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The Apologetic revisited:

Exonerating Luke from an Ancestral Exegetical and
Theological Burden

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1. *Introduction to the theme of the Dissertation*

From the sixties of the last century, the double work of Luke has been holding a key position in the New Testament field. This interest has partially to do with its subject matter and length. Glancing through the bibliographies of works in the field of New Testament exegesis, one sees immediately that much attention has been bestowed upon it. It would not be an overstatement to say that the writings of Luke have taken over the interest and domination, which the letters of Paul enjoyed until the fifties of the last century, and is second only to the scholarship involved with the historical Jesus.

To this field of proficiency and excellence should be added the political importance and contribution of Luke: the double work of Luke is, with the exception of the book of Revelations, the most political work of the New Testament.¹ It is therefore not surprising that for several generations of scholarship of Luke-Acts, it has been ancestral paying a critical attention to the relationship between the imperial Rome and the Christian community, especially the Lukan community. This overarching attention is not only politically motivated, it also portrays the trajectories of a judicial reality in the Roman world. The political and the judicial interests of this attention are grounded on the very interest of Luke in his works. His political sensitivity to realities of his time is unmistakable as he took time to map out an effusive height of synchronisms, which he worked out between the dates in the imperial history and in his history of salvation.² This observation, which characterises the whole work of Luke from the gospel to Acts, is too obvious that it does not require any extraordinary diligence. A partial consequence of this interest is the question regarding the opinion and attitude of Luke or his dramatic figures to the mighty Rome, to the powerful and to the socially well to do of his time. Does he present a wonderful picture of these powerful or are they suspiciously presented? Besides, an antecedent to this discussion is the widely held ancestry of an appeasement theology or the Apologetic as presenting an interpretative matrix, which helps in presenting a summary of the attitude of Luke to the Roman authorities. The Lukan position is often presented as Apologetic, which comes from the Greek concept of defence. This concept, with the attendant verbs, appears often in the Acts of the

¹ Confer for instance H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 251-267. J.B. Green sees in the nativity presentation a subtle reference to the political situation of Jesus' time. Cf. J.B. Green, *Luke*, 132-135. On the other hand, M. Wolter sees no political insinuations in the titles given to Jesus in the proclamation of his birth. Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 128. In relation to the figure of Hannah in the presentation of Jesus, Heininger has observed that the refusal of Hannah to remarry after the death of her husband could be seen as a criticism to the laws of Augustus; *lex julia de maritandis ordinibus*, *lex julia de adulteriis*, *lex papia poppaea*. These laws wanted to promote the birth rate among the higher class of the citizenry and ordered the remarriage of widows of the higher caste of the Roman citizenry, failure of which attracted a financial punishment in the form of higher taxes. From the religious perspective of Luke, it suffices to maintain that a life dedicated to God is worthier than following the birth-rate politics of an Emperor. Cf. B. Heininger, *Witwe*, 159.

² Luke presents his historical narration with synchronisms: The birth of Jesus is presented as having taken place during the census ordered by Augustus in Lk 2:1-7. Further, Luke presents John the Baptist as beginning his ministry in the fifteenth year of the principate of Tiberius as Pontius Pilate was the governor of Judea (Lk 3: 1-3).

Apostles (*ἀπολογειν*: Acts 19:33; 24:10; 25:8; 26:1, 2, 24; Lk 12:11; 21:14; *ἀπολογία*: Acts 22:1; 25:16). There is however, a difference between the Apology as was used in the early Christian church and the Apology of the biblical science. In the early church, following the example of the defence of Socrates, the Apologetic developed into a literary genre, while in the New Testament studies it expresses the wishes of the early Christians to express and live out their conviction especially in relation to other religions.³ The tenet of this Apologetic position in the New Testament is a political stating that Luke undertakes a friendly portrayal of the Roman power apparatus, in order to show them that the new faith is far from being a danger to the Roman politics.⁴ As such, Luke's intention is an *apologia pro ecclesia*. This Apologetic, which partially seems to capture the essence of the writings of Luke, has blinded scholars from approaching the Lukan writings from a different perspective, namely from the perspective of finding out the aversions of Luke to the powerful.⁵ Unfortunately, not much has been done in this direction, which explains partly the motif of this study.

2. *The justification of the study*

As I have already stated, a typical stand in the research of Luke-Acts is the conviction that Luke wrote his double work as an Apology for the new Christian faith, which invariably justifies the theory of an appeasement theology.⁶ In order to show that the Christian faith is not a threat to the political entity and imperial system of Rome, he presents the local and imperial officials in a positive way. He not only presents the innocence and harmlessness of the Christians but also portrays the actions of the Roman officials as exemplary since they procure safety and benefaction for the Christians. This position of Luke to the Roman system runs from the gospel to the Acts. In both works, there is a series of court narratives with Roman officials being the important decision takers while the Jewish officials help out, especially in matters of Religion. Both the arraignment and cross-examination of Jesus before Pilate (Lk 23:1-23) and the long judicial process against Paul ending with his arrival in Rome (Acts 21:15-28:31) have one thing in common: In both court trial processes, the Jews raised their accusations,

³ For more on this cf. H. Omerzu, *Imperium*, 27.

⁴ For more than 270 years ago, Heumann proposed the thesis that the two volumes of Luke were written as an apology for the Christian faith, which was gasping for survival in the Roman imperial period. This apology was meant to be presented to a magistrate or state official with the name Theophilus. Cf. C.A. Heumann, *Dissertatio*, 483-505. Some opine that Luke wrote an apology for the Christian faith to be presented to the Roman empire, while others maintain that his works are an apology with a different recipient: An *apologia pro imperio* to be presented to the church.

⁵ As regards the topic of the dissertation, it is important to call to mind the idea of Plümacher concerning the seeming unanimity of the agreement regarding the "... Vorhandensein einer *politisch-apologetischen* Tendenz bei Lk." E. Plümacher, *Acta-Forschung*, 51.

⁶ Cf. H. Conzelmann, *Theology*, 137-144; W. Radl, *Paulus*, 325-345; M. Tolbert, *Ideas*, 446; T. Reese, *Theology*, 62-65; M.C. Cano, *Prozeß*, 210-221; J. Ernst, *Portrait*, 61-73; F.F. Bruce, *Acts*, 2598.

while the Roman officials clearly state the innocence of the accused.⁷ Besides, the Christian community never proved to be a danger to the Roman state because it never had any political ambition.⁸ Even when there seemed to be a sign of rebellion, it normally came from the Jewish citizens. Last but not the least, the Roman Empire, represented by the local officials, protects a Christianity seeking survival in the midst of Jewish foes represented by the religious aristocrats.⁹ Even in Acts, Paul hopes to get a favourable judgement from the emperor, which explains his appeal to him (Acts 25:11). Also at his arrival in Rome, the Roman state was never a hindrance to the preaching activity of Paul (Acts 28: 30-31).¹⁰ With these arguments and observations, the institution of the Apologetic as a central and not a peripheral theme of the Lukan double work seems to have its foundation on solid, thorough and well thought out biblical arguments.¹¹ On the background of these findings, therefore, it sounds absurd and redundant trying to find out the criticisms, which Luke meted on the political elites since they would not seem to exist. Many literatures on this topic, which support the above Apologetic thesis, make it almost impossible to undertake a work of this nature, which tries to systematise the subtle Lukan criticisms on the powerful. What I am attempting is a proverbial swimming against the current, an *Aspektverschiebung* or as M. Ebner would say, a project “...gegen den Strich der exegetischen Auslegungstradition...”¹²

3. *Some research works in the course of years*

There exist two tendencies in the domain of the Apologetic argumentation, which portray an apparent disunity of this apologetic syndrome. Is this Lukan apologetic an apologetic for the empire to the church (*apologia pro imperio*) or the apologetic for the church to the Empire? According to Vernon Robbins, Luke worked from the perspective of establishing a lively and positive symbiosis between Christianity and the Roman Empire. The intentions of both institutions do not contradict each other: “This means that Christianity functions in the

⁷ Erika Heusler has argued in this direction. She opined that Luke presented Jesus as a nationale of a conquered territory, who was accorded the privileges of a Roman citizen. According to her, Luke is working with a political apologetic, which exonerated the Romans from all guilt, not only in the Gospel, but also in Acts: Pilate, Felix and Festus did everything possible to assure the accused the maximum protection of the Roman legal processes, while the chief priests and the scribes assume responsibility for the death of Jesus. Cf. E. Heusler, *Kapitalprozesse*, 259-266.

⁸ C. Burchard, *Zeuge*, 184: “Derjenige Aussagenkomplex, der sich am ehesten an (heidnische) Außenstehende richtet, ist die politische Apologetik, die einerseits auf Differenzierung des Christentums vom faktischen Judentum aus ist, andererseits auf die Feststellung, dass der christliche Glaube Staat und Gesetze Roms nicht verletzt und daß die Behörden das jedenfalls zu Paulus’ Zeit auch anerkannten.“

⁹ Cf. J.B. Tyson, *Death*, 138: “The Pharisaic block of Jesus’ opponents is not present at the crucial moment. The foes of Jesus who are to blame are those who formed the priestly block.”

¹⁰ For a summary and an exegetical foundation of these arguments for an appeasement theology, cf. F.W. Horn, *Haltung*, 203-212.

¹¹ J. Weiss has already noticed this phenomenon in 1897 in his book, “Absicht und literarischer Charakter der Apostelgeschichte”.

¹² M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 129.

domain of the Roman Empire, and this empire is good because it works symbiotically with Christianity. Roman laws, correctly applied, grant Christians the right to pursue the project started by Jesus, and the goals of Christianity, rightly understood, work congruently with the goals of the Roman Empire.”¹³ Walaskay supports this claim with his opinion: “Far from supporting the view that Luke was defending the Church to a Roman magistrate, the evidence points us in the other direction. Throughout his writings Luke has carefully, consistently, and consciously presented an *apologia pro imperio* to his church.”¹⁴ He even maintained that Luke has neutralised some aspects of the anti-Roman sentiments with the intention of portraying the positive aspects of the Roman rule.¹⁵ In the last century, the thesis of *apologia pro ecclesia* has, before the Second World War, enjoyed a careful analysis by Cadbury, leading to the reality that the Rome-directed apologetic has continued to thrive, which eventually gave rise to the theory of *religio licita*.¹⁶ Luke, according to Cadbury, had different aims for the compilation of Luke-Acts. One of these aims was the concern of proclaiming the loyalty of the church to the political institutions.¹⁷ He, however, offers an appendage regarding the certainty of his thesis: “Our knowledge of Roman law on these points and of Rome’s treatment of the Christians in the first century is too uncertain for any assurance.”¹⁸

3.1 *Conzelmann: Redaction criticism in Luke and the Apologetic*

After the Second World War, a renaissance in the redaction critical school of the Lukan scholarship began with the person of Conzelmann and with his classical piece in redaction criticism, *Die Mitte der Zeit*. He took over the apologetic line of those before him, however, with the observation that the Lukan apologetic was prompted by the very realisation that the church was still at its very beginning and had the wonderful prospect of still enjoying many years of existence. As such, the clarification of its status and position becomes highly imperative, not only in relation to the Roman state, but also to Judaism.¹⁹ From this perspective, this overarching enterprise of clarifying its status is historical, as well as genetic and theological. As a result, the Lukan apologetic is not only an internal endeavour, but also an external enterprise.²⁰ The aim of the internal apologetic was to work towards the reconciliation of the different schools in Christianity and to define its relation to Judaism, while the external apologetic was deeply political defending the church before the state. The apologetic in relation to Judaism is independent of the political apologetic to the state. In addition, Conzelmann, while accepting the political apologetic, maintained however, that Luke was not interested in making an appeal for the toleration of Christianity, but in appealing to the state to allow

¹³ V.K. Robbins, Luke-Acts, 202.

¹⁴ P. Walaskay, Rome, 64.

¹⁵ Cf. P. Walaskay, Rome, 64.

¹⁶ Other notable adherents of this theory include Foakes-Jackson, Kirsopp Lake and B.S. Easton.

¹⁷ Cf. J. Cadbury, Luke-Acts, 308.

¹⁸ J. Cadbury, Luke-Acts, 308.

¹⁹ Cf. H. Conzelmann, Luke, 137.

²⁰ Cf. H. Conzelmann, Luke, 148.

Christianity to enjoy her rights under the Roman law.²¹ For Conzelmann, Luke's apologetic tracks a trajectory through Luke-Acts and consists of his emphasis on the disinterest of the church in political matters, starting from John the Baptist and continuing into the ministry of Jesus and the early church.²² Instances of this non-political stance include the non-political reason for the arrest and imprisonment of John (Lk 3:19), the non-political programme of the sermon of Jesus (Lk 4:16-19), the encouragement given to the apostles to bear witness to kings and governors in Lk 21:12-15 because "...to confess oneself to be a Christian implies no crime against Roman law."²³ In Acts, according to Conzelmann, this tendency is evidenced in 10:1 where the first pagan to be admitted to the faith is Cornelius, an official of the Roman state. Further, in 16: 35-39 Luke writes of the Roman citizenship of Paul.

However, a consequence of this apologetic syndrome is to fathom the length at which the early Church was actually persecuted. Conzelmann has seen the Lukan church as an *ecclesia pressa*, which made this apologetic necessary. Karris deposits his doubt on affirming the first century church as a victim of imperial persecution, on the ground of the futile effort involved in finding evidences for such persecutions.²⁴ One can at most say that the Jews were very instrumental to the Roman persecutions of Christians.

It is worth noting, however, that this apologetic euphoria does not carry all commentators of Luke-Acts, in as much as certain works on Luke-Acts have attempted a shift from this ancestry. Lukas Bormann, for instance, has propagated the concept of the "Verrechtlichung" in the study of Luke-Acts.²⁵ Such a concept, while not completely neglecting the apologetic thesis, would open another horizon for the study of Luke-Acts. He summarises this concept as "die Tendenz eines Autors, Überlieferungen mit rechtlichen Details anzureichern, Vorgänge innerhalb juristischer Kategorien zu interpretieren und juristische Problemstellungen in den Erzählablauf zu integrieren".²⁶ With this method, Luke was able to adapt his work to the interest of the reader, inasmuch as court and trial episodes are veritable means of generating tension in ancient Rome.²⁷ Bormann supports his claim with these instances: A. The numerous occurrences of situations, in which legal matters are of immense importance. B. The right of the Roman nationality of Paul evidences a crucial change in the way he was treated by the officials. In addition, this right of his nationality determines the structure of the trial from Acts 22:25. C. The legal relation of Paul to Tarsus and Rome is insinuated at the beginning, only to be treated fully in the course of the portrayal. D. There was no other

²¹ Cf. H. Conzelmann, Luke, 142-144.

²² Cf. H. Conzelmann, Luke, 138-144.

²³ Cf. H. Conzelmann, Theology, 140.

²⁴ Cf. R.J. Karris, Communities, 84-86.

²⁵ L. Bormann, Verrechtlichung, 283-311.

²⁶ L. Bormann, Verrechtlichung, 287.

²⁷ Cf. L. Bormann, Verrechtlichung, 304. The interest of Luke in forensic trials is an evidenced fact in the Lukan scholarship with textual evidences. For more on these forensic trials confer J.H. Neyrey, Passion, 84f. For the Book of Acts confer A.A. Trites, Importance, 278-284.

martyrdom after that of Stephen and there was no punishment after the episode in Philippi.²⁸

Bormann portrays Luke as being aware of the use of the Jewish apologetic in political matters in her surroundings through diplomacy. The possibility of this high level of diplomacy is however lacking in Luke, which he however, substitutes with the “Verrechtlichung” of his sources. This thesis of the “Verrechtlichung” not only helps Luke to exemplify the innocence of Jesus and Paul from the Roman legal perspective, it also serves as a reaction to the expanding popularity of the Roman power and legal system. However, a careful evaluation of this concept would locate it at the periphery of the apologetic, inasmuch as it “...greift auf Erfahrungen und Traditionen der jüdischen Apologetik in der hellenistisch-römischen Welt zurück.”²⁹

3.2 *Yoder and Cassidy: Protagonists of a defiant Luke*

Contrary to the mild assessment of Bormann are some exegetes, who see in Luke a theologian that writes against the power structure of the Roman Empire. Their wish is to sharpen the horizon for the forms, functions and consequences of the Roman power structure as experienced in the social, military, economic and of course political control mechanisms and the reactions of the people.³⁰ One of them, John Howard Yoder, has presented several theses in his book, *The Politics of Jesus* just to show that the Lukan composition is far from being influenced by an appeasement theology. Yoder is fully convinced that the ministry of the Lukan Jesus was not only a social but also an economic and political revolution. Working from the perspective of the jubilee proclamation in Lk 4:18-19, a text which forms the fountain of his arguments, and from the conviction that Luke’s year of favour refers to the jubilee year of the Old Testament, Yoder argues that the presentation of Jesus’ mission equals “a visible socio-political, economic restructuring of relations among the people of God.”³¹ With this singular conviction of Jesus, he constitutes a danger for the Roman political elites.³² The Lukan texts dealing with the annunciation and the Lukan presentation of the preaching of John the Baptist arouse socio-political hopes, especially with the martial tone of the Magnificat in Lk 1:52-53. In addition, the political tone of the birth narrative accentuates the political expectations and features of Jesus with known ancestries within the Jewish religious expectations: Bethlehem, the city of David; the angelic “peace on earth”; the unannounced but anxious appearance of Simeon and Anna garnished with a considerable height of liberation hopes. The sermon of Jesus on the plain (Lk 6:20-49) takes into account the social reality of his hearers. This sermon is revolutionary in as much as it propagates an ethic not founded on the principles of natural law. Jesus forms a new community of

²⁸ Notwithstanding the ingenuity and artistry of Bormann, it must still be mentioned that the martyrdom of James in Acts 12 and the intended murder of Peter, all with the collaboration of the Jews in the same chapter, are too conspicuous to be ignored.

²⁹ L. Bormann, *Verrechtlichung*, 311.

³⁰ Cf. H. Omerzu, *Imperium*, 28.

³¹ J.H. Yoder, *Politics*, 39.

³² Cf. J.H. Yoder, *Politics*, 50-52.

disciples with the awareness that it "... constitutes an avoidable challenge to the powers that be..." and at the same time introducing "... a new set of social alternatives."³³ The execution of Jesus is not only a political novelty owing to the irregularities, but also full of political insinuations because Jesus was crucified as the "king of the Jews". In not allowing himself to be made a king and in his accepting suffering, he allows the cross "... to loom not as a ritually prescribed instrument of propitiation but as the political alternative to both insurrection and quietism."³⁴ In consideration of the socio-political and economic significance of the mission of the Lukan Jesus, Yoder declares: "Jesus was in his divinely mandated prophethood, priesthood, and kingship, the bearer of a new possibility of human, social, and therefore, political relations."³⁵

Another instance of a very hard antipathy of Luke towards the Roman setup and establishment could be R.J. Cassidy's book, *Jesus, Politics and Society*, which could be described as an initial stimulus against the apologetic, although his theses are quite compatible with those of Yoder. He sees Luke as painting a picture of an uncompromising Jesus, who convincingly takes a critical posture to the powerful of his time. To these powerful, he also included the Jewish political as well as Temple aristocrats. With this singular stance, Jesus posed a threat to the Roman hegemony, not only by the criticisms meted on the political rulers, but also by his consistent contravention of social conventions, especially in sensitive economic matters involving wealth distribution. With a major emphasis on the fact that Jesus' teachings and actions are socially, economically and politically revolutionary, and that he refused to run over to the existing political order of his day, Cassidy concludes that the gospel of Luke is a potential threat to the political order of its ambits. From his political conviction, Luke presented a Jesus, who not only had a concern for the marginalised in the society, but also a Jesus, whose actions, teachings and convictions were a response "to the policies and practices of the political leaders of his time."³⁶ The outline of the summary of his thesis shows that Cassidy is against all that, which the adherents of the Apologetic have proposed as arguments for their convictions, namely, that Luke presents the Christians as a harmless and obedient group, that he exemplifies Paul as a Roman citizen and that Luke paints a positive picture of the Roman system. By being against the main theses of the apologetic adherents, it suffices to say that he sees these apologetic theses as inexpedient.

In order not to be drawn into the vast whole of his presentation, it would only be expedient to present a summary of the fourth and fifth chapters dealing with the political stance of the Lukan Jesus according to his view.³⁷ Many incidents in the gospel exemplify this stubborn and defiant stance of Jesus on political matters that could justify the purported collision between Jesus and the political aristocrats. Firstly, Jesus took the report of the Pharisees seriously that Herod wanted to kill him. However, he reacts by derogating Herod as a fox and succinctly points out

³³ J.H. Yoder, *Politics*, 47.

³⁴ J.H. Yoder, *Politics*, 43.

³⁵ J.H. Yoder, *Politics*, 62f.

³⁶ R.J. Cassidy, *Jesus*, 74.

³⁷ Cf. R.J. Cassidy, *Jesus*, 50-76.

that Herod will not effect any change on the course of his ministry (Lk 12:31-33). Secondly, Jesus thematised the massacre of the Galileans by Pilate (Lk 13:1-3). Thirdly, Luke attached much importance to the antagonism between the chief priests and Jesus (Lk 19:27; 20:19), which reached its zenith at the trial of Jesus, in which Jesus gives a sarcastic answer. Fourthly, the answer to the tax-thematic generates a tension in the clash between God and the Emperor, which ultimately led to the accusation that Jesus taught a refusal of tax payment (Lk 20:21-25; 23:2). Fifthly, the persecution of his followers at the hands of kings and governors is predicted by Jesus (Lk 21:12-15). Sixthly, the kings of the Gentiles are examples for the models of character, which Jesus abhors (Lk 22:24-27). Seventhly, notwithstanding the fact that Pilate declared Jesus to be innocent, four texts amplify the responsibility of Rome for the death of Jesus: Lk 23:24, where Pilate gave his verdict; Lk 23:38, where Pilate put up the inscription, "This is the king of the Jews": Lk 23:47, where it is noted that a Roman soldier stood beneath the cross and Lk 23:52, where Pilate is presented as having the jurisdiction over the body of Jesus.

On the basis of these portrayals, Cassidy sees in the Lukan Jesus a threat to the political stability of Rome, however, with a difference from the zealots: "Although Jesus did not constitute the same type of threat to Roman rule as the Zealots and the Parthians, the threat that he posed was, ultimately, not less dangerous. Unlike the Zealots, the Jesus of Luke's gospel does not make the overthrow of Roman rule the central focus of his activity,... Nevertheless, by espousing radically new social patterns and by refusing to defer to the existing political authorities, Jesus pointed the way to a social order in which neither the Romans nor any other oppressing group would be able to hold sway."³⁸

Cassidy undertakes a programmatic and exact overthrow of the quietist Jesus of Luke's gospel, which has been holding sway since the monumental work of Conzelmann. Cassidy's work is interesting, in as much as it tries to work out a comprehensive social and political implication of the Lukan gospel at a time, when all were interested in working out a compromising Lukan Jesus.

However, his work has certain shortcomings, in as much as he concentrates on recordings about the situation in Palestine of the early decades of the first century, while a lack of the knowledge of the later decades (eighties and nineties), in which the gospel was written, is accented. A profound interest in these later years would have given more substance to this claim of working with redaction criticism involving a committed portrayal of the Lukan Jesus. In addition, the notion that the disciples would appear before kings and governors (Lk 21:12-15) is not a typical Lukan documentation. Although it appeared twice in the Lukan documentation,³⁹ it also appeared in Mark 13:9-11 and in Matt 10:17-20. A redaction criticism worth its name would have recognised the existence of these parallel texts with the changes involved.⁴⁰ A consequence of this recognition

³⁸ R.J. Cassidy, *Jesus*, 79.

³⁹ For the next version, confer Lk 12:11-12.

⁴⁰ The difference of Lk 21:12-15 to the other texts is the absence of the Holy Spirit as the active defender and the strong emphasis given to the mouth and wisdom to be given to the apostles. The other version in Lk 12:11-12 does not have these differences in as much as the Holy Spirit

would have been to testify that this is not a typical Lukan text and as such is not suiting for a possible reconstruction of a Lukan stance. There is still a fact to be clarified on this issue of appearing before kings and governors. The presentation of Cassidy does not explicitly clarify the functions of these governors and kings in the lives of the apostles. This fact makes the criticism of Esler imperative,⁴¹ although this claim of Esler should not be overemphasised, in as much as it could be argued that Luke actually intended the evaluation of these officials not to be seen as lovers of the new faith, but as persecutors.

The argument of Cassidy regarding the historical reliability of Luke is wanting and very unconvincing. As a result, some of his findings are based on a minimal observation, which obviously warrants the question whether he is not making hasty conclusions.⁴² His thesis that Jesus was outspokenly critical of Herod is founded merely on Jesus' reference to Herod as a fox (Lk 13:32). Cassidy did not succeed in completely demystifying this apologetic theory, though his effort of swimming against this current of apologetic intervention is very encouraging and demands recognition.

All in all, one should not forget the intention of Yoder and Cassidy. The hitherto held ancestry in the Lukan scholarship that Luke-Acts shows the Christian faith as a politically harmless unit seeking a permanent rapport with the political Rome is seriously challenged. The Lukan documentations and presentations of Jesus are full of theses characterised by a high political brisance.

H. Frankemölle, although explicitly involved with the research of peace in Lukan composition, has indirectly contributed to the discussion of the relation of the Lukan Jesus to the powerful of his time. According to Frankemölle, Luke presents Jesus as a non-political messiah, who rides into Jerusalem as a prince of peace on a donkey. However, the Christological titles in the angelic announcement of the birth of Jesus are highly provocative, especially in the face of the persecutions of Christians under Domitian (AD 81-90). Frankemölle is convinced that Luke politicised not only the title "saviour", but also the other titles like messiah and lord, "indem er die Bedeutung dieses Kindes als Ort der Erfahrung Gottes für ganz Israel... der Bedeutung und dem Anspruch der römischen Kaiser entgegensetzt."⁴³ He sees the Christological concepts involved in Lk 2:11-14 as not only being theological but also political and running through the whole gospel.

Worth mentioning in the line of articles enunciating the criticism of Luke to the political setup is the one of C. Burfeind.⁴⁴ He sees an overwhelming criticism to

plays a very important active role in the defence of the apostles by teaching them what they would say.

⁴¹ Cf. P.F. Esler, *Community*, 207f. Prosecution was a matter of private individuals in the Roman litigation process. Appearing before kings and governors must not necessarily involve a conflict with them, since their job consists in adjudicating and not in prosecuting.

⁴² The undertaken comparison between Jesus and Mahatma Ghandi is lacking in its attempt at addressing the differences between them, in as much as it fails to work out the differences between these two personalities.

⁴³ H. Frankemölle, *Friede*, 91-97.

⁴⁴ Cf. C. Burfeind, *Paulus muß nach Rom. Zur politischen Dimension der Apostelgeschichte*. (NTS 46) 2000, 75-91.

the person of the Emperor in Acts 21-28 in as much as the Roman parastatals were confronted with teachings and preaching concerning the resurrected *kyrios* and the *basileia*, which refer neither to the Emperor nor to the Roman Empire but to the resurrected Jesus and the kingdom of God. With these two words, Luke waters down the absolutism of the Imperial cult since "... die Basileia Gottes das Imperium Romanum und der Kyrios Christus den Caesar ablösen wird."⁴⁵

3.3 *Works of recent years*

With P. Walaskay's *And so we came to Rome*, the New Testament scholarship experienced an "awkward" reception of the traditional and ancestral understanding of the political apologetic of Luke. He called his enterprise an "upside-down" of the traditional interpretation of Luke's political apologetic.⁴⁶ Hitherto, it has been the custom to argue that Luke tried a harmonious and loyal presentation of Christianity to the Roman state and structure. Walaskay goes a different direction maintaining that it is the intention of Luke to persuade his readers of the complementarity between the church and the state. He writes, "Far from supporting the view that Luke was defending the church to a Roman magistrate, the evidence points us in the other direction. Throughout his writings Luke has carefully, consistently, and consciously presented an *apologia pro imperio* to his church. Where he found anti-Roman innuendos in his sources he has done his best to neutralize such material and to emphasize the positive aspects of Roman involvement in the history of the church."⁴⁷ Accordingly, Luke was able to include materials that were politically damaging to the faith because he was not interested in an *apologia pro ecclesia*. Rather, he was undertaking the task of persuading the readers of the fact that "the institutions of the church and empire are coeval and complementary" and that "the Christian church and the Roman Empire need not fear nor suspect each other, for God stands behind both institutions giving to each the power and the authority to carry out his will".⁴⁸ Consequently, he argues that Luke, like other New Testament authors, was addressing the church, not Rome.⁴⁹ Faced with the task of explaining the numerous negative presentations of the Roman Empire by Luke, which depicts the unfavourable stance of Rome towards the new faith, normally carried out by Roman officials and magistrates, Walaskay replies: "...Luke consistently presents these magistrates against the backdrop of (1) jealous Jews who constantly pressure the authorities to act against Christians and (2) a durable imperial legal system that transcends local administrative waffling. None of these episodes depicts Rome as an enemy of Christianity. At worst, it can be said that the civil authorities succumbed to Jewish pressure; most often, they acted out of ignorance; and at best, the Roman judicial system protected the apostles from the chaos and caprice of an unruly mob."⁵⁰ Working with this conviction, Walaskay examined

⁴⁵ Cf. C. Burfeind, *Paulus*, 91.

⁴⁶ Cf. P. Walaskay, *Rome*, 64.

⁴⁷ P. Walaskay, *Rome*, 64.

⁴⁸ P. Walaskay, *Rome*, ix-x.

⁴⁹ Cf. P. Walaskay, *Rome*, 23.

⁵⁰ P. Walaskay, *Rome*, 23f.

certain texts in the gospel of Luke excelling the pro-Roman tendencies of these texts, which are normally considered as anti-Roman. Beginning with the nativity story (Lk 2:1-5) and the preaching of John the Baptist (Lk 3:10-14), he laid the foundation of a non-critical trajectory of the Lukan acceptance and assessment of the Roman political reality. This Lukan passion did not remain unshared since he allowed Jesus to partake of it. As such, Jesus is presented as accepting the Roman status quo, exemplified in the payment of tribute to Caesar (Lk 20:20-26) and in the discourse on kings and benefactors (Lk 22:24-27).

This *apologia pro imperio*, according to Walaskay, is motivated by the tendency among Christians to devalue the imperial wishes because of the envisaged catastrophic end of the Roman Empire and the overthrow of this Empire with the kingdom of Christ. Walaskay writes: “Luke may have been concerned to counter such anti-Roman sentiment in order to help the church survive in the given political order.”⁵¹

An objection to the idea of Walaskay could be articulated thus: There is no documented evidence in the writings of Luke, which could have insinuated the idea that the Christian community of Luke adopted a negative and provocative stance towards the Roman Empire. The reader of the double work is not availed of this knowledge. As such, it would be absurd supporting an unfounded speculation with the fervent hope of the catastrophic end of Rome. There is no doubt that the fervent hope of the Parousia was instrumental in moulding the faith of Luke’s community, which invariably effected the reaction of Luke. However, it should only be seen in its proper category as a help in time of uncertainty regarding the unexpected delay of the second coming. There is no evidence that this necessary help in the time of anxiety should be seen as curbing or curtailing the excess of apocalyptic vigour or zeal. In addition, the question of the intended presentation of the relation between Rome and Christianity must be revisited. If it were in Luke’s intention to present a rosy treatment of the Christian community by the Roman officials, he would have given himself more pains to avoid the detailed presentation of the ferocious act of Pilate (Lk 13:1). Besides, the officials, Felix and Festus, would have received a better profile than they did, which would invariably have nothing to do with self-centeredness, corruption and deception. Acts 24:22-27 is very informative in this regard. Although Felix made Paul’s condition in prison bearable, he however proved to be a corrupt officer: He purposely postponed the trial of Paul hoping to get the statement of Lysias (Acts 24:22). In addition, he was expecting a financial gratification from Paul and at the same time hoping to do the Jews a favour by remanding Paul in custody. His successor, Festus could help to save Paul from the assassination attempt (Acts 25:3) by not complying with the wish of the Sanhedrin, who had hoped that Paul should be transferred to Jerusalem. He, therefore, placed Paul under custody in Caesarea (Acts 25:1-8;21). Festus noticed that the allegation of the Jews was nothing political (Acts 25:18), but at worst religious allegations, which either proved difficult to ascertain (Acts 25:7), or do not fall under his authority (Acts 25:19f). Although Festus had upheld many times that Paul was innocent, he was

⁵¹ P. Walaskay, Rome, 65.

still looking for information for a letter, which would enable Paul to see the Emperor, since Paul had appealed to him. However, an appeal to the Emperor without any antecedent condemnation and allegation is not only absurd, but also an unusual judicial procedure. With his position and office, he could have made a decision, which could have saved Paul many unnecessary problems. However, he wanted to please the Jews by allowing Paul to appear before the Sanhedrin (Acts 25:9), a process which could have ultimately meant Paul's death. This certainty motivated Paul to appeal to the emperor (Acts 25:11). To exonerate himself from the plight of Paul with the argument that he should appear before the emperor since he appealed to the latter (Acts 25:12c) is a flimsy excuse aimed at exonerating him from this deception.⁵²

In the same line, Klaus Wengst painted in his book, *Pax Romana*,⁵³ a politico-apologetic picture of Luke. Hoping to contribute to the discussion on peace as presented by the New Testament by asking questions "... historisch konkreter und theologisch reflektierter",⁵⁴ he presented the *pax romana* as the political peace reigning during the time of Jesus and the New Testament writers. In addition, he is convinced of the fact, that there is no homogeneity regarding the position of Jesus and the early church to the political powers. In the light of this assumption, he exonerated other evangelists, especially Matthew and Mark, from the yoke of friendship to the ruling class and joined in the choir of many theological voices criticising Luke for his apologetic approach and stance. According to him, in the gospel of Luke, "findet sich so gut wie keine negative Aussage über Rom und seine Repräsentanten; sie werden vielmehr in einem ausgesprochen günstigen Licht dargestellt."⁵⁵ In almost ten pages (pp.112-121), he took pains to articulate in all details the positive presentation of the Roman officials and parastatals in the double work of Luke, which has partly been undertaken by Walaskay. Soldiers, the guarantors of the *pax romana*, appear often in the gospel of Luke, however, not as an aggressive and military force. They are rather presented as being responsible for the maintenance of order.⁵⁶ To exemplify this observation, he names the centurion Cornelius in Acts 10 and the unnamed centurion, on whose behalf the elders of the Jews intervened for the healing of his servant in Lk 7:3-6. With this singular Jewish intervention from the perspective of Wengst, Luke "...

⁵² Regarding this alleged favourable presentation of these Roman officials by Luke, H. Omerzu took time to make a balanced observation: "Im Hinblick auf die Frage der lukanischen Apologetik ist zu betonen, daß Lukas dabei auch für Paulus nachteilige Maßnahmen der Beamten nicht übergangen hat. ... Lukas zeichnet die römischen Behörden also keineswegs uneingeschränkt positiv,... (und) kritisiert ... das Verhalten des Festus offen als unrechtmäßigen Gunsterweis gegenüber den Juden. Auch die wohl ebenfalls historische zweijährige Haftverschleppung durch Felix führt er ungeschönt auf dessen korruptes Wesen und dessen Bestechlichkeit zurück." H. Omerzu, *Prozeß*, 504-507. W. Stegemann argues in the same direction pointing out the absurdity involved in the defence of this theory. Cf. W. Stegemann, *Synagoge*, 32.

⁵³ Klaus Wengst, *Pax Romana. Anspruch und Wirklichkeit. Erfahrungen und Wahrnehmungen des Friedens bei Jesus und im Urchristentum*. München 1986.

⁵⁴ K. Wengst, *Pax*, 11.

⁵⁵ K. Wengst, *Pax*, 112.

⁵⁶ Cf. K. Wengst, *Pax*, 112.

vermittelt... geradezu den Eindruck herzlichen Einvernehmens zwischen einheimischer Bevölkerung und fremder Besatzung.”⁵⁷

He articulates the theological and political cleverness of Luke in exonerating the Roman officials and Pilate from the guilt of the condemnation and execution of Jesus. The exoneration of the Roman setup is more palpable in the presentation of the tribulations of Paul. The Roman power structure is responsible for Paul’s long journey as a prisoner to Rome, although Luke wanted to make other circumstances responsible. Luke makes the Roman officials appear as Paul’s helpers and saviours, although they were actually those who killed him.⁵⁸ The implication of this observation is fatal and has a far-reaching consequence for the appraisal of the Lukan documentation of the trial, crucifixion and death of Jesus: “Den Tod Jesu konnte Lukas nicht einfach ebenso übergehen wie den des Paulus. Da er ein Evangelium schreiben wollte, mußte er ihn darstellen. Wie er dabei die Römer aus der Verantwortung für die Hinrichtung Jesu und aus der Durchführung der Exekution heraushält und dafür andere einschiebt, ist ein literarisches Kabinettstück, aber historisch und theologisch eine Ungeheuerlichkeit.”⁵⁹ Although not explicitly written, however, it would not be out of concept to read from the writings of Wengst, that he is well convinced that Luke could have left the death of Jesus undocumented, if that would only help him attain the aim of presenting the Roman officials in a positive light.

He sees the high social status of Luke and his audience as a reason for this apologetic posture and attests Luke a profound ignorance of the real situation. Since he was experiencing and judging the situation within the *pax romana* not from the perspective of an involved but as a withdrawn observer from an elevated social status just as the others involved in the historiography of his days, he was bound to be ignorant of the real situation. He presented the result of this withdrawn evaluation thus: “Sie verleitet ganz offensichtlich dazu, vom Zentrum ausgehende Gewalt zu verdrängen und nur die >>Sonnenseite<< der römischen Wirklichkeit wahrzunehmen. So wird der dominierenden Macht das von ihr beherrschte Feld überlassen, indem Konflikte möglichst grundsätzlich durch die immer von neuem wiederholte Erklärung ausgeschlossen werden, daß man selbst auf jenem Feld nichts zu bestellen habe. Das ist der Preis, den Lukas für die Eintrittskarte in die große Welt zu zahlen hat.”⁶⁰ However, Wengst attests Luke a minimal rate of statements that could be considered as being critical of the Roman power structure. Striking is however that these statements have only to do with the period of Jesus that is quite different from the time of the church. For the present, which is the time of the church, Wengst summarises: “Aber welche positiven Erfahrungen Lukas auch immer gemacht und welche guten Absichten er gehabt haben mag, die Reproduktion der Wirklichkeit der Pax Romana, wie er sie im Evangelium und in der Apostelgeschichte darbietet, gelingt ihm doch nur unter

⁵⁷ K. Wengst, Pax, 113.

⁵⁸ Cf. K. Wengst, Pax, 121.

⁵⁹ K. Wengst, Pax, 121.

⁶⁰ K. Wengst, Pax, 127.

Ausblendung der in ihr geübten Gewalt. So aber wird Gewalt nicht unterbrochen, sondern überspielt.”⁶¹

The idea of Wengst that it is very difficult to see any negative statement about the Roman power structure in the double work of Luke is wrong. One only needs to read the Magnificat, Lk 13:1; 19:41ff; Acts 4:25 and 24:26 in order to appreciate the high level of criticism meted on the powerful. It is however obvious that the appraisal of Wengst would be one-sided, since a comprehensive appraisal of Luke is not intended but a partitioning of Luke to a phantom-construct without any effort towards taking cognizance, not to talk of understanding the centre of the Lukan theology. One can only say that Wengst failed in his ambition of questioning historically. One can at most say that he wanted to verify his already formed claims concerning the writings of Luke.⁶²

Eckhard Plümacher who has done much to explore the historiography of Luke-Acts,⁶³ is worth mentioning. About ten years ago, he updated his ideas about the historiography of Luke, which however is of immense importance for our topic. He articulates his view thus: “Zu jener Geschichtsschreibung indes, die einer der Hauptströme der hellenistisch-römischen Historiographie gewesen ist, möchte ich Lukas unbedingt zählen: zur tragisch-pathetischen Historiographie, die man allerdings... besser als mimetische oder sensationalistische Geschichtsschreibung bezeichnen sollte.”⁶⁴ To the important elements of this mimetic or sensational historiography belongs the longing, “auf Wirkung bedacht zu sein und es deshalb mit der historischen Wahrheit nicht sonderlich genau zu nehmen, wenn die Gestaltung einer fiktiven Wirklichkeit der emotionalen Beteiligung des Lesers förderlicher zu sein schien als ein Bericht nur des tatsächlich Geschehenen.”⁶⁵ For Plümacher, the Lukan presentation of the trials of Paul serve as an instance: “die Erzählung vom Jerusalemer Komplott der Juden gegen Paulus und dessen Rettung durch die zu diesem Zweck die Hälfte ihrer Jerusalemer Garnison aufbietenden Römer – all dies verrät sich durch das bewußt Spektakuläre der Darstellung als gleichfalls dem Bereich der *τερατεία* zugehörig.”⁶⁶ However, Plümacher is convinced that this mimetic historiography was meant for those on the middle or even on the lowest cadre of the social setting. The possible consequence could be the rejection from those who were literate.⁶⁷ Summarily, Plümacher maintains that Luke liked this historiography, in as much as it possessed “... ein Geschichtsbild mit deutlich apologetischen Zügen.”⁶⁸

Anna Janzen articulated her staunch conviction of the Lukan Apologetic from the perspective of peace. In her book published in 2002, *Der Friede im lukanischen Doppelwerk vor dem Hintergrund der Pax Romana*, she presented Luke as one

⁶¹ K. Wengst, Pax, 131.

⁶² For a detailed critical and very negative appraisal of this work of Wengst cf. G. Lüdemann/H. Botermann, Pax, 390-398.

⁶³ Cf. E. Plümacher, Schriftsteller, and his article “Apostelgeschichte”.

⁶⁴ E. Plümacher, TEPATEIA, 67.

⁶⁵ E. Plümacher, TEPATEIA, 72.

⁶⁶ E. Plümacher, TEPATEIA, 83.

⁶⁷ Cf. E. Plümacher, TEPATEIA, 89.

⁶⁸ E. Plümacher, TEPATEIA, 90.

who not only treasured the politics and judicial system of the *pax romana*, but also entertained no aversion to the economic gains of this system. Luke, according to her, praises the representatives of the *pax romana* for their correct behaviour, especially with forensic issues: Pilate tried to set Jesus free (Lk 23:1-5, 13-25), the soldiers did not play any crucial role in the crucifixion of Jesus (Lk 23:36), the arrest of Paul presented them as his protector (Acts 21:27-23:35), and the trials of Paul was a prototype of the Roman judicial system (Acts 24:1-26:32).⁶⁹ Luke distinguished between the political and the private spheres.⁷⁰ Accordingly, Jesus' kingdom does not transcend the private sphere, which should be seen as the Christian community,⁷¹ while the emperor is the political ruler.⁷² As such, it is not necessary detaching the kingdom of God from the kingdom of the emperor. The kingship of Jesus is founded on peace, which made him not to transgress the Roman laws. To the non-Christians, Jesus is a king of peace, who has nothing to do with violence, revolution and terrorism. In addition, Christianity is not an anti-Roman movement and the imperial cult is, as such, not a problem for Luke.⁷³

This presentation of Janzen is not a new contribution to the discussion of the Apologetic in as much as her presentation of the Lukan Apologetic tallies with that of Conzelmann and the views of Walaskay and Wengst.⁷⁴ However, her insistence on some themes is commendable. Notwithstanding her apologetic background, she summed up a negative thesis that could actually be speaking against her ideas: "Ein weiteres Problemfeld bezieht sich auf die sozialwirtschaftliche Komponente der Pax Romana. Vom Wohlstand der Pax Romana konnten hauptsächlich die Oberschichten profitieren und ihren Reichtum in Frieden genießen, während die Unterschichten größtenteils ihren Lebensunterhalt in Armut bestreiten mussten. Lukas dagegen lässt Jesus ein Friedensprogramm... vorstellen, bei dem die unteren Schichten einen sozialen Ausgleich schon in der Gegenwart erhalten werden ... und beurteilt dabei die Wohlhabenden besonders kritisch."⁷⁵ Her conviction that the imperial cult did not present any problem for Luke is better left uncommented, although her observation, that its intensity in the Lukan works is nothing in comparison with that of the Revelation, is correct. The fact that Luke presented the birth of Jesus as having taken place during the reign of Augustus and the beginning of the ministry of John during the reign of Tiberius should not be taken from its face value as affirming the principles of the system of the *pax romana*. Why should one not see these pieces of information as keys to a critical evaluation?

3.4 *A shift in the appeasement paradigm*

P. Esler, although not an explicit proponent of the apologetic theory, develops and propagates a theory in his book, *Community and Gospel in Luke-Acts*, which is

⁶⁹ Cf. A. Janzen, Friede, 11.

⁷⁰ Cf. A. Janzen, Friede, 252.

⁷¹ Cf. A. Janzen, Friede, 247.

⁷² Cf. A. Janzen, Friede, 252.

⁷³ Cf. A. Janzen, Friede, 252.

⁷⁴ Cf. H. Conzelmann, *Theology*, 137-144.

⁷⁵ A. Janzen, Friede, 12.

not far away from the ambits of the apologetic theory. He abandons the *religio licita* theory outrightly, because of the impossibility "...to impute to the author of Luke-Acts a purpose in his work which could have brought no advantages to much of his community..."⁷⁶ He argues that the main intention of Luke in the construction of Luke-Acts was the sociological principle of legitimation, which has to do with legitimating Christianity to fellow Christians.⁷⁷ One encounters an internal phenomenon that regulates the relationship of Luke to his audience or community. Luke found a situation "...where the members of his community, who were mainly Jews and Gentiles (including some Romans) who had been associated with synagogues before becoming Christians, some of whom were rich and some poor, needed strong assurance that their decision to convert and to adopt a different life-style had been the correct one."⁷⁸ As a result, Luke must have had developed legitimatory strategies, which ultimately took the sociological and ethnic make-up of the Lukan community into consideration. This legitimatory strategy is easier in relation to the Christian Jews, who had formerly attended the synagogues. Luke needed only to reactivate the loyalties for the Jewish customs, which they had largely forsaken.⁷⁹ This strategy explains the reason for the inclusion of materials, which continually and stubbornly assert that Jesus and Paul had not breached the Roman law. From the background of legitimatory strategy and working with the conviction that there were quite a good number of Romans in the Lukan community, this recurrent tenor serves to reassure these Romans in the Lukan community serving the empire in a military or administrative capacity "that faith in Jesus Christ and allegiance to Rome were not mutually inconsistent."⁸⁰ These Romans, although Christians, had not broken with Rome. As such, it requires a lot of historical diligence to legitimate Christianity for them and to convince them that they are a part of this community, although the Roman governor of Judea had executed Jesus. It is, therefore, of immense necessity for these Romans that Luke stresses, that Jesus and Paul carried on and finished their mission without contravening the Roman laws. That Pilate, Felix and Festus personally went a different direction could be explained as a personal irregularity, which has nothing to do with the Roman law and disposition. Legitimizing Christianity to these Romans involved just the insinuation "that the Roman system which they served was not opposed to Christianity *per se*, even if individual Roman officials had occasionally treated Christians unjustly."⁸¹ The story of Naaman, according to Esler, served as a scriptural authority for these Romans that conversion does not necessitate withdrawal from public life. Besides, it helped to reassure them that it was possible to be a part of this system without getting actively involved in the cultic sacrifices.⁸² Concisely, the pressure arising from the

⁷⁶ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 214. He arrives at this conclusion after a thorough survey of the financial and fiscal reality of the time in question.

⁷⁷ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 16.

⁷⁸ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 16.

⁷⁹ Cf. P.F. Esler, *Community*, 217.

⁸⁰ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 210.

⁸¹ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 217.

⁸² Cf. P.F. Esler, *Community*, 219.

relationship of the Roman Christians to the state is an avenue to an understanding of the *raison d'être* of the Lukan writings. He therefore concludes: "In responding to these pressures, Luke reshaped Gospel traditions in the service of a particular community at a particular point in history."⁸³

There is no doubt that Esler has done a wonderful work in threading another route in the understanding of the motivating factors for the Lukan documentation. In him and with his writing, the relationship between the Lukan community and the ruling system of the time receives a different foundation. The question concerning the relationship between legitimation and apologetic remains, however, unanswered, more especially as a distinction from *religio licita*. Is it not worthwhile speaking consequently from *religio licita*, in as much as the legitimisation of the Christian religion tantamounts to telling these Romans that Christianity is loyal to the Roman state and does not present a danger to it? If Luke's legitimacy strategies aim at presenting Christianity as good to Christians, why is this legitimation not a defence? If it is a defence, why can it not be called an apologetic? I think, it would only involve making a shift from the literary genre and as well pointing out that this apologetic is an internal and not an external enterprise. Interestingly, Esler undertakes a cursory analysis of the word *ἀπολογέομαι*, pointing out that the six occurrences in the works of Luke (twice in the gospel and six times in the Acts of the Apostles) are used differently. In the Acts of the Apostles, he maintains that the expression concerns an external defence, while in the gospel (Lk 12:11; 21:14), "...Luke... introduced the exact notion, not found in the other synoptists..."⁸⁴ This meaning, which is typically Lukan, concerns Christians being assisted in making a defence of their belief. This analysis notwithstanding, the conclusion of Esler is unimaginably striking: "Luke is reassuring his audience... that at the appropriate time they will be able to defend themselves against hostile charges. This is legitimation, not apologetic."⁸⁵ From every indication, Esler seems to understand apologetic only in its relation to apocalyptic. However, Christian apologetic means for the author not only the defence but also the positive presentation of a particular case, done with the hope of rendering a good service to the Christian community. One undertakes such a venture hoping to present the reliability of the Christian community and its teaching. Notwithstanding Esler's dissociation of his thesis from apologetic interpretations, apologetics and legitimation, as presented by Esler, are closely related.

Secondly, the idea of Esler concerning the Romans needs to be questioned. There is no gain denying the fact, that there were many Romans, who played important and active roles in the Gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles. Beginning with the centurion of Capernaum (Lk 7:1-10), it runs through the centurion at the crucifixion (Lk 23:47) and the centurion Cornelius (Acts 10) and ends with the proconsul of Cyprus, Sergius Paulus (Acts 13:6-12) and Titius Justus (Acts 18:7). However, is that enough to postulate a theory, which has a far-reaching

⁸³ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 219.

⁸⁴ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 218.

⁸⁵ P.F. Esler, *Community*, 218.

consequence for an understanding and evaluation of the beginning of the Lukan enterprise? That some Roman officials were presented as converting to the faith does not necessarily indicate nor imply the presence of many Romans in the Lukan community. The assumption that the presence of Roman citizens in the communities of Paul suffices for their existence in the Lukan communities is not at all plausible. Besides, it is not convincing that Roman officials, serving as prototypes, would determine the direction and intention of the works of Luke. If it were so, would one not have expected that this Roman constitution come to bear on the internal organisation and occurrences of and within the Lukan community? The documentation of the misunderstanding between the Hebrews and the Greeks in the Jerusalem community could serve as an example (Acts 6:1). A question that will remain unanswered is why these Christians should be convinced of the innocence of Jesus and Paul at all.

On the other hand, if, as Esler points out, the derailments of the few Roman officials, under whom Jesus and Paul had to suffer, were mere *Randerscheinungen*, what arguments does he provide for the negative and unfavourable presentations of the Roman system? It remains essentially impossible differentiating between the Roman system and its representatives. This theory is unconvincing in as much as it would be futile pointing out that these Romans came to know of the unjust crucifixion of Jesus under Pilate only after they must have converted to Christianity.

4. *Relevant biblical texts for the Dissertation-theme*

The texts considered above give a clue to the enormous scholarship, which this apologetic interest has motivated in the course of history. Notwithstanding this traditional belief concerning the favourable attitude of Luke to the ruling class, it is the aim of the dissertation to highlight the criticism of Luke to the Roman setup and to the powerful as a more promising approach to a better grasp of Luke, an enterprise championed by Cassidy. Irrespective of the contrasting opinion, the dissertation works with the thesis that Luke criticises the powerful caste of the society of his time. He does that however, in different ways, and at times in such a subtle manner, that this criticism is only noticed at a closer look and preoccupation. The aim of this dissertation is therefore a decoding of these subtleties in matters of ruler criticisms.

The theme of the dissertation partially explains the tremendous height of interest, which the works of Luke have been enjoying recently. In addition, the prospect of sustaining this interest is very encouraging among New Testament scholars. This interest is not without reasons. One can easily say that the political question of power and the institution of Christology as a viable alternative to or as comfort for the ruling system run through the whole fabrics of the work of Luke. The annunciation of Jesus begins with a message full of political insinuations. That Jesus will take over the throne of his father David and that his reign will never know any end are already signs of an immanent progressive criticism meted on the powerful, who are projected as subjugating Israel.

The Magnificat (Lk 1:46-55), one of the poetic hymns set within the matrix of the infancy narrative of Luke, is grouped as one of the passages that evidently portray

the distaste of Luke for matters of power and domination. The concern of Luke for the powerless, the underprivileged, the poor and the exploited is evident. The hymn actually has more to do with the rich. Notwithstanding the presence of the powerful in v.52a, not much is said regarding power. However, the consideration of power as avenue of being rich or the fact that the rich are also the powerful, the Magnificat offers the possibility of forming a comprehensible thought about the powerful in the theology of Luke. The revolutionary and martial tone of the change of fortune (vv 51-53) portrays an avenue to his intentions. Whether this hymn is a result of Luke's edition or it is his own creation, the height of his aversion for the powerful is palpable.

The political interest of Luke experiences a further treatment as it is well illustrated in the nativity story of Jesus (Lk 2:1-20). Although subtle in its criticism of power, it is nevertheless a masterpiece. This criticism is at the first look not manifest in this presentation. Luke, obviously aware of the immense weight of the political theology of his time, used a diplomatic as well as literary method to arrive at his theological intention making use of literary imageries and composition immanent in this Hellenistic culture and tradition for an easier acceptance and understanding of his theology. The affirmation that Jesus is not only the *σωτήρ* but also the *χριστός* and *κύριος*, is a contrary claim to the assumptions of an imperial cult that regarded Augustus and the consequent emperors as the saviour and redeemer of humanity. The acquaintance with the brutal intricacies involved in the tax politics of the Roman Empire, which motivated the census, helped Luke in the articulation of his theology. His intention in the documentation of the angelic message *ὅτι ἐτέχθη ὑμῖν σήμερον σωτήρ* is: Here and today is born the saviour and redeemer of humankind. This is however, a Christian counterclaim to the imperial propaganda involved in the celebration of the emperor. The very use of *εὐαγγελίζομαι* for the birth of a child strikes a bell in Hellenistic ears, who are accustomed to this vocabulary in relation to the imperial cult. For Luke, the redeemer is not the emperor resident in Rome, but the poor and weak child born in Bethlehem to a couple,⁸⁶ who could not even afford a room in the inn. The simplicity of the real redeemer is contrasted with the pomposity and affluence of a usurper.

A pericope that concretely deals with the theme of power and authority *ἐξουσία* is the scene of the temptation of Jesus by the devil (Lk 4:5-8). With a singular opportunity offered by this pericope, Luke lays a strong foundation for the formation of a theology against power and domination. Notwithstanding the motivation for the dislocation of this item of the temptation pericope, Luke portrays a power that makes one to assume the position of God as coming only from the devil. In the face of the offer of the authority over the inhabited world and the glory of this authority, Jesus faces the dilemma of bowing down for the devil in order to get this authority and its glory, or remaining faithful to God by being aware of his mission, however forsaking this authority of the devil as a consequence. This pericope provokes the question regarding the source of the worldly power and the question of whether all powers have their source in the

⁸⁶ Cf. M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 128.

devil. The answer to this question justifies an acquaintance with the social history of this age.

One of the many parables of Jesus is dedicated to this interesting aim of the Lukan theology. With the parable of the throne claimant (Lk 19:11-27), Jesus presents the normal track of the royal punishment and retaliation. With this text, Luke paints the picture and way of acting of a typical man of authority. A king justifies the fear and scepticism nurtured by his subjects by acting the very way they had expected. The theme of corruption and greed is also captured by this parable, insinuating that the worldly kings are corrupt and greedy. With the figure of the third servant, a paradigm in matters of sincerity and freedom is created. Zacchaeus finds in the third servant an eulogy for his action. The utmost brutality of this throne-claimant is portrayed with the word *κατασφάζειν*.

The undaunted posture of Luke in his endeavour to articulate his theological notions and convictions on power and domination is further portrayed at a very crucial period in the earthly life of Jesus, namely within the matrix of the last supper (Lk 22:30). Given in the form of a farewell speech or a testament, this pericope questions the *status quo* of the powerful as not fitting to be the ought in a Christian community. Asserting the difference between a Christian idea of leadership and the pagan understanding of hegemony, Luke presents with Jesus' indoctrination a palpable sum of instruction for the apostles (*Jüngerbelehrung*). The apostles were not only advised against seeking the honour that go with authority and leadership in accordance with the world's convention by allowing to be called benefactors,⁸⁷ but were also admonished to see service as the height of leadership. Only through service can true greatness be achieved and be achievable. The question in this dispute is ultimately revised in the answer, so that the question about who the greatest is transforms into the question about how the greatest should behave.⁸⁸ As a reward of this faithfulness in service as leadership, they are promised the lot, which Jesus received from his father, enabling him to judge and rule over the twelve tribes of Israel.

The second volume of Luke does not deprive him of this interest in the criticism of power and domination. Notwithstanding the neutral, or atimes the positive portrayal of the powerful in the Acts, the figure of Agrippa presents an example of the intoxication of power leading ultimately to a false evaluation and assessment of one's ability and disposition. Allowing himself to be seen as a god and therefore attempting to deprive God the honour due to him, Agrippa dies a mysterious death (Acts 12:20-24). With this death, Luke issues an example and a warning to the powerful: Having power and using it against God or as God is a dangerous idea. *Vis-à-vis* the persecution and execution of Christians, the

⁸⁷ Although the cult of benefactors has a very long history, its use became widespread in the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The title manifests a manifold use. It was applied not only to gods and heroes, but also to kings and public officials because of their contribution to the development of a cultural or ethnic group. During the classical period, it became a classical term of reference to denote a man concerned with the welfare of his fellow citizens. Cf. A.D. Nock, *Soter*, 725.

⁸⁸ Cf. H. Schürmann, *Abschiedsrede III*, 67-69.

historical figure of Nero is criticised in the figure of Agrippa. Agrippa dies the common death of all interested in the power and honour of God.

5. *Methodological approach*

A work of this intensity requires a clarification of the question of methodology, in as much as this question not only governs but also directs and at the same time limits any research in the study of Luke-Acts. The awareness of the complexity of the two-source theory that Luke used the Gospel of Mark, the Quelle, and a peculiar source (Sondergut) for his Gospel already gives a direction concerning the methodology of the dissertation. In the light of this knowledge, the use of the form-critical method, especially the redaction criticism,⁸⁹ becomes imperative, since the biblical scholarship is in possession of the Gospel of Mark, and the Quelle could be ascertained by highlighting the identical presentations in Luke and Matthew. All this is possible because of the literary interdependence among the synoptic gospels. The preoccupation with the text of the gospel of Luke with the view of its literary dissection as to ascertain what actually belongs to Luke, and what he borrowed from Mark and how all these traditions came to be one, is the function of the redaction criticism. In the course of this redactional critical method, it has been observed that Luke changed certain traditions in order to portray his own view. Redaction criticism preoccupies itself with the possible reasons for these changes. It helps to elucidate the theological concern of Luke after working out the differences and the identities with the other gospels. In addition, an analysis and interpretation of the Lukan use of sources in the Gospel could be guaranteed. Luke's ingenuity has to do with the wonderful combination of all these traditions in a literary unit, reforming his sources in an extremely creative manner and leaving definitely his personal stamp upon the final account.⁹⁰ However, Luke, as a historian, tried to present an exact account (*ἀκριβῶς*⁹¹ *καθεξῆς*) of the Jesus' events (*πράγματα*) aimed at the inspiration and the sustenance of faith.⁹² Convinced of the necessity of basing his theology on a historical fundament of the person of Jesus, he leaves no stone unturned in the examination of facts intended to lead to this faith. From this perspective, one could come to a better appreciation of the two-volume work of Luke. Based on this argument, it is better to study the Gospel and Acts together for a better analysis and evaluation of what one could call the theology of Luke. To this is

⁸⁹ For the methods of historical critical exegesis, confer especially M. Ebner/B. Heinger, *Exegese*, 347-381. For the discussion on redaction critical method confer §10 of this book, 347-379. Other relevant books are: W. Egger, *Methodenlehre*, where the redaction critical method is discussed in 183-194; T. Söding, *Wege*. The redaction critical method is discussed in 208-220; R.H. Stein, *Gospels*; J.R. Donahue, *Redaction*, 27-57.

⁹⁰ Cf. R.J. Cassidy, *Jesus*, 1.

⁹¹ Centuries before Luke, another historian and author Thukydides has claimed to have done the same thing: in his documentation of events, he has not done any thing on the principle of picking and choosing but on the principle of researching in a possible exact manner on the accounts of others. Cf. Thukydides I 22,2.

⁹² For more on Luke as a historian, cf. E. Plümacher, *Lukas, Historiker*, 2-8. Also: D. Rusam, *Lukasevangelium*, 187-192.

added a text-immanent structural analysis, which is very fundamental to any interpretation of this theology.

This important fact notwithstanding, a thorough and complete delineation of the sources of Luke for the Acts of the Apostles is elusive. The absence of identical works seems to prove that one has to adopt a completely different approach to Acts, namely that of seeing the composition of Acts as relying more on literary and historical ability of the author than on other sources, an observation noted by Dibelius more than forty years ago.⁹³ In other words, his gospel is an attempt to defend the Christian faith based on the historical person of the crucified Jesus, but supported with history-based data. The historical clarity of his narration in the Acts of the Apostles has contributed to this assertion regarding his integrity as an historian.

The problematic of source criticism in relation to Acts notwithstanding, redaction criticism seems to be the better instrument,⁹⁴ in as much as the weight of the Lukan view and profile is of much importance. The question asked is what Luke, and not Jesus, presents as political realities and what should be a political ought for him, since redaction criticism sees in the author an independent theologian, who presents his writings in the service of his theology.⁹⁵ This question concerns not only the Gospel, but also Acts, where Luke extends his work to include the effects of Jesus' life and teaching after his ascension, thus showing a profound ecclesiological interest. It becomes therefore expedient to study both works together in as much as the vocabulary, style and grammar betray their common authorship.⁹⁶ Consequently, care should be taken that any theological statement concerning the stance of Luke towards politics, politicians and the society should be supported by and come to bear on findings from both the gospel and Acts as much as possible.⁹⁷

⁹³ Cf. M. Dibelius, Aufsätze, 11.

⁹⁴ The choice of redaction criticism is because this method is interested in presenting the author as the final editor of the text or of the book, which invariably accrued from sources. There is no insinuation that he is the ultimate source of a written piece.

⁹⁵ Cf. U. Schnelle, Einleitung, 189.

⁹⁶ No New Testament scholar has succeeded in proving a different authorship of Luke and Acts in the history of Lukan scholarship.

⁹⁷ Notwithstanding this expectation, it must be pointed out that the Lukan presentation is not always consistent in the presentation of ideas and expectations. Initially, I pointed out that Luke criticises the ruling class. However, he does this in such a subtle manner that one must be very ready to read in between the lines. The fact that the different views concerning the relation of the Lukan Jesus to the powerful are rooted in the work of Luke serves as proof for the inconsistency of Luke in his presentation.

Luke is a narrative theologian,⁹⁸ in as much as he focussed a transmission of knowledge and faith through his narration. That involves invariably a well-projected and creative fantasy, which is selective in its projection, and at the same time effective in the demythologising of tensions and fallacies. The draft of his work suggests a profound knowledge of, and acquaintance with Hellenistic literary method, and his elite type of Greek gives his gospel a high literary and didactic quality and taste. Impressed by the accuracy of his historical references to officials in the then Roman empire, and by his close acquaintance with the customs and life of the inhabitants, the question regarding his relationship to these ruling classes becomes more imperative. These questions form the nexus of the political stance of Luke, which however should not be treated without a reference to the social questions bothering his community. The political scenes of the Roman setup are used for directives and corrections for the community to enable it to come to terms with the existent social problems. In this regard, there exists an interdependence of these areas.

The aim of redaction criticism lies in the complete capture of a writer's historical location and theological position. These complexities will come to bear on the trajectory of this dissertation. Care will be taken to avoid the ancestral mistake of many works in redaction criticism, namely, that of assessing the importance of the author for his community only from the theological perspective while ignoring his literary importance. This mistake reaches its utmost realisation by not paying attention to the possible parallels in the surroundings of the classical period and the New Testament period, which might have had a strong influence on him. These parallels in ancient literatures could enrich the findings of any work done under the auspices of redaction criticism. Accordingly, the importance of profane literatures, especially in the correct understanding of words that have a long tradition will be highlighted, supported by lexical investigations. With due attention paid to the historical and developmental changes and use of these words, beginning from the classical period and making their ways through the Old Testament to the New Testament, the meaning of these words for the audience of Luke will be fathomed. Only through this painstaking and rigorous method is a full appreciation assured. This step is imperative in as much as I am convinced of the idea of Darr in his profile-conjecture of the possible first reader of Luke: "The reader of Luke is thus a heuristic hybrid, a fusion of ancient and modern cultural

⁹⁸ When I regard Luke as a narrative theologian, no direct allusion to the present use of the word "narrative theology" in theological circles is intended, where story telling is seen as a means of the propagation of faith,. This sense is all the same not excluded. For Luke is exclusive that his narrative theology is not only confined in story telling, but also is a detailed history telling. However, it must be observed that Luke the historian became a self-conscious theologian as could be seen in his intentional mutation of certain historical facts in order to arrive at his theology. The resurrection narrative could serve as an example. Luke confines the resurrection event and appearances within Jerusalem in a rather surprising contrast to the impression given elsewhere in the New Testament that it occurred in Galilee. Luke is not always by a desire to show historical accuracy. In this regard, he is solely motivated by his theological concept of the role of Jerusalem in his history of salvation. His historical accuracy seems to be subservient to his theological thoughts and wishes. For more on Luke as a narrator, even when it has more to do with parables confer G. Sellin, *Gleichniserzähler*, 166-189.

horizons... The reader is a member of the late first-century Mediterranean world and lives by the cultural scripts and the social norms of that world. She or he knows basic historical, political, geographical, and ethnic facts about the Roman empire. Perhaps more to the point, the reader is at home in popular Greco-Roman literature. Luke-Acts was not written for a literary elite, but for those accustomed to low- to middle-brow fare like the romances.”⁹⁹

The theme of the dissertation involves political as well as social phenomena. As such, it is therefore expedient to throw light to the possible social situation and problems of the Lukan community, without insinuating a complete schematisation of the beginning of the Lukan double work arising from these problems and situation since that would be a futile venture.¹⁰⁰ That would amount to seeing the Lukan double work as belonging to the literary genre of the Epistles, where concrete situations and events warrant a letter.¹⁰¹ Luke’s double work will be used as a help to fathom the social setting of the Lukan community. Against this background, it is of utmost importance to work out the relationship between the Lukan community and the world represented by the ruling class. In addition, an interest in the community sociology of the Lukan community would be of palpable expedience. Ascertaining the sociological strata (poor and rich) of the aforementioned community would be an important key to an understanding of the Lukan interest, which runs through his work: “Viel deutlicher noch als Matthäus und Markus präsentiert der dritte Evangelist Jesus als Heiland der Armen, während sich im Gegenzug die Reichen scharfe Worte gefallen lassen müssen... Den Ehrentitel „Evangelist der Armen“ trägt Lukas also zu Recht; man könnte ihn aber mit demselben Recht auch den „Evangelisten der Reichen“ nennen, ...”¹⁰²

This observation is important for the dissertation, especially with the observation and the certainty that the socially rich could also be the politically powerful.

The dissertation is exegetical in as much as the methods of historical-critical exegesis based on the two-source theory or hypothesis are taken into consideration, especially the redaction critical method. In order not to make a banality out of the work of Luke, leaving its exegetical outcome as a contribution to comparative literature, biblical theological messages are given in the conclusion of each chapter presenting the wonderful exegetical findings as having had a practical meaning for the day to day life of the Lukan audience and community. Therefore, the conclusion of the work will occupy a section with the meaning and imports of the teachings and theology of Luke for the modern day reader as a minor contribution to a mild liberation theology concerned with working out theses for a peaceful coexistence. With this done, I hope that a decisive step in the achievement of the aims and intentions of Luke has been

⁹⁹ J.A. Darr, *Voice*, 259.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. M. Tolbert, *Hauptinteressen*, 346: “Als aussichtslos dürfte jeder Versuch gelten, die genaue Entstehungssituation des lukanischen Doppelwerkes zu erfassen.”

¹⁰¹ This impression has been given by Schmithals, who after analysing the situation of the Lukan community, saw it as the reason for the literary and theological work of Luke. Cf. W. Schmithals, *Apostelgeschichte*, 11.

¹⁰² B. Heining, *Option*, 195f. Of immense importance to this theme is the conviction of H.J. Degenhardt outlined in his book, *Lukas - Evangelist der Armen*.

taken. However, one can be sure that these intention and aim of Luke in the composition and outlay of his work cannot be completely captured in a single dissertation. This conviction, therefore, calls for more research on and more exegetical preoccupation with the theology of Luke.

1. *The Magnificat and the theme of Power (Lk 1:46-55)*

1.1 *Greek Text*

- 46a *Καὶ εἶπεν Μαριάμ,*
 b *Μεγαλύνει ἡ ψυχὴ μου τὸν κύριον,*
 47 *καὶ ἠγαλλίασεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ σωτήρῳ μου,*
 48a *ὅτι ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπείνωσιν τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ.*
 b *ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μακαριοῦσίν με πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί·*
 49a *ὅτι ἐποίησέν μοι μεγάλα ὁ δυνατός,*
 b *καὶ ἅγιον τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ,*
 50a *καὶ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ εἰς γενεὰς καὶ γενεὰς*
 b *τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν*
 51a *Ἐποίησεν κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ,*
 b *διεσκόρπισεν ὑπερηφάνους διανοία καρδίας αὐτῶν*
 52a *καθεῖλεν δυνάστας ἀπὸ θρόνων*
 b *καὶ ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς,*
 53a *πεινῶντας ἐνέπλησεν ἀγαθῶν*
 b *καὶ πλουτοῦντας ἐξαπέστειλεν κενούς.*
 54 *ἀντελάβετο Ἰσραὴλ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ, μνησθῆναι ἐλέους,*
 55a *καθὼς ἐλάλησεν πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν,*
 b *τῷ Ἀβραάμ καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.*

1.2 *English Translation*

- 46a And Mary said
 b my soul magnifies the Lord
 47 and my spirit rejoiced in God my saviour
 48a because he looked upon the humility of his handmaid / servant
 b Then behold from now all generations will bless me
 49a because the mighty did me a great (thing)
 b and holy his name
 50a and his mercy from generations to generations
 b For (to) those who fear him.
 51a He did power with his arm
 b he scattered the proud in the plans of their hearts
 52a He pulled the powerful from throne
 b and raised the humble
 53a He filled the hungry (with) good (things)
 b and the rich he sent away empty.
 54 He accepted Israel his servant remembering mercy
 55a just as he spoke to our fathers
 b to Abraham and his seeds forever.

2. *The context of the Magnificat*

The Magnificat has an important position in the Gospel of Luke. Situated within the annunciation narrative of the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, it represents the high point of Luke's narrative and brings in a dramatic fashion both mothers

and the separate Jesuanic and Baptist traditions together.¹ Elizabeth praised Mary because of the role she plays in the fulfilment of God's promise. A hymn with an anthological character,² outlining with parallelisms the power of God manifested in his redeeming love and mercy, follows. It is the first text dealing with the subject of power and domination in the gospel of Luke. Especially vv.51-53 are of utmost importance as they talk about the power of God, the scattering of the proud and the pulling of the powerful from throne. All these aspects are summarised in the doctrine of reversal (*περιπέτεια*).

