

PROOFS OF THE DIVINE: LUKE'S USE OF *TEKMHPION* IN ACTS 1:3 IN LIGHT OF HERODOTUS' DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE OF MYCALE (*Hist.* 9.100.2)

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Abstract

In Acts 1:3, the author claims that Jesus had shown himself alive 'by many proofs' (ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις). Phrases containing *τεκμήριον* (a NT hapax) qualified by *πολύς* have a long textual history. Reference works, however, do not discuss the closest rhetorical and theological parallel to the occurrence of *τεκμήριον* in Acts, which is found in Herodotus' description of the battle of Mycale (*Histories* 9.100.2) in a metaleptic aside about proofs of divine intervention in human history: Δῆλα δὲ πολλοῖσι τεκμηρίοις ἐστὶ τὰ θεῶν τῶν πρηγμάτων. Given the theologically charged nature of Luke–Acts and the *Histories*, this rich parallel illustrates well both projects and evinces plausible Herodotean influence on Luke's historiographical erudition.

INTRODUCTION

If the author of the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles may be considered 'the historian of God', then Herodotus certainly deserves the title 'the historian of the gods'.¹ Proofs of divine involvement in human history were part and parcel of their historiographies, and they had no apparent complex about it. Although their views on the spiritual world are very different, their constant emphasis on divine acts and speech coalesces the roles of historian and prophet.²

¹ The expression 'l'historien de Dieu' is adeptly proposed and demonstrated by D. Marguerat in his *L'historien de Dieu: Luc et les Actes des apôtres* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2018), p. 9.

² See J. M. Morgan, 'Prophetic Historiography: Definition and Relevance for Herodotean and Lukan Research', in S. Buttica, L. Devillers, J. M. Morgan, and S. Walton (eds.), *Le corpus lucanien (Luc-Actes) et l'historiographie ancienne: Quels rapports?* (Zurich: LIT, 2019), pp. 69–95. For the question of Luke's works in relation to historiographical works that include or exclude divine activity, see, for example, J. Frey, Clare K. Rothschild, and Jens Schröter (eds.), *Die Apostelgeschichte im Kontext antiker und frühchristlicher*

In the preface of the Acts of the Apostles, the author (hereafter Luke) resumes the narration from his first volume by reiterating Jesus' physical presence among his disciples, after his death and burial.³ Luke wants to reassure his readers that Jesus really was alive.⁴ After all, the contents of Book 2 would hardly make sense if that were not established. Yet, one might have asked how this could be known. Luke responds concisely: 'He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.'⁵ The phrase under study here is *ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις*. The phrase 'by many proofs' serves to stress what Luke had begun to do in the first volume, namely, to demonstrate that Jesus had presented himself, after his resurrection, not in the form of a spirit or phantom, but in his resurrected physical body, yet without the limitations of human corporality.⁶ For Luke, and presumably also

Historiographie (BZNW, 162; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), and T. Schmeller (ed.) *Historiographie und Biographie im Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt* (NTOA, 69; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009).

³ The second preface builds on the first preface and is only a bit longer than the first. In the Nestle-Aland 28th edition, there are 42 words in Luke 1:1–4 and 54 in Acts 1:1–3. Scholarly discussion varies about the precise limits of the preface in Acts. Loveday Alexander has even proposed that the preface has no ending ('The Preface to Acts and the Historians', in B. Witherington (ed.), *History, Literature and Society in the Book of Acts* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], pp. 73–103, at 82). Here I interpret the first three verses as the preface proper. The verses 4–11 serve to recommence the narration of events by illustrating specific moments (during the 'forty days') leading to Jesus' ascension. For the attractive proposal concerning the synchronic links between the end of Luke and the beginning of Acts, see D. P. Moessner, "Listening Posts" Along the Way: "Synchronisms" as Metaleptic Prompts to the "Continuity of The Narrative" in Polybius' Histories and in Luke's Gospel-Acts. A Tribute to David E. Aune', in J. Fotopoulos (ed.), *The New Testament and Early Christian Literature in Greco-Roman Context: Studies in Honor of David E. Aune* (NovTSup, 122; Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 124–47, at 135.

⁴ For Luke's use of various Hellenistic rhetorical techniques to provide certainty to his readers, particularly the enthymeme, a rhetorical form of deduction, see W. S. Kurz, 'Hellenistic Rhetoric in the Christological Proof of Luke-Acts', *CBQ* 42 (1980), pp. 171–95, at 184.

⁵ My translation.

⁶ For the rhetorical import of Luke's references to Jesus' corporality before, during, and especially after burial and death, see J. Roloff, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (NTD, 5; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), p. 20; L. T. Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (SP, 5; Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 25; J. Zmijewski, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (RNT; Regensburg: Pustet, 1994), pp. 47–50; P. G. Bolt, 'Mission and Witness', in I. H. Marshall and D. Peterson (eds.), *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), pp. 191–214, at 196–7; and C. S. Keener, *Acts: An Exegetical*

for his readers, this was a ‘God thing’ supported by plausible evidence.

Some five hundred years earlier, the illustrious historian Herodotus used almost the identical locution (πολλοῖσι τεκμηρίοις) to highlight still another divine intervention in his account of the Greco-Persian Wars (499–479 B.C.E.).⁷ For Herodotus, the Greeks’ victory over the Persians in the battle of Mycale clearly fell in the category of the miraculous. The evidence for this event was so impressive that he interrupts his narration with another pious exclamation to his readers: ‘the divine element in [human] affairs is indeed evident by many proofs’.⁸ Herodotus then astutely buttresses this with evidence received from various sources. Nearing the end of his long nine-volume work, Herodotus wants his readers to grasp (once again) the inescapable fact that this Greek victory—as well as their triumph in the entire Greco-Persian conflict—was achieved through divine assistance.

The use of this metaleptic aside in Herodotus’ *Histories* will be the object of this comparison. Biblical reference works occasionally refer to it, but they never discuss it. New Testament commentators typically give more attention to Aristotle’s uses of τεκμήριον in relation to Acts 1:3.⁹ The lexicons BDAG and the German edition of Bauer signal no references to Herodotus in their discussion of τεκμήριον.¹⁰ Likewise, David Mealand’s

Commentary, vol. 1: Introduction and 1:1–2:47 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), pp. 666–7.

