed the diversity that lies within Judaism itself, and now within Christianity, throughout the Roman Empire.

Thus, the thought of the implied author is located in a social environment that accepts its foreignness and mixedness as blessed by God. This confidence in God's action reflects a social location in which Christians consider themselves equal to Pharisees and able to challenge them to be hospitable in their homes and generous in almsgiving. In addition, it gives these Christians confidence with the leaders of Roman society, which leads us to our last section.

4.9 Political-Military-Legal System

According to Carney, during the time of the Roman Empire, the political-military-legal system stood in a close symbiotic relationship

with socio-economic affairs, affecting almost everything everywhere in the system (Carney 1975:235–79; cf. Andreski 1968). It is widely recognized that a political-military-legal system is extensively in view in Luke–Acts. Some have argued that the primary purpose of Luke–Acts was to show that no Christian had ever been found guilty of a crime against the Roman legal system. More recently, Philip Esler has argued that Luke–Acts legitimatizes Christianity by exhibiting favorable relationships between early Christian leaders and Roman officials (Esler 1987).

On the one hand, we must remind ourselves of those parts of the political-military-legal system that are outside the boundaries of what is in view to the implied author. While Luke–Acts contains many references to Roman emperors, only three are referred to by name (Caesar Augustus — Luke 2:1; Tiberius Caesar — Luke 3:1; Claudius — Acts 18:2). Moreover, there is no scene in Luke–Acts where a Roman emperor is present. Paul is taken to Rome so he can appeal directly to Caesar, but such an appeal is never shown to the reader nor referred to as accomplished. In fact, there is such a social separation from the environment of the emperor that references to a specific emperor are absent except in the two synchronisms at the beginning of Luke and the reference to Claudius' edict against Jews in Rome. References to certain decrees and laws imply the presence of the emperor as a symbol of supreme political and legal power.

In contrast to the absence of emperors themselves, a number of upper-level representatives of the emperor's domain appear in Luke–Acts. The narrator depicts a majority of these people as holding a favorable attitude toward Christians (Esler 1987:202). Thus, Lysias, the Roman tribune in Jerusalem, goes to great lengths to protect Paul from the Jews in Acts 21–23; Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus, converts to Christian belief (Acts 13:6–12); and Asiarchs in Ephesus, who are priests of the imperial cult, are described as friends of Paul (Acts 19:31). Most of the people at the level of prefect, proconsul, or king will take no legal action against individual Christians, but most exhibit some social distance from Christianity. Thus, Pontius Pilate declares Jesus innocent, but his social location is clearly distant from the activity of Jesus and his followers. Likewise Gallio, the Roman proconsul of Achaea, dismisses the case of the Corinthian Jews against Paul, and his reason is that this is a matter of dispute over Jewish words and names (Acts 18:12–17). In other words, people at the highest levels of the political-military-legal system are located socially at a distance from the Christian movement.

The number of centurions mentioned in Luke–Acts, and their favorable relation to Jesus and the later apostles, is quite a different matter. It would appear that Luke–Acts is produced in a social location where a number of centurions are members of the Christian community. The centurion of Capernaum has a favorable experience with Jesus (Luke 7:1–

10); the centurion at the foot of the cross "glorifies God," probably indicating a personal stance within Christian belief (Luke 23:47; see Esler 1987:202); the first gentile convert is the centurion Cornelius, along with his entire household (Acts 10:1–11:18); and Julius, the centurion in charge of Paul during the voyage to Rome, is especially kind to Paul, allowing friends to visit him (Acts 27:3) and saving him from being thrown overboard by the ship's crew (Acts 27:42–43). Luke–Acts is located in an environment where centurions are among the members of the community, not simply outsiders looking in.

What, then, is the social relation of Christianity to the political-military-legal system in the thought of the implied author? It implies that representatives from this arena of the social system are fully constituted members of the Christian movement alongside the other representatives of diversity within it. Likewise the political-military-legal system has an established practice of protecting, or at least attempting to protect, Christians. Thus, in the ideology of the implied author, there is every reason why members of the political-military-legal system can feel at home within Christianity and every reason why Christianity should be considered to have a comfortable place within the Roman political-military-legal system.

Yet there is a deep uneasiness within this "at homeness." Throughout Luke–Acts, the political-military-legal system protects or attempts to protect Christians. But in the end there is a social location of imprisonment within the system. On the one hand, Paul is a Roman citizen (Acts 22:27–28), he is free to move about openly and unhindered (Acts 28:31), and he is able to meet with local Jewish leaders (Acts 28:17–23). Yet, a soldier must guard him (Acts 28:16), much as there are representatives of the political-military-legal system keeping an eye on the affairs of this "foreign people" throughout the narrative. Paul, like the Christian movement, has a rightful home within the Roman Empire; yet his home, and he himself, is continually guarded. The attentive guarding protects the members of the movement, but it also imprisons them socially. Thus, in this social location, the thought of the implied author hovers between being at home, enjoying the hospitality and benefits of Roman society, and being in prison, always guarded by people both inside and outside the movement.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Many interpreters have claimed knowledge either about the author of Luke–Acts or about the community in which he lived. Other interpreters have denied that the interpreter can know anything about either

the author or his community. There is, however, another way to ask the question. What can we know about the social location of the thought of the implied author?