From a synchronic perspective, the Magnificat shows a reception of some of the phrases and words that occurred before it. Mary speaks as the "favoured one" of 1:28. In 1:48a, Luke picks up the handmaid-motif of 1:38: *ἰδοὺ ἡ δούλη κυρίου*. The reception of 1:45 (*μακαρία ἡ πιστεύσασα*) in 1:48b is evident. A careful reading of 1:49 and 1:50 shows three attributes of God:³ God is the mighty *ὁ δυνατός*, his name is holy (*ἅγιον τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ*), and his mercy is everlasting from generations to generations (*τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ εἰς γενεάς καὶ γενεάς*). The first two attributes remind the reader of Mary's meeting with the angel in 1:35. Mary got the information that the power (*δύναμις*)⁴ of the most high would come over her and the child to be born will come from him whose name is "holy", and this child would be called "holy".⁵

The Magnificat relates to other texts of Luke, especially those dealing with the reversal of fortune, which belongs to the theological tenets of Luke. In Luke's version of the sermon on the field in Lk 6:20-26 comprising of the beatitudes and woes, this theme of the reversal of fortune would experience a detailed treatment. Those who are suffering are promised the end of their suffering and those that are enjoying are prophesied the end of their joy.

2.1 *Structure and composition*

The Magnificat could have different structures. The perspective matters. The Magnificat is such a rich hymn to be streamlined in only one structure. It offers a fertile ground for the development of different branches of theology.⁶

¹ Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas I*, 80; K. Löning, *Geschichtswerk*, 90; J. Nolland, *Luke I*, 62; J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 357; A. Plummer, *Luke*, 27. A detailed presentation is given by P.L. Schuler, *Luke 1-2*, 89.

² Cf. R. Laurentin, *Struktur*, 95.

³ F. Gryglewicz, *Herkunft*, 266.

⁴ *δύναμις* served as a late Jewish designation for God. Cf. W. Grundmann, *δύναμαι*, 298.

⁵ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 360.

⁶ The attempt of U. Mittmann-Richert to give the Magnificat a concentric structure held together by the mercy of God deserves recognition. This mercy could also serve as the guarantor of the meaning of text. Although this structure does not have all the answers, it should be recognised as an attempt to depart from the traditional way of structuralising the Magnificat. However, criticism is allowed. When the Magnificat is considered as a separate text without any dependence to the foregoing texts, it becomes impossible to follow the line of thought of this structure. There is no mention of the Messiah in the Magnificat as a text. It appears incomprehensible moving from a hymn of Mary to a theology of mercy being personified in the Messiah. It is only by association within the perspective of the incarnation that one can conclude that the mercy of God is the Messiah, who brings the destinies of Mary and Israel

A general statement is that the Magnificat begins by focusing on Mary and ending with a focus on Israel, from the personal to the corporate.⁷ The reasons for the praise of God are introduced with the Greek word ὅτι.

The *parallelismus membrorum* of the text, e.g., in 46b/47, 51a/51b und 52a/52b, gives the text of the Magnificat an Old Testament ambience, and provides an interpretive role by juxtaposing related but not identical lines, thereby building the metaphorical field from which the audience will draw while appreciating the song.⁸ The Magnificat has two major parts but comprising of an introduction and a conclusion. This structure involves four elements:

1. *First part: 46b-50a*
 - a. V. 46b-47: Introduction: The announcement of the praise of God
 - b. V. 48-50a: First stanza: The graciousness of God towards Mary
2. *Second part: 50b-55b*
 - c. V. 50b-53b: Second stanza: The specified (different) actions of God
 - d. V. 54-55b: Conclusion: The fulfilled promises of God.

2.1.1 *Linguistic proof for the structure*

The introductory part of the Magnificat comprising of 46b and 47 has a parallel structure,⁹ which partly explains its character as a literary unit. The threefold genitive pronoun μου guarantees the unity of the introductory part, ψυχῆ μου, πνεῦμά μου and σωτηρί μου. The markers for the person of Mary are present, not only in 46b ψυχῆ but also in 47 πνεῦμά.¹⁰ The person of the singer is also present in the second element, με in 48b and μοι in 49a guaranteeing the unity of the first part. God is presented as κύριος, σωτήρ and δυνατός. With the exception of v.46b, all the verbs in the Magnificat are aorists. The parallel structures of 48a and 49a in the second element of the Magnificat are conspicuous:

ὅτι ἐπέβλεψεν	ὅτι ἐποίησέν μοι
ἐπὶ τὴν ταπεινώσιν	μεγάλα
τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ	ὁ δυνατός

The second and the third lines are antithetically arranged: Lowliness – Great, handmaid – the mighty.¹¹ There is a semantic relation between v.49 and v.50 because they sing of the attributes of God: his might, his holiness and his mercy.¹² This helps in structuring v.49 and v.50 as belonging together. The syntax of v.49b

together. The text does not provide us with such information. Cf. U. Mittmann-Richert, Magnificat, 165-7.

⁷ Cf. R. C. Tannehill, Magnificat, 272. H. Schürmann, Lukasevangelium, 70-71.

⁸ Cf. J. B. Green, Luke, 99.

⁹ R. Tannehill calls it a synonymous parallelism, echoing a traditional repetitive pattern of OT poetry. Its purpose is the immediate establishment of a celebration mood by using a repetitive pattern to express this mood. Cf. R. Tannehill, Magnificat, 266.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke I, 68. Also J. Fitzmyer, Luke, 366.

¹¹ Cf. T. Kaut, Befreier, 299.

¹² Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, Luke I, 360.

and v.50a shows them as parallelisms: both verses present predicates, which have no finite verbs, τὸ ὄνομα and τὸ ἔλεος and are joined in the sentence structure with the same conjunction καί. There is however a problem posed by v.50. Καὶ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ εἰς γενεὰς καὶ γενεὰς suffices as a meaningful sentence. The problem is the determination of the next phrase: τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν. Where does it belong? Does it belong to the aforementioned or to the next sentence, ἐποίησεν κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ;¹³ The complementarity of this particular phrase to both sentences makes this question necessary. When seen as belonging to v. 50, it would be translated as, “and his mercy from generations to generations (for) those who fear him”. If it were a part of v. 51a, it would be translated as, “(for) those who fear him, he has done strength/power with his arm”. The second alternative seems to be syntactically and semantically more probable. The parallelism involved in the Magnificat is also present in v.50b-51. This grammatical possibility of seeing v. 50b as belonging to v. 51a would further enlighten the programmatic “synthetic”¹⁴ parallelism involved when compared with v. 51b: It would suffice for the lack of the recipients of God’s power shown by his arm in v. 51a.¹⁵ With this reading, the parallelism involved receives a chiasmic structure of two lines.¹⁶ The hymn might have been in the following order before its versification: 1.τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν/ ἐποίησεν κράτος ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ, 2.διεσκόρπισεν ὑπερηφάνους/ διανοίᾳ καρδίας αὐτῶν. In a bid to retain the rhyme presented by the two aorists, ἐποίησεν -διεσκόρπισεν, the recipients of this action of God might have been shifted to another verse, notwithstanding the problems posed by this shift. Consequently, God’s power for those who fear him is a contrast to the punishment for those who do not fear him (the proud) in 51b.

In the first subunit of the second part, one sees the apex of the literary structure of the hymn attained in the parallelism involved in the chiasmic-polarised statements of v. 50b-53 containing the most powerful language of the hymn. There are six third person singular aorist verbs, all ending with -εν. In this major part are also the strong contrasts based on the words δυνάστας, ταπεινούς, πεινῶντες and πλουτοῦντες in a pattern of a-b-b-a. A rhyme pattern is present in vv. 52-53, serving as a linguistic style to emphasize these contrasts: θρόνων - ἀγαθῶν and ταπεινούς - κενούς.¹⁷ The six aorist verbs with four at the beginning of the verses (ἐποίησεν, διεσκόρπισεν, καθεῖλεν and ὑψώσεν) show the verses 51-53 as a unit.

That vv 54-55 belong to a category is motivated by the presence of personal names, Ἰσραὴλ and Ἀβραάμ and relational words like παιδὸς αὐτοῦ, πατέρας ἡμῶν and σπέρματι αὐτοῦ, which are all biological and familial. Moreover, it portrays a

¹³ Nolland, working with parallelism, is convinced that v.49b belongs with v.50 and not with 49a. His reason is that both lack an expressed verb and begin with καί. In addition, fearing of God seen in 50b is to be seen as the parallel to holiness of God’s name of 49b. Cf. J. Nolland, Luke 1, 70. Kaut, while acknowledging the syntactic possibility of joining the whole of v.50 to v.49, affirms that 50b could also be seen as being a semantic part of v.51 since it belongs to the same semantic field like the lowly and the hungry. Cf. T. Kaut, Befreier, 299f.

¹⁴ Cf. R. Tannehill, Magnificat, 266.

¹⁵ Cf. R. E. Brown, Birth, 362.

¹⁶ Cf. W. Radl, Lukas, 71.

¹⁷ Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas I, 90.

reception of the combination of God's actions: *ἀντελάβετο Ἰσραὴλ παιδὸς αὐτοῦ* and his attributes *μνησθῆναι ἐλέους*, which are the fulfillment of God's promises.¹⁸

The semantic structure of the Magnificat shows that it is a hymn of praise with *μεγαλύνω* and *ἀγαλλιάω* for the *κύριον*, who is also the *Θεός* and *σωτήρ*. It describes the intervention of God in the history of humanity¹⁹ in well-arranged semantic opposites. The divine intervention in favour of the poor and the oppressed: *φοβούμενοι, ταπείνοι, πεινῶντες* is opposed to the harsh treatment meted on the oppressors: *ὑπερήφανοι, δυνάσται, πλουτοῦντες*.²⁰ These differences typify the semantic oppositions. The verbs having God as their subject typify the Magnificat as dynamic and revolutionary, especially the second part of the hymn, which occupies itself with the reversal of fortunes: *ἐποίησέν, διεσκόρπισεν, καθεῖλεν, ὑψωσεν, ἐνέπλησεν, ἐξαπέστειλεν*. With these aorist verbs, one is compelled to compare extremes, and so think of a radical overturn of society.²¹ With the exception of v.48b, God is the subject of all the verbs from v.48a. God's descriptions are in two semantic fields: the semantic field of mercy and the semantic field of power.²² These two types of description come to their apex in the radical pattern of 1:52-53, where God's mercy for the downtrodden appears in the powerful overthrow of the mighty oppressors.

2.2 *Literary genre*

The Magnificat presents difficulties when one tries to classify it to a particular literary genre. It is not a prayer of thanksgiving.²³ A conversatory relationship with God in a thankful manner is not present, even when one is compelled to view the whole of the Magnificat as a prayer thanking God for his intervention in human history.²⁴

It is a poetic text that praises celebratorily the actions of a person. With the utmost caution that a strict classification to pattern cannot be expected, I suggest that a text conveyed in a poetic language praising the actions of a person should be classified as a hymn or as a canticle.²⁵ The word "hymn" requires a further explication. The best definition could be that a hymn is a song of praise, and in this case, the praise is given to God. The definition of a hymn as a song implies already that this praise enjoys an air of poetry.

The Magnificat satisfies the conditions required of a hymn or a canticle from the perspective of the Old Testament: there is not only a hymnic invitation to the canticle, but also a hymnic reason for this canticle, introduced with the conjunction *ὅτι*.²⁶ Psalm 136, the thanksgiving psalms of Qumran (*Hôdăyôt*) and

¹⁸ Cf. R. E. Brown, *Birth*, 356.

¹⁹ Cf. W. Radl, *Lukas*, 80.

²⁰ Cf. T. Kaut, *Befreier*, 300.

²¹ Cf. R. Tannehill, *Magnificat*, 267.

²² Cf. J. Dupont, *Magnificat*, 339-342.

²³ Cf. T. Kaut, *Befreier*, 304, footnote 147.

²⁴ Cf. H. Schürmann, *Lukasevangelium I*, 71 and 79.

²⁵ In accordance with the definition of Gunkel, who saw in this Hymn a song of praise. Cf. H. Gunkel, *Lieder*, 53. Also J. Ernst, *Überlegungen*, 32f.

²⁶ Cf. N. Lohfink, *Lobgesänge*, 14. However, it is important to note that the Magnificat does not show any call or invitation to the praise of God. Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas*, 81. It only states that the

the war scroll (*Milhāmāh*) could serve as instances. The *Hōdāyōt*²⁷ of the Qumran community and the Psalms of Solomon²⁸ share certain features with the Magnificat.²⁹ In addition, the general pattern of Hebrew poetry in pairs is adhered to, so that one line repeats and explores the thought of the former one, however in different words.³⁰

The Magnificat is a hymn of praise, although it is difficult to differentiate between a hymn and a prayer of thanksgiving.³¹ However, it exhibits the parallelism, which is very characteristic of Hebrew poetry that seeks to praise God in his being and in his actions.³² Such hymns of praise have three parts:

- a. An introduction in the first person stating the aim of the singer, which is the praise of God.³³
- b. The main corpus of the hymn listing and explaining the motives justifying this praise of God, introduced often by the Hebrew word יָדָה (Greek: ὄμι).
- c. The conclusive aspect of the hymn that may recapitulate the main motives of the hymn including atimes a blessing or a request.³⁴

The Magnificat fits into this scheme. It has a personal touch, which is seen in the first stanza (v. 46-50), and a general concern for the oppressed in the second stanza, although it does not indicate an addressee. Due to this personal and general concern, the character of the Magnificat as a hymn, which could have a special place in an assembly, is reaffirmed. It has the features of both individual and community hymn of praise,³⁵ which has a long tradition in Israel. Philo reminds us of the use of hymns and canticles in the community of the

soul of the singer praises God. The soul is not invited to magnify the Lord (imperative); it is only presented as magnifying the Lord (indicative). In addition, there is no direct address to God, or to a community or audience. Cf. J. Nolland, Luke, 64. Also F. Bovon, Lukas, 81.

²⁷ Cf. J. Ernst, Überlegungen, 33.

²⁸ The Psalms of Solomon have these expressions, which are also in the Magnificat: The fearers of God in v.50: PsSol 2:33; 3:12; 4:23; Israel as servant of God in v.54: PsSol 12:6; 17:21. The proud in v.51: PsSol 2:1-2,31; 17:13,23. The descendants of Abraham in v.55: PsSol 18:3. Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas, 82. This factor plays a very important role in my hypothesis that the second part of the Magnificat with its revolutionary aspect could have been motivated from the pharisaic circle, from which the Psalms of Solomon had its source, or which shared their sentiment. Cf. T. Kaut, Befreier, 317f. and F. Bovon, Lukas, 82f. Bovon sees the literal proximity and the identity of ideas and expressions between the Magnificat and the Psalms of Solomon as possible determinants of the source of the Magnificat. He further sees the friendly attitude of Luke to the pharisees in the Acts as a possible reason for locating the Magnificat within the pharisaic spectrum, and not within the Jewish Christian or Baptist movement.

²⁹ However, there is no praise of God as the creator in the Magnificat as is the case in the *Hōdāyōt*. The topics of death and persecution are not present in the Magnificat, and there is a formal and direct address of God in the *Hōdāyōt*, which is lacking in the Magnificat.

³⁰ Cf. I.H. Marshall, Interpretation, 184.

³¹ Cf. F. Crüsemann, Formgeschichte, 208f.

³² Cf. Pss 29; 33; 100; 146.

³³ Cf. R. Tannehill, Unity I, 26. See also R.E. Brown, Birth, 355f.

³⁴ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, Luke I, 359f.

³⁵ Cf. R. E. Brown, Birth, 357.

Therapeuts,³⁶ remembering the great hymn of the Israelites after crossing the Red sea.³⁷

2.3 *Literary criticism*

Giving a careful assessment of the Magnificat makes the following literary critical observations to the language and theme of the Magnificat imperative.

1. The context of the Magnificat raises the question concerning the appropriateness of this text. From the perspective of external coherence, it articulates the question of determining the original location of the Magnificat.³⁸
2. V. 48 is ambiguous in its explanation. As such, it presents a problem of ascription. The word *ταπεινώσις* in 48a reflects the situation of Elizabeth, while 48b reflects the situation of Mary.
3. The determination of the syntactic relation of *τοῖς φοβουμένοις αὐτόν* in v.50 points to a literal critical discrepancy. Does it belong to the syntactic unit of the verse or is it syntactically meaningful when considered as belonging to v. 51a?
4. The martial tone of the second part of the Magnificat and the presence of aorist verbs remain unexplained, as they do not fit the context.³⁹ As such, there is the need to explain their *Daseinsberechtigung*.
5. The possibility of regarding v. 55a: *καθὼς ἐλάλησεν πρὸς τοὺς πατέρας ἡμῶν* as a parenthesis, thereby seeing the two datives in 55b *τῷ Ἀβραάμ* and *τῷ σπέρματι* as datives of advantages with *μνησθῆναι ἐλέους*, making the reader to read „remembering mercy ...for Abraham and his seeds forever.” It suffices to say that there is a syntactic ambiguity in these lines.⁴⁰

From the sequence of the annunciation narrative, the Magnificat seems to be a “foreign body” in the whole portrayal.⁴¹ The absence of the Magnificat would not have done any violence to the sequence of the text. It would even have eased the free flow of the annunciation narrative, because v.45 would have found its literal continuity in v.56.

³⁶ N. Lohfink identifies the therapeuts of Philo with the Essenes or the Qumran community. Cf. *Lobgesänge*, 24.

³⁷ Cf. Philo, *VitCont* 79-81.

³⁸ The opinion that the present location of the Magnificat is original is no longer tenable. Winter sees the Magnificat as a Maccabean warsong or better a song sung after a victorious war, which was already incorporated in an older Baptist tradition. Cf. P. Winter, *Magnificat*, 328; 337f. The majority of exegetes are of the opinion that the Magnificat was incorporated in an already existing childhood narrative. Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 357-359, R.E. Brown, *Birth*, 347, S. Farris, *Hymns*, 86-98.

³⁹ Following the traditional structures, many exegetes are of the opinion that the second stanza of the hymn (v. 51-55) is given as an explication of the first stanza (v. 46-50). Cf. F. W. Horn, *Glaube*, 137; J. Ernst, *Lukas*, 75. Also J. Ernst, *Portrait*, 75.

⁴⁰ Cf. R. Tannehill, *Magnificat*, 271.

⁴¹ That is an attempt at an English translation of “*Fremdkörper*” as a word used by Radl in his questioning of Mary as the intended speaker of the Magnificat. More of this would be treated in the problem of attribution.

If we are to follow the traditional structure, there seems to be a height of tension between the theologies of the first and second part. The theology of the second part would seem to be in favour of a military revolution, which does not belong to the theological tenets of Luke,⁴² who did not anticipate the revolutionary intervention of God with the aim of changing situations in the world. The first part, on the other hand, continues in the line of what we know of Luke. Generally, Luke "... spricht vielmehr von der in der jenseitigen Zukunft erfolgenden Vergeltung, je nach Situation und Verhalten (Lk 6, 20-26; 12,33; 14, 14; 16,19-31) und ruft deshalb zur Wohltätigkeit für die Armen auf (Lk 3,11; 6, 33-36; 8, 3; 16, 9; Acts 10,2.4.31)."⁴³ There is a tension between the revolutionary and the conservative aspects of Luke's characterization of God. He is not only a revolutionary God, who introduces reversal in history, but also a God, who remembers his mercy to Israel in 1:54-55. The difficulty in the reconciliation of both aspects of the Lucan God shows a theological tension.⁴⁴ The amicable praise of God in the first part contrasts the martial sequence of the second part. Owing to this finding, the Magnificat cannot be a unit in the sense of belonging together initially. However, the initial work of combining Old Testament sentiments with the revolutionary sentiments of the Psalms of Solomon might have been done before Luke borrowed the canticle with little amendments.⁴⁵

The reference to lowliness in v. 48a is in accordance with the social situation of barren women. The pivotal word that serves as the propeller of all the arguments against the attribution of the Magnificat to Mary is *ἡ ταπεινότης*. This expression shows in biblical language the humiliation and social dejection of an individual.⁴⁶ Mary did not experience any of these dejections. From this logic, therefore, there does not seem to be the need for her to proclaim her lowliness. Consequently, there would not be any reason to regard her virginity as a humiliation. On the other hand, however, Elizabeth has reason to speak of her lowliness and social dejection. The reason for this social dejection of Elizabeth would be her barrenness. Hannah's song, on which the Magnificat could be modelled, was motivated by the fact of her having a son clearing her from the allegation of barrenness. Similarly, it would be normal to expect Elizabeth to sing this song, in as much as her situation is identical with that of Hannah.

This tension shows that the Magnificat is a pre-lukan text. The only amendment Luke made might have been the inclusion of v.48b and the extension of the promise in the last verse to include Abraham and the fathers, showing his openness for Gentiles, who would later be important members of the early church.

⁴² Cf. L. Schottroff, Magnificat, 305.

⁴³ W. Radl, Ursprung, 300.

⁴⁴ Tannehill, Unity I, 31.

⁴⁵ A help in the solution of the problem could be the suggestion of Winter, who sees three stages in the history of the nativity hymns: the first stage is the hebrew or aramaic original form from the time of the Maccabees, the Nazarene version is the second stage while the Lukan version, representing the last stage, epitomises the Christian reception. Cf. P. Winter, Magnificat, 324-347.

⁴⁶ Cf. Gen 16,11; Dt 26,7; Ps 9,14; Neh 9,9; Jas 1,10.

However, making Elizabeth the speaker of the Magnificat is also problematic. From a synchronic reading, the Magnificat has meaning in its contextual relation to the revelation made to Mary. The expression in the Magnificat, “his handmaid” in v.48a echoes the autodescription of Mary in v.38. The future joyfulness/blessedness of the speaker of the Magnificat, *ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν μακαριοῦσίν με πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί* tallies with the expression of praise by Elizabeth for Mary in v.45, *καὶ μακαρία ἡ πιστεύσασα ὅτι ἔσται τελείωσις τοῖς λελαλημένοις αὐτῇ παρὰ κυρίου* and with her praise of v.42b, *εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξίν καὶ εὐλογημένος ὁ καρπὸς τῆς κοιλίας σου*. The claim of v.48b that all generations will call the speaker blessed fits Mary better than Elizabeth.

It is the intention of Luke that Mary sings this canticle even when many ideas and theologies (information about God) in the song of Hannah come up once more.⁴⁷ The verse in the song of Hannah that suggests the closest nearness to Elizabeth’s situation is missing, 1 Sam 2:5 (LXX): *ὅτι στεῖρα ἔτεκεν ἑπτὰ, καὶ ἡ πολλὴ ἐν τέκνοις ἠσθένησε*.

From a social and historical perspective, one can differentiate between the Lukan speaker of the Magnificat, Mary and a probable historical speaker Elizabeth. This is because of the redactional attitude of the meeting of the two women, with which Luke hoped to convey a message.⁴⁸

3. *Tradition and history*

As mentioned above, it is the intention of Luke that Mary sings this hymn. He however, chose a hymn, whose situation and message reflect better the situation of Elisabeth. In a bid to reconstruct a possible historical explanation and solution to this problem, I will propose the following thesis:⁴⁹

The Magnificat was initially a song of Elizabeth, derived from the song of Hannah however sharing Pharisaic sentiments from the Psalms of Solomon,⁵⁰ which Luke intentionally assigned to Mary in the course of the composition of his gospel.

Although the parallelism that characterises the presentation of Luke is attested in these verses, Luke must have used an already existing Semitic text, harbouring the idea of the canticle of Hannah and the sentiments expressed in the Psalms of Solomon, as a literary background, but with some modifications. The Magnificat has a number of Old Testament parallels. Almost each line has many Old Testament equivalent texts, which could have served as points of reference. The second stanza has many parallels in the *Psalms of Solomon*, which has motivated the discussion of a possible Pharisaic origin of

⁴⁷ The textual critical questions regarding the speaker of the Magnificat remains unsolved even when the better reading opts for *καὶ εἶπεν μαριάμ*. Benko, Loisy and Harnack postulated reasons for favouring the Elizabeth variant. Cf. S. Benko, *Magnificat*, 263-275.

⁴⁸ Cf. W. Radl, *Ursprung*, 300.

⁴⁹ This is a personal venture to explain the possibility of the Jesuanic adaptation of a Baptist hymn and tradition. I later found out, that Brown has already constructed such a historical explanation, however from another perspective, and with a different emphasis. See R.E. Brown, *Birth*, 283-285.

⁵⁰ Because of the unparalleled affinity of the second part of the Magnificat to the Psalms of Solomon when compared with the other writings of the period, I am inclined to believe that the historical beginning of the revolutionary and martial language of the Magnificat should be sought within the intellectual ambience of the Pharisees. The terminologies *ἐν βραχίονι αὐτοῦ*, *σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ*, *φοβούμενοι* and *ὑπερήφανοι* are well documented in the Psalms of Solomon.

the Magnificat.⁵¹ In addition, there are only few Lucan presentations, in which such a degree of septuagintalism exists, just as *Machen* observed.⁵²

This hypothesis could have had a diachronic development. At the composition of his gospel, Luke had many sources and traditions at his disposal comprising the Baptist-tradition, which was already available for the Lukan community, since it is probable that it comprised of members who were former adherents of John the Baptist.⁵³

This Baptist-tradition contained not only the Benedictus, but also the Magnificat. These hymns were for their patron, especially for his annunciation and birth. (The tradition behind the double annunciation (to the father and to the mother) could be the story of Samson in Jg 13 and Ps.-Philo 42).⁵⁴ These traditions could have come to Luke at the conversion of the followers of John the Baptist. However, they still felt obliged to the teachings of their patron John. This made them not ready to discard their belief in John the Baptist. Probably, there arose a conflict within the communities regarding the measure of salvific importance to Jesus and to John the Baptist. The former members of the Baptist-movement believed that John was greater than Jesus was, while the others believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and, therefore, greater than John. This conflict motivated different reactions in the different communities ranging from the conviction, “He was not the light, he was to bear witness to the light” and “He must grow greater, I must grow less” in Joh 1:8 and 3:30 respectively to the mild assessment, “In truth I tell you, of all the children born to women, there has never been anyone greater than John the Baptist” of Mt 11:11a. (Luke also shared this idea from Q in Lk 7:18ff).

Luke, in a bid to solve the problem, introduced his style of *parallelismus membrorum* with its synchronism in order to refute the claim that John the Baptist is greater than Jesus is or that both are equal in their salvific importance: John has a role in the salvation history, but Jesus’ role in salvation history is unparalleled.⁵⁵ Without denying the greatness of John the Baptist,⁵⁶ Luke, through his rhetoric of comparison,⁵⁷ constructed his nativity story in such a way that the superiority of

⁵¹ Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas, 82f.

⁵² The conclusion of *Machen* in this regard is very helpful: “The author of such a hymn must have lived in the atmosphere of the Old Testament, and must have been familiar from earliest childhood with its language. Only so could elements derived from so many sources have been incorporated without artificiality in a single poem.” In: J. G. Machen, Hymns, 23. He is supported by Gunkel: “Der Verfasser lebte also so sehr in der alten Ueberlieferung, dass ihm die Gattungen noch völlig vertraut waren.” In: H. Gunkel, Lieder, 52.

⁵³ Cf. Acts 19:1-7. The text describes the non reception of the holy Spirit through the baptism of John, because of its being only a baptism of repentance. Only after the baptism through Paul and through the laying on of hands were they able to receive the Holy Spirit, enabling them to speak in tongues.

⁵⁴ Cf. W. Radl, Ursprung, 312-316.

⁵⁵ Already from the annunciation, the reader is reassured of the greatness of Jesus over John: John will be great before the Lord, while Jesus’ greatness is not given any positional and temporal qualification. In addition, he would be called the son of the most high. Cf. Lk 1:15a; 32. Following the same line of thought, Zacharah proclaimed in the Benedictus, that John would be called a prophet of the most high. Kaut affirms, “Dennoch steht Johannes nicht gleichberechtigt neben Jesus. Durch Ergänzungen werden die Akzente gesetzt... Johannes spielt in bezug auf die Heilszeit gegenüber Jesus die Sekundantenrolle.“ Cf. T. Kaut, Befreier, 326.

⁵⁶ Luke is convinced that the conceptions of Jesus and John are wonders.

⁵⁷ Cf. P.L. Schuler, Luke 1-2, 85.

one character over another is left to the reader's judgement, however, clearly portraying his affinity and allegiance to Jesus. From this conviction, the virgin birth is greater than birth in old age.⁵⁸ For the same reason, he took the original form of the Magnificat depicting the situation and praise of Elizabeth in the Johannine Community, and attributed it to Mary. The conception of Jesus was through the instrumentality of the *πνεῦμα ἅγιον* or the *δύναμις* of the most high, and as such a son of God, while John is a prophet of God. Zechariah and Elizabeth are praised (Lk 1:6) but Mary is twice addressed as the one who has found favour with God (Lk 1:28, 30). John is said to be filled with the holy Spirit from his mother's womb (Lk 1:15), whereas the holy Spirit will come upon Mary. This is in a bid to show the greater importance of the child, that she is to bear. Luke left the Benedictus for Zachariah. In this case, Luke made an insertion, namely verse 48b, in an attempt to reflect the situation of Mary, which at the same time will echo her faith, which has already featured in verse 38. He shows his community, that the problem within the group arising from the rivalry between Jesus and John the Baptist has already had its solution from the beginning of the earthly existence of both Jesus and John the Baptist.

The solution begins with the programmatic portrayal of Luke, that Mary and Elizabeth are related, a piece of information that is lacking in other gospels. This conviction of Luke should have an authority behind it. That is why this information has to come from the Angel Gabriel (Lk 1:36). By means of association, the reader should then know that Jesus and John the Baptist are related.⁵⁹ Elizabeth praises Mary as "the mother of my Lord", and John in support of this claim moves with joy in the womb of the mother. "There is no rivalry between the two figures in the salvation history since God sends the same angel Gabriel to announce both conceptions."⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Latest with the observations of Dibelius, *Jungfrauensohn*, 30-34, the importance of Philo in the explication of the nativity stories has begun to enjoy a profound recognition. Philo is convinced that birth in old age is also an extended form of virgin birth, especially in the case of Sarah. The aspect of "knowing", which describes the biological act leading to conception, is not present as it was in the relation of Adam and Eve that gave rise to Cain. Cf. Philo, *DeCh*, 40-52. The argument of Philo is based on the conviction (Mystery) that the wives of the saints of the Pentateuch are virtues, who receive the seed for their children directly from God, since these virtues have nothing in common with concupiscence or carnality. Philo explicates this thought on the persons of Sarah, Rebecca, Lea and Zippora. Although the children do "lawfully" belong to the husbands, they were conceived from God. According to Philo, this thought is a mystery for higher understanding and too spiritual for profane ears. For the religio-historical appraisal of this Philonic idea, cf. C. Böttrich, *Geburtsgeschichte*, 236-40. B. Heiningen argues from the same perspective: for him, the births of Jesus and John the Baptist are wonders. Although it is usually said that Zachariah is the father of John the Baptist, there is however no explicit mention of the fact of Zachariah "knowing" Elizabeth. The matter is very interesting from the perspective that Luke knew of these three angles of knowing-conceiving-bearing in the Old Testament (Gen 4:1,7; 1Sam1:19f), whose first aspect "knowing" was not mentioned in the narration of the birth and the conception of John in the Lukan narrative. From this background, there is the possibility of seeing the birth of John the Baptist as a virgin birth. Cf. B. Heiningen, *Geschlechterdifferenz*, 41f.

⁵⁹ This is a piece of contrast information to the one we have in Joh 1:33, where John claims, that he does not know Jesus.

⁶⁰ R.E. Brown, *Birth*, 285.

This is only a hypothetical attempt to solve the problem involved in the correct exegesis of the Magnificat, and to explain how a song of Elizabeth later became a song of Mary. In addition, the aorist verbs would aid to trace a history for the text, which invariably helps our understanding of the text. They are the descriptions of God's habitual and recurring actions, "...immerwährende(s) Tun Gottes.... Es muß sich gewissermaßen um ewige Eigenschaften Gottes handeln, die sich in immer gleichem Geschichtstun und damit natürlich auch allen Menschen gegenüber zeigen."⁶¹ However, that would not be relevant in this context. This solution regarding God's way of acting must be corrected because these aorists in verses 51-53 seem to be in relation to, and to have an explanatory motive for the verb *ἐποίησέν* in v. 49, which points to a particular action of God in the past. Moreover, at the end of the second stanza is the emphasis on Israel as a nation. Therefore, these aorists are to be translated and understood as pointing to a particular completed action or actions in the life of Israel as a nation, since the hymn ends with the remembrance of the mercy promised to Israel. From this background, "...the aorists refer to a definite action in the past, namely, the salvation brought about through the death and resurrection of Jesus. That was the supreme manifestation of the strength of God's arm. At that moment He scattered the proud and the mighty, the rulers and the princes who gathered together against his anointed, i.e. the Messiah..."⁶² However, this does not suffice to answer the question about the historicity and the tradition (Überlieferung) of these actions of God. The attempt summarises a Christian redactional perspective. The question still remains, where has he pulled down the mighty, and where has he elevated the humble and the lowly? A hypothetical explanation could be of help. I have maintained that the second part of the Magnificat, where all these aorist verbs occur, expresses sentiments peculiar to the Psalms of Solomon. If the hypothesis is correct, that the origin of the Psalms of Solomon should be dated around 63 BC,⁶³ it has to do with the fall of Jerusalem in the year 63 BC into the hands of Pompey and the resistance offered by the Jews.⁶⁴ These sentiments, motivating the composition of the Psalms within a Pharisaic milieu, might have been nourished and kept alive by some Pharisaic parties, who saw themselves as heir of the circle, from which these Psalms resulted, until the first Jewish war against Rome.⁶⁵ The success against a foreign domination is immortalised in a canticle, which was later adopted by the Baptist-community in honour of their patron. The

⁶¹ N. Lohfink, *Lobgesänge*, 18. That is the gnomic aorist. Verses 49b and 50 clearly speak of God's habitual way of acting, or better put, his abiding character, and we cannot assume that v. 47 simply refers to a past event. Schmid suggested that these aorists should be seen and appreciated as literal translations of the Hebrew perfect, which can also have gnomic sense. Cf. J. Schmid, *Lukas*, 55.

⁶² R.E. Brown, *Birth*, 363. Having seen the death and resurrection event as the central motive of the aorists, Brown sees the Magnificat as being a hymn vocalising literally the sentiments of the Jewish Christian Anawim. He is of the opinion that a Jewish Christian remnant must have composed the Magnificat. See especially 350-355.

⁶³ Cf. S. Holm-Nielsen, *Psalmen*, 51.

⁶⁴ Cf. T. Kaut, *Befreier*, 317f.

⁶⁵ Josephus maintained that some Pharisees sympathised with those who offered resistance, while some of the Pharisees even joined in the resistance. Cf. M. Hengel, *Zeloten*, 89ff.

Magnificat is an instance of an anthological poesy, with relations to canonical texts, where anyone who sings or recites the canticle or poem immediately recalls the traditionally rooted motives that make up the hymns.⁶⁶ In this case, the Magnificat serves as a transmitter of tradition and history. It is a testimony against culturelessness (*Kulturlosigkeit, -verfall*) and the forgetfulness of history. This leads to the conclusion that each of the statements comprising the aorists has an important message, and refers to a particular event in the history of Israel from the perspective of this Pharisaic movement. The statements, he has done strength with his arm, he has scattered the proud with the intentions of their hearts, he has unseated the mighty and raised the lowly, and the other revolutionary actions of God could be a celebration of the initial military resistance of the Pharisaic circle around the Psalms of Solomon, and the initial success of the resistance against the Roman occupation leading to the first Jewish war, and by extension even the military success of the Maccabeans against the seleucide oppressors many years before the capture of Jerusalem by Pompey. The question concerning the merging of the two conflicting parts cannot be adequately answered.

The change of ownership of the Magnificat from Elizabeth to Mary, which was effected by Luke, brings with it a change of meaning. It is only from a redactional Christian perspective could these aorists have for Luke the meaning offered by Brown. In the same line of thought is the contribution of Lohfink:

“Dies würde bedeuten, daß Maria das Handeln Gottes an ihr als der armen Magd einordnet in das seit Abraham geschehende Handeln Gottes an Israel, seinem armen Knecht, ja daß sie es als die Aufgipfelung dieser Geschichte Gottes mit seinem armen Israel ansieht.”⁶⁷

However, seeing these aorists as depicting historical events deparmentalises the historical understanding of the Jesus event. There is no room for eschatology, which is of vital importance for the understanding of the hymn. It records in a hymnic character an anticipation of the yet to come, which has already begun. An eschatological understanding of these aorists would imply the celebration of an anticipated coming victory of God, which has manifested itself in the way God acted on Mary, because the singer of the Magnificat is sure of God's tremendous victory, in that God has always emerged victoriously in all that he does. His action on Mary is interpreted eschatologically as an action for the oppressed and the marginalised.⁶⁸ The saving work of God, which began in the Old Testament times, continues in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.⁶⁹ The victory of God's hand in the past repeats itself in Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus was a sure sign to the singer of the Magnificat that the annunciation of the birth of Jesus is already the inception and fulfilment of these expectations. Only from this eschatological

⁶⁶ Cf. N. Lohfink, *Lobgesänge*, 19.

⁶⁷ N. Lohfink, *Lobgesänge*, 19.

⁶⁸ Cf. L. Schottroff, *Magnificat*, 302.

⁶⁹ The resurrection of Jesus, seen from the optic of the early Jewish apocalyptic, begins the age of the endtime, in which the reversal of the cosmic power takes place. In this perspective is also the punishment of the foreign powers, under whose bondage Israel suffers. Cf. K. Müller, *Apokalyptik*, 35-173.

understanding is it possible to appreciate the verbs not only as gnomic aorists, but also as inceptive aorists: God acts in a manner peculiar to him, in order to initiate a change in the world's order, whereby God's actions in the past are not excluded.

4. *Some literal constructions of immense importance*

In this text, some words are very indispensable for the appreciation of the theme of power and powerlessness. They are linguistic products and bear the stamp of history being important codes of traditions, and having meanings with a long history. Studying them will show their importance for the topic of the powerful and the powerless.

4.1 *ἡ ταπείνωσις*

The word is a Greek noun for humility, lowliness and modesty, especially in biblical history.⁷⁰ It can also have the negative sense of "humiliation". Related to the noun is *ταπεινός*, which can serve as adjective, and as a noun, and means base and servile,⁷¹ of low birth and ignoble,⁷² especially in classical Greek, and moderate or humble from a biblical background. The verb, *ταπεινῶω*, means to humble or to humiliate. An extended meaning of the word since 500 B.C. includes the socially low, poor without any access to power, and therefore powerless, without any prospect of contributing to the wellbeing of the state:

"There was the greatest danger of revolution in Rome because of the unnatural distribution of riches. The most respectable and noble men were reduced to beggars because of their extravagant spendings for theater-displays, for hospitality, for application for official posts and for wonderful buildings, whereas the great riches went into the hands of low (*εἰς ἀγεννεῖς*) and ordinary (*ταπεινοῦς*) people."⁷³

A person, ethnic group or state can be poor or low from nature, and can be made poor or low.⁷⁴ *Ταπείνωσις* is this state of being a *ταπεινός*. *Ταπεινῶω* is the act of introducing this state of *ταπείνωσις* on somebody or on something.⁷⁵ Despite the baseness, meanness and pettiness involved in the classical understanding of *ταπείνωσις*, it was considered a virtue by pagans, namely as the virtue of modesty or moderation.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Cf. C. Spicq, *ταπεινός*, 369.

⁷¹ Cf. Plato, Leg 4. 774: *δουλεία ταπεινή* means base or disrespectful servitude.

⁷² Cf. Lucian, Cal. 24. Lucian differentiates between a gentle and noble man, who is slandered and an ignoble and mean man, who is also slandered. For the negative qualifications he uses *ἀγεννέστερος καὶ ταπεινότερος*, (ignoble and mean).

⁷³ Plutarch, Cic. 10,5.

⁷⁴ This is the case, when a country or an ethnic group is captured in a war. Cf. Xenophon, Hist Graec II 5,13

⁷⁵ Cf. Epict Diss III 24,75; Plut CGracch 9 (I 838d). Aristotle is of the opinion that the course of life could deprive a human being of his courage and his high ambitions, leaving him without courage, and with a low ambition (*τεταπείνωνται*). Cf. Arist. Rhet II 12.

⁷⁶ Plut. Ant. 73,5 documented the celebration of Cleopatra's birthday „with simplicity“. Xenophon described the virtues of Agesileus and called him among other things: *καὶ τῷ μεγάλῳφρονι οὐ σὺν ὕβρει ἀλλὰ σὺν γνώμῃ ἐχρῆτο. τῶν γοῦν ὑπεραύχων καταφρονῶν τῶν*

In the Septuaginta, there are many evidences for the use of this word with its related word groups in many nuances. The word *ταπεινώσις* appears approximately 40 times in the LXX. It means lowliness and humility, and the mental state that results from such a situation, e.g., sadness and anxiety.⁷⁷ The word is used in the characterisation of the situation of the Israelites in Egypt (Deut 26:7; Ps135:23), from their troubled situation arising from their hostile neighbours in Canaan (1kg 9:16), in relation to their exilic and postexilic time (Esther 4:8; Jud 6:19b;⁷⁸ 7:32; 13:20). Isaiah proclaimed in 40:2; *ἐπλήσθη ἡ ταπεινώσις αὐτῆς, λέλυται αὐτῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία*, reminding the exiled race that their deliverance is close.

The word is used to characterize the situations of individual persons, e.g., the situation of Hagar (Gen 16:11), of Joseph in Egypt (Gen 41:52), and of Hannah (1Sam 1:11 *ἐὰν ἐπιβλέπων ἐπιβλέψῃς ἐπὶ τὴν ταπεινώσιν τῆς δούλης σου...καὶ δῶς τῇ δούλῃ σου σπέρμα ἀνδρῶν...*). In the Psalms, the oppressed man prays to God to look on the *ταπεινώσις* (9:14) inflicted on him by his enemy. This subjugation and the oppression serve as rationale for his deliverance

The different nuances in the understanding of this word and the other related words in the antiquity and in the Septuaginta arise from the different understanding of the human person and of freedom in these periods. The negative aspect of *ταπεινώσις* is repulsive to the Greek concept of the human person well attuned to the search of freedom. As such, the Greek conception of the free human person, both in culture and in the philosophy, did not offer any room to sympathise with slavery and subjugation.⁷⁹ A subjugated being could not claim to belong to the human race. This, of course, explains the negative qualification of *ταπεινώσις* and its derivatives within the Greek milieu. For the Jews however, the human person is the outcome of God's determination and action. He remains the subject of God making the human person regard himself as the servant of God. The words *ταπεινώω*, *ταπεινός* and *ταπεινώσις* therefore turn into a positive description of the human person, especially in his relationship with God.⁸⁰

It does not mean that these words do not have any negative quality within the milieu of the Septuaginta. The *ταπεινώσις* as a social brand has a negative connotation. The verb in question *ταπεινώω* can refer to an action, where force is used to achieve an end. Accordingly, it is suppressing or humiliating a person or a particular group, e.g., Gen 15:13; Ex 1:12; Jg 12:2 and Ps 9:31. In this context, one can speak of *ταπεινώω* in terms of rape, e.g., in Gen 34:2; Deut 22:24, 29 and Jg 19:24.

Ταπεινώσις and other related words are evidenced thirty-four times in the New Testament. The verb *ταπεινώω* alone appears fourteen times in the New Testament, with Matthew and Luke using it eight times, but in different semantic connotations.

μετρίων ταπεινότερος ἦν. Cf. Xenophon, Ages. 11,11. For more on this cf. S. Rehr, Problem, 26ff.

⁷⁷ W. Grundmann, *ταπεινός*, 11.

⁷⁸ The linguistic affinity of *καὶ ἐλέησον τὴν ταπεινώσιν τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν* is very striking.

⁷⁹ Cf. H-H. Eber, *ταπεινός*, 176.

⁸⁰ Cf. W. Grundmann, *ταπεινός*, 12.

Luke extended the quotation from Is 40:3ff by making John the Baptist use the verb in the warning about the impending doom, reminding all of the need to *level* all mountains (Lk 3:5): *καὶ πᾶν ὄρος καὶ βουνὸς ταπεινωθήσεται*. In the pericope, where Jesus teaches about taking places of honour in a dinner (Lk 14:11), the verb occurs to show the fate of all who assume importance *ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ὑψῶν ἑαυτὸν ταπεινωθήσεται, καὶ ὁ ταπεινῶν ἑαυτὸν ὑψωθήσεται*. This could serve as a social aspect of *ταπεινώσις*. Luke proceeds to show the meaning of this word from a Hellenistic setting of the symposium, where the rich and the poor gather showing in an unmistakable manner the lowliness within a social group. The narrative was used to show the complexity of God's saving programme, using Prov 25:6f as background. This quotation has Old Testament parallels (Ez 21:31; Hos 14:9). The word further explains the justification of the tax collector and his blessed and happy return in Lk 18:9-13. This aspect mirrors the religious and cultic dimension of this word in the theology of Luke. Humility, and not humiliation, is presented as a religious and cultic dimension of forgiveness, which is exemplified in the confession of sins. The tax collector lived with the precepts of Ps 51:3, and therefore gained the rewards promised in Ps 51:19.⁸¹ The humility of the tax collector, arising from a sincere assessment of his person, is a contrast to the pride of the Pharisee. The humble assessment of his life and work gained him access to God. Being humble and acknowledging that one is nothing before God is the way to God's kingdom. One expects a tax collector to be rich even if these riches are ill gotten. His humility and truthfulness however place him in the group of the saved ones.

Mary professes *ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπὶ τὴν ταπεινώσιν τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ*. In this case, the word *ἡ ταπεινώσις* would have the meaning of lowliness or humility, with the genitival emphasis, *τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ*. It is the prayerful disposition of one who does the will of God and presents himself as the servant of God, just as Mary did.⁸² To such people, God shows his enduring mercy. Choosing a young woman to be the mother of his son could justify this *ταπεινώσις*. This unparalleled action is the beginning of the fulfillment of the hope in God's eschatological salvific act. The lowly social status of Mary, typified in the "lowly" of Lk 14:11, reinstates her in this role from the Lukan perspective. Her question to the angel regarding the possibility of her bearing a child (Lk 1:34) is not to be interpreted as disbelief but as a humble presentation of her unworthiness, which later metamorphosed into a *fiat* (Lk 1:38). The word *δούλη* belongs to the word group of the *δουλ-* stems. This word group explains a state of dependence, or service for others in the New Testament, between men or in relation to God. The word *δούλη* is feminine, means maidservant or handmaid and appears three times in the New Testament. It occurs only in Luke's works: Lk 1:38; Lk 1:48a and Acts 2:18.⁸³ In each case, it refers to the lowliness of the person involved in her/their relationship to God and is a concretisation of the *ταπεινώσις* of Mary before God. Luke is the only New Testament writer who used the word *δούλη*. This reference to women could suggest Luke's interest in the affairs and problems of women.⁸⁴ There is however,

⁸¹ Cf. H. Giesen, *ταπεινώσις*, 802.

⁸² Cf. F. Jung, ΣΩΤΗΡ, 267.

⁸³ In Acts 2,18 the accusative plural of *δούλη* is given: *τὰς δούλας*. In the same verse the accusative plural of the masculine form *δούλος* is given: *δούλους*. Luke gives an abridged version of Joel 3:1-5.

⁸⁴ Cf. C. Janssen/R. Lamb, *Erniedrigten*, 515. The gospel of Luke shows that the Christian communities comprised not only of men. Luke's intention to balance the gender-equation is remarkable: 7:12/8:46;13:10-17/14:1-6;15:4-7/8-10. The „stubborn“ woman in Lk 18:1-8

a male counterpart *δοῦλος*, which is of immense importance in the New Testament literature. The word group is essentially related to lowliness from the Lukan perspective. This is elucidated in Acts 20:17-35, where Paul, in his speech to the elders in Ephesus, presented himself as having served (*δουλεύων*) the Lord in humility (Acts 20:19).

In a feminist-emancipatory interpretation of the Magnificat, Luke is denied the name, “Evangelist of Women”, because of his involvement in the patriarchalism of his time, which saw women in their passive importance at home. This criticism affected the picture of Mary in the Magnificat with the possibility that Mary could have been pregnant through rape.⁸⁵

Acts 8:26-39 gives another possibility of understanding the meaning of this word in Luke. In this pericope in 32b-33, Is 53:7f is quoted according to the LXX, seeing the whole destiny of the servant of God from the perspective of *ταπείνωσις*. This *ταπείνωσις* explains his glorification, which could only have come from the dejection, which he suffered. Only in this perspective is it possible to appreciate the obedience of the servant. It is the intention of Luke to see the glorification of Christ from the perspective of suffering, which will usher in a new but glorified situation (Lk 9:20-22; 24:7,46; Acts 2:36) intended for his followers, (Lk 9:23-27; Acts 14:22).

The use of the genitive *τῆς δούλης αὐτοῦ* could have a social background, without neglecting the relation of Mary to God. It could be an indication, that there were many women in the Lukan community entrusted with leadership roles. It can also be an indication of the incipience of Marian devotion in the early church.

4.2. *Φοβούμενοι του Θεοῦ*

The pragmatics of this text is interested in the Hellenistic Christians. They should see themselves as the addressee of the text, and be reassured by this text of the

serves as an example for praying without losing heart. The poor widow in Lk 21:1-4 exemplifies the Christian way of concretizing one's thanks to God. Mary and Martha are presented as model followers of Christ in Lk 10:38-42. This followership of women is not only as home service as in the case of Martha, but as deep interest for the evangelization through the word, just like Mary. That does not mean that women were socially equal to men. Women are very interesting for Luke, as long as they followed a particular model of serving and listening to the words of the gospel, just as Mary in Lk 10:39 and Lydia in Acts 16:14-16, whereby the unmarried women and widows like Anna in Lk 2:36-38 received a better treatment in comparison with other women. For more on this, cf. B. Heininger, *Geschlechterdifferenz*, 44ff.

⁸⁵ “In 1,48 beschreibt Maria ihre Situation als >>Erniedrigung<< (tapeinosis). Dieser Begriff ...wird im Kontext der biblischen Sprache jedoch nicht rein religiös verwendet, sondern thematisiert häufig sexuelle Gewalt gegen Frauen ... um eine Vergewaltigung zu beschreiben... Es ist nicht eindeutig... ob die historische Maria tatsächlich auf diese Weise schwanger geworden ist, doch weil der Begriff dies andeutet, muß mit dieser Möglichkeit gerechnet werden.” Jansson - Lamb, *Erniedrigten*, 520. This is a typical example of Eisegesis: a sense quite foreign to a text is read into the meaning, hoping to justify one's view. In as much as I said above that rape belongs to the meaning of this word-group, there is however no reason to suggest that Mary became pregnant through rape. The idea is not only absurd but out of context. Would Mary then sing a song praising God for permitting this injustice on her (rape)? Would that be the sign of God's mercy on Israel? Would this assault on the honour of Mary warrant her being called blessed from generation to generation? This understanding of the *ταπείνωσις* of Mary from the aspect of rape is as such imaginary and out of place.

clement and encompassing nature of God and the Christian message. This word is typically Lucan in character. It is characteristic of Luke that he has "... eine gewisse Vorliebe für die alttestamentlich-jüdische Formel >Gott fürchten<".⁸⁶ As such, a formal manner for the designation of a group with this word in Christian writings begins with him.⁸⁷ This word is only present in his works, where it appears more than six times (Cf. Lk 1:50; Acts 10:2, 22, 35; 13:16.26 etc), with the word *σεβόμενος* (-οι) (Acts 13:43.50; 16:14; 17:4.17; 18:7), that is closely related in meaning with *φοβούμενος*. The use of this word in Lk 1:50 reminds one of the wisdom descriptions of a just and pious Jew, taken from Ps 103:13, but accentuated in a different manner, and with a different perspective in the Magnificat. From the perspective of the Old Testament, God-fearers are those who respect the laws and ordinances of God keeping in mind his covenant. Such people are promised the faithful love and justice of God, which extend to the third generation (Ps 103:17f).

In the parable of the wicked Judge in Lk 18:2, the judge is described as *τὸν θεὸν μὴ φοβούμενος καὶ ἄνθρωπον μὴ ἐντρέπόμενος*. Because of the lack of this fear of God and respect for men he was projected as being very unjust, which is diametrically opposed to the Lukan picture of a faithful.⁸⁸ In Acts, it describes non-Jews, who have some sentiments for the Jewish religion, and were better disposed to accept the message of the new faith.⁸⁹ Without any relation to Christianity, it is used specially for non-Jews who were fascinated from the Jewish religion, especially in their monotheistic belief and in their norm and ethics, though this relationship is atimes not clear and definite.⁹⁰ They might have cultivated and maintained a lively and noteworthy contact to the Jews in their different localisations, that they visited the public Jewish liturgical celebrations.⁹¹ In Acts 13:16,26; 15:21; 16:1; 17:4,17, they are presented as visiting the synagogues on the Sabbath. However, the men among this group of "Godfearers" were not ready to jump the last hurdle leading to full identification with and as Jews, namely the circumcision, which would ultimately bind them to the full respect of the Jewish laws and practices. They were not proselytes.⁹²

"Als Proselyten bezeichnet das nachexilische Diasporajudentum und von daher auch die übrige Literatur Männer und Frauen, die... auf Grund eines rechtgültigen Aufnahmeaktes Mitglieder der jüdischen Kultgemeinschaft geworden, ihr beigetreten sind. Von den Proselyten zu unterscheiden sind Leute, die mehr oder weniger intensiv am Leben jüdischer Kultgemeinden teilnahmen, ohne durch einen regelrechten Aufnahmeakt zu Mitgliedern der Gemeinden zu werden. Im Unterschied zu den Proselyten bezeichnet man sie als *σεβόμενοι* oder *φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν*."⁹³ It has been debated whether this group of Godfearers existed.⁹⁴

⁸⁶ H. Balz, Art. φοβέω, 208.

⁸⁷ Cf. H. Balz, φοβέω, 208.

⁸⁸ Confer the characterisation of Zachariah and Elizabeth in Lk 1:6.

⁸⁹ Cf. H.-J. Klauck, Gottesfürchtige, 134.

⁹⁰ Cf. W. Stegemann, Synagoge, 161. Also B. Wander, Gottesfürchtige, 51.

⁹¹ Cornelius is portrayed in Acts 10:2,4 and 31 as one, who not only prays to God always, but also as one who is privileged to see visions, and as one whose prayer has been answered.

⁹² Cf. F. Siegert, Gottesfürchtige, 931f.

⁹³ K.G. Kuhn/ H. Stegemann, Proselyten, 1248f.

⁹⁴ A. T. Kraabel denied the existence of this group because of the historical failure of inscriptions bearing this designation. Cf. Disappearance, 113-126 and Diaspora, 445-464. However, a

Kraabel is convinced that the Godfearers should be seen as the literary construct of Luke, which helped him to show how Christianity became a Gentile religion without losing its root in Judaism and in the traditions of Israel. This appellation never appeared on the inscriptions of the synagogues. In addition, they (Godfearers) only serve a literary purpose, "... on the stage as needed, off the stage after they have served their purpose in the plot."⁹⁵ Recent studies indicate, however, that they enjoyed a high social status and honour, because of their readiness to donate for the common good.⁹⁶ The names of these Godfearers were recorded in the list of donors in an inscription found in Aphrodisia in south-west Turkey in 1977 and published in 1987. In the first page of the inscription are the names of the chairpersons of a group recorded, which instituted a philanthropic organisation. Three proselytes and two Godfearers belong to this group. The second page has two lists comprising of 55 Jews and 52 others, who were identified as Godfearers. As such, they are in the third position of the Jewish list of salvation-hopefuls, forming with the Jews and the proselytes a prayer-community and a community for learning the torah.⁹⁷ The description of Cornelius in Acts 10:2 is an eloquent proof of this phenomenon. Josephus reports that Jews and worshippers of God contribute for the temple.⁹⁸

The Godfearers mentioned in the writings of Luke are significantly women.⁹⁹ Either they were rich and supported the church, or they were the wives of high-ranking personalities. Josephus narrates the affinity of such women in Damaskus to the Jews:

“Meanwhile, the people of Damaskus...were fired with a determination to kill the Jews who resided among them. As they had for a long time past kept them shut up in the gymnasium – a precaution prompted by suspicion – they considered that the execution of their plan would present no difficulty whatever; their only fear was of their own wives who, with few exceptions, had all become converts to the Jewish religion, and so their efforts were mainly directed to keeping the secret from them.”¹⁰⁰

A Midrash (DevR 2:24) tells the heroic act of a woman, who persuaded her husband, a Godfearer, to commit suicide, hoping to thwart the decision of the senate through such means. The observations regarding the personality profile of the Godfearers undertaken by Gülzow go in the same direction: “Mit Vorliebe wandte sich die jüdische Propaganda an die gehobenen Gesellschaftsschichten und Persönlichkeiten in einflußreichen Positionen. Denn ihre Zahl und ihr

neatly weighed and more convincing argument to the favour of this Group has been offered by J. G. Gager, *Jews*, 147-157.

⁹⁵ A.T. Kraabel, *Disappearance*, 120.

⁹⁶ Cf. J. Reynolds/R. Tannenbaum, *Jews*,

⁹⁷ *Jews, proselytes and godfearers*.

⁹⁸ Josephus, *Ant* 14, 110. However, there is no mention of Godfearers here but “the Jews and those who worshipped God...”: *Ἰουδαίων καὶ σεβομένων τὸν Θεόν*.

⁹⁹ Cf. Acts 13:50; 16:14; 17:4,12.

¹⁰⁰ Josephus, *Bell.* 2, 559-561. Though the assumption that all the women, with few exceptions, were converts to Judaism, and as such Godfearers, is an exaggeration, it shows however the political influence of the women as Godfearers.

Ansehen in der Öffentlichkeit spielten für die Beurteilung der Juden durch die heidnische Welt und den Staat eine große Rolle. Die Gottesfürchtigen... besuchten... den Synagogendienst; sie nahmen im allgemeinen auch einen Teil des jüdischen Zeremonialgesetzes auf sich und hielten sich an die ethischen Grundforderungen des Alten Testaments. Häufig unterstützten sie die Synagoge mit großzügigen Spenden.”¹⁰¹ The centurion of Capernaum (Lk 7:1-10) and Cornelius (Acts 10:1-11:18) fit into this profile. With these figures, Luke acquaints the reader with personalities, who, without denying their foreign identities, sympathised with the Jewish synagogues. This made him see a just man in Cornelius, who feared God with his whole family (Acts 10:2). The characterization of Cornelius is important: he is prayerful and very generous. His generosity tallies with known facts about the *φοβούμενοι* from recent studies above. He is described as *εὐσεβής* (Acts 10:2) and *δίκαιος* (Acts 10:22), a very simple summary of one of the aspects of Pauline theology,¹⁰² where *ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην* (Acts 10:35) seems to be the personification of being pleasant to God. However, the predicate of a Godfearer is not attached to the centurion of Capernaum, though his love for the Jews and the building of a synagogue were well accentuated. This finesse in the differentiation might have prompted Siegert to a further differentiation between Godfearers and Sympathisers: the Godfearers are the “... ernsthaft an der jüdischen Religion Interessierte”, while the Sympathisers are mere “... Nachahmer(n) irgendwelcher jüdischer Bräuche oder politisch den Juden wohlgesonnenen Personen”.¹⁰³

Luke could have known the religious meaning of this appellation among the Jews, and therefore used it to exemplify his understanding of the universality of salvation. He has begun to sympathise with the salvific meaning of the Jesus event for non-Jews in the Magnificat, although some are of the conviction that only the godfearing Jews are meant in the Magnificat.¹⁰⁴ It is however clear, that Luke was convinced, that the missionary work of the Church must consider the gentiles. Tyson even affirms: “The purpose of Luke-Acts is to persuade Godfearers to accept the Christian message about Jesus rather than accepting Judaism.”¹⁰⁵ Lk 1:50 is therefore to be considered as a programmatic announcement of the intention of Luke. “Der Text schaut über die Grenzen des jüdischen Volkes hinaus zu den Heiden, die sich zum Evangelium bekennen werden...”¹⁰⁶

Another reason for seeing non-Jews in this description is the plural form of *γενεά*: His mercy “from generation to generation” is given in plural, *εἰς γενεὰς καὶ γενεὰς*, although all the possible parallels in the Old Testament are in singular, *εἰς γενεὰν καὶ γενεὰν*. It is most probable to believe that the use of this word in plural is a symbolic intention of harbouring non-Jews into the mercy of God.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ H. Gültow, *Gegebenheiten*, 194f.

¹⁰² Cf. H. Balz, *φοβέω*, 209.

¹⁰³ F. Siegert, *Gottesfürchtige*, 110.

¹⁰⁴ Seccombe is of this opinion. Cf. D. P. Seccombe, *Possessions*, 78.

¹⁰⁵ J.B. Tyson, *Images*, 182.

¹⁰⁶ F. Bovon, *Lukas*, 89.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Gottesfürchtige*, 136.

The mention of Abraham in the concluding verse of the Magnificat manifests the openness of Luke towards the gentiles, who would proclaim Jesus as the Messiah. Abraham was the prototype of the true proselyte in early Judaism. Luke referred to the promise made to Abraham in the homily of Peter in Acts 3:25 as the fundament for the blessing of all “nations” (πατριάι) of the earth, the gentiles inclusive. The prophecy of Simeon in Lk 2:29-32 made it clear that the light personified in Jesus has to “enlighten the gentiles” (φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν). The fact stated in the Magnificat regarding the change of destinies must have been the motivating factor in the Acts of the Apostles for seeing in pagans and foreigners (Godfearers) better hearers and recipients of the words of the missionary Paul than the Jews (Cf. 16:14; 17: 4.17; 18:7). They are decribed in these verses as Godfearing (σεβόμενος, οἱ).

An examination of the word has shown that it primarily refers to gentiles, who were fascinated by the Jewish religion and custom, and sympathised with it by donating to its well-being and praying to its God without the willingness to circumcision. In the Lukan language of the New Testament, it designates Gentiles, who were more ready to receive the word of God than the Jews were. Its use in the Magnificat is programmatic for the future of the non-Jewish and Gentile world. The name of Abraham, the proselyte par excellence, makes it clear that the Christian religion should also involve people who are not Jews. Paul, convinced of this, described his Galatian Christians as τοῦ Ἀβραάμ σπέρμα in Gal 3:29.

It would not be a hasty conclusion to maintain that the Lucan community comprised mainly of Christians with Gentile origin. That could explain why Luke extols them in such measure. It could also be that Luke wanted to reassure them during a possible persecution by the Christian Jews, that they should not allow their nationality to hinder them from following the vocation to the service of God. The authority in resolving this conflict should be the prerogative of Peter in his capacity as the head of the apostles in Acts 10:35, ἀλλ’ ἐν παντὶ ἔθνηι ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστίν.

4.3 Ὑπερήφανοι¹⁰⁸

This is the plural of the adjective ὑπερήφανος meaning proud. The etymology of the word is not clear, although it is seen as a literal development from the coinage between ὑπερ and φανοίμαι to designate someone who believes or shows himself to be above his fellows.¹⁰⁹

There are many passages in the Old Testament with this word and other words belonging to the word group: Ps 88:10; 93:2; Job 22:29 and Job 40:7, but especially Sir 10: 7; 12-13b.

*Pride (ὕπερηφάνια) is hateful to God and humanity
and injustice is abhorrent to both.*

¹⁰⁸ Schoonheim examined the use of this concept in Old Testament, and divided the various use of this religious concept into six categories 1. Special cases. 2. Pride. 3. snubbing. 4. No respect for the law. 5. Naughtiness. 6. Being angry towards God. He saw in all these activities grave offences, which are not easily forgivable. See: P. L. Schoonheim, ὑπερηφανος, 235-246.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. C. Spicq, ὑπερηφάνια, 390.

The first stage of pride (ὑπερηφανίας) is to desert the Lord and to turn one's heart away from one's Maker. Since the first stage of pride (ὑπερηφανίας) is sin, whoever clings to it will pour forth filth.

What follows from v.14 is a parallel reading to the dethronement of the mighty and the enthronement of the humble ending with the statement of v.18 that pride was not created for human beings.

In the Psalms of Solomon, these expressions are registered in the evaluation of the desecration of the Temple by Pompey and his forces:

PsSol 2:35: *He who raiseth me up in glory and layeth low the proud (ὑπερηφάνους) not for a time but forever, in contempt; because they knew him not.*

PsSol 17:15, *ἐν ἀλλοτριότητι ὁ ἐχθρὸς ἐποίησεν ὑπερηφανίαν, καὶ ἡ καρδιά αὐτοῦ ἀλλοτρία ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν.* In his foreign manner, the enemy is proud, and his heart is foreign to our God.

The use of this word in connection with foreigners¹¹⁰ has led to the suggestion, that *ὑπερήφανοι* should be sought within the foreign powers that torment and dominate Israel, thereby characterising *ὑπερηφανία* as a gentile sin.¹¹¹ In 4 Macc 4:15, Antiochus Epiphanes¹¹² is described as *ὑπερήφανος*. A further reference is made to 2 Macc 9:12, where Antiochus Epiphanes' death is described. At his death, he realised and got the knowledge that one should not be proud before God. In the Targum Onkelos (TO Ex 15:21) is the traditional belief that the triumph of God over Pharaoh and his forces is the triumph over pride and arrogance.¹¹³ The word is the opposite of *ταπεινοί* and is used five times in the New Testament, beginning with the Magnificat. Moreover, it is used precisely from the perspective of the Old Testament, especially in Ps 88:11. A deliberate comparison between these two opposing qualifications is presented in Ps 17(18): *ὅτι σὺ λαὸν ταπεινὸν σώσεις, καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑπερηφάνων ταπεινώσεις.* In Is 14:13, the king of Babylon, a foreigner, is shown as having the ambition of ascending to heaven, which is a sign of pride and insurgence to God. It is worth noting, that the phrase *ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ σου* strikingly reminds the reader of Lk 1:51b, which thematises the plans of the proud.

Rom 1:30 and 2 Tim 3:2 also made use of the word, but in a different, although not exclusive manner: the word is listed as one of the vices. The quotation in Rom 1: 30 is retrospective in nature, in that it seeks to evaluate the past from the perspective of the stubbornness of philosophers and pagans to submit their will to that of God. On the other hand, 2 Tim 3:2 conjectures the future as a time, in which the rational reasons for morality would be questioned, and its foundations rejected.¹¹⁴

Jas 4:6 and 1 Pet 5:5 cite Prov 3:34 to show God's faithful love for the humble and His rejection of the proud. These New Testament references to the word have meaning from the perspective of the Old Testament Ethics.

¹¹⁰ The word is not exclusive for the Gentiles. It is also used for the Israelites. Cf. Is 2:12; 29:20.

¹¹¹ Cf. D.P. Seccombe, Possessions, 78.

¹¹² The „literary“ pride *ὑπερήφανος* of Antiochus could possibly have been derived from the word-play with his other name *Ἐπιφάνης*. Cf. H.J. Klauck, 4. Makkabäerbuch, 707.

¹¹³ See 4 Ezra 11:42f for another proof of such conviction.

¹¹⁴ Cf. C. Spicq, *ὑπερηφανία*, 394.

The word *ὑπερήφανοι* does not belong to the typical Lucan vocabulary for designation of an individual or of a group. However, it creates a forum for the theology of Luke. The rich and the powerful belong to this group of the *ὑπερήφανοι*, as opposed to the *ταπεινοί*. “Zwar beinhaltet V.51 im Gegensatz zu V.52f keine doppelte Umkehrung, doch erlaubt der Kontext und die trad. Gegenüberstellung von *ταπεινός – ὑπερήφανος* ..., den sachgemäßen Gegensatz zu *ὑπερήφανοι* in der *ταπείνωσις* der *φοβούμενοι* (V.50) zu sehen.”¹¹⁵

The understanding and the will of the *ὑπερήφανοι* are oriented against God, because they usurp the divine prerogatives. Their punishment would be an inevitable reality because “die Gläubigen sind davon überzeugt, daß dieser Sturz auf Gottes Zeit vollziehen wird. Diese Überzeugung klingt auch im Lobgesang Mariae.”¹¹⁶ The proud is not only in enmity with God, but also with his fellow human beings. He is a god unto himself, and his fellow human beings are objects within the circle of his tyranny. They look down on others, because they do not look up to God. They are the traditional enemies of God (Cf. Is 2:12; 13:11). In this case, the history of the subordination of the Israelites in their land of slavery serves as a traditional motive in the construction of the Magnificat: Pharaoh has no respect for God. He does not look up to God, nor recognises Him. His question in Ex 5: 2-3 supports this conviction: “*Who is Jahwe, that I should listen to him and allow Israel go. I do not know him, and neither will I allow Israel go*”

Luke might have used it to refer to those neutral to the Christian message. However, it is more plausible to see the proud as non-Christians persecuting the new community for their faith in Jesus. The proud in this case would refer to those who are so self-sufficient that they do not need God. Being capable of solving their problems, they tend to be arrogant in their way of life, in their ambitions and in their plans. They are also forgetful of God. The account of Acts 12:23 is an example: An angel struck Herod for his pride of enjoying attributes, which are prerogatively divine. Owing to their apparent superiority, it is hard for Luke to imagine them as members of his Christian community, where love, humility and service (Lk 9:46.48; 22: 24-27) should be guiding principles.

4.4 *καθεῖλεν δυνάστας ἀπὸ θρόνων*

This is one of the sentences in the Magnificat that suggest that it is a revolutionary song celebrating the world’s transformation. It is located within the chiasmic order of the traditional second stanza, where Luke wishes to inspect the world’s order from a socio-political perspective.

Δυνάσται is plural and generally refers to any ruler from the minor official to the emperor.¹¹⁷ It is not comparable to *ὁ δυνατός*, which is the prerogative of God. It is God’s name, and contrasts others, who claim to have power, the *δυνάσται*.¹¹⁸ In this sentence, this social group finds itself in a negative evaluation within the theme of the reversal of fortunes or destinies, which is a very important Lucan

¹¹⁵ F. W. Horn, *Glaube*, 142.

¹¹⁶ P. Schoonheim, *ὑπερηφανος*, 245.

¹¹⁷ Cf. D.P. Seccombe, *Possessions*, 79. The singular *δυνάστης* is only once used for God in New Testament in 1 Tim 6:15.

¹¹⁸ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke*, 70.

subject.¹¹⁹ The sentence could be seen as an explication of the information contained in v.51, where the religious and ethical qualification assumes a socio-political dimension. The mighty God unseats rulers, who have the might, which look like that of God.¹²⁰ The very fact, that Mary described herself as the *δοῦλη* of God serves to amplify the difference between her and this group of people.

The mention of this group anticipates a major theme in the narrative of Luke's gospel, where the opponents of Jesus are characterised as persons interested in social rank and respect. They do not only search for positions of honour and power, but also exclude the less fortunate and socially underprivileged from their circles of kinship, to enhance the power that accompanies their privileged status.

Recourse to Old Testament is helpful: examples abound, where rulers are unseated according to the will of God, beginning with the Exodus-story of crossing the Nile. The numerous ascents to the throne in Israel and the dethronement and death of these kings in the second book of Kings are related to this theme. The dethronement of Saul in 1 Sam 13: 8-15 and his death in 1 Sam 31 could serve as background.

