



# **In Praise of Christian Origins: Stephen and the Hellenists in Lukan Apologetic Historiography (Emory Studies in Early Christianity)**

*Todd Penner*

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Almost all scholars look to Acts 6:1-8:3 as providing the bedrock of early Christian tradition. The incident between the Hebrews and the Hellenists are understood to reflect real historical and theological problems in the early Jerusalem community, demonstrating the Hellenist role as a historical bridge between Jesus and Paul. Penner's study challenges the fundamental assumptions of this approach. Penner emphasizes the rhetorical and moral dimensions of ancient historiographical theory, especially the centrality of narrative and plot, the use of vivid description, the application of comparison using various type-scenes, and the role of speeches in terms of characterization and the presentation of narrative style.

Todd Penner is the Assistant Professor of Religion at Austin College and the co-editor with Caroline Vander Stichele of *Contextualizing Acts: Lukan Narrative and Greco-Roman Discourse*.

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