⁷ For the ‘publication’ of Herodotus’ writing project, Classicists propose an *approximate* period around 425 B.C.E. See C. Pelling, ‘Waiting for Herodotus: The Mindsets of 425 BC’, in J. Baines, H. van der Blom, Y. S. Chen, and T. Rood (eds.), *Historical Consciousness and the Use of the Past in the Ancient World* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2019), pp. 261–78.

⁸ M. A. Flower and J. Marincola, *Herodotus: Histories*, Book IX (Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 278.

⁹ See, for example, Johnson, *Acts*, p. 25; C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, vol. 1 (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), p. 70; B. Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 108; and D. Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1–12)* (CNT, 5a; Genève: Labor et Fides, 2007), p. 38.

¹⁰ F. W. Danker, W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich (eds.), *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (3rd edn., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 994; W. Bauer, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur* (6th edn.; K. and B. Aland [eds.]; K. and B. Aland [eds.]; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1988), p. 1611.

helpful lexical note on *τεκμήριον* in Acts 1:3 is limited to Hellenistic texts.¹¹ Although he does indicate that the expression was used as early as Herodotus and Isocrates, he does not discuss any of the four occurrences of *τεκμήριον* with *πολύς* in Herodotus' *Histories*.¹² These and other reference works, then, do not indicate the remarkable syntactical, rhetorical, and theological affinities between the uses of *τεκμήριον* in *Histories*, Book 9 (100.2) and Acts 1:3. This parallel in fact is the closest textual artefact to Luke's use of *ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις*, which displays plausible Herodotean influence as well as Luke's rhetorical sophistication and theological finesse.¹³

Most of the essay will focus on the context of the occurrence in Herodotus. First, however, observations will be made on the text in Acts 1:3, which is followed by a survey of the renderings of *τεκμήριον* in reference works and Bible translations as well as key uses in antiquity.

THE USE OF TEKMHPION IN ACTS 1:3

The occurrence of *τεκμήριον* in Acts 1:3 is intriguing. Not only is it a hapax legomenon in the New Testament, but also no other words from the *τεκμαρ-* semantic group occur in this corpus.¹⁴

¹¹ D. L. Mealand, 'The Phrase "Many Proofs" in Acts 1,3 and in Hellenistic Writers', *ZNW* 80 (1989), pp. 134–5. Mealand states (p. 134) that his search was not exhaustive as he used a selection of texts from the Hellenistic period. He discusses a few brief texts and signals other key references. Like the BDAG, New Testament commentators also recognize the value of Mealand's work: Witherington, *Acts*, p. 108; E. J. Schnabel, *Acts: Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), p. 72 n. 19; and Keener, *Acts*, vol. 1, p. 666 n. 173.

¹² The 'Grand Bailly', a standard reference work in French, does not indicate *Hist.* 9.100.2 or Acts 1:3 in its treatment of *τεκμήριον*. A. Bailly, E. Egger, L. Séchan, and P. Chantraine (eds.), *Dictionnaire grec-français* (Paris: Hachette, 2000), p. 1907.

¹³ For Herodotean imitation in the first lines of Acts, see John Moles, 'Luke's Preface: The Greek Decree, Classical Historiography and Christian Redefinitions', *NTS* 57 (2011), pp. 461–82, particularly at 473 where he notes three (even four) possible points of imitation of Herodotus' use of *λόγος* in Acts 1.1.

¹⁴ Luke is the master of the hapax legomena in the New Testament. Based on Nestle-Aland 28th edition, Accordance (12.3.4) indicates 280 in Luke and 417 in Acts for a total of 697 compared to a total of 1,941 hapax legomena in the NT. Thus, Luke–Acts provides 35.9% of all hapax legomena. Slightly different are the results (284 hapax based on the Nestle-Aland 27th ed.) presented in A. Denaux, R. Corstjens, and H. Mardaga (eds.), *The Vocabulary of Luke: An Alphabetical Presentation and a Survey of*

This requires us to examine occurrences of the expression in other texts to shed light on its meaning.¹⁵ Nonetheless, the grammatical use of τεκμήριον in Acts 1:3 seems plain enough. It occurs within a dative phrase preceded by the preposition ἐν, which has the syntactical function of instrument. Its plural form qualifies the verb παρέστησεν, and it is itself qualified by the adjective πολὺς (many, numerous). The context is given here (Nestle-Aland 28th ed.) and followed by my mainly literal translation with the dative phrase in italics:

Οἷς καὶ παρέστησεν ἑαυτὸν ζῶντα μετὰ τὸ παθεῖν αὐτὸν ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις, δι' ἡμερῶν τεσσεράκοντα ὀπτανόμενος αὐτοῖς καὶ λέγων τὰ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ·

To whom he, after having suffered, also presented himself alive *by many proofs* over a period of forty days, appearing to them and speaking (to them) about the things concerning the kingdom of God.

The expression appears in this manner in the preface in Acts, and no textual variants appear to be relevant to its wording or interpretation. We will now consider very briefly the interpretation of τεκμήριον in Acts 1:3 as presented in translations, lexicons, and commentaries.

SURVEY OF THE INTERPRETATION OF ΤΕΚΜΗΡΙΟΝ IN ACTS 1:3: TRANSLATIONS, LEXICONS, AND COMMENTARIES

Reference works and Bible translations propose similar readings for the meaning of τεκμήριον in Acts 1:3. Some, like

Characteristic and Noteworthy Words and Word Groups in Luke's Gospel (BTS, 10; Leuven: Peeters, 2009), pp. xxxii–xxxiii. In light of these impressive statistics, Ernst Haenchen is certainly right in dismissing the facile proposal to attribute the hapax in Acts 1:3 to a redactor. E. Haenchen, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (5th edn., Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), p. 109.