From a diachronic perspective, it has been stated earlier that the second part of the Magnificat could have been written within the same milieu as the Psalms of Solomon around the year 63 BC. The observation that the books of Maccabees recorded the occupation of Israel by the Seleucide kings (168-142 BC), represented by Antiochus Epiphanes, the desecrator of the Temple in Jerusalem and a convinced persecutor of the Jewish race, who came, not only with a triumphant, but also with a militant Hellenism to destabilise Judaism and its cultural traditions, could be a further support.¹²¹ He saw himself as a parallel to the Israelite Jahweh, which not only found acceptance by some but also a convinced opposition from the Maccabeans.¹²² The Jewish victory against this occupation in 142 BC is the motivating factor behind this religious book. God is the ultimate cause of this victory against a force that did not recognise His power.

From a synchronic perspective, Jesus' criticism of those in power (Herod, Pharisees and Scribes) shows that their power is nothing before God. They did not see the salvation in Jesus (10:23f). The apostles however, were promised the throne with the judgement over the twelve tribes of Israel at the last supper.¹²³

Although the story of Herod's death in Acts 12 is told in connection with the assumption of divine attributes, it would not be out of place to see it as a typical example of the dethronement of the powerful. Their power blinds them that they forget the limits they can go. Herod reacts arbitrarily with his power. The fact that the execution of James entertained the people motivated him to arrest Peter. His rule exemplifies sovereignties that are in opposition to the will of God. The saving God of Mary is unique because he does not tolerate the powerfuls of this

¹¹⁹ The word can also have the meaning of a court official (Acts 8:27). Apart from Lk 1:52, it is also used negatively in Acts 10:38. In this sentence it is used as participle attached to *κατα*: *καταδυναστευομένους ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου*: those led (or possessed) by the devil.

¹²⁰ R. Tannehill, *Unity I*, 28.

¹²¹ Cf. J. Ernst, *Überlegungen*, 34.

¹²² Cf. W.C. Schneider, *Herrscherverehrung*, 213.

¹²³ Cf. B. Kowalski, *Magnificat*, 54.

world.¹²⁴ Paradoxically, those who partake of his might are those who recognise this might.

The social and political situation of the time, in which Luke wrote his gospel, might have been decisive in the adoption of his thought: the devastating experience of this time and the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem might have allowed certain critical questions, suggesting uncertainty about the teaching that claimed Jesus to be the Christ. A Pharisaic group, sympathising with the circle of the Psalms of Solomon, might have revived their ideals as seen in the second part of the Magnificat. The Roman victory and the total occupation of Palestine are social factors that are not readily reconcilable with the apparent victory of Christ. They pose a very big question for the Jewish identity. Since the hope of salvation within this time was thought of in a political and historical manner, which expected the freedom from Roman occupation,¹²⁵ Luke maintains that the coming of Jesus is only the beginning and not the consummation of the salvation history. Moreover, the occupation of Palestine and the destruction of the Jerusalem temple are only temporary issues. The eschatological coming of the Christ would make these realities belong to history.¹²⁶

The admission of Gentiles to the faith might have brought a considerable height of inferiority complex among these Christians. Probably, it attracted the underprivileged in social ranking, which warranted James to denounce the attitude of the rich in a most provocative manner (5:1-6). Luke on his part would seem to be telling them with this sentence, that the blessed might not, after all, be those that are socially well situated, who lord it over others. This pharisaic feeling expressed in the Magnificat fits into the programme of Luke for his community.

At two other times, the Lucan Jesus promises the raising of the humble in 14:11; 18:14 (compare with 1:48a. 52b). The kingdom of God is reserved for the poor, the prisoners, the sick, the possessed (8:26-39; 9:37-43), the oppressed, the children, the sinners (5:17-26. 27-32; 7:36-50; 22:21-23) and the tax collectors (5:27-32; 19: 1-10). This act of God in the work of Jesus should be seen from the perspective of a divine justice that seeks to balance equations. Such equations are seen in the Lucan beatitudes in Lk 6:20-26. The Magnificat thematises the raising of the humble. It never promised the usurpation of the power of the mighty.¹²⁷ An equative balance of fortune is intended and not the arbitrary exhibition of power.

5. Redaction criticism

This chapter has preoccupied itself with the intentions of Luke, which made him include the magnificat in his narrative of the annunciation/infancy. He made certain changes in the text, which I have shown, he adopted. These changes were made in order to fit it into the context we have. As such, the choice of the Magnificat in this context is not accidental but premeditated, however from the perspective of the nativity story of Jesus.¹²⁸

¹²⁴ Cf. F. Jung, ΣΩΤΗΡ, 267.

¹²⁵ R. J. Cassidy, Jesus, 50ff.

¹²⁶ Cf. Jensson/Lamb, Erniedrigten, 514.

¹²⁷ Cf. W. Radl, Lukas, 84.

¹²⁸ For a fuller discussion of this point, see R. Laurentin, Struktur, 96.

The Magnificat is a conglomerate of Old Testament Theologies.¹²⁹ It is full of traditions similar to the sentiments of the Psalms of Solomon. The only verse that seems to fit the situation of Mary is 48b. The reasons for this observation are: It is the only verse that makes the general hymn applicable to Mary. It tends to disturb the free flow of thought and the poetic structure of the hymn. The clause “For behold from now all generations will call me blessed”, is to be seen as an intrusion. It contains more Lucanisms than other sentences in the Hymn.¹³⁰

The second part of the verse is reminiscent of the statement of Leah in Gen 30:13. From the Lucan perspective, this could depict the situation of Mary, because of the graciousness of God towards her in being the chosen mother of the Messiah. The Magnificat in its original form might have been a song among others used in the liturgy of the Baptist movement for the praise and honour of their patron combined with Pharisaic ideals of the Psalms of Solomon. Luke, strongly convinced of the superiority of Jesus and at the same time trying to be fair to John the Baptist, adopted the song and made out of a Baptist song a Jesuanic hymn. An explication of the situation of Elizabeth warranted the use of the song of Hannah in 1 Sam 2, but Luke intending to make the song fit into the situation of Mary, removed the very verse that would have utterly betrayed his intention. The verse in question is 1 Sam 2:5c, where God is praised for bestowing the barren woman with children in all its fullness (seven): ὅτι στείρα ἔτεκεν ἑπτα.

The observation in v.50 is also very important for the redactional intention of Luke. There is no exact parallel of 50a in the Old Testament. However, many verses might have served as motivating factors for this verse. Instances are Ps 32:11; 48:12; 78:13. However, all these verses have “generation” in singular: εἰς γενεάν καὶ γενεάν. That the plural form is used in the Magnificat, εἰς γενεάς καὶ γενεάς, suggests that the continuation of Israel, which is one of the tenets of Lucan theology, would incorporate people that did not belong initially to the chosen race,

“...aber mit dem Ausblick auf die endlos offene Zukunft rundet sie den Grundgedanken in der ersten Hälfte des Liedes ab...”¹³¹

The *πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί* of v.48 had already announced this intention of Luke. The inclusion of Abraham at the end of the hymn in v.55, which is considered by many as parenthetical, serves to amplify the intention of Luke in the construction of his salvific history, where he considers “...natürlich... die Abraham gegebene Verheißung für alle Völker.”¹³² The Hebrew retaliatory wisdom in Sir 10: 14 could be the motivating factor of v.52: *θρόνους ἀρχόντων καθεῖλεν ὁ κύριος καὶ ἐκάθισε πρῶτις αὐτῶν*. God is not a retaliatory God but only a God, who

¹²⁹ The plural rendering of theology is to suggest, that they are not to be considered as a theology in the strict sense of the word, but as information about God. For more on the traditions from the Old Testament see U. Mitmann-Richert, Magnifikat, 8-21.

¹³⁰ S. Farris, Hymns. 20-30, identified three typical Lucan words in this sentence.

¹³¹ W. Radl, Ursprung, 277.

¹³² W. Schmithals, Lukas, 31. Fitzmyer sees the new race as all encompassing, „The remnant of Israel is to have a new meaning, for it is to be reconstituted in a way that will extend the promises of old to others not under the law“. In: Luke I, 361; I. H. Marshall has another view: “But there is as yet no trace of a universalism embracing the Gentiles.” In: Luke, 85.

balances inequalities thus instituting justice in the world. He dethrones the mighty, and raises the lowly. It is never stated, that he dethrones the mighty, in order to seat the lowly at their stead: *καθεῖλεν δυνάστας ἀπὸ θρόνων καὶ ὕψωσεν ταπεινούς*. God's interest lies only in an equative justice.

The tracing of the trajectory of the Lukan theology of the Magnificat to the traditions in the Old Testament exemplifies the intention of Luke to show an intertestamentary continuity.¹³³ That could explain the thought behind the choice of this hymn. However, this continuity in terms of traditions is given in the form of a tapestry, which ultimately gives rise to a new piece of thought. "Deutlich wird hier zitiert, doch so, dass die grundlegenden Zitate ineinandergearbeitet werden, wodurch nicht nur ein völlig neues Satzgebilde entsteht, dessen grammatikalische Schwierigkeiten sich aus ebendieser Kompositionsweise ergeben, sondern auch ein theologisch neues Beziehungsgeflecht, welches den Horizont der verarbeiteten Textstellen erheblich weitet."¹³⁴ Luke adopted this hymn, making sure that it fits into his theological program.

The intention of the Magnificat for the reader is the presentation of the intervention of God in human history. The basic information the hymn wants to give is the assurance of the presence and intervention of God in the salvation history. That explains the martial and revolutionary language of v. 51-53, pointing out in the aorist the mighty works of God. A social revolution would be attained through eschatological reversal. God's regard for a humble woman is a paradigm of God's eschatological actions for the world.¹³⁵ From the beginning, the hymn gives a striking characterisation of a God, whose purpose shapes the salvation story in Luke. Further information of importance is the opening of the salvation for those, who do not initially belong to the saved race. With expressions like *φοβούμενοι*, *ταπεινοί* and *πεινῶντες*, Luke shows interest for the marginalised and for those who do not belong to Jewish Christians in his community. He tells this group that they belong to those destined to savour the mercy of God. The name Abraham is programmatic: it encompasses the whole of the human race in the dawn of a new salvation history.

The many references to Israel in the exegetical work is a historical instance: the oppressed and glorified Israel receives a Christian salvific personalisation in Mary.¹³⁶ This identity could have been motivated by the intensified projection of the salvation of Israel in Mary. An eschatology, which is typical of the Jewish apocalyptic, plays a vital role, however, from the perspective of the resurrection of Jesus, giving the hymn a Christian touch.

¹³³ The opinion of D. Schinkel is apt: "Lk schafft im Magnifikat eine Art literarisch-motivgeschichtlichen Querschnitt durch das AT und verbindet diesen mit der Intention, im Rahmen einer Exposition zu seinem Evangelium sich auf die Tradition zu besinnen, Kontinuität zum AT aufzuzeigen und gleichzeitig die Geburt Jesu theologisch vorzubereiten. Tradition und Kontinuität sind der Boden für das Neue, das mit der Geburt Christi anbricht." D. Schinkel, *Magnifikat*, 279.

¹³⁴ U. Mittmann-Richert, *Magnifikat*, 15.

¹³⁵ Cf. R. Tannehill, *Unity I*, 29.

¹³⁶ Cf. J. Ernst, *Überlegungen*, 35. Also R. Laurentin, *Struktur*, 98.

6. Conclusion

By way of conclusion, the Magnificat is not a compendium of the theology of Luke or his Christian community. We are only compelled to assert that the Magnificat, although not fully outlining all the aspects of the theology of Luke, still represents a very important access to it. It helps to stress the importance-culture of Luke. In addition, it helps to analyse how he tried to imbibe this culture into the life of the community for which he wrote. From the deeds of God in the Magnificat, Luke seems to give a programme of duty to his Jesus. Jesus not only befriended the poor and the needy, he equally cared for the sick by healing them. He brought the good news to the poor, which does not exclude the rich and the powerful, in as much as they are ready to abhor violence and to give alms. Those who repented like Zachaeus (Lk 19:1-10) underwent a conversion that served as a prerequisite for salvation.¹³⁷ From these findings, it suffices to say that Luke never intended a church, where power and social ranking should be the determinants of salvation. From the perspective of the Magnificat, one understands his injunction in Lk 14 as a reminder to his community that salvation has nothing to do with social ranking. The humility of Mary, who sees herself as *δούλη* and therefore exemplifies herself as paradigm, should be the hallmark of all in the community. Luke presented the same humility in the speech of Paul to the elders in Ephesus, who should see themselves as humble servants of God without any privileges attached.¹³⁸ With a Hellenistic Christian community comprising of the rich and the poor, Luke makes an enduring effort to inculcate into the mind of his Christians that the lust for seats of honour has nothing to do with lowliness. In addition, a sinful Christian can also be saved, when he shows a deep sign of humility typified in the confession of one's sin and unworthiness just like the tax collector in Lk 18:9-13.

Just like many New Testament writers, he made use of sources, not only from the Old Testament, but also from the culture and context of the New Testament times. How he rearranged these sources, give a clue, to what his interest could be. Luke intended a church that would be a church, i.e., a community which, through the way its members deal with one another, demonstrates to the world what social relations directed by God are.¹³⁹ Luke intended a world, in which the less fortunate should be accepted and not tolerated. Behind the eschatologically motivated criticisms of the rich, the powerful and the proud, we see a real concern for the less privileged and the marginalised. The metaphors of rising and falling in the Magnificat, especially in Lk 1:52, are already anticipative of Simeon's oracle of conflict, where Jesus is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel. Those that would fall are those that have no Christian identity. Those that see themselves as belonging to the new community of God are assured of rising with God.

The conviction of the reversal of destiny discussed in the Magnificat is overtly an interesting aspect of the theology of Luke, which succinctly undertakes to explore the hope sustained by the composer of the Magnificat, who is convinced that God

¹³⁷ Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Interpretation*, 191.

¹³⁸ Cf. B. Heininger, *Metaphorik*, 197.

¹³⁹ Cf. C. H. Talbert, *Luke*, 25.

loves the poor and the humble. The eschatological hope imposed on the Messiah is no longer postponed to the end of time. The birth of the Messiah is "...eine unüberbietbare Großtat, die aber ganz eingehüllt ist in eine unüberbietbare Erniedrigung."¹⁴⁰ This is why he has already begun to manifest the features and the qualities reserved for him at the end of time. The downtrodden and the marginalised will have their ill fate reversed to fortune. The hungry will have enough to satisfy their biological and moral hunger, and the humble will be exalted. Those that lord over others will be pulled down from their throne, the rich will be sent away empty-handed, while the proud will be humiliated.¹⁴¹ In the course of the gospel narrative, the composer of Luke's gospel will acquaint the reader with more surprising reversals: Those who lay claim to being sons of God will be rejected and treated as outcasts, while those least expected of gaining access to God's kingdom, would be allowed in. All these reversals serve to fulfil God's intention, and they have a central importance in the composition of Luke. "Mary's hymn of praise begins to make clear that the story deals with a God who works in human life by overturning the presumption of the powerful and the resignation of the weak. Since the outcome of events repeatedly conflicts with human calculations, the signature of this God appears in the human experience of irony."¹⁴² The continuity between Israel and the church is one of the theological intentions of Luke. This continuity receives a subtle but emphatic projection in his composition of the Magnificat. Israel is seen as the servant of God in the Magnificat in relation to the promise made to Abraham instead of the promise to David.¹⁴³ However, a further reading of the gospel of Luke shows that the composer also depicts an apparent fatal crisis within Israel, which will eventually lead to the emergence of a new Israel. The new Israel that will emerge after God must have purged the world of the proud, the rich and the mighty is to be identified with the church. This continuity of Israel in the church forms the theological background for the Acts of the Apostles. With the conversion of many Jews to the Christian faith, they seemed to constitute the main nucleus of the believing people of God with the inclusion of believing Gentiles. For these Jews and Gentiles, God's promise to Israel has been fulfilled, and the long awaited new Israel has already emerged, with the result that the unbelieving portion of the house of Israel is rejected forever.¹⁴⁴ The Magnificat shares the hope that

¹⁴⁰ R. Laurentin, *Struktur*, 96.

¹⁴¹ After having done a wonderful work concerning the possible links and traditions in the Old Testament, Seccombe gave an answer that is unbelievable for any study of the Lukan gospel, and what more, a grievous attack on the theology of the Magnificat: "We may now answer the problems raised at the beginning... and say that there is nothing in the Magnificat to justify speaking of Luke as a champion of the cause of the lower classes, nor to indicate any antipathy on his part towards the well-to-do. The poor are saved not because they are without possessions, but because they are God's chosen people, trodden down by the nations. Nor are the rich scattered because they are wealthy, but because they are the proud oppressors of Israel." D.P. Seccombe, *Possessions*, 82.

¹⁴² R.C. Tannehill, *Unity I*, 31.

¹⁴³ Abraham would then be a representative of all races, while David remains the constant guarantee for the fulfilment of the messianic promise made to the Jews.

¹⁴⁴ J. Jervell, *People*, 64.

everyone will have a share in the salvation intended for the new Israel, which does not only include the old Israel of the Old Testament covenant, but opens up for all the people for which Abraham stands for. Mary represents this Israel,¹⁴⁵ which has been oppressed, but now stands at the threshold of salvation.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. R. Laurentin, *Struktur*, 96.

1. THE BIRTH NARRATIVE: Imperial edict and divine fulfilment

1.1 Greek Text

- 1a Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις
 b ἐξῆλθεν δόγμα παρὰ Καίσαρος Αὐγούστου
 c ἀπογράφεσθαι πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην.
 2a αὕτη ἀπογραφή πρώτη ἐγένετο
 b ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου.
 3a καὶ ἐπορεύοντο πάντες
 c ἀπογράφεσθαι, ἕκαστος εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ πόλιν.
 4a Ἀνέβη δὲ καὶ Ἰωσήφ ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας ἐκ πόλεως Ναζαρεθ εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν
 εἰς πόλιν Δαυὶδ
 b ἣτις καλεῖται Βηθλέεμ,
 c διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριᾶς Δαυὶδ,
 5a ἀπογράψασθαι σὺν Μαριὰμ τῇ ἐμνηστευμένῃ αὐτῷ,
 b οὔσῃ ἐγκύῳ.
 6a ἐγένετο δὲ
 b ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἐκεῖ
 c ἐπλήσθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν,
 7a καὶ ἔτεκεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον·
 b καὶ ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτὸν
 c καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτὸν ἐν φάτνῃ,
 d διότι οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι.
 8a Καὶ ποιμένες ἦσαν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ τῇ αὐτῇ ἀγραυλοῦντες
 b καὶ φυλάσσοντες φυλακὰς τῆς νυκτὸς ἐπὶ τὴν ποιμνὴν αὐτῶν.
 9a καὶ ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐπέστη αὐτοῖς
 c καὶ δόξα κυρίου περιέλαμψεν αὐτούς,
 d καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν.
 10a καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ ἄγγελος,
 b Μὴ φοβεῖσθε,
 c ἰδοὺ γὰρ
 d εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην
 e ἣτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ,
 11a ὅτι ἐτέχθη ὑμῖν σήμερον σωτὴρ
 b ὅς ἐστιν Χριστὸς κύριος ἐν πόλει Δαυὶδ·
 12a καὶ τοῦτο ὑμῖν τὸ σημεῖον,
 b εὐρήσετε βρέφος
 c ἐσπαργανωμένον καὶ κείμενον ἐν φάτνῃ.
 13a καὶ ἐξαίφνης ἐγένετο σὺν τῷ ἀγγέλῳ πλήθος στρατιᾶς οὐρανοῦ
 b αἰνούντων τὸν θεὸν καὶ λεγόντων,
 14a Δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις θεῷ
 b καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς εἰρήνη ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας.
 15a Καὶ ἐγένετο ὡς ἀπῆλθον ἀπ' αὐτῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν οἱ ἄγγελοι,
 b οἱ ποιμένες ἐλάλουν πρὸς ἀλλήλους,
 c Διέλθωμεν δὴ ἕως Βηθλέεμ
 e καὶ ἴδωμεν τὸ ῥῆμα τοῦτο τὸ γεγονὸς

- f* ὁ ὁ κύριος ἐγνώρισεν ἡμῖν.
16a καὶ ἦλθον σπεύσαντες
b καὶ ἀνεῦρον τήν τε Μαριὰμ καὶ τὸν Ἰωσήφ καὶ τὸ βρέφος
c κείμενον ἐν τῇ φάτνῃ·
17a ἰδόντες δὲ ἐγνώρισαν περὶ τοῦ ῥήματος
b τοῦ λαληθέντος αὐτοῖς περὶ τοῦ παιδίου τούτου.
18a καὶ πάντες οἱ ἀκούσαντες ἐθαύμασαν
b περὶ τῶν λαληθέντων ὑπὸ τῶν ποιμένων πρὸς αὐτούς·
19a ἡ δὲ Μαριὰμ πάντα συνετήρει τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα
b συμβάλλουσα ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῆς.
20a καὶ ὑπέστρεψαν οἱ ποιμένες
b δοξάζοντες καὶ αἰνοῦντες τὸν θεὸν
c ἐπὶ πᾶσιν οἷς ἤκουσαν καὶ εἶδον
d καθὼς ἐλαλήθη πρὸς αὐτούς.

1.2 English Translation

- 1a* In those days
b it happened that an edict came from Emperor Augustus
c that the whole inhabited world should be registered.
2a This first census took place
b when Quirinius was the governor of Syria.
3a All went out
b in order to be registered, each in his own town.
4a So Joseph went up too from Galilee, from his town Nazareth to Judea in the town of David,
b which was called Bethlehem
c because he comes from the house and family of David,
5a to be registered with Mary his betrothed,
b who was pregnant.
6a It happened however,
b as they were there
c the fullness of days came for her to deliver
7a and she delivered her firstborn son
b wrapped him in cloth bands
c and laid him in a manger
d because there was no place for them in the lodge.
8a There were shepherds in the same district out of doors
b and they kept night watch over their flocks.
9a The angel of the Lord appeared to them
b and the glory of the lord shone around them
c and they had a terrible fear.
10a But the angel spoke to them
b do not be afraid
c behold
d I announce to you a great joy
e which will be for the whole people.

- 11a A saviour is born for you today
 b who is Christ, the Lord in the town of David.
- 12a This will be a sign for you:
 b You will find a baby
 c wrapped in cloth bands and lying in a manger.
- 13a Suddenly a throng of the heavenly host appeared with the angel
 b praising God and singing:
- 14a Glory to God in the highest
 b and on earth peace to people he favours
- 15a It happened
 b as the angels left them and had gone back to heaven
 c the shepherds said to one another
 d let us go over to Bethlehem
 e and see this thing that has taken place
 f which the Lord has made known to us.
- 16a So they came in haste
 b and found Mary and Joseph and the baby
 c lying in a manger.
- 17a Having seen him, they made known the message
 b which had been given to them about this child.
- 18a And all who heard of it wondered
 b at what the shepherds told them.
- 19a However Mary treasured all these things
 b and pondered over them in her heart.
- 20a The shepherds returned
 b glorifying and praising God
 c for all they heard and saw
 d just as it had been told to them.

2. *The context of the birth narrative*

The Lukan birth narrative is situated between the birth of John the Baptist and the pilgrimage of Jesus and his parents to Jerusalem. Beginning with the information about the census (Lk 2:1), it ends with the statement that the child advanced in wisdom and in strength, with God's favour (*χάρις*) being upon him (Lk 2:40). Of exegetical importance for the topic is the appearance of three high Christological titles for Jesus in the eleventh verse of the second chapter of the gospel of Luke: *σωτήρ*, *χριστός* and *κύριος*. Luke not only reserves these titles for Jesus, he also contrasts Jesus with Augustus. The titles, *σωτήρ* and *κύριος* remind the reader of the Magnificat, where Mary praised God as his lord and saviour. The God who acts for and on behalf of the lowly in Magnificat 1:48 is now born in a lowly stable.¹ That the shepherds received the revelation of the birth of Jesus initiates already the fulfilment of raising the lowly in 1:55.² The topics in the birth narrative important for the discussion are the elements involved in the contrast

¹ Cf. P.L. Schuler, Luke, 92.

² Cf. W. Eckey, Lukasevangelium I, 142.

theology of Luke. The opposing dynamics between the emperor and Jesus will be discussed from the perspective of *σωτήρ* and *εὐαγγελία*:

In v.10, Luke uses the verb for bringing the “good news” (*εὐαγγελίζομαι*) of the birth of Jesus. A reader, well acquainted with the social programme of this time, marvels at the echo of the language and thought with which the emperor was honoured by a Greek city in Asia. With the use of the same idea and thought, however, for a different person, Luke presents a contrast programme to that of the *pax Augusta*. Notwithstanding the contrasting nature of this edict to the angelic proclamation, the emperor with the title *σωτήρ τοῦ κόσμου* presented the forum for the birth of the true *σωτήρ*.

The references to Augustus, Quirinius and to the census are devices, which enable the setting of Jesus’ birth within the framework of global history, paying attention to its political and economic features.³ This historiography helps in initiating the contrast theology, which is the aim of Luke.

2.1 *The structure of the text of the birth narrative: Lk 2:1-20*

The „birth narrative“⁴ is used here, not in an extended form to cover the whole spectrum of the birth of Jesus. It only refers to the aspects relevant to the dissertation. The structure presented is a microstructure concerned with Lk 2:1-20. The discussion comprising the first twenty verses is necessary⁵ since it concludes with the honour and praise of God on human level, which seems to complement angelic praise and honour of God in vv 13-14. The *ἐγένετο δὲ* in v1 and another *ἐγένετο δὲ* in v 6 serve as syntactic marker not only showing the unity of 1-5,⁶ but also the beginning of another theme and subsection in v.6. The inclusion of *ἡμέραις* in v.1a and *ἡμέραι* in v.6c supports this observation. The Greek words depicting the census and the idea of being registered are recurrent in v.1-5: *ἀπογράφεσθαι* (1c and 3b), *ἀπογραφή* (2a) and *ἀπογράψασθαι* (5a). With v.6, a new theme and new protagonists come actively into the scene: Birth, Mary and Jesus. The *δόγμα* from Augustus isolates him from the masses, who heed to his edict: *καὶ ἐπορεύοντο πάντες*. With the preposition *παρὰ*, he is detached from human affairs making the *δόγμα*, the subject of the verb *ἐξέρχομαι*, to be an independent

³ Cf. R. E. Brown, *Birth*, 414f.

⁴ I have already indicated that the birth narrative ends with the information in Lk 2:40. The words *ἄγκυρος*, *τεκεῖν*, *πρωτότοκος*, *σπαργανῶν*, *φάτνη*, *βρέφος*, *παιδίον* are only seen within Lk 2:1-40, dealing with the birth and the purification/presentation of the child in the temple. Although the words *παῖς* and *τέκνον* appeared in Lk 2:43 and 48, however, the very information that Jesus was twelve years excludes the narrative from belonging to the birth narrative. One can say that they all belong to the infancy narrative, beginning with the annunciation of his birth and ending with his finding in the temple.

⁵ Pesch is convinced of noticing a premeditated structure of the christmas narrative, which he extends to v.21 seeing Augustus and Jesus as forming an *Oppositio*. He structures as follows: vv.1-7: the birth of Jesus, vv.8-14: the announcement of birth, vv.15-21b: the confirmation of birth. He further subdivides each of these sections in three noting the importance of the middle element in each subsection: the origin of Jesus from David, the information of the angel and the reaction of the shepherds. In a further subdivision, he exposes the importance of the number 14 in relation to David. Cf. R. Pesch, *Weihnachtsevangelium*, 99-105.

⁶ Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 392. He sees it as the setting for the birth of Jesus. Nolland sees it also from the perspective of Bethlehem as the place of Jesus’ birth in accordance with Mic 5:2. Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke I*, 102. See also J.B. Green, *Luke*, 125.

structure thereby denying Augustus a voice. This device exemplifies the fact that the birth of Jesus as an event within his empire is not in his control. A narrative jump from a general situation to a particular condition is very apparent: The census is for the whole inhabited world *οἰκουμένη*, which explains the movement of all individuals in v.3a *καὶ ἐπορεύοντο πάντες* and 3b *ἕκαστος εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ πόλιν*. However, there is a particular concentration on Joseph and his betrothed from v.4a. The word *καῖσαρ* and the genitive absolute of *ἡγεμονεύω* denoting the power of Quirinius are markers of power/status contrasting Joseph, Mary (v.4.5) and the world (“all”- v.3a), who are *Befehlsempfänger*.⁷ The birth of Jesus (6-7) is held together with the words *τεκεῖν, ἔτεκεν, τὸν υἱόν, πρωτότοκον, ἐσπαργάνωσεν* and *φάτνη*.

The annunciation scene (8-12) is replete of epiphanic themes (*καὶ ἄγγελος κυρίου ἐπέστη* (9a), *καὶ εφοβήθησαν φόβον μέγαν* (9c) and *μὴ φοβεῖσθε* (10b) after which the annunciation themes (*εὐαγγελίζομαι, χαρὰν μεγάλην*) and the object (v.11: *σωτήρ, χριστός, κύριος*; v.12a: *τὸ σημεῖον*) appear. In addition, the juxtaposition of *νυκτός* (8) and *περιέλαμψεν* (9) heighten the epiphanic language. These give these verses a structure and an identity.⁸ Striking is the presence of a *hapax legomenon* in v.8a: *ἀγραιλοῦντες*. As an opposite to the figure of Augustus, the angel of God professes the good news as the subject of this annunciation. The dynamics of contrasts between the powerful and the non-powerful is retained: The shepherds receive the information, which was denied the powerful. Besides, the *δόγμα* of Augustus geared towards domination and subordination finds a contrast in the *εὐαγγέλιον* of the angel, which promises great joy. The praise of the angels (13-14) finds its resonance in the praise and honour of the shepherds for God.⁹ The *δόξα* summarises not only the gratitude of the angels (v.14) but also of men (v.20 *δοξάζοντες*) to God. With the *εἰρήνη*, a contrast to the *pax romana* of Augustus is articulated. The repetition of certain verbs in vv 15-20 is very striking: *λαλέω* four times, *ῥήμα* three times, *ὄρω* three times.

The text could be divided into three sections: 1. Introduction (1-7) comprising of the introductory setting and the birth of Jesus (1-5: 6-7), 2. Birth announcement (8-14) with the appearance and announcement of the angel¹⁰ (8-12) and the angelic praise of God (13-14) and 3. Certification of birth (15-20).

Many shifts in perspective are noticed in the narrative with the shift to the birth of Jesus making it the centre of an episode: A narrative, which begins with a wide

⁷ Cf. J.B. Green, Luke, 125. Also W. Radl, Ursprung, 144.

⁸ Radl and Brown extend this section to include v.13 and v.14, thereby dividing this aspect of the birth narrative from the perspective of setting- annunciation- reactions. Cf. W. Radl, Lukas, 104 and R. Brown, Birth, 410. In the same manner, Nolland grouped vv.8-15 as a pastoral scene in which the shepherds learn of the birth of Jesus. Cf. J. Nolland, Luke 1, 102.

⁹ This is in accordance with the narrative intention of Luke in associating the celestial and the earthly realms: Occurrences in heaven have their resonance on earth.

¹⁰ Ancient literatures are acquainted with wonderful stories connected with important personalities. Plutarch documented not only wonders connected with the birth of Osiris (Is et Os 12), but also of Alexander (Alex 3,3-5). The text has even parallels in the Old Testament. Instances abound in the Old Testament, where the birth of a child does not only mean Joy and salvation for the parents, but also the assurance of an everlasting offspring (Gen 16:7-14; 18:1-19) and for the salvation of his people (Jg 13:1-25).

span of Augustus and the whole world *πάσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην* makes a shift and centres on the birth of a child. Another shift moves from the child and concentrates externally on the proclamation of this birth by the inhabitants of heaven.¹¹ The thesis that the birth of Jesus and its angelic annunciation are the centre of the narrative is further amplified by the anticlimactic nature of vv 15-20 full of redundancies in the articulation and repetition of verbs.¹²

The three structures (vv 1-7; vv 8-14; vv 15-20) offer the opportunity of giving the humble circumstance of Jesus' birth and his descent from David more eminence and profile: The Greek word *φάτινη*¹³ appears in each of the three sections v.7, v.12 and v.16 just as "Bethlehem" or "the city of David" appears in v.4, v.11 and v.15. The observation is apt that the general composition of the pericope places Augustus at the beginning and God at the end as opposing poles. This fact, however, warrants a further observation that the edict of a person, seeing himself as saviour and arrogating to himself godly powers, led to the glory and praise of the true God, who gives the world the true saviour and lord from an unsuspecting and meaningless hinterland of the tribe of David.

2.2 *The literary genre of the micro text*

Determining the literary genre of the birth narrative is not a light venture in as much as the account of the birth of Jesus that centres on the angelic announcement to the shepherds concerning the messianic identity of the newborn child has prior information.¹⁴ The birth of Jesus is followed by another different literary unit, albeit having to do with the general theme of birth. Three genres are present:¹⁵

Vv 1-7 comprising of the setting of the birth and the actual birth belongs to the genre of birth narrative.¹⁶ Information regarding the wonderful circumstances of the birth of this person is also very important. In this case, the *ἔθνος* of Jesus would be Jewish from Judea (Lk 2:4), while his *πατρις* is Bethlehem (Lk 2:4). The *πρόγονοι* are Mary and Joseph, descendants of David (Lk 2:4), while *τὰ περὶ τῆς γενέσεως* are the circumstance of the census, which made Jesus be born in

¹¹ Cf. C.K. Rowe, *Christology*, 49.

¹² Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas 1*, 129f. Interesting however is the observation of Nolland that this section is like a climax because the protagonists of vv 1-7 and vv 8-15 meet themselves. Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke 1*, 102.

¹³ In accordance with Luke's overriding interest in the theme of food, it would not be out of order to interpret the manger, which occurs in each of the three sections, as a symbol of Jesus being the sustenance for the world. Notwithstanding the lowly circumstances of his birth devoid of hospitality, he hosts the starving humanity. Cf. R.J. Karris, *Artist*, 47-78.

¹⁴ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke 1*, 98. Lk 2:11-14 is necessary to understand Lk 2:1-20, because it is in these verses that we hear Luke's voice. Having quoted traditions in 1:51-53 that could be viewed as militaristic, Luke presents Jesus as the davidic messiah, who will bring peace for humanity.

¹⁵ W. Radl sees the literary genre of this microtext not from the perspective of narrative but from the perspective of history and theology: an event (the birth of Jesus) receives a theological explanation, a story of birth becomes a story of revelation. Cf. W. Radl, *Lukas*, 106.

¹⁶ Cf. K. Berger, *Formgeschichte*, 349.

Bethlehem and in a manger.¹⁷ Examples of such births are Plutarch's accounts of heroes like Alexander¹⁸ and Charilaus.¹⁹ The birth of Osiris is also presented in such a genre.²⁰

Vv 8-12 exemplifies the announcement of birth within an angelophany with the explicit proclamation of salvation.²¹ Is 9:6 is an example of such a genre. It shares at times the conditions of the promise of birth genre.²² The salvation attached is shown in Jg 13:1-25 where the promise of a child means salvation for the people. Vv 13-14 is theophanic acclamation.²³ The acclamation is theophanic because it comes from heavenly spokespersons and not to a character in the narrative.²⁴ Is 6:1-7, Ez 1:4-28 and 1 Kg 22:19 are instances.

2.3 *Literary development of the text*

With Lk 2:1, Luke gets back to the beginning of Jesus. The double promise of the births of John and Jesus and the fulfilment of the promise of the birth of John in Lk 1:57-80 make the informed reader to expect a detailed narrative of the birth of Jesus.²⁵ With his parallelism, Luke depicts the supremacy of Jesus over John.²⁶ However, the beginning of the second chapter cannot be the continuation of the Jesus tradition, which ended in Lk 1:38.²⁷ Mary appears as if she were not introduced in Lk 1:27. There is no allusion to the virgin birth and to the instrumentality of the Holy Spirit in the conception of Jesus. That Mary understood the magnificence of the birth of Jesus only after the visit of the shepherds renders Lk 1:26-38 redundant. Moreover, the purpose of the visit to Bethlehem, which is the census, receives no further treatment.

With a high probability, one can say that the setting of Lk 2:1-5 is an invention of Luke allowing Jesus to be born in Bethlehem.²⁸ He pursues a Christology, which explains the beginning of Jesus and establishes him as an heir to David.

¹⁷ The categories *ἔθνος, πατρίς, πόλις, πρόγονοι, τὰ περὶ τῆς γενέσεως* were enumerated by K. Berger as necessary for the portrayal of the birth of heroes. Cf. K. Berger, *Gattungen*, 1174. The noble origin of a hero is also of immense importance.

¹⁸ Cf. Plutarch, *Alex* 3, 3-5.

¹⁹ Cf. Plutarch, *Lykurgus* 3.

²⁰ Cf. Plutarch, *Is*. 12.

²¹ Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas* 1, 115. Bovon however is convinced that Lk 2:8-20 belongs to the literary genre of angelic announcement with vv 8-12 being the announcement while vv 15-20 serves as a certification of the announcement. Westermann has opined that vss. 8-12 should be regarded as an epiphany in which God appears to help or to save his people. Cf. C. Westermann, *Elemente*, 323. However, the classification of this section under the literary genre of annunciation is better.

²² Cf. D. Zeller, *Ankündigung*, 35f.

²³ Cf. F. Jung, *ΣΩΤΗΡ*, 273. Also W. Radl, *Lukas*, 105.

²⁴ Cf. R.E. Brown, *Birth*, 426. Legrand classified this section under the literary genre of apocalypse. Cf. L. Legrand, *L'évangile*, 184.

²⁵ Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 96.

²⁶ Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 96 and J. Nolland, *Luke I*, 98. The birth of John is greeted with a prophecy coming from the father (Lk 1:68-79), while the birth of Jesus is heralded with an angelic proclamation (Lk 2:9-14).

²⁷ Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas*, 115.

²⁸ Cf. W. Radl, *Lukas*, 106, L.T. Johnson, *Luke*, 51f.

Discussions and objections regarding the historicity of the census are many.²⁹ With a definite place, probably Nazareth, v.6 and v. 7a might have served as the continuation of the Jesus tradition that stopped in Lk 1:38 following the form of promise and fulfilment. However, v.7b-d *καὶ ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτὸν ἐν φάτνῃ, διότι οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι* should be seen as an addition of Luke to link this tradition with the setting he has invented.³⁰ In a unified, homogenous and well thought out story, a description of the place of birth comes before the actual birth.

A summary of this development implies that the annunciation to Mary had in the tradition a part telling of its fulfilment following the pattern of promise – fulfilment. However, in the redaction of Luke only v.6-7a and v.21 retain elements of this traditional fulfilment. The beginning of the tradition might have been replaced with the census, to bring Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem because of the messianic tradition that the messiah is to be born in Bethlehem, the city of David.³¹ It helped him also to contrast Jesus with the emperor. The Lukan redaction is not interested in a scientific chronology, but in a purposeful storytelling.³²

The considered verses are not entirely a Lukan composition, nor are they traditions taken in their entirety by Luke. Notwithstanding the many sources of the different traditions, he composed the birth narrative of Jesus in such a way that he might complete the parallelism he began in the first chapter.

3. *Religio-Historical Perspective*

In analysing the structure of the text, the contrasts between Augustus and Jesus were evident. From a religious perspective, an attempt at fathoming the optic of the Lukan criticism from the imperial cult and the *pax romana* will be made.

3.1 *Imperial cult: A guide to the understanding of the text*

The beginning of the pericope suffices to show the sceptical position of Luke towards the governing organ. Augustus and Quirinius are mentioned as rulers, on the other hand, Joseph, Mary and Jesus, as subjects.³³ The birth of Jesus in lowly surroundings is presented hoping to arrive at a contrast with the majesty and

²⁹ The census and its probability have solicited many opinions generating a great deal of scholarly controversy. The beginning of the controversy dates back to 1835 with the work of D.F. Strauss. The opinion of Strauss could be summarised thus: There was no general census under Augustus; such a census could not have been permitted in a client kingdom under the reign of Herod the Great; Luke makes a mistake by situating the governorship of Quirinius under the reign of Herod the Great, although the governorship of Quirinius was later; Luke's account that Joseph needed to appear in Bethlehem does not correspond to the practice of Roman census and the presence of Mary was not obligatory. Thereafter, many scholars have taken many opinions: Cf. E. Schürer, *History*, 399-427, Machen, *Virgin birth*, 239-243, C.F. Evans, *Tertullian*, 24-39, H.R. Moehring, *Census*, 144-160. Luke's attempt at a correct synchronistic presentation of facts is not so successful because Herod the Great died in 4 B.C. and Augustus was emperor from 27 B.C. to 14 A.D. However, Quirinius was governor of Syria from 6 to 7 A.D. At the root of this problem is also the correct interpretation of the word *πρώτη*.

³⁰ Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas I*, 115.

³¹ Cf. Matt 2:1-6.

³² Cf. L.T. Johnson, *Luke*, 52.

³³ Cf. W. Radl, *Ursprung*, 144.

splendour of him whom the *imperium romanum* regarded as its saviour.³⁴ The developments leading to this appellation have a very long history making their way from the classical period to the time of the Roman hegemony.

The classical Greek period worshipped dead men with altars and sacrifices,³⁵ as honour granted in gratitude for political benefactions.³⁶ The genesis of this cult is as obscure as it is problematic.³⁷ It reached its apex with Alexander, who wanted the same quality found in the Egyptian divine monarchy.³⁸ The cultic veneration, which Alexander enjoyed while alive,³⁹ radicalised the idea of the ruler cult.

In a subtle social and political development, Rome embraced the ruler cult. Owing to its military conquests, the territories of Greece and Asia Minor were brought under its hegemony. To the new rulers the Greeks reacted in their accustomed manner by transferring the cult of rulers to them.⁴⁰ The cult of the goddess Roma provided a bridge between the cult of Hellenistic rulers and the Roman imperial cult.⁴¹

Honouring dead men was a normal practice in ancient Rome. The living did not receive such honour. Julius Caesar seemed to be an exception, who trespassed this cultural boundary. An epigraph in Ephesus celebrated Julius Caesar as the one from Ares and Aphrodite, the visibly appearing God (*θεόν ἐπιφανήν*) and the common saviour (*σωτήρα*) of human life.⁴² His statue should stand in the temple of Quirinius with the inscription, “to the unconquered God”.⁴³ The honour rendered to him after defeating Pompey was simply superhuman.⁴⁴ The Athenians thanked him in 47 BC with an inscription as *τὸν ἑαυτοῦ σωτήρα καὶ εὐεργέτην*,⁴⁵ and an altar was erected in Lesbos for *Γαίῳ Ἰουλίῳ Καίσαρι ἀρχιερεῖ εὐεργέτα καὶ σωτήρι*.⁴⁶ His nephew and adopted son Octavian received the name “Augustus” from the senate, which the Greeks translated as *σεβαστός*.⁴⁷ With the post of

³⁴ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, Luke I, 394.

³⁵ Lysander, according to the documentation of Plutarch, was the first Greek, for whom the cities erected altars and offered sacrifices as if to a god. Cf. Plut. Lysander 18,3. The reason behind this divinisation was his prowess and success in the Peloponnesian wars. Cf. S.R.F. Price, *Rituals*, 26.

³⁶ Cf. S.R.F. Price, *Rituals*, 23.

³⁷ M.P. Nilsson is convinced that the genesis of the cult of rulers is “...the most obscure and most highly disputed problem of Greek religion in the historical period.” *Geschichte II*, 135.

³⁸ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Context*, 267.

³⁹ It is still a matter of debate, whether Alexander was divinised while alive or after his death. Klauck maintains that owing to his conquest of the Persian empire, this cult should be seen as a matter of gratitude during his life time.

⁴⁰ The assessment given to this Greek adaptation is ambivalent. In a contemporary assessment, Klauck takes an explanatory position, seeing the adaptation of the Greek as a form of reaction to the experience of the Roman power. In the face of the Roman superiority, the Greeks had to adopt a way of integration in this political situation that would still maintain their identity. One way of doing this was the adaptation of the Hellenistic cult of rulers, with which they were familiar, to their present masters, the Romans. Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Sendschreiben*, 160.

⁴¹ Cf. D. Fishwick, *Cult I*, 1, 50.

⁴² SIG³ 760 (48 BC).

⁴³ Dio Cassius 43,45,3.

⁴⁴ Cf. Suetonius, *Divus Julius* 76.

⁴⁵ SEG XXXIV, 177 (=IG II/2, 3222).

⁴⁶ IG XII/2, 151=IGRR IV, 57.

⁴⁷ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Context*, 299.

pontifex maximus in 12 BC, his proximity to the gods received a further emphasis.⁴⁸ This religious recognition coupled with the respect given to Augustus for the peace brought to the empire formed the idea of the *pax romana*.

3.1.1 *The social and political Aspects of the pax romana*

Before and after the death of Julius Caesar, Italy was involved in wars, which lasted for many centuries. It was a case of a historiography of decline exemplifying an original imperfect republican religious dynamic in dire need of a reformer. Caesar's assassination in 44 BC laid the foundation for another war with Octavian, Mark Anthony and Lepidus forming a triumvirate against Brutus and Cassius, who were later defeated at Philippi in 42 B.C. The internal peace of the empire was not restored after this victory owing to the internal strife among the triumvirates. Octavian subdued Lepidus in 36 BC and finally defeated Mark Anthony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium in 31 BC. The disorder, civil discord and strife of the last century before Christ marking the failure of the republican constitutional government was resolved with the ascension of Octavian to the throne in a way that proved Tacitus right in his assertion that *pax* required a *princeps*.⁴⁹ "The poverty, misery and uncertainty caused by the Roman economic exploitation of Asia, the revolt of Mithridates, the incursions of pirates and the campaigns of the Roman civil wars were transformed into almost three centuries of stability and prosperity."⁵⁰ Civil disorder and defeat against external foes, which were considered signs and reflections of cosmic disorder ceased. Augustus succeeded in achieving what Alexander the great could not achieve⁵¹ making Rome a general chamber for the entire world.⁵²

Owing to this development, Aelius Aristides lobbied that the golden age should begin with Augustus.⁵³ In the same way, Vergil outlined the wonderful praises for the god called Augustus stressing his general meaning for the golden age.⁵⁴ Philo even praised Augustus as the custodian of peace.⁵⁵ The peace during the reign of Augustus became proverbial. The doors of the shrine of Janus, which normally

⁴⁸ Cf. D. Fishwick, *Cult* 1,1, 89.

⁴⁹ Cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* I.

⁵⁰ S. R. F. Price, *Rituals*, 54. A feature encountered when giving an appreciation of the reign of Augustus and the attendant *pax romana* is the discrepancy involved in the presentation. Authors, writing from a historical view, are only interested in presenting historical facts, without asking the moral and religious question behind this abundance. A christian author would try to show that amidst this seeming prosperity and peace of the empire, people suffered and were oppressed to sustain this prosperity.

⁵¹ The peace ideal that was realised within the *pax romana* was seen as an intention of Alexander, which could unfortunately not materialise. Cf. Plutarch, *Alex.* 1,6.

⁵² Pliny, *Nat.* 3,39f: *Una cunctarum gentium in toto orbe patria.*

⁵³ See the relevant quotations in K. Wengst, *Pax*, 19.

⁵⁴ Vergil, *Ecl.* 1.6-8, "Indeed, it was a god (*deus*) who bestowed on us the delight of *otium*, for I shall always look on him as a god, and the blood of a lamb from our flocks will often bedew his altar." In *Aeneid*, he wrote still on Augustus, "And this one is the hero who was so often promised to you, Augustus Caesar, offspring of the divine one. He brings back to the fields of Latium the golden age of the world". (*Aen.* 6.791-3).

⁵⁵ Cf. Philo, *Leg.* 147: *Εἰρηνοφύλαξ*.

stood open in times of war, were closed at last.⁵⁶ To monumentalize this peace, an altar was consecrated to it (*Ara pacis Augustae*) in 13-9 BC.⁵⁷ This *pax Augusta* therefore exemplified the profound association between Augustus and the divine power, which produced this peace.⁵⁸ In the altar's relief is an iconography showing "the epiphany of Pax, Felicitas, Concordia and Pietas in the person of Augustus and his restoration of the Roman and universal order."⁵⁹ This contributed to and was an aspect of the worship of the emperor, the imperial cult.⁶⁰ With subsequent emperors however, it adopted different religious and social ramifications.

3.1.2 *Εὐαγγελίζομαι*

Luke introduces the angel as "bringing"⁶¹ a piece of information for the great joy of all. *Εὐαγγέλιον* initially refers to good (εὖ) news brought by a messenger (ἄγγελος) or the pay for disseminating good news.⁶² It is also associated with a sacrifice of gratitude for the good news. In this case, the reason for the sacrifice is given in a verbal form.⁶³ Information, for which a pay could be expected could be of a private (birth of a child; announcement of marriage) or of a public (cheap prices; just world order) nature. However, it has to do mostly with victory in a battle.⁶⁴ For the work of the messenger, the special verb *εὐαγγελίζομαι* is evident.

⁵⁶ Augustus made this observation in his account for posterity, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 13.

⁵⁷ Augustus resisted any official worship in Rome, however, he promoted the worship of the imperial genius, which was the benevolent spirit, that protected him (Cf. Klauck, Context, 299). It is probable that this precaution was out of a political sensitivity arising from the example of Julius Caesar, who died because of his ambition. For more on Augustus' position to the imperial cult cf. D. Kienast, Augustus, 202-214, Herzog-Hauser, Kaiserkult, 820-833, Nock, Einrichtung, 377-388.

⁵⁸ Cf. J.R. Fears, Cult, 887.

⁵⁹ J.R. Fears, Cult, 885.

⁶⁰ The imperial cult is a prominent example of the pagan religiosity. Cf. H.J. Klauck, Sendschreiben, 181. He differentiates between "hartem" and "weichem" imperial cult, with the former demanding a sacrifice before the statue of the emperor and the cursing of Christ, while the latter designates a passive participation in a feast with pagan undertone.

⁶¹ The verb is *εὐαγγελίζω /-ομαι* and is normally rendered in English as „announcing“ or „bringing“ attached to an object, "the good news". The German translation "frohbotschaften" is better because of the literal unity between the action and the object. Of immense importance in the translation is the diphthong εὖ meaning "good". He used the verb *εὐαγγελίζομαι* ten times in his gospel and fifteen times in Acts, but always with a direct connection to Is 61:2 especially in Lk 4:18; 7:22. In Acts, the verb evolved into a technical term for the description of the missionary work, which has Christ as subject, especially in Acts 5: 42 and 17:18.

⁶² The double meaning can only be explained from the common etymological origin of the noun and the verb from the adjective *εὐάγγελος*: *εὐαγγέλιον* is that, which belongs to an *εὐάγγελος*. For the person, whom an *εὐάγγελος* visits, is that which belongs to *εὐάγγελος* a good news. For the *εὐάγγελος* however is *εὐαγγέλιον* the pay for the errand. Cf. G. Friedrich, *εὐαγγελίζομαι*, 719.

⁶³ Cf. Aristoph. Eq 656. In Eq 655: ἐπὶ συμφοραῖς ἀγαθαῖσιν εἰσηγγέλλμεναις (for the announcement of good events).

⁶⁴ This aspect was very determinant that it at times came to misunderstandings: As messengers persuaded the people to offer *εὐαγγέλια* to Nero for his three times victory in the olympic games, many thought that Nero was victorious in a battle against Olympia and had taken captives from there. Cf. Philostr., Vit Ap V 8).

In ancient Greek literature, be it pagan or Jewish, the *εὐαγγελ-* terminology refers to a message or an act of proclamation that must be “news” to the hearer. The Septuagint uses *εὐαγγελίζομαι* to translate the piel of the Hebrew word בשר.⁶⁵ Religiously, it refers to God’s intervention and gracious benefits,⁶⁶ which normally receive an oral proclamation.⁶⁷ However, the messenger of the good news is never described as *εὐάγγελος* but as *εὐαγγελιζόμενος*, a substantivised participle.⁶⁸ The use of the feminine form of *εὐαγγέλιον* is evidenced in the LXX.⁶⁹ The Hebrew root בשר was instrumental to the Christian reception of the verb *εὐαγγελίζομαι*.⁷⁰ In all Semitic languages, the root בשר contains the fundamental idea of joy⁷¹ used especially in the announcement of victory or in the bearing of the message of joy.⁷² From this background, every bearer of the message of war is referred as מברש.

Deutero-Isaiah (40-66) is important in the New Testament in order to understand *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* and its word forms, especially in the works of Luke. Many images exist therein regarding the good news, ranging from its explanation as the coming of God⁷³ to the societal changes it would bring: the reign of God in peace and justice⁷⁴ and the wellbeing of the poor and the outcast.⁷⁵

In his writings, Philo used the verb in a profane manner, retaining however the original meaning of disseminating good news.⁷⁶ After the reunification of Joseph and his brothers, the Egyptian chiefs hurried to bring the good news (*εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*) to the king.⁷⁷ The Women of Midian reported the good news (*εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*) of their seduction of the Israelites to their friends.⁷⁸ The verb helped Philo in the articulation of his metaphoric language, which is actually a novel enterprise: The movements of the Pleiades “announce (*εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*) reaping-time.”⁷⁹ However, there is a discrepancy in Philo’s use of the word forms in *Legatio ad Gaium*: Although Philo asserts that Caligula brings misfortune because of his blasphemy, he uses the verb thrice in his *Legatio ad Gaium* in the context of the imperial cult.⁸⁰ Surprising is that Philo uses this verb within the

⁶⁵ Only once did the Septuagint use *εὐαγγελίζομαι* to translate the hitpael of the word in 2 Sam 18:31. Cf. C. Spicq, *εὐαγγελίζομαι*, 83.

⁶⁶ Cf. Isa 40:9.

⁶⁷ Cf. Ps 40:9; Isa 40:9; 52:7.

⁶⁸ Cf. Isa 40:9; 52:7; Ps 67:12.

⁶⁹ ἡ εὐαγγελία is used in 2 Kg 18:20ff.

⁷⁰ For a lengthy account of this development cf. J.P. Dickson, *Mission-Commitment*, 153-177.

⁷¹ Cf. J. Bowman, *Gospel*, 54-67.

⁷² Cf. 2 Sam 18:26.

⁷³ Cf. Is 40:9.

⁷⁴ Cf. Is 52:7.

⁷⁵ Cf. Is 61:1-2.

⁷⁶ Cf. Philo, *Jos.* 245. The Patriarch Joseph admonished his brothers to return to his father and “give him the good tidings (*εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*) that you have found me.”

⁷⁷ Cf. Philo, *Jos.* 245.

⁷⁸ Cf. Philo *Virt.* 40.

⁷⁹ Cf. Philo *Creat.* 115.

⁸⁰ Cf. Philo *Leg.* 18. 19. 231. In the 18th and 19th chapter, Philo uses the word to refer to news of the recovery of the sick Caligula. In the 231st chapter, Philo narrates how the Jewish people congratulated Caligula on hearing the good new, that he has ascended the throne.

visit of the Alexandrian Jews to this emperor seeking an exemption from the imperial edict, which ordered and institutionalised the imperial worship. This profanity is also evident in Josephus. He used *εὐαγγελίζομαι* when narrating a message of victory,⁸¹ the announcement of birth⁸² or the announcement of a favourable occasion.⁸³ He used the plural form *εὐαγγέλια* when narrating details of imperial biographies. On the ascendance of Vespasian to the throne, he writes:

“Tiberius... made all preparations for Vespasian’s arrival; and quicker than thought rumour spread the news of the new emperor in the east. Every city kept festival for the good news (*εὐαγγέλια*) and offered sacrifices on his behalf...”⁸⁴

The use of the noun by Josephus shows a Hellenistic influence while the use of the verb reveals the Jewish background of the word family.⁸⁵ The departure from the religious implication of the *εὐαγγελίζομαι* in early Judaism represented by Philo and Josephus is corrected in Palestinian Judaism. *בשׂר* once again assumed the religious meaning it had. Of immense importance is the observation that the idea of the messenger of the good news, evolved from Deutero-Isaiah, remained present in the Palestinian Judaism that harboured the hope of the redemption of Israel, peace and salvation of the world.⁸⁶

3.1.3 *The imperial hegemony of the Roman era*

Rome’s appearance in the scene of civilisation changed the social and political understanding of the words belonging to the *εὐαγγελ-*family especially the noun *εὐαγγέλιον*, which was used not only politically but also in a sacral context.⁸⁷ This piece of information helps to understand the provocative nature of the angelic proclamation. Influenced by the *pax romana* of the Roman culture embedded in the Imperial cult, the “good news” became associated with the emperor,⁸⁸ making

⁸¹ Cf. Jos., Ant 5,24; 7,245, 250; 15,209.

⁸² The angel announces the birth of Samson. Cf. Ant. 5, 277.

⁸³ Cf. Jos., Bell, 3,143.

⁸⁴ Jos., Bell 4, 618. The plural form is also evidenced in 4, 656 which treats the interim reign of Domitian. There are about 15 instances of *εὐαγγελ-* in Josephus. Cf. J. P. Dickson, Gospel, 216. In all these instances, this word-group depicts the telling of news, even the news of Tiberius’ death. Cf. Ant. 18, 229.

⁸⁵ Cf. J. Schniewind, Euangelion, 100. Also H. Frankemölle, Evangelium, 85.

⁸⁶ Cf. Ps Sol 11:2.

⁸⁷ Cf. C. Ettl, Anfang, 123.

⁸⁸ Cf. J. B. Green, Luke, 133. A clear insight into this phenomenon offers H.J. Klauck, Kaiser, 10. “Mit dem “Geburtstag des Gottes” ist, ... nichts anders als der Geburtstag des Augustus gemeint, und der Ausdruck für die “Freudensbotschaften”, die Stationen seines Lebens wie Geburt, Siege und Amtsantritt zum Inhalt haben, lautet im Griechischen „Evangelien“.” Plutarch attested to this particular use of the word as he wrote: “Accordingly, when he had come near, he stretched out his hand and cried with a loud voice: “Hail, King Antigonus, we have conquered Ptolemy in a sea-fight, and now hold Cyprus, with twelve thousand eight hundred soldiers as prisoners of war.” To this Antigonus replied: “Hail to thee also, by Heaven! But for torturing us in this way, thou shalt undergo punishment; the reward for your good tidings (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) thou shall be some time in getting.” Cf. Plut. Demetr 17.

the province of Asia see the birthday of Augustus as the beginning of all good news.⁸⁹

”...and whereas Caesar when he appeared exceeded the hopes of all who had anticipated good tidings (εὐαγγελία), not only by surpassing the benefactors born before him, but not leaving those to come any hope of surpassing him; and whereas the birthday of the god marked for the world the beginning of good tidings (εὐαγγελία) through his coming...”⁹⁰

This word family became a necessary part of the imperial cult. As the imperial cult was introduced in Sardis, it was said that the city has been evangelised.⁹¹

3.2 Σωτήρ

In Lk 2:11, the effort of the narrator to capture the essence and mission of Jesus is evident in the use of three titles: Σωτήρ, Χριστός, Κύριος. At the first sight, they do not seem to be revolutionary. However, analysing the titles, both from the Hellenistic and the Jewish perspectives will reveal the political brisance involved therein.

The word σωτήρ⁹² has a very long but shared history with σώζω and σωτηρία. In the ancient Hellenistic period, it stood for something⁹³ or for somebody that saves. Notwithstanding the worship of inanimate things, only gods and human beings were designated as σωτήρες. In the Hellenistic period, salvation was sought not only in philosophy but also in religion.⁹⁴ A god or a goddess, who in one way or the other has proved to be a saviour, gets the appendage “saviour” to his or her name, e.g. Zeus Sôtêr, Asklepius Sôtêr, or in feminine, Isis Sôteira.⁹⁵

The title belongs primarily to the gods. They are saviours from the dangers of life.⁹⁶ In the oldest proof for the use of σωτήρ, Poseidon is addressed as “the saviour of the ships” (σωτήρ νηῶν),⁹⁷ while a suppliant in Philadelphia in the first century invoked Zeus thus: “May Zeus saviour (σωτήρ) receive this account favourably and grant in return the benefits of health, safety, peace, and security on land and on sea.”⁹⁸ The use of this title for the gods shows its honour and reverence.⁹⁹ Politicians like Philip of Macedonia

⁸⁹ For a thorough treatment of the proclamation of this Asian assembly with complete line to line translation in German, cf. C. Ettl, Anfang, 127-147.

⁹⁰ The Inscriptions of Priene 36-41, in: S. R. F. Price, Rituals, 54.

⁹¹ Cf. H.J. Klauck, Zauber, 10.

⁹² A detailed account of the Greek use of this title is presented in the work of H. Kasper, Soter-Vorstellung, 25-74.

⁹³ In Herodotus VIII 138, 1 a river is described as σωτήρ because, it saved, through its swelling, the persecuted from their persecutors. Sacrifices are offered to the river as the saviour σωτήρι by which the people saved. The river is thus worthy of worship.

⁹⁴ Cf. R. Gleis/S. Natzel, Art. Rettung, 932-938. A concise philosophico-historical treatment of this matter is given here.

⁹⁵ T. Drew-Bear/C. Naour, Divinités, 2014-2018 (Nr. 26).

⁹⁶ Cf. Xenophon, Hell. 3.3, 4; “After that, they offered to the deities responsible for the suspension of evil, and to the deities in charge of saving (noun: Σωτήρσι) from danger, and only stopped after they had with difficulty received a favourable offer-sign.”

⁹⁷ Hom. Hymn ad Neptunum 22,5.

⁹⁸ Dittenberger, Syl. 985, 60-62.

⁹⁹ The title of soter belongs to the ὀνόματα τιμιώτατα. Cf. F. Jung, ΣΟΤΗΡ, 46.

(Demosthenes 18.43) and Dionysius of Syracuse¹⁰⁰ were addressed with these titles. For having announced the freedom of Greece, Titus Quintius Flamininus is proclaimed “the saviour and defender of Greece.”¹⁰¹ Sickness, war and storm are great dangers presented by Plato, which create possibilities of calling one a saviour since the people involved in these dangers look up to people in power as saviours.¹⁰²

The title of *σωτήρ* has its obligations: Acting for the benefit of the polis. A contrary deed could nullify the title.¹⁰³ Besides, the bearer of this title could be charged to court if he was not living up to this expectation.¹⁰⁴ There is a difference between the use of *σωτήρ* as a sign of gratitude and its use as an official designation: The Rhodes called Ptolemy I *σωτήρ* as gratitude for the help he rendered during the time they were besieged by Demetrius. This case has nothing to do with the cult of the royals. In the royal cult of the Ptolemys and the Seleucids, *σωτήρ* and *θεός σωτήρ* are official parts of the Royal designations without exhausting the whole official Royal nomenclature.

The Roman imperial cult radicalised the use of this title. It enjoyed an immense extension that *σωτήρ τῆς οἰκουμένης* or *σωτήρ τοῦ κόσμου* became a formal designation for the Emperor. This particular use was attached to the conception of the golden age. The title then had a new quality of designating the inaugurator of the golden age. The introduction and the maintenance of peace and security among the conquered races helped the empire to legitimise its power in as much as the effects of the *pax romana* were considered as salvation. As a result, the assembly of the province of Asia saw in Augustus a saviour sent (*σωτῆρα πέμψασα*) to put an end to war.¹⁰⁵

The attitude of Augustus to his deification is ambivalent because he avoided his deification in Italy, while allowing his adoration in the eastern (Hellenistic) provinces.¹⁰⁶ The title *σωτήρ* became a prized title for the emperor¹⁰⁷ who allowed

¹⁰⁰ Plutarch, Dio 46: “When he had made these preparations and had prayed to the gods, and was seen leading his forces through the city against the enemy, shouts of joy and loud battle-cries mingled with prayers and supplications were raised by the syracusans, who called Dion their saviour and god τὸν μὲν Δίωνα σωτῆρα καὶ θεὸν ἀποκαλούντων.”

¹⁰¹ Plutarch, Flam. 10:16: “And the Roman faith we revere, which we have solemnly vowed to cherish; sing, then, ye maidens, to great Zeus, to Rome, to Titus, and to the Roman faith: hail, Paeon Apollo! Hail, Titus saviour! ὦ Τίτε σῶτερ.”

¹⁰² Cf. Plato, Theaet. 170a. 11. That explains why Plato sees war heroes (*πολεμικοῖς ἀνδράσιν*) as belonging to those who should lawfully take on the title of Soter. Cf. Plato, Law 11,922a.1.

¹⁰³ Plutarch narrated how the title of saviour given to Demetrius was taken back from him by the Athenians since they felt that Demetrius was becoming too powerful for them. Cf. Plut Demetrius 10,4; 46,2.

¹⁰⁴ Aelius Aristides, Πρὸς Λεπτίνην, Dind. LIV,42,5.

¹⁰⁵ Epigraph of Priene, 36 (= OGIS 458).

¹⁰⁶ In this regard, Habicht speaks of a „Mischung von Zurückhaltung und Aufdringlichkeit“. Cf. C. Habicht, Zeit, 51. See also Klauck, Sendschreiben, 160. It could have been an intended disguise arising from a political sensitivity. For more on the worship of Augustus in the East cf. G.W. Bowersock, Augustus, 389-402. In comparison with Caligula, Philo praised Augustus for not being too forward with the cult of his person. Cf. Philo Leg. Gai. 154.

¹⁰⁷ IGRR IV,200: τὸν ... σωτῆρα τῶν πολιτῶν καὶ εὐεργέτην πάντων. CAGI IV/1, Nr. 894: σωτῆρα τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν ἀνθρώπων γένους.

the building of temples in the eastern province in his honour and in the honour of the goddess Roma.¹⁰⁸

3.2.1 Σωτήρ in Old Testament and Judaism

There is no homogenous use of the title in these periods. It is used for God and for individuals whom God raises up to deliver his people. The only homogenous quality of this title is the fact that God is always the source of this initiative. Whether he is personally intervening or he is acting through another person is irrelevant to the use of this title.¹⁰⁹ This is the most pivotal difference between the biblical understanding of the title and the Hellenistic understanding.

Whereas in the LXX, the word σωτήρ is often translated with the stem נשׂי, there seems to be a problem, in that σωτήρ is also used seven times for the participle hi of מושיע ישׁי¹¹⁰, which is actually the correct rendering.¹¹¹ It appears for God in hymnic texts, which include the psalms, prayers and proses (Deut 32; Wis 16 and Isa 45). Normally, the use of this title for God marks a surprising turning point in the narrative, especially in prayers and hymns.¹¹² Beside Mordechai who was described as “saviour”,¹¹³ the title seems to be a *terminus technicus* for the judges,¹¹⁴ who acted within a theological and deuteronomistic scheme,¹¹⁵ describing history as a story of God with his people.¹¹⁶ It is not used in the Greek Old Testament to depict the Messiah, although Zech 9:9 with the participle σώζων and Is 49:6 with the Messianic servant of God, who will be salvation εἰς σωτηρίαν for the world, give the impression of such an identity between the σωτήρ and the Messiah.

In the apocryphal and deuterocanonical works, this non-homogeneity arising from the ambiguity in the use of the word σωτήρ is further attested. Maccabees¹¹⁷, Baruch¹¹⁸ and the Psalms of Solomon¹¹⁹ used σωτήρ only in reference to God, who delivers Israel from the hands of its enemies.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. W. Schmithals, Weihnachtsgeschichte, 290. Roma was the personification of the power of Rome. Cf. D. Fishwick, Cult 1,1, 50.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. F. Jung, ΣΩΤΗΡ, 176.

¹¹⁰ Σωτήρ is used for נשׂי in Jg 3:9,15; 12:3; 1 Sam 10:19; Isa 45:15,21.

¹¹¹ Cf. G. Fohrer, σωτήρ, 1013.

¹¹² Cf. F. Jung, ΣΩΤΗΡ, 227.

¹¹³ Cf. Est 8:12n.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Jg 3:9,15.

¹¹⁵ Cf. E. Zenger, Einleitung, 142.

¹¹⁶ Salvation history is full of the transgression of the people from God’s ways and the humiliation meted on them by a foreign people. They cry to God to save them from their humiliation. In answer, God sends a judge who saves them from bondage and humiliation.

¹¹⁷ In 1 Macc 4:30, God is invoked before a war as the σωτήρ of Israel, who saved David from the hands of Goliath. In 3 Macc 6:29,32; 7:16, God is acclaimed as the σωτήρ of the Egyptian Jews from destruction.

¹¹⁸ In Bar 4:22, Baruch hopes for the salvation of those who rejoice in God through their eternal saviour.

¹¹⁹ In Psalms of Solomon is the use of σωτήρ reserved for God, especially when he accepts his pious ones and saves them from evil, cf. PsSol 8:33, or when He is called upon to allow the Messiah to come, cf. 17:3.

There is ambivalence in the theology of Philo. For Philo, God is transcendent and has nothing to do with the world. However, he is the *σωτήρ* of his people¹²⁰ and the sustainer of the human generation. In Hellenistic Judaism, Philo was one of those, who used the title considerably, taking it for granted that there is only one saviour. That is why he uses *σωτήρ* absolutely for God without requiring any other qualification.¹²¹ He uses it at times with *θεός*,¹²² giving the title an adjectival character. The uniqueness of the saviour is seen in the thought of Philo when he sees God as *μόνος σωτήρ*.¹²³ In a further subtle ambivalence however, Philo does not see any problem with seeing in God, as well as in the emperor, a “saviour and benefactor” (*σωτήρ και εὐεργέτης*).¹²⁴

Josephus¹²⁵ seems to operate from the Hellenistic background and use of the title, reserving it for individual heroes, who help in the salvation of a land and its inhabitants like Vespasian: “The population opened their gates to him and went out to meet him (Vespasian) with acclamations, hailing him as saviour (*σωτήρα*) and benefactor.”¹²⁶

3.3 Χριστός

Of all the titles used for Jesus in this passage, *χριστός* is the most typically Jewish. The title has its root in the Old Testament and as such is genuinely biblical¹²⁷ and for Luke the most important.¹²⁸ *Χριστός* is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word משיח, from where the English word “Messiah” takes its root.¹²⁹

The verb *χρίω* means anointing (the body or parts of the body), and as such has an intrinsic relation to oil and ointment. The Hebrew equivalent of this verb is *חשׁב*. The title *χριστός* comes from a verbal adjective,¹³⁰ which means, “anointed”. The anointing meant here is a juridical act of certification or confirmation. It is performed through the pouring of oil on the head of the appointed or elected. The intention of this act is the transmission of the power of God to the anointed.¹³¹ The Canaanite lands, where the anointing of the king belonged to the formal process of enthronisation, influenced Israel in this phenomenon. The act of anointing as a sacral and juridical act later became part of the

¹²⁰ Cf. Philo, Leg. 196.

¹²¹ Cf. Philo, Post 156; Praem 117.

¹²² Cf. Philo Migr 25,124; Contempl 87; Ios 195.

¹²³ Cf. Philo Sacr 70f; Deus 137.

¹²⁴ Cf. Philo Op. Mundi 169. Here is one of the instances where God is called saviour and benefactor. Flacc. 74 documents these titles for the emperor.

¹²⁵ Josephus did not use the title for God but for humans: David calls Jonathan *σωτήρ αὐτοῦ τῆς ψυχῆς*. The Emperor Vespasian is welcome as: *ὁ εὐεργέτης και σωτήρ και μόνος ἄξιος ἡγεμῶν τῆς Ρώμης*. Josephus seems to have followed one of the Hellenistic forms where this title is reserved for someone who has done something to save a land and its inhabitants.

¹²⁶ Josephus, Bell III 458-459. It is not easy to determine if Josephus is involved in a propaganda. As a captive, he prophesied to Vespasian that he will be emperor (Bell IV 402f) which was later fulfilled. However, the brisance of the story is that Vespasian, although a very heroic soldier, hadn't any aristocratic origin. His father was a simple tax collector. Cf. Suetonius, Vesp 1,2; Nero 4,5.

¹²⁷ Cf. F. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, 133.

¹²⁸ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, Luke, 197.