The goal of this chapter has been to create a model for exploring systematically the social location of the implied author of a document written in Mediterranean society during the time of the Roman Empire and to make an initial application of the model to the study of Luke–Acts. As a result of our sortie through the arenas of the social system identified by Thomas Carney, a picture has begun to emerge. The implied author produces previous events as a written product, and this production of events is observable in virtually every arena of the narrative functions of the text. Major characters, the narrator, and the inscribed author produce previous events as a social product for their audiences. While most people in Mediterranean culture produced previous events as a social product, only certain people produced them in written form. The inscribed author refers to both written and oral production of previous events as a resource, the raw material if you will, for this production of an ordered account. The implied author produces previous events as a means of establishing and maintaining sets of relationships among various kinds of Christians, Jews, and Romans who encounter one another and exchange values, goods, beliefs, and challenges.

The thought of the previous events that constitute Luke–Acts occurs in a geographical space extending from Ethiopia and Cyrenaica east to Elam and west to Rome. The resources within this space are ships for travel and islands for protection and hospitality on the Great Sea, fish and boats for travel on lake Gennesareth, and houses for hospitality in ports, cities, and towns on the mainland and on islands. The differentiated people in view in this space are wealthy and powerful Jews, wealthy and powerful Romans, and afflicted men and women. Thus, the thought of the implied author is located in the midst of the activities of adult Jews and Romans who have certain kinds of power in cities and villages throughout the Mediterranean world from Rome to Jerusalem.

Within this space and among these people, the thought of the implied author exhibits technology in four spheres: administration, sea travel, writing, and crafts. The arena of socialization reveals an upward-looking use of technology toward Roman officials with political power. Jewish officials, however, are considered equal in social status and rank. Wealthy Pharisees are singled out as people who regularly offer hospitality to Christians sharing the social location of thought with the implied author, yet those Pharisees are accused of often not fulfilling aspects of social action valued by the Christians who receive hospitality from them. Christians in this social location of thought pride themselves on offering healing to afflicted people (see Pilch's chapter) and food to beggars, lame, maimed, blind, and those not allowed to stay in the city over-

night (see Rohrbaugh's chapter). In this social location, Christians argue for distribution of wealth to the poor, but they do not argue the case for allowing the poor to become landowners or householders (see Oakman's chapter; Oakman 1986). In other words, the thought is located socially within cities and villages, not out in the countryside.

The primary culture exhibited by the social location is written literature and cultivated speech. The implied author knows substantial portions of Isaiah and the Psalms, as well as other scriptures. In addition, the implied author can produce short lines of Greek poetry, though there is no attempt to produce a hexameter verse from Homer or a poetic line from Greek tragedy. Rather, the implied author produces poetic verse out of the culture of Judaism. In other words, the cultural achievement represented by Luke–Acts reflects a Jewish sphere of society using the Greek language, the lingua franca of the Mediterranean world.

The arena of foreign affairs gives us additional insight into the social location of the thought of the implied author of Luke–Acts. Roman emperors, and thus foreign affairs are in view for the implied author. But the presence of Roman affairs has created a view that the affairs of Israelites, Jews, and Christians are "foreign" to the dominant population in the Mediterranean world. Thus, the thought of the implied author is located socially in a place where it seems advantageous, and perhaps necessary, to tell "these foreign affairs" to people slightly higher in social rank who read Greek and appreciate a people who strive to be devout, righteous, and lettered.

In the arena of belief systems and ideologies, the thought of the implied author appears to challenge the dominant Jewish purity system at its center. The thought in Luke–Acts celebrates diversity and claims that God has "cleansed" it. In this way, the thought of the implied author claims to be an authentic part of the heterogeneous population of the Roman Empire. Part of this diversity includes the presence of political-military-legal personnel within the Christian movement. Thus, it is quite acceptable in this social location to sell one's coat and buy a sword (Luke 22:36). Yet the sword is not to be used carelessly or with undue aggression (Luke 22:49–51). Nevertheless, life at this social location is uneasy. Members of the political-military-legal system both protect Christians and imprison them. Accepting a position of subordination, Christians speak with politeness and care upwards to those who dominate the system. Yet, bolstered by God's sanctioning of their diversity and by their ideology of "at homeness" in the Roman Empire, they not only tell their story to those above but engage in vigorous and continued confrontation with those from whom they claim their Jewish heritage and those with whom they enjoy the benefits of Greco-Roman culture.