¹⁵ See the following lexicons for the longevity and richness of this semantic family: Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1999), p. 1099; Franz Passow, *Handwörterbuch der griechischen Sprache* (5th edn.; 4 vols; Leipzig 1841–1857; reprint, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2008), vol. 2, pp. 1844–5; F. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* (M. Goh and C. Schroeder [eds.]; Leiden: Brill, 2015), p. 2092; and R. Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, vol. 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), p. 1459. The first of these reference works (p. 1099) describes τεκμήριον as the most frequent derivation of τέκμαρ: ‘Dérivé le plus fréquent et de structure remarquable τεκμήριον n. formé sur l’aoriste τεκμήρασθαι “signe (en principe certain), preuve”, d’où l’expression τεκμήριον δε distincte de σημείον.’

Montanari (p. 2092), propose a one-word gloss such as ‘proof’.¹⁶ Others, however, probably owing to the semantic development of the word, which we will explore below, add an adjective to strengthen its meaning: such as ‘infallible proofs’ (KJV) and ‘convincing proofs’,¹⁷ and F.F. Bruce’s weighty rendering with classical overtones ‘compelling tokens’.¹⁸ This nuance is already apparent in the passage between early, influential English translations. William Tyndale’s translation of the New Testament (1526) renders it as ‘many tokens’, which is followed by the more emphatic ‘manie infallible tokens’ of the Geneva Bible (1560) and ‘many infallible proofes’ of the King James Bible (1611). Louw and Nida’s lexicon also conveys this latter emphatic nuance: ‘that which causes something to be known as verified or confirmed—“evidence, proof, convincing proof”’.¹⁹ Accordingly, they render the phrase in Acts 1:3 through ‘by many convincing proofs’. BDAG also provides the same gloss. This emphasis is justifiable through an examination of key uses of *τεκμήριον* in works of antiquity that shed light on the historical development of the expression and its lexical values.

¹⁶ So F. Montanari, who includes Acts 1:3 for the definition ‘proof’ (*The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*, p. 2092). The Liddell-Scott-Jones does not signal Acts 1:3 as a reference for *τεκμήριον* (H. G. Liddell, R. Scott, and H. S. Jones [eds.], *A Greek-English Lexicon* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1996], p. 1768). Neither does Passow, *Handwörterbuch der Griechischen Sprache*, p. 1845. English translations using ‘proof’: NRSV, NIV, ESV. Likewise, one-word glosses in French, Italian, and German translations: *preuves* (NEG79; SEG21; Semeur; NBS; TOB 2010; Bible de Jérusalem 2013); *prove* (NR1994; CEI 2008); *Beweise* (Einheitsübersetzung 2016; Lutherbibel 2017; Menge-Bibel) and *Weise* (Zürcher 2007). Bauer’s influential lexicon (6th edn., 1988, column 1611) provides an overall gloss for earlier literature, ‘der überzeugende, durchschlagende Beweis’, and renders the phrase in Acts 1:3 with ‘durch viele Beweise’. Finally, no discussion is provided on *τεκμήριον* in *TDNT* (G. Kittel and G. Friedrich [eds.]; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976) or *PGL* (G. W. H. Lampe [ed.]; Oxford: Clarendon, 1961).

¹⁷ Possibly following the glosses proposed in BDAG (p. 994) and L&N (p. 340), these English translations propose two-word glosses: NRSV; NET Bible; HCSB; and NASB. Marguerat renders it with brio (p. 35): ‘une foule de preuves’. Similarly, one finds a variety of synonymous renderings in German, such as ‘durch viele sichere Kennzeichen’ (Schlachter 2000), ‘in vielen sicheren Kennzeichen’ (Elberfelder 1991), ‘überzeugende Beweise’ (NGÜ), and ‘in vielen Bezeugungen’ (Müncher 1998).

¹⁸ F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (rev. edn.; NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 28.

¹⁹ Louw & Nida, p. 340. They discuss *τεκμήριον* in the semantic subgroup ‘Well known, clearly shown, revealed’ within the broader domain: ‘Know’ (pp. 338–42).

SOME KEY USES OF ΤΕΚΜΗΡΙΟΝ IN WORKS OF ANTIQUITY

Before moving back some five hundred years to explore Herodotus' use of τεκμήριον, I will continue with a general survey of meanings from earlier periods that give particular attention to the meaning of τεκμήριον up until the time of Luke's writings in the latter part of the first century C.E. Following the treatment in Montanari's lexicon, nuances of τεκμήριον can be summarized by the following renderings in English: *sign* or *indication*; *proof*; thus, in rhetoric, a *demonstrative proof*, and in medical language a *symptom*.²⁰ Its historical development appears to be stable, keeping to the central notion of a marker or sign that points to something else. Additionally, the nuance of certainty communicated through τεκμήριον can be noted in writings as early as fifth-century historians Herodotus (2.13 and 9.100) and Thucydides.²¹

By the time of Aristotle's works in the fourth century, one can safely assume that τεκμήριον had reached the status as a *terminus technicus*.²² For example, Aristotle, in his *Rhetoric*, distinguishes τεκμήριον as a more dependable source of knowledge, a 'demonstrative proof', thus, stronger than other sources such as σημείων and εἰκός).²³ This nuance of certainty conveyed through τεκμήριον can be gathered from the first meanings provided in the lexicon LSJ: 'sure sign' and 'token' (p. 1768), and, for a later linguistic period, the lexicon BDAG (p. 994), similar to Louw & Nida, describes the word as 'that which causes someth. to be known in a convincing and decisive manner, *proof*'.

This historical development, as noted in works of history and rhetoric, is relevant to the occurrence in Acts 1:3 since Luke uses τεκμήριον in the context of a historiographical preface, thus in his

²⁰ Montanari, *Ancient Greek*, p. 2092. Beekes (p. 1459) derives τεκμήριον from τεκμήρασθαι and provides these denotations: 'sign, feature, emblem, proof, evidence, symptom'.

²¹ Thucydides often uses τεκμήριον δέ ('in proof of this'); cf. *Thuc.* 2.15.4; 2.50.2; 2.39.2.

²² For Aristotle's qualifications of evidence (especially τεκμήριον) marking a significant advancement in rhetorical works, see Kurz, 'Hellenistic Rhetoric', pp. 173–4, and, especially, W. M. A. Grimaldi, 'Semeion, Tekmerion, Eikos in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*', *AJP* 104 (1980), pp. 383–98.