¹²⁹ De Jonge observes that various concepts could be connected with the word Messiah. The exact meaning needs to be established within each context, in which it is used. Cf. M. de Jonge, Anointed, 132.

¹³⁰ Together with *χριστή* (feminine) and *χριστόν* (neuter). The neuter part is substantivised to *τὸ χριστόν*, which is the Greek word for ointment.

¹³¹ Cf. F. Hesse, *χρίω*, 485f.

rituals in the call or election of prophets and priests,¹³² although the report about the anointing of the kings dominates in the Old Testament.¹³³ As such, the kings are primarily designated as the anointed,¹³⁴ even when the anointing of the high priests metamorphosed as the anointing par excellence in Israel of the second century before Jesus.¹³⁵

This importance has its root in the prophecy of Nathan:¹³⁶ God promises an everlasting dynasty to David and his lineage. The end of the Davidic dynasty and the subsequent exilic experience presented a different situation, which made a re-enactment of this promise imperative.¹³⁷ The expectation of the Davidic Messiah, who will eventually restore the promised destiny of the dynasty, became gradually a matter for eschatology.¹³⁸ The Maccabeans however, through their armed revolution against the utmost Hellenisation process of Palestine by the Seleucids, gave the impression of the fulfilment of this promise by establishing and sustaining the Hasmonean dynasty for almost a century (164-67 BC).¹³⁹

Both in history and in the theological conviction of the people, there exists a degree of ambivalence in the understanding of the person and the function of the anointed.¹⁴⁰ The Qumran texts with their two types of Messiahs departed from the eschatology attached to the Messiah, since these Messiahs are already present in the community. The text 1 Q Sa II: 12-21 presents a societal insight into the messianic understanding of the group, especially when they gather for a community meal. The משיח ישראל takes from the food before the אהרון.

¹³² In these verses the high priest is called the anointed: Lev 4: 3,5; 16:6,15.

¹³³ The anointing of David: 1 Sam 16:3,12f; 2 Sam 2:4,7; Ps 89:21. The anointing of Saul: 1 Sam 9:16; 10:1. The anointing of Solomon: 1 Kg 1:34,39,45; 5:15.

¹³⁴ Cf. K. Koch, *Messias*, 73.

¹³⁵ Cf. M. Karrer, *Gesalbte*, 147.

¹³⁶ Cf. 2 Sam 7:14.

¹³⁷ Cf. Isaiah 11 and Mi 5.

¹³⁸ The title משיח יהוה shows the problematic situation, in which the people found themselves. An appeal is made to God with this title imploring the urgency of his help. The nasty experience of the monarchy and the tension between ideal and reality led to the postponement of the ideal as a promise with a possible fulfilment in an indefinite future. Cf. S. Mowinckel, *He that cometh*, 96f. The basic element in this eschatological expectation is the conviction that God will bring his work to an end by effecting a radical change. Cf. M. de Jonge, *Anointed*, 133.

¹³⁹ The reign of the Hasmonaer suggested the fulfilment of God's promise regarding the Davidic dynasty. John Hyrcanus was not only a highpriest, he was also a king and a prophet. Josephus wrote of him: "For the rest of his days John lived in prosperity, ... truly a blessed individual and one who left no ground for complaint against fortune as regards himself. He was the only man to unite in his person three of the highest privileges: the supreme command of the nation, the high priesthood, and the gift of prophecy." Cf. Bell 1,68f. For the same idea confer Ant 13,290. Josephus must have maintained a wonderful relationship with the Hasmonaer. The Pharisees were against the Hasmonaer, because of their "usurping" not only the throne, but also the office of the Highpriesthood. This criticism is based on the fact that although John Hyrcanus was sitting on the throne with a diadem on his head, he was not anointed and as such not the messiah.

¹⁴⁰ Along the line, the expectations connected with the Messiah acquired different dimensions depending on the need of the people at a particular time: During the second Jewish war against Rome, Rabbi Akiba saw in Bar Kochbar the promised Messiah of the Jews although Bar Kochbar was not a descendant of David. Cf. A. S. van der Woude, *Χρῖω κτλ.*, 514. Before this development, the Bible has shown how ambivalent the title could be: In Isaiah 45:1, Cyrus is called the anointed of God.

Judaism expected the “anointed” as a human-political king of salvation, who would free Israel from the yoke of slavery and restore the kingdom of David that should be everlasting. This conception experienced a correction in the writings of the New Testament.¹⁴¹ The book of the Prophet Zachariah, written during the Hellenistic period, presents the Messiah as a triumphant victor, an initiator of peace, and most importantly, the ruler of the world (Zach 9:9-17). The Psalms of Solomon is a typical example of the undying nature of such an Israelite hope. The 17th chapter of this psalm presents a compact history of Israel remembering the promise of God (v 4), and the forgetfulness of God arising from the unfaithfulness of Israel (v 5f). The second part of the Psalm begins with the hope of the coming of the son of David (v 21).¹⁴² The assumption of power by the Messiah would involve the destruction of the godless and sinners (v 22-25), and the gathering of the holy ones. The anointed of the Lord is a human being, excelling in justice and the fear of God. He does not place his hope on earthly power, but on God. This anointed of the Lord is also free from sin, and has the gift of the spirit of God, which will enable him to protect those under his charge (v 32-43). The end of the Psalm begins with a blessing for all who are privileged to witness the coming of the Messiah, and ends with a prayer to God imploring him to allow this event to be a reality soon. The anointed expected is a national figure with political and military power, although the main emphasis is on the spiritual aspects of his reign. Notwithstanding the subtle difference,¹⁴³ the 18th chapter echoes the same hope of the coming of the Messiah, showing parallels with the 17th chapter in vv. 5-10. Summarily, the Messiah is the king of Israel, who will establish a new kingdom for God, where justice and the fear of God would reign.

3.4 *Κύριος*

The LXX uses *κύριος* for the translation of *אֲדֹנָי* and *בַּעַל*,¹⁴⁴ when the latter is used in a profane manner.¹⁴⁵ If it is used to designate the deity of Canaan, the Greek transcription of Baal is used: *βάαλ*. Through the Diaspora Judaism, *κύριος* came to be used for Yahweh. It became a working title for God in the LXX.¹⁴⁶

The title *κύριος* has been used since the ancient time to refer to the Greek gods, especially when maintaining the fact, that the gods exercise their power and take control over certain aspects of life in the world. Plato writes:

¹⁴¹ H. Wilkens, *Christus*, 256.

¹⁴² The fervour connected with this hope is understandable since no offspring of David has been king over Israel for a long time. Cf. M. de Jonge, *Anointed*, 135.

¹⁴³ There is a minor difference between the two psalms inasmuch as the 17th chapter is nearer to the Old Testament usage than the 18th chapter, which appears to be an appendage betraying a lack in coherence between vv. 1-9 and vv. 10-12. Cf. M. de Jonge, *Anointed*, 134-136.

¹⁴⁴ *בַּעַל* is used to describe one with the right of ownership in the Old Testament, while *אֲדֹנָי* describes a person who has the power and the authority over a group of people, and as such worthy to be adored. Cf. F. Hahn, *Hoheitstitel*, 70.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. Gen 49:23; Ex 21&22, where it is used eleven times; Judg 19:22f; Isaiah 1:3; Ez 31:39.

¹⁴⁶ On the religious level, the great innovation of the LXX is evident. It used *κύριος* to translate the divine name YHWH, to the effect that “Lord” became the name of the God of Israel.

“Is the teaching about the gods not one of the most beautiful things one can know if he is capable, which we have proved with every seriousness, that they exist, and that they have great control over power- ὡς εἰσὶν τε καὶ ὅσης φαίνονται κύριοι δυνάμεως.”¹⁴⁷

However, this fact does not carry much weight because the gods are not classified as the “Lords” of their different aspects as is the case in the Orient. The lording of the gods over certain areas or aspects of life does not belong to the characteristics of the Greek gods.¹⁴⁸ From the Oriental aspect, *κύριος* has more to do with the exercise of power over somebody and the right of ownership, which are however juridical. The title conveys a sense of authority over and responsibility for a group of people or for a particular area.¹⁴⁹ Whether the subject of this authority is a human person or a god is irrelevant.¹⁵⁰ From the cult of the mystery religions in the orient, this title made its way from Alexander the great, the Seleucids¹⁵¹ and the descendants of Ptolemy and finally succeeded in being settled in the West. Although Augustus¹⁵² and Tiberius declined the use of this title, Caligula, Nero¹⁵³ and Domitian¹⁵⁴ decreed the use of *κύριος* as an official title for the Emperor. Although, this title played a cultic role in Hellenism and in the Roman religious world, it was abhorred after the death and *damnatio memoriae* of Domitian.

The use of *κύριος* in the New Testament has many varieties.¹⁵⁵ Although the title could be used in a profane manner, it is a divine designation in the New Testament. It serves not only as title for Jesus in his earthly ministry, but also for the exalted Jesus, whose coming in glory is awaited. Luke uses the title *κύριος* to express the divinity of Jesus, indicating that God was active in Jesus. The birth narrative is full of the description of Jesus as the son of God through whom God acts. *Κύριος* as a designation has already been applied to Jesus in Lk 1:43.

¹⁴⁷ Pluto Leg XII 966c.

¹⁴⁸ The reason behind this argument should be sought in Greek cosmology and theodicy: The gods were intrinsic part of the reality called the “world”. They were not the creators of the universe. Therefore, the relationship between the gods and men should not be categorised under Lord/slave *κύριος/δοῦλος* relationship. Gods and men were separated through an eternal and unbridgeable gap. However, they are originally related and parts of reality. Cf. Pindar, Nem. 6,1ff.

¹⁴⁹ Of Soknopaius is written already in 1st century BC: ὡς θέλει ὁ Σεκνιβτῦ(νις) ὁ κύριος θεός. A building was even dedicated to him: τῷ θεῷ καὶ κυρίῳ Σοκνοπαίῳ. Cf. Dittenberger OGIS 655, 4.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. H. Omerzu, Imperium, 32.

¹⁵¹ From a poem of an unknown poet, we have the proof that Demetrius, one of the sons of the Macedonian general Antigonos I, also known as Monophthalmos (the one-eyed), was given this title. He was able to free the city of Athens in 307 BC from the rule of a tyrant, which made the Athenians heap on him honours in a hitherto unheard variety. Cf. H.J. Klauck, Context, 256.

¹⁵² Although Augustus never allowed himself to be worshipped in the West, he was called θεός καὶ κύριος Καῖσαρ Αὐτοκράτωρ in Egypt.

¹⁵³ SIG³ 814,31Q Nero was addressed as ὁ τοῦ παντὸς κόσμου κύριος Νέρων (Nero, Lord of all the world).

¹⁵⁴ Domitian contributed immensely to the promotion of the imperial cult. According to Suetonius, he made use of the expression *Dominus et deus noster* when referring to himself in his capacity as the source of letters and edicts. He also allowed himself to be addressd in this manner. Cf. Suetonius, Dom. 13.2.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. W. Foerster, κύριος, 1085.

A look at the cultural context would help in the understanding of this title for Jesus, without however neglecting the profane and day-by-day use of the word.¹⁵⁶ With its meaning, “Lord” and master, the title assumed a religious connotation.

4. *The Lukan profile and theology*

Hitherto, I have tried to explain the chapter from a religio-historical point of view, paying considerable attention to the titles especially from the perspective of the imperial cult. The Lukan use of these titles is of immense importance in a bid to understand his theology.

4.1 *The Lukan use of the title “saviour”*

From the statistics, Luke prefers specific vocabulary of salvation. He uses *σώζω* and words of this family: *διασώζω*, *ἐκσώζω*, *σωτήρ*, *σωτηρία* and *σωτήριον*.¹⁵⁷ *Σωτήρ* and *σωτηρία* appear six times in their different declensions in the gospel of Luke, especially in the infancy narrative.¹⁵⁸ *Σωτήρ* is used in the Acts in 5:31 and 13:23. Its use in Lk 1:47 gives the impression that it is a prerogative of God. In the present text, the title is used for Jesus but in the tradition of the Old Testament: Jesus is the saviour but his saving work has meaning only within a theocentric context. God, not the saviour, is given the glory *δόξα* for sending the saviour. The horn of salvation for the house of Israel in Lk 1:69 shows a tradition in the book of Judges, in which the appearance of a judge is interpreted as the appearance of a saviour.¹⁵⁹ The title began to be associated with Jesus only with the late texts of the New Testament, especially with the Deutero-Pauline and pastoral works.¹⁶⁰ The use of the title is only from the perspective of the exalted Christ: Jesus who died and rose from the dead.

Luke uses this title only in sections, in which there is an unanimous opinion about the status of Jesus, namely the conception and birth of Jesus and his resurrection. Luke, the Hellenistic writer, emphasised this title for Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles. In Lk 2:11, Jesus is not only presented as the offspring of David like in Acts 13:23, he arranged his work in such a way that Jesus is contrasted with Augustus, who was presented as the world’s saviour.

The death and resurrection of Jesus are the perspective-marker in the use of this title in the writings of Luke. This explains why the use of this title in the Acts of the Apostles occurs from the perspective of the death and resurrection of Jesus, whereas the use of the title in the gospel is reserved for the infancy narrative and for his earthly appearance. Jesus, the exalted Christ, is the focus of the Acts of the Apostles: It occurs in 5:31, with Peter and the other Apostles trying to extricate themselves from the charge of the

¹⁵⁶ The noun refers generally to one who commands, cf. Aeschylus, Cho. 658, a boss, and notably the owner of a slave, cf. Xenophon, Oec. 9.16. The slave calls his mistress *ἡ ἐμὴ κυρία* in Josephus, Ant. 17.137,139. It refers not only to the head of a family, but also to the head and master of inhabitants. Cf. Josephus, Ant. 11.54.

¹⁵⁷ *Σώζω* appears 30 times, *διασώζω* 6 times, *ἐκσώζω* once, *σωτήρ* 4 times (once for God and three times for Jesus), *σωτηρία* 10 times, and *σωτήριον* 3 times. Cf. F. Bovon, Theologian, 276. See also L.T. Johnson, Dimensions, 522.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Lk 1:47; 1:69; 1:71; 1:77; 2:11; 3:6.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. F. Jung, ΣΩΤΗΡ, 280.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. Eph 5:23; 2 Tim 1:10; Tit 1:4; 3:6.

Sanhedrin. They had to declare that God has exalted “as leader and saviour” Jesus, “whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.” A clearer proof of the affinity between the title and the death and resurrection of Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles occurs in 13:23. In addressing the people in Antioch in Pisidia, Paul sees Jesus as belonging to the lineage of David, making him to conclude, that God has brought in Jesus a “saviour” to Israel in remembrance of his promise. In the same address later, Paul referred again to Jesus, whom God has raised from the dead (13:34). From this flow of thought, it is most probable that Luke sees *σωτήρ* as a title for the risen Christ.¹⁶¹

In Lk 2:30, Jesus is described as “salvation” from God. Luke makes the healing activity of Jesus not only a salvation from a physical ailment but a restoration to the society of men (Lk 4:39; 5:25; 7:10; 8:48-56; 17:19).¹⁶² Jesus is saviour and salvation in his merciful works made public in his inaugural homily in Lk 4:18-19. Physical recovery should lead to faith in Jesus (Lk 17:19; 18:42). These healings are combined with the good news. His life accomplishes the salvation as shown in the encounter with the paradigmatic sinner and tax collector Zacchaeus:¹⁶³ *ἦλθεν γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ζητῆσαι καὶ σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολωλός.* His saving works are not only evidenced in Lk 5:17. They are recurrent issues in the gospel of Luke, especially where people recognise the mission of Christ, which makes a saving encounter possible. Luke uses the title in relation to Old Testament promises of salvation: God has not forgotten the promise made to Israel and has sent a saviour to Israel to accomplish his promise. Notwithstanding that *σωτήρ* almost became a common title for Jesus, probably through the instrumentality of Luke,¹⁶⁴ it is not a major New Testament title for Jesus.¹⁶⁵ Luke makes effort to work out a wonderful cosmic importance of Jesus as the *σωτήρ* of the world in contrast to the assumptions of the *pax romana*.

As conclusion, one can maintain that Luke sees *σωτήρ* as a title for God.¹⁶⁶ Luke uses for the Roman emperors the neutral title of “Caesar” (Lk 2:1; 3:1; 20:22, 24f; 23:2; Acts 17:7; 25:8; 26:32 etc.) or the proper name of the emperor (Lk 2:1; 3:1; Acts 11:28; 18:2). He does not bring the attribute of “saviour” to the emperors. As such, he criticises, though subtly, the claim of the imperial ideology. By using the title of saviour only for God, he seems to be saying that there can only be one saviour (Acts 4:12a). The frequent use of this title in the Septuagint normally refers to God in the deliverance of his people¹⁶⁷ or to human helpers in time of need.¹⁶⁸ The idea of a saviour in relation to God is transferred to Jesus, and this title of saviour will be a prerogative of Jesus in Acts.¹⁶⁹ Salvation involves healing and rescue, which is present and social.¹⁷⁰ Through this singular proclamation of

¹⁶¹ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, Luke I, 204.

¹⁶² Cf. L.T. Johnson, Dimensions, 525.

¹⁶³ Cf. F. Bovon, Theologian, 277.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, Luke I, 205.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. F. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, 270f.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Lk 1:47.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. 1 Sam 10:19; Is 45:15, 21; Wis 4:30; 1 Macc 4:30; Sir 51:1

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Jg 13:9.15; 2 Esra 19:27.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Acts 5:31; 13:23.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. L.T. Johnson, Dimensions, 530.

the angel, Luke questions the divine claims of the emperor, and of course the institutionalised *pax romana* that warranted such claims.

4.2 *The Lukan use of Χριστός*

Well acquainted with the Jewish anticipation of salvation, Luke sees in Jesus the *χριστός*, who fulfils the hope and the promise of a Messiah to the Jews. Luke tries to take the cultural and religious views of his audience into account. “Für die jüdischen Leser war ὁ χριστός mit dem Betlehem-Kontext eindeutig, für die griechischen erfüllte ὁ κύριος die gleiche Funktion.”¹⁷¹ *Χριστός* appears as title in Lucan writings about twenty-four times.¹⁷² It became the most known title of Jesus after his death and resurrection,¹⁷³ which served as a Christian interpretation of the Messiah’s expectation of Late Judaism. Luke is the only New Testament writer to enunciate the importance of this title with the information that “Christians” became the name of the followers of Jesus. This name has invariably to do with the Messiah-title of Jesus.¹⁷⁴ The title is assigned to Jesus, who in his lifetime through actions and words made it evident that he is the expected Messiah. P. Stuhlmacher summarises:

“Die Urchristenheit hat sich von Ostern her zu Jesus als dem >>für uns<< gestorbenen und von Gott auferweckten *χριστός* bekannt, weil er schon irdisch als messianischer Menschensohn und Gottesknecht gewirkt hat und um dieses Anspruchs willen zum Tod am Kreuz auf Golgatha verurteilt worden ist.“¹⁷⁵

In the light of this argument, one understands why the anointed and his suffering are of vital importance in the writings of Luke. This is evident from the question of the resurrected to the disciples on their way to Emmaus: *οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν καὶ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ.*

The title *χριστός* applied to Jesus, shows him as God’s anointed royal agent, who would ultimately fulfil the eschatological hopes attached to the Davidic covenant.¹⁷⁶ Jesus appears then as the fulfilment of hope and bearer of a new form of salvation. The child born is the saviour and Messiah promised for a very long time. Bethlehem is the city of David, and it was expected that the saviour would also come from the city of David. Jesus is the king expected by the Jews.

Κύριος is the most frequently used title for Jesus in Lukan writings, although it never succeeded in being a real name for Jesus.¹⁷⁷ Alone in the Acts, it is used

¹⁷¹ F. Bovon, Lukas, 126. *Χριστός* and Messiah are important for the understanding of the Lukan use of this title. The Gentile Christian readers of Luke were acquainted with the Greek rendering of this title. However, the title Messiah, owing to its Hebrew background, conveys the meaning and history of the title better.

¹⁷² Eg. Lk 2:11,26; 3:15; 4:41; 9:20; 20:41; 24:26,46; Acts 2:31,36; 4:26; 5:42 etc.

¹⁷³ Cf. F. Hahn, Hoheitstitel, 186.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Acts 11:26; 26:28. For more on the meaning of this name, cf. P. Stuhlmacher, Gottesknecht, 131.

¹⁷⁵ P. Stuhlmacher, Gottesknecht, 133.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke, 107.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, Luke, 200f.

more than sixty times. It occurs almost twice as often as *χριστός*.¹⁷⁸ Striking in Luke is that the title is used not only for Yahweh, but also for Jesus. In the birth-infancy narrative, the title is used approximately twenty-five times.¹⁷⁹ Only two of these twenty-five instances refer to Jesus.¹⁸⁰ Luke retrojected this title of *κύριος* to the beginnings of Jesus.¹⁸¹ The occurrence of this title for Jesus in the birth-infancy narrative carries such a weight that they determine in a profound manner the meaning and interpretation of the rest of the narrative.¹⁸² Luke is also the only Evangelist, who in a consistent manner used the absolute *ὁ κύριος* for Jesus during his earthly mission. The vocative and non-vocative features of this title abound in the narrative of Luke: In Lk 19:8, the narrator reports not only that Zacchaeus replies to *τὸν κύριον* (accusative), but also presents Jesus as the *κύριε* (vocative) in the direct speech of Zacchaeus. An interplay of nominative and vocative in the narrative level is further attested in the vision of Ananias in Acts 9:10-11: The narrator presents Jesus as the absolute *ὁ κύριος*, which is corroborated in the vocative use of the title in the direct speech of Ananias.¹⁸³ For Luke, Jesus is and remains from the very beginning the *κύριος*, as this title is essentially Christological for him. This view finds support in the observation that the very first appearance of *χριστός* in the gospel (Lk 2:11) is in conjunction with the title of *κύριος*. The logic behind this juxtaposition is that “Jesus’ messianic status (is) inextricably bound with his identity as *κύριος*.”¹⁸⁴

Helped by the Jewish Diaspora, the early Christians¹⁸⁵ used it for God. Possibly the early Jewish Christians in Palestine transferred the title *κύριος* from Yahweh to Jesus.¹⁸⁶ In Acts 3:19 the title is clearly used for God who is to send the appointed messiah, while in Acts 2:36, the title is applied to Jesus after the resurrection. It would be out of place to believe that the title is exclusively a post-resurrection title¹⁸⁷ since this title is also used for Jesus in his earthly work.¹⁸⁸ Instances of this title abound in the gospel, where the Evangelist is speaking.¹⁸⁹

Even in Acts, the use of *κύριος* for the earthly affairs of Jesus and for the resurrected Jesus is evidenced in 20:35 and 9:27 respectively. Often in Acts the

¹⁷⁸ Luke uses the title about two hundred times in Luke-Acts, with about one hundred instances in each book. Cf. C.K. Rowe, *Luke-Acts*, 294.

¹⁷⁹ The instances in Lk 1:9, 15, 66 and 68 have some text-critical problems.

¹⁸⁰ Lk 1:43; 2:11.

¹⁸¹ The text being discussed is an instance. Later Elizabeth called Mary *ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ κυρίου μου*. Fitzmyer opines: “In retrojecting the title born of the resurrection back into earlier parts of his story, Luke surrounds the character of Jesus with an aura more characteristic of the third phase of his existence.” Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 203. However, in the self-designation of Mary as *ἡ δούλη κυρίου*, it is obvious that the title is meant for God and not for Jesus.

¹⁸² Cf. C.K. Rowe, *Christology*, 31f.

¹⁸³ For more on this, cf. C.K. Rowe, *Luke-Acts*, 295.

¹⁸⁴ C.K. Rowe, *Luke-Acts*, 296.

¹⁸⁵ Before Luke, this title has been used for God: Mark 11:9; 12:11, 29, 30, 36. The Q passages in Luke suggest this assumption: 4:8; 4:12.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *Background*, 115-142.

¹⁸⁷ The title *κύριος* for Jesus is a post-resurrection title. Luke, influenced from the post-resurrection faith, did not hesitate to use this title redactionally for the very beginning of Jesus as if Jesus were born with this title.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. Lk 7:13, 19; 12:42; 17:5, 6;

¹⁸⁹ Lk 11:39; 13:15; 18:6; 24:3, 34.

action of the resurrected Jesus is narrated (22:10; 23:11) as the object of the faith (5:14 = πιστεύοντες τῷ κυρίῳ) of his disciples (9:1 = τοὺς μαθητὰς τοῦ κυρίου), who baptised in his name (8:16 = βεβαπτισμένοι... εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου). The possessive nature of κύριος abounds in the Acts (9:31; 18:25 and 15:11). In Luke, a portrayal of the development of the κύριος from an ordinary appellation to the merited object of the Christian mission is evident. In addition, it is worth mentioning that the titles χριστός and κύριος are used together five times in the Acts of the Apostles for the resurrected Jesus (Acts 2:36; 10:36; 11:17; 15:26; 28:31). There is no doubt that with the simultaneous use of these titles, Luke intends a polemic contrast to the power claim of the pagan religious cults, more especially to the κύριος καίσαρ of the imperial cult.¹⁹⁰

A further observation confirms the fact that Luke uses the title of κύριος for the emperor Nero in Acts 25:26. That means that this title is not a prerogative of God and Jesus, even when the context in question suggests that no identification of Nero with God or Jesus is intended, at most a contrast.¹⁹¹ The emperor could be the κύριος, but Jesus is the κύριος πάντων just as Peter affirmed in Acts 10:36.

4.3 *Lukan theology and criticism of the pax Romana*

When Luke composed his gospel some seventy years after the death of Augustus, his memory as the saviour and benefactor of the world was still nurtured and kept alive in notions like εἰρήνῃ, σωτηρία and ὁμόνοια, which although well known in their republican context, had received a concretisation in his person. This concretisation was not only undertaken by the imperial cult, but also by the Asian calendar, whose New Year was the birthday of Augustus on the 23rd of September. The Asian calendar marked the birthday of Augustus in perpetuity as a part of the natural order.¹⁹² These qualities of peace, salvation, harmony and concord, which were parts of the essence of the Emperor inspired such decisions of Asia. With his use of titles, especially σωτήρ, and in connection with the verb εὐαγγελίζομαι, Luke attempts a provocation. He gives his Hellenistic audience a message that is contrary to the teachings of the *pax romana*, which maintained that Augustus and the subsequent Emperors were the saviours of humanity and that every good news had to be essentially imperial.

Luke, through the celestial proclamation of the angel, criticises the peace and claims of Augustus and the subsequent Roman Emperors. The indirect criticism of the peace of Augustus has its root in historical facts. That the empire was at peace was not because of the peaceful measures and organisations, but through an organised and instituted exploitation and subjugation of the vassal states:

“Aber dieser Friede war teuer und er war ständig bedroht... Ringsum an den Grenzen standen die römischen Heere in ständiger Wachsamkeit und in hier und dort stets neu aufflammenden Kämpfen. Der Erzähler blickt vermutlich auch bereits auf den blutigen jüdischen Krieg und die Zerstörung Jerusalems zurück. Der Friede beruhte auf der Macht der

¹⁹⁰ Cf. C. Burfeind, Paulus, 89.

¹⁹¹ Cf. C.K. Rowe, Luke-Acts, 279-300.

¹⁹² Cf. S. R. F. Price, Rituals, 106.

römischen Waffen, Man bezahlte für ihn mit Freiheit und mit Geld und war seiner doch nie sicher.“¹⁹³

From this background, Luke substitutes the “heart beat” and tension involved in the *pax romana* with the “great joy” (*χαρὰν μεγάλην*) instituted with and by the birth of the saviour. The *pax romana* or the *pax Augusta* gives no joy, but fear and intimidations coming from the readiness of the military troop to eliminate insurrections of any type.

“Der Altar des Augustusfriedens war ein Brandopferaltar; daß er seinen Platz auf dem Marsfeld fand, zeigt an, daß dieser Friede auf dem Schlachtfeld gewonnen wurde... Die Pax Romana ist ein vom römischen Kaiser und seinen höchsten Beamten politisch gewollter und durch den erfolgreichen Einsatz seiner Legionen militärisch hergestellter und gesicherter Friede.“¹⁹⁴

Luke replaces the *pax romana* or *pax Augusta* with *pax Christi*. The ideals of the *pax romana* are not rejected completely. Some are accepted, however, these accepted values are given another source: Jesus. Jesus, and not Augustus, is the foundation and guarantee for this peace. The peace in question does not need any protection. It comes from the Christ, and not from the *divi filius*. As such, the message has a different meaning for the Christian audience. Having the history of the development of the *pax romana* as background-information, he seems to inform his readers: The peace of Augustus, justifying his being called saviour, cannot be compared to the peace of Christ. The peace of Augustus is an “armed peace”¹⁹⁵ and as such can only be guaranteed through military interventions while the peace of Christ forms the quintessence of what peace should be.

The testimony of the peace of Christ, which involved the heavenly host, is far greater than the monumental altar erected by the senate for the peace of Augustus. The joy proclaimed by the angel in the face of this peace will later be justified in the gospel of Luke, which gave Jesus the title saviour from the logic of *nomen agentis*: The *σωτήρ* cures the sick, heals the possessed and cleanses the unclean by curing them of their leprosy. His healing has a soteriological aspect, because this healing is a facet of salvation.¹⁹⁶ His being a saviour is attested by his doing saving works, thereby bringing peace to all.¹⁹⁷ The Lukan peace consists in the forgiveness of sin and in the untiring effort to unite God and man. The angel of God presents the birth of the saviour as the good news, which is the source and beginning of great joy. This joy contrasts the burnout of the census and counteracts the edict of the province of Asia,¹⁹⁸ which saw the birthday of

¹⁹³ W. Schmithals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 287.

¹⁹⁴ K. Wengst, *Pax*, 23.

¹⁹⁵ Wengst speaks of “bewaffneter Friede” and “Friedenstruppen”, which cannot adequately be rendered in English, without the loss of the intended meaning. Cf. *Pax*, 24.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. J.T. Carroll, *Healer*, 270.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. M. Karrer, *Retter*, 171.

¹⁹⁸ Owing to this birthday of Augustus as the beginning of the new year for the province of Asia, and partly to geographical findings in these areas regarding the imperial cult concentrated on

Augustus as the beginning of the good news.¹⁹⁹ Notwithstanding the numerous saviour-inscriptions referring to Augustus, the child born in the city of David is the saviour.²⁰⁰ From the very beginning, Luke's emphasis lies on the proclamation of the child as the *σωτήρ*. In the edict of Priene, a worldly power decides that Augustus is the saviour because of his success, but God is the initiator of the salvation process in Luke. The proclamation of the saving nature of Augustus takes place during his reign, while that of Jesus happens at the beginning. The peace that should be emphasised is the Messianic peace, which opens the possibility of entering into an eschatological communion with God.

Luke's comparison of Jesus with the Emperor is not only from the perspective of drawing out the qualities ascribed to Jesus in order to counteract the claim of the *pax romana*. Another perspective of this comparison could also be an alternative: Augustus sees himself as the sole ruler of the universe and therefore issues an edict that orders the registration of all his subjects. Without being aware of the implication of his decision, he contributes to the fulfilment of the prophecy that the saviour and Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.²⁰¹ In his attempt to contravene the law of the Jewish God forbidding the census,²⁰² he has actually helped the process aimed towards the salvation of the whole world. He is unknowingly serving a higher power and purpose.²⁰³ The birth of the saviour within the context of the census, which Augustus ordered, renders the impact of the edict of the census redundant. It is interesting to note that Luke never gave further information concerning the course or the outcome of the census. The power of the happy event of the birth of the saviour overshadows the biting negative effects and implications of the census.

The Emperor has mobilised the world for the birth of a child, who is a better alternative to the Emperor. With this census, he reminds the vassal states that they were under his dominion and servitude,²⁰⁴ and calls to mind an event of the Old Testament.²⁰⁵ Against the advice of his general, David ordered a census of Judah and Israel, which merited him the wrath of God. Census in Israel therefore remained a taboo, because the land and everything on it belong to God. Augustus,

the person of Augustus, many authors see Asia as a possible place, where Luke wrote and had his community. E.g. W. Schmithals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 290.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. R. E. Brown, *Birth*, 415-416.

²⁰⁰ Cf. M. Karrer, *Retter*, 174.

²⁰¹ Cf. M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 128.

²⁰² The census places Jesus at a very crucial stage of the world and serves the interest of presenting Jesus as the saviour instead of Augustus. As such, Bethlehem, and not Rome, is the centre of the world's salvation.

²⁰³ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Kaiser*, 13.

²⁰⁴ After the dethronement of Archelaus, the son of Herod, Judea was assigned to the province of Syria. The procurator Quirinius wanted to take a census of Judea for financial purposes. The Jews were initially very sceptical of the whole idea. However the high priest Joazar persuaded his people to conform to the wishes of the new procurator without protests. Josephus reports: "Although the Jews were at first shocked to hear of the registration of property, they gradually condescended, yielding to the arguments of the high priest Joazar, the son of Boethus, to go no further in opposition. So those who were convinced by him declared, without shilly-shallying, the value of their property." Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 18, 1-3.

²⁰⁵ Cf. 2 Sam 24. Also 2 Chron 21.

on the other hand, sees everything as belonging to him and issues the census as a way of estimating his belongings, and as a help to his taxation policy. “Des Kaisers Augustus Gebot war, daß alle Welt geschätzt würde, daß folglich alle Welt noch mehr bedrückt werden und also Geld und wiederum Geld hergeben sollte für des Kaisers und Roms Gelüste.”²⁰⁶

Tax collection was a ruthless and merciless affair. With the non-payment of a tax, one stands the risk of being sold as a slave. Plutarch narrated the kindness of Galba towards people tortured and faced with such fate.²⁰⁷ This period witnessed an unparalleled exorbitance in the taxation-politics. The reasons for the increase in taxes are numerous:

“Eine riesige Grenze mußte verteidigt, ein großes stehendes Heer unterhalten, ein bürokratischer Riesenapparat finanziert,... die kaiserliche Hofhaltung bezahlt... Mit jedem Census griff die öffentliche Hand nach einem größeren Anteil vom Sozialprodukt... Die kaiserliche *ἀπογραφή*, der Census, war mitten im Frieden der Schrecken aller Welt.”²⁰⁸

In the face of all these injustices and oppressions, God’s ability to make the best out of an evil situation is evident.²⁰⁹ In these uncertainties, the angel of God proclaims the birth of a child capable of bringing peace to people with God’s favour and not the favour of the Emperor. The ingenuity of Luke in this pericope is easily comprehensible: The very mention of the census robs the Emperor the right of laying claim to the title of saviour and bringer of peace.²¹⁰ As a parallel to the *ἡ οἰκουμένη* describing the area affected by the competence of the imperial edict, Luke presents his *παντὶ τῷ λαῷ* to show the radius of the joy that has the birth of the saviour as its reason. Luke presents an ironical situation, where Augustus, acting as the *σωτήρ τοῦ κόσμου*, creates the sociological and historical background and context for the birth of the real *σωτήρ*. This irony is further stretched with the social milieu of the real saviour, who in humble obedience allowed himself to be born within a context provided by an edict issued by an emperor.²¹¹ For the reader of Luke, the whole presentation of the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus would appear ironical, but it is in accordance with

²⁰⁶ Kohlbrügge cited in W. Schmithals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 286. For a fuller treatment of the influence of the patron and clients system to the corrupt tax system of this period, cf. M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 128.

²⁰⁷ Cf. Plutarch, *Galba* 4. “But when, as the nefarious agents of Nero savagely and cruelly harried the provinces, Galba could help the people in no other way than by making it plain that he shared in their distress and sense of wrong, this somehow brought relief and comfort to those who were being condemned in court and sold into slavery.”

²⁰⁸ W. Schmithals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 286.

²⁰⁹ The place, where the punitive pestilence for the arrogance of David stopped, marked the very point, where the temple of Jerusalem was to be built.

²¹⁰ Cf. R. Pesch, *Weihnachtsevangelium*, 115.

²¹¹ This has been seen by many authors as an appeal of Luke to his community to respect the local laws, and not follow the example of the zealots, since Jesus was never a party to rebellion against Rome. Cf. R.E. Brown, *Birth*, 417. Also W. Schmithals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 291.

the will of God. The emphasis on the way in which events unfold at the behest of God and in accordance with his plan is typical of Luke.²¹²

Calling to mind that this very *pax romana* condemned Jesus to death widens the horizon of the reader. The defendants of this *pax romana* condemned him to death with the principles of this *pax romana* protected by the Roman military occupants. Jesus was presented as a rebel, who endangered the peace of the Roman occupants by seeing himself as the king of the Jews (Lk 23:38b).²¹³

5. Conclusion

Luke wrote for a community, which he intended to reach with ideas and imageries, with which it was accustomed. To dissuade them from their former religious convictions, Luke begins from the very moment of Jesus' birth. In the years of the third generations of Christians in the first century, the imperial cult was still a very strong religious phenomenon, and the influence of Augustus was still palpable.

In this angelic proclamation, the reader coming from a Hellenistic background encounters a conceptual development. He finds himself confronted with images and ideas, which are seized and made to undergo a narrative rebirth by Luke.²¹⁴ The Hellenistic use of "good news" is reinstated, but not for the emperor. In using *εὐαγγελίζομαι*, Luke operates within the literal and cultural milieu of the *pax romana*, which used the verb in the context of the birth of a new Emperor.²¹⁵ He states categorically that another ruler has been born, who is the real saviour.²¹⁶ This "good news" is the contrast information to the "good news" of the *pax romana*.

"Luke ... has drawn on language embedded in the culture of Roman religion and legitimation of power and in the culture of Jewish trust in divine intervention and rule. He exploits the socio-politico-religious depth of that language in both cultures, and then transforms that language by vesting it in a message about a newborn baby in a manger, spoken to peasant-shepherds."²¹⁷ This "good news" of Luke changes nurtured ideas regarding the identity of the saviour, and the proclamation of hope. Luke's theology of the good news follows in its dynamics the main features and aspects of the *εὐαγγέλιον* in Deutero-Isaiah.²¹⁸ The "great joy", mentioned in the proclamation of the angel is a fitting reaction to the "good news", which manifests in the praise of God. Finally, the effect of the tidings is to bring the peace of God, and not that of Augustus.²¹⁹ From this perspective, one understands and appreciates the inaugural teaching of Jesus, in which the

²¹² Cf. I. H. Marshall, *Historian*, 104.

²¹³ Cf. K. Wengst, *Frieden*, 19.

²¹⁴ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke I*, 107.

²¹⁵ This is a typical example of inculturation: Luke adopts the language within the milieu of the *pax romana* to announce that a ruler more efficient and capable than the Emperor is born. The use of this verb outside the imperial cult is a provocation. Cf. M. Ebner, *Evangelium*, 32.

²¹⁶ Cf. H.-J. Klauck, *Kaiser*, 13.

²¹⁷ J. B. Green, *Luke*, 134.

²¹⁸ The inaugural preaching of Jesus in Lk 4:18 borrows imagery already existent in Deutero-Isaiah especially in Is 61.

²¹⁹ Cf. Lk 2:14. In Lk 2:29 Simeon is prepared to be dismissed in peace because he has seen the salvation of God.

proclamation of the good news to the poor involved the forgiveness of sins, the healing of the blind, freedom for the imprisoned and the proclamation of the Lord's year of favour.²²⁰

The council of Priene adopted the birthday of Augustus (23rd September) to be the beginning of their new year with the argument that the reign of Augustus has liberated the world from barbarism, confusion and chaos. Augustus is presented as a saviour from providence. Luke presents the birth of the saviour Jesus with a *passivum divinum*, "born for you" ἐτέχθη ὑμῖν. Both the document of Priene and the chronology of Luke speak from good news and from joy. Both highlight the peace, the salvation and the light metaphor (Lk 2:8b: περιέλαμψεν; P.Z.37: ἐπιφανείς δὲ ὁ Καῖσαρ). However, the resemblance and identity end here. The public transcript of Luke's message has a hidden transcript, which can be summarised thus: there can only be one saviour and this saviour can only be Jesus, who through the resurrection has become the Lord.²²¹

Moreover, Luke questions the prerogative of the special class regarding the good news in the *pax romana*. He does not share the opinion that the εὐαγγέλιον is a prerogative of the ruling class, as was the case in the *pax romana* and in the imperial cult. The shepherds and peasants located at the bottom of the scale of power and privilege, are the recipients of a divine visitation. As such, they are highly esteemed in the world of the nativity pericope. "Mangy, stinking, bathless shepherds are in their ritual uncleanliness an encouragement for all who lack religious status."²²² This is not an honour intended for the mighty of Lk 2:1-2.²²³

Historically viewed, Luke seems to argue in the same line with Mark. Mark wrote for a community that witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 CE by Vespasian. Seeing Jesus as the "son of man" is a clear tendency that equals the denial of the divinity of Vespasian.²²⁴ The Lucan community is being told that this area, which is presently experiencing the celebration of the triumph of Vespasian and Titus, had already experienced the birth of the real saviour and redeemer,

²²⁰ Cf. Lk 4:18f.

²²¹ Cf. H. Omerzu, Imperium, 33.

²²² F. W. Danker, Jesus, 27.

²²³ Luke seems to be consequent in the actualization of the programm mapped out in the Magnificat. The reversal of fortune stated in Lk 1:52 is already on the verge of narrative fulfilment: The aristocrats are contrasted to the lowly. The power of the ruling class is weakened in such a way that they do not receive the news of divine intervention in human history, while this information is given to the poor and the degraded. After the reference to the emperor and his legate at the beginning, the shepherds present a very contrasting mood of ordinariness. The shepherds in the pericope could also stand for nobility and gentility with the imagery of Virgil. With the mention of Bethlehem in direct contact with the shepherds, one sees in the shepherds a symbol of davidic descent, because of the profession of David in Bethlehem before his becoming a king. For more on this theme, refer to R. E. Brown, Birth, 672-675. J. Fitzmyer, Luke I, 396.

²²⁴ Mark was determined to show that notwithstanding the imperial apotheosis, the emperor, in this case, Vespasian, is not the son of God. In Caesarea Philippi, where Vespasian retreated to plan the attack on Jerusalem, Peter proclaimed that Jesus is the son of God (Mk 8:29). Mark used the beginning of his gospel to assure a counter claim to the Evangelium of the Emperors. Knowing the importance of the moment of Jesus' death, he allowed the Roman centurion to proclaim a central message: the divinity of Jesus (Mk 15:39). Cf. M. Ebner/B. Heining, Exegese, 358-9.

which was made possible by the instrumentality of Emperor Augustus,²²⁵ on whose *pax romana* they (Vespasian and Titus) are basking.

The dictates and ideas of the *pax romana* helped Luke in the correction of ideas and actions in his community. The end of the first century witnessed the membership of rich and influential individuals in the Christian communities.²²⁶

The correct attitude and approach to power and to the less privileged members of the community formed a theme that will occupy Luke in the course of his gospel. Luke intends to give a solution to this problem. It is as if he were saying: Depart from the ideas and mentalities of your former religion and sociological setup. Your social and political status in the society has nothing to do with God's acceptance. At another central event, the last supper, Luke introduces this topic, as a reaction of Jesus to the quarrel of the apostles concerning the greatest among them.²²⁷ The reply of Jesus summarises the Lucan theology: *οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἔθνων κυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν και οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες αὐτῶν εὐεργέται καλοῦνται.*²²⁸

Luke uses the idea and language of the imperial cult to indicate an identity that should not be found among Christians. "Benefactor" is a title that was prized in the imperial cult besides "saviour".²²⁹ Borrowing ideas from the imperial cult, Luke tells his audience what a Christian should not be. To be the greatest means reducing oneself to the level of a serving one during meals.

At a time of experienced devastating disorientation regarding the true saviour and redeemer of humanity, Luke's birth narrative was an answer to a cultural and theological confusion. He reassures his audience that the majesty and splendour of the imperial cult arising from the *pax romana* should not blind them from the simplicity and divinity of the real saviour. Notwithstanding this splendour, it is still subservient to a more powerful and heavenly purpose. The simplicity and seeming helplessness of the child notwithstanding, it is still able to control imperial decisions and edicts. As such, divinity and simplicity are not two polarising ends but complementary. That the message of the birth of the saviour was first given to "unworthy" people, socially and politically, indicates the universality of the salvation intended by Luke. It is a moderate portion of comfort for the community of Luke with Hellenistic members. What counts is the openness of an individual to God's dictates and commands, and not his status.²³⁰

The synchronisms²³¹ of Luke are of immense importance for the articulation of the needs of the Lukan community. Probably, there were believers interested in the position of Christianity in the context of Roman domination. To such readers, Luke shows that God could use the dictates of the governing class of the Roman

²²⁵ Cf. W. Schmithals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 290.

²²⁶ Cf. U. Schnelle, *Einleitung*, 290.

²²⁷ Cf. Lk 22: 24-27.

²²⁸ This passage will be treated later in details since it is one of the central texts of the topic.

²²⁹ Cf. H.-J. Klauck, *Kaiser*, 14.

²³⁰ Cf. Acts 10:34 -35. The universality of salvation is one of the tenets of Lucan Theology.

²³¹ With synchronisms, I intend to characterise the historical presentation of Luke that the census, and as such the birth of Jesus, occurred during the reign of Augustus (Lk 2:1-7), and that John the Baptist began his ministry in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius (Lk 3:1-3).

Empire to set the process of salvation in motion.²³² The imperial cult has contributed immensely to the realisation of salvation, even without intending it. Through the “public transcript” of the Gloria of the angel, Luke criticises the political elites, who assume the position of God believing that they can control the events of the world, however embedded in a “hidden transcript”: Peace remains utopic when a person lays claim to the glory of God.²³³ Critical of such arrogance and ungodly development, a move to demythologise the divine aura surrounding Augustus becomes imperative: The powerful were rendered redundant in the information politics of the birth of the real saviour. The tranquillity of the *pax romana* is peripheral. Over and against this ideal is the conviction that another peace exists, which comes from God through the real saviour σωτήρ, who comes in his name.

²³² Cf. P. F. Esler, *Community*, 201.

²³³ Cf. W. Schmithals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 293.

1. *The second item of the temptation of Jesus (Luke 4:5-8)*

1.2. *Greek text*

- 5a *Καὶ ἀναγαγὼν αὐτὸν*
 b *ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου·*
- 6a *καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος*
 b *Σοὶ δώσω τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἅπασαν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν,*
 c *ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται*
 d *καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν θέλω*
 e *δίδωμι αὐτήν·*
- 7a *σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ,*
 b *ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα.*
- 8a *καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ,*
 b *Γέγραπται,*
 c *Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις*
 d *καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.*

1.3. *English translation*

- 5a And leading him up
 b he showed him all the kingdoms of the inhabited world in a point of time.
- 6a And the devil said to him
 b to you I will give this whole authority and their glory
 c because it has been given over to me,
 d and to anyone I want
 e I can give it.
- 7a You now, if you bow down before me,
 b it will wholly be yours.
- 8a But Jesus replying said to him
 b it is written,
 c the Lord your God you shall worship
 d and him only shall you adore.

2. *The context of the temptation pericope*

Since the topic of the dissertation has to do with the criticism of power and dominion in Luke-Acts, the second item of the temptation narrative is of immense importance, in as much as it avails us the opportunity of tracing the trajectory of this theme in Luke-Acts. The very appearance of *τὰς βασιλείας τῆς οἰκουμένης* (v.5b), *ἐξουσία* (v.6b) and *δόξα* (v.6b) is already suggestive of the importance of this pericope for the dissertation because kingdoms, authority and honour are important elements and accessories of power. This temptation pericope is situated between the Genealogy of Jesus (Lk 3:23-38) and his first public ministry in Galilee and Nazareth (Lk 4:14-30). It falls however within the wide context beginning with the baptism of Jesus (Lk 3:21). The whole process is bound

together with the mention of the Holy Spirit,¹ which seems to be the connecting word and the motivating factor behind the presentations.

Taken alone, the temptation narrative is carved into a unit characterised with the presentation of the wilderness, as the place where Jesus encounters the devil. It begins in Lk 4:1 and stretches to Lk 4:14. The occurrence of the word *ὑπέσχεψεν* with the mention of the Holy Spirit in v.1 and v.14 shows the unit of Lk 4:1-13.² The temptation narrative occupies a central place in the Lukan composition.³

A closer look at the temptation pericope reveals that Lk 4:5-8 is of immense importance for the topic of the dissertation. Working from the perspective of the Magnificat and the annunciation of the angels at the birth of Jesus, one sees in it a correction of the false hope and expectations that could be placed on the devil, who claims to have authority over the kingdoms of the inhabited world. The dynamics of the interrelation between politics and Christian community could be summarised thus: In the course of being occupied with political questions, the theological aspect of a community suffers the danger of being paralysed.

2.1 *The compositional structure of the temptation pericope*

The second item of the temptation centred on the promise of the devil of transferring his authority to Jesus begins with *καὶ ἀναγαγὼν* of v.5. The *ἤγαγεν* of v.9 depicts the beginning of another item of the temptation. The different forms of the same verb root (*καὶ ἀναγαγὼν* and *ἤγαγεν*) exemplify the unity of the second item since they depict a beginning *ἀναγαγὼν* and a change of location *ἤγαγεν* showing the beginning of another item. The words *πάσας* (v.5b), *ἅπασαν* (v.6b) and *πᾶσα* (v.7b) appear as recurrences in the possible sections. The adverb *ἐάν* (v.6d and v.7a) stresses the words of the devil. Striking is the interaction between the first and the second person singular in the words of the devil in 6b-7b, which insinuates the wish for a pact or a bond on a personal level. The sentence of the devil is full of *σοὶ* (v.6b), *ἐμοὶ* (v.6c), *σοῦ* (v.7b), *ἐμοῦ* (v.7a) and *σύ* (v.7a). On the other hand, the words of Jesus concentrate on God, who is Lord as well stating clearly that he is not interested in any bond or pact with the devil. An intended

¹ The baptism of Jesus, devoid of all decorations and details, has a mention of the Holy Spirit in Lk 3:22 (*καὶ καταβῆναι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον*). The temptation pericope begins in Lk 4:1 with the information about the Holy Spirit (*πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου*). In the documentation of the first ministry of Jesus in Galilee in Lk 4:14, a mention of the Spirit is also made (*δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος*). The Genealogy of Jesus seems to be a Lukan afterthought, “mit Gewalt eingeklemmt”. Cf. F. Schleiermacher, *Schriften*, 51. Fitzmyer argues contrarily and sees it as coming to the Gospel of Luke at the same time with the prologue and the infancy narrative, Cf. *Theologian*, 29.

² Cf. W. Radl, *Lukas*, 222.

³ W. Wilkens has shown that the gospel of Luke should be read from the redactional expertise seen in the presentation of the temptation pericope. Each of the items in the temptation of Jesus corresponds to the major parts of the Gospels: Lk 4:14–9:50 sees Jesus as the saviour of the poor, corresponding to the temptation with bread; Lk 9:51–19:27 signalises the missionary work of Jesus for the heathens and corresponds to the temptation with power and authority; Lk 19:28–24:53 talks of the end and fall of Jesus on the cross and therefore is comparable with the temptation of Jesus’ fall from the temple. From the presentation of the temptation pericope, Luke seems to tell his readers, one could imagine which way the saviour Jesus would follow, and what his mission could be. Cf. *Versuchungsgeschichte*, 262-272.

detachment which gives God all the glory and refuses any pact with the devil is seen in his words. Political words depicting honour and hegemony dominate the semantic field: βασιλεία, ἐξουσία, δόξα, προσκυνεῖν. This second item of the temptation could be structured as follows:

A. V.5a-5b: **Introduction**

B. V.6a-8d: **Exchange of words**

1. V.6a-7b: *The speech of the devil*

- a. V.6a: Introduction
- b. V.6b-6e: Promise (σοὶ δώσω...) and supporting statement (ὅτι ἐμοί...)
- c. V.7a: Condition (σὺ οὖν ἐὰν...)
- d. V.7b: Reiteration (ἔσται σοῦ...)

2. V.8a-d: *The reaction of Jesus*

- a. V.8a: Introduction: καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς
- b. V.8b-d: (Scriptural) Words of Jesus: Γέγραπται

2.2. *Synoptic comparison of the Lukan and Matthean accounts*⁴

This temptation of Jesus is of immense importance for the synoptics. That is the most important reason that explains its *treditio triplex*. Before venturing into the possible exegesis of this text and into the consequent Lukan theology, it would be worthwhile ascertaining the similarities and the differences between the Lukan and Matthean presentation. Mark is not interesting, in as much as he made a very brief presentation of the temptation of Jesus in two verses (Mk 1:12-13).

Lk 4:5-8	Mt 4:8-10
5 Καὶ ἀναγαγὼν αὐτὸν	8 Πάλιν παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος
ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας	εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν,
τῆς οἰκουμένης	καὶ δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας
ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου·	τοῦ κόσμου
6 καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ	καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν,
ὁ διάβολος,	9 καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ,
Σοὶ δώσω τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἅπασαν	Ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω
καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν,	
ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν θέλω	
δίδωμι αὐτήν·	
7 σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ,	ἐὰν πεσῶν προσκυνήσῃς μοι.
ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα.	
8 καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ,	10 τότε λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς,
	Ἵπαγε, Σατανᾶ·

⁴ The Synoptic comparison of the two evangelists would only concentrate on the temptation item necessary for the topic of the dissertation, namely the second temptation in Luke and the third temptation in Matthew.

γέγραπται,

Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ
αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.

γέγραπται

γάε,

Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ
αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.

The sequence of the temptation version of Luke differs from the Matthean sequence of the same account. The climax of the temptation version of Matthew occupies the middle position in the temptation account of Luke.

After the temptation with bread, Luke writes, *καὶ ἀναγαγὼν αὐτὸν*. Matthew has a detailed piece of information: *πάλιν παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν*.⁵ The subject of the sentence is the devil, while the object is Jesus. The high mountain of Matthew is missing in Luke. Continuing, Luke writes *ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τῆς οἰκουμένης*, while the parallel text in Matthew reads *καὶ δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν*. Instead of the Matthean *ὁ κόσμος*,⁶ Luke uses his favourite: *ἡ οἰκουμένη*.⁷ Luke informs about the time of this event: *ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου*. Matthew has an addition, which Luke avoided but later adopted, *καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν*.

The promise of the devil in both versions is differently rendered. Luke gives a longer version,⁸ *σοὶ δώσω τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἅπασαν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν*. Matthew writes, *ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω*. Before this, however, Luke used the introduction, *καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ διάβολος*, while Matthew wrote, *καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ*. The promise is different: The pronoun *σοὶ* is emphatic at the beginning of the promise of the devil in Luke,⁹ so that it begins with a first person pronoun of the same case as its subordinate clause *ἐμοί*, suggesting a contrast.¹⁰ The emphasis on this *σοὶ* also shows the persuasive nature of the promise of the devil.¹¹ Matthew begins with a definite pronoun in plural *ταῦτά* (these). The promise of the devil in the version of Matthew is, “all these I will give you”. Luke introduced an important element to the promise of the devil: *ἡ ἐξουσία* (power/authority) with *ἅπασαν*.¹² In addition,

⁵ *Πάλιν* is used frequently by Matthew as a substitute for the Lukan *καὶ*. It appears twenty eight times in Mark, seventeen times in Matthew, and only three and four times in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles respectively. In the seventeen instances of its appearance in Matthew, it is used five times redactionally. Cf. U. Luz, *Matthäus I*, 69. The *καὶ* of Luke is more original than the *πάλιν* of Matthew. (Cf. Mahnke, *Versuchungsgeschichte*, 127; Sevenich-Bax, *Konfrontation*, 63; Davies-Allison, *Matthew I*, 369).

⁶ Luke uses this description of the world only in Lk 9:25; 11:50; 12:30 and Acts 17:24.

⁷ The word *οἰκουμένη*, which Luke used, has a different meaning as the word *κόσμος*. In the form, in which Luke uses it, it means the inhabited world, which would actually be seen as the civilised world of the Roman Empire. Statistically, one can say that the word is used fifteen times in the New Testament; eight times in Lukan writings, (cf. Lk 2:1; 4:5; 21:26; Acts 11:28; 17:6,31; 19:27; 24:5), once in Matthew. It never occurred in Mark. Here in Luke, it is not only redactional, but also a criticism of the Roman Empire. The word reflects a particular world-view of Luke.

⁸ Cf. S. Schulz, *Spruchquelle*, 181.

⁹ Cf. E. Sevenich-Bax, *Konfrontation*, 63.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 516.

¹¹ Cf. J. Dupont, *Versuchungen*, 53.

¹² Luke often uses this other form of *πασα*. The word is used redactionally in seven texts in the Lukan Gospel, which was taken from Mark: Lk 4:40; 5:26; 8:37; 9:15; 19:37,48; 21:15. Cf. J. Jeremias, *Sprache*, 113. The statistics of the word among the evangelists is: Matthew 3 times;

the Lukan account has an explanatory clause, *ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται καὶ ᾧ ἐὰν θέλω δίδωμι αὐτήν*.

Both evangelists structured the condition for the fulfilment of the promise differently. Luke writes *σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσης ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ, ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα*. Matthew articulates: *ἐὰν πεσῶν προσκυνήσης μοι*. Both begin the conditional statement with *ἐὰν*. The participle *πεσῶν* is present in Matthew but lacking in Luke, while *ἐνώπιον* is lacking in Matthew. The phrase *ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα* is only present in Luke.

The reaction of Jesus and the introduction are recorded differently. Luke has *καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ* as introduction, while Matthew has *τότε λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς*. The words of Jesus show a major literary difference. Luke has it thus: *γέγραπται, Κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις*. The difference lies in the Matthean verbal expulsion of the devil with his Aramaic name and with the inclusion of *γάρ* after *γέγραπται*, making the Scripture the reason for refusing the temptation: *Ἵπαγε, Σατανᾶ· γέγραπται γάρ, Κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις*. Apart from these inclusions, all the other accounts correspond.

2.2.1 *Historical and relational Questions*

Probably, Matthew preserved the original sequence of Q, while Luke changed it to fit into his theological concept of Jerusalem, while at the same time underlining the essence of his second item through its middle position.¹³ Luke did not tell the reader where Jesus was led up to. He uses the aorist participle of the very word he refused to use in v.1, namely *ἀνάγω*,¹⁴ but without any preposition of movement, since he did not give any definite place. However, it is puzzling, why Matthew

Mark 4 times; Luke 11 times; John 1x. Luke used the word about ten times in the Acts of the Apostles. Cf. R. Morgenthaler, *Sedes*, 293. The appendage of the prefix *ἀ* is therefore to be sought within the Lukan initiative.

¹³ The sequence of the temptation narrative in the Gospel of Luke suggests an editorship of Luke. Exegetes like G. Theißen, *Lokalkolorit*, 216f, U. B. Müller, *Hoheitstitel*, 87,28 and P. Hoffmann, *Tradition*, 194 opine that Matthew maintains in his sequence an identity with the Q source. However, other exegetes see Luke as the custodian of the original sequence. Comiskey's view is important: "Some prefer Luke's order, arguing that his is more logical, and hence earlier; for the temptations in Luke deal with power over nature, power over men, and power over God. A certain climactic order too may be seen in Christ's conquest of a corporal, a physical, and a spiritual temptation." Cf. J.P. Comiskey, *Satan*, 622. W. Schmithals, *Lukas*, 58 stressed the impossibility of Luke changing the original sequence since he is inclined to identity with Q. G. Schneider, *Lukas*, 99 opines that Luke preserved the original sequence, which was changed by Matthew in order to correspond with the end of his gospel. However, it is quite likely that Luke is responsible for changing the order of the temptation. He probably placed the temptation in Jerusalem owing to the theological role of Jerusalem in his gospel. The Jerusalem-journey of Jesus is very central in his gospel. The devil leaves Jesus in Jerusalem only to appear at the end in Jerusalem. K.H. Rengstorf is convinced that either Luke or his source rearranged the sequence to correspond with the first three petitions in the Lukan version of "Our father". Cf. K.H. Rengstorf, *Lukas*, 63.

¹⁴ W. Radl says that the translation with "leading up" is false in this instance. A better translation would be "abduction". Cf. W. Radl, *Lukas*, 233. For Plummer, *Luke*, 111, the devil transferred Jesus "in thought to a mountain-top".

refused to use the verb *ἀνάγω*¹⁵ and used *παραλαμβάνω* in its indicative present instead, although *ἀνάγω* would have fitted better than *παραλαμβάνω*, which means “taking (someone) along”. However, his *παραλαμβάνω*¹⁶ could have been more original than the Lukan *ἀνάγω*, judging from the frequency of the word.¹⁷ Matthew, in accordance with his dramatic method, writes of a high mountain,¹⁸ while Luke creates rather a picture of a cryptic and hypnotic trance.¹⁹ Luke uses the indicative aorist *ἔδειξεν*,²⁰ while Matthew uses the indicative present *δείκνυσιν*, to match the present tense of *παραλαμβάνω* in the preceding clause. Luke prefers *οἰκουμένη* to *κόσμος*. A comparison within the Gospel of Luke shows that in Lk 2:1 he writes *πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην*, (all the inhabited world) while in Lk 4:5 he writes *πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τῆς οἰκουμένης* (all the kingdoms of the inhabited world).

*Ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου*²¹ is usually translated as “in an instant”, although the literal translation “in a point of time” gives a better insight to the event. Luke tells the reader that the presentation of the kingdoms of the *οἰκουμένη* took place in a flash of time, because of the impossibility of seeing the kingdoms of the inhabited world from a single mountain. This presentation of time renders the question

¹⁵ The word *ἀνάγω* is a favourite verb of Luke. He used it twenty times in his writings (thrice in the Gospel and seventeen times in Acts). However, the word lacks such a frequency in Q and in Matthew, where it is used only once. Cf. J. Jeremias, *Sprache*, 90.

¹⁶ The verb *παραλαμβάνω* is used in Q. It is also present in Matthew and Luke: Sixteen times in Matthew and twelve times in the writings of Luke (six times in the gospel and six times in the Acts of the Apostles). From the background of this statistics, it becomes difficult assigning the affinity to this word to any of them (Matthew and Luke).

¹⁷ The occurrence of the word in Q 11:26 and Q 17:34,35 combined with the argument favouring the Matthean sequence seems to suggest in favour of *παραλαμβάνω*. The *ἀνάγω* is therefore an addition of Luke.

¹⁸ The mountain plays a very important role in the Gospel of Matthew. It does not play a big role in the Gospel of Luke. Matthew writes of “the sermon on the mount” and Luke writes of “the sermon on the plain”. Cf. Matt. 5:1; 8:1; 5:29; 17:1 and 28:16.

¹⁹ Luke’s concern for plausibility demands recognition. It is likely that he avoided the use of a high mountain, being aware that there is no mountain, from which it is possible to view the whole kingdoms of the World. However, one can see all the kingdoms of the world in a vision shown in a moment of time. Cf. H. Kruse, *Reich*, 45 and S.C. Glickman, *Temptation*, 464f. R. Morgenthaler’s view offers an insight: “Wer den Matthäustext liest, fragt unwillkürlich: Wo ist diese hohe Berg? Lukas weiß, daß es diesen Berg im Sinne dieser Frage gar nicht gibt... Er ersetzt das archaische Raumwunder des Matthäus durch ein Zeitwunder, indem er die Bergnotiz fortläßt und *ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου* einfügt.” (Sedes, 291). Cf. also J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 507.

²⁰ The historic present of Matthew (*δείκνυσιν*) could be more faithful to Q and as such more original to *ἔδειξεν*. The historical presents were used 93 times in Matthew, 151 times in Mark and only 9 times in Luke. As such, Luke has the tendency of replacing verbs in historic present into aorist. There are about seven instances where Luke changed a Markan historical present into aorist, while Matthew maintained this historic present.

²¹ Since the time of Aristotle, the word *στιγμή* denotes a point made with a sharp tool. Cf. Aristotle, *Ethics* 10,4,4. During the time of Demosthenes, the word stood for something very minute, inconsequential and small: *εἴ γε εἶχε στιγμὴν ἢ σκιάν τούτων ὧν κατεσκευάζε*. Cf. Dem. 21, 115. However, the word, as used later by Plutarch had the special meaning of designating the time of the moment. The full use of the word, *στιγμῇ χρόνου* is not only attested of in Luke, but also in TestSal 24,2 and in Ps.-Plutarch, *Cons ad Apollon* 104b. For more information on this word, see Bauer-Aland, *Wörterbuch*, 1534 and W. Pape, *Handwörterbuch*, 943.

concerning the place of the temptation redundant and superfluous.²² With the use of this word, Luke clearly suggests that this item of the temptation experience has a visionary character.²³

Matthew makes an addition, which Luke avoided in his account, but later adopted in his version of the words spoken by the devil: *καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν* (and their glory). It is also striking to see that Luke betrayed his redactional activity by setting the pronoun modifying “glory” in plural (*αὐτῶν*), although this pronoun has no immediate antecedent.²⁴

The word *ἐξουσία* is missing in Matthew. Luke uses it in its political sense.²⁵ The theological inclinations and intentions of the different evangelists are clear: Matthew lays emphasis on riches (possessions) and kingdoms, and Luke wants to turn the attention of the reader to power and authority as the source of falling away from the worship of the true God.

There is a qualitative and quantitative difference between the Matthean “all these” and the Lukan “the whole of this power/authority”. This strong emphasis is Lukan.²⁶ The devil affirms that the power and authority over the kingdoms of the inhabited world are given to him, and he gives them to whomever he wants. Matthew probably shares this idea of Luke,²⁷ otherwise, it would not make any

²² H. Mahnke, *Versuchungsgeschichte*, 127f, writes, „Jetzt wird auch verständlich, warum Lk die Angabe des “sehr hohen Berges” getilgt hat... Diese beiden Veränderungen des Lk lassen den Vorgang also als Vision oder als zauberhafte teuflische Vorspiegelung begreifen.“ E. Sevenich-Bax, *Konfrontation*, 62, is also of this opinion.

²³ Cf. L.T. Johnson, *Luke*, 74.

²⁴ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 516, and S.R. Garret, *Demise*, 127. See also I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 172.

²⁵ In all the synoptic Gospels, *ἡ ἐξουσία* is associated with the authority of Jesus to cast out the devil and to teach in a manner that the people have never seen before. Luke also uses the word from a political perspective within his gospel. Cf. Lk 12:11; 20:20; 23:7; The use of this word in relation to the devil is a clear indication that it could be used ambiguously in Luke. Luke even speaks of the *ἐξουσία* of the devil in Acts 20:18 and of the darkness in Lk 22:53.

²⁶ Cf. G.H. Twelftree, *Temptation*, 826. See also E. Sevenich-Bax, *Konfrontation*, 62. However, H. Schürmann says that Luke might have used only the words, which were already in Q tradition and in the theological conception of the East. He rejects the view that Luke introduced this detailed offer of the devil in order to show his distrust in the Roman Empire since that does not correspond with his proven loyalty to the ruling class. Cf. H. Schürmann, *Lukasevangelium*, 211. Notwithstanding this effort, the evidence of a Lukan redaction is very strong. Beside the argument that the use of *ἐξουσία* in the political sense is very typical of Luke, Luke’s version is not only explanatory (Creed) but also concretizing (Fuchs) and emphasizing (Schweizer).

²⁷ The opinion of the apocalyptic is that God has rejected and abandoned the world leaving it for the devil and the ultimate judgement (cf. 1Cor 2:8; 2Cor 4:4; John 12:31; 14:30). In Rev 13, a message with political brisance is offered: The Roman Empire is in the hands of the devil. Cf. W. Schmithals, *Lukas*, 59. Working from a logical background (*nemo dat quod non habet*) and from the apocalyptic conviction outlined above, Matthew has the same idea with Luke. It might however, be a contradiction to the possession of divine authority by Jesus in Matt 9:6,8. The claim of the devil would counteract the resurrected Jesus in Matt 28:18. Therefore, it is unacceptable. Cf. R.H. Gundry, *Matthew*, 58. That could explain his refusal of the explicit apocalyptic conviction that the devil has authority over the world. However, the devil promising Jesus all the kingdoms of the world reinstates the conviction that the devil can only give out what belongs to him.

sense making the devil promise Jesus the kingdoms of the world and their glory. In Luke, the devil claims to see to the distribution of glory in the world.²⁸

However, this promise has a condition. The devil is emphatic in the Lukan presentation with *σὺ* (second person singular) placed at the beginning of the condition. Both of them use the grammatical introduction of a conditional statement *ἐάν*. Matthew uses a participle lacking in the Lukan presentation: *πεσῶν*.²⁹ It qualifies *προσκυνήσης*.³⁰ He adds the dative of the personal pronoun of the first person *μοι*. Luke makes the condition of the devil clear with his preposition *ἐνώπιον*,³¹ followed by the genitive case of the first person singular *ἐμοῦ*.³² The terms of the promise is partly repeated: *ἔσται σοῦ πάντα*.

Luke and Matthew recorded Jesus' reaction differently. Matthew begins with the adverb *τότε*. He avoided *εἶπεν* and used the historical present *λέγει*³³ instead, although he is at times fond of *ἀποκριθεὶς... εἶπεν*.³⁴ He leaves Jesus, the subject of the action, grammatically behind the personal pronoun in the dative case referring to the devil. On the other hand, Luke presents the name of Jesus, the subject of the action, before the dative personal pronoun of the devil.³⁵

The words of Jesus are recorded differently. Luke writes: *γέγραπται, Κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις*. Matthew makes Jesus expel the

²⁸ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke, 180.

²⁹ *πεσῶν* is the participle derived from *πίπτω*. Matthew uses it nineteen times in his gospel, Mark eight times and Luke uses it seventeen times in his gospel and nine times in the Acts. Although used by Matthew in his temptation narrative, the outline above shows that it is not a typically Matthean word. However, it is only in Matthew that we have *πίπτω* in relation to *προσκυνέω* in 2:11, 4:9 and 18:26, even when the argument is attached that these texts, where *πίπτω* and *προσκυνέω* appear together, do not have any parallel in the gospel of Luke. Cf. E. Sevenich-Bax, *Konfrontation*, 64. The use of *πεσῶν* is a Matthean innovation and initiative. Cf. S. Schulz, *Spruchquelle*, 181.

³⁰ The verb *προσκυνέω* means to worship and occurs sixty times in the New Testament: Matthew used it thirteen times in his gospel, Mark used it twice and Luke used it three times in the gospel and four times in the Acts. John used it eleven times in his Gospel and twenty four times in the Revelations. The word is used once and twice in the first letter to the Corinthians and in the letter to the Hebrews respectively. Cf. J.M. Nützel, *προσκυνέω*, 419.

³¹ *ἐνώπιον* is a Lukan favourite. Luke uses it approximately 22 times in his gospel and thirteen times in the Acts of the Apostles. This word is not in Matthew and Mark. It appears only once in the Gospel of John 20:30. Cf. J. Jeremias, *Sprache*, 38. As such, it should be viewed as a part of Luke's literary attempt. Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas*, 199 and Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 516. Also Davies and Allison: "Matthew has added "falling"... and Luke has changed *μοι* to a more semitic *ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ* (*ἐνώπιον*: Mt: 0; Mk: 0; Lk: 23)." Cf. W.D. Davies – D.C. Allison, *Matthew I*, 372.

³² The preposition with the genitive *ἐμοῦ* attached shows that we are in this instance dealing with a result of Lukan redaction. Since *ἐνώπιον* is strongly Lukan and absent from other Synoptics, it is no doubt the addition of Luke.

³³ The *λέγει* of Matthew should be considered as redactional. Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew I*, 372. Also E. Sevenich-Bax, *Konfrontation*, 65. Besides, in the context of the temptation narrative in Q, *εἶπεν* has been used in 4:3, 4:6, and not *λέγει*.

³⁴ Cf. *Matt 28:5*

³⁵ No definite statement could be made regarding who made a faithful use of the Q in the position of the subject. However, since it is accepted that Luke's formulation with *καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς* is nearer to Q as Matthew's, it would be more logical to accept that Luke preserved the Q position of the subject, notwithstanding the ambiguity in the Lukan order. See the evaluations to this problem rendered by S. Carruth and Robinson, *Temptations*. 342f.

devil with his Aramaic name and with the inclusion of *γάρ* after *γέγραπται*, making the Scripture the reason: *ὑπάγε, Σατανᾶ.³⁶ γέγραπται γάρ,³⁷ Κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.³⁸*

2.2.2 *A hypothetical reconstruction of the Q version*

The Q begins with the mission of John the Baptist and the temptation account³⁹ and ends with apocalyptic speeches. The beginning of the Q has the important function of legitimising the speeches by showing Jesus as the strong one announced by the Baptist. From this perspective, the temptation pericope helps in presenting Jesus as the strong one, who withstood the devil by passing a qualifying test.⁴⁰ A reconstruction of the possible Q version of the aspect of the temptation, which has to do with the topic, would be as follows:

Καὶ παραλαμβάνει αὐτὸν ὁ διάβολος εἰς ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν καὶ δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· ταῦτά σοι πάντα δώσω, ἔὰν προσκυνήσῃς μοι. καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ· γέγραπται· κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις.⁴¹

³⁶ Matthew used these words for the expulsion of the devil owing to the position of this third item in the temptation pericope. The *Ἔπαγε, Σατανᾶ* might have belonged to another tradition, which only Matthew used, and as such a Matthean addition. Is Matthew putting in signals, which will help the reader remember the present text when reading future texts? See the identical usage in rebuking Peter in Matt 16:23. Cf. U. Luz, *Matthäus*, 227. However, Mahnke, *Versuchungsgeschichte*, 324 and Marshall, *Luke*, 172 say that this formel existed in Q. Luke abandoned it, because of its oddness having changed the position of the temptation account. S. Brown, *Apostasy*, 18 also shares this view. In the face of these arguments, an assessment is necessary: Matthew and Luke are interested in the withdrawal of the devil. Luke makes the devil leave Jesus for a period. It becomes difficult to fathom why Luke could have rejected this word. Secondly, the non-existence of the word *σατανᾶς* in the temptation narrative of the Q version bears evidence of a Matthean redaction. However, there is no reason that would speak against retaining this verbal expulsion of the devil if it were present in the Q version. The conclusion follows that Matthew must have changed the Q version.

³⁷ *Γάρ* is a particle and belongs to the addition of the Matthean expulsion of the devil. It serves as a connective to the scriptural quotation. The inclusion of the word before the quotation of Deuteronomy gives the debate a scriptural tone. Cf. A. Fuchs, *Versuchung*, 130f.

³⁸ The quotation, which Jesus used in the expulsion of the devil corresponds neither to the Hebrew wording of the Old Testament, nor to the manuscript B of the Septuagint (LXX). A correct translation of Deut 16:13 in accordance with the masoretic text and the ms. B of the Septuagint would be: "The Lord, your God, you shall fear. Him you shall serve." In our texts, it is quoted in a form identical with the ms. A of the Septuagint (LXX). Our texts have *προσκυνήσεις* instead of *φοβηθήσῃ* with an additional *μόνῳ*. The change of *φοβηθήσῃ* to *προσκυνήσεις* could have been warranted as corresponding to the demand of the devil. The *μόνῳ* intensifies the rejection of the devil. Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 516. W. Radl, *Lukas*, 234f. J. Dupont, *Versuchungen*, 56.

³⁹ The temptation pericope is generally regarded as belonging to the later stage of the Q composition. It could have possibly been composed in a written manner within the stage of redaction of the Q. Cf. R. Bultmann, *Geschichte*, 354. For more on the possibility of the temptation belonging to the redactory stage of the Q cf. J.S. Kloppenburg, *Formation*, 325f.

⁴⁰ Cf. D. Zeller, *Versuchungen*, 63f.

⁴¹ Cf. Hoffmann/Heil, *Spruchquelle*, 36.

By way of conclusion, it could be said that *ἀναγαγὼν αὐτὸν, οἰκουμένη, ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου, ἔξουσία, ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδέδοται καὶ ᾧ εἰάν θέλω δίδωμι αὐτήν, ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ* and *ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα* are the important changes, which Luke made in Q version dropping the high mountain and the *παραλαμβάνει*.

3. *History and Tradition*

3.1 *A traditional and historical consideration of the Lukan redaction*

Having made a comparison of the gospels of Matthew and Luke and ascertained the changes Luke made in the Q version, which allowed the reconstruction of a probable Q version of the second item of the temptation in Luke, it becomes imperative to consider words, which give a clue to the theology of Luke by undertaking a lexical investigation to ascertain their development. This precedes the consideration of the Lukan theology.

3.1.1 *οἰκουμένη*

The word is a substantive participle of the present passive of *οἰκέω* meaning to dwell, which initially in ancient Greek had to be completed with *γῆ*,⁴² resulting into *ἡ οἰκουμένη γῆ*.⁴³ From the beginning, it has been a geographical concept and meant the inhabited world as different from the uninhabited world. Deeply rooted in Greek culture and thought, the word referred to an order of settled life or government of the Greek cultural world, differentiating it from the barbarian ethnic groups surrounding it.⁴⁴ This phenomenon was existent not only in the classical Greek period but also in the Hellenistic period.

In the LXX, *οἰκουμένη* is used about forty times⁴⁵ to translate the Hebrew *עֲרָב* and *לְבַב*. Even here it refers to the universal earth, its inhabitants and the kingdoms in it, which have been made, ordered and directed by God, and which He will later judge.⁴⁶ Philo uses the word *οἰκουμένη* frequently,⁴⁷ however without any political meaning or implication following the Greek understanding of the word as a differentiation between an inhabited and uninhabited land.

Owing to the stoic cosmopolitanism, it came to refer to the centrally organised and ordered Roman Empire (*orbis terrae/terrarum*), which was governed from Rome⁴⁸ as from the time of Sulla. This is evidenced from the titles and names given to the Roman Emperors.⁴⁹ Invariably, the application to the Roman Empire and world state is what the word *οἰκουμένη* would convey to the man of the first

⁴² Cf. O. Michel, *ἡ οἰκουμένη*, 159.

⁴³ Cf. G. Johnston, OIKOYMENH, 353.

⁴⁴ Cf. Herodotus, 4, 110. This Greek conceit towards the “barbarians” is comparable with the Hebrew attitude towards the Gentiles.

⁴⁵ In the Psalms, the word occurred about seventeen times like in Ps 18: 5. It occurred about fourteen times in the book of Isaiah. E.g. in Is 10: 23.

⁴⁶ Cf. Ps 9:9; 18:5; 88:12; Is 10:14; 62:4.

⁴⁷ Cf. Philo, Leg 10; Vit Mos 1, 157; 1, 255.

⁴⁸ Cf. Cicero, Pro Murena 22; Jos Ant 11, 3

⁴⁹ In relation to Marcus Aurelius, it was written: *τὸν εὐεργέτην καὶ σωτῆρα τῆς ὅλης οἰκουμένης*. Nero was also called: *σωτῆρ καὶ εὐεργέτης τῆς οἰκουμένης*.

century A.D. It was in this direction that Josephus used the word, seeing in the emperor the foreman of the oikoumene: ὁ τῆς οἰκουμένης προστάτης Καῖσαρ.⁵⁰ From the perspective of the New Testament, this word is a Lukan favourite.⁵¹ It could mean humanity as a whole, the people or the nations.⁵² With its use in Lk 2:1, it implies that the census is for all people. This is ascertained from the intention of Luke: the birth of the world's saviour falls within an event that has a very important meaning for all people.⁵³ It is obvious that the use in Lk 2:1 has a literary and redactional connection to the use in Lk 4:5.

It might have helped Luke to underscore the necessity of the political landscape of the Roman Empire for the survival of the Christian faith and his endeavour to see Christians as necessary for the political landscape of the Roman hegemony. All the instances of this word in the writings of Luke have a concrete political connotation and refer to the Roman Empire. From the historical certainty that the works of Luke are, historically speaking, late works,⁵⁴ it becomes easier to see the reasons for the political undertone of this word. In relation to κόσμος, it can be said that οἰκουμένη has more to do with the political entity known as the world, while κόσμος has to do with the world as a place marked out for the proof of one's faith, and often used as forces working against the Christian meaning of the salvation history.⁵⁵ However, this implication of the use of κόσμος can also be applied to the use of οἰκουμένη in Revelation 16:14, where the βασιλεῖς τῆς οἰκουμένης ὄλης are the eschatological enemies of God.

In the course of history, οἰκουμένη has enjoyed different meanings, beginning with the depiction of an inhabited area to the differentiation of the Greek world and later as a synonym for the Roman Empire. The frequency of its use in the Lukan writings shows that it is a Lukan favourite.

3.1.2. Ἐξουσία

Ἐξουσία is the possibility and the right to do something based on the power given by a higher jurisdiction either politically, morally or socially.⁵⁶ It means the possibility of doing something, however based on the condition that there is

⁵⁰ Cf. Josephus, Bell 1, 633. See Ant 11, 196 for a further use of this word.

⁵¹ The word does not occur frequently in the New Testament. Out of the fifteen times of its occurrence in the New Testament, Luke used it three times in his gospel and five times in the Acts. It occurred only once in Matthew and once in the letter to the Romans. The Revelation used the word three times while it is used twice in the letter to the Hebrews. Cf. Moulton – Geden, Concordance, 689f. The Lukan preference for this word explains why Luke avoided the more theological expression κόσμος, which is highly favoured by the other evangelists and enjoys a higher level of frequency than οἰκουμένη. However, Luke used the word κόσμος only three times in his gospel (9:25; 11:50; 12:30) and once in Acts (17:24).

⁵² Cf. Acts 19:27.

⁵³ Cf. W. Bauer, Wörterbuch, 1137.

⁵⁴ Cf. R. Morgenthaler, Sedes, 292.

⁵⁵ Cf. G. Johnston, OIKOYMENH, 356. The numerous use of the word “world” in the writings of John is a proof of this phenomenon. See Joh 7:7; 8:23; 14:17. Bormann offers another differentiation: κόσμος refers to the world in its natural orderedness while οἰκουμένη refers to the world as a political product of human activity. Cf. L. Bormann, Recht, 122.

⁵⁶ Cf. Ps. Plato, Def 415b.

nothing hindering its prosecution.⁵⁷ Therefore, it is translated with authority and power as being different from *δύναμις*, which can also mean ability or capacity, however translating the intrinsic possibility of doing something independent from external hindrances.⁵⁸

Ἐξουσία can cover different aspects of life, which makes it possible to talk of the *ἐξουσία* of the king, or of the father.⁵⁹ In addition, it describes the moral freedom of an individual to do or not to do something.⁶⁰ It can only be exercised by persons, and not things. Within the general Greek understanding of law and order, the concept *ἐξουσία* could be an assumed freedom, which one assigns to himself. The concept of *ἐξουσία ποιητική* (poetic license) is an instance. In the LXX, instances of *ἐξουσία* are few when compared with *δύναμις*.⁶¹ Here, it also means authority, permission and freedom in juridical sense. Furthermore, it can mean the permission given by God,⁶² or the permission given or denied by the Jewish law.⁶³ The book of Daniel is a very important background for the understanding of the use of the word in the New Testament. In LXX, it uses *ἐξουσία* for the Aramaic *ܫܠܬܢܐ* which suggests that the whole world is under the jurisdiction of this *sholtana*. The person behind this *sholtana* is God whose overall sovereignty is stressed.

Josephus' use of this word is parallel to the general Greek use of the word given above. The word *ἐξουσία*, with the genitive or with the infinitive, denotes permission,⁶⁴ authority⁶⁵ or power, which the law gives or denies.⁶⁶ Philo uses the word from the perspective of the general Greek usage. However, both Philo and Josephus exemplified the "authority" of the ruler. *ἐξουσία* became the governing authority of the kings and the emperors (Philo, Leg 26; Jos, Vita 112; Ant 14,302). Furthermore, Josephus is convinced that no one can attain a political *ἐξουσία* without the will of God,⁶⁷ and no one can free himself from the *ἐξουσία* of God.⁶⁸ Occasionally, the ruling power of God is called *ἐξουσία* in Philo.⁶⁹

In the New Testament, the word *ἐξουσία*⁷⁰ appears in the profane sense of the authority to command,⁷¹ and concretely as area of jurisdiction.⁷² God has the world in his plan.⁷³ He

⁵⁷ Cf. W. Bauer, Wörterbuch, 562f. Cf. Appian Liby 52 § 226; Xen Mem 2,1.25. *Ἐξουσία* in connection with the freedom to do something is taken from the original meaning of *ἔξεστιν*: "It is possible". Cf. Epic Diss I 1,21.

⁵⁸ Cf. W. Grundmann, Begriff, 3f. Luke tends towards using *ἐξουσία* and *δύναμις* side by side. Cf. Lk 4:36; 9:1.

⁵⁹ Cf. P. Oxy, II, 237 (the famous petition of Dionysia).

⁶⁰ Cf. Ps. Plato, Def 412d.

⁶¹ *ἐξουσία* is evidenced about fifty times and *δύναμις* about four hundred times.

⁶² See the word of the angel in Tob 7:10: *καὶ ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔχω ἐξουσίαν δοῦναι αὐτήν ἐτέρῳ ἀνδρὶ πλὴν σοῦ*.

⁶³ Cf. Tob 2:13: *οὐ γὰρ ἐξουσίαν ἔχομεν ἡμεῖς φαγεῖν οὐδὲν κλειψιμαῖον*

⁶⁴ Cf. Jos, Ant 20, 193.

⁶⁵ Cf. Jos, Vit 72.

⁶⁶ Cf. Jos, Ant 4, 24.

⁶⁷ Cf. Jos, Bell 2, 140.

⁶⁸ Cf. Jos, Ant 5, 109.

⁶⁹ Cf. Philo, Cher. 27.

⁷⁰ There are 108 instances of the word *ἐξουσία* in the New Testament, whereby Revelations, the gospel of Luke and the first letter to the Corinthians exhibit a higher level of frequency in the use of the word.

⁷¹ Cf. Matt 8:9; Lk 19:17; 20:20.

⁷² Cf. Lk 23:7.

also has the power to condemn people and the world to an everlasting perdition.⁷⁴ The *ἐξουσία* of God is manifested in his capacity to organise the world the way it pleases him.⁷⁵ From the perspective of the synoptic gospels, *ἐξουσία* can also mean commission, in the sense of being sent to do something. The question directed to Jesus gives an insight to this meaning: *ἐν ποίᾳ ἐξουσίᾳ ταῦτα ποιεῖς*.⁷⁶

The Lukan use of the word enjoys many facets of meanings and applications. An instance of a metaphorical use of the concept of *ἐξουσία* is seen in the formulation *ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ σκότους* in Lk 22:53,⁷⁷ which refers to powers opposed to the foundational implications of the salvation history. As such, they are diametrical opposites of the positive *ἐξουσία* of Matt 28:18. Notwithstanding the problems involved in the reconstruction of the Q version underlying Lk 12:5, *ἐξουσία* denotes the royal and judging competence at the last day.⁷⁸ The story of the centurion from Capernaum, which is adapted from Q, understands *ἐξουσία* as the power enabling one (an official) to fulfil his or her responsibilities.⁷⁹ In traditions peculiar only to Luke, the juridical meaning of *ἐξουσία* as power and the authority required for the execution of an office is dominant.⁸⁰ The use of *ἐξουσία* in Lk 10:19 suggests the meaning of the word as an authority being possible to save someone from the danger and the malignancy of the evil one.⁸¹ The *ἐξουσία* of Jesus is differentiated from other demonic powers,⁸² and corresponds with the purpose of creation in the restoration of nature to its initial status and purpose.⁸³ This *ἐξουσία* of Jesus proves to restore the forgotten serenity and health of a community through the restoration of the well-being of the constituents of this community. Through this *ἐξουσία*, members excommunicated owing to ritual uncleanness, regain their membership. Members, who were social outcasts because of demonic attack and possession, assert their full personality and respect enabling integration.⁸⁴ The wonders and the teaching of Jesus underline the fact that the *ἐξουσία* of Jesus corresponds to the creation purposes of the creator.⁸⁵ The word *ἐξουσία* appears further in Acts 9:14; 26:10,12 in the meaning of authority.

⁷³ Cf. Acts 1:7.

⁷⁴ Cf. Lk 12:5.

⁷⁵ Cf. Rom 9:21.

⁷⁶ Cf. Matt 21:23,24,27; Mk 11:28,39; Lk 20:2,8. For a concise treatment of this question in the gospel of Mark, see K. Scholtissek, *Vollmacht*, 215-222.

⁷⁷ This is identical with the formulation in Acts 26:18.

⁷⁸ Cf. L. Bormann, *Recht*, 116.

⁷⁹ Cf. Lk 7:8.

⁸⁰ Cf. Lk 4:6; 12:11; 19:17; 20:20; 23:7.

⁸¹ Cf. L. Bormann, *Recht*, 116. Furthermore, a correct traditional and historical assignment of Lk 10:19 appears to be exceedingly difficult. Schürmann is of the opinion that the text is not from Q but prelucan. Cf. *Lukasevangelium II/1*, 94-97.

⁸² Lk 11:15-20.

⁸³ Lk 11:14.

⁸⁴ Lk 4:33-41; 5:12-26; 8:26-39. For more on the importance of Jesus' healing for a Jewish community see L. Lies/S. Hell, *Heilsmysterium*, 14-20. Although not an exegetical work, it articulates the opinion reflected in this work.

⁸⁵ Cf. L. Bormann, *Recht*, 301.

The difference between *δύναμις* and *ἐξουσία* is not well pronounced as Luke places both terminologies often side by side (Lk 4:36; 9:1).⁸⁶

The devil's offer of dominion over all the kingdoms does not correspond to Jesus' view of *ἐξουσία*. Rather, this offer of the devil should be seen from the light of the Lukan usage in Lk 22:53: *ἡ ἐξουσία τοῦ σκότους*, a power diametrically opposed to all that Jesus and the salvation history stand for. The conviction of the early church was that the world was the kingdom of the devil.⁸⁷ That is why John writes that the whole world is *ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται* (1 John 5:19). The passive construction in *ὅτι ἐμοὶ παραδίδοται* exemplifies however a *passivum divinum* and corresponds to the biblical art of projecting the work of God.⁸⁸ Therefore, one can say that he has this authority from God. Besides, this construction of Luke resembles a Jeremian idea in Jer 27: 5-6. As part of his punishment for a dissident people, God allows Nebuchadnezzar to own everything. In the same way, the sins of humanity made a change of ownership possible.⁸⁹ Luke departs from the Jewish and biblical conceptualisation of the word, accepting the legal sense of *ἐξουσία*, which was mostly political in his time.⁹⁰ The use of the concept *ἐξουσία* in Lk 4:6 suggests the authority of the Satan and the power and authority of the state.

3.1.3 *προσκυνεῖν*

προσκυνεῖν means to adore someone with an external sign that involves kneeling down or through prostration, however, before a person that deserves adoration. It also means to greet someone with a gesture of utmost loyalty and atimes kissing his feet.⁹¹ It is an act of obeisance and consisted of prostrating oneself on the ground.⁹² The action of kissing the hand towards an object of worship could be regarded as a later development of proskynesis.⁹³

Proskynesis is an act of adoration by which Persians⁹⁴ pay allegiance to a divinified king. The Greeks abandoned this gesture as barbaric. However, they practised it before their deities or before something that was holy. Proskynesis was an act of worship to a god. The meaning of this word derives from the practice associated with it: whoever wants to

⁸⁶ Cf. I. Broer, *ἐξουσία*, 26.

⁸⁷ Cf. 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 6:12.

⁸⁸ Cf. H. Kruse, Reich, 50.

⁸⁹ Cf. H. Kruse, Reich, 54-56. An in-depth treatment of this thematic is given in the section dealing with the political theology of Luke.

⁹⁰ Cf. L. Bormann, Recht, 239. The word *ἐξουσία* is used in a political sense in Lk 12:11 (the defence of the apostles before authorities), in Lk 19:17 (the faithful servant who is rewarded for his faithfulness by being entrusted with the authority over a Decapolis) and in Lk 20:20 and 23:7 where Luke spoke of the *ἐξουσία* of Pilate and Herod. In Acts 9:14 (also 26:10 and 26:12), Paul got the *ἐξουσία* from the high priests enabling him to search out the Christians and arrest them.

⁹¹ Cf. W. Bauer, Wörterbuch, 1435.

⁹² Cf. E.M. Smallwood, Philonis, 209.

⁹³ Cf. Apuleius, Met. IV, 28.

⁹⁴ The Tragics evidenced the first occurrence of this word. It has therefore, been maintained that the concept must have had initially something to do with the Persians. However, it has been argued that the Greeks could not have borrowed this oriental practice for the worship of their deities, because they considered the practice as unworthy. For more on this thematic cf. H. Greeven, *προσκυνέω*, 759f.

adore a deity through kissing must have to prostrate him or herself: Odysseus and Agamemnon prostrated themselves and kissed the earth after landing safely.⁹⁵ However, proskynesis could be an act of supplication offered to a man.⁹⁶ Arrian of Nicomedia, in his work *Anabasis*, reported how Alexander the Great, probably fascinated by this singular act of reverence, attempted to introduce proskynesis at Bactra in 327. The opposition, meted out by the Greeks and the Macedonians, was so formidable and unexpected that he decided to abandon the project.⁹⁷ Proskynesis was practiced in Rome only in connection with the submission of the barbarians to a Roman king, especially in the time of Sulla. It was seen as a sign of the hated monarchy in Rome: Mark Anthony knelt down to present the diadem to Julius Caesar. This act was interpreted as an urge for the office of a king, which led to the assassination of Caesar.⁹⁸

Almost three quarter of the use of the word *προσκυνεῖν* in LXX is used in the vocalisation of the adoration and worship due to God as the true and only God⁹⁹ or in the articulation of the adoration and worship rendered to other gods.¹⁰⁰ Though proskynesis could be practised before the kings or before someone having more power than the other as a sign of respect,¹⁰¹ it has nothing to do with seeing the king or the person with authority as being divinified.

Josephus followed the language thought of the LXX. He used *προσκυνεῖν* not only for the worship and adoration of the true God, but also for the worship of the other gods and for showing respect among men. However, there is a subtle difference introduced by Josephus. When trying to differentiate between the Jewish worship of the true God and the pagan worship of gods, he uses *προσκυνεῖν* for the pagan worship and *σέβειν*¹⁰² for the Jewish worship. Although he tells of the proskynesis involved in the LXX, he however avoids this word and the consequent gestures especially if it is a story dealing with Jews of his time.¹⁰³ The use of *προσκυνεῖν* peculiar to Josephus is in relation to the Torah¹⁰⁴ and the temple,¹⁰⁵ which can be an expression of respectful admiration for the temple of Jerusalem. A clear assessment of the use of this word by Philo is very problematic. The profane use of the word is wider than the religious use of the word in Philo. However, he used the word *προσκυνεῖν* in the sense of showing respect.¹⁰⁶ From the optic of the Imperial cult, Philo saw the proskynesis before the Emperor as an affront against the Roman concept of freedom. From this background, he called the proskynesis of the

⁹⁵ Cf. Hom Od 4.522; 5.463; 13.354.

⁹⁶ Cf. Sophocles OT 327.

⁹⁷ Arr. 4.10.5-12,5. The Greeks saw the proskynesis as being a form of worship and as such sacrilegious since the worship of a living person should not be equated with the worship of a god or a dead hero. Callisthenes of Olynthus thwarted this attempt of Alexander. He however paid with his life for sabotaging this attempt of Alexander. Cf. Arr. 4.14.1-3. For a detailed discussion, see W.W. Tarn, *Alexander I.*, 77-80.

⁹⁸ Cf. Cicero, *Phil II*, 86.

⁹⁹ Cf. Gen 22:5; 24:26,48,52; Ex 4:31; 24:1; Deut 26:10 etc.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Ex 20:5; 23:24; Deut 4:19; Is 2:8; 44:17 etc.

¹⁰¹ Cf. 1 Sam 24:9. David greeted Saul with proskynesis and in Gen 33:3-7 Jacob greeted his brother Esau with proskynesis. It also occurred in the book of Ruth 2:10, where Ruth did a proskynesis before Boaz.

¹⁰² Atimes, he also uses *δρησκειν* or *τιμαῖν*. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 3, 91; 8, 248; 9, 133.

¹⁰³ Cf. Josephus, *Bell.* 2, 336. 350.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 12, 114.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 13:54; 20:49; *Bell.* 2, 341; 5, 381.

¹⁰⁶ Philo, *Jos.* 164. The brothers of Joseph bowed before him and in Op. 83 the animals of the newly created world bowed before Adam in respect.

imperial cult a *βαρβαρικὸν ἔθος* (a barbarian practice).¹⁰⁷ In addition, the utmost rejection of proskynesis from the perspective of the imperial cult is further complicated with the narration of the visit to Gaius by Philo and some other Jews. This distinct and categorical rejection of the proskynesis never featured in the narration of Philo.¹⁰⁸ By extension, Philo used the word *προσκυνεῖν* for holy things like the temple and the scripture.¹⁰⁹

Proskynesis was performed before the Assyrian kings, in whose documents there are references to vassals prostrating themselves before the kings and kissing their feet.¹¹⁰ As the Romans introduced their hegemony over the orient, they picked this tradition/ritual up.¹¹¹ The introduction of proskynesis into the empire of Rome is attributed to Vitellius after his return from the province of Syria around 40 AD.¹¹² Tiridates greeted Nero in Naples as *δεσπότης* and performed the proskynesis before him.¹¹³ Domitian allowed the worship of himself as a god by his subjects, who saw him as a god.¹¹⁴

The New Testament use of the word is specifically reserved for God, and for the post-resurrection Jesus.¹¹⁵ At times, *προσκυνεῖν* appears in connection with *πίπτω* (falling down),¹¹⁶ which readily suggests that the worship rendered through *προσκυνεῖν* consists in falling down or prostrating. Luke, in contrast to Matthew¹¹⁷ and John,¹¹⁸ is very conservative¹¹⁹ in his use of the word *προσκυνεῖν*¹²⁰ for Jesus

¹⁰⁷ Philo, Leg. 116. In this regard, M.P. Charlesworth has argued that for a Roman, proskynesis would not be an act of worship but a piece of servile flattery. Under an Emperor demanding proskynesis as a result of his divinity, abasement and worship tend to be mingled. Cf. M.P. Charlesworth, *Observations*, 16-20. Borrowed from E.M. Smallwood, *Philonis*, 210. The abasing nature of the proskynesis, in line with the assertion of Philo, has already been worked out by Seneca in *De Benef. II, 12, 2: homo natus in hoc, ut mores liberae civitatis Persica servitute mutaret...*: kneeling to a mortal is not an act worthy of a free man, though it is characteristic of Persia where men are as slaves to their ruler.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Philo, Leg. 352.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Philo, Leg. 310 and *Vit Mos.* 2, 23, 40.

¹¹⁰ Cf. J.B. Pritchard, *Texts*, 275-277.

¹¹¹ Cf. R. Morgenthauer, *Sedes*, 295.

¹¹² Cf. Suetonius, *Vitellius* 2,5.

¹¹³ Cf. Forster, *κύριος*, 105f.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Suetonius, *Dom.* 13,2; *Dio C.*, 67, 4,7.

¹¹⁵ A Christological question that confronted the biblical study of the 1960s was the question of the adoration of Jesus in the early Church. For Conzelmann only God was adored in the liturgy of the early Church. The *κύριος* Jesus was only invoked. Cf. H. Conzelmann, *Gottesdienst*, 355-365. However, this theory does not represent the theological facets of the New Testament. G. Lohfink has tried to show that there was adoration of Jesus as the Christ in the liturgy of the early Church, but not in isolation from the adoration of God: The adoration and worship of Jesus the resurrected is a worship of God, who reveals himself in the resurrected. Cf. G. Lohfink, *Anbetung*, 161-179.

¹¹⁶ Cf. *Matt* 2:11; 4:9; 18:26; *Acts* 10:25; *Rev* 4:10; 5:14; 7:11; 11:16; 22:8.

¹¹⁷ The proskynesis before Jesus is important for Matthew. Cf. R. Pesch, *Gottessohn*, 414f. He used the word not less than five times in his redaction of Mark. However, not all these instances of the word *προσκυνεῖν* in Matthew have a worshipping character. He used the words belonging to this family thirteen times in his gospel. Cf. Moulton – Geden, *Concordance*. 865f. Notwithstanding the distinction between the religious and the profane use of the word in Matthew, Pesch opined: “Die Proskynesen im Matthäusevangelium sind immer Proskynesen vor Jesus als dem göttlichen *κύριος*, dem Sohn Gottes.” Cf. R. Pesch, *Gottessohn*. 414.

¹¹⁸ The meaning of *προσκυνεῖν* in John is simpler. Generally, *προσκυνεῖν* is used to articulate the adoration due to God (4:20-24; 12:20), although it can at times refer to respect given to a living

who has not been glorified.¹²¹ He used it in his Gospel twice in the pericope dealing with the temptation of Jesus and at the end of his gospel in Lk 24:52, which could be regarded as one of the christological highlights of the gospel of Luke.¹²² That took place after the ascension of Jesus.

Judging from Luke's prudence to this word, it can be concluded, that the verb *προσκυνεῖν* is only used in relation to God in Lukan writings. Not even in front of angels is *προσκυνεῖν* allowed.¹²³ From this conviction, Peter was made to stop Cornelius, who tried to worship (*προσκυνεῖν*) him. He stopped him with the statement *Ἀνάστηθι· καὶ ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπός εἰμι*. Peter voiced out an important theological sentiment of Luke, the proskynesis is only reserved for God and Jesus and should therefore never be performed for an ordinary human being.¹²⁴

4. *The political theology of Luke in the temptation account*

4.1. *Introduction*

The synoptic comparison has shown the differences in the reception of the temptation tradition. It remains to apply the findings of these studies to the theology of Luke under the motivation and perspective of the theme of the dissertation. The three key words will be used to give a possible reconstruction of the theology of Luke regarding power, authority and dominion.

4.2. *The social and cultural context of the temptation account in Luke*

The second item in the temptation of Jesus can be summarised into three important elements:

1. The promise of an unabridged power and authority (*ἐξουσία*) over the kingdoms of the inhabited world (*τῆς οἰκουμένης*) from the devil, who sees

being. Jesus is the true temple (2:21), the place for the true worship of God (4:23). Cf. R. Schnackenburg, *Johannesevangelium II*, 323. It is used eight times in his gospel and twenty times in the Revelation. Cf. Moulton – Geden, *Concordance*, 866f. The word reached its zenith in the Revelations owing to the narration of the rivalry between the lamb and the dragon and the *προσκυνεῖν* due to each of them.

¹¹⁹ In the Lukan parallels to Matt 8:2; 9:18 and Mk 5:6; 15:19, the verb *προσκυνεῖν* is avoided. It is replaced by other words. In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke used the word four times in 7:43; 8:27; 10:25; 24:11. Cf. Moulton – Geden, *Concordance*, 866. The instances in chapters 8 and 24 deal with the worship of God in the temple, while the instance in chapter 7 concerns idolatry, which is the reason for the babylonian captivity of Israel.

¹²⁰ *προσκυνεῖν* could be used either with the accusative or with the dative in New Testament Greek. The use of the verb with dative betrays a semitic influence, while the use of accusative suggests an origin from a Hellenistic thought. There is no essential difference between these two options. Cf. H. Greeven, *προσκυνέω*, 762-764.

¹²¹ I use glorification here to articulate the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus.

¹²² Cf. G. Lohfink, *Himmelfahrt*, 253f.

¹²³ The resurrection pericope of Luke, probably convinced of the latral implication of this word, avoided the proskynesis of the women before the angels, and stated simply: *κλινοσῶν τὰ πρόσωπα εἰς τὴν γῆν* in Lk 24:5. Cf. G. Lohfink, *Anbetung*, 164.

¹²⁴ Cf. J.M. Nützel, *προσκυνέω*, 420f.

himself as the ruler of the world and in the position of giving them to people, whom he deems fit.¹²⁵

2. The condition for the fulfilment of this promise is the *proskynesis* (προσκύνησις) before the devil.
3. The implication of this *proskynesis* is a radical denial of God and every monotheistic religion and that alone offers the reason for Jesus' rejection of the devil's offer.

I have already pointed out that there is more behind the Lukan use of the word ἡ οἰκουμένη in relation to the edict of Augustus in Lk 2:1 and the reception of this word in the temptation of Jesus by the devil than meets the eye.¹²⁶ At the first instance, the reader of Luke is led to believe that "the entire inhabited world" (πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην) is under the control of the Roman Emperor. In the temptation of Jesus however, the devil presents himself as the ruler of the inhabited world.¹²⁷ If one were to follow this line of thought logically, it means that the devil is in control of the inhabited world, which ultimately raises the question of the identification of the devil with the emperor. However, the principate of the devil over the kingdoms of the earth is a transferred power and not a power belonging to the devil necessarily.¹²⁸ One can say, of course by means of extension, that God¹²⁹ has given the power over the inhabited world to him, although there is no explicit mention of this fact. The power, which he claims to have, is a matter of proxy. That would correspond with the monotheistic conviction of the biblical tradition.

In addition, Revelations 13 creates a picture that corroborates the claim of the devil. Working with the animal/monster symbol involved in a vision, the seer castigates the imperial cult¹³⁰ and the anti-Christian position of the Roman

¹²⁵ The devil usurps the capacity of the power broker, who sees to the disposition of glory in the world. Cf. J. Nolland, Luke, 182.

¹²⁶ Cf. R. Morgenthaler, Sedes, 292. „Wir werden nicht um die Feststellung herumkommen, dass bei Lukas auch im Text der zweiten Versuchung vom Imperium Romanum die Rede ist, um so mehr, als ja Luk. 2,1 in der Nähe steht.“

¹²⁷ It was the conviction of the community of the early Christians that the world falls within the jurisdiction of the devil. In the claim of the devil in the offer made to Jesus, the devil can be seen as paraphrasing his titles: God of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4); "ruler of this world" (Joh 12:31; 14:30); and "director of the world" (Eph 6:12). It is only in his capacity as the "ruler of this world" that the devil can promise Jesus all the kingdoms in his world. Only with the conviction and belief of the early Christians is it possible to understand the Johannine construction: The whole world is under the yoke of the evil one (ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται) in 1 Joh 5:19. This eschatological conviction was not only peculiar to the early Christians but also to the Jews. Cf. 1QS 111:21-24.

¹²⁸ Cf. H. Kruse, Reich, 46.

¹²⁹ The granting of kingdoms is a sign of granting of jurisdiction to individuals. In the course of the research, two verses of the book of the prophecy of Jeremiah appeared, which could have been a scriptural inspiration to Luke in his redaction, Jer 27:5-6: "I, by my great power and outstretched arm, made the earth, the human beings and the animals that are on earth, and I give them to whom I please. For the present, I have handed all these countries over to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant."

¹³⁰ Cf. J.M. Ford, Revelation, 220f.

Empire.¹³¹ The seer documents in Rev 13:4: *καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ δράκοντι, ὅτι ἔδωκεν τὴν ἐξουσίαν τῷ θηρίῳ, καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θηρίῳ*. The important aspects of the theology of Luke within the second item of the temptation pericope are already present in this documentation: The proskynesis and the authority. The *ἐξουσία* appears again in the next verse qualified with a passive verb *ἐδόθη*, which supports the proxy argument. The setting of this vision parallels the claim and conviction of the devil in Lk 4:6. The same book of the Revelation sees in the imperial image in Rev 13:14-16 a means of satanic seduction.¹³²

The use of the word *οἰκουμένη* readily reminds the reader of Luke of the unavoidable association of this word with the Roman Empire. Luke, using his expertise, does a very subtle political theology. Working with a careful approach necessary for such a study, Luke is criticising the political idea of the Roman Emperors, albeit in a subtle manner. While stating categorically that the use of the words *οἰκουμένη*, *ἐξουσία* and *προσκύνησις* could be ambivalently intended, not only for God and for the devil, but also for the individual human being,¹³³ it is not out of order to see in the pericope of the second item of the temptation a criticism of the politics of the Roman emperors and consequently of the imperial cult. The immediate historical and social context in which Luke and his community were situated was one in which the influence of the imperial cult was palpable.¹³⁴ In addition, the Roman rule was made a tangible reality through the operations and convictions of the imperial cult.

The claim of the devil of possessing *ἐξουσία* over all the kingdoms of the inhabited world and the right to give it to whomever he wants parallels the conviction and awareness of the Roman idea of Hegemony. Augustus expressed this conviction in the protocol of his principate.¹³⁵ It means however, that the authority of the powerful does not come from God nor from the people but from the devil. It would be milder saying that the powerful use their authority for selfish purposes and not for the interest of the masses.¹³⁶

There remains the name Caligula. His case is as striking as it is significant. Luke, working with the Q as prior information for his gospel, must have shared the

¹³¹ Cf. H. Kruse, Reich, 47.

¹³² Cf. H.-J. Klauck, Context, 317.

¹³³ Cf. H. Kruse, Reich, 47. The advice of Kruse for a degree of carefulness in the identification of the devil with the Roman Empire deserves commendation. However, it cannot be totally avoided. Luke presents the young Christian faith as a licit religion (*religio licita*). He presents Christians as law-abiding citizens and as people interested in the posterity of the Empire. That does not make Luke to praise the Empire at all costs. The second item of the temptation is a blatant idolatry, inevitably weighing on a sensitive nerve of the early Christian community. Luke would not betray this religious sentiment just to please the ruling elites of his time. Idolatry was a very crucial topic, upon which the obedience of the early Christians to the secular officials would rise or fall. Cf. R. Morgenthaler, Sedes, 295. The opinion of Schürmann, Lukasevangelium, 211, Schneider, Lukas, 101 and Nolland, Luke, 180, that the second item of the temptation should not be seen in association with the Roman Empire is therefore unacceptable.

¹³⁴ Cf. A. Brent, Luke-Acts, 412.

¹³⁵ Cf. Augustus, Res gestae 33. "The people of Parthians and of the Medes received from me the kings, whom they requested through messengers and their princes: The Parthians Vonones, son of king Phrates (IV) and the grandchild of king Orodes; the Medes Ariobarzanes, the son of king Atavazdes and grandchild of king Ariobazanes."

¹³⁶ Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas I, 200.

sentiments and the motif behind the composition of the temptation of Jesus, which could have been given by the emirate of Gaius Caligula. Gaius was the first emperor, who performed a self-deification of himself while still alive.¹³⁷ The experience of the Jews with the arrogance, self-centredness and unparalleled reputation for arbitrary despotism of Caligula caused the disturbances in Alexandria. There is no lack of tales regarding his autocratic rule. He expressed his lust for power by presenting himself as one of the gods, thereby looking for divine titles. This obsession of looking for divine titles began with his approximation with the demigods like Dionysius and Hercules.¹³⁸ It later reached the height of seeing himself as equal to the Olympian gods.¹³⁹ The summit of this obsession however, was his blasphemy against the Jewish God, in which proskynesis was mentioned.¹⁴⁰ Philo relates of a meeting with Gaius:

“But we, as soon as we were introduced into his presence, the moment that we saw him, bent to the ground with all imaginable respect and adoration, and saluted him calling him the emperor Augustus; and he replied to us in such a *gentle and courteous and humane* manner that we not only despaired of attaining our object, but even of preserving our lives; for, said he, “You are haters of God, inasmuch as you do not think that I am a god, I who am already confessed to be a god by every other nation, but who am refused that appellation by you.” And then, stretching up his hands to heaven, he uttered an ejaculation which it was impious to hear, much more would it be so to repeat it literally.”¹⁴¹

Generally, the Roman emperors operating within the ambience of the imperial cult tended to see themselves as having special relationship with the divine. Notwithstanding this general fact, Gaius’ case was a particular one. He introduced the proskynesis officially as belonging to the court ceremony of the emperor and even ordered a proskynesis from the senators before his empty seat.¹⁴²

The conflict of Gaius with the monotheistic religion of the Jews is well attested. It was he, who attempted the dedication of the Temple of Jerusalem to the imperial cult. It was he, who expected from the Jews the adoration and worship due only to Yahweh.¹⁴³ Philo documented the defiance of the Jews, who were ready to sacrifice their blood:

¹³⁷ The apotheosis was a rite of passage performed in the imperial cult for dead emperors hoping that the dead emperor would be admitted into the college of the gods. One of the conditions however was the witness of a prominent citizen testifying to a vision that the dead emperor has been admitted. This could entail strange happenings. This ritual enabled Augustus and the subsequent emperors, who were the sons of the dead emperor to take the title *divi filius*, which means “son of a divinified”. Due to the inaccurate grammatical rendering of this title in Greek (*υἱος τοῦ θεοῦ*), it created the impression that the emperors were already the sons of the gods. Caligula however, was the first to see himself as an emperor-god during his lifetime. He had a temple built in his honour. Cf. Suetonius, Gaius Caligula, 22:2-3.

¹³⁸ Cf. Philo Leg. 78-80.

¹³⁹ Cf. Philo Leg. 93-95.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Philo Leg. 114-116.

¹⁴¹ Philo Leg. 352f.

¹⁴² Cf. Dio Cass 59,24,4.

¹⁴³ Recent studies are very doubtful of the accounts about Caligula. A. Winterling exonerated Caligula from the historical accusations against him, especially from that of Suetonius. He

“But the single nation of the Jews, being excepted from these actions, was suspected by him of wishing to counteract his desires, since it was accustomed to embrace voluntary death as an entrance to immortality, for the sake of not permitting any of their national hereditary customs to be destroyed, even if it were of the most trivial character, because, as is the case in a house, it often happens that by the removal of one small part, even those parts which appeared to be solidly established fall down, being relaxed and brought to decay by the removal of that one thing, but in this case what was put in motion was not a trifle, but a thing of the greatest importance, namely, the erecting the created and perishable nature of a man, as far at least as appearance went, into the uncreated and imperishable nature of God, which the nation correctly judged to be the most terrible of all impieties...”¹⁴⁴

He presented the required qualifications for a close affinity with the devil, more so with his conviction that he has the power and authority over the kingdoms of the earth, and is in the position of giving it to those ready to dance to his tune. It is related how Gaius, within his short empire, enthroned six kings in the East with the Jewish king Agrippa I being the first of these six kings. Although the *proskynesis* leading to the assignment of these kings to their kingdoms is not documented, the reader is reminded of the actions of warrant kings, who kneel down before the Roman Emperors as a sign of their subordination and unalloyed loyalty. From this historical background, it is very possible to imagine that the nomination of a king in Palestine under the auspices of the Roman Empire was followed by a *proskynesis*.¹⁴⁵ The account of Philo, already given in the translation above, could also imply that they performed this *proskynesis* before Gaius, hoping to obtain his favour.¹⁴⁶

summarises: “Caligula war weit davon entfernt, sich für einen Gott zu halten oder einen offiziellen Kaiserkult in Rom einzuführen. Er nutzte vielmehr gelegentliche Inszenierungen seiner Göttlichkeit, um die angstvolle und zugleich heuchlerische Unterwürfigkeit der senatorischen Gesellschaft dem Kaiser gegenüber in aller Öffentlichkeit in ihrer Absurdität vorzuführen...” Cf. A. Winterling, *Caligula*, 152.

¹⁴⁴ Philo, *Leg.* 117f.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. G. Theissen, *Lokalkolorit*, 223-225. M. Charlesworth opines that by the middle of the second century, qualities like *aeternitas* and *providentia* were believed to belong to the emperor. Cf. M.P. Charlesworth, *Providentia*, 113f.

¹⁴⁶ Although Philo is not explicit on this matter, his account: *μετ’ αἰδοῦς καὶ εὐλαβείας τῆς ἀπάσης νεύοντες εἰς τοῦδαφος*, could be interpreted from this perspective. The Jews in this delegation must have rendered a lip service arising from a mental reservation. An example would be Namaan, a Syrian who was converted to Judaism but continued paying lip-service to the Syrian deity as officer closely associated with the Syrian king (2 Kings 5: 1-19). For more on this cf. E. M. Smallwood, *Philonis*, 318. The Jewish polemic against the *proskynesis* is not explicit by Philo. It is safer to assume that they practised this *proskynesis* before him, even if half-heartedly. The persecution of the Jews in the second book of the Maccabees has shown that some Jews complied with the instructions of the Hellenistic forces just to save their life. However, the sixth chapter of the book of Maccabees presents an instance as a counter argument against paying lip service to save one’s life. Eleazar, a Jewish law teacher, refused the advice that could have saved his life.

Due to his brutality, Caligula was seen as a brute.¹⁴⁷ Although other emperors like Nero and Domitian¹⁴⁸ could be seen as playing the role, which Gaius Caligula played, the utmost similarities in the claims and the persuasions of the devil from the perspective of the Jewish history in relation to Caligula are however striking. Only Gaius was confronted with conflicts arising from the Jewish monotheism, because of his self-apotheosis. He is the only documented Emperor, who gave a kingdom to a Jewish ruler in Palestine.¹⁴⁹ Nero also shared this staunch conviction that parallels the claim of the devil of possessing *ἐξουσία* over the kingdoms of the inhabited world:

“Well hast thou done to come hither in person that meeting me face to face thou mightest enjoy my grace. For what neither thy father left thee nor thy brothers gave and preserved for thee, this do I grant thee. King of Armenia I now declare thee, that both thou and they may understand that I have power to take away kingdoms and to bestow them.”¹⁵⁰

This assignment was of course crowned with a proskynesis. From the social and cultural context of this temptation pericope, one might conclude by saying that the social and religious changes brought about by the Roman rule with the claims of the imperial cult should occupy a vital position in the attempt at giving the temptation pericope a social and cultural background.

”Bei der Auslegung von Luk. 4,7 werden wir uns dessen wohl bewußt sein müssen, daß die Proskynese in den Tagen der Abfassung des Lukasevangeliums diejenige Geste war, die den Kaisern oft spontan und Domitian auf Befehl dargebracht wurde. Wo dies geschah konnten die Christen allerdings im Haupte des römischen Staates nicht mehr den Wahrer des Rechtes, sondern nur noch den personifizierten Satan selber sehen.“¹⁵¹

Although it could be argued rightly that this sentiment engraved in the hearts of Jews by the hubris of Caligula survived until the time of the writing of the gospel of Luke, it is however pertinent to see the contribution of Domitian to the survival of this anti-Roman sentiment among the Jews and the new religious community of Christians. Domitian’s reign was not only repressive, cruel and savage, his demand that all call him “our lord and god” (*dominus et deus noster*)¹⁵² is seen as influencing the language of the seer at Revelation 4:11.¹⁵³ The importance placed

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Philo, Leg. 22. Suetonius promises that from this point onwards, he will relate the career of Caligula as a monster. Cf. *Suetonius*, Calig. 22.1: *reliqua ut de monstro narranda sunt*.

¹⁴⁸ Domitian was worshipped as *dominus ac deus noster*. Cf. R. Morgenthaler, *Sedes*, 298.

¹⁴⁹ For more on these similarities see G. Theissen, *Lokalkolorit*, 228.

¹⁵⁰ Dio C., 62, 5,3. This is the speech of Nero during his crowning of Tiridates as the king of Armenia. Following this speech of Nero is an interesting commentary that could support the idea that such crowning was combined with proskynesis: *καὶ καθιζήθεντι αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τὸν πόδα τὸ διάδημα ἐπέθηκε*, which follows that Tiridates was made to seat beneath the feet of Nero before receiving the crown.

¹⁵¹ R. Morgenthaler, *Sedes*, 296.

¹⁵² Cf. *Suetonius*, Dom. 13,2.

¹⁵³ A. Harnack opined, “The politics of Jewish apocalyptic viewed the world-state as a diabolic state, and consequently took up a purely negative attitude towards it. This political view is put

on this title created a crisis for Christians,¹⁵⁴ since they acclaimed Christ and not Domitian as “our Lord and God”.¹⁵⁵ Both Roman and early Christian sources testify that Domitian demanded divine worship during his lifetime, most especially at the end of his reign. The height of emperor worship in the imperial cult was reached with Domitian, who apparently invited his wife to the divine couch, allowing people to call him lord and god.¹⁵⁶ He also strengthened the imperial cult, which included the worship of both Roma and the emperor. Not only Tacitus, but also Pliny the younger condemned the evil claims of Domitian to divinity: Domitian captured mighty herds of sacrificial animals heading towards the capitol forcing them to take a different path, so that his own statue, “the hideous image of a brutal tyrant, might be honoured with as much sacrificial blood as he himself had shed human blood”.¹⁵⁷ The *damnatio memoriae* of Domitian was not enough to deprive the Lukan writing of such a hostile image. The claims and the politics of Domitian might have helped the redaction of the second item of the temptation pericope, adapting it to the religious exigencies of his time. The imperial cult did not cease with Domitian. It continued for two centuries.¹⁵⁸ However, the appearance of Domitian on the stage of the imperial cult had many historical relevancies for the Christian faith. With him the idea of *Nero redidivus* was born.¹⁵⁹

The conviction of the Roman emperors of having uncontrolled authority over the kingdoms of the inhabited world, as expressed by Augustus and Nero, and of being in the position of sharing this authority according to their wishes, is unacceptable for the Jewish understanding.¹⁶⁰ It explains why such claims in the temptation of Jesus could only be made by the devil, who stands for the power and authority of the Roman Empire,¹⁶¹ since the demand of proskynesis had its historical concretisation in the imperial cult.¹⁶²

Fervent attempts and ideas against the imperial cult were not only immanent and instrumental in the composition of the second chapter of the gospel of Luke. One therefore needs to take the imperial cult seriously as a religious phenomenon,¹⁶³

uncompromisingly in the apocalypse of John, where it was justified by the Neronian persecution, the imperial claim for worship, and the Domitianic reign of terror.” Cf. Mission, 257.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. J. Weiss, Christianity, 806f.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. E. Schüssler Fiorenza, Invitation, 62.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. Suetonius, Dom. 13,1-2.

¹⁵⁷ Pliny, Pan. 52, 7. In the course of research on the life and person of Domitian, many contrary opinions have arisen; some see the criticisms on Domitian as purely unhistorical. The evil things written about him are considered legends, and are therefore viewed sceptically. Belonging to this group are L. Thompson, Revelation, and B.W. Jones, Domitian. The humble appeal of Klauck for a careful approach and a historical appraisal of Domitian becomes imperative and can only be appreciated. Cf. H.-J. Klauck, Context, 310.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. K. Waters, Domitian, 74.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. J.M. Ford, Revelation. 281.

¹⁶⁰ The imagery in Dan 2:21 reflects an underlying Jewish conviction that contrasts the claims of the devil in the temptation pericope. Unlimited power and authority are only the prerogative of the true God. It could be argued that the claim of the devil in the temptation pericope is a typical case of the usurpation of God’s right.

¹⁶¹ Cf. U.B. Müller, Sohn, 30.

¹⁶² Cf. E. Schüssler Fiorenza, Priester, 343.

¹⁶³ Cf. A. Brent, Luke-Acts, 413.

especially in the time of the beginning of the Lukan writings. These ideas motivated Luke in his redactional rearrangement of the temptation data.

4.3. *The political and theological message in the temptation pericope of Luke*

This temptation provides a wonderful medium of teaching the Lukan community. Luke tells his Christian community of the dangers involved in power and domination. The temptation of Jesus is based on a messianic foundation.¹⁶⁴ Luke is tracing a Christology that runs contrary to wide expectations. The devil is fully aware of Jesus being the Messiah. His conditional statement, “if you are the son of God”, should be better understood as “since you are the son of God.” The temptation of Jesus is in *ipsissima persona*, because he was tempted as (a) son of God, which was affirmed immediately after his baptism. He is offered a different covenant after the father-son covenant between him and God has been sealed.¹⁶⁵ Son of the divinified, *υἱὸς Θεοῦ*, was an imperial title within the *pax romana*. With Luke allowing the devil to use this title for Jesus, the diabolic nature of this title and the consequent intention of the devil are shown. The reader comprehends the difference between Jesus, the son of God and the *divi filii*. Jesus is not a son of the divinified; he is the son of God.

Luke offers political messages in the temptation pericope. He redactionally wants to demonstrate the discrepancies and illogicalities involved in the promise of the devil: knowing fully that Jesus is the son of God, the devil must also have known that he is the almighty ruler over everything that belongs to God. What is then the logic behind his offering Jesus the authority over the kingdoms of the inhabited world? The discrepancies in this question are enough to show the devil’s aim.

The temptation was a challenge to Jesus to use his messianic power to introduce a change in cosmic and natural phenomena. An arbitrary show of power is intended. In rejecting this challenge of the devil, Jesus affirms his role as a wise man full of the spirit, who is equal to the task involved in the temptation of the devil:

“In diesem Konflikt läßt sich Jesus nicht auf die Seite der Unordnung ziehen, die die schöpfungsgemäßen Strukturen der Welt, konkretisiert am täglichen Brot, der gesellschaftlichen Machtverteilung und der Begrenztheit menschlicher Existenz aufheben will. In diesem Sinn erweist er sich als Sohn des Gottes, der die Welt geschaffen hat.”¹⁶⁶

Secondly, it represents a challenge to the godly nature of Jesus. The first item of the temptation suggests to him that it does not befit his godly nature to suffer. He should therefore exploit the privilege of his divine relationship. “Dem gottgleichen Jesus wird die Weltherrschaft angeboten, ... Der Gottessohn Jesus stieß die Versuchung zurück, seine menschliche Natur der göttlichen zu

¹⁶⁴ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke, 180. This view contrasts the opinion of Bultmann, who sees the temptation as a presentation of unpleasant events, which can befall any Christian. They can be imagined for any Christian. However, there does not seem to be any contradiction in maintaining that in the case of Jesus, the temptation is messianic.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas I, 200.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. L. Bormann, Recht, 239.

opfern.”¹⁶⁷ A succinct representation of the imagery presented in this scene is that the devil wants Jesus to depart from his mapped out way to the salvation history, which runs contrary to the hymnal conviction of the letter to the Philippians 2:6-8. The devil hopes to win over Jesus by presenting him with a *theologia gloriae* as a substitute to *theologia crucis*: His divinity should be used to carve out a “better” option for him. However, he has to pay the price of this *theologia gloriae*, which involves a proskynesis implying that Jesus has recognised the unparalleled supremacy of the devil and is very ready to compromise with the demonic forces that are in control of the world.¹⁶⁸ Only after the resurrection of Jesus will his suffering as part of his mission be clear (Lk 24:26) *οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ;* Jesus’ concept of the messiahship, which involves suffering and service, is antithetical to the aims of the devil,¹⁶⁹ who wants to give him an unabridged authority over the inhabited world at the expense of denying God. From the perspective of the *theologia gloriae*, Luke warns his community against the dangers involved in taking up arms for the introduction of a messianic age with world political undertone. That contributes to the service of the devil.

“Die Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes war seit der Eroberung Jerusalems durch Pompejus im Jahre 63 vor Christus durch den Kampf um die politische und religiöse Unabhängigkeit geprägt.... Der Weg des Messias zur Weltherrschaft führte über den heiligen Krieg gegen Rom; man erhoffte die Errichtung eines weltumfassenden jüdischen Reiches mit dem Mittelpunkt Jerusalem.... Wenn also gerade der Teufel... die Weltherrschaft um den Preis des Abfalls von Gott anbietet, wird die Idee einer politisch-messianischen Weltherrschaft disqualifiziert.”¹⁷⁰

A Christian with a false and political notion of the messiahship of Jesus falls to the whims and caprices of the devil. The conditions attached to power and authority are contrary to the teachings of Jesus in Lk 16:13. Politics and authority are existential situations for a firm conviction of faith. The convictions of power contradict the Christology of Luke, which he has begun in the annunciation of the conception of Jesus. Jesus will be conceived of the Holy Spirit making him to be called the son of the most high (Lk 1:32b), who will take over the throne of David *καὶ υἱὸς ὑψίστου κληθήσεται, καὶ δώσει αὐτῷ κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὸν θρόνον Δαυὶδ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ.* This Christology is further enunciated in the Magnificat, where the powerful are negatively affected by the intervention of this God. A contrast theology is presented in the birth of this messiah: Not the “mighty” Augustus, who resides in Rome the centre of the world, is the saviour and Lord, but the personified weakness in the form of a baby born in inconsequential and rural Bethlehem. Augustus with his military arsenals is not able to give the peace the weak baby of Bethlehem gives, which makes the angelic choir to hail this peace.

¹⁶⁷ D. Flusser, *Versuchung*, 114.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke*, 182.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke*, 180.

¹⁷⁰ P. Hoffmann, *Versuchungsgeschichte*, 213f.

This peace is evident in the work of this Jesus. His messiahship is characterised by peace and not by war and domination. His triumphal entry in Jerusalem with an ass will illustrate this purposeful Christology. Vis-à-vis this Christology, Luke warns his community about the danger of having power in order to attain selfish purposes of leaving the way of suffering that will inevitably lead to glory. Such power can only come from the devil. In the face of such power, a community will never be free from corrupt and inhuman leaders. The circle will be replete with leaders overdoing their predecessors in wickedness and tyranny. The existence of such a mentality among Christians renders this Christology redundant. The motive of this picture of Jesus, as one who withstood the temptations of the devil, should be a model and a motivation for a Christian. Jesus is aware that those who dominate others are in the slavery of the devil.¹⁷¹ He was able to withstand the temptation of the devil, even as he was promised the glory and the authority of the world. The story of *Simon Magus* (Acts 8:9-24), a contemporary of Jesus, shows the implication of a pact with the devil. The statement of *Simon Magus* makes him an opposite of Jesus:

“... I flew through the air..., I made stones to become bread, from one mountain I turned to the other, guided by the hands of the angels I came down to earth. Not only that was I able to accomplish, I can also accomplish more in order to prove through my works that I am the son of God.”¹⁷²

Simon Magus had to recognise the power and the supremacy of the devil and as such was a slave to the devil. Judging from the redactional motives of Luke, he seems to be telling his Christian community in relation to the ruling authority: those seeking for authority and those that have it are inevitably the instruments of the devil. As such, when they demand what belongs to God in any way, namely the *proskynesis*, you are advised to see in them the devil, who once tried to get your master over to his side. Accordingly, a silent but vehement refutation of this demand is required of you.¹⁷³

5. Conclusion

From the perspective of redactional criticism, Luke presented the image of the devil suggesting a pact or a covenant in the second item of the temptation and the non-acceptance of this pact from the part of Jesus, hoping to counteract the idea that Jesus liberates those under the bondage of demons through Beelzebul. Jesus has a different form of *ἐξουσία*, otherwise, he would not have been in the position to heal the unclean, cure the sick and liberate those under the bondage of the

¹⁷¹ Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas I*, 200.

¹⁷² *Die Pseudoklementinen*, 128. Cited in D. Flusser, *Versuchung*, 115. The translation is mine.
“...ich bin durch die Luft geflogen..., ich habe Steine zu Broten gemacht, von Berg zu Berg bin ich hinübergekommen, von den Händen der Engel gehalten bin ich auf Erden herabgestiegen. Nicht nur dies habe ich vollbracht, aber ich kann es auch jetzt vollbringen, damit ich durch die Taten selber beweise, dass ich der Sohn Gottes bin.”

¹⁷³ Cf. R. Morgenthaler, *Sedes*, 303.

devil.¹⁷⁴ The *ἐξουσία* of Jesus is of a different type, and is in accordance with the will and purpose of creation. Besides, this *ἐξουσία* of Jesus does not present any threat to the integrity of the Jews as a corporate entity.¹⁷⁵ The devil knows that Jesus has this authority and that is why he presents him this pact, hoping to get him over to his side.¹⁷⁶ The logic and the argument of those purporting that Jesus has a pact with the devil (cf. Lk 11:15) are rendered redundant, because Jesus has already refused this pact even at the dawn of his ministry. In addition, Jesus has proved that his authority is of a different source,¹⁷⁷ while the devil's influence is coextensive with the influence of evil in the fabrics of human affairs.¹⁷⁸

In modern literatures, associations are insinuated with the black magician *Faust*, who entered a pact with the devil in the person of *Mephisto*. The devil gave him all he wanted including an evergreen youthfulness and an unabridged lust for the good things of the world, but he had to forsake his former life and devote himself and his time to the devil.¹⁷⁹

Whichever way one views the redactional work of Luke, the political tone of Luke cannot be overheard. The preoccupation of Exegesis with what is written is of utmost importance. However, it is necessary atimes to ask what the author intends to convey. Luke wants to convey that the proskynesis is reserved only for God and his Messiah, not for the emperor, and never for the devil, who has real "authority" over those he rules.¹⁸⁰ This conveyed message has an intention: the Christian should be very careful because the devil can use as many means as possible to arrive at this proskynesis.

Aware of this notion of messiahship, Jesus declined a pact with the devil. Rather, his disciples receive a new code of conduct within a very crucial time of his life, by the last supper in Lk 22: 24-27.

"Jesus wird mit messianischen Herrschaftserwartungen konfrontiert. Er widerspricht ihnen durch Ablehnung von Zwangspolitik, ... Er überträgt Herrschererwartungen auf seine Jünger..., die gegenüber ihren Feinden großzügig sind, die Herrschaft als Dienst verstehen und Frieden stiften. In all dem aber verwirklicht sich nicht die Herrschaft Jesu, sondern die Herrschaft Gottes."¹⁸¹

Not even the temptations of the devil could make him lose sight of his mission. This meaning should however be sought in the *theologia crucis* leading ultimately to *theologia gloriae*, and not the other way round.

Son of the divinified, *υἱὸς Θεοῦ*, was a prized imperial title within the *pax romana* of the imperial cult. With the use of the title of *son of God*, Luke indirectly makes a mockery of the imperial title by presenting Jesus, who is not just the son of a

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Lk 10:17-20.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Lk 11:14-36.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. D. Flusser, *Versuchung*, 115f.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Lk 11:15.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke*, 182.

¹⁷⁹ J.W. von Goethe, *Faust I and Faust II*.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. L.T. Johnson, *Luke*, 75.

¹⁸¹ G. Theißen, *Dimension*, 122.

divinified but of God. As such, he presents Jesus as the quintessential personification of the divine, who says a decisive no to the bondage of those who enslave others¹⁸² by refusing to be a victim of the yoke of the devil.

¹⁸² Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas I, 200.

1. *The parable of the throne claimant*¹ (Lk 19:11-28)

1.1. *Greek Text*

- 11a Ἀκούοντων δὲ αὐτῶν ταῦτα προσθεῖς εἶπεν παραβολὴν
 b διὰ τὸ ἐγγὺς εἶναι Ἱερουσαλὴμ αὐτὸν
 c καὶ δοκεῖν αὐτοὺς
 d ὅτι παραχρῆμα μέλλει ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀναφαίνεσθαι.
 12a εἶπεν οὖν,
 b Ἄνθρωπός τις εὐγενῆς ἐπορεύθη εἰς χώραν μακρὰν
 c λαβεῖν ἑαυτῷ βασιλείαν καὶ ὑποστρέψαι.
 13a καλέσας δὲ δέκα δούλους ἑαυτοῦ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς δέκα μνᾶς
 b καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς,
 c Πραγματεύσασθε ἐν ᾧ ἔρχομαι.
 14a οἱ δὲ πολῖται αὐτοῦ ἐμίσουν αὐτόν,
 b καὶ ἀπέστειλαν πρεσβείαν ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ λέγοντες,
 c Οὐ θέλομεν τοῦτον βασιλεῦσαι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς.
 15a Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἐπανελθεῖν αὐτὸν λαβόντα τὴν βασιλείαν
 b καὶ εἶπεν
 c φωνηθῆναι αὐτῷ τοὺς δούλους
 d τούτους οἷς δεδώκει τὸ ἀργύριον,
 e ἵνα γνοῖ
 f τί διεπραγματεύσαντο.
 16a παρεγένετο δὲ ὁ πρῶτος λέγων,
 b Κύριε, ἡ μνᾶ σου δέκα προσηργάσατο μνᾶς.
 17a καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ,
 b Εὖγε, ἀγαθὸν δοῦλε, ὅτι ἐν ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς ἐγένου,
 c ἴσθι ἐξουσίαν ἔχων ἐπάνω δέκα πόλεων.
 18a καὶ ἦλθεν ὁ δεύτερος λέγων,
 b Ἡ μνᾶ σου, κύριε, ἐποίησεν πέντε μνᾶς.
 19a εἶπεν δὲ καὶ τούτῳ,
 b Καὶ σὺ ἐπάνω γίνου πέντε πόλεων.
 20a καὶ ὁ ἕτερος ἦλθεν λέγων,
 b Κύριε, ἰδοὺ ἡ μνᾶ σου
 c ἣν εἶχον ἀποκειμένην ἐν σουδαρίῳ.
 21a ἐφοβούμενη γὰρ σε,
 b ὅτι ἄνθρωπος αὐστηρὸς εἶ,

¹ I am aware of the problem involved in the title given to this parable. It is already a general observation that the parable is almost known as the parable of the minas because of the parallel title in the gospel of Matthew (25:14-30), the parable of the talents: Cf. A. Denaux, King-Judge, 34f. It is noted correctly that the feature of the throne claimant distinguishes the Lukan parable of the minas from the Matthean parable of the talents. With this title, the impression is given that the main interest of the parable lies in the correct interpretation of the layer dealing with the entrustment of the minas, leaving the "frame" unattended. From a close observation, one notices that this frame is only seen in Luke. However, that this frame is included shows also that it must be of utmost importance for Luke. That explains my choice of this title. However, the different titles and the different spectrum of interest exemplify this parable as one that is undergoing development in the course of the traditions handed over orally. This also explains the successive layers of application. Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 665.

- c* αἴρεις ὃ οὐκ ἔδηκας
d καὶ θερίζεις ὃ οὐκ ἔσπειρας.
 22*a* λέγει αὐτῷ,
b Ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου κρίνω σε, πονηρὸ δοῦλε.
c ἤδεις ὅτι ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος αὐστηρὸς εἰμι,
d αἴρων ὃ οὐκ ἔδηκα
e καὶ θερίζων ὃ οὐκ ἔσπειρα;
 23*a* καὶ διὰ τί οὐκ ἔδωκάς μου τὸ ἀργύριον ἐπὶ τράπεζαν;
b καγὼ ἐλθὼν σὺν τόκῳ ἂν αὐτὸ ἔπραξα.
 24*a* καὶ τοῖς παρεστῶσιν εἶπεν,
b Ἄρατε ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὴν μνᾶν
c καὶ δότε τῷ τὰς δέκα μνᾶς ἔχοντι
 25*a* καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ,
b Κύριε, ἔχει δέκα μνᾶς.
 26*a* λέγω ὑμῖν
b ὅτι παντὶ τῷ ἔχοντι δοθήσεται,
c ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ μὴ ἔχοντος καὶ ὃ ἔχει
d ἀρδηθήσεται.
 27*a* πλὴν τοὺς ἐχθρούς μου τούτους τοὺς μὴ θελήσαντάς με
b βασιλεῦσαι ἐπ' αὐτούς
c ἀγάγετε ὧδε
d καὶ κατασφάξατε αὐτούς ἔμπροσθέν μου.
 28*a* Καὶ εἰπὼν ταῦτα ἐπορεύετο ἔμπροσθεν ἀναβαίνων εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα.

1.2. English translation

- 11*a*: As they were listening to these things, he proceeded to tell a parable
b: because he was near to Jerusalem
c: and they thought
d: that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately
 12*a*: He then said:
b: a nobleman went to a big land
c: to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.
 13*a*: Calling ten of his servants he gave them ten minas
b: and said to them
c: trade with these till I come.
 14*a*: But his citizens hated him
b: and sent an embassy after him saying,
c: we do not want this man to reign over us.
 15*a*: when he returned, having received the kingdom
b: he said
c: that his servants should be called unto him,
d: to whom he has given the money
f: that he should know
e: what they had traded out.
 16*a*: The first came before him saying,

- b: Lord, your mina worked out ten minas more
- 17a: And he said to him
- b: well done, good servant, because you have been faithful over a little
- c: you will have authority over ten cities.
- 18a: And the second came saying,
- b: Your Mina, Lord, made five minas.
- 19a: He also said to this (man)
- b: and you are to be over five cities
- 20a: And the other came saying,
- b: Lord, here is your mina
- c: which I put down (wrapped) in a handkerchief.
- 21a: for I was afraid of you
- b: because you are a harsh person
- c: you take up what you did not lay down
- d: and reap what you did not sow.
- 22a: He said to him,
- b: out of your mouth I condemn you, evil servant
- c: You knew that I am a harsh person
- d: taking what I did not lay down
- e: and harvesting where I did not sow
- 23a: Why did you not give my money to a table (bank)
- b: and at my coming, I would have collected it with interest.
- 24a: And to those who stood by, he said
- b: take away the mina from him
- c: and give to him, who has the ten minas
- 25a: and they said to him,
- b: Lord, he has ten minas.
- 26a: I say to you
- b: that to everyone who has will be given
- c: but from him who has not, what he has
- d: will be taken away.
- 27a: However, these enemies of mine, who die not want me
- b: to rule over them
- c: lead them out
- d: and slay them before me.
- 27: And saying this, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

2. *The context of the parable*

The parable of the throne claimant is the last in the series of parables, which Luke allowed Jesus to begin with “a (certain) man” (ἄνθρωπος τις).² In addition, it belongs to the double tradition.³ It follows the narrative, which thematised the meeting of Jesus with Zacchaeus and the salvation that Jesus brought to his household (Lk 19:1-10), and should be imagined as having been told still within

² Cf. Lk 10:30; 12:16; 14:16; 15:11; 16:1, 19.

³ Together with Mt//Lk: 1. 11: 16-19//7:31-35 (playing children); 2. 12:43-45//11:24-26 (return of the unclean spirit); 3. 24:43-44//12:39-40 (the watchful house owner and the thief); 4. 24:45-51//12:42-46 (the faithful and prudent manager); 5. 5:25-26//12:58-59 (settling with one's accuser); 6. 13:33//13:20-21 (the yeast); 7. 22:1-10//14:16-24 (the great dinner); 8. 18:12-14//15:4-7 (the lost sheep); 9. 24:37-39//17:26-30 (the flood and the rain of fire).

the place of Zacchaeus.⁴ The Greek word *προσθεῖς* shows the immediate position of the parable to the episode with Zacchaeus. Lk 19:11 and Lk 19:28 serve as the frame (*inclusio*) of the story with the mention of Jerusalem as the destination of Jesus.⁵ It is also quite remarkable that the entrance into Jerusalem formed the next pericope. The parable prepares the regal/triumphant appearance of Jesus in the next episode.⁶ The beginning of the narrative with *ἀκουόντων δὲ αὐτῶν ταῦτα*, a genitive absolute,⁷ guides against effecting/introducing any significant structural alienation from the story of Zacchaeus⁸ since the motifs of the previous sections continue, especially the time of salvation (19:9 and 11), the journeys (19:1 and 11) and the mood of his audience (19:8,15,24).⁹ Besides, the salvation shown to the house of Zacchaeus could be the motivating factor for the expectation of the promised salvation for Jerusalem, which has been the destination of Jesus since Lk 9:51, especially since Lk 18:31. The necessity of the parable is shown by the nearness of space (*ἐγγὺς εἶναι*: Jerusalem) and time (*παραχρῆμα*: God's kingdom).¹⁰ Seen narratologically, the parable illustrates the action of Jesus, which exemplifies a contrast to the action of the master. With the *ταῦτα* of 11a, Luke effects a syntactic relation between the story of Zacchaeus and the parable.¹¹

2.1. *Structure and language*

The kingly thematic functions as a frame beginning with *ἄνθρωπός τις εὐγενῆς* in v.12b: It is further attested in v.12c: *λαβεῖν ἑαυτῷ βασιλείαν*.¹² In v.13 the aspect of the minas is introduced only to turn over to the kingly thematic in v.14. Vv.14c-15a: *οὐ θέλομεν τοῦτον βασιλεῦσαι ἐφ' ἡμᾶς* and *λαβόντα τὴν βασιλείαν*. The two actions (v.12b and v.14c-15a), separated from each other through the inclusion of *δέ* (v.14a), form the point of departure.¹³ The royal thematic appears again as

⁴ Cf. W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium*, 789. I used the word "imagined" purposely because there is no explicit mention that Jesus is still in the house of Zacchaeus. The verb *ὑποδέχομαι* in v.6 is, on the other hand, a guarantee that Jesus really entered into the house of Zacchaeus. It is also supported with the murmuring of the people in v.7. With the genitive absolute construction however, Luke was able to refer to a vague audience.