²³ The LSJ (p. 1768) qualifies this point further: 'in the Logic of Aristotle, *demonstrative proof*, opp. to the fallible σημείων and εἰκός, *APr.* 70^b2, *Rh.* 1357^b4, 1402^b19, cf. *Phld. Rh.* I.369S.' On the historical development of the distinction between these three words, see Grimaldi, 'Semeion, Tekmerion, Eikos', p. 397 n. 12. Quintilian also refers to the rhetorical strength of τεκμήριον in the Greek tradition (*Inst.* 5.9.3).

own voice.²⁴ Also, given Luke's interest in other words that evoke divine activity, such as *σημεῖον* and *τέρας*, it is helpful to notice here how *τεκμήριον* adds rhetorical strength to his claim for Jesus' post-Easter appearances.²⁵ In short, expressions involving *τεκμήριον* were suitable for historians and orators to make their points more convincing. The link between historiography and rhetoric is well known, and illustrated well by Polybius' exhortation that true historians must know how to teach and persuade (*Polyb.* 2.56.11). Indeed, Mealand's lexical note confirms the continuity of Luke's use of *τεκμήριον* with previous literature. Mealand focused on the phrase *many proofs* and not only the word by itself. He also limited his research to Hellenistic texts and concluded that the expression was normal Hellenistic Greek.²⁶ Luke's use then reflected a standard and *specific* rhetorical expression used in various fields. This may be the reason why Luke chooses to use *τεκμήριον* here and not elsewhere. It fit the situation: it occurs in his voice and in the preface, which displays his rhetorical erudition.

With that basis, this discussion extends to occurrences of *τεκμήριον* (with and without *πολύς*) used in historiographical texts and in the context of mentions of the divine. This will help to explore the continuity of the expression, both lexically and rhetorically, and finally to grasp the affinities between the occurrences in Herodotus and Luke's writings.

Diodorus Siculus uses the phrase *τεκμήρια δ' ἔσεθαι τῆς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γενέσεως* in a quote of a prophet who meets Alexander the Great during a consultation of the oracle of Ammon in Siwa. The prophet of the god utters these words: 'The proof of his divine birth will reside in the greatness of his deeds; as formerly he has been undefeated, so now he will be unconquerable for all time' (*Hist.* 17.51.3 [Welles, LCL 422]). This, of course, pleased the

²⁴ On the influence of rhetoric on ancient historiography, see A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies* (London: Routledge, 1988), and an examination of rhetoric in Polybius' work, S. Farrington, 'A Likely Story: Rhetoric and the Determination of Truth in Polybius' Histories', *Histos* 9 (2015), pp. 29–66.

²⁵ *σημεῖον* (77 times in the NT of which 11 in Luke and 13 in Acts), *τέρας* (16 times in the NT of which not one in Luke and 9 times in Acts, always as a pair with *σημεῖον*). Additionally, *τεκμήριον* in Acts 1:3 has an interesting parallel in *πίστις* in Acts 17:31, where, through Paul's voice, the notion of 'assurance' even 'proof' of a fact is communicated. In this instance, it also concerns the resurrection of Jesus.

²⁶ Mealand, 'Many proofs', p. 135. We will see below that *τεκμήριον* qualified by *πολύς* is also attested in classical texts and is normal classical idiom.

young king: 'Alexander was delighted with these responses. He honoured the god with rich gifts and returned to Egypt'.

Two other relevant occurrences of *τεκμήριον* in relation to the divine sphere are found in Flavius Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*. In Joshua's prayer (*Ant.* 5.39), Josephus reports the expression *διὰ πολλῶν τεκμηρίων ἐπηγγέλλου* to remind God the many proofs by which he had promised the conquest of the land.²⁷ Also, later in the same work (17.128), one finds *τεκμήριον* qualified by *ἐμφανής* ('evident', but without *πολύς*) and qualifying *παραστήσαι* (a parallel to Acts 1:3) to describe Antipater's plea for innocence hoping for divine support through *τεκμηρίοις ἐμφανέσι* ('clear signs').²⁸ In both cases, *τεκμήριον* is used in the plural, qualified by an adjective, and with the syntactical function of instrument.

Additionally, turning to the Septuagint, one finds three occurrences of *τεκμήριον* (3 Macc. 3:24; Wis. 5:11 and 19:13). Only the last occurrence refers to the divine sphere. There the writer reminds his readers that God had not punished sinners during the exodus from Egypt 'without signs being given beforehand in the violence of the thunders'.²⁹ The syntactical function of this phrase is also that of instrument in that God had sufficiently warned them *by way of prior signs*.

The four examples above and a search in the TLG database show that *πολύς* qualifying *τεκμήριον* enjoyed a long and continuous history between Herodotus and Luke.³⁰ Yet only a few

²⁷ The Greek text is taken from Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities, Volume V: Books 5–8*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray and R. Marcus (LCL 281; Cambridge: Harvard University, 1988), p. 18. Christopher T. Begg translates: 'through many proofs you kept promising' (Christopher T. Begg, *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary, Volume 4: Judean Antiquities Books 5–7*, ed. Steve Mason [Leiden: Brill, 2005], p. 11).

²⁸ Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities Volume VIII: Books 15–17*, trans. R. Marcus and A. Wikgren (LCL 410; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 430.

²⁹ The text in NETS is οὐκ ἄνευ τῶν προγεγονότων τεκμηρίων. The form of *τεκμήριον* is in the genitive plural following *ἀνευ* and qualified by a participle of *προγίνομαι*, but *πολύς* is absent.

³⁰ A TLG search shows that the two words often appear either directly juxtaposed or slightly separated in works between Herodotus and around the end of the first century C.E. For the words juxtaposed and in the dative plural, TLG shows five occurrences between Herodotus and Luke: Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. rom.* 1.90.2; *Lys.* 12.37; *Thuc.* 13.14; and Lysias, *Eratoth.* 51.2; *Orat.* 20.41b.32 (cf. C. Carey, *Lysiae orationes cum fragmentis*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae Digital Library* (M. C. Pantelia [ed.]; University of California, Irvine, CA; <<http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu>>).

occurrences are used in connection with the divine, similar to the occurrence in Acts 1:3.³¹ We now turn to the question about the uses of *τεκμήριον* in Herodotus' *Histories*, in particular the occurrence in Book 9.