⁵ Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas*, 283.

⁶ Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1228.

⁷ It remains to question the identity of the *αὐτοί* in 11c. Following a strict grammatical adherence, one may see it as staying for the *πάντες* of verse 7, who were not happy that Jesus entered the house of Zacchaeus. However, it is also possible that the *αὐτοί* could refer to the *ὄχλοι* or the apostles who could be envisaged as part of the entourage towards Jerusalem. Cf. L.T. Johnson, *Kingship*, 145.

⁸ Cf. J.B. Green, *Luke*, 674. Also U. Busse, *Dechiffrierung*, 423.

⁹ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke*, 910. Also W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium*, 789 and F. Bovon, *Lukas*, 283.

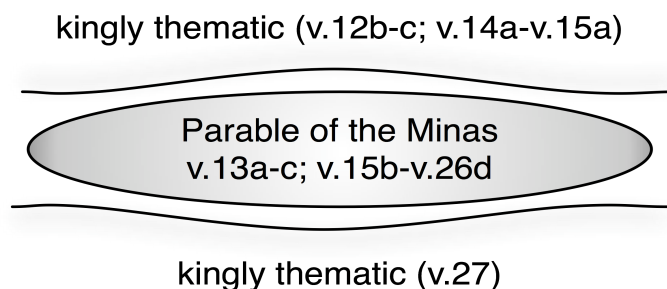
¹⁰ Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 618.

¹¹ Luke follows a particular scheme in the construction of his story. It is obvious that in conflict situations concerning dinner, that he normally relates a parable in response to the objections of the people concerning his social inclusiveness, e.g. Lk 5:29-39; 14:1-24; 15:1-32. It would then follow that Lk 19:1-27 is a syntactic unit and as such, any attempt to alienate this parable from the story of Zacchaeus would not be proper. For more on this insight cf. B. Heining, *Metaphorik*, 86.

¹² Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 617.

¹³ Cf. U. Busse, *Dechiffrierung*, 430.

frame in v 27: *μη̄ θελήσαντάς με βασιλεῦσαι ἐπ' αὐτούς.*¹⁴ The *inclusio* of the context of the parable (Jerusalem: Lk 19:11 and Lk 19:28) is differentiated from the *inclusio* immanent in the parable itself *βασιλεία*. In the parable-immanent *inclusio*, we have a *sandwich-presentation*, that could thus be presented:



The intention of the noble to go to a distant land to get his title (v.12b-c), the objections coming from his would-be subjects (v.14a-c) and the punishment meted out on those who were against his royal intention (v.27a-d) serve as a frame positioning the parable of the minas. If taken alone, the different elements of this kingly thematic combine to a narrative that is complete and coherent.¹⁵ A plausible structure could be as follows:

First part: Vv.11a-12a: **Setting and introductory narrative.** A first level narrative stating the reason for and the introduction of the parable: v 11: *διὰ τὸ ἐγγὺς εἶναι Ἰερουσαλήμ αὐτὸν* and ending with *εἶπεν οὖν*.

Second part: Vv.12b-27d: **Discourse.** A second level narrative.

I. *Exposition with background information:* Vv.12b-14c

- 1a. vv 12b-c: Journey of the noble man
- 1b. v13a-c: Entrusting and commissioning of the servants (conflation point)
2. v14a-c: Dislike and petition by the fellow citizens

II. *Return and account of stewardship:* vv 15a-26d

1. v.15a-e: Return of the master (king) and the summoning of the servants
2. vv 16a-19b: The stewardship accounts of the servants
 - i. vv 16a-17c: Account and reward of the first servant
 - v.16a-16b: the account of the first servant
 - v.17a-17c: the praise and reward from the master
 - ii. vv 18a-19b: Account and reward of the second servant
 - v.18a-18b: the account of the second servant
 - v.19a-19b: the reward from the master
3. vv 20a-23b: Encounter with the third servant
 - i. v.20a-21d: His inaction and the reasons for it
 - ii. v.22a-23b: The verbal reaction and curse of the master

III. *Closing dialogue:* v 24a-27d:

¹⁴ This structure follows to some extent the structure given by Bovon, Lukas, 284f and Eckey, Lukasevangelium, 790.

¹⁵ Cf. A. Denaux, King-Judge, 40.

1. vv 24a-26d: Judgement, reaction and justification¹⁶
2. vv 27a-27d: Condemnation of the enemies.

Third part: V.28a: Concluding narrative. A return to the first level narrative.

A very subtle but interesting structure is inherent in the story dealing with the kingly thematic, were it to be taken alone. There is a balance in the narrative endeavour, which proceeds thus: Departure (v.12b), dispatch (v.14), return (v.15a) and summon (v.27),¹⁷ while commissioning, effecting and accounting summarise the story dealing with the minas.¹⁸ The reward with ten and five cities for the first (v.14) and the second (v.17) servants respectively is the device of Luke to make the whole parable coherent.¹⁹ The account and the praise in the parable show a parallelism in the stewardship-accounts of the first two servants in v.16b and v.18b, which is further accentuated in the bestowal of cities to the servants heightened by the correspondence between the output and the number of cities bestowed to one: Ten minas = ten cities, five minas = five cities.²⁰ A syntactical look at the pericope will reveal the dynamic nature of the text: it is very rich in the use of verbs especially the verbs of movement and the verbs of speech.

The parable has two topographies: the place of the king with his servants, citizens and bystanders and the distant (great) land, where the king went to obtain his kingship. The semantic analysis of the text shows that it is not only rich in commercial terms (*πραγματεύομαι*, *τράπεζα*, *τόκος*), but also in words depicting inequality (between master and slave) e.g. *βασιλεία* (v.12), *εὐγενής* (v.12), *κύριος* (v.15, v.18, v.20) and *δοῦλος* (v.13, v.15, v.17, v.22). Striking is the *oppositio* between the noble man *εὐγενής* and his servants on one hand, and between the nobleman and his citizens on the other, made known through the word *μισέω*. Agricultural vocabularies are not lacking.²¹ The *χώραν μακρὰν* is to be seen as an *oppositio* to *ἐγγύς/παραχρῆμα*. The presence of four *hapax legomena* is striking as well: *πραγματεῦσθαι*, *διαπραγματεῦσθαι*, *ἀστέρος*, *κατασφάζειν* and *τράπεζα* in the sense of bank.

A closer look at the text reveals that in rebuking the “evil” servant in v.22, the master adopted the very characterisation, which the servant made of him in v.21b, 21c, and 21d, however with a difference in the tenses of c and d: the present tense of the second person singular takes a participial tense: *αἴρεις = αἴρων*, *θερίζεις = θερίζων*, while the aorists remain aorists but in first person singular: *ἔθνηκας = ἔθνηκα*, *ἔσπειρας = ἔσπειρα*. This autodescription could serve as a possible clue to understand the parable.²² It is easily observable that the third servant is, from a

¹⁶ V.26a could be seen as being originally a part of Jesus’ concluding remark or word. Cf. G. Schneider, Lukas, 382. Following the sequence of the narrative, it would be expected that the third person singular would have been appropriate if the master were the speaker and not the first person singular: *λέγω ὑμῖν*.

¹⁷ Cf. F.D. Weinert, Claimant, 507.

¹⁸ Cf. C. Münch, Gewinnen, 242.

¹⁹ Cf. M. Zerwick, Parabel, 656f. Giving authority over cities is the function of a king. With this singular action, Luke succeeds in merging two elements into a story, namely the story of the throne-claimant and the story of the minas.

²⁰ Cf. L.T. Johnson, Luke, 290.

²¹ Sowing and harvesting are agricultural motives.

²² Cf. C.F. Evans, 667.

dramatical viewpoint, actually the main figure of the total parable. In observing his words and actions, a correct interpretation of the parable could be guaranteed.²³

2.2 *Literary genre*

The description given by Luke in v.11 for this narrative suffices for the determination of its literary genre: *παραβολή*.²⁴ In the gospel-tradition, parable usually stands for a literary form used in achieving a certain aesthetical effect by making an illustrative comparison, usually of a generic nature.²⁵ Owing to this generic nature, it is mysterious thereby making an explanation imperative.²⁶ Jülicher²⁷ defined a parable as a figure of speech, in which the effects of a sentence should be ascertained through juxtaposing a similar sentence belonging to a different field that will ultimately bring about the same effect.²⁸

The characteristics of a parable are the past tense of the narrative, which renders it fictional,²⁹ its unusualness and the singularity of the event.³⁰ The text in question is narrated in the past tense (*ἐπορεύθη, ἔδωκεν, ἐμίσουν, ἀπέστειλαν* etc.) except where direct speeches are given. The meagre sum of a mina for an enterprise (v.13a), the seriousness attached to it (v.13c, v.15d-f) and the gains accruing from it (v.16b, v.18b) accentuate the unusualness of the fiction. Dialogues (vv 16-23) and monologues accentuate the dramatic nature of parables, which have an excellent authoritative demarcation between the main character and others.³¹ As such, it presents the possibility of identifying the dynamics of a “dramatic” or “scenic triangle” involving the determinant or the initiator, who controls the drama of the parable, the protagonist or the main figure, who is actually the object of interest and the supporting figure.³² The determinant and the protagonists are of immense

²³ Cf. C. Dietzfelbinger, *Gleichnis*, 228.

²⁴ The German parable research has gone a longer way than the English parable research. In the German exegesis, there is a difference between *Parabel*, *Gleichnis* and *Beispielergählungen*, with each having different qualities and characteristics especially in tenses, forms of speech and the frequency. Such distinctions are relatively not well advanced in the English exegesis although Via has succeeded in differentiating between parable, similitude and example stories. Cf. D.O. Via, *Parables*, 11f. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 883, has undertaken such differentiation especially with regard to example stories, which supply a practical model for conduct. For a detailed treatment of the German parable research, cf. W. Harnisch, *Gleichniserzählungen*; H.J. Klauck, *Gleichnis*, 851-856.

²⁵ Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke I*, 600.

²⁶ Cf. W. Bauer, *Wörterbuch*, 1238.

²⁷ With Adolf Jülicher, the German biblical scholarship in its critical parable research experienced a remarkable shift from the allegorical interpretation of the parables, which Jülicher rejected. Instead, he demanded a non-allegorical interpretation of the parables of Jesus in as much as that is the best way to arrive at a possible picture of the historical Jesus.

²⁸ Cf. A. Jülicher, *Gleichnisreden I*, 80. The translation and the paraphrasing are mine. The original definition is, “*Gleichnis ist diejenige Redefigur, in welcher die Wirkung eines Satzes (Gedankens) gesichert werden soll durch Nebenstellung eines ähnlichen, einem anderen Gebiet angehörigen, seiner Wirkung gewissen Satzes.*”

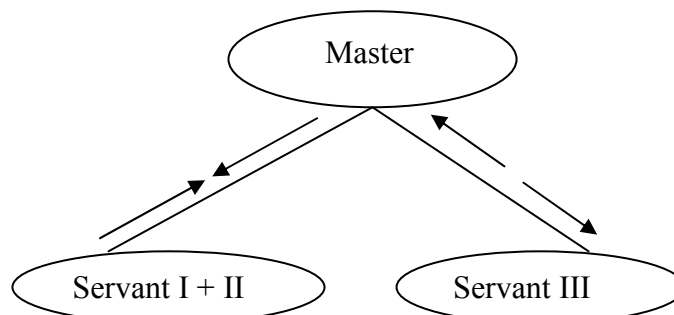
²⁹ Cf. B. Heininger, *Metaphorik*, 12.

³⁰ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Gleichnis*, 852.

³¹ Cf. K. Berger, *Formgeschichte*, 51f.

³² G. Sellin introduced the idea of the scenic or dramatic triangle (*dramatisches Dreieck*) in the history of German parable research. Cf. G. Sellin, *Gleichniserzähler*, 180-183.

importance.³³ With the law of the “open triangle”, only two of the three possibilities given in the parable will be developed: there is normally a dichotomy between the determinant and the protagonist (*πονηρὲ δούλῃ*), as seen between the noble man and the third servant (vv 20-24). On the other hand, there exists an accord between the supporting figure and the determinant (vv 16-19: *ἀγαθὲ δούλῃ*).³⁴



In such parables, a judgement is of immense necessity, which is given either by the determinant of the parable or by Jesus himself (v.24 and v.27). Of introductory importance is the beginning: “a certain man...” or “a certain woman...” (*ἄνθρωπός τις*).³⁵ Sentences serving as the aim of the parable are given at the end.³⁶ Qualities like homogeneity and dramatic duality are necessary.³⁷ The present text does not fulfil this homogeneity because of the conflation of two parables belonging to different spheres. The dramatic or scenic duality ensures that at most only two persons appear or act at the same time.³⁸ It ensures that the master speaks with each of the servants at different times and not at the same time. That is part of the monologue and dialogue nature of the parable. The bystanders are presumably the readers of the parable. Dodd’s description of a parable as “a metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life...”³⁹ would be out of place because the parables of Jesus are not so near to daily routine, nature and everyday life.⁴⁰ The unexpected turn of events in the parables heightens the tensions involved.⁴¹ With the discussion above, one can attempt a summary: This text is a parable, because it is a fictional narrative in past tense, having a dramatic quality

³³ D.O. Via, Wechselbeziehung, 70: „Es mag zusätzliche Figuren geben, deren Schicksal sich von dem des Protagonisten unterscheidet... aber sie sind zweifellos von untergeordneter Bedeutung, während der Protagonist in alle Episoden einbezogen ist und sein Schicksal den vereinheitlichenden Faktor bildet.“

³⁴ Cf. B. Heininger, Metaphorik, 10f. Also M. Ebner/B. Heininger, Exegese, 77f. This method enjoys a particular height in the construction of Luke: In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the third figure, instead of behaving like the first (priest) and the second (Levite) figures, establishes himself as a contrast. Cf. Lk 10.

³⁵ Cf. W. Harnisch, Gleichniserzählungen, 78.

³⁶ Cf. K. Berger, Formgeschichte, 50.

³⁷ Cf. H.J. Klauck, Gleichnis, 853.

³⁸ For more on this, cf. W. Harnisch, Gleichniserzählungen, 25f.

³⁹ C.H. Dodd, Parables, 5.

⁴⁰ S. Bieberstein has also given a similar correction, although not in a detailed manner. Cf. S. Bieberstein, Kraft, 66.

⁴¹ Cf. E. Biser, Gleichnisse, 42f: „In der Dramaturgie der Gleichnisse herrscht die Ausnahme, nicht die Regel, das Unerhörte, nicht das Gewohnte und Allgemeine.“

involving the appearance of two or three persons or groups, whose relationship could be explained with the help of a scenic or dramatic triangle,⁴² as such creating a theatrical possibility.⁴³ A synoptic comparison will establish the uniqueness of Luke in this parable.

2.3 *Synoptic comparison*

This parable of Luke has a parallel in the gospel of Matthew (25:14-30) and a minor resemblance to a Markan presentation.⁴⁴ However, the synoptic comparison will be between the versions of Luke and Matthew:

The similarities between the two versions are as striking as they are structural: both versions tell of a person, who, before undertaking a journey, entrusted his servants with money with the hope of gains. During the stewardship-account, two proved to be responsible and faithful and were praised and rewarded, while the third, seeking to justify his indolence, presented a very nasty image of his master as the reason for his inaction. The master castigated him, removed the money from him and gave it to the person who had more. In a general conclusion, he supported his action with the saying that to everyone who has, something more will be given, but the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away from him.⁴⁵

At a close look, however, one notices some differences between the versions. The contexts of the two are different. The Lukan version is situated almost at the end of the travel account *before* the entry to Jerusalem, while the Matthean account relates to a later stage of the ministry of Jesus, namely during his eschatological discourse *in* Jerusalem.⁴⁶ The Lukan version, or the parable of the minas, is presented with the parable of the throne claimant in a sandwich form, i.e. at the beginning and at the end. All the elements dealing with the throne claimant could easily be removed without inflicting any injury to the essence of the parable of the minas.

Luke adds an explanation in v.11, which is lacks in the version of Matthew. It becomes worthwhile observing that this explanation is not necessary inasmuch as the parable retains its meaning even without any explanatory allusion to Jerusalem. The master of the parable is presented differently in the two versions. In the version of Matthew, he is presented as a private man ἄνθρωπος, while the Lukan version sees him as a noble, εὐγενής.⁴⁷ Matthew speaks of three servants in 25:14-15, while Luke mentions ten servants initially, only to tell of the destiny of three servants later.⁴⁸ Luke tells of a mina μνᾶ while Matthew tells of a talent,

⁴² For an approximate rendering cf. B. Heininger, *Metaphorik*, 12f.

⁴³ Cf. W. Harnisch, *Gleichniserzählungen* 26, where he opines that the parable represents "... nicht anders als die Fabel eine *als Schauspiel vorstellbare Folge von Begegnungen*... Sie tendiert zur Welt des Dramas."

⁴⁴ Cf. Mk 13:34. Eusebius of Caesarea attests to the existence of another version of this parable in the apocryphal Gospel of the Nazaraeans. Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1232. Also F. Bovon, *Lukas III*, 285f.

⁴⁵ Cf. A. Denaux, *King-Judge*, 37.

⁴⁶ Cf. B. Schultz, *Archelaus*, 106.

⁴⁷ Cf. P. Fiedler, *Talente*, 264.

⁴⁸ I have made this point earlier. That Luke only told of the destinies of the three servants instead of the ten suffices for the conclusion that the initial version must have read three.

τάλαντον.⁴⁹ It is easily apparent that the Lukan amount involves a portion of trial,⁵⁰ while the amount of Matthew envisages a more powerful financial exposure.⁵¹ In addition, Luke says that the servants received a mina while the three of Matthew received five, two and one talents respectively.⁵² This is a case of ability and responsibility in Matthew versus equality in Luke. The version of Matthew gives the impression that the master gave all his possessions to the servants (Matt 24:14: τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτοῦ). This insinuation is lacking in the version of Luke.

Matthew relates that the lord was not present for a long time, μετὰ δὲ πολὺν χρόνον, while Luke relates that the noble man left for a distant land εἰς χώραν μακρὰν for the reception of his royal recognition. The long absence of the lord should be taken as a redaction of Matthew, with which he wanted to draw attention to the Parousia that is takes its time to come.⁵³

The express command to trade, πραγματεύομαι, seen in Lk 19:13 and which was taken up again in v.15 is not present in the Matthean version. The careful reader asks for the reason behind entrusting the talents to the servants. The commercial yields in the two versions show other differences: In the Matthean version, two of the servants doubled the talents they got, five making five more and two making two more. In Luke, the first servant multiplied in ten his gain, while the second multiplied his gain in five.⁵⁴ In the version of Matthew, the actions of the servants are told and later retold by the slaves (Matt 25:16-18; 20; 22; 25), while the slaves of the Lukan version tell the story for the first time. The rewards given to the servants are presented differently: In Matthew, the master promised the two servants the authority over more and, in the future, admission to τὴν χαρὰν τοῦ κυρίου σου, thus surrounding the whole parable with an eschatological aura and dominion for the faithful ones.⁵⁵ Luke, on the other hand, is more specific transforming the reward to a political power (ἐξουσία) over cities, which is not to be realised in the future, but is present (ἴσθι, γίνου) and already accomplished in

⁴⁹ It is problematic determining the original value involved. The talent of Matthew is the payment for many thousand workdays, and as such much more valuable as the mina of Luke, which is a pay for about hundred workdays. Mina and Talents were not monetary units as such but weight measures, which were also used to signify monetary measures. Cf. C. Münch, Gewinnen, 244. Both evangelists, however, speak of the smallness of the sum entrusted (Matt 25:21; Lk 19:17). Therefore, one can say that the original reading of the parable was mina, cf. F. Bovon, Lukas, 287. However, Nolland maintains that the bid to ascertain the more original remains uncertain. Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 914.

⁵⁰ Cf. M. Wolter, Lukasevangelium, 619.

⁵¹ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 914.

⁵² Bovon presented a summarised theology of Luke pointing out that he worked with the assumption that all are endowed equally. That explains the equal entrustment of one mina to each of the ten. From this argument, he concludes that the original reading must have been five, two and one. Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas III, 288.

⁵³ Cf. C. Diezfelbinger, Gleichnis, 225.

⁵⁴ The point has already been made that Luke's exaggeration is very palpable. It is more imaginable that each servant was able to double the money given to him. Cf. F. Bovon, Lukas III, 288. Also W. Resenhöfft, Gleichnis, 321.

⁵⁵ In relation to this eschatological aura, Jeremias writes that here, „redet nicht ein irdischer Kaufmann, sondern der Christus der Parusie, der Anteil verschenkt an der neuen Welt und der zur ewigen Verdammnis verurteilt.“ J. Jeremias, Gleichnisse, 57.

the story.⁵⁶ The account of the third servant in both versions is formulated differently, however, logically. The account of Luke presented the third servant as hiding his mina in a handkerchief *ἐν σουδαρίῳ*,⁵⁷ while the account of Matthew presented the third servant as hiding his talent in the ground, *ἐν τῇ γῆ*. The defence, which the third servant presented, shows another difference in the different versions. In the version of Luke, the third servant first brought out his mina, *κύριε, ἰδοὺ ἡ μινᾶ σου* before supporting his action with the strictness and fraudulent nature of his master. In the Matthean version, the servant presented his master as one who harvests without sowing, and fearing his strict nature he hid the talent in a piece of land. All these were explained before he gave his talent back with the words *ἰδοὺ ἔχεις τὸ σόν*. The introductory part of the accusation in the Matthean version, *ἔγνων σε* (Matt 25:24), gives the accusation more authority by presenting a height of intense familiarity. The description of the master in the Lukan version is *αυστηρός*, while the Matthean description is *σκληρός*. There is also a change of position in the accusations of the servants: The Lukan version has “taking up where you did not lay down” before “reaping where you did not sow” (Lk 19:21), while the Matthean version has it the other way round (Matt 25:24). Matthew uses the preposition *ὅπου*. Where Luke has “taking up what you have not laid down”, Matthew has, “gathering where you have not scattered” *συνάγων ὅθεν οὐ διεσκόρπισας*.

The information that the Lukan version punished the third servant because of his words is missing in Matthew. In the Lukan version, the command to take away the mina from the third servant is given to bystanders, *τοῖς παρεστῶσιν*, while there is no specific person to whom this command is given in the Matthean version. That the Matthean master punished the servant by throwing him into the darkness with the consequent weeping and gnashing of teeth is missing in Luke. The surprised reaction of the people in Lk 19:25 (*κύριε, ἔχει δέκα μινᾶς*) has no parallel in the Matthean version.

The yield of the synoptic comparison of the two versions could be the observation that the original version had three servants and not ten. The original sum must have been a mina since both versions emphasize the meagreness of the amount.⁵⁸ The allocation of the amount could have been according to effort: Five, three and one. It is also possible that the good servants must have doubled the minas given to them. Matthew’s version of the reward seems to be more original than the reward with cities in the Lukan version with which he hoped to perfect the combination of two stories. If the sum is a mina, the handkerchief is more original than the ground, where the Matthean servant hid his money.

A general assessment would be to maintain that all the elements that deal with the throne claimant in the version of Luke should be considered as being secondary,

⁵⁶ With this singular inclusion, Luke succeeds in the integration of the two parts of the story. Cf. L.T. Johnson, *Kingship*, 144. Also W. Foerster, *Gleichnis*, 47.

⁵⁷ Some exegetes read more meaning into this method of hiding money. Some argue that this aspect of the parable shows that the third servant is a careless person and as such liable to punishment. They assert their opinion with the observation that in the Jewish custom, whoever puts borrowed money in a handkerchief must have to pay it back in case of loss. Cf. U. Luz, *Matthäus III*, 501.

⁵⁸ Cf. W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium II*, 792.

especially the reward with political posts.⁵⁹ The conviction of Jeremias that there existed a separate parable of the throne claimant is not convincing at all.⁶⁰ The relationship of the two versions is neither easily reconstructable nor determinable. Sometimes, the exegetes say that the original version must be sought in Q⁶¹ in as much as the agreements suffice to accept the existence of one tradition at the root of both versions. At other times, a determination of another source is seen as being very imperative since some doubt this common part as being part of Q.⁶² In this regard, it is stated that Luke and Matthew must have edited with peculiarities an original version of Q.⁶³ It would be necessary to determine if Matthew abridged the version of Q or if Luke widened it.⁶⁴ There are still some, who are convinced that the version of Luke is a result of the editing of the Matthean version.⁶⁵ Owing to this idea, the probability that the parable could be sought in the historical Jesus gains some ground.⁶⁶ Others, however, doubt the possibility of whatever relationship between the two versions stating that there is no reason for the assumption that either of them copied from the other.⁶⁷ However, I would adopt the thesis that Luke and Matthew shared Q as their tradition with amendments, each with his own variant of Q.⁶⁸ The logion, “he who has...” and the structural resemblance of the two versions could be taken as reasons for this thesis. Presumably given by Jesus and handed down through Q, it is also evidenced in Lk 8:18 and in Matt 13:12. Mk 4:25 has it also although it is missing in Mk 13:34.

The frame story of the throne claimant, which Luke perfectly integrated into the parable, belongs to his *Sondergut*.⁶⁹ Luke adapted another parable, already existent in the *Sondergut*, to this parable, making it to have a relevance to a theology directed against the ruling class.

⁵⁹ Cf. W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium II*, 791.

⁶⁰ Cf. J. Jeremias, *Gleichnisse*, 56, 166.

⁶¹ Cf. A. Denaux, *Parable*, 430. The similarities, according to him, are to be explained by locating both of the versions in a single teaching occasion of Jesus.

⁶² Schneider notices the popular view that both versions of the entrusted money have their origin in Q. He however affirms that it is improbable that both used the same source. He sees the possibility of both using different traditions, which however have the same source. Cf. G. Schneider, *Lukas*, 379.

⁶³ Cf. A. Jülicher, *Gleichnisreden II*, 485; J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1230.

⁶⁴ Lagrange is convinced that Luke has preserved the original version. Cf. *Luc*, 490-492. On the other hand, some exegetes are of the opinion that the version of Matthew must have preserved the most original version. For more on this, cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1230.

⁶⁵ Cf. B. Shellard, *Light*, 136-140.

⁶⁶ Cf. A.J. Hultgren, *Parables*, 278f.

⁶⁷ Cf. N.T. Wright, *Jesus*, 632f: “It is highly likely that Jesus used such stories like this on numerous occasions... There is no reason whatsoever to insist that either Matthew’s or Luke’s version was “derived” from the other, or both from a single original.”

⁶⁸ Cf. W. Wiefel, *Lukas*, 329; S. Schulz, *Spruchquelle*, 293. *Ἐῖπεν πρὸς αὐτούς* (13b) *πολλῖται* (14a) *ἀπέστειλαν πρεσβεῖαν* (14b) *καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἐπιανελεθεῖν* (15a) *παρηγένετο* (16a) etc are typically Lukan. Cf. H. Klein, *Lukas*, 607 (footnote 6).

⁶⁹ Bormann, however, is of the opinion that it is probable that Luke uses the parable as he saw it in his tradition. That means, the two parables have already been merged before Luke used them. Cf. L. Bormann, *Recht*, 315.

2.4 *Literary criticism*

The question whether our text is an original unit is a very important one having ascertained already that the sandwiching method offers a great insight into the nature of the text. One of the thematic discrepancies noticed in the interpretation of the parable of the throne claimant is the correspondence between the meagre sum⁷⁰ of the parable and the seriousness of the throne claimant.⁷¹ Even if the amount of one mina were ten times multiplied, it would still not match the seriousness attached to the commissioning of the servants by the would-be king, and neither would the amount be considered adequate for a reasonable business.⁷² It seems almost improbable that a future king, who will be in the position of giving the authority over ten cities, would give out a meagre sum of a mina to his servants.⁷³ The information that the servant hid the mina in a handkerchief suggests to the reader that the sum could not have been of immense quantity.⁷⁴ The issue of the number of servants in the parable is as striking as it is surprising. In v.13, it is stated that the nobleman called his ten servants and gave them ten Minas instructing or commissioning them to trade with them until he comes back. However, during the account of the stewardship only three were interviewed. The characterisation of the third servant as *ὁ ἕτερος* and not as “the third” or “the last” is a clue that something is missing here, or at most that the inclusion of the ten servants is redactional.⁷⁵ It could be that the original version of the story had only three servants.⁷⁶ This is suggested by the very use of the characterisation *ὁ ἕτερος*.⁷⁷ The *πολιῆται* of v.14 appear in a sudden and unmotivated manner feeding the suspicion that the original unit was without the kingly motives. The sudden appearance of the bystanders, *τοῖς παρεστῶσιν*, on the stage (v.24) is as surprising as their unknown identity, since no mention of this group was made

⁷⁰ One mina was a Greek coin with the worth of about 100 drachmas. Giving a modern equivalent of the mina in terms of purchasing power proves to be difficult. Zerwick suggests about 80 DM, cf. M. Zerwick, *Parabel*, 657, while Barclay reckons with an approximate of £5. Cf.

⁷¹ Cf. M. Zerwick, *Parabel*, 657. When one compares the mina given to each servant with the 500 Drachma given by Mark Anthony as reward or gift to each of his soldiers, which made the soldiers see Mark Anthony as a stingy person, it becomes almost impossible to understand the seriousness attached to such a meagre sum. Cf. Appian, *History*, III, 42 § 177.

⁷² Owing to the smallness of the sum, it has been suggested that the parable has to do with a test of faithfulness. Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 704.

⁷³ Cf. A. Denaux, *King-Judge*, 51.

⁷⁴ W. Resenhöfft comes, however, to a different conclusion. With this singular action of wrapping the mina in a handkerchief, he concludes that the editor of the Lukan gospel not only portrays the third servant as an irresponsible servant, he is also presented as being careless with things entrusted to his care. Cf. W. Resenhöfft, *Gleichnis*, 324.

⁷⁵ Cf. W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium*, 791.

⁷⁶ Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 707. Evans (*Luke*, 666) goes further by saying that the ten of Luke is very odd and points to slovenliness at some stage, basing his argument on the special and customary role of the number three in parables.

⁷⁷ Plummer is convinced that *ὁ ἕτερος* could refer to a third group of servants; an individual representative of several of the same kind. The three mentioned are samples of the whole ten. Some must have gained immensely, some in a considerable manner, and some not at all. The third servant is therefore *ὁ ἕτερος* to distinguish his group from the group of those that gained. Cf. *Luke*, 441.

earlier.⁷⁸ In line with this observation is the question concerning the intended recipient of the order to call his servants in v.15. Could the bystanders have been the persons charged with the obligation of calling the servants? Are they the recipients of the order to take away the mina from the third servant?⁷⁹ Ascertaining the subject of v.26a proves to be a literary critical problem. Following the sequence of the story, the third person singular would have been appropriate if the master were the speaker and not the first person singular: λέγω ὑμῖν. However, seeing v.25 as intrusion could give a flow from v.24 to v.26.⁸⁰

A question concerning the reward given to the servants is important: Were the faithful servants allowed to keep the money they made in addition to the ten and five cities they were put in charge? A similar question becomes imperative: if they were allowed to keep the money they made, did they submit the one mina that was given to each of them? If they did not submit the one mina, then there must be a mathematical problem in v.24: the first servant should actually have 11 minas and not just 10 minas. An explanation to this could be the probability that the story betrays the fact that Luke took the story from an original version which had five initial talents or minas, and which later yielded five, thereby making a total sum of ten. He took the total sum of ten without caring to see if it fits to the structure of the parable.⁸¹

Still in the direction of the minas is to be observed, that the 1000% gain of the first servant in relation to a worthless quantity has nothing to do with the objective reality.⁸² Although the mention of a “distant land” indirectly implies a very long time for the distant journey, to receive a kingship and to come back thereby giving the servants the required time to turn out gains out of the trade with the mina. Notwithstanding this time factor, there does not seem to be a realistic justification of this extraordinary market situation and dynamics seen in the profit.⁸³

In Lk 19:25, the bystanders reacted as the mina was given to the first servant with the words “he has ten minas already”. With this singular remark, the interest seems to lie on the money as no mention of the cities is made. As such, one can conclude that the reward with cities is not original.⁸⁴ There is a small literary-critical problem with the compatibility of Lk 19:26 to the theme of the parable: The recurrent logic behind the parable is that inaction or indolence is abhorring and not that one who has only a little will be dispossessed of this little. The abrupt

⁷⁸ Marshall (Luke, 707) suggests that presumably lesser servants in the court of the king are intended. Busse argues in the same direction: “Zu einem König gehört nämlich auch ein Hofstaat, der ihm dient. Deshalb vermag auch eine Erwähnung von >>Umstehenden<< (v. 24) den antiken Leser nicht zu überraschen.” U. Busse, *Dechiffrierung*, 430.

⁷⁹ Bovon is convinced that both figures must not be identical. Cf. F. Bovon, *Lukas III*, 284.

⁸⁰ This verse is missing in some ancient versions like OL and OS. However, it is found in the best Greek manuscripts although clearly an insertion since the master continues to speak of himself in the first person singular. Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Luke III*, 1238.

⁸¹ Cf. W. Resenhöfft, *Gleichnis*, 323. Also J. Nolland, *Luke III*, 916.

⁸² Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 621, who advised against trying to defend this gain percentage from the market conditions of this time, in as much as the whole parable has to do with theological numbers.

⁸³ This aspect accentuates the narrative extravagance, which is a feature of the parables. This surprising aspect of this parable shows that the parable of the New Testament must not always be near to daily life, experience and expectation. This extravagance mixes the ordinary with the extraordinary. Cf. P. Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics*, 97.

⁸⁴ Cf. A. Denaux, *King-Judge*, 51.

change of interest from inaction to dispossession is not easy to explain. In addition to this is still the problem with the mathematical logic behind v.26c: either one has or one has not, not having and still having are not logical sequences. If one does not have anything, you cannot take something from him.

One of the weaknesses of the formation of the Lukan parable is seen in the presentation of the actions of the third servant, which takes away the exciting aspect of the parable. There is no mention of the offence of the third servant.⁸⁵

In the light of these observations, one cannot but say that the parable of the throne claimant, as presented in the gospel of Luke, is originally not a literary unit. Owing to the presence of a different “kingly/royal” story, it must be said, that Luke used a parable, already existing, to drive home his message. This is buttressed by the fact that the gospel of Matthew has a version of a part of the parable, as presented in the gospel of Luke, namely the aspect dealing with the commissioning of the servants and the accounts of their stewardship, which has already been given.

3. *Tradition*

The parable of the throne claimant, as presented in the gospel of Luke, cannot be treated without any allusion to already existing items in the traditions. In the Old Testament, some of these ideas are inherent, especially in the aspect dealing with the throne claimant. The clearest Old Testament parallel, which schematises the vengeance of a king on his citizens, is in the book of Jeremiah, especially in the chapters 39:5-7 and 52:9-11, 24-27, where the king Zedekiah bears the brunt for neglecting the warnings of Jeremiah. With the fall of Jerusalem, the prominent leaders of Judah and the sons of Zedekiah were taken to Babylon and slain before Zedekiah and Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah was blinded and exiled as a prisoner. In addition, texts of 2 Kings⁸⁶ must have been very useful to Paul in his composition of this parable.

Striking, however, is the analogy between the tradition from the Jewish tale of Archelaus in the documentation of Josephus and the Lukan version. Archelaus made a journey to Rome in 4 B.C. hoping to get a confirmation of his entitlement over the kingship of his father Herod against the wish of his brother Antipas (Ant. 17.9.3; Jewish Wars 2.2.2). An embassy, comprising of about fifty Jews, followed him to protest this confirmation (Ant.17.11.1). Their reason for this protest was the wickedness and brutality of Archelaus, which he had already manifested after the death of his father by killing many people in the temple of Jerusalem. They appealed to Augustus not to put Judea under the reign of Archelaus but under the Roman district of Syria. Notwithstanding this opposition, he succeeded in being confirmed, however not as a king but as an ethnarch over Judea and Samaria. After his confirmation as ethnarch, he came back and deposed the incumbent high priest. This brutality that caused this protest was however, the hallmark of the reign of Archelaus. It will eventually cost him his reputation as well as his

⁸⁵ Cf. W. Foerster, Gleichnis, 46. „Wie es dem dritten Knecht ergehen wird, weiß der Hörer in dem Augenblick, in dem er von seinem Tun erfährt. Dazu kommt, daß der Herr gar nicht auf das Übertreten seines Gebots eingeht.“

⁸⁶ Cf. 2 Kings 25:6-7, 18-21.

position as ethnarch. He went on exile to Gaul after his removal from office.⁸⁷ Of immense importance is the observation that Archelaus' father made the same journey to Rome in 40 B.C. in order to be recognised as king by Augustus. Herod Antipas, who killed John the Baptist, will also make the same journey in 39 A.D. hoping to get recognition from Rome.⁸⁸

The allusion to tradition is very necessary in as much as it helps in the determination of events and ideas, which might have helped Luke in the formation of this part of the parable dealing with the throne claimant and his brutal retaliation.

3.1 *Redaction criticism*

One of the difficulties involved in the correct interpretation of this text is the determination of the intended message of Jesus in the thoughts of Luke. There must be a reason why Luke decided to merge two parables together.

While dealing with the context of this parable, I said that this parable should be imagined as spoken while Jesus was still near the house of Zacchaeus. The reason given by Jesus for the salvation of Zacchaeus is: *ἦλθεν γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ζητῆσαι καὶ σῶσαι τὸ ἀπολωλός.* This interaction with Zacchaeus must have been a disappointment for many who thought that he should have received condemnation from Jesus, with the conviction that a tax collector should not have anything to do with a salvation reserved for the house of Abraham. The people must have had another optic concerning the logic of salvation. A consideration of this aspect, I believe, is of immense importance in the understanding of this text.

Jerusalem depicts not only the royal topography but also the salvation topography, and is of immense meaning to the Jews. Having been disappointed by Jesus in the case of Zacchaeus,⁸⁹ another disappointment seems to be coming up. This disappointment has to do with the appearance of the kingdom of God, which ultimately concerns the appearance of the messiah. He begins with a parable in order to show them what type of ruler he is not hoping to prepare them for the type of messiah he is, which has already begun in the story of Zacchaeus.

Luke had Jesus combine the parable of the minas with the parable of the throne claimant, whose main motif was derived from the historical ambience of Archelaus.⁹⁰ The historical person of Archelaus with his deeds in history presents

⁸⁷ Cf. Josephus, Ant. 17, 339-344; Bel. 2, 111. Also Dio Cassius, 55.27.6.

⁸⁸ This observation, however, is not strange since it was the custom of this time to travel to Rome in order to get a certification and confirmation from the Emperor. This was necessary because Judea was a vassal of Rome. Cf. the treatment of patrons and clients in the next chapter.

⁸⁹ This view is supported by the observation of U. Busse, *Dechiffrierung*, 432f., though he goes a different way and will reach a quite different conclusion. He writes, „Die Anwesenden, Jünger wie Menge, haben gerade miterlebt, wie der reiche, aber marginalisierte Oberzöllner mit seinem gesamten Haus durch sein Verhalten...wieder in das Heilsvolk der Kinder Abrahams integriert wurde. Dies gab Jesus die Möglichkeit, seinen Auftrag als irdischer Menschensohn abschließend nochmals zu definieren... Sein Verhalten gab... Anlaß zur Kritik. Das Heil, das dem Haus des Zachäus widerfahren war, erwarteten die Kritiker in Jerusalem, das schon fast greifbar vor ihnen lag.“

⁹⁰ Bernhard Scott, *Parable*, 223, seems to be the only exegete, who denies any relationship between the story of Archelaus and this parable. He states: “the identification of Archelaus is both distant and unnecessary. The theme of a throne claimant is frequent in oriental literature.”

a figure, with which Jesus would not allow himself to be identified.⁹¹ The people, who are yet to understand him, should not believe that he would react like Archelaus,⁹² even if it might be the *usus* that royals should react that way when offended.⁹³

The topography of this parable is also a clue to its understanding. A part of the parable, which has to do with the noble (throne claimant), has a historical insinuation to Jericho. Jericho is the city in whose vicinity Archelaus built a city after his recognition as ethnarch, which he named after himself.⁹⁴ That was not the only edifice attributed to Archelaus. According to Josephus, he rebuilt the palace of Herod the Great in Jericho, which was burnt down by Simon the rebel.⁹⁵ It is therefore probable that these edifices, which still stood the test of time at the time of Jesus, occupied a magnificent and significant position on the way to Jerusalem.⁹⁶ Jewish citizens passing by must have been reminded of one of their brutal kings. It should be seen as the literary device of Luke to have Jesus utter this parable within the scenery provided by this place. By using a parable that got its motif from the brutality of Archelaus, Jesus is only telling his hearers that his

⁹¹ Zerwick, *Parabel*, 668, has a different opinion. He is convinced that the person of Archelaus or the master is an allegory to the person of Jesus. He underlines his argument with *contra factum non valet argumentum*: "...es genügt, dass eine Seite, ein Aspekt eines vielleicht noch so komplexen Sachverhaltes wahr und für den Sprechenden benötigt ist, um den Orientalen zu einem allgemeinen Urteil zu berechtigen...". He simply states that Jesus used the figure of Archelaus and his coming to power to enunciate his own coming. This identification has nothing to do with the brutality and unforgiving nature of Archelaus. Schneider sees the parable as an allegory pointing to the rejection, suffering and death of Jesus, who will later come with might to destroy his enemies, personified by the Jews. Cf. G. Schneider, *Lukas*, 382. The Parousia determines the interpretation of Klein, who sees the distant land as an analogy for heaven, whence Jesus will come to judge all. Cf. H. Klein, *Lukas*, 608.

⁹² Jeremias, *Parables*, 59f, remarks: "...it is hardly conceivable that Jesus would have compared himself, either with a man „who drew out where he had not paid in, and reaped where he had not sown“ (Luke 19:21), that is, a rapacious man, heedlessly intent on his own profit: or with a brutal oriental despot, gloating over the sight of his enemies slaughtered before his eyes“. This is also an argument against seeing the parable as an allegory.

⁹³ After quoting some verses in the book of Proverbs, which support the wrath of a king when offended, F.D. Weinert, *Claimant*, 509f, states, "...the citizens' action against the throne claimant emerges as provocative as well as dangerous; by traditional standards, any king who wished to be regarded as just would have to punish such rebelliousness severely to demonstrate its wicked character."

⁹⁴ Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 17, 340.

⁹⁵ Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 17,340: „When Archelaus came to Judaea and took possession of his ethnarchy, he... rebuilt the royal palace in Jericho in splendid fashion..."

⁹⁶ Cf. B. Schultz, *Archelaus*, 115. However, Schultz denies that Archelaus has any political or religious importance for the Jews at the time of the composition of the gospel because the Jews did not nurture any nostalgia for his reign since they never wanted to keep his memory alive. At most, he argues, one could only accept that it was relevant at the time of Jesus, precisely as he was leaving Jericho. Cf. *Archelaus*, 116f. Schultz neglects or underrates the role of oral tradition in historicity. This makes him neglect the possibility of oral transmission of historical facts, a phenomenon that has already been recognised by Zerwick: "...und wohl die meisten der Jüngeren dürften von jenen schweren Unruhezeiten nach dem Tod des Herodes und vor dem Regierungsantritt des Archelaus oft und oft gehört haben, wenn ihre Väter davon erzählten. Wer also damals diese Parabel hörte, musste an Archelaus denken." Cf. M. Zerwick, *Parabel*, 665.

messiahship should in no way be viewed as being a replica of the rule of Archelaus.

In the parable of the minas, Luke goes a very different way as we have seen in the synoptic comparison, however, remaining true to the criticism meted out on the ruling class and on the rich. While Matthew spiritualises the promise of the master to his servants wrapping it up in an eschatological aura, Luke remains on the level of political power giving the “faithful” servants some cities, which they will rule politically. The word *ἐξουσία*⁹⁷ appears again.

The general tendency among exegetes has been to see this parable as referring to Jesus and as dealing with the word of God, which advises every one to be serious with his or her talent, which has been entrusted by God. Following this argument, the third servant is condemned for his laziness. This identification of the master with Jesus could be the correct interpretation of the initial parable as found in Q.⁹⁸ The parable as we have it in Luke shows a process of addition and conflation, which possibly could have changed the original meaning. The merging of two units into one parable must have had a reason. Therefore, one question remains to be asked: is the intention of the original version in Q still identical with the intention of the use in Luke?⁹⁹

The brutal noble, who became king (ethnarch) although his citizens never wanted him, stands for a corrupt and oppressive system. From the Lukan theological relation to the powerful, it is easier to understand the parable, which already has a negative undertone, as a continued criticism of the ruling class. The accusation of the third servant is easily brushed aside as the argument of a lazy and indolent servant. However, is it like that?

It should not be forgotten that the reason for his inaction is inherently an accusation against the master: *αἴρεις ὃ οὐκ ἔθνηκας καὶ θερίζεις ὃ οὐκ ἔσπειρας*. It is interestingly striking that the master used exactly the same words, which the third servant used for him, to qualify himself.¹⁰⁰ Taking what one did not put down and harvesting where one did not sow articulates an illegal infringement on the belonging of another person. Consequently, it is not a thing of pride. This awareness comes from the ancient law of Deposits, which orders that only a deponent has the right to take, what he has deposited.¹⁰¹ Plato sees it as the most wonderful and simple of all laws.¹⁰² One of the possible interpretations of this parable captures it well: “I feared you as one who does not live honestly by his

⁹⁷ A detailed treatment of this word in the biblical and profane traditions has been given already in the chapter dealing with the temptation of Jesus by the devil.

⁹⁸ Cf. J. Jeremias, *Gleichnisse*, 59. The call to faithfulness bearing in mind the last day of the powerful judge is recurrent in Q. Cf. 6:47-49; 12:35-46 and 17:22-35.

⁹⁹ M. Ebner has succinctly pointed out that many exegetes do not dare to give a different explanation of this parable, which could contradict the traditional explanation. Cf. M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 129, footnote 14.

¹⁰⁰ Exegetes like Harnisch, Luz and Wolter understand his use of the same word in his characterisation as ironical, with which he questions the evaluation of his servants. Cf. W. Harnisch, *Gleichniserzählungen*, 39; U. Luz, *Matthäus III*, 502 and M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 623. Others see it as a confirmation. Cf. C. Kähler, *Vorbild*, 173.

¹⁰¹ For more on the meaning of this item and on its text references, cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 622f.

¹⁰² Cf. Plato, *Leg.* 913c. Aelian, *Var. Hist.* 3, 46 later articulated: *ὃ μὴ κατέδου..., μὴ λάμβανε*.

own labours, but by fraud und misappropriation..., and is prepared to make profit at all costs and by all means. I was unwilling to behave like you; I return your pounds to you.”¹⁰³ It follows, therefore, that the third servant is the only person courageous enough to tell his master the very truth about his exacting nature.¹⁰⁴ This action of the third servant exemplifies an attempt to rehabilitate Zacchaeus as one having an urgent need to dissociate himself from a corrupt and unjust system. With his passive rebellion, Zacchaeus at last frees himself and washes himself of all allegations of being a collaborator. In the same way, the third servant breaks out of the yoke of his corrupt and merciless master showing that it is possible to remain innocent in the face of all these atrocities, which seem to be the pivotal focus of the system. Such Rebellion against a corrupt system is the intention of Luke.¹⁰⁵ The reward given to the first two servants is understandable. Jesus would seem to be saying: „Wenn du ihr Spiel mitmachst, werden sie dich dafür belohnen. Die Welt sorgt für ihre Leute.“¹⁰⁶

Even if some exegetes try to read another meaning into the characterisation of the ethnarch as *αυστηρός*,¹⁰⁷ the reader is left in no doubt as regards the negative undertone of this characterisation, which motivated the reaction of the third servant.¹⁰⁸ Of immense importance is the observation that this parable has more to do with the portrayal of a person who became king as a result of the grace of the Roman Emperor.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ C.F. Evans, Luke, 667.

¹⁰⁴ For Fricke who reads the parable from the perspective of Liberation theology in Latin America, the hero of this parable is the third servant „...denn er bietet dem Herrn die Stirn: >>Du nimmst, was du nicht angelegt hast<<, und kritisiert damit den Herrn und das System, für das er steht. Für diese Haltung,...ist er bereit, die Konsequenzen zu tragen.“ Cf. M. Fricke, Talente, 42.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. M. Ebner, Widerstand, 130. „... so wie der dritte Sklave in meiner Geschichte. Auf ihn sollt ihr schauen! Solche Art von Widerstand ist nötig. Solche Verweigerung gegenüber dem etablierten Bereicherungssystem. Solches Nicht-Mitmachen, solches Sich-nicht-Einklinken in die Selbstverständlichkeit des „diskreten Charmes der sozialen Distanz“...“

¹⁰⁶ R. Rohr, Freiheit, 142.

¹⁰⁷ An instance of this extenuation could be seen in the observation of U. Busse: „Es kann zwar auch >>hart<< bedeuten, doch mit anderen Konnotationen als >>grausam<<. Es meint ursprünglich den >>bitteren<<, ohne Restzucker vergorenen Wein... Übertragen auf den Charakter eines Menschen bedeutet das Adjektiv metaphorisch deshalb auch so viel wie >>hart<<, jedoch im Sinne von >>konsequent<< bzw. >>unbestechlich<<, >>preussisch korrekt<<, nicht >>umgänglich<<, sondern vielmehr >>gerecht<<. Cf. U. Busse Dechiffrierung, 437. Giving this adjective a positive evaluation would mean neglecting the further characterisations thereby reading the text out of context. Busse however, forgets to mention that this adjective atimes functions as the semantic opposite of *φιλόανθρωπος*. Plutarch, Mor 142b, for instance, speaks of a woman, who is „... strict, tyrannical... and unfriendly” (*αυστηρά και ἄκρατος... και ἀνήδυντος*).

¹⁰⁸ A lot of injustice has been done to this third servant. They, however, result from a false reading and understanding of this parable, especially reading the Lukan version with the Matthean version in mind. Via, convinced that the third servant lacks the consciousness that necessarily follows existence, says he personifies the type of person „...der den Schritt ins Unbekannte nicht wagt. Er will den Versuch nicht wagen, seine eigenen Möglichkeiten auszufüllen... Handlung wird durch Furchtsamkeit paralyisiert, und das Selbst unserer Hauptfigur ist nur ein Schatten von dem, was es potenziell ist.“ Cf. D.O. Via, Gleichnisse, 116. With this argument, Via implies that the third servant could have given more, if he had wanted.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. M. Ebner, Widerstand, 130.

The master goes further to confirm the negative image painted of him. With the mention of a bank¹¹⁰ *τράπεζα*, he demands from the servant an action that is related to the very action the servant condemned. With the question in v.23, *καὶ διὰ τί οὐκ ἔδωκάς μου τὸ ἀργύριον ἐπὶ τράπεζαν; καὶ γὰρ ἐλθὼν σὺν τόκῳ ἂν αὐτὸ ἔπραξα*, he seems to say indirectly: „Since you knew that I was an extortioner, you should, as my slave, have been like me, and have engaged in the unlawful and extortionate practice of usury.“¹¹¹ The logic behind this statement could be because it is forbidden for a Jew to lend money with interest to a fellow Jew.¹¹² With this singular intent, poverty among the covenant people was not only checked but also curbed.¹¹³ It was only tolerated when a Jew was dealing with a gentile.¹¹⁴ It could be argued that the man was accusing his servant for not having brought the money to the table of moneylenders or to the bank,¹¹⁵ which invariably would have involved non-Jews.¹¹⁶ However, that is only a theoretical possibility. From the characterisation given about him by the third servant, it would not be an aberration to think of him as someone, who would not have had any problem lending his money with interest to fellow Jews, if he were a Jew. Owing to the obsession of the noble with the interest (*τόκος*) from his money, one can explain the authority (*ἐξουσία*) given to the servants as authority over the cities from the perspective of the corrupt and merciless taxation policy during this time. Since the two servants have, in accordance with the wishes of the noble (v.13c: *πραγματεύσασθε*), proved to be reliable and hardworking (v.16b: *προσηργάσατο*; v.18b: *ἐποίησεν*) in matters of lending money with exorbitant interests, they can now join the master in his exploiting and oppressive business.¹¹⁷ Consequently, the noble has not only succeeded in perpetuating injustice and greed. His thesis in this parable (who has will be given more) seems to support the unfortunate observation that the poor gets poorer while the rich gets richer. Due to this observation, this parable has not only been of immense importance for the exegesis. It has also been used in the poesy with the hope of introducing a

¹¹⁰ The function of a bank in those days could be threefold: 1. Changing currencies of other nations, 2. transferring money from one region to the other, and 3. lending money to individuals or groups who might be in need. Cf. P. Herz, *Erwerbsmöglichkeiten*, 196f.

¹¹¹ Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 672. The opinion of Klein is almost identical with this idea: The servant is condemned not because of his thought but because of not being consequent in following the logic of his thought, which invariably would have implied that the servant behaves like his master knowing that his master lives from the work and sweat of others. He is an evil servant for knowing his master, however refusing to act the way his master acts. Cf. H. Klein, *Lukas*, 610.

¹¹² Cf. Exodus 22:25; Lev 25:36-37; Deut 23:19-20.

¹¹³ Cf. W. Thiel, *Zins*, 1217. In the Old Testament (Ps 15:5), demanding interest from a fellow Jew was viewed as grievous as demanding bribe from the innocent. Such offence could deter one from partaking in a general cultic assembly. In the book of Ezekiel 22:12, it was one of the sins of Jerusalem and Judah, that will ultimately lead to the final judgement.

¹¹⁴ Deut 23:21.

¹¹⁵ Hauck has an interesting interpretation of these words. He conjectures that by referring to *τράπεζα*, Luke maybe wants the “... indirekte Wohltätigkeit, die durch Hingabe des Geldes an die Gemeindeführer den Besitz der einzelnen brüderlichen Wohltat zuführt...” As reference, he gives Acts 4:36f. Cf. F. Hauck, *Lukas*, 232f.

¹¹⁶ Cf. J. A. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1237.

¹¹⁷ Cf. M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 130.

socio-critical change. In the novel, *Dreigroschenroman*, Bertolt Brecht narrates the dream of a poor soldier Fewcoombey, who is made to prosecute Jesus because of this parable, which encourages criminality. The soldier sees himself as the solicitor of the poor who cannot indulge in such a profiteering business owing to their lack of money and lack of criminal intent and energy. He accused Jesus of articulating and spreading lies. At the end of the prosecution, Jesus is condemned for giving this parable, with which the rich support their inordinate search for interest.¹¹⁸ The conception of God as a capitalistic profiteer is the background for the poetic criticism in his poem: “Und sieht man’s denn nicht stündlich/ Auf Erden weit und breit/ Daß Gott dem, der nicht gründlich/ Mitwuchert, nicht verzeiht?/ Nur, die kein Pfündlein haben/ Was machen denn dann die?/ Die lassen sich wohl begraben/ Und geht es ohne sie?/ Nein, nein, wenn die nicht wären/ Dann gäb’s ja kein Pfund/ Denn ohne ihr’ Schwielen und Schwären/ Macht keiner sich gesund.”¹¹⁹

The logion of the parable (Lk 19:26b-d) is also present in the teaching of Jesus in Lk 8:18, which makes an identification of the king with Jesus plausible. However, the reader is forced to ask relevant questions concerning the type of picture the bible is giving about God or about Jesus if the traditional interpretation of this parable is anything to work with. Accepting the traditional exegetical interpretation would imply reducing God and Jesus to the level of the world, where brutality becomes the determining factor, where the rich and the powerful triumph over the poor with their materialism and capitalism,¹²⁰ and where an unjust system considers and appreciates violence as the only solution to problems. If this were the case, how much more terrible and inconsistent would it be in the Lukan context: the brutality of the master and the punishment meted out on the third servant run contrary to Lk 1:53 where he fills the hungry with good things and sends the rich away empty-handed. An exegete, who paints such a negative picture of God in the Lukan context, is bound to explain this harshness with the contradiction inherent in the picture of God presented by Jesus in the parable of the prodigal son in Lk 15 and earlier in the inaugural homily of Jesus in Lk 4.¹²¹ A changed optic leading to all these questions is possible only from the perspective of the redactional work of Luke in merging the parable of the throne claimant with the parable of the minas. That is why I am proposing the thesis from a Lukan context.

In this parable, the Lukan Jesus is unambiguous in his teaching: With the traditional motif of Archelaus in mind, Luke criticises an unjust system, which knows no other way to defend itself, other than by a brutal physical elimination of its critics. If he were to use this brutality in order to drive home his teaching or to confirm the atrocities committed in the world, his teaching would no longer merit

¹¹⁸ Cf. B. Brecht, *Werke*, 1153.

¹¹⁹ B. Brecht, *Die Gedichte*, 507.

¹²⁰ Cf. M. Fricke, *Talente*, 40.

¹²¹ From a similar perspective, Schottroff has denied any identification with God because of the greed of this master, who is more interested in the exploitation and mishandling of his servants. Cf. L. Schottroff, *Gleichnisse*, 13.225.292.

the name “gospel” given to it. More so, Luke would be inflicting harm on the reputation he has acquired as the solicitor of the poor and the oppressed.

By the very slaughtering (*κατασφάζειν*: v.27d)¹²² of his opponents, the king confirms the very doubt his fellow citizens were entertaining about him. He killed because as king he could kill. He killed because he has the “power” to kill. Luke seems to ask indirectly, whether he travelled all the way to a distant land only to receive the power to kill. Read from this perspective, this text belongs invariably to the many texts, whose critical undertone is directed against the mighty and the powerful, who see violence as the best and only defence mechanism.

Lk 19:28 is also very significant in this interpretative and understanding process. The sentence *καὶ εἰπὼν ταῦτα ἐπορεύετο ἔμπροσθεν ἀναβαίνων εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα* has more meaning than is usually given in the traditional interpretation. After giving this parable, Jesus moves on to demonstrate with his entry, suffering and death in Jerusalem something he left unsaid in the parable, where he gave an instance of what a king should not be. Now, however, with his triumphant entry to Jerusalem, he shows them, what a king should be like accompanied by the ovation of the apostles in Lk 19:38, which echoes the hymn of the angels at the birth of Jesus: *εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν ὀνόματι κυρίου· ἐν οὐρανῷ εἰρήνη καὶ δόξα ἐν ὑψίστοις*. Being a king has to do with the readiness to give up ones life for others in order to guarantee this peace and this honour of God.¹²³ In doing this, Jesus shows himself as a contrast to the self understanding of the kings of this world. With this parable and the consequent undaunted movement to Jerusalem as his destination, he illustrates his impending death.

4. Conclusion

With his composition, Luke shows again how and why the theme of dominion is very important or repulsive to him. Borrowing the scenario presented with the historical journey and wickedness of Archelaus, he gives the parable of the talents, as it is called in the gospel of Matthew, a royal touch albeit with a negative undertone. Luke makes Jesus present himself as the quintessential king, who rides to Jerusalem with the message of hope and salvation. He follows rigorously the programme mapped out to curb the excesses of the powerful. The observation is correct: „Die aus dem Sondergut stammende Jesusüberlieferung läßt die Könige nicht in einem guten Licht erscheinen. Die Könige werden aus der Perspektive des Volkes kritisch betrachtet. Antikönigliche Opposition wird in Lk 19,14 ebenso erwähnt wie deren brutale Beseitigung durch den König in Lk 19,27.“¹²⁴

Luke presents the third servant as the good servant, who believes that only by being “lazy” is he in the position not to join the oppressive and criminal act of his master. He chose being called indolent to being a part of the criminal actions of his master. The others acted on instructions but he acted out of conviction. The

¹²² The correct translation of this word is actually “slaughter” or “massacre”, words, which are normally used in relation to animals. It shows however a most brutal art of killing a human being. Cf. Josephus, Ant. 6,120; Bell. 7,362.

¹²³ Cf. M. Fricke, „Jesus... sieht sich in der Tradition der Propheten, deren Schicksal es war, gerade in Jerusalem verfolgt und getötet zu werden...“ Talente, 42.

¹²⁴ L. Bormann, Recht, 114.

message of Jesus in this parable is summarised thus: “Täuscht euch nicht!... Die Königsherrschaft Gottes... tritt anfanghaft in Erscheinung, wenn ihr auf meine Worte hört und sie tut – so wie der dritte Sklave in meiner Geschichte. Auf ihn sollt ihr schauen! Solche Art von Widerstand ist nötig. Solche Verweigerung gegenüber dem etablierten Bereicherungssystem.”¹²⁵

¹²⁵ M. Ebner, Widerstand, 130.

1. Leadership as service: The advice of Jesus within the last supper in Lk 22:24-30

1.1 Greek Text

- 24a Ἐγένετο δὲ καὶ φιλονεικία ἐν αὐτοῖς,
 24b τὸ τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων.
 25a ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς,
 25b Οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν κυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν
 25c καὶ οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες αὐτῶν εὐεργέται καλοῦνται.
 26a ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως
 26b ἀλλ' ὁ μείζων ἐν ὑμῖν γινέσθω ὡς ὁ νεώτερος,
 26c καὶ ὁ ἡγούμενος ὡς ὁ διακονῶν.
 27a τίς γὰρ μείζων, ὁ ἀνακείμενος ἢ ὁ διακονῶν;
 27b οὐχὶ ὁ ἀνακείμενος;
 27c ἐγὼ δὲ ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν εἰμι ὡς ὁ διακονῶν.
 28 ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐστε οἱ διαμεμενηκότες μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς μου·
 29 καὶ γὰρ διατίθεμαι ὑμῖν καθὼς διέθετό μοι ὁ πατήρ μου βασιλείαν
 30a ἵνα ἔσθητε καὶ πίνητε ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης μου ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ μου,
 30b καὶ καθήσεσθε ἐπὶ θρόνων τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς κρίνοντες τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ.

1.2 English Translation

- 24a There arose however a quarrel among them
 b about which of them seems to be the greatest.
 25a But he said to them,
 b The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them,
 c and their men of authority (allow to be) are called benefactors.
 26a But not so with you.
 b Rather, the greatest among you should be the youngest
 c and the person who leads like the one who serves.
 27a For who is greater, the one who reclines (at table) or the one who serves?
 b Isn't it the one who reclines?
 c However, (yet) I am among you as the one who serves.
 28 You are the ones who remained with me in my trials (temptations).
 29 and I confer on you a kingdom just as my father conferred on me,
 30a so that you can eat and drink at my table in my kingdom,
 b and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

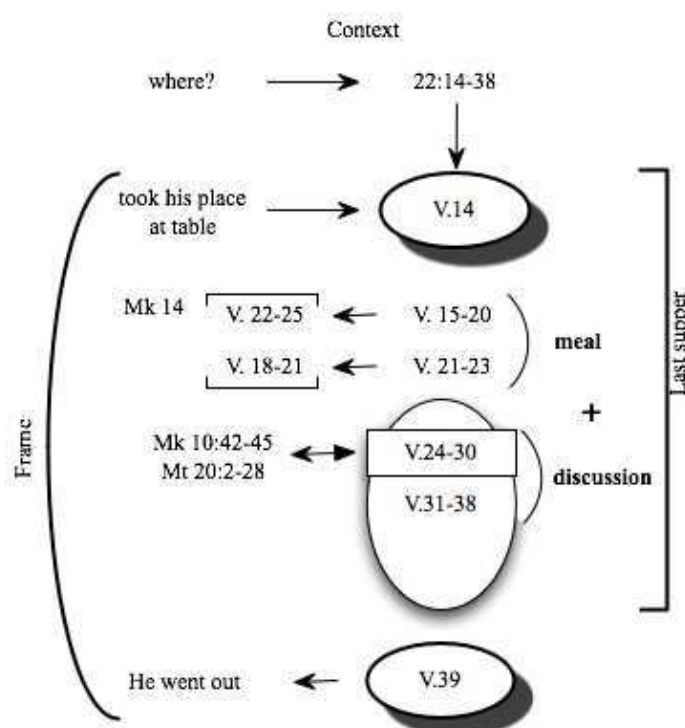
2. Context, language and genre of the text

The pericope of the advice of Jesus to his apostles concerning the *φιλονεικία* among them is sandwiched within the discursive episode of the last supper (Lk 22:14-38) comprising the institution of the Eucharist and the injunction for the future. After the institution of the holy Eucharist (v.14-v.20), and the confusion regarding the betrayer of Jesus (v.21-23), the advice is preceded by the quarrel among the disciples regarding who should be considered the greatest among them.¹ This quarrel (*φιλονεικία*) serves as the background for the teachings of the

¹ Cf. W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium*, 891.

Lukan Jesus on power and leadership. After these pieces of advice however, Jesus rounded up the discussion with the promise of an eternal rule for the apostles as a reward for their faithfulness.²

The ingenuity of Luke is shown in the presentation of this material of the last supper. Within this context, which is announced with ἀνέπεσεν in v.14 and ended with a movement ἐξελθὼν in v.39 suggesting a change of place, Luke not only shows his uniqueness, but also his identity with the other synoptics, especially Mark. The verses 15-23, which speak of the supper, are present in Mk 14:18-25.³ In Lk 22:24-38 on the other hand, one finds a discussion, which is missing in Mark and Matthew. It is noticeable that a part of the section missing in Mark and Matthew (v.24-30) is present in Mk 10:42-45 and Mt 20:25-28. This can be shown graphically:



A part of Luke's ingenuity is his ability of introducing a farewell speech as a literary genre within the last supper. Although there could be reasons to speak about a banquet discourse or symposium as the literary genre of the text,⁴ it is more plausible and convincing to locate the text within the genre of farewell or testamentary speeches,⁵ without fully neglecting the influence of symposium

² Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 1062.

³ The Lukan version of the institution of the Eucharist is different from the version of Mark. According to Luke, Jesus distributed the wine before the bread only to come back to the wine again, while Mark had Jesus distribute the bread before the wine.

⁴ It has already been noted that table language and motifs are numerous in the whole presentation of Jesus' advice to his disciples. In the symposium or banquet discourse, a meal is taken as an opportunity to convey a vast sum of wisdom for the hearers. This wisdom is transmitted from the words and thoughts of a chief guest. In the literary world, the symposia of Plato and Xenophon still occupy an unparalleled position in this literary genre that they are still quoted.

⁵ Cf. W.S. Kurz, Farewell, 251. Also P.K. Nelson, Leadership, 107-116.

genre.⁶ A reason for seeing this text as not belonging to the symposium genre is the absence of its typical elements, which include a structured dialogue involving a main speaker, who is as well the hero of the literary scene having the wisest things to say, other opponents, comics, intruder (*ἀκλητός*), drunks and lovers. The themes discussed vary according to interests.⁷ Plato and Xenophon however, favoured philosophical themes.

With his formal Hellenistic education,⁸ Luke could imitate a genre that would eventually serve the purpose of transmitting his theology. Such genres abound in biblical tradition.⁹ The elements involved in such genres are the revelation of the speaker's impending death, final instructions and installation of his successor, a speech concerning his life and general warnings for the future. In this farewell speech, an opportunity is given for the correction of false opinions and assumptions. In Greco-Roman literature, the speakers of farewell addresses preoccupy themselves in these farewell speeches with existential questions of death, life after death and noble deaths. As such, they differ from biblical farewell speeches inasmuch as they lack the biblical emphasis on the plan and mercy of God emanating from the theological interpretations of history.¹⁰

A proper look at the presentation of Lk 22:14-38 reveals the following elements¹¹: Jesus' reference to his impending death (vv.15-16),¹² his instruction that the Eucharistic bread and wine should be re-enacted in his memory (v.19),¹³ the prediction of his betrayal (v.21), the reaction of the disciples and the quarrel over position and dignity (vv.23-24), which formed the background for Jesus' teaching,

⁶ Luke might have known the implication of placing this advice within a table gathering. The situation of a table setting is not forgotten in Lk 22. It leads ultimately into the Eucharist, and may be with the model of the banquet discourse between Socrates and his followers serving as background. Cf. J. Ernst, Lukas, 589. It is therefore possible that Luke must have intended a combination of the two genres. Kurz argues: "Greco-Roman symposium discussions probably also influenced Luke 22:14-38." Cf. Kurz, Farewell, 253. Berger sees in this text a combination of elements belonging to the two genres. Cf. K. Berger, Formgeschichte, 79. The position of the invited guests plays a very important role in the Symposium. From this background, it could even be argued that the *φιλονεικία* of the apostles had to do with the positions, which the apostles take during the meal.

⁷ Plutarch shows a series of discussion themes, which are not related. At times, he is interested on the question whether the invited guests should take their seats, or should be seated by the host (cf. Table Talk 1.615c), and another time it is the question of who is the god of the Jews (cf. 4.671c) and whether wrestling is the oldest sport (cf. 2.638a).

⁸ The presentation of the farewell address of Socrates in the *Phaedo* could serve as an example of this literary genre. Although a dialogue concentrating on the immortality of the soul, it highlighted the impending death of Socrates, the care of those he will leave behind, regulation of discipleship, consolation for his followers and a type of philosophical testament.

⁹ The Deuteronomy could be seen as a farewell speech of Moses. In Tob 14:3-11, an example of such a genre is presented. The testaments of the twelve patriarchs fall within this category.

¹⁰ Despite the spirited effort to structuralise the elements of the farewell discourse, it must be noted that only few follow this pattern in all respect. This genre is so flexible as to accommodate Paul's speech to the elders in the church of Ephesus (Acts 20:18-35) as the best example of this genre, notwithstanding the absence of the death of Paul. Cf. H.-J. Michel, Abschiedsrede, 71.

¹¹ Similar order and elements could be found in 1 Macc 2:49-70.

¹² Cf. Plato, *Phaedo*, 61b; 63d. However, a careful analysis is required here. In Luke, we do not have a typical example of the farewell of a dying man, since Jesus reappears after his resurrection to instruct his apostles once again in chapter 24 and in Acts 1:1f. Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 792.

¹³ Cf. Plutarch, Ot. 15-17.

the transfer of authority to the twelve (vv.29-30),¹⁴ the commissioning of Peter for the special task of strengthening his brothers (vv.31-32)¹⁵ and the exhortation of Jesus to readiness for the impending crisis (vv.36-37).¹⁶

2.1 *The structure of the pericope*

A first major section introduces the pericope with the *φιλονεικία* of the apostles concerning the greatest, *ὁ μείζων*, among them and prepares for the speech of Jesus. The second has two subunits bound by the expression *ἐγὼ δὲ... εἶμι* and *ὕμεῖς δὲ ἐστε*. The two major subunits are structured in such a way that there is a statement of fact followed by an exhortation or a promise. The direct speech of Jesus begins with verse 25b, which forms an opposing unit with v.26 because of the injunction of v.26a *ὕμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως*, where the *βασιλεῖς* and the *ἐξουσιάζοντες* are differentiated from the *νεώτερος* and the *διακονῶν* that are in a chiasmic relation to *ὁ ἡγούμενος* and *ὁ μείζων*.¹⁷ The rhetorical question of Jesus emphasizes his injunction. The second part of the direct speech begins with a statement of fact: *ὕμεῖς δὲ ἐστε οἱ διαμεμενηκότες μετ' ἐμοῦ ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς μου*. It is followed by a promise. The word *μείζων* (vv 24b,26b and 27a) not only holds the first subunit of the second section together, it binds the first and the second sections. The *oppositio* between the two statements of fact is clear: the first statement of fact deals with "them" (*οἱ βασιλεῖς...καὶ οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες*) while the second deals with "you" (*ὕμεῖς... ἐστε*). The predicates of the subjects of the different statements of fact are semantically different: those in power lord it over others, while the apostles are steadfast in the temptations of Jesus. The reader is presented with two semantic fields of power and of suffering, which will help him to see both subjects as opposing poles.

1. *Introduction: V.24a-25a*

- a. v.24a-24b: Narrative introduction with *φιλονεικία*
- b. v.25a: Introduction of speech

2. *Direct speech of Jesus: V.25b-30*

A. *Exhortation*

- a. v.25b-25c: Statement of fact
- b. v.26a-26c: Exhortation
- c. v.27a-27b: Rhetoric question

B. *Promise*

- a. v.28: Statement of fact
- b. v.29-30: Promise

A clear observation notices that the words of Jesus begin with a parenetic comparison (vv 25-26). In this manner, Luke shows his acquaintance with ancient literatures and arts, in as much as this genre was very popular in the ancient times. To the elements of this genre belongs a sentence made up of two parts. The first

¹⁴ Cf. Josephus, Ant. 12.6.3, where Mattathias appoints his successor.

¹⁵ Cf. Plutarch, Alexander, 73, 76.

¹⁶ Cf. Tacitus, Annals 15:62-63. For more on this, see W. Kurz, Farewell, 257f.

¹⁷ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 1065.

part is indicative and describes the character or convention of a particular group of people (*βασιλεῖς* and *ἐξουσιάζοντες*). The second part normally begins with *σὺ δέ* or *ὑμεῖς δέ* and embodies the imperative part of the genre admonishing the hearer to behave in a different manner (*ἄλλα*) from the first group. The difference is heightened with the adversative *δέ* and the *οὐχ οὕτως*. With this singular means, the comparative relation of the first and the second part, showing that they are antithetical, is evident.¹⁸ This genre is not only evidenced in Philo but also in some books of the New Testament.¹⁹

A link between the two subunits of the second section, which appear to be very significant, is seen in the language and concepts, which exemplify the text: Words of power and of political inconsequence and languages of table fellowship. There are words dealing with power and authority. These authority markers run through these subunits: *οἱ βασιλεῖς* (v.25b), *κυριεύουσιν* (v.25b), *οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες* (v.25c), *εὐεργέται* (v.25c), *ὁ ἡγούμενος* (v.26c), *ἀνακείμενος* (v.27b and c) *διατίθεμαι* (v.29), *βασιλεία* (v.30a), *καθῆσθε ἐπὶ θρόνων* (v.30b) and *κρίνοντες* (v.30b). There are also words serving as subservience markers²⁰ denoting entities on the lower cadre of political consequence: *τῶν ἐθνῶν* (v.25b), *ὁ νεώτερος* (v.26b), *ὁ διακονῶν* (vv.26c, 27a, c) and *τὰς δώδεκα φυλάς... τοῦ Ἰσραήλ* (v.30b).

Another unifying aspect of these subunits is the series of vocabularies derived from the table conventions and customs of the ancient near East: *ὁ ἀνακείμενος* (v.27a, b), *ὁ διακονῶν* (vv.26c, 27a, c), *ἔσθητε* (v.30a), *πίνητε* (v.30a) and *ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης* (v.30a). However, these words, with the exception of *ὁ διακονῶν*, occur between v.27-30. These imageries of table fellowship and power-languages suffice to consider the two sections, 22:24-27 and 22:28-30, as belonging to a unit.²¹

¹⁸ Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 711.

¹⁹ Philo, *Ouis Her.* 105: "Many have become careless in respect of such sacred deposits, ... *σὺ δέ* ... endeavour ... to present what you have received without injury..." Matt 23:6-8: The scribes and the pharisees "... love the first place during meals... and to be called Rabbi by the people, *ὑμεῖς δέ* should not be called Rabbi,..." For more examples, cf. 1Tim 6:10f. and 2Tim 3:13f.

²⁰ Marshall speaks of the call to menial service. Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 813.

²¹ Exegetes have contributed to the liveliness of this discussion concerning the unity of Lk 22:24-30 as a text. Marshall sees the mention of the thrones as the disruption of the unity of the subsections since it is in a sharp contrast to the previous section. He however maintained that the text 22:24-30 is "tightly connected". Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 814. From the perspective of the tradition history, Schürmann argued that Lk 22:24-27 and Lk 22:28-30 are separate units without any unitary character. Cf. H. Schürmann, *Abschiedsrede*, 36-90. Evans argued against the unity of the two sections with the observation that the two sayings are simply linked with "and". The probable connexion of Lk 22:28-30 would be with Lk 22:15-20, where the institution of the Eucharist is presented. Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 798. Seeing the whole discussion as being of minor importance, J. Fitzmyer however observes that the use of "you" in v.27c and 28 cements the character of the text as a literary unit. Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1412. That the unifying aspect of the subsections is the common reference to the death of Jesus is the conviction of Tannehill. Cf. R.C. Tannehill, *Theology*, 200-203. Lull's contribution to the solution of the problem, although interesting, runs contrary to the aim of the dissertation. Lull is of the opinion that the section Lk 22:24-30 is bound together with a development of a positive concept of greatness: Jesus presents the kings of the nations and the benefactors as positive examples of greatness, and indirectly rebukes the apostles for not being so. Cf. D.J. Lull, *Servant-Benefactor*, 296f. Nelson argues for the unity of the sections based on language, structure, form and progression of thought. Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Character*, 609-619.

3. *Synoptic comparison between Luke and Mark*

There is a melange of traditions in our Lukan text inasmuch as Luke 22:24-27 has a parallel in Mk 10:42-45 and Lk 22:28-30 a parallel in Matt 19:28. Working from the background that there is dependence between the Lukan and the Markan texts, the differences and the similarities will be shown.

Lk 22:24-27

Ἐγένετο δὲ καὶ φιλονεικία ἐν αὐτοῖς, τὸ τίς αὐτῶν δοκεῖ εἶναι μείζων.

ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς,

Οἱ βασιλεῖς τῶν ἐθνῶν κυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες αὐτῶν εὐεργέται καλοῦνται.

ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως, ἀλλ'

ὁ μείζων ἐν ὑμῖν γινέσθω ὡς ὁ νεώτερος, καὶ

ὁ ἡγούμενος ὡς ὁ διακονῶν. τίς γὰρ μείζων, ὁ ἀνακείμενος ἢ ὁ διακονῶν; οὐχὶ ὁ ἀνακείμενος; ἐγὼ δὲ

ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν εἰμι

ὡς ὁ διακονῶν.

Mk 10:42-45

καὶ προσκαλεσάμενος αὐτούς ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς, Οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν τῶν ἐθνῶν κατακυριεύουσιν αὐτῶν καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι αὐτῶν

κατεξουσιάζουσιν αὐτῶν. οὐχ οὕτως δὲ ἐστὶν ἐν ὑμῖν· ἀλλ'

ὅς ἂν θέλη μέγας γενέσθαι ἐν ὑμῖν, ἔσται ὑμῶν διάκονος, καὶ ὅς ἂν θέλη ἐν ὑμῖν εἶναι πρῶτος, ἔσται πάντων δοῦλος·

καὶ γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου

οὐκ ἤλθεν διακονηθῆναι ἀλλὰ διακονῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.

3.1 *Differences in points of departure*

The presentation of Luke is situated within the beginning of the passion presentation of the Gospel of Luke,²² i.e. within the preparation for and the last

²² The passion presentation of Luke is almost identical with the passion presentation of Mark. The presentation of Luke (Lk 22:1-23:56) started with the commission of Jesus to the apostles to prepare for the Passover meal. In the parallel story in Mark and Matthew, the apostles were the ones who asked their master about the preparation for the Passover feast. They initiated the move. The anointing of Jesus through a woman with the symbolic and prophetic implications attached to it in the Markan presentation (Mk 14:3-9) is completely missing in Luke. J.

supper. Owing to the apparent similarity in the progression of the passion story in both Luke and Mark, the section in question (Lk 22:24) seems to be a redactional invention of Luke to have a discourse, which lacks any parallel in the other synoptic accounts of the last supper.²³

The discussion on the betrayal of Jesus and the fate of the betrayer precedes the *φιλονεικία* of the apostles concerning their worth and pre-eminence. The sequence or the logical connection between the two is not evident, as there is no signal that the person, who is to betray Jesus, would do that out of his ambition to be great or pre-eminent.²⁴ The passage of Mark with the words “servant”, “slave” and “to be served” is not explicit in its reference to dining.²⁵ In Mark, the advice of Jesus to the apostles beginning with the comparison with Gentile rulers has a sequential background. The background is the request of the sons of Zebedee in Mk 10:35-37,²⁶ that each of them should sit at one side of Jesus in his coming kingdom. The sitting on the right and on the left of Jesus is a measure of greatness, but these greatness and pre-eminence deal with the eschatological future.²⁷ Before this general instruction of Jesus in the gospel of Mark, a direct discussion with the two sons of Zebedee is presented, in which Jesus asks them about their readiness to suffer.²⁸ This is missing in Luke, since there is a collocation making the context to be of a different type.²⁹

3.2 *Text immanent comparison*

A first look at the synoptic table presented above will immediately reveal that the frame verses (Lk 22:24 and 27) of the Lukan presentation of this instruction have

Fitzmyer has presented the information about the passion story of Luke, its similarities and differences to the other synoptic presentations. Cf. J. Fitzmyer, Luke II, 1359-1368.

²³ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, Luke II, 1412.

²⁴ J. Green argues that there exists a thematic relationship between the betrayal question and the question of pre-eminence as the betrayal question ends with τὸ τίς, while the question of pre-eminence begins with τὸ τίς. If the prophecy of Jesus about a betrayer in his company was a cause for alarm, so too is the betrayal of the understanding of the kingdom of Jesus as exhibited by the other apostles. Cf. J.B. Green, Luke, 766. Further, this sequence mirrors Lk 9:43b-45, 46-48. Fitzmyer explains the sequence thus: The revelation that one of the apostles was the betrayer of Jesus means that there could be differences among the chosen twelve. If it is so, who then seems to be the greatest and the best? Cf. J. Fitzmyer, Luke II, 1414f.

²⁵ Cf. J.N. Collins, *Diakonia*, 46f.

²⁶ Cf. Matt 20:20-21. Here the mother of the two sons of Zebedee makes the request.

²⁷ Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 795.

²⁸ Cf. Mk 10:38-40. After the question of their readiness to drink of his cup and be baptised with his baptism, he affirmed the answer of the two brothers, however with the observation that it is not his to grant positions in the kingdom. After this discussion with the brothers, he turned his attention to his disciples. Cf. J. Roloff, *Anfänge*, 51

²⁹ As an appendage to the topic, some exegetes observe the tendency of Luke to portray the apostles in a seemingly positive manner, which might explain Luke's intention of purposely avoiding the mention of James and John. For more on this cf. A. Schulz, *Nachfolge*, 252. In support, S. Brown maintains that Luke is fond of a positive presentation of the disciples. Cf. S. Brown, *Apostasy*, 66-74. It is not my intention to discredit this finding. However, one is inclined to ask why Luke presented such a negative picture of the disciples in such a precarious moment. Having followed Jesus until his passion, one expects a certain degree of acquaintance with the teachings and life style of their master. That this is not the case is not a credit for the apostles. Cf. R. Tannehill, *Unity*, 262f.

no parallel in the Markan presentation,³⁰ while Lk 22:25-26 has a close literal relationship with Mk 10:42-44.³¹

3.2.1 *The preoccupation of the disciples*

Luke substitutes the Markan *οἱ δοκοῦντες*³² ἄρχειν with *οἱ βασιλεῖς* (the kings) to refer to political rulers, at the same time refusing to use the Markan *οἱ μεγάλοι*,³³ which he replaced with *οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες*, a substantive derived from the verb ἐξουσιάζω. A subtle difference exists in the verb uses of the different accounts. Luke adopts the simple form *κυριεύουσιν*, while Mark shows a liking for the compound form, *κατακυριεύουσιν*,³⁴ which has the negative implication of subduing, humiliating and tyrannising someone.³⁵ The use of ἐξουσιάζω also exhibits the same phenomenon. Luke removed the sting that Mark attached to it.³⁶ Mark extended it in its compound form *κατεξουσιάζω*,³⁷ while Luke uses the simple form in its present participle, however as a substantive. This could imply that the Markan description has a negative undertone,³⁸ while the statement of Luke comprises of a neutral³⁹ description of a phenomenon.⁴⁰ Luke introduced the action of those in authority

³⁰ I do not intend to disagree that both endings of the different presentations have a Christological conclusion. Cf. M.L. Soards, *Passion*, 5. Notwithstanding the Christological conclusion, a synoptic comparison worth the name reveals immediately that Lk 22:27 is unparalleled.

³¹ Cf. V. Taylor, *Passion*, 62f.

³² The formulation *οἱ δοκοῦντες* is derived from the verb *δοκέω*. It is probable that the use of the word here in Mark must have influenced the Lukan usage in 22:24b. At least a use of a common tradition is suggested, although the Markan usage appears to be more unfavourable towards the political rulers. Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 144.

³³ Luke uses *μέγας* frequently. It appeared twenty five times in his Gospel and thirty two times in the Acts of the Apostles. Cf. Moulton – Geden, *Concordance*. 620f. However, it was used only eight times in relation to persons. Mark uses *οἱ μεγάλοι* here to refer to rulers. Cf. C.S. Mann, *Mark*, 414.

³⁴ It is surprising to see that Luke does not use the compound verb here, although he has an unparalleled liking for compound verbs. Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 795.

³⁵ Cf. W. Bauer, *Wörterbuch*. 838.

³⁶ Cf. P. Walaskay, *Rome*, 36.

³⁷ The use of the word here suggests an aspect of tyranny. Cf. W. Bauer-Aland, *Wörterbuch*. 857. Notwithstanding the absence of this word in the LXX and in the works of Philo and Josephus, there is the tendency to see this word as implying the possibility of compulsion and oppression, which is immanent in all earthly power. Cf. Foerster, *κατεξουσιάζω*, 572.

³⁸ Cf. W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium*, 891.

³⁹ A well debated topic regarding the compositional intention of the Lukan writings surfaces here. It is argued that Luke gave a neutral portrayal of the political elites owing to the apologetic nature of his writing. However, Luke's interest is directed against the lust for power. It therefore requires a correction of this theme of Apologetic. J. Ernst makes a wonderful observation, that the neutral description of the political elites of the time in this particular pericope might have arisen from the context. It could be explained with the observation that Luke is comparing the world leaders with the Christian hierarchy, which compels him to be mild in his presentation. Cf. J. Ernst, *Lukas*. 454. From this perspective, Walaskay's opinion becomes unacceptable, that the changes are "... the conscious attempt of Luke to show the empire in a favourable light." Cf. P. Walaskay, *Rome*. 85.

⁴⁰ Evans made a distinction between the two uses among the evangelists: It could be that the Markan usage works from the perspective of a greater level of tyranny, while the Lukan usage, though being descriptive, is suggestive of a mentality not worthy of the Christian community. Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 795f. The observation of Marshall, that these verbs in Luke belong to the actions to be avoided by the Christian hierarchy in the Epistles (e.g. 2 Cor 1:24; 1 Pet 5:3), is very important. Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 812. To convictions resembling that of Evans, which suggest that these compound verbs underscores the negative portrayal of the political elites,

(οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες) with a verb form *καλοῦνται*,⁴¹ a passive and middle form of the verb *καλέω* in connection with *εὐεργέται*, which is missing in Mark. The injunction of Jesus, which followed his presentation of the Pagan mode of ruling, is documented differently in Luke and Mark. In chapter 22:26, Luke writes *ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως*, while Mark recorded *οὐχ οὕτως δὲ ἐστὶν ἐν ὑμῖν* in v.43. However, from the text immanent relationship, one is able to see that the *status quo* of the pagan kings is contrasted to the should-be among the disciples. The sentence in Luke is prohibitive/prescriptive,⁴² while the Markan presentation is descriptive.⁴³ Luke differs from Mark in this presentation: The conditional sentence of Mark *ὅς ἂν θέλῃ... γενέσθαι* is missing in Luke.⁴⁴ Luke uses the substantivised comparative *μείζων*, which has a superlative sense⁴⁵ and which corresponds to the Lukan compositional intention,⁴⁶ while Mark uses the positive *μέγας* to refer to having a chief position,⁴⁷ or to political rulers.⁴⁸ With his *γινέσθω*, Luke is very economical in his use of verbs and creates a literary situation, which enables him to hinge his sentence on this one verb, while Mark, notwithstanding his aorist infinitive *γενέσθαι*, uses not only *ἔσται*, but also *εἶναι*. The changes Luke undertook are clearly noted. The greatest *ὁ μείζων* is the antithesis of *ὁ νεώτερος*,⁴⁹ while in Mark the antithesis of *μέγας* is the *διάκονος*. Consequently, the *διάκονος* of Mark is now the *ὁ νεώτερος* of Luke.⁵⁰ Owing to the social inaptness existing between the

Clark counters that neither *κυριεύω* nor *κατακυριεύω* is essentially evil or negative. Cf. K. W. Clark, *Meaning*, 207-212.

⁴¹ A reflexive – passive form of *καλέω* appears thirty three times in the works of Luke (nineteen times in the Gospel and fourteen times in the Acts). However, the sense intended in the meaning of these uses attests to a passive meaning and not to a reflexive meaning. E.g. Lk 1:60; 6:15; 19:2; 22:3; Acts 1:23; 13:1; 15:22, 37.

⁴² Lull counters the prohibitive nature of Lk 22:26a and maintains that it is descriptive. Cf. D. Lull, *Servant-Benefactor*, 296. Fitzmyer supports the prohibitive nature of the injunction. Cf. Luke II, 1417, as well as J. Green, *Luke*, 768. Also P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 135.

⁴³ It is important to note a further difference between the two presentations. The Lukan presentation *ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως*, with the nominative personal pronoun placed at the beginning of the injunction, aids the reader to see the intended comparison between the apostles and the subjects of the immediate former sentence. Luke compares the apostles with the rulers of the pagan world, while Mark juxtaposes the situation of the world to the situation of the apostles among themselves.

⁴⁴ It can be argued that with the omission of this conditional statement, Luke shows that he is interested in actual and not in potential greatness. Cf. E. Percy, *Botschaft*, 244. Cf. also, W. Wiefel, *Lukas*, 370.

⁴⁵ Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 796.

⁴⁶ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1417.

⁴⁷ Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 796.

⁴⁸ Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 127.

⁴⁹ This substantivised comparative is used here in a superlative sense like *ὁ μείζων*. Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 796. This term has already been used by Luke in Lk 15:12,13 and will be used again in Acts 5:6. In the New Testament, this word is also found in 1 Tim 5:1f., 11,14; Tit 2:6 and 1 Pet 5:5. The use of this word has given rise to the discussion whether *νεώτεροι* classifies a special office in the stratified early Christian communities. The use of this word can only be appreciated from the historical background presented by the Greco-Roman world, where age is a very important determinant of status and pre-eminence. Here, “the youngest” would ultimately refer to one having no status that would require respect, pre-eminence or recognition. Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke III*, 1065. For more on the social and political status or meaning of the young in the Greco-Roman world, cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 36-39. This topic will be treated later on.

⁵⁰ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1417.

Markan contrast of *πρῶτος* and *δοῦλος*,⁵¹ Luke substituted with *ὁ ἡγούμενος* and *ὁ διακονῶν*,⁵² both in present participle, whereby the use of *ἡγούμενος* as a lexeme to typify people in high and leading positions is attested not only in New Testament writings but also in classical Greek writings.⁵³

The double question form of Lk 22:27a and b is missing in Mark. Instead of the Markan *ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου*, Luke writes *ἐγὼ δὲ*. The fact that the *ὁ διακονῶν* of Luke and the Markan *διακονηθῆναι* and *διακονῆσαι* have the same root in the infinitive *διακονεῖν* suggests a literary relationship. The Lukan Jesus remains within the language and the metaphor of the table service, while the Markan Jesus presents a soteriological aspect of his mission and immanence with the disciples. The retrospective *ἤλθεν* of Mark, which serves as a summary of the life of Jesus contrasts the present *ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν εἰμι* of Luke,⁵⁴ which depicts a present and concrete situation. It is therefore argued that the tradition, which Mark used, is younger than that of Luke,⁵⁵ since the final structure of Mark betrays an affinity to the idea of the suffering servant of God already inherent in other Markan positions in Mk 8:31; 9:31 and 10:33.

3.3 *The theological yield of the synoptic comparison*

It is clear that Luke knew of the version of Mark, which is given in a very different context. He borrowed the discussion, however with a collocation, namely within the last supper. He uses *οἱ βασιλεῖς* instead of the Markan *οἱ δοκοῦντες ἄρχειν*. Instead of *οἱ μεγάλοι* he uses *οἱ ἐξουσιάζοντες*. He rejected the Markan tendency for compound verbs thus using *κυριεύουσιν* instead of *κατακυριεύουσιν* and *ἐξουσιάζω* instead of *κατεξουσιάζουσιν*. Luke introduced the word *εὐεργέται*, which is not in the Markan version. Instead of the Markan comparison *μέγας* and *διάκονος*, Luke compares *ὁ μείζων* and *ὁ νεώτερος*. He differentiates between *ὁ ἡγούμενος* and *ὁ διακονῶν* while Mark differentiates between *πρῶτος* and *δοῦλος*. The double question of Luke has no parallel in the Markan account. The soteriology of the Markan version at the end contrasts the actuality of the Lukan *ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν*.

4. *Tradition and History*

4.1 *Φιλονεικία*

The use of *φιλονεικία* in the New Testament is only attested in the Gospel of Luke.⁵⁶ It is a highly literary word used to refer primarily to “emulation”,⁵⁷ but

⁵¹ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, Luke II, 1417.

⁵² Luke makes the reader understand that his use of the word *ὁ διακονῶν* in the present context differs from the use of *διάκονος*, which is a verbal substantive. The meaning of the word *διακονέω* in the New Testament has a very wide spectrum. If Luke had used the word *διάκονος*, it would have been a titular expression of a status. The use of the present participle *ὁ διακονῶν* (the one serving or the serving one) suggests however, that Luke is probably thinking of a mere function, which one is doing under commission. Cf. A. Hentschel, *Diakonia*, 285f.

⁵³ Cf. W. Bauer-Aland, *Wörterbuch*, 696. Also cf. Lucian, *Alex.* 44. 57.

⁵⁴ Cf. J. Roloff, *Anfänge*, 57. It is also argued that the tradition, which Mark used is younger than the tradition of Luke, since the final structure of Mark betrays an affinity to the idea of the suffering servant of God already inherent in other Markan positions. Cf. Mk 8:31; 9:31 and 10:33.

⁵⁵ Cf. R. Bultmann, *Geschichte*, 154. See also H. Schürmann, *Abschiedsrede*, 79-92.

⁵⁶ Cf. Moulton – Geden, *Concordance*, 991. It is a *hapax legomenon* seen in Lk 22:24.

can also mean quarrel or the love for quarrel.⁵⁸ The developmental history of the adjective *φιλόνηκος* attests to the fact that the word could be positively used in the sense of “zealous”.⁵⁹ However, a consideration of the use of the word in the LXX and in the works of Philo⁶⁰ and Josephus,⁶¹ and the context in which it is used in the Lukan pericope suggests a negative use.⁶² Its use in this context suggests a quarrel about capacities and positions as determinants of pre-eminence.

4.2. *Εὐεργέτης*

Within the system of patronage and clientism,⁶³ based on rights and responsibilities and exemplified by the strong element of inequality,⁶⁴ *εὐεργέτης* became one of the common titulations of honour given to the patrons by their clients.⁶⁵ Accepting an act of benefaction from the patron shows the subordinate status of the recipient with the promise of loyalty and *salutatio*⁶⁶ to the superior benefactor. The benefactor helps with surety, influence, advice, healthy teaching⁶⁷ and a considerable help in the acquisition of a political office.⁶⁸ Aristotle recognises the importance of this system in the social dynamics of ancient societies:

“Honour (*τιμὴ*) is a token of reputation for doing good; and those who have already done good are justly and above all honoured... Doing good (*εὐεργεσία*) relates either to personal security (*σωτηρία*) or the preservation of life or wealth, or any of those other good things that are not so easily acquired, either now at this precise moment or in the past... The honours consist in sacrifices, monuments in verse and in

⁵⁷ Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 795.

⁵⁸ Cf. W. Bauer, Wörterbuch, 1716.

⁵⁹ Liddell and Scott have shown the ambiguity in the use of the word. Its ambiguity arises from the fact that it can be used either positively in the sense of competition, emulation and eagerness, or of course negatively in the sense of rivalry and contentiousness. Borrowed from Nelson, Leadership, 132.

⁶⁰ Cf. Philo, Leg. 218. An assessment of the person of Caligula that was given by Petronius, in which Caligula was portrayed as young and optimistic in the execution of his wills, even if it involved quarrel/contentiousness (*φιλονεικίας*).

⁶¹ Cf. Josephus, Ant. 7, 182. In the Antiquities, a typical reception of the story of David and Absalom is given. An old woman clad in a mourner’s garb visits David with the information that her two sons were involved in a quarrel (*φιλονεικίαν*). As no one appeared, who could have stopped the quarrel, the stronger one killed the other. The use of the word in the works of Philo and Josephus, notwithstanding the few positive undertones, has nothing positive about it.

⁶² The occurrences of the word in the LXX have negative undertones. Cf. Ezek 3:7; Prov 10:12 and 2 Macc 4:4.

⁶³ For a thorough treatment of this aspect of the Greco-Roman world in the composition of the Lukan gospel, see the works of H. Moxnes, who applies the methods of the social sciences in the explication of the Gospel, especially “Patron-Client Relations and the new Community in Luke-Acts” in: Luke-Acts, 241-268. Cf. also H. Moxnes, Economy. The patron (*patronus*) saw it as his duty to protect and provide for his dependent client (*cliens*), while the client understood his responsibility as lying in serving the reputation of his patron. Cf. H. Moxnes, Patron-Client, 242.

⁶⁴ Cf. P. Saller, Patronage, 8.

⁶⁵ Cf. F.W. Danker, Benefactor. This book is replete with instances of such honours rendered by the clients to their patrons.

⁶⁶ Cf. T. Schmeller, Hierarchie, 23.

⁶⁷ Cf. Seneca, De Beneficiis I 2,4.

⁶⁸ Cf. Seneca, De Beneficiis I 5,1.

prose, an honorary public office, first seats, tombs, statues, public banquets, a piece of land...⁶⁹

The word *εὐεργέτης* is translated with “benefactor”, which does not specifically render any Greek expression, but a general term for the expression of exceptional beneficent service or action.⁷⁰ Danker captures the social and cultural importance of this institution.⁷¹

*Εὐεργέτης*⁷² was a title of honour in the cultural milieu of the Greco-Roman world. The high appreciation and awareness of honour and shame⁷³ in ancient societies contributed to the proficiency and awe attached to it. This title however, has a manifold dimension, because many people were entitled to it: gods and emperors, heroes and political leaders, lawyers and doctors, philosophers and inventors owing to their contribution to the social welfare. It offered a cultural situation similar to that of the emperor, praised as the benefactor par excellence in the Roman Empire.⁷⁴ Although it was existent in Egyptian (Ptolemy III and Ptolemy VII) and Syrian (Antiochus VII) culture,⁷⁵ it was very frequent in classical and Hellenistic literature and culture,⁷⁶ that it came to be associated with the civilised outlook and image of Hellenism.⁷⁷ The motive behind conferring this title to individuals was their beneficence to the welfare of a social group, especially through the medium of certain professions.⁷⁸ This benefaction had many avenues: the erection of public buildings like theatres, basilicas and temples, and sometimes the financing of public feasts and sacrifices. Distribution of food in times of famine was also a form of this beneficence.

With the *pax romana*, this social institution had a religio-political effect in the Hellenistic and Roman civilisation.⁷⁹ The use of this title for gods and emperors assumed an affinity to the imperial cult,⁸⁰ inasmuch as the ruler was held to be more than a ruler, a saviour.⁸¹ That explains why this title is at times paired with

⁶⁹ Aristotle, Rhetoric 1.5.9.

⁷⁰ Cf. F.W. Danker, Jesus, 348.

⁷¹ F.W. Danker, Benefactor, 26: “A dominant feature of the Greco-Roman culture in its various phases is the association of unusual merit, as manifested by esteemed members of narrower and broader community, with the response made by the beneficiaries of such merit.”

⁷² The use of this word here is highly redactional and should be sought in the initiative of Luke. Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 796. This word is a *hapax legomenon* of the New Testament. Its verb occurs only in Acts 10:38. A cognate noun *εὐεργεσία* used to depict “service” occurs only in Acts 4:9 and 1Tim 6:2.

⁷³ B.J. Malina/J.H. Neyrey, Honour, 26.

⁷⁴ Cf. H. Moxnes, Patron-Client, 249.

⁷⁵ Cf. F.W. Danker, Jesus, 348.

⁷⁶ Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 796.

⁷⁷ Cf. G. Bertram, *ἔργον κτλ.*, 652.

⁷⁸ An inscription from Cos around CE 53 shows the manifold use of this title. Gaius Stertinus was the doctor of Claudius. Due to the helps rendered to the people of Cos, he was given the title of *εὐεργέτης*. Cf. A. Deissmann, Light, 248. The city of Iasos conferred on the physician Philistos the title of *εὐεργέτης* as can be seen in an inscription recovered in an excavation of the sanctuary of Asklepios. Cf. F.W. Danker, Benefactor, 57.

⁷⁹ Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 796.

⁸⁰ Charlesworth speaks of “the cult of benefactors”. Cf. M.P. Charlesworth, Observations, 5. This could not be dismissed lightly, since *εὐεργέτης* was also the characteristic term particularly used for someone, who endowed a temple and a cult to the emperor. Cf. A. Brent, Luke-Acts, 435. However, it would amount to exaggeration were one to conclude that all that were honoured with this title also enjoyed the religious privileges involved in the imperial cult.

⁸¹ Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 796.

other titles of praise like *σωτήρ*.⁸² The Augustan renaissance, which sees the emperor as the godly source of salvation for humanity, cemented this development, which began with the Greek civilisation of the polis.⁸³ However, the title of *εὐεργέτης* has a negative aspect of concealing tyranny under extravagant expenditure for the benefit of a social group. These philanthropy and benefaction were not always an expression of public feeling and spirit, but part of a premeditated competition⁸⁴ for public offices and honour that is far from being altruistic.

Dio Chrysostom saw this title from the perspective of the gods, who are the models of ideal monarchs. In his first *Oratio*, Dio exemplifies Zeus⁸⁵ and Heracles for their provision of benefactions for men: Heracles wanted to be a ruler “not through desire for pleasure and personal gain, which leads men to love power, but that he might be able to do the greatest good to the greatest number”.⁸⁶ Convinced of the social rank of the title given to the emperors and rulers, Dio argued through Alexander that the actions of a monarch must show a character that “above all... takes delight in bestowing benefits (*εὐεργεσιαις*)- a trait which approaches most nearly to the divine nature”.⁸⁷ One with the title of *εὐεργέτης* must behave like the gods. Although there were clear and strong expectations as to how a patron ought to behave,⁸⁸ as is evident from the writings of Dio, some with this title never met the demands.

In the light of this information, one begins to appreciate the Lukan criticism of this social institution. The system, considered in isolation, is not necessarily the object of criticism of Luke. The outcome of this system makes Luke’s criticism understandable.⁸⁹ It was to the advantage of the wealthy that the city treasury was empty. The dangers involved were: the wealthy never paid taxes; they only contributed time and money for the welfare of the city, which had no central management, and that only when they wanted a post; the goods were not distributed where they were mostly needed; the ascension to a political office

⁸² The emperor Trajan was described as *ὁ παντὸς κόσμου σωτήρ καὶ εὐεργέτης*. Augustus was implicitly hailed as *εὐεργέτης* in the Priene inscription, which celebrates his birthday and give thanks for his benefactions (*εὐεργηματα*). Nero was also given the title *εὐεργέτης* as well as *σωτήρ* in an inscription from the Fayyum in Egypt. For further notes, cf., A.D. Nock, Soter, 720-735. This relationship between *εὐεργετέω κτλ.* and *σωτήρ* is also manifested in the pericope dealing with the healing of the paralysed by the apostles in Acts 4:9. The benefaction to a paralysed is taken up in the question, through whom is the paralysed saved (*σέσωται*)?

⁸³ Cf. A. Alföldi, *Mus. Helv.* 11 (1954), 145-151. Germanicus opines emphatically, “I absolutely reject these odious acclamations which are addressed to a god. They are fitting only for the one who is the real saviour and benefactor of the whole human race, my father (Augustus) and his mother”. Cited in C. Spicq, *εὐεργετέω κτλ.* II. 113.

⁸⁴ Cf. H. Moxnes, *Patron-Clients*, 249.

⁸⁵ Cf. Dio Chrys., *Or.* 1.20-22.

⁸⁶ Dio Chrys., *Or.* 1.65; *ἀλλ’ ὡς ἂν δύναται πλεῖστα καὶ πλείστους εὖ ποιεῖν.*

⁸⁷ Dio Chrys., *Or.* 2.26.

⁸⁸ The social system that involved the title of *εὐεργέτης* was not devoid of a socially motivated actions that demanded the fulfilment of this expectation. Dio reports in *Oratio* 46 how he was mobbed during a grain shortage because of the accusation that he withheld his own wealth instead of using it for the public welfare. This could represent a pressure from the masses on the high society to share with others in time of need. He also illustrated the various motives for the benefaction of a social group, which include the concern for general welfare, the desire for repute and for honour.

⁸⁹ Cf. F.W. Danker, *Jesus*, 348.

became consequently a prerogative of the rich and the wealthy.⁹⁰ The lust for this title grew unimaginably, that its reception was more precious than life.⁹¹ Some individuals like Ptolemy II took the title without deserving it. He was held in derision as *κακεργέτης*.⁹²

With the assumption that Luke knew of these abuses,⁹³ it could be argued that he used *καλοῦνται* in the reflexive sense. Only in its reflexive sense will the whole line of thought and presentation of Luke have a consequent meaning. The *ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως* of Jesus supports this line of argument.

The ambiguities and the flattery therewith contribute to a careful analysis of the political and social import involved. Josephus reports how the nation of the Jews acknowledged the wicked Albinus as a benefactor,⁹⁴ however in retrospect. His successor Gessius Florus behaved "... as if he had been sent to give an exhibition of wickedness,..." ostentatiously parading "... his lawless treatment..." of the Jewish nation and at the same time omitting "... no form of pillage or unjust punishment".⁹⁵ In the face of the wickedness and lawlessness of Gessius Florus, the wickedness of Albinus was a very mild and welcomed one. On his part, Philo documents that the subordinates of Flaccus called him master, benefactor and saviour.⁹⁶

The use of the words belonging to this word-family in the LXX is seemingly rare,⁹⁷ notwithstanding the goodness of God.⁹⁸ Only human beings, especially royalties, are designated as benefactors in the Hellenistic writings of the Old Testament. Philo of Alexandria, although with a Hellenistic background, does not entertain any scruple in using this title for God and for the emperor.⁹⁹

The members of this word-family occur only four times in the New Testament. In Lk 22:25, the noun in its plural form *εὐεργέται* is used. The verb *εὐεργετέω* occurs only at Acts 10:38, in which the saving aspect of the life and work of Jesus is expressed from the optic of the Hellenistic concept of doing a good thing for the benefit of the masses. The participles *εὐεργετῶν* and *ἰώμενος* help in the clarification of the soteriology of the mission of Jesus: His benefaction expresses itself in healing those under the bondage of the devil. This universality of his beneficence and his victory over evil differ from that of

⁹⁰ For further reading on the abuse of this system, cf., J.B. Green, Luke, 767f.

⁹¹ Cf. Dio Chrys., Or. 75.7f.

⁹² Cf. F.W. Danker, Jesus, 348.

⁹³ Cf. F.W. Danker, Benefactor. 294. The epigraphic findings on the title of benefactor confirm that the abuse of this title was palpable. Danker documents a decree passed about 100 C.E. at Hierapolis concerning oppressive police activities, aimed at imposing restraints on certain security officials guilty of oppressive measures. Notwithstanding their oppressive character, these officials pressurised the citizens to see them as benefactors. A contravention of this decree attracts a fine that equals the exact amount extorted. Besides, the culprit is held in dishonour and denied of such awards. Such findings only confirm that Luke is not very neutral in his appreciation of the social and political relations and reality of his time. Danker even sees Lk 22:25 as a summary of this unfortunate reality.

⁹⁴ Josephus, Ant. 20.253.

⁹⁵ Josephus, Ant. 20.254.

⁹⁶ Cf. Philo, Flacc. 126.

⁹⁷ Exceptions are 1 kg 2:32; Ps 50:20 and Ps 118:65. The Hebrew *יטב* and *טוב עשה* are translated with *εὐεργετέω* here.

⁹⁸ For the goodness inherent in the goodness of God manifested in the Exodus event. Cf. Ps 77:11; Wisdom 16:11,24. His goodness even to sinners are also seen as *εὐεργεσία*. Cf. 2 Macc 6:13.

⁹⁹ Cf. Philo, Op. Mund. 169 and Leg 22 and 149.

the incumbent emperors.¹⁰⁰ The cognate noun *εὐεργεσία* meaning “goodness, kindness or generosity”¹⁰¹ occurs only at Acts 4:9, where the miracle of healing worked through the apostles is understood as a benefaction for mankind, and in 1 Tim 6:2, where the Christian slaves are advised to respect their masters, who have become their brothers in Christ, because the benefactions they get from their masters are explained as a result of the love of God, which should not be misused.

The finding shows that the use of this word-family in the New Testament is very rare. Of the four uses in the New Testament, three fall to Luke, attesting him a clear appreciation of this system. The disciples are then being advised not to lay fraudulent claims to the title of *εὐεργέτης* just as the kings of the nations do,¹⁰² which would ultimately make them to be searching for honour and titles arbitrarily.

4.3 *Socio-historical considerations*

The analysis of the text has shown that apart from tradition-historical terms and definitions, there are still elements of the table fellowship and important expressions that help in the understanding of the social and historical terms of the New Testament world, or of the surroundings of the early Christian period. A study of some of these phenomena would help in the effort of giving a better understanding of the text.

4.3.1 *Νεώτερος*

The synoptic comparison shows that the Markan *διάκονος* became *ὁ νεώτερος* in Luke, which is a comparative but used in a superlative sense. The word appears in Gen 42:20 with the same use as in Lk 22:26 but as an opposite to *πρεσβύτερος* in Gen. 27:15. This word has already appeared twice in Lk 15:12,13 and will occur again in Acts 5:6. It is further used in 1 Tim 5:11; Tit 2:6 and 1 Pet 5:5, however in its plural form *νεώτεροι*. The adjective *νέος* is actually used for things and means “fresh” and “new”.¹⁰³ Besides, it can also be used for persons, in the meaning of “young”.¹⁰⁴ However, the comparative meaning of *νεώτερος* is often not felt.

¹⁰⁰ Of Nero is said: *ὁ ἀγαθὸς δαίμων τῆς οἰκουμένης, σὺν ἅπασιν οἷς εὐεργέτησεν ἀγαθοῖς τὴν Αἴγυπτον... ἔπεμψεν ἡμεῖν Τιβέριον Κλαύδιον Βάλβιλλον*. Cf. W. Dittenberger, OGIS 666, 4-7.

¹⁰¹ C. Spicq, *εὐεργετέω* κτλ. II. 107.

¹⁰² Cf. F.W. Danker, *Endangered*, 44. The observation of Danker is important for the scholarship of *εὐεργέτης*. However, postulating the theory that it is Luke’s intention to present Jesus as the benefactor par excellence, or to see the saving work of Jesus only from the perspective of an endangered benefactor, requires courage from the reader. His opinion would be more convincing if all the words relating to “doing good” were taken into consideration. The relation in Lk 6:9 could serve as an example: *ἀγαθοποιῆσαι* is situated near the act of saving life. Also in Acts 14:17, *ἀγαθοουργῶν* is used to describe the actions of God. Considered in isolation, the few uses of the words belonging to this euerg-family do not suffice to postulate such a theory. On the other hand, in contrast with the words belonging to the Greek family of the word saviour *σωτήρ*, which enjoys a greater level of frequency, *σωτήρ* would have presented literal and statistical grounds for the postulation of such a theory, which is actually a hallmark of the Lukan theology. Jesus is a *σωτήρ*, who shows his salvific act by healing the sick and releasing those under the bondage of the evil spirit in accordance with his programmatic teaching in Lk 4:18f. Owing to his deeds among his believers, he is the saviour par excellence. For more on this see the chapter dealing with the nativity of Jesus above.

¹⁰³ Cf. Philo, *Aet.* 89.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Philo, *Post.* 109.

The use of this word in this context brings with it a little problem: One is inclined to ask why *ὁ μικρότερος* is not used as a fitting contrast to *ὁ μείζων*. However, the culture and the social setup of the ancient world, especially in the Near East, identify wisdom, respect and pre-eminence with the aged and not with height. It was a privileged status to attain old age, while children and youth were generally held in low esteem.¹⁰⁵ Notwithstanding the economic and social importance attached with and to children in the ancient cultures, children had low regard in the society. Aristotle, who sees the family as a subunit of the polis, states that a complete house consisted of freemen and slaves. He differentiates between the primary (*πρωτα*) and smallest (*ἐλάχιστα*) parts of the household stating that the *paterfamilias* is the ultimate and final authority in a household, while the children share the same position with the slaves and the wife.¹⁰⁶

The adjective *νέος* does not have the best of meaning since it atimes refers to youthful exuberance and temperament, and to immaturity. Atimes, Plato groups the youths with the ignorant,

“I think that the works of Kronos and the misfortune from his son should not be told to ignorant (*ἄφρονας*) and young people (*νέους*) unconsidered, even if they were true.”¹⁰⁷

The social value of the Greco-Roman world was that of an utmost parent-centeredness; the death of a child was not viewed as a tragedy for the dead child but for the parents.¹⁰⁸ All these stem from the conviction that the child was not truly human.¹⁰⁹ Besides, the high mortality rate among children in antiquity made them insignificant and disposable. In Judaism, children are blessings from God and a continual assurance of the covenantal faithfulness of God. However, there is no reason to compare a child/youth with an aged man. Children served as old age insurance for the parents.¹¹⁰ Notwithstanding this importance, the opinion is apt that the reasons for valuing children are to be sought in the advantages from them for the parents and not necessarily because of their worth.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁵ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 1065. Nolland further stresses the chiasmic relationship that exist between „the youngest“ and „the serving one“ on one side and „exercising lordship“ and „have themselves called benefactor“ on the other.

¹⁰⁶ Aristotle, Pol I.2.1

¹⁰⁷ Plato, Pol II.378a.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. P.K. Nelson, Leadership, 38. This notion still exists in some African cultures, where the death of a child before his parents is considered as a taboo. The dead child is not given a full burial rite even when it is no longer a child in the correct sense of the word. The very fact that he died before the father is enough to deprive him of such burial rites.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. T. Wiedemann, Adults, 176-186. Gnilka also made the same observation: „In der Antike hatte man den Kindern gegenüber weitgehend eine neutrale oder sogar negative Einstellung. Das Griechentum erblickte im Kind das Unfertige und Kindische... Die Wiederentdeckung des Kindes im Hellenismus in Dichtung und Kunst, die launige Kunstwerke wie den Dornauszieher... oder das Kind mit der Fuchsgans... hervorbrachte, war eine Episode.“ J. Gnilka, Hausgemeinde, 237, footnote n. 13.

¹¹⁰ Cf. P.K. Nelson, Leadership, 38. This phenomenon reminds one again of social structures still existent in some parts of Africa. The wealth of a man is measured primarily in the number of children he has. The more children he has, the richer he is. Children also serve economic purposes especially in an agrarian society, where life is sustained from agriculture. The children help the parents on their farm, minimising costs involved were hired labourers to be engaged. In a culture, where old people's home is still a taboo, many children mean concerted help for the parents in their old age. Moreover, children are the concrete assurance that the family name will survive.

¹¹¹ Cf. P.K. Nelson, Leadership, 38.

At many times, children experience segregation in the Jewish culture and religion, presumably because of their age. Hence, they are assigned the same position as women.¹¹² In the rabbinic literatures exists the conviction that the child is not entitled to any merit before God and before the Torah owing to their inability to understand and appreciate the Law.¹¹³

The child in the ancient society is a concretised weakness and dependence, held in low esteem by the society. The injunction of Jesus that the leader should be like the youngest (child) implies that the disciples renounce any attitude leading one to overestimate his importance. Since children have their importance in relation to their parents,¹¹⁴ the leader should know that his worth and importance have their source in another person, under whose authority and command he is directed and sustained. The leader of the Christian community is the youngest, who acclaims that he is an entity only in relation to Jesus.

The use of *νεώτερος* in Josephus and Philo outlines the difference between the younger and the elder.¹¹⁵ It is hotly debated whether it refers to a special group in the early church just like *πρεσβύτερος*.¹¹⁶ A closer look at the construction of Acts 5:6 would reveal that *οἱ νεώτεροι* just appeared without any antecedent. This feeds the suspicion that such a group could have had a specific and established existence.¹¹⁷ Notwithstanding all these facts, one can maintain that the youngest is expected to perform the lowliest task in a given community.¹¹⁸ The leader should therefore behave as if he were called to a menial task.¹¹⁹

4.3.2 *Διακονέω*

That the word *διακονέω* κτλ in classical Greek only refers to service at table is the opinion of modern commentaries. Classical ancient Greek literatures show that the words belonging to this *διακον*-family have varieties of meanings.

¹¹² In IQM 7:3 it is written: „...sie alle sollen fünfundzwanzig bis dreißig Jahre alt sein. Kein Knabe, Jüngling und Weib soll in das Lager kommen, wenn sie ausrücken.“ It could be argued that although this passage is only taking precautions to save children from an impending battle, it however shows that children have nothing to contribute to the security of an area.

¹¹³ Cf. J. Gnilka, *Hausgemeinde*, 237, footnote n. 13. This low regard is documented in Mishna Aboth: “Morning sleep and midday wine and children’s talk and sitting in the meeting-houses of the ignorant people put a man out of the world.” M. Aboth 3:11b.

¹¹⁴ T. Zahn interpreted this text from the perspective of the relationship between Peter and John. Cf. T. Zahn, *Lucas*, 680f.

¹¹⁵ Josephus, *Ant.* 12, 235. Also Philo, *Sac.* 42. Philo has a derogatory assessment of the material world in comparison to the spiritual: “...in order that so using an incorporeal model formed as far as possible on the image of God, he might then make this corporeal world, a younger (*νεώτερον*) likeness of the elder (*πρεσβυτέρου*) creation...” Cf. Philo, *Op.* 16.

¹¹⁶ Cf. J. Fitzmyer *Luke II*, 1417. Marshall sees *οἱ νεώτεροι* as a particular group in the church, denying however that they have official functions in the church since there is no evidence for that in the Lukan scholarship. Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 813.

¹¹⁷ Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 157. G. Schneider is convinced that the *οἱ νεώτεροι* represents the opposite of *πρεσβύτεροι*. Cf. G. Schneider, *νέος*, 1138.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Acts 5:6.

¹¹⁹ Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 813.

4.3.2.1 *Διάκονος as a go-between*

The words of the διακον-family depicted initially the function of a go-between, or a diplomat. In older Greek literatures, we have this function in the sense of help for the state.¹²⁰ Plato uses them in the sense of a go-between. Convinced that no individual is self-sufficient, he gives reasons for different professions. Since no polis is self-sufficient, there is always the need of bringing in, what is needed in the society. He writes:

“If the *διάκονος* goes empty-handed, taking nothing which those people want from whom are to be brought the things which the community has a need of, he will certainly come back empty-handed.”¹²¹

The *διάκονος* is not a servant. He only contributes his quota to justice. A diviner is a *διάκονος* because he is an interpreter of the gods, being acquainted with the manner of presenting gifts in a pleasant manner to the gods by means of sacrifice and the consequent bestowal of good things to men.¹²² These aspects belong to the “diaconic” skill.¹²³ This word-group has to do with message and its transmission explaining why Hermes is the messenger of the gods,¹²⁴ which is an official capacity.

In the LXX, the verb *διακονέω* is completely missing, while the cognate nouns *διάκονος* and *διάκονια*¹²⁵ play a minor role. The difference between a slave (*δοῦλος*) and a servant (*διάκονος*) clarifies a socio-religious phenomenon in the LXX. A servant renders a service or form of assistance to another, while the slave is entirely dependent on his master (*κύριος*).¹²⁶ A master’s authority over his slaves exceeds that of an employer over his servants.¹²⁷ It is not surprising that the words of the *δουλ*-family¹²⁸ are present in the LXX than the nouns of the *διακον*-family, since master-slave relationship is dominant in the Old Testament.¹²⁹ The verb *διακονεῖν* is replaced with *δουλεύειν*, and sometimes with *λειτουργεῖν* or *λατρεύειν*, especially when it expresses a cultic dynamics and importance.

Philo uses the word *διακονέω* in the general sense of serving the other person, however with a clear preference for the particular sense of service at table.¹³⁰

¹²⁰ Cf. Demosthenes, 9:43; 50:2.

¹²¹ Plato, Republic 370e.

¹²² Plato, Politician 290c-d.

¹²³ Cf. J. Collins, *Diakonia*, 85.

¹²⁴ Cf. Plutarch, *Mor.* 777b. The word *διάκονος* is not used in this passage, but the word *διάκτορος*, which is generally accepted as being etymologically the same with *διάκονος*, however more antiquated as *διάκονος*. Cf. P.C. Buttmann, *Lexilogus*, 233, borrowed from J. Collins, *Diakonia*, 90f. In the bid to consolidate the understanding of *διάκονος* as a messenger, Prometheus refers to the office of Hermes designating him as the messenger of the new tyrant, τὸν τοῦ τυράννου τοῦ νέου διάκονον. Cf. *Pr.* 942.

¹²⁵ Cf. Est 1:10; 2:2; 5:3,5; 1 Macc 11:58. In these verses these words are used in highly functional sense

¹²⁶ Cf. A. Weiser, *διακονέω*, 726f.

¹²⁷ Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 40.

¹²⁸ W. Brandt opines: “Die Belastung des Wortes mit der Erinnerung an das Sklaventum hindert in der orientalistisch beeinflussten Welt nicht, das Wort zu erweitern auf Dienstleistungen, die Menschen einander erweisen... Es betont nicht die Hilfeleistung sondern die Unterordnung!” in: *Dienst*, 42f.

¹²⁹ Cf. H.W. Beyer, *διακονέω*, 82.

¹³⁰ Cf. Philo, *Vit Cont* 70 and 75.

Josephus uses *διακονέω* in three senses: Service at table,¹³¹ obedience¹³² and priestly service.¹³³

4.3.2.2 *The New Testament use of διακονέω κτλ.*

The sense of a go-between in the word *διακονέω* is completely missing in New Testament.¹³⁴ It is used thirty six times in the New Testament: twenty one times in the synoptic gospels and in Acts, three times in John, eight times in the *corpus paulinum*, once in Hebrew and three times in the first letter of Peter.¹³⁵ The cognate nouns *διακονία* and *διάκονος* are well evidenced in the New Testament with *διακονία* meaning “service” or “office”¹³⁶ occurring thirty-three times in the New Testament and *διάκονος* twenty nine times.¹³⁷

The serving mission of Jesus expressed by the members of this word-group is contrary to the Greek understanding and contempt for this phenomenon. The New Testament use of the word-group is obviously bound with the concept of serving at table,¹³⁸ however with the extended meaning of helping someone in a very caring manner.¹³⁹ The salvific work of Jesus is understood from the perspective of service,¹⁴⁰ and this tradition has its *Sitz im Leben* presumably in the Eucharistic celebration of the Christian communities. This tradition runs contrary to the Greco-Roman understanding of the theme of service.¹⁴¹ Sometimes this word-group represents the apostolic and missionary work of the disciples,¹⁴² and of Paul.¹⁴³ Most of the times, it serves as a synonym for the works of charity of the followers of Jesus.¹⁴⁴

4.3.2.3 *Διακονέω κτλ. and the innovations of Luke*

This word-group plays a very important role in the Gospel of Luke and in Acts. Interestingly, Luke seems to avoid the insinuation that service at table is directed exclusively to Jesus. This explains his omission of the angels ministering to

¹³¹ Cf. Josephus, Ant 11, 163 and 11,188.

¹³² Cf. Josephus, Ant. 9,25 and 17,140.

¹³³ Cf. Josephus, Ant. 7,365 and 10,72.

¹³⁴ In a general assessment, J. Roloff observed: “*Διακονεῖν* gehört zu jenen Begriffen, deren Inbesitznahme durch das Urchristentum sich auf dem Wege ihrer Füllung mit einem neuen, spezifischen Bedeutungsgehalt vollzogen hat.“ Anfänge, 53.

¹³⁵ Cf. A. Weiser, *διακονέω*, 726.

¹³⁶ It occurs once in the gospels in Lk 10:40. It is further evidenced in Acts about eight times, twenty two times in the letters of Paul and once in the letter to the Hebrews and in the Revelations respectively.

¹³⁷ It occurs eight times in the gospel and twenty one times in the letters of Paul.

¹³⁸ Cf. Matt 22:13; Mk 1:31; Lk 10:40; 12:37; 22:26f and Jn 12:2.

¹³⁹ Cf. Mk 15:41; Matt 25:44; and Lk 8:3.

¹⁴⁰ The text under survey is an eloquent example of this theological conviction. For further instances, confer Mk 10:45 and Matt 23. This theological aspect of the word-group *διακονέω κτλ.* is duly represented in the Pauline theology. The apostolic self-understanding of Paul and the appreciation of the different services in the community are well motivated by this understanding of the life and death of Jesus as service. The idea of “serving” helps Paul in the construction of his self-understanding as an apostle. Cf. J. Roloff, *Apostolat*, 121.

¹⁴¹ Socialised in the Greco-Roman world, there is the inclination to see the one reclining at table as being greater than the one serving. Jesus, however, presents himself as not falling within this convention, and urges his disciples never to do so.

¹⁴² Acts 1:17,25; 6:4

¹⁴³ Rom 11:13; Eph 3:7 and 1 Tim 1:12.

¹⁴⁴ Acts 6:1; Rom 12:7 and 1 Pet 4:11.

Jesus,¹⁴⁵ and he follows Mark 1:31 in writing “to them” at Lk 4:39,¹⁴⁶ thus removing the master from the centre of attention at the table.

The use of this word-group in the Acts of the Apostles depicts a double semantic association with this word-group. It refers to the apostolic service, especially of proclaiming the word.¹⁴⁷ The use refers further to the care of the poor.¹⁴⁸ A clear relationship to the theological concept of the Pauline pagan-Christian communities is noticed in the Lukan use of this word-group.

An innovation of Luke in the use of this word-group is the careful omission of the word *διάκονος*. Luke, the Hellenistic author, included in his account of the last supper a factor reminiscent of the Hellenistic language character. The participial use, *ὁ διακονῶν*, is the preferred Greek designation of someone rendering a service in a particular time in question, which means a table-servant in action.¹⁴⁹ This appellation is therefore valid only within the time of action.

It then implies that Luke uses this participial presence to articulate his conviction that the apostolic office, like other leading offices in the Christian communities, should have a serving character,¹⁵⁰ thereby presenting Jesus as a living example of such a serving character. This could explain the Lukan avoidance of *ὁ διάκονος*.¹⁵¹

The Christianisation of the members of this word-group could have led to the institutionalisation of the *διάκονος* as a titled status, which was possibly deplorable to Luke. With his Hellenistic background, Luke is aware that this word-group has to do with commissioning, that means, doing something on the authority of a higher person. There is the tendency of one believing that he has the right to dictate what is right and wrong. This would make him forget that his status is only a function arising from a commission, ultimately implying that he is under someone, who has commissioned him and as such cannot act autonomously, but is answerable to him, who commissioned him.¹⁵² However, by the use of *ὁ διακονῶν*, Luke avoids this problem, by making it clear that one who has a part to play in the community should see it only as a function and not as a status. One has this function because there is one behind him. Therefore, one is not acting out of his one's own power.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁵ Cf. J. Collins, *Diakonia*, 245

¹⁴⁶ For more information concerning this relationship see A. Weiser, *διακονέω*, 730.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Acts 1:17; 20:24; 21:19.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Acts 6:1,2.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. J. Collins, *Diakonia*, 246.

¹⁵⁰ Luke clears this point by referring to the apostolic office as a service. Cf. Acts 1:17,25 and 6:4.

¹⁵¹ One can extensively opine that the Lukan *ὁ διακονῶν* has the same meaning and import like *ὁ διάκονος* in the other writings of the New Testament. The avoidance of the title *ὁ διάκονος* in the writings of Luke is a typical innovation of Luke.

¹⁵² Cf. Lk 12:42-48. The servant is summoned to give an account of his stewardship.

¹⁵³ Cf. A. Hentschel, *Diakonia*, 285f, for an excellent treatment of this view. Also I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 813. However, this idea represents one of the possibilities of explaining the Lukan avoidance of this title. Another possibility could be the conjecture that the title *ὁ διάκονος* has already been used to describe the function of the service of proclaiming the word (1 Tim 3). Luke, wishing to see a group of community leaders working under the tutelage of the apostles, allowed the confirmation of this group for the service of the poor, thereby reaching his intention of avoiding this title of *ὁ διάκονος*.

There is the possibility of concluding that the Christian community, for which Luke wrote, did not have any institutionalised title of deacon. They did the works of deacons not as status titles but only as functions.¹⁵⁴

5. *The twelve and their future judging role in Lk 22:28-30*

5.1 *Synoptic comparison*

The verses 28-30 are indispensable for the correct exegesis of the previous verses 24-27. The unity of the text indicates that the Lukan Jesus is not only interested in the humility of the apostles, but also in the eschatological¹⁵⁵ reward that would be theirs as a result of this humility. This humility is considered as an avenue to something greater. The identity of the semantic field of table fellowship betrays the interest of Luke that these subsections belong together. A section helps in understanding the other. A synoptic comparison between Lk 22:28-30 and Matt 19:28 is very necessary.

Lk 22:28-30	Matt 19:28
ὕμεῖς	ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Ἀμήν λέγω
δέ ἐστε	ὑμῖν ὅτι
οἱ διαμεμενηκότες	ὕμεῖς
μετ’	οἱ ἀκολουθήσαντές
ἐμοῦ	μοι,
ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς μου·	
καὶ γὰρ διατίθεμαι ὑμῖν καθὼς διέθετό μοι ὁ	
πατήρ μου βασιλείαν	
ἵνα ἕσθητε καὶ πίνητε ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης	
μου	
ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ	ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ,
μου,	
καὶ	
καθήσθε	καθήσθε
ἐπὶ	καὶ ὕμεῖς
θρόνων	ἐπὶ
τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς κρίνοντες τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.	δώδεκα
	θρόνους
	κρίνοντες τὰς δώδεκα φυλὰς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.

The literary affinity existing between Luke 22:28-30 and Matt 19:28, where it is given as an insertion in a Markan material,¹⁵⁶ suggests a relationship to Q.¹⁵⁷ A similar tradition is in Rev 3:20-21. The Lukan and the Matthean versions are identical in the intention of Jesus, that they might sit on the (Matthew: twelve) thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel (Lk 22:30 parr Matt 19:28). However, there are differences between the versions: In Luke, Jesus talks to those who have persevered with him (*οἱ διαμεμενηκότες μετ’ ἐμοῦ*) in

¹⁵⁴ Cf. A. Hentschel, *Diakonia*, 286.

¹⁵⁵ Marshall maintains that the language of this particular text is that of traditional apocalyptic, with emphasis on the final coming of Jesus. Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 814.

¹⁵⁶ Cf. C.F. Evans, *Luke*, 798.

¹⁵⁷ There is a debate on which form of wording stands nearest to the Q, which probably underlies both texts. Bultmann, *Tradition*, 170f, Klostermann, *Lukas*, 209 and Roloff, *Apostolat*, 148-150 see the Matthean text as being nearer to the Q, while E. Schweizer, *Matthäus*, 251f, Schürmann, *Abschiedsrede*, 37-54 and E. Jünger, *Paulus*, 239f uphold the faithfulness of the Lukan version.

his temptations, while the Matthean Jesus talks to those following him (*ἀκολουθήσαντές μοι*).¹⁵⁸ Matthew begins with, “amen, I say to you”, while Luke begins with *ὑμεῖς δέ*.¹⁵⁹ While the promise of the Lukan Jesus refers to (my: *μου*) kingdom (*ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ*), the Matthean Jesus refers to the rebirth (*ἐν τῇ παλιγγενεσίᾳ*). The aspect of the Lukan table fellowship (*ἵνα ἔσθητε καὶ πίνητε ἐπὶ τῆς τραπέζης*) is missing in Matthew, making the assumption more plausible that Luke might have added the aspect of table fellowship, which at the first look seems to be out of place since table fellowship is not a constituent of sitting and judging.

5.2 Conditions and content of the promise

The *ὑμεῖς δέ* placed at the beginning of v.28 serves an emphatic purpose, however aimed at taking the reader back to v.24 with the beginning of the dispute,¹⁶⁰ and not a contrasting purpose aimed at distinguishing Jesus from his disciples. Here is solidarity of purpose and unity intended. The “withness” of Jesus supports this assertion.¹⁶¹ The word *διαμεμενηκότες* is the perfect participle of *διαμένω* and is very rare in Luke-Acts.¹⁶² Owing to the function of a perfect tense, which focuses on a present condition arising from a past action, the Lukan intention in v.28 should be a consideration of past and present events.¹⁶³ This action of the apostles, in connection with the *μετ’ ἐμοῦ*¹⁶⁴ of Jesus, contradicts their present action. Notwithstanding the unpalatable story dealing with the preoccupation with eminence among them, these apostles persevere with Jesus in his trials. Jesus gives a positive evaluation of his disciples,¹⁶⁵ reminding them that his own life and their life contrast the present unedifying discussion. The adversities in the course of his ministry¹⁶⁶ are of interest in this verse.

The eschatological and apocalyptic aspect of the text is the promise given to the apostles in v.29-30. The apostles are promised the reward for their perseverance. The pivotal word in this promise is *διατίθεμαι*, which has Jesus as its subject. The verb *διατίθεσθαι* can mean to issue a decree, or to make a covenant,¹⁶⁷ to confer, or to bequeath.¹⁶⁸ The use of the word should not be understood from the perspective of the Greek testament thought¹⁶⁹ nor should it be understood

¹⁵⁸ It is possible that Matthew intended here an answer to the question of Peter in Matt 19:27. Cf. W. Eckey, *Lukasevangelium*, 892.

¹⁵⁹ The beginnings of both versions are to be sought within the redactional intention of the evangelists, since both are missing in the Q version. However, Hampel thinks otherwise. Cf. V. Hampel, *Menschensohn*, 143f.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke III*, 1065.

¹⁶¹ Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 180. Cf. the *μετ’ ἐμοῦ* in v.28. Also W. Wiefel, *Lukas*, 372.

¹⁶² The word has been used once in Lk 1:22. The perfect participle of Luke has replaced the aorist of Matthew *ἀκολουθήσαντες*, which leads Schulz to the argument that Luke’s formulation was secondary. Cf. S. Schulz, *Spruchquelle*, 330f.

¹⁶³ Conzelmann contends that the trials mentioned here have nothing to do with the tribulations of Jesus before the passion, since that would thwart his Satan-free time theory. However, seeing the trials of Jesus only from the perspective of the passion would not do justice to the perfect tense of the participle used in depicting the apostles, which denotes the continuance of a completed action. Cf. S. Brown, *Apostasy*, 8f. Also I.H. Marshall, *Luke*, 816.

¹⁶⁴ This phrase could represent the beginning of the liturgical “with Jesus” form that should be sought in the historical life of Jesus. Cf. J. Ernst, *Lukas*, 596.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. J.B. Green, *Luke*, 769.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Lk 8:1, 13-15; 17:25.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Acts 3:25; Heb 8:10; 10:16.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Heb 9:16f.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. J. Ernst, *Lukas* 596. Since God/Jesus is the subject of the verb, it is wrong to think of the verb in the sense of a will or a testament, which presupposes the death of the subject. This

ordinarily as “In-Aussicht-stellen”¹⁷⁰ in the sense of having a wish to do something. Here, a final say is intended, making it better to render the word with “to assign” or “to confer”,¹⁷¹ which suggests a determination in conferring the object βασιλείαν, best rendered as kingship or royal rule. Jesus can confer this royal kingship having been conferred this royal kingship from his father.¹⁷²

The opening ἵνα is used in an exegetical manner, helping in the explanation of the meaning of v.29. It is a sentence expressed in the indicative mood. A table situation is painted to accentuate the royal nature of the eschatological meal. This verse is also replete with royal images. The elements of this royal rule are specified in v.30 with the verbs ἔσθθητε, πίνθητε, καθήσεσθε. The first two elements recall the language of the table or meal fellowship. The awkwardness of these items notwithstanding, one should appreciate the interest of Luke to remain within the context of the last supper.¹⁷³ The present table “...has a great significance as the forerunner or type of the table at the Messianic Banquet which is to inaugurate the kingdom.”¹⁷⁴ This interest in “table” appearing in v.21 and v.30 serve as a link between the last supper and the eschatological meal with the apostles.¹⁷⁵ The background could have been offered by the persistent conviction of a (heavenly) messianic meal or banquet, which, being a familiar picture in Jewish eschatology,¹⁷⁶ would help in the concretisation of God’s kingship. The “Tischgemeinschaft” of Jesus does not end there. It is transformed and widened to a “Schicksalgemeinschaft”. The possessive pronoun μου in relation not only to “table” but also to “kingdom” suggests a life-solidarity, which receives a solid expression in table fellowship.

In conferring the kingdom to the apostles, Luke counteracts the claim of the devil in the second item of the temptation of giving out kingdoms to whom he wants. Sitting on a throne is a metaphoric language, and for the people of old an apparent sign depicting a ruling nature.¹⁷⁷ An allusion could be made to Rev 3:21 for a similar promise made to the disciple to sit with Jesus on his throne. Partaking of this eschatological meal as a sign of reigning with God in his kingdom implies the judging nature of the apostles over the twelve tribes of Israel.¹⁷⁸ This aspect is introduced with the participle κθίνοντες. The conviction that ruling involves

problem arises from the literary genre of the pericope as a farewell speech or discourse. It is expected that Jesus, just like other figures of history, should advise his disciples before his near death.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. W. Grundmann, Lukas, 404.

¹⁷¹ Cf. I.H. Marshall, Luke, 816. Also J. Nolland, Luke III, 1066.

¹⁷² Here arises a question regarding the wish of the devil in Lk 4:5 where Jesus is shown all the kingdoms of the earth, with the promise of having power over the kingdoms, if only he would fall down and worship the devil. The reader is reassured that the promise of the devil cannot be true. Only Jesus is able to give power and not the devil. However, the kingship here is an eschatological kingship, while the power of Lk 4 is a power over the kingdoms of the inhabited world.

¹⁷³ Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 800.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. A.R.C. Leaney, Luke, 270.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 1066.

¹⁷⁶ These ideas and pictures are seen in its developing nature in Is 25:6; Zeph 1:7.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. J. Ernst, Lukas, 597.

¹⁷⁸ In the gospel of Matt 19:28, twelve thrones are mentioned, which could have been the original form of Q. Luke might have omitted the “twelve” owing to the defection of Judas. This could express the difficulty the Lukan community had in assigning a throne to a defaulter and betrayer. Cf. W. Wiefel, Lukas, 372 and J. Fitzmyer, Luke II, 1419. Nolland sees the removal only as an economy of language. Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 1066. Ernst explains this with the stylistic sensitivity of Luke, who is very fond of avoiding doublets. Cf. J. Ernst, Lukas, 598.

judging¹⁷⁹ in biblical history helps to understand the text. Judging in this context should have the meaning of “ruling over” as exemplified in the book of Judges.¹⁸⁰

The raising of a judge in Israel followed the pattern of apostasy-repentance-deliverance: The Israelites offend God by forsaking him and running after other gods, God forsakes them by allowing them to be humiliated in wars with their neighbours, they cry to God promising to be faithful only to him, God sends them a judge who mobilises and rescues them, ensuring some years of rest and peace for the Israelites.¹⁸¹ From this background, the opinion that there was not always a sharp distinction between judging and ruling is very essential,¹⁸² since at several points in the Old Testament time these functions came together.¹⁸³

In our context, the apostles will act as the judges, rebuilding the forsaken and deserted kingdom of God into an apocalyptic community. The name Israel opens another horizon for understanding the text, since the determination of its identity is important. Those claiming that the twelve tribes of Israel represent the Christian community,¹⁸⁴ might be doing so with the argument based on the reversal theory of Luke: Israel rejected Jesus, and God has no other alternative than to carve out for himself a new Israel. Without condemning this thesis, one still has to say that despite the idea of a new Christian Israel, the bond emanating from the old Israel is ubiquitous in the Lukan Gospel: Simeon and Anna represent the Jewish hope of seeing a consolation and redemption for Israel respectively.¹⁸⁵

All these expectations are turned to reality through the birth of the same Jesus. The song of Mary, the Magnificat, although celebrating the reversal of destiny, did not forget to include the remembrance of the mercy promised to Israel.¹⁸⁶ The Benedictus is full of Israel-oriented imageries suggesting that the conception of a new Israel cannot be imagined without a full and thorough integration and appreciation of the Israel of old. The new Israel will have its base on the promises made to the old Israel. The effect of this would be that the promises made to the Israel of old would be widened to accommodate the Gentiles, without forgetting the initial addressees of God’s covenantal love.¹⁸⁷

5.3 Conclusion

Immediately after reprimanding the apostles for their inordinate search for pre-eminence, the Lukan Jesus did not hesitate to give a positive evaluation of the conduct and life of the disciples in solidarity with him, telling them that their past life contrasts their present behaviour. Having been steadfast in their endurance

¹⁷⁹ Cf. W. Grundmann, Lukas, 405. In 1 Sam 8:20 it is written: “...with our own king to rule us...” Also Dan 9:12. In both instances, the LXX translated with “judging”. For further references: Jg 2:16 and Rt 1:1.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. C.F. Evans, Luke, 801.

¹⁸¹ A thorough reading of the book of Judges will confirm this observation. The raising up of a judge for the Israelites is a sign of God’s forgiveness and paternal care for a race bound to him in covenant.

¹⁸² Cf. M. Trautmann, Handlungen, 197.

¹⁸³ Cf. Is 16:5; 32:1 and 33:22.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. I.H. Marshall, Luke, 818. Also S. Brown, Apostasy, 64.

¹⁸⁵ Cf. Lk 2:25, 38.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. Lk 2:54.

¹⁸⁷ For more on this topic confer J. Fitzmyer, Theologian, 194f. P.K. Nelson offers a wonderful elucidation of the topic in, Leadership, 221-223.

and perseverance, they are now promised a conferral of kingship just as Jesus has been conferred a kingship by his father. Some of the elements of this kingship have a link with the present Passover meal, since they will also eat and drink in the kingdom of Jesus. Moreover, they will sit on the throne judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The table imagery describing the kingdom of God is still present. With the conviction of the unity of the two sections, the reader understands that the judging nature of the apostles in the eschatological kingdom would not be reminiscent of the actions of the kings and leaders of the world, whose actions have been criticised, albeit in a subtle, however clear manner. The logic of the whole composition is the necessary and imperative “otherness” of the disciples. A disciple or a Christian should have the courage to go beyond or even contradict conventions, especially if these conventions are avenues refraining one from doing good. The *status quo* is not enough for the Christian. The eschatological feast in the kingdom, where the apostles would have the chance of judging the twelve tribes of Israel, presents the optimal rule of the apostles as an opposite to the ruling method of the kings and leaders of this world. It is not only a reward, but also as a contradiction of the *status quo*.