TEKMHPION IN HERODOTUS' DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE OF MYCALE

Moving from Luke to Herodotus requires us to pay attention to lexical changes and to avoid introducing later meanings on the latter's texts. A survey of its seven occurrences in the *Histories* will help focus on the last occurrence in Book 9. Particularly noteworthy is that Herodotus always uses *τεκμήριον* in his own voice as narrator.³² This is further supported by the denominal (denominative) verbal form *τεκμαίρομαι* (*infer from*) which is used three of five times in Herodotus' voice as narrator.³³ Through these uses, we perceive, through his own voice, something of 'his cognitive process and use of signs'.³⁴ Herodotus' use of the first person is extensive throughout his work, so narrative asides are quite common. Even so, by using *τεκμήριον* in various locutions, he stresses his authority as a reliable historian having sufficient proofs or

³¹ The occurrence of *τεκμήριον* in 3 Macc. 3:24 (also dative plural with instrumental function, 'convinced by the evidence' [NETS]) provides a good syntactical parallel, but it is not used in conjunction with the divine. Wisdom 5:11 displays the singular in relation to the flight of a bird leaving no 'proof', which is helpfully restated but with *σημεῖον* 'sign' (NETS). A helpful, but much later, occurrence of *τεκμήριον* can be adduced from a line in Libanius' funeral oration over Emperor Julian (*Or.* 18.13). Here both *πολύς* and *τεκμήριον* are found in the dative plural: *τὸ τῆς φύσεως βασιλικὸν πολλοῖς καὶ μεγάλοις τεκμηρίοις ἐμηνύετο*. He uses the expression from a pagan perspective to support Julian's worthy personality as a royal: 'and the princeliness of his nature was attested by many notable signs' (Libanius, *Selected Orations*, vol. 1, trans. A. F. Norman [LCL 451], p. 287). Another later occurrence is found with *μέγα* in an inscription dedicated to Artemis: *μέγιστον τεκμήριον* (see *SIG* 867,37 [3rd edn.; W. Dittenberger (ed.); 4 vols. 1915–24; Leipzig: Hirzel, 1915]).

³² 2.13.1 (with *μέγα τεκμήριον*); 2.43.2 (with *πολλά μοι καὶ ἄλλα τεκμήρια*); 2.58 (no qualifying adjective in the locution *τεκμήριον δέ μοι*); 2.104.4 (with *μέγα ... τεκμήριον*); 3.38.2 (without *μοι*; *πολλοῖσι τε καὶ ἄλλοισι τεκμηρίοισι*); 7.238.2 (*μοι πολλοῖσι μὲν καὶ ἄλλοισι τεκμηρίοισι*); 9.100.2 (without *μοι*; *πολλοῖσι τεκμηρίοισι*).

³³ For *τεκμαίρομαι* in Herodotus' voice: 1.57.2; 1.57.9; 2.33.8; and not in his voice: 7.16.31; 7.234.3.

³⁴ A. Hollmann, *The Master of Signs: Signs and the Interpretation of Signs in Herodotus' Histories* (Hellenic Studies; Washington: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2011), p. 13.

inferences for his arguments.³⁵ In five of the seven occurrences of *τεκμήριον*, both singular and plural forms are used in a similar construction with the first-person singular pronoun in the dative case (*μοι*), for example, *τεκμήριον δε μοι τόδε* (only 3.38.2 and 9.100.2 do not have *μοι*). This construction is common in Classical and Hellenistic Greek having the pragmatic function of introducing evidence for a given question.³⁶ LSJ indicates that the independent clause *τεκμήριον δέ* can be rendered as ‘now the proof of it is this’ or ‘take this as a proof’ (p. 1768).³⁷ Similar to the definitions explored above, Powell’s lexicon to the *Histories* defines *τεκμήριον* as a ‘piece of evidence’ (p. 353). The seven occurrences of *τεκμήριον* evoke tokens of evidence that point to something else and thus support a claim on a given question.³⁸ Accordingly, when *πολύς* is used in four occurrences, additional rhetorical strength is added (2.43.2; 3.38.2; 7.238.2; 9.100.2; note also the use of *μέγα* in 2.13.1; 2.104.4).³⁹ This much seems clear. Let us now consider the last occurrence of *τεκμήριον* in Book 9.100.2.

The occurrence of *πολλοῖσι τεκμηρίοις* is located in Herodotus’ description of the battle of Mycale in Ionia, fought between the Greeks and the Persians in 479 B.C.E.⁴⁰ Here Herodotus offers to his readers still another example of divine intervention in the

³⁵ See S. Sheehan, *A Guide to Reading Herodotus’ Histories* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), pp. 118–9.

³⁶ For relevant references, see LSJ, p. 1768 and Montanari, *Ancient Greek*, p. 2092.

³⁷ See also Montanari (*Ancient Greek*, p. 1092): the word is used ‘parenthetically in Att. prose: *τεκμήριον δέ* and here is the proof’. See, for example, *Thuc.* 2.39.2 and *Demosth.* 20.10.

³⁸ Here are the renderings of the seven occurrences and the relevance to their passages: ‘an important piece of evidence’ for explaining the nature of Egypt’s geography, in particular its delta (2.13.1); ‘many other pieces of evidence’ for the claim that the name Heracles came from Egypt to Greek (2.43.2); ‘a piece of evidence’ for supporting the claim that Egyptians held public religious activities longer than the Greeks (2.58.1); ‘an important piece of evidence’ for claim that the Phoenicians learnt circumcision from the Egyptians (2.104.4); ‘by many other pieces of evidence’ to support the idea that people prefer their own customs to those of other peoples (3.38.2); ‘by many other pieces of evidence’ for the claim that Leonidas was the most irritating person to Xerxes (7.238.2); and ‘by many pieces of evidence’ to demonstrate divine intervention in the battle of Mycale (9.100.2).

³⁹ It is good to note that Herodotus does not always provide a list of supporting evidence in his use of ‘many proofs’.

⁴⁰ For a description of the battle and its overall significance, see J. P. Barron, ‘The Liberation of Greece’, in J. Boardman, N. G. L. Hammond, D. M. Lewis, and M. Ostwald (eds.), *The Cambridge Ancient History*, vol. 4:

human sphere.⁴¹ The point of Herodotus' discussion here is that the Greeks were so encouraged by certain divinely ordered signs that they were able to take on the Persians with greater audacity. Without these signs, victory for the Greeks might not have happened. Here is the text from Robin Waterfield's translation (*Hist.* 9.100):

The Greeks completed their preparations and set out towards the Persian lines. As they were advancing, a rumour sped its way to the entire army and a herald's wand was seen lying on the beach; the rumour, which spread throughout the ranks, was that the Greeks had defeated Mardonius' army in a battle in Boeotia. *There is plenty of convincing evidence that the divine plays a part in human affairs.* Consider how on this occasion, with the Persian defeat at Plataea and their imminent defeat at Mycale happening on the same day, a rumour of Plataea reached the Greeks at Mycale, boosting their morale and making them even more willing to face danger.⁴²

How then is τεκμήριον used here and what is the convincing evidence that Herodotus claims to have? The text in italics translates the sentence: δῆλα δὲ πολλοῖσι τεκμηρίοις ἐστὶ τὰ θεῖα τῶν πρηγμάτων. As in Acts 1:3 (and other texts noted above), the phrase has the function of instrument (again in the dative, but without the preposition ἐν).⁴³ This sentence illustrates well Herodotus' believing posture with regard to divine intervention throughout his work.⁴⁴ Classicists generally agree on this

Persia, Greece and the Western Mediterranean c. 525 to 479 B.C. (2nd edn., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 592–622, at 613–5.

⁴¹ For excellent treatments of divine involvement in the *Histories*, see especially G. Lachenaud, *Mythologies, religion et philosophie de l'histoire dans Hérodote* (Lille: Atelier reproduction des thèses, Université de Lille III; Paris: Diffusion H. Champion, 1978); John Gould, 'Herodotus and Religion' in S. Hornblower (ed.), *Greek Historiography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) pp. 91–106; T. Harrison, *Divinity and History: The Religion of Herodotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); J. D. Mikalson, *Herodotus and Religion in the Persian Wars* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); S. Scullion, 'Herodotus and Greek religion', in C. Dewald and J. Marincola (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Herodotus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 192–208; and V. Pirenne-Delforge, *Le polythéisme grec à l'épreuve d'Hérodote* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2020).

⁴² Italics added.

⁴³ An example of a Hellenistic text with τεκμήριον in the dative plural without ἐν can be found in Plutarch's *Aetia Romana*, 268A.2 (cf. Mealand, 'Many proofs', p. 135).

⁴⁴ For an illuminating treatment of this key aspect of Herodotus' work, see Harrison's chapter 'Miracles and the Miraculous', in *Divinity and History*, pp. 64–101.

point.⁴⁵ However, a question raised in various translations is whether Herodotus takes this opportunity to offer an interpretative aside, a type of metaleptic claim about divine activity in the human sphere. Or, perhaps, with less rhetorical punch, it only serves to introduce the following sentence about a few local divine manifestations. I think both elements are being addressed. The question hinges on the function of $\delta\eta$ in this phrase and the function of the adverbial expression that immediately follows $\epsilon\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$. The former element ($\delta\eta$) points back to the signs witnessed by the troops (in 9.100.1) and thus introduces the $\tau\epsilon\kappa\mu\acute{\eta}\rho\iota\omicron\nu$ phrase as an emphatic phrase. The latter element ($\epsilon\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$) functions as a causal connector ('as sure as', 'since') which introduces the following sentence that restates the first bit of evidence, its consequences for the Greek troops, as well as additional evidence in light of further research (in 9.100.2, i.e. confirmation of the day of the two battles; the proximity of Demeter's temples). The following reading shows the functions of these two elements: 'Indeed⁴⁶ the divine nature of affairs is manifest through many sure tokens,

⁴⁵ The majority of commentators of the *Histories* view Herodotus as a believing pagan. Some think that he is not so easily described as a religious person, pointing to certain expressions where Herodotus seems critical of religious practices or at least not committed to a particular religion. See, for example, the relevant sections in D. Lateiner, *The Historical Method of Herodotus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), pp. 189–210, and B. Shimron, *Politics and Belief in Herodotus* (Historia: Einzelschriften, 58; Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1989), pp. 26–57.

⁴⁶ Like other translators, Godley opts for 'now' instead of 'indeed': 'Now there are many clear proofs of the divine ordering of things...' (Herodotus, *The Persian Wars, Volume IV: Books 8–9*, trans. A. D. Godley [LCL 120; Cambridge: Harvard University Press], p. 1179). This tends to stress this phrase's function for introducing what follows. See also Andrea L. Purvis' translation which includes 'now' and 'indeed': 'Now there are indeed many clear proofs that the divine is present in what happens, and certainly one would be that on the date of the defeat at Plataea...' in R. B. Strassler (ed.), *The Landmark Herodotus: The Histories* (New York: Anchor Books, 2009), p. 714. Josef Feix's translation lacks the emphasis of expressions such as 'in der Tat' or 'tatsächlich' ('aber' not having the same rhetorical strength here): 'Die göttliche Fügung zeigt sich aber ganz offen in vielen Zeichen: gerade damals gelangte an demselben Tage...' in Herodot, *Historien, Griechisch-deutsch*, 2. Band, *Bücher VI–IX* (ed. J. Feix, 7th edn.; Sammlung Tusculum; Düsseldorf: Artemis & Winkler, 2006), p. 1253. The emphasis is also missing in the Italian translation of Herodotus by A. Colonna and F. Bevilacqua, *Le storie di Erodoto*, vol. 2, Libri V–IX (Torino: Unione tipografico-editrice Torinese, 1996), p. 691.

since at that time...'.⁴⁷ In contrast, Waterfield's translation above supports the interpretation that Herodotus wishes to make a general statement, but it does not show the emphatic link with the previous sentence (i.e. through *δη*). Flower and Marincola, however, rightly capture this 'emphatic narrator intervention' with these words: 'the divine element in [human] affairs is indeed evident by many proofs'.⁴⁸

Another reading may be that Herodotus uses the expression to introduce these specific examples of divine interventions, then and there. Tom Holland, for example, proposes this translation marked by the use of a colon: '...Indeed, here was just one of the many clear proofs of the role played by the divine in mortal affairs: that the disaster at Plataea and the one now threatening at Mycale should have occurred on the same day...' (p. 630).⁴⁹ The emphatic particle 'indeed' connects the sentence with the preceding ones, but the wording and punctuation (via the colon) appear to lessen the metaleptic force of the expression, accentuating rather local manifestations of the divine in Mycale.

Consequently, the context and the syntax suggest that the *τεκμήριον* phrase supports the whole, as a link between the two parts of the paragraph about divine participation in the battle. The first part provides evidence available to the soldiers that day (what *they* saw), while the second part offers further evidence that was adduced later through further investigation. As a part of Herodotus' rhetorical strategy, the aside with *τεκμήριον* highlights both the general (his own view of the divine) and the particular (specific manifestations of the divine).

Further examination of the first part, prior to the aside, reveals that Herodotus points out two *τεκμήρια*, one auditory (the report or rumour) and the other visual (the herald's staff). Although Herodotus does not explain the significance of the herald's staff,

⁴⁷ My translation. LSJ (s.v. *εἰ*, p. 481, VI) helpfully elucidates this particular construction by which *εἰ* introduces a causal and demonstrative clause 'in citing a fact as a ground of argument or appeal', thus having valences such as: 'as surely as' and 'since' (cf. also *Hist.* 1.60.3 and 5.97).

⁴⁸ Flower and Marincola, *Herodotus: Histories*, Book IX, p. 278.

⁴⁹ This understanding is made clear in Marincola's notes on the passage: 'A later rationalized version of this incident has Leotychides invent the story that the Greeks had been successful at Plataea in order to encourage his men at Mycale to fight bravely. There is no value in this. H. obviously likes the story because it proves again "that the hand of God is active in human affairs"'. Herodotus, *The Histories* (trans. A. de Sélincourt; revised ed. with 'Introduction' and notes by J. Marincola; London: Penguin, 2003), p. 680 n. 45.

he simply invites his readers to observe how the staff was a visible and tangible sign of the source of the report that spread throughout the Greek troops. The logic goes like this: How is it possible that the Greeks in Mycale could know about the victory in Plataea *on the same day* if it had not been of divine origin?⁵⁰ The herald's staff confirmed the report, and the Greeks believed that they could count on divine assistance that day. Indeed, the pragmatic effect, which was divinely intended in Herodotus' point of view, was immediate. The Greeks were inspired to enter into battle with greater boldness. This is understandable, since the victory in Boeotia was against Mardonius, one of Persia's leading generals. In addition, the battle in Plataea was highly strategic in the overall scheme of the war and was a cause for great concern for the Greek troops in Mycale (cf. 9.101). But thanks to the manifestation of these *τεκμήρια*, the Greek army could reasonably infer that if a miracle could happen there in Plataea and against Mardonius, why not also in Mycale?

This, however, is not all the evidence. Herodotus bolsters his argument in the following paragraph after the aside with *πολλοῖσι τεκμηρίοις*. The second part of Herodotus' exposition (9.100.2) provides more information that supports his interpretation. He goes on to restate the significance of the first pieces of evidence, and then he provides additional support for his claim. Sometime after the battle, upon investigation, the Greeks were able to confirm that the two battles took place on the same day, Plataea early in the day and Mycale in the afternoon (9.101.2). Was this divinely orchestrated? Herodotus expects his readers to receive this as the correct interpretation since he summons another *τεκμήριον* that involves divine participation in 9.101.1. Both battles in fact took place near temples of Demeter of Eleusis. This is no light matter in light of the whole of the *Histories* as well as her reputation in the Greek world for defending her territory.⁵¹ As with the herald's staff, readers must infer from this *τεκμήριον* what this

⁵⁰ Mardonius had planned to send a signal to the king about victory in Athens via a relay of beacons of fire (see 9.3). Perhaps the Greeks could have done the same for the victory in Plataea? Herodotus does not offer this here as a possible source of knowledge. For ancient and modern explanations of Herodotus' chronology and realization of the two battles, see W. W. How and J. A. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus: with Introduction and Appendixes*, vol. 2: Books V–IX (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936), p. 331, and Flower and Marincola, *Herodotus: Histories*, Book IX, p. 277.

⁵¹ For the perception of Demeter in the Greek world and her presence in the *Histories*, see D. Boedeker, 'The View from Eleusis: Demeter in the Persian Wars' in E. Bridges, E. Hall and P. J. Rhodes (eds.), *Cultural Responses*

indicates about the divine. Read or heard in an isolated manner, this could have left readers unresponsive. Not so for those readers or auditors who have noticed the reminders scattered throughout the nine volumes that the gods were seeking vengeance against the Persians for previous crimes of sacrilege committed against temples and sanctuaries.⁵² Thus, fortunately for the Greek army, divine retribution fell on the right day. The battle in Mycale was another example of how the divine displays its power in human activities and shapes the destiny of individuals and nations. Therefore, that which the Greek army perceived through the signs, Herodotus spelled out for his readers through an explicit narrative aside and supported by pre- and post-battle *τεκμήρια*. Again, the import of this episode goes beyond this local event. Rather, it underscores and fleshes out—close to the end of the ninth volume—a general principal running throughout the entire work: ‘The unlikely or impossible events of Mycale prove not only divine intervention in this instance but more broadly the possibility of divine intervention at any moment in human history: divine involvement in human affairs is clear by many proofs.’⁵³

CONCLUSION

I conclude now by reviewing some of the main points of the discussion in order to underline the relevance of πολλοῖσι τεκμηρίοις in *Hist.* 9.100.2 for the occurrence of ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις in Acts 1:3. It is perhaps helpful to remove any lingering doubts about the pertinence of Herodotus for Greeks and Hellenistic Jews in the first century C.E. (in short, someone like Luke). Along with many other authors from the classical period, historians such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon were still widely read throughout the Mediterranean basin. The well-known comments of Cicero and Plutarch about Herodotus are ex-

to the Persian Wars: Antiquity to the Third Millennium (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 65–82.

⁵² For example, Cleomenes became insane due to a variety of sacrileges such as his bribing the Pythia, ravaging the shrine of Eleusis, or taking refuge in the temple of Argus (6.75.3), and the Persians are punished by Poseidon for desecrating his temple (8.129).

⁵³ Harrison, *Divinity and History*, p. 68. This theological underpinning is capped off by the story of the vengeance of the hero Protesilaus on Artayctes for his sacrilegious acts (*Hist.* 9.120.1–2).

cellent τεκμήρια!⁵⁴ While Cicero refers to Herodotus as ‘the father of history’ (*De legibus* 1.5), Plutarch rebukes the great historian for his malice and slander and makes it his project to expose him as a liar (*Her. mal.* 854E, 855A). Additionally, an ancient inscription in Herodotus’ hometown of Halicarnassus immortalized him as ‘the prose Homer of history’.⁵⁵ Given his celebrity, it is plausible that the author of Luke and Acts read or heard parts or all of the *Histories*. This is a sufficient bridge for textual and cultural transmission between Herodotus and Luke. Consequently, this key occurrence of τεκμήριον in the *Histories* is plausibly a Herodotean allusion or echo.

On the basis of the contexts of the two texts, New Testament lexicons and commentaries—as well as discussions on the reception of Herodotus—should give more attention to this parallel for the following reasons. First, on grammatical and syntactical grounds, the two phrases are almost identical. Set aside the differences in orthography and Luke’s use of the preposition ἐν, τεκμήριον is in the plural form, used as a dative of instrument, and is qualified by πολλός. Thus, we have similar possible renderings (respecting their contexts), for example, *by many (sure) tokens* or *by many (convincing) proofs*.

Second, rhetorically, the two phrases are employed in the narrative voice, not by characters in the narratives. In both literary contexts, the narrators use τεκμήριον to reinforce their statements. By Luke’s time, this phrase, and others involving τεκμήριον, could be recognized as a *terminus technicus* as a part of a writer or orator’s repertoire. In addition, the adjective πολλός, not always found in such expressions, also adds rhetorical strength to the two phrases. Moreover, Luke’s emphasis on the well-founded nature of his narrative echoes his use of ἀσφάλεια in the first preface to indicate ‘the certainty of the things about which you [Theophilus]

⁵⁴ See these publications about the outstanding yet mixed reception of Herodotus: J. A. S. Evans, ‘Father of History or Father of Lies: The Reputation of Herodotus’, *Classical Journal* 64 (1968), pp. 11–17; L. M. Sawlivich, *The Reception of Herodotus from Cicero to Plutarch* (PhD diss., Harvard University, USA, 1991); J. Priestly, *Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture: Literary Studies in the Reception of the Histories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); and J. Priestly and V. Zali (eds.), *Brill’s Companion to the Reception of Herodotus in Antiquity and Beyond* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

⁵⁵ For the historical background of this last description, see Priestly, *Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture*, pp. 187–219. This understanding of Herodotus as a prose writer is found as early as Aristotle’s *Poetics* (1451b), where Herodotus is mentioned as a historian.

have been instructed' (Luke 1:4).⁵⁶ His aim is to provide a narrative that is well grounded and surefooted.

Third, theologically, both authors use the phrase to support their beliefs in divine activity in the human sphere. To study their proofs of the divine helps us to enter the worlds they describe on their terms and thus to explore their manner of including the divine in human history. In this sense, both historians write with prophetic or oracular authority. For Herodotus, divine involvement is a significant part of his theological interpretation of the Persian Wars as one of the main causes for this international geopolitical conflict. For Luke, the God of Israel had continued his plan of salvation through Jesus the Messiah, whose resurrection proved and validated his mandate to Israel and the world. Despite their different world views, both authors support their beliefs *by many proofs*. As a part of Luke's theological project, and perhaps also as a part of historiographical one-upmanship, he may have used this expression polemically to surpass Herodotus' and other writers' claims in order to underscore the obsolescence of pagan belief and practices highlighted throughout Acts.⁵⁷

Fourth, historiographically, by appropriating this rhetorically robust expression, Luke wishes to display, at the outset of his second volume, more of his historiographical erudition. Although both of his prefaces are concise, they hold their own before other prefaces of history in the Greek tradition and display Herodotean influence.⁵⁸ Similar to other historians, Luke certainly wanted to demonstrate his ability to exemplify the values of tradition and innovation. Thus, in light of the historically grounded distinction

⁵⁶ See LSJ for various nuances of *ἀσφάλεια* in Greek literature, including *certainty* in Luke 1:4.

⁵⁷ Moreover, Luke's own literary project proposes an international and ontologically rooted metanarrative that aims at replacing pagan metanarratives such as the one displayed in Herodotus' *Histories*. For Luke then, in the light of the divine interventions through Jesus and his apostles, God was showing the world that pagan world views and practices were, from then on, effectively obsolete. This element is summarized well in Paul's conclusive statement in Athens: 'Therefore, whereas God has overlooked those times of ignorance, he now commands all people everywhere to repent...' (Acts 17:30 my translation).

⁵⁸ Like the first preface in the Gospel of Luke, the preface of Acts is generally considered a historiographical preface that imitates eminent prefaces of the past, including Herodotus' brief preface. See, for example, John Moles, 'Luke's Preface: The Greek Decree, Classical Historiography and Christian Redefinitions'. Yet Moles' proposal has recently been challenged by Z. K. Dawson, 'Does Luke's Preface Resemble a Greek Decree? Comparing the Epigraphical and Papyrological Evidence of Greek Decrees with Ancient Preface Formulae', *NTS* 65 (2019), pp. 552–71.

between *τεκμήριον* and *σημείον* (a word consistently used by Luke), Luke employs the strongest word possible to insist on the certainty of Jesus' post-Easter activity in word and deed. Historians and rhetoricians knew this and could have appreciated its force. Consequently, the use of *τεκμήριον* by Herodotus in Book 9 is the closest textual artefact to *ἐν πολλοῖς τεκμηρίοις* in Acts 1:3. *Τεκμήριον*, what else? It was the word to use. Luke shows once again his proficiency in the language of professionals. His choice certainly would have resonated with Herodotus, satisfied Aristotle's standards, and pleased Polybius for rhetorical skill.