6. *The political theology of Luke*

The ingenuity of Luke in the composition of this text is seen in his ability of joining two semantic fields to arrive at a message. The semantic fields of table fellowship and of ruling are not only complementary, but also contrasting especially when one sees that the imagery of a serving one from the table fellowship is used to contrast the ruling ones and the kings of the nations. A combination of genres- farewell discourse and symposium- helped in the elucidation of his theology of power. The use of the verb *δοκέω* gave him the opportunity of distinguishing between “appearance and reality”:

The use of *δοκέω* in the indirect question of the quarrel gives the whole dispute a new dimension. The third person singular here can be translated as “seems”.¹⁸⁸ Its use implies that we have to do with the language of appearance, not only from the perspective of how they will be seen in the eyes of others,¹⁸⁹ but also from the perspective that the teaching and directive of Jesus is centred on the confusion of appearances.¹⁹⁰ The use of the verb here seems to be influenced by the use in Mk 10:42.

6.1 *The Lukan Jesus as ὁ διακονῶν*

A cursory look at the text in question immediately shows that Jesus presents himself as the “serving one” among his apostles. Beginning with his rhetoric question contrasting the greatness of the one reclining at table and the humble stature of the one serving at table, he identifies himself with the one serving at table, after asserting the conventional greatness of the one reclining at table. The use of the participial presence helps Luke to make the situation among his disciples (*ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν*)¹⁹¹ to have relevance for his teaching.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. W. Bauer, Wörterbuch. 406.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, Luke II, 1416.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. J. Nolland, Luke III, 1064.

¹⁹¹ This phrase pinpoints the area of conflict, namely among the apostles themselves, and by extension the leaders of the Christian communities. Cf. P.K. Nelson, Leadership, 160.

This is one of the pictures affirming the serving nature of Jesus in the meal tradition of the gospels.¹⁹² This presentation of Jesus is used parenthetically for those in charge of the communities. The problem is the determination of the serving of Jesus in the last supper, and how this serving nature of Jesus should be understood. Is Jesus' nature of the serving one to be understood in the sense of washing the feet of the apostles, as Jn 13:1-20 suggests,¹⁹³ or did he function as a table-servant during the last supper? Is his serving nature rather to be seen in his administration of the Passover feast with its constituent distribution of bread and wine, which he offered as his body and blood, or does a retrospective look at the life and repeated actions of the service of Jesus constitute his serving nature? Is the serving nature of Jesus in his coming, including his life, suffering, impending death and resurrection?¹⁹⁴

It was not mentioned that Jesus took over the functions of the table servant during the last supper, although a simple understanding of his assertion in Lk 22:27c could lead to this understanding.¹⁹⁵ The conjecture that there was a prior Lukan account of the last supper, where the disciples were served by Jesus as *ἀνακείμενοι* should not be taken seriously since there is no text evidence for such a claim.¹⁹⁶ However, an actual performance of the function of a table servant is syntactically possible because of the *ὡς*, which suggests that Jesus can still be a *διακονῶν* since it is only a functional title and not a status title.¹⁹⁷ The distribution of the bread and wine in the Passover feast is the function of the *pater familias*.¹⁹⁸

The service and actions of Jesus during the last supper combined with his impending death offer a wonderful avenue of understanding the serving nature of Jesus for the apostles.¹⁹⁹ Jesus, in the course of the last supper, has already done that, which enables him to present himself as the serving one, the *διακονῶν*. As the *διακονῶν*, the table servant in action, who serves the participants of a concrete meal, he has already served himself (up), in bread (body) and wine (blood), for the benefit of others, namely his disciples. The body of Jesus "is given for you" (apostles) (*τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον*) and his blood of the new covenant "is poured out for you" (*τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον*), thus stressing the soteriological aspect

¹⁹² Cf. J. Roloff, *Anfänge*, 55.

¹⁹³ Associating the feet-washing practice of Jesus in John with the serving one of Luke has its problem, although there are scholars who see wonderful reasons for such associations. Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1415 and J. Ernst, *Lukas*, 592. No matter how wonderful this association might seem to be, it would not survive the fact that the washing of feet was the function of a slave and not of a *διακονῶν*. Secondly, the feet washing practice takes place before the meals and not after. For more on tradition-historical reasons against this thesis, cf. J. Roloff, *Anfänge*, 58. The nearest association could be made to Lk 12:37 with Jesus' words in Lk 22:27 being a commentary of the parable of Lk 12:37: He is the master, who puts on a waiter's cloth to serve his faithful servants.

¹⁹⁴ For a thorough treatment of all these possibilities, cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 161-171.

¹⁹⁵ The verb *ἀνέπεσεν* in Lk 22:14 however, speaks against this assertion, since he is presented as "taking seat" with his disciples.

¹⁹⁶ Schürmann informs the reader, that the Lukan redaction of the gospel of Mark in Lk 22:7-14 must have subdued the original prelukan account of the last supper. Cf. H. Schürmann, *Paschamahlerbericht*, 15. However, it is unimaginable that Luke could have allowed such an important act to pass away undocumented.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. A. Hentschel, *Diakonia*, 287f.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. J. Roloff, *Anfänge*, 58. The conviction of W. Grundmann that Jesus himself served his apostles during this last supper does not have any textual evidence. Cf. W. Grundmann, *Lukas*, 402.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. W. Wiefel, *Lukas*, 370.

of his life-giving involving his suffering and death,²⁰⁰ which means a humble self-giving and utmost benefit for others.²⁰¹ One can say with J. Roloff:

Der Akt der Selbsthingabe Jesu, das Vergießen seines Blutes ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν, für die sich in der Jüngerschaft konstituierende Gemeinde, sind hier als ein der Mahlgemeinschaft der ἀνακειμένοι zugutekommendes Dienen ausgedeutet.²⁰²

The relevance to our topic is the humble serving nature of Jesus, who, although the head of a group never saw his greatness as an avenue of lording it over his “subjects”. Rather, he was so ready to serve them that he even served his own life (up) for others. He contrasts the domineering spirit of the kings and their overweening self-aggrandizement.²⁰³

6.2 *The political intentions of Luke*

The advice of Jesus to his apostles shows a community oriented parenthesis.²⁰⁴ It shows a relationship to the present of the Lukan community,²⁰⁵ preoccupying itself with the important question of power. This brings one to the *Sitz im Leben* of the text, which is probably situations arising from the hierarchical structure of the early church in a Eucharistic context. As a counteraction, guiding codexes for community officials are inserted in a very sensitive event in the life of Jesus.²⁰⁶ The use of liturgical terms in this text heightens the suspicion that the Eucharistic celebration of the Lukan community is very crucial in the construction of this text.

With the use of experiences in the world of pagan rule and hegemony with their overweening self-aggrandizement,²⁰⁷ a contrast to the Christian rule is presented. Luke has nothing against leadership in the Christian community. He is only interested in the type of leadership that should exist in it, that of a serving leadership²⁰⁸ and not a leadership that claims to be a benefactor but is characterised by oppression and egoistic awareness of power. Hoping to drive home his point, the table imagery is used. The leader of a Christian community should behave as if he were the serving one at table. He should not behave like one being autonomous in his decisions and actions. Luke presents Jesus as the prototype of this serving one, scenically presenting him in his “serving” of himself for the good of others. By doing this, he provides an extraordinary ethic for his Christian community, different from what is exists in the world. Being a Christian implies a vocation to a greater identity in service.

Without mincing words, the introduction of the behaviour of the kings and men of authority of the pagan world tells the disciples of Jesus not to emulate the pagan kings, no matter how neutral the presentation of the pagan kings in this text might be.²⁰⁹ The reflexive form of the verb would mean that the authority holders of the

²⁰⁰ Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 168.

²⁰¹ Cf. L. Rasmussen, *Luke 22:24-27*, 75.

²⁰² Cf. J. Roloff, *Anfänge*, 58.

²⁰³ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1415.

²⁰⁴ Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 712.

²⁰⁵ Cf. L. Bormann, *Recht*, 336.

²⁰⁶ Cf. A. Hentschel, *Diakonia*, 293.

²⁰⁷ Cf. J. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1415.

²⁰⁸ Cf. L. Bormann, *Recht*, 337.

²⁰⁹ The cryptic nature of the Lukan presentation of this injunction has given rise to its different interpretations. The openness of this injunction to different interpretations prompted Lull to see

pagan world call themselves, let themselves be called, or have themselves called Benefactor,²¹⁰ while the passive form of the verb implies that these authority holders are called Benefactors.²¹¹ The literary context of the whole comparison between the apostles and the pagan rulers tends to suggest the reflexive sense of the verb in question.²¹² That they make people call them benefactors underlines the inordinate search for pre-eminence and honour among them. After this, he now directs his attention to what should be the convention among them. Luke, using an antithetical structure, (*ἐν ὑμῶν* as antithesis to the convention of the *τῶν ἐθνῶν*)²¹³ presents an alternative to the hegemonic concept of world rulers, exemplified twice with *ὡς*, which should form the quintessence of leadership and honour in the Christian community. In a sentence consisting of two units hold together with the present imperative *γινέσθω*, Luke states his expectation of Christian leaders: The greatest should behave as if he were the youngest, and the leader should behave as if he were the waiter or table servant. These (the youngest and the serving one) are people, whose status is very low in the social hierarchy.²¹⁴

Much respect for kings is not shown in the writings of Luke. Matthew uses *βασιλεὺς* at times as metaphor for God.²¹⁵ Especially, Matt 17:25 presents the actions of kings in a synthetic analogy to the actions of God, to the effect that the sons of God are free from taxes just as the sons of the kings are. Such analogies are missing in Luke. He presents the actions of the kings as contrary to the expected actions of the disciples. In his peculiar sources (Sondergut), the kings do not appear positively. The open criticism of Luke to the politics of the kings in Lk 14:31 is almost palpable: the kings go to war just out of personal interest. They make peace because of tactical gains and not for the sake of peace. The critical assessment of the kings leads to the opposition against the king in Lk 19:14 and the brutal end of this opposition by the king in Lk 19:27.²¹⁶ All these are possible because of the political consciousness of Luke, who is aware that the office of the king did not enjoy any popularity during the Roman hegemony. The office of the king was only seen as a vassal office to Rome,²¹⁷ although armed and clothed with a considerable power,²¹⁸ which made him do what he wanted. This political reality was enough to make Luke avoid the use of this title to depict God,²¹⁹ because a God, "... der "König" ist oder

Jesus as praising the leaders for their beneficence, enjoining the apostles to do as the pagan authorities do. The instance given with the pagan kings gears towards motivating the apostles to behave like the pagan kings, who are beneficent with their subjects. Cf. D. Lull, *Servant-Benefactor*, 297. Deissmann's opinion is contrary to this view. He writes that Jesus "... mentioned the title not without contempt, and forbade His disciples to allow themselves to be so called: the name contradicted the idea of service in brotherhood." In: *Light*, 253f.

²¹⁰ Many exegetes work with the reflexive meaning of the verb as the intended meaning of the verb. Cf. Fitzmyer, *Luke II*, 1415; Cassidy, *Jesus*, 39; Danker, *Benefactor*, 324; Creed, *Luke*, 268. Clearly and distinctly states Kötting, *Euergetes*, 857, in the discussion, that the advice of Jesus is directed against the lust of title of the disciples.

²¹¹ Nelson, after having offered a thorough analysis of the word in Luke, arrived at the conclusion that the passive form of the verb is intended. Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 153f. It is also the opinion of Walaskay, that the verb is used in its passive form. Cf. P. Walaskay, *Rome*, 36.

²¹² Cf. J. Nolland, *Luke III*, 1064.

²¹³ Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 712.

²¹⁴ Cf. M. Wolter, *Lukasevangelium*, 712.

²¹⁵ Cf. Matt 5:35; 17:25; 22:2,7; 25:34.

²¹⁶ L. Bormann has given a detailed discussion of this topic. Cf. *Recht*, 114f.

²¹⁷ Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 14. Also Josephus, *Bell.* 1, 131,153; 6, 333f.

²¹⁸ Cf. P.K. Nelson, *Leadership*, 31.

²¹⁹ Cf. L. Bormann, *Recht*, 114.

Jesus, der einen "Königstitel" anstrebt, ist entweder politischer Gegner Roms oder aber Vasalle römischer Weltmacht,..."²²⁰

The above excursus gives an insight into the political theology of Luke in his writings. Notwithstanding the harmless presentation of the kings and the men of authority in our present text, their actions are duly used by Luke to show his Christian community what a leader should not be. The greatness and pre-eminence, which the apostles should search is the regal status, which the father has already conferred on his son. This pre-eminence is realised in the kingdom banquet. Mere human lordship, which the apostles are searching for, is nothing compared to the honour of judging Israel in the eschatological end. What they might have lost in serving others, they now get in an eschatological set-up. However, the service of others must precede this eschatological end.

The presentation of the kings and their tactical manoeuvres in the gospel of Luke lead us to the historical findings associated with the benefactors, who create artificial scarcity hoping that their beneficence and importance would be felt. A Christian community leader who creates a situation that will enable the community to feel his importance and indispensability usurps the importance and honour due to Jesus, to whom he is answerable. This explains the careful distance of the New Testament to the saviour-benefactor thought of its days.²²¹ The inclusion of this *φιλονεικία* in the Passover context of the Lukan gospel has much to transmit. The Passover is a celebration of freedom over slavery, and in the Christian concept of Jesus, a celebration of the triumph of life over death. It is unbecoming introducing a discussion aimed at the slavery and bondage of some, arising from the dominion and will to power of others.

The table fellowship of the Passover, which gave rise to the institution of the Eucharist, portrays the Christian community not only as *Tischgemeinschaft*, but also as *Schicksalgemeinschaft*, implying the identity of purpose and mission. It would be out of order to talk of the greatest. However, the positive general evaluation of the mission and ministry of the apostles makes the question redundant. Whatever be the case, this text within the context of the Passover confers the advice of Jesus a more compelling and moral force.

An important but abandoned aspect of the phenomenon of the benefactor as experienced in the system of patronage and clientism that is obviously against the Christian spirit is the reciprocity involved in the system. The patron does something for his client but he expects that this client would pay it back in a different manner. In this system, there is a vicious circle of giving and expecting to be given. Each gift is only an antecedent for a reciprocal gift. If the patrons do anything good for their clients, these clients are expected to render a sign of their gratitude to the patrons, which could take many forms: Visiting the courts of the patrons as a sign of respect, accompanying the patrons to the market place and serving as claque at a possible public oration of the patrons.²²² This is a typical instance of a maximum honour for a minor juridical and social help. The dependence that ensues in such a mechanism of reciprocity is very abhorring, inasmuch as it legalises a form of slavery. Such slavery is not necessary for a redeemed race, nor is the discussion of such a praxis befitting for a Eucharistic

²²⁰ L. Bormann, *Recht*, 115.

²²¹ Cf. M. Karrer, *Retter*, 171.

²²² Cf. M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 125.

community involved in a Eucharistic feast. The Eucharistic community would be true to its name, if all could be the serving ones, emulating the example of the person, who made the Eucharistic feast possible. Jesus, the serving one, exemplifies, in the narrative level, the *κύριος* of the parable in Lk 12:37, who, upon his return, finds his servants awake. He serves them while they recline at table.

7. Conclusion

The way Luke handled his sources shows his literary ingenuity. It also shows his theological conviction of the primacy of service over the wish to be greater than others in the Christian community. The placement of this discussion in such a crucial moment in the life of Jesus and his apostles can only imply that Luke wants Jesus to leave for his apostles a teaching that will function as a life legacy, not only in its efficacy but also in its durability. Drawing examples from the patron-client system of the Greco-Roman culture and traditions, which institutionalises slavery in the name of reciprocity, he contrasts them to the life of Jesus, the table servant, who served up his life for others. This discussion not only articulates the wish of Luke to have a discussion within the last supper. It could also have articulated a concrete situation in the life of his community within the liturgical or inner political sphere. Avoiding the title of *διάκονος*, he readily accepted the present participle *διακονῶν* to depict a functional activity, which Jesus is presently doing among his apostles. Only in service is a true and Christian leadership possible. Being the servant of all to depict leadership should therefore be a convention among the Lukan community. Luke allows Jesus to develop “ein durchaus anspruchsvolles Ethos christlichen Lebensstils”.²²³

The motivation to this seemingly demeaning act is the promise of a reward in the eschatological feast, and sharing in the regal activity of Jesus, which he has received from his father. One of the aspects of this regal participation is the judging of the twelve tribes of Israel. The gathering of these tribes shows Jesus as the Messiah, who is able to gather the rest of God’s chosen people, however comprising not only the Israel of old, but also all, who see in Jesus the promised redeemer. The message of Luke to his community is: Do not waste your time looking for earthly powers, because your solidarity with Christ has already prepared for you a heavenly regal participation, which includes righteousness and justice as its aspect? With the negative examples of the actions of worldly rulers, he shows the urgency of his conviction and expectation.

²²³ P. Hoffmann/V. Eid, *Jesus*, 227.

1. *The Hubris of Herod: God's wrath on an arrogant king*

1.1 *Introduction*

The Lukan dislike for domination and oppression extends to all facets of his double work. Some texts in his gospel have shown what role this theme plays in his theology. In Acts, Luke did not derail from this theme. He avails the reader the opportunity of a concrete example of the danger of power and oppression: One sees himself in the position of God, convinced of ones omnipotence. The hubris of Herod exemplifies this conviction.

1.2 *Text and translation of Acts 12: 20-24*

1.2.1 *Greek text*

- 20a Ἦν δὲ θυμομαχῶν Τυρίοις καὶ Σιδωνίοις·
 b ὁμοθυμαδὸν δὲ παρήσαν πρὸς αὐτόν,
 c καὶ πείσαντες Βλάστον τὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ κοιτῶνος τοῦ βασιλέως
 d ἤτοῦντο εἰρήνην,
 e διὰ τὸ τρέφειν αὐτῶν τὴν χώραν ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλικῆς.
 21a τακτῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ὁ Ἡρώδης
 b ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθῆτα βασιλικὴν [καὶ] καθίσας ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος
 c ἐδημηγόρει πρὸς αὐτούς·
 22a ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει,
 b Θεοῦ φωνὴ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου.
 23a παραχρῆμα δὲ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος κυρίου
 b ἀνδ' ὧν οὐκ ἔδωκεν τὴν δόξαν τῷ θεῷ,
 c καὶ γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος ἐξέψυξεν.
 24a Ὁ δὲ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἠύξανεν καὶ ἐπληθύνετο.

1.2.2 *English translation*

- 20a However, he (Herod) was infuriated with the people of Tyre and Sidon.
 b They came to him with one accord,
 c having won over Blastus, the chamberlain of the king,
 d they sought for peace
 e because their land was fed by (the land of) the king.
 21a But on an appointed day, Herod
 b being dressed in a royal robe, and having taken his position on the rostrum,
 c addressed them.
 22a The people shouted
 b voice of God and not of man
 23a At once the angel of the Lord struck him (down),
 b because he did not give God the glory.
 c Eaten up by worms he breathed his last.
 24a But the word of God spread and increased.

2. *The context of the death of Herod*

Our text would not have any meaning if it were not seen as belonging to a macro-context. The whole of chapter 12 is a unit,¹ because only in the correct contextualisation within this twelfth chapter is a correct analysis of our micro-text dealing with Herod's death possible. At the first glance, our text of Acts 12:20-24 appears to be out of place. However, a correct reading reveals the connectedness of the whole chapter, which could be summarised thus: For the reader, the death of Herod becomes imperative after being intimated on the malicious intentions and actions of Herod, who not only attacks the church, but also failed to give God His glory.² The shift from Antioch to Jerusalem (Act 11:30) and from Jerusalem to Antioch (Acts 12:25) helps in the determination of this text as a unit. In addition, this chapter disrupts the literary flow of the account about the Antiochian community. Besides, the fact of its being embedded within the literary frames of the mandate given to Barnabas and Saul for the Jerusalem community, which not only closes the eleventh chapter (*ἀποστειλάντες πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους διὰ χειρὸς Βαρναβᾶ καὶ Σαύλου*), but also the twelfth chapter (*Βαρναβᾶς δὲ καὶ Σαῦλος ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ...*) is another proof of its unity.³ The framing device with this mandate confers the text a height of unity and structure, whereby this structure incorporates the three last verses of the preceding chapter. Consequently, the text has a concentric structure of a/b/c/b/a with the miraculous liberation of Peter through the angel⁴ as the centre of the structure:

- a. The journey of Barnabas and Saul to Jerusalem (Acts 11:27-30)
- b. The actions of Herod against the church (Acts 12:1-4)
- c. The miraculous liberation of Peter (Acts 12:5-17)
- b. The actions of Herod and his death (Acts 12:18-24)
- a. The return journey of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 12:25).⁵

¹ Cf. W. Radl, *Befreiung*, 82. R.C. Tannehill, *Unity 2*, 157, sees the text as not only presenting Agrippa as an evil ruler, who not only persecutes the church, but shows his willingness to accept divine honours. The chapter, therefore, is a documentation of the evil deeds of Agrippa. Alfons Weiser sees the text as a planned narrative unit with three sections beginning with the murder of an apostle and ending with the death of Agrippa with a far-reaching consequence for the word of God. Cf. A. Weiser, *Apostelgeschichte 1*, 283f. Against these views, D.S. Dockery, *Acts 6-12*, 433, states, "The verses (vv. 20-24) serve as a footnote to the previous section, adding little to Luke's narrative, except to provide a point of reference with secular history."

² Cf. O.W. Allen, *Death*, 91. Contrary is the view of J. Hintermaier, *Befreiungswunder*, 201, who insists that there is neither a causal nor an internal relationship between the release of Peter and the death of Agrippa.

³ This observation in the structure enjoys the acceptance of J. Hintermaier, *Befreiungswunder*, 187-189. However, he disagrees that the text is a unit in the sense of treating a common theme. For him, this logical unit is only attested in Acts 12:1-19. As such, he sees a literal-critical problem, inasmuch as there is a break in the logic of thought, because the reason for the punishment on Agrippa does not correspond with his actions on the community. S. Cunningham sees the death punishment as the opposite of deliverance, which however complements the deliverance miracle. Cf. S. Cunningham, *Tribulations*, 241.

⁴ The activity of the angel contrasts the passivity of Peter during the liberation. Peter had only to obey the orders of the angel. The initiative is however taken by the angel. The angel is therefore the first character to be given a voice in a direct speech: *ἀνάστα ἐν τάχει*.

⁵ Cf. W. Schmithals, *Apostelgeschichte*, 115. This structure not only sees the whole chapter as a unit, it also shows that our text of Acts 12:20-24 is not a digression but a result of Luke's

Our small text in question (Acts 12:20-24) is situated within a wider context dealing with the unannounced and unexpected introduction of the person of Herod Agrippa and his persecution of the young faith. The characterisation of Herod is striking, preparing the mind of the reader to expect nothing good from the king.

Judging from the inability of the writer in being specific about the victims of Herod, one can conclude that Herod is the focus of the narration. The king in question is Herod Agrippa I, also known as Julius Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great and the son of Aristobulus and Berenike, whom Luke refers conventionally as Herod. Just like his grandfather, Herod Agrippa was a friend of Rome and a confidant of Emperor Caligula, who gave him not only the tetrarch of Philip in 37 CE, but also the royal title. In 40 CE, following the order of Caligula, Galilee and Perae, which formerly belonged to his uncle Herod Antipas, were added to his royal jurisdiction. His affinity with the king makers in Rome was cemented by Emperor Claudius in 41 CE, who transferred to him the jurisdiction for Judea and Samaria, that were formerly under the tutelage of the imperial governors. From 41 to 44 CE, the year of his death, Agrippa reunited the different kingdoms that were under his grandfather.⁶ Owing to the background of his grandmother Marianne, he could claim a Maccabean descent, which invariably assured him the support of pious Jews, especially the Pharisees.⁷

The direct characterization or definition⁸ of Herod is simply negative, inasmuch as there is no mention of an offence committed by the church that could have warranted the persecution. He is not only characterized as powerful, but also as tyrannical, evil and ruthless.⁹ His characterization is *in factis* (by action) and not *in dictis* (by speech). His actions (his unfavourable stance to the young faith and his killing of James) and his primary aim in arresting Peter are stated (*ἀρεστόν ἐστιν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις*). Of immense importance in this characterisation is not only the arbitrariness,¹⁰ but also the partiality and injustice involved in the procedure of Herod. Executing innocent people as an avenue to personal interest was a welcome option for him. The imprisonment of Peter and the subsequent execution of the guards after the deliverance of Peter exemplify the wickedness of Herod, which would be followed by his hubris in Caesarea. The immediate relationship between the persecution of the church and his death suggests a divine retribution against one who defied God by persecuting his church.¹¹ An assessment of his death as favouring the growth and the increase in number of the young church is given. Only by reading thoroughly through the lines is it possible for the reader to see Herod as a hindrance to the faith. His elimination paves the way for a brighter future.

purposeful organisation. This structure is however criticised by Barrett on the ground that the first and the fifth points are not based on literary reasons but on chronological reasons, which Schmithals oversaw. Cf. C.K. Barrett, Acts I, 572.

⁶ Cf. Herodes in Kleine Pauly II, 1094.

⁷ Cf. H.J. Klauck, Stimme, 253. Also C.K. Barrett, Acts I, 574.

⁸ For more on direct characterisation as an authoritative literary device confer S. Rimmon-Kenan, Fiction, 60.

⁹ Cf. O.W. Allen, Death, 77.

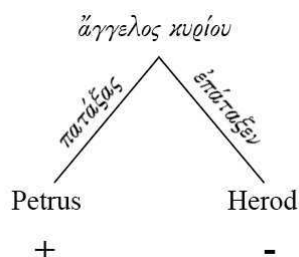
¹⁰ Cf. R. Pesch, Apostelgeschichte I, 363. For more on the arbitrary action and injustice involved in the action Herod, cf. C.W. Stenschke, Portrait, 72.

¹¹ Cf. D.R. Adams, Suffering, 171.

2.1 *The semantic connections and structure of Chapter 12:20-24*

The language and tense of the text present very important information about the text. The beginning of the liberation of Peter with the *μέν...δέ* construction, beginning in v.5 and ending in v.6, heightens the expectation of the reader in the anticipation of the redeeming actions of God.¹² In an abrupt manner, the problematic situation between Agrippa and the people of Tyre and Sidon is thematised without stating the reasons for the conflict. One could easily have the impression that Luke presents another device of Agrippa to sooth his ego, after failing to have his way in killing Peter. The time description is vague and does not convey any definiteness though it deals with an appointed or set day (*τακτῆ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ*). From v.19, the reader perceives a change in the geography of the narration from the religious capital Jerusalem to Caesarea, where the king is expected to undertake a political function.

The angel of God *ἄγγελος κυρίου* belongs to the *dramatis personae* of this pericope though he is not a human person.¹³ He appears again after having left Peter in v.10. He is the binding feature between the deliverance miracle and the punishment miracle. However, his resurfacing in the scene has a different motivation as during the liberation of Peter. He saved Peter, but here he comes to kill Herod. His appearance in v.7 is introduced with a semantic signal *καὶ ἶδου* and in v.23 with another semantic signal *παραχρῆμα*. With these semantic signals the surprise and meaning of the epiphany of the angel gain a profound profile.¹⁴ Interesting however, is the use of the same verb (*πατάσσειν*) for the different actions, which heightens the irony of the literary art of Luke. The verb is used in its present participle in connection with Peter in v.7 (*πατάσας*) to wake him (*ἤγειρεν*) and used in aorist in the case of Herod in v.23 (*ἐπάταξεν*), which meant death for him. The angel carried out the same action, however, with different intentions and results.¹⁵ In the case of Peter, he served as a guardian and delivering angel, while he acted as an angel of doom for Agrippa.



The different tenses of the finite verbs in the punishment of Herod give an insight into the importance of the action of the angel and the ensuing death of Herod.

¹² That is obviously in keeping with the Lukan intention of displaying his good news as operating on two layers: Heaven and earth. God intervenes in Acts to save Peter and the church just as he intervened in the gospel to save Jesus. The song of the angels at the birth of Jesus confirms this observation. Heaven and earth are in communion.

¹³ Others are the people of Tyre and Sidon, Blastus, who did not play any other role, Herod and the people, whose identity is and remains obscure.

¹⁴ Cf. R. Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte* 1, 364f.

¹⁵ *Πατάσσειν* is frequently used in the Septuagint for divine judgement (Exod 2:12; Judg 1:5; Ps 3:7; 77:66). Owing to the use of the same verb, it is evident that the same angel is at work. Cf. G. Theissen, *Verfolgung*, 265 footnote 3 and H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 254.

Luke uses imperfect verbs (Erzählzeit) to describe the actions of the different characters of the scene beginning in v.20, e.g. ἦν, παρῆσαν, ἤτοῦντο, ἐδημηγόρει, ἐπεφώνει. Suddenly there is an abrupt change in the tense of the finite verbs in v.23 now using aorist to describe the action of the angel and the death of Herod, e.g. ἐπάταξεν, ἔδωκεν, ἐξέψυξεν, only to return to his use of imperfect tense in v.24, e.g. ἠύξανεν, ἐπλεθύνετο. Invariably this action of the angel and the type of death that Herod experienced are important factors for Luke. In the whole chapter, Herod acts as God's opponent and of those working for Him: the Christian communities, James and Peter.¹⁶ Through the action of the angel and the death of Herod, the conflict between God and Herod comes to a decisive end.¹⁷

Our text dealing with the arrogance and hubris of Herod Agrippa has changing semantic fields: there are not only words indicating anger and sad moments, e.g. θυμομαχῶν, ἐπάταξεν, γενόμενος σκοληκόβρωτος and ἐξέψυξεν, but also words of joy and pleasant remarks, e.g. ἤτοῦντο εἰρήνην, θεοῦ φωνὴ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου and ἠύξανεν καὶ ἐπλεθύνετο. With the exception of the acclamation of the audience, θεοῦ φωνὴ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου, the text is lacking in direct speeches, which renders the pericope boring and undynamic. The text could be structured thus:

1. V.20: **Introduction and background information**

- a. v.20a: Introduction
- b. v.20b-e: Tyre and Sidon and their quest for peace

2. Vv.21-23: **Main narrative**

- a. vv.21-22: Herod and the people
 - v.21: The public address of Herod
 - v.22: The reaction of the people
- b. V.23: The reaction of the angel
 - v.23a and b: the strike of the angel and the death of Herod
 - v.23c: Reason for striking.

3. V.24: **Consequence**¹⁸ as a summary statement, which not only closes the narrative of the punishment of Herod but also opens the way for the course of the new faith outside Palestine, especially with the missionary journeys of Paul.¹⁹

2.2 *The Literary Genre of Acts 12:20-24*

The determination of the literary genre of Acts 12:20-24 poses a little problem inasmuch as the contextualisation of the text is very important. The reader should also note the presence of the genre of miraculous deliverance in the case of Peter, which is the centre of the narration.

¹⁶ Cf. J. Hintermaier, *Befreiungswunder*, 199.

¹⁷ Cf. O.W. Allen, *Death*, 73.

¹⁸ Following the course of the whole chapter, the rescue of Peter is exemplified on the freedom of the word of God. The conviction of Hintermaier is apt: "Apg 12,1-23 bringt zum Ausdruck, dass keine Macht die Verkündigung des Wortes Gottes aufhalten kann. Teilerfolge mögen erreicht werden, doch letztlich ist keine Opposition stark genug, um dem Eingreifen Gottes zu trotzen." *Befreiungswunder* 200.

¹⁹ Cf. R. Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte 1*, 371. Concerning the narrative importance of this verse as a way of introducing the missionary journey of Paul, confer R.C. Tannehill, *Unity II*, 157.

The inspection of the language and form of the present text show that Acts 12:20-24 belongs to the genre of punishment miracle, especially to the group of the horrible death of God's classic persecutors, *de mortibus persecutorum*.²⁰

The stages in this genre are generally typified to involve a manifold transgression of the rules and ways of God, idolatry, God strikes the offender, who dies by being eaten up by worms. It could involve an arrogant pride and presumption, which could be interpreted as an excessive pride towards or defiance of the gods, which invariably leads to nemesis. Their untold pride justify the observation that the interest of such legends is, "...mit dem *θεομάχος* kurzen Prozeß zu machen".²¹ These people often die through being eaten up with lice and decaying while still alive.²²

The sickness inflicted on such people and their type of death heighten the awareness and fear towards a particular deity. The horrible sickness, that involves being eaten up by worms while still alive seems to be central to such genres: Lucian documents the death of Alexander the false prophet and mentions the instrumentality of these worms in his death.²³ Josephus narrates the death of Herod the Great from this perspective; even the Maccabean documentation of the death of Antiochus Epiphanes is coloured with this informative element.²⁴

The *Sitz im Leben* of such a narration could have been the hostile Palestinian polemic and agitation against the imperial cult and the cult of rulers, which is diametrically opposed to the Jewish understanding and conviction of monotheism.²⁵ The intention of such a narration is to warn against any act that could be challenging to God, or termed blasphemous against God. An important observation concerns the many narrations in Acts that exemplify the punishment

²⁰ Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, Acts, 486. Also W. Radl, *Befreiung*, 85. Examples abound, not only in the Bible but also in classical literatures, of such deaths and punishments. In antiquities, the opposers of deities, e.g., Dionysius, are struck with terrible sicknesses, which lead to a most painful death. The conviction, "daß Gott die christenfeindlichen Kaiser, die in den Anhängern der christlichen Religion ihn selbst und seine Wahrheit bekämpften, durch einen besonders grausamen Tod bestrafte, ist eine Übertragung aus der Antike." W. Nestle, *Legenden*, 269. Striking are the similarities in the deaths of Herod and Antiochus IV. Epiphanes in 2 Macc 9:1-28. Antiochus was filled with pride and was struck (*ἐπάταξεν*) by God. Worms (*σκώληκας*) infested his body as he died. The résumé that a mortal should not think as if he were God (9:12) finds an echo in Acts 12:23. According to Klauck, Luke and Josephus are following a scheme in Jewish literature that reached its summit with Antiochus IV. Epiphanes. Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 256. Also W. Schmithals, *Apostelgeschichte*, 116.

²¹ B. Heininger, *Paulus*, 228. In addition, Heininger presents some important elements of this literary genre in this work. Cf. 226-232.

²² W. Radl, *Befreiung*, 86.

²³ Cf. Lucian, *Alexander* 59. Pliny affirmed the instrumentality of worms in the death of such people in his *Natural History*, where he documented the death of Pherekyds of Syros as arising from the multitude of worms, which came out of his body. Cf. Pliny, *Natural History* VII, 172. Worms or the like are also found in the following narratives: Judith 16:17 (for the Lord's enemies in general); Apocalypse of Peter 27 (for persecutors in general). Plutarch, *Sulla* 36, which speaks of lice and Josephus, *Ant.* 17. 168-190, which documents the death of Herod the Great.

²⁴ I.H. Marshall observes that death by worms could be taken literally although it seems to be a phrase in describing the death of tyrants (Acts, 212). In the same line, Pesch (*Apostelgeschichte*, 368) sees the death of Agrippa as typical of those despising God. Schneider (*Apostelgeschichte*, 87) simply notices that the description of the death of Agrippa is typical.

²⁵ Cf. W. Radl, *Befreiung*, 86.

miracle, notwithstanding the fact that each narration is unique in its presentation: Acts 5:1-11; 9:1-19; 13:4-12; 19:13-19.

3. *Tradition-criticism*

The information about the death of Herod Agrippa in the Acts of Apostles gains a height of brisance and retains its authority, especially when compared with the account of Josephus concerning the death of Herod Agrippa.²⁶ Owing to this close parallelism to a non-Christian text, the Lukan text of the death of Herod Agrippa is especially intriguing to historians and exegetes as well.

The interest in this surprising identity between the work of a historian and the work of an evangelist has a very long history. Eusebius, trying to analyse the struggle of the young church from the perspective of secular history, noted and marvelled at the way the work of Josephus corroborates the account of Luke²⁷

He sees the account of Josephus as ratifying the information given by Luke concerning the death of Herod in Acts 12:20-24. He, however, noted the difference in the appellation of the king, given the fact, that Luke calls him Herod, while Josephus is more definite with the name Agrippa.²⁸

However, an attempt to determine the extent of the influence of tradition and redaction on the version of Luke will invariably presuppose a prior determination of the Lukan language in the version presented in Acts: The word *θυμομαχῶν* comes from *θυμομαχέω* and is only evidenced once in the New Testament, namely in Acts 12:20. As such, it is a hapax legomenon.²⁹ It is therefore neither typically Lukan nor typically a word of the New Testament and should be assigned to tradition. The word *ὁμοθυμαδὸν* is used twelve times in The New Testament. Of these twelve instances, eleven instances are found in Luke³⁰ and one instance is in Romans 15:6. The words *κοιτών* and *δημηγορέω* are hapax legomenoi appearing only in Acts 12:20 and Acts 12:21 respectively. The word

²⁶ Scholars are of the opinion, that the same event but with different details in the different accounts rendered by Luke and Josephus show that both writers wrote independently of each other, even when some opine that Luke must have used the version of Josephus, e.g. S. Mason, Josephus, especially page 99. For a general evaluation of the relationship between Luke and Josephus, confer the following pages 185-229. A neutral assessment of the literary relationship in this narrative of the death of Herod is the assumption that both Luke and Josephus, while not copying from each other, had access to the same source. Josephus and Luke could have merely heard similar stories, and had similar written material.

²⁷ Eusebius opined, "I am surprised how in this and other points Josephus confirms the truth of the divine scriptures. Even if he seems to some to differ as to the name of the king, nevertheless the date and the events show that he is the same, and either that the name has been changed by clerical error or that there were two names for the same man, as has happened with many." In: The Ecclesiastical History (LCL). Harvard 1980.

²⁸ Here lies the utmost importance of Josephus in the historical clarification of facts and events in the New Testament. Without the help of Josephus, many historical illustrations given in the New Testament would have been peripheral, and the social, as well as political and cultural details in the Palestinian organisation would have remained unfathomed. Cf. S. Mason, Josephus, 90. Also M. Hengel, Zeloten, 175.

²⁹ A related word *θυμόμομαι* is equally recorded once in the New Testament, namely in Matt 2:16. Most interesting however is that this word has to do with another Herod. The noun *θυμός* is however used often in the New Testament, none in the other gospels, twice in the Lukan volume (Lk 4:28 and Acts 19:28) and ten times in the Revelations etc.

³⁰ Acts 1:14; 2:1,46; 4:24; 5:12; 7:57; 8:6; 12:20; 15:25; 18:12; 19:29.

ἐπεφώνει is the imperfect form of *ἐπιφωνέω*. *ἐπιφωνέω* is used four times in its different forms in the New Testament and these occurrences are only in Luke.³¹ The adverb *παραχεῖμα* belongs to the favourite words of Luke. Of the nineteen occurrences in the new Testament, seventeen instances are found in Luke, while the remaining two are evidenced in Matt (21:19,20). Another hapax legomenon is evidenced in Acts 12:23 namely *σκωληκόβρωτος*.³² With this word, Luke exemplifies the death of Agrippa as belonging to those who engage God in a combat. Related to this word is another hapax legomenon *σκώληξ* in Mk 9:48. From the above observations, certain words are typically Lukan; others are uniquely Lukan while others are not Lukan. It is therefore plausible to assume that Luke had a standing tradition, from which he got the story, however, modifying it according to his needs (redaction). I will now give the documentation of Josephus, which will be followed by the presentation of the important details of his account.

3.1 *The account of Josephus*

Jewish Antiquities, XIX 343-350³³

(343) After the completion of the third year of his reign over the whole of Judea, Agrippa came to the city of Caesarea, which had previously been called Strato's tower. Here he celebrated spectacles in honour of Caesar, knowing that these had been instituted as a kind of festival on behalf of Caesar's well-being. For this occasion there were gathered a large number of men who held office or had advanced to some rank in the kingdom. (344) On the second day of the spectacles, clad in a garment woven completely of silver (*στολήν ἐνδύς ἐξ ἀργύρου πεποιημένην πᾶσαν*) so that its texture was indeed wondrous, he entered the theatre at daybreak. There the silver, illumined by the touch of the first rays of the sun, was wondrously radiant and by its glitter inspired fear and awe in those who gazed intently upon it. (345) Straightway (*εὐθύς*) his flatterers raised their voices (*φωνὰς ἀνεβόων*) from various directions – though hardly for his good – addressing him as a god (*θεὸν προσαγορεύοντες*). “May you be propitious to us,” they added, “and if we have hitherto feared you as a man, yet henceforth we agree that you are more than mortal in your being.” (*εἰ καὶ μέχρι νῦν ὡς ἄνθρωπον ἐφοβήθημεν, ἀλλὰ τούντεῦθεν κρείττονά σε θνητῆς φύσεως ὁμολογοῦμεν*) (346) The king did not rebuke them nor did he reject their flattery as impious. But shortly thereafter he looked up and saw an owl perched on a rope over his head. At once, recognising this as a harbinger of woes (*ἄγγελον...κακῶν*) just as it had once been of good tidings, he felt a stab of pain in his heart. He was also gripped in his stomach by an ache that he felt everywhere at once and that was intense from the start. Leaping up (347), he said to his friends: “I, a god in your eyes (*ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν ἐγώ*), am now bidden to lay down my life, for fate brings immediate refutation of the lying words lately addressed to me. I, who was called immortal by you, am now under sentence of death. But I must accept my lot as God wills it. In fact I have lived in no ordinary fashion but in the grand style that is hailed as true bliss.” (348) Even as he was speaking these words, he was overcome by more intense pain. They hastened, therefore, to convey him to the palace; and the word flashed about to everyone that he was on the very verge of death. (349) Straightway the populace, including the women and children, sat in sackcloth in accordance with their ancestral custom and made entreaty to God on behalf of the king. The sound of wailing and lamentations prevailed everywhere. The king, as he lay in his lofty bedchamber and looked down on the people as they fell prostrate, was not dry-eyed himself. (350) Exhausted after five straight days by the pain in his abdomen, he departed this in the fifty-fourth year of his life and the seventh of his reign.

³¹ Lk 23:21; Acts 12:22; 21:34; 22:24.

³² Actually, this is an agricultural vocabulary used mainly for plants, trees and fruits. However, in the biblical tradition, fire and worm symbolise the emptiness of man (Sir 7:17; Is 66:24). Worms especially show the decomposition of corpses implying that the human person is nothing. That explains the frequent use of this metaphor in religious and profane literatures especially for the painful ends of villains and persecutors. Cf. C. Spicq, *σκωληκόβρωτος* in: TLNT 3, 266f.

³³ The translation used here is that of Loeb classical library (LCL) translated by L.H. Feldman.

3.2 *Synoptic comparison with Josephus*

I will try to point out, with the help of a tabular form, the similarities and differences involved in the different versions of Luke and Josephus.³⁴

Acts 12	Antiquities 19
Herod (20,21)	Agrippa (343)
Setting and Context: Caesarea , Dispute with Tyre and Sidon (19)	Setting and Context: Caesarea , Celebration honouring Emperor Claudius (343)
Royal garb (21)	Royal garb in complete silver (344)
Crowd offers divine honour Related to his <i>voice</i> θεοῦ φωνή, after his speech (22)	Crowd offers divine honour Related to the <i>glitter of the silver robe</i> as he entered the theatre (345)
King did not glorify God (23)	King fails to reject praise (346)
<i>An angel strikes the king</i> (23): ἄγγελος κυρίου	<i>An owl appears as messenger of woe</i> (346): ἄγγελον...κακῶν
<i>King dies immediately</i> (23)	<i>King suffers excruciating pains for five days and dies</i> (346ff)
He was eaten by worms (23)	He suffered stomach ache (346ff)
Word of God increased and multiplied (24)	People of Caesarea and Sebaste rejoiced at the king's death (356ff).

From this tabular setting, it is suggestive that both versions have the same plot. Even when each version has its own peculiar details, the general similarity is very striking. Notwithstanding this identity, attempts have been made to harmonise both versions, making a version out of two. However, each of the accounts is unique.

Each of the writer knew this tradition, either orally or written. There is no evidence that one copied from the other.³⁵ The mention of the setting in Caesarea in both versions is a common factor, although the contexts are different: a peacemaking union after a dispute with Tyre and Sidon provides the context in Luke (Acts 12:20) while a celebration in honour of the emperor Claudius provides the context of Josephus (Ant. 19:343). Luke has no reason to invent a dispute between Herod and the people of Tyre and Sidon, since this dispute was not very necessary for the death of Agrippa. The Old Testament evidences for an economic independence of these areas on Israel make this account historically plausible.³⁶ Luke might have used such a discord to present a situation, where Agrippa would make a speech of reconciliation to the people of Tyre and Sidon hoping to be hailed as benefactor, who brings relief to his clients.³⁷

³⁴ For more on this confer, O.W. Allen, *Death*, 7.

³⁵ On the general question of a possible relationship of the two versions, confer L.H. Feldman, *Josephus*, 717-23 and H. Schreckenberg, *Josephus*, 179-209. It is however evident that many scholars simply note the similarities and differences without stating any view concerning a relationship like R. Pesch, *Apostelgeschichte*, 367f and F.F. Bruce, *Acts*, 288f.

³⁶ Cf. 1 kg 5 and Ezek 27:17. For more on this confer J. Jervell, *Apostelgeschichte*, 339.

³⁷ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 255.

The mention of Tyre in this pericope has given a cause for comparison between this text and the oracle against Tyre in Ezek 27-28: Judah and Israel trade foodstuffs with Tyre and the hubris of Tyre is summarised in its king presented as the epitome of rebellion, which is the re-enactment of the original steps to hubris. For oppressing the people of the covenant and for the utterance of hubris, they, personified in the tyrian king, deserve the certainty of swift punishment by a cherub.³⁸ Both texts exemplify the criticism of domination and the protest against the misuse of power.³⁹ Probably, Luke had this text of Ezekiel in mind as he was composing his account of the death of Agrippa.⁴⁰

In the versions of Luke and Josephus, the appearance of the king as being clad in royal garb is documented (Acts 12:21 *ἐνδυσάμενος* and Ant. 344 *ἐνδύς*), although with a further qualification of the royal garb as completely made of silver by Josephus. It is striking that Luke never said any other thing concerning the royal robe. The question regarding the purpose of the royal robe becomes imperative. This observation cannot but insinuate the suspicion that Luke had the version of Josephus in mind as he wrote his version, otherwise he should not have mentioned the royal garb.⁴¹ However, this is just a possibility just as it is another possibility that the tradition, which both of them used had this detail, which Luke did not see as relevant for his composition. In addition, a resemblance to Lk 23:11 has been suggested, where Antipas (another Herod!) made a mockery of Jesus by laying his coat on him.⁴²

The characterization by external appearance of the king (the glittering of the silver garb) provided the immediate context for the offering of divine honour to the king in the version of Josephus (Ant.345), while the address of the king in the version of Luke provided the immediate context for the divine honour (Acts 12:22). The king did not glorify God in the account of Luke (Acts 12:23), while Josephus noted that the king did not reject the divine praise given to him (Ant.346). The angel struck the king down in the account of Luke (Acts 12:23), while an owl appeared as the messenger of doom in the account of Josephus (Ant.346). The immediate death of the king in the Lukan version (Acts 12:23) contrasts the protracted death of the king in the version of Josephus (Ant.346f). The Lukan account, following the *topoi* of the death of persecutors and blasphemers within the Jewish milieu,⁴³ notes that the king was eaten up by worms prior to his death (Acts 12:23), while the account of Josephus documents that the king suffered stomachache (Ant.346f).⁴⁴ Generally, the wondrous aspect of the death of Agrippa is missing in the version of Josephus. The Lukan version noted the increase and multiplication of the word of God because of the death of Herod (Acts 12:24). On the other hand, Josephus documented that the people of Caesarea and Sebaste rejoiced at the death of the king (Ant.356f). The Version of Josephus gave the king the opportunity of addressing the people in his pains and of a possible repentance (Ant.347), which is

³⁸ Cf. M.R. Strom, Background, 290.

³⁹ Cf. H.J. Klauck, Stimme, 254, footnote 16.

⁴⁰ Cf. S.R. Garrett, Exodus, 677.

⁴¹ Cf. S. Mason, Josephus, 99 for a detailed discussion of his point.

⁴² Cf. H.J. Klauck, Stimme, 256.

⁴³ Cf. 2 Macc 9:1-28 which presented the painful death of Antiochus Epiphanes, a traditional archetype of blasphemers.

⁴⁴ Josephus would have rendered his historical account boring and uninspiring, if he had documented that worms ate Agrippa, while he had already reported that the grandfather of Agrippa, Herod the Great, died from gangrene and worms. For a further reading, cf. Jos Ant. 17, 169 and Bell. 1, 656.

lacking in Luke. The version of Josephus further records the sympathy of the populace for the dying king, shown through the entreaty made to God on his behalf (Ant.349).

At most, one can see the two versions as complementing each other, having been probably drawn from the same tradition opposed to the wishes of the imperial cult, in as much as the acclamations in both versions insinuate an affinity to Ezek 28:2,6,9 (e.g. v.2c: “you are human and not God, though you have set your heart as the heart of God.”). The differences in the versions could be explained from the different processes involved in the handing on of this tradition and in the redaction motives of the authors.⁴⁵ Probably, the circle from which Josephus got this traditional story would not want its loved king⁴⁶ to be presented as being smote by the angel of God. That might explain the introduction of the bird of doom.⁴⁷ In as much as a comparison is instructive, the different aims of both authors should not be forgotten: Josephus is silent over the persecution of Christians under Agrippa and presents him in a very positive light showing from a historical point of view that Agrippa was not the notorious villain we meet in the Acts of the Apostles. On the other hand, Luke is interested in Agrippa only as a scoundrel and as a persecutor of the church.⁴⁸ Notwithstanding these similarities and differences, the summary of the versions is to articulate the outcome of blasphemy and the arrogation of divine honour.

However the general similarity of the different accounts, the acclamation of the crowd in the account of Luke, which is very essential in the steps leading to the death of Herod, has no parallel in the account of Josephus. It has to do with a particular word *φωνή*. Although the word appeared in its plural form in Ant. XIX, 345 *φωνὰς ἀνεβόων*, it could atmost be seen as an equivalent of the Lukan construction *ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει*. The sense of this word in the construction *θεοῦ φωνή* is unparalleled.

The conviction that part of the reason for the death of Herod could be seen in his hubris is shared by Luke und Josephus, although with a difference. For Luke, the divine acclamation of the crowd was motivated by the *φωνή* of the king, which they heard as he made a public address to them (*ἐδημηγόρει πρὸς αὐτούς*). Josephus documents a more plausible attribution of the awe and euphoria of the crowd to the glittering of the royal robe of the king as the silver was illumined by the first

⁴⁵ Cf. A. Weiser, *Apostelgeschichte* 1, 287.

⁴⁶ The behaviour of Agrippa is very difficult to assess, since Josephus presented him in a very fair manner. That Agrippa was loved could be because of his dedication to the cause of the temple after the death of Caligula. Philo (Leg. 197-337) and Josephus (Ant. 18, 256-309) exemplify his dedication for the Jewish cause, especially for the temple. Helmut Köster (Einführung, 410) summarises the other side of Agrippa: “In Jerusalem gab sich der König die größte Mühe, als frommer und gesetzestreuer Jude aufzutreten, förderte die jüdische Religion nach Kräften und ging gegen ihre Feinde nach dem Willen der religiösen Führer Jerusalems vor. ... In seiner politischen Hauptstadt Caesarea freilich spielte Agrippa den orientalischen Kleinkönig.” E. Renan (*Apostles*, 204) advocates that Agrippa was poisoned possibly by the Romans who feared and wanted to check his authority.

⁴⁷ Cf. E. Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte*, 373.

⁴⁸ Cf. S. Cunningham, *Tribulations*, 240 footnote 179.

ray of the sun.⁴⁹ It is then very important to go into history and tradition with the intention of seeing where these details come from.⁵⁰

3.3 *Historical findings*

The appearance of the king with the information given about his royal garb and the voice of the king are instruments very essential in the understanding and assessment of the imperial cult as a system, which provides the background for the understanding of the intentions of Luke. I am inclined to believe that these two items are used so subtly in Luke that only one well accustomed with the practices of the imperial cult and court ceremonies is in a position to understand it for what it is, namely a criticism of this imperial cult, which saw a god in the reigning emperor.

3.3.1 *The emergence of the king*

The account of Josephus portrays the king as being pompously clad in a royal garb made completely of silver, *στολήν ἐνδύς ἐξ ἀργύρου πεποιημένην πᾶσαν*. The Lukan account simply stated: *ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθῆτα βασιλικήν*. However, it is very important to note that Luke⁵¹ and Josephus never gave this information simply because they are interested in an utmost impeccable historical recording of an event, neither did they give this information to heighten the literary expectation of the royal feast.

This information about the dressing and emergence of the king centres on the practice of the then imperial cult and touches the very nerve of this practice.⁵² Both accounts give insight into the social and religious practice in the imperial cult. It belonged to the system that an emperor or a king should make an event out of his public appearance or emergence, which invariably has more to do with the royal garb and appearance.⁵³ The appearance of an emperor during a feast, or for a

⁴⁹ Haenchen and Klauck, arguing from social and religious data, hold the opinion that the account of Josephus regarding the royal garb of Herod and the subsequent awe it awaked in the crowd documents a more plausible story in comparison to that of Luke. Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 257, and E. Haenchen, *Apostelgeschichte*, 373.

⁵⁰ Although the royal garb of Herod does not play a great role in the account of Luke, it would not be out of order to give it a thorough investigation just like the mention of the voice of the king as the voice of God.

⁵¹ Luke knows and appreciates this form of expressing majesty and poverty with the type of cloth one is wearing. In Lk 16: 19, a picture of a rich man clothed in an expensive garb is presented, who eventually ended up in hell because he never cared about the poor that housed at his doorpost. In addition to this text, another pericope in Luke (Lk 15: 11-32: the prodigal son especially v.22) presents another picture giving a new meaning to a cloth. The fact that the prodigal son was given a new article of clothing does not just create the picture of satisfying the human need of covering oneself. More importantly, it is "...das öffentliche Sichtbarmachen der Vergebung und der Wiederherstellung der Kindesstellung." B. Heininger, *Metaphorik*, 160.

⁵² In many cultures, the type of articles of clothing, which some one puts, exemplifies his excellence in the community. Atimes, these articles are used to show the type of function one has in a particular society. Articles of clothing have more to say about the social status of a person.

⁵³ For more on the demagogic and orchestrated appearance of the emperors, see the history of Nero given by Suetonius in the biography of Nero. Suetonius, *Nero* 25.

meeting with emissaries, or during the signing of an accord is always heightened with a great expectation concerning the demagogic appearance of the emperor.

Emperor Claudius organised a feast in honour of the military power of his waters, which surpassed all that one knew of such feasts during the time of Augustus. On the dressing and appearance of the emperor during this feast, Tacitus reported, *ipse insigni paludamento neque procul Agrippina chlamyde aurata praesidere*.⁵⁴

The aim of this quotation is to show that both Luke and Josephus situated Agrippa within this class of people in a ruling and exploiting system. Herod belonged to a system, in which a human with power over others sees himself as having a special affinity to the divine. The appearance of such people involves an intimidating awe from those privileged to behold this sight.

The characterisation by external appearance fuels the imagination that Agrippa intends a deification of himself, or insinuates an affinity with the sun god.⁵⁵ It has, therefore been maintained that the royal garb of Agrippa must have had the embroidered image of the sun god.⁵⁶ Owing to the documentation of Josephus from the perspective of the dazzling rays of the morning sun, it has been argued with some degree of probability that Agrippa played the part of a sun god, allowing the spectators to acclaim his appearance (epiphany). This assumption of Lösch has a far-reaching consequence for the findings of Morgenstern regarding the setting of this Agrippa episode:

“However, the fact that Agrippa appeared in radiant garb and playing the role of a sun-god apparently just at sunrise, so that the first rays of the rising sun were reflected from his person, suggests that this was in all likelihood an equinoctial or solstitial festival.”⁵⁷

The celebration of such appearances in wonderful and most extravagant garb and apparel in a sycophant manner was and remained normal in classical poetry. Extravagant royal garbs with embroidered images of the gods or mythological images were not only accessible in Babylon⁵⁸ and Egypt. They were also treasured by well to do families within the imperial period.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ Tac. Ann. 12, 56. “He and Agrippina presided, the one in a gorgeous military cloak, the other – not far distant – in a Greek mantle of cloth of Gold.” Dio Cassius documented it thus: “Claudius conceived the desire to exhibit a naval battle on a certain lake; so, after building a wooden wall around it and erecting stands, he assembled an enormous multitude. Claudius and Nero were arrayed in military garb, while Agrippina wore a beautiful chlamys woven with threads of gold, and the rest of the spectators whatever pleased their fancy.” Dio Cassius, LXI. 33, 3.

⁵⁵ Cf. J. Morgenstern, *The King-God*, 156-159.

⁵⁶ Cf. S. Lösch, *Deitas*, 15f.

⁵⁷ J. Morgenstern, *Chanukkah*, 91 footnote 170. L.H. Feldman sees the view of Morgenstern as “extravagant”. Cf. *Jewish Antiquities* (VIII-XIX), 378 footnote a.

⁵⁸ A support of this finding is rendered by Josephus, “silver and gold and ivory in masses, wrought into all manner of forms, might be seen, not as if carried in procession, but flowing, so to speak, like a river; here were tapestries borne along, some of the rarest purple, others embroidered by Babylonian art with perfect portraiture...” Josephus, *Bell.* 7, 134.

⁵⁹ Excavations in Egypt have shown that such garbs with embroidered images of deities were part of the dressing code of well to do families in the imperial period. Cf. S. Lösch, *Deitas*, 15.

It is most conceivable, judging from the tight patron and client relationship between Caligula and Agrippa, that Agrippa intended almost an identification with the sun god, which fuels the allegation that Agrippa must have clothed himself in a cloak of the sun god as a parallel of this god. His relationship with Caligula plays an important role in this assessment of his character, owing to the obsession of Caligula to see himself as a god, making him clothe himself as Jupiter, to the extent of improvising sounds reminiscent of thunder and lightening, and as such seeing himself as the god governing these natural phenomena. Dio Cassius reports:

“Styling himself Jupiter Latiaris, he attached to his service as priests his wife Caesonia, Claudius, and other persons who were wealthy... He had a contrivance by which he gave answering peals when it thundered and sent return flashes when it lightened.”⁶⁰

Agrippa must have copied some characteristic rudiments attributed to his friend and mentor, affirming the view of many people that Agrippa was interested in making himself the concrete personification of a sun god.⁶¹

However, this obsession of seeing oneself as a god is not a prerogative of Caligula, although he stands for the monumental pacesetter of this fatal obsession. Nero typified himself with the obsession of being like Apollo, the sun god. This obsession motivated the anonymous of the *Einsiedeln Eclogues* to compare Nero to the sun god, Phoebus Apollo.⁶²

Only in reading between the lines, the reader is able to detect and understand the literary device used not only by Luke, but also by Josephus in the articulation of the Agrippa story. Agrippa, a man born in his time and well acquainted with the social, religious and political values and royal symbols of this time, is set as an instance of divine wrath against an ungodly system, in which humans, not satisfied with their status, seek and aspire to realms reserved for God.

The double work of Luke sees Agrippa as standing for the punishment of the collective offence of an institutional idolatry. Using the social and demagogic appearance of Herod, he offers a good portion of criticism to the imperial cult and the cult of rulers.

3.3.2 *The speech of Agrippa and its consequence*

Another item very pivotal for the correct understanding of the text is the speech of Agrippa in Acts 12:21, which, according to Luke, motivated the blasphemous acclamation of the crowd, *θεοῦ φωνή καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου*. However, Agrippa did not reprimand the people for assigning him a divine nature and neither did he give God the glory, which ultimately resulted in his agonizing end.

⁶⁰ Dio Cassius, 59, 28, 5-6.

⁶¹ This obsession with divine essence and importance was not only noticeable in the Roman imperial cult or in Caligula, who garbed himself in the costume of Jupiter. It belonged almost to the social phenomenon involved in the cult of rulers or in the cult of persons. Alexander the Great had the obsession of imitating the dressing of divinities like Ammon and Hermes. Cf. S. Lösch, *Deitas*, 16. One of the proponents of Hellenistic apotheosis of rulers, Demetrius Poliorketes, favoured appearing in the costume of Athena.

⁶² Cf. *Einsiedeln Eclogues*, 1. 21-37.

In this aspect, Luke maintains his peculiarity and uniqueness in the documentation of the end of Agrippa. This juncture appears to be very important because it harbours one of the few differences between the documentation of Josephus and that of Luke.

Agrippa must have made a wonderful speech full of promises to the emissaries and the crowd present, making them forget the differences between them and promising a continued and faithful deliverance of food items. That is the only possible explanation of this acclamation that surpasses a standing ovation.⁶³ The peace and the benefactions⁶⁴ he promised must have made the people to see a kind and merciful king in Agrippa just as is expected of a god. Since benefactions and peace are proclaimed through the instrumentality of his speech, or better his voice, the people tended to sense divine power and divine being in him. Hence, the acclamation.

One can argue that the *φωνή* of Luke corresponds to the *φωναί* of the flatterers in the documentation of Josephus. However, such an equation would only dislocate the contexts of the two documentations. An objection would begin by showing that the *φωναί* of Josephus correspond to the *ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει* of Luke, which documents the acclamation of the crowd,⁶⁵ while the *θεοῦ φωνή καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου* of Luke remains without any parallel in the documentation of Josephus. This addition that documents the highlight of the offences of Agrippa bears invariably the handwriting of Luke.

This observation is very necessary, as it would help the reader to dig deeper into history and circumstances for a correct interpretation of the Lukan account. The important question remains: Where did Luke get this crucial item of the “divine voice” that exemplifies his documentation?

I would suggest that Luke is under a high motivation to write against the imperial cult. With this suggestion however, it becomes pertinent to ask if there is a figure in the history of the imperial cult, who was obsessed with his voice or with his eloquence, tending therewith to ascribe divine honours to himself. A socio-religious and historical enquiry is imperative for such a task.

3.4 *Nero from the perspective of history*

The question asked above regarding the obsession with voice in the history of the imperial cult should be answered positively. In the history of the imperial cult, there was an Emperor, who was well known for the obsession with his voice and this Emperor was Nero. The obsession was so pathological that Nero thought of

⁶³ Klauck explained the euphoria this way: “Er mag in Rom in jungen Jahren als künftiger Politiker eine rhetorische Ausbildung genossen haben und ein guter Redner gewesen sein, und er mag in der Rede königliche Wohltaten in Aussicht gestellt haben, um sich als echter *εὐεργέτης* zu erweisen.“ H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 255. He refers to the work of S. Lösch, who made such an observation in his work.

⁶⁴ An allusion could be made to the topic already treated in Lk 22:25-26. It documents the scene, where Jesus advised his disciples not to allow themselves called benefactors just as the pagan kings do. The doom of Agrippa is rooted in his incapacity to direct the glory to God. The mistake of the crowd could be termed a misappropriation of value, while the offence of Agrippa is the quiet acceptance of honour not due to him.

⁶⁵ This observation has also been made by Klauck to ascertain the special source and motivation of Luke in the documentation of the story. Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 256.

entertaining people with his voice as an actor and as a singer. The accounts of many classical works prove this obsession of Nero.

In his work “Apocolocyntosis”,⁶⁶ in which he castigated the work, life and era of Claudius, he rejoices that the death of Claudius has paved the way to the ascendance of Nero to the throne, who will introduce the Golden Age that was not realised in the reign of Claudius.

Seneca praised the musical genius in Nero through the poetic device of Phoebus,⁶⁷ who, because of Nero’s voice, identified him with himself. In a direct speech of Apollo, regarding Nero, Seneca documented:

He will conquer the time of earthly life. He resembles me physically. He resembles me in beauty. Just like me, he is not lacking in the art of singing and in the sound of voice (*voce*). He will give glorious moments for the tired humanity, and the silence of law will be abrogated.⁶⁸

Seneca initiates an identification of Nero with Apollo through a poetic device, which allows Apollo to announce this identification. Apollo is not only a zither player with passion; he is also the singer of the gods. All these give an insight to the obsession of Nero. “In der nicht weniger “häßlichen” Kunst des Singens zur Zither hatte Nero seit seiner Ernennung zum Kaiser Unterricht bei dem Virtuosen Terpnus genommen. Bisher war er nur im engen Kreis aufgetreten, aber nun wollte er den Kreis erweitern und lud,..., Männer und sogar Frauen der vornehmen Gesellschaft ein,...“⁶⁹ Nero’s obsession with music and his voice made him institute a game, in which the art of singing plays an important role. This game was to take place after every five years, and he gave it the name *Neronia*⁷⁰ in remembrance of himself.

Tacitus, a historian, documented that Nero instituted a new knighthood known as the *Augustiani*, comprising of youthful and robust men, whose duty and means of livelihood consisted in thundering of applause and bestowing of reverential epithets on the Emperor and his voice (*formam principis vocemque deum vocabulis appelantes*).⁷¹ Thrasea, a noble well known for his acting prowess, absented himself from the public performance of Nero during the Juvenile games of 59. Having nursed animosities against Thrasea and looking for a reason to kill him, he accused him, among other reasons, of not offering a sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperor and his heavenly voice (*numquam pro salute principis aut*

⁶⁶ This work is a satire against the consecration or apotheosis of Emperor Claudius. With this satire, Seneca made a mockery of the rite preceding the apotheosis of Claudius. The name of the work itself is self-illuminatory. Instead of “apotheosis”, he calls the process of the consecration of Claudius “Apocolocyntosis” meaning “Pumpkinisation”. He wants to convey the message that the consecration of Claudius only made him to end up being a pumpkin.

⁶⁷ Cf. V. Sørensen, Seneca, 161.

⁶⁸ Seneca, Ap. 4,21-24: Vincat mortalis tempora vitae. Ille mihi similis vultu similisque decore. Nec cantu nec voce minor. Felicia lassis saecula praestabit legumque silentia rumpet.

⁶⁹ V. Sørensen, Seneca. 159.

⁷⁰ Cf. V. Sørensen, Seneca. 159.

⁷¹ Tacitus, Annals 14, 15,5. Cf. also S. Lösch, Deitas, 18.

caelesti voce immolavisse).⁷² The heavenly voice of the Emperor has transcended from an ordinary entertaining instrument to a figure of religious worship.

The obsession with his voice and his singing prowess nurtured the report that Nero was never perturbed that Rome was burning. At the very moment when Rome was burning, he was on his private stage singing the destruction of Troy.⁷³ This incident nurtured the rumour that Nero was responsible for the fire that engulfed Rome, which, on the other hand, made him accuse the Christians of setting the city on fire. This accusation triggered the persecution of Christians in Rome.⁷⁴

The account of Tacitus helps us to a socio-religious finding regarding the importance of Nero's voice during his reign. There was not only a sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperor (*pro salute principis*), but also a sacrifice for the welfare of his voice (*immolare pro principis caelesti voce*). The intensity of the former is not more than that of the latter, since the violation of both "religious institutions" attracts the death penalty. Interesting details regarding the obsession of the Emperor Nero to his voice are seen in the compilation of the lives of the Emperors written down by Suetonius. The account is interesting as much as revelatory. Nero could transcend limits of morality just to defend his voice from "seeming" attacks of competitors. He murdered Britannicus, a son of Claudius, out of envy because the voice of Britannicus is from nature better than that of Nero (...*vocis, quae illi iucundior suppetebat*).⁷⁵ Suetonius even attested that the voice of Nero remained weak and terrible (*exiguae vocis et fuscae*)⁷⁶ even after the numerous professional trainings he underwent.

As Vindex initiated a rebellion in Gaul, he called Nero a miserable singer,⁷⁷ which was the most painful insult one could give to him. Notwithstanding, Nero enjoyed making public outings, since he had trained claquees,⁷⁸ who supplied the necessary applause. Owing to this mechanism, the known world of his flatterers did all possible to hear the heavenly voice of Nero.⁷⁹ Although the emperors before him wrote messages for their soldiers, Suetonius documents that Emperor Nero wrote down his messages, or appointed another person to read his address in order to do his voice no harm.⁸⁰

One of the Greek historians interested in this obsession of Nero is Dio Cassius. For him, the voice of Nero was very weak and blunt. However, he made public appearances, since he had about five thousand soldiers who doubled as claquees

⁷² Tacitus, *Annals* 16, 22,1.

⁷³ Cf. Tacitus, *Annals* 15, 39,3. Readers accustomed with the English language and idioms must have heard of the idiom "fiddling while Rome burns". This idiom has its origin from the report that Nero was singing and enjoying the melody of his voice as Rome was burning to ashes.

⁷⁴ Cf. Tacitus, *Annals* 15, 44, 2-5. A careful reader of Luke is wont to understand the relationship between the beautiful voice of Nero and the persecution and killing of Christians. Just as Tacitus noted, notwithstanding the accusations levelled on the Christians, many people had the impression that the Christians were not being sacrificed for the benefit and well-being of the state but for the ferocity of an irresponsible Emperor. It is surprising to see that Agrippa, who was interested in the killing of Peter and some members of the Christian faith, dies because of his "heavenly voice".

⁷⁵ Suetonius, *Nero* 33,2.

⁷⁶ Suetonius, *Nero* 20,1.

⁷⁷ Cf. Suetonius, *Nero* 41,1.

⁷⁸ Cf. Suetonius, *Nero* 20,3.

⁷⁹ Cf. Suetonius, *Nero* 21,1.

⁸⁰ Cf. Suetonius, *Nero* 25,3.

and supplied applause for the singing Emperor.⁸¹ Thrasea, disgusted with the measures and bills passed in the senate, and with the singing and lyre playing of the Emperor, absented himself regularly from the senate. However, his main offence was that he did not sacrifice to the divine voice of Nero (οὐτε ἔδουσε τῆ ἱερῶ αὐτοῦ φωνῇ), as did the others.⁸²

That the people were also convinced of the divine voice of the Emperor Nero suffices this citation from Dio Cassius after Nero's tour in Greece:

The city was all decked with garlands, was ablaze with lights and reeking with incense, and the whole population, the senators themselves most of all, kept shouting in chorus: "Hail, Olympian victor! Hail, Pythian Victor! Augustus! Augustus! Hail to Hero, our Hercules! Hail to Nero, our Apollo! The only victor of the grand tour, the only one from the beginning of time (ἀπ' αἰῶνος)! Augustus! Augustus! O, *Divine voice* (ἱερὰ φωνή)! Blessed (μακάριοι) are they that hear you."⁸³

Nero was so obsessed with his voice that even at the point of death, he was convinced of his ability and his indispensability: "Jupiter, what an artist perishes in me."⁸⁴

3.5 Conclusion

From the socio-historical journey undertaken, it becomes very clear that the obsession of Nero with his voice was monumental. At the beginning, it took a panegyric form in the work of Seneca, where the voice of Nero is acclaimed and praised. However, satire and parody abound regarding this obsession, as the works of different historians like Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio Cassius have shown. Of utmost importance is the historical observation that disrespect towards the institution of the voice of Nero equals a disrespect of his person.⁸⁵

The documentation of this obsession by Latin as well as Greek writers is a proof of the importance of this detail in the life of Nero. It is also a proof that this obsession was well known in the cultural as well as social life of the then world, since one did not need to be highly educated to know of this obsession. The average reader must have been well acquainted with this obsession of Nero and the jokes therewith, especially after the death of Nero.

The intention of this retrospection in history is not to deny the death of Agrippa. It must be accepted as a fact that he died, since Luke and Josephus, independent of

⁸¹ Cf. Dio Cassius, 61, 20,2f. Could it be that the role played by these soldiers has been taken by the crowd in the account of Luke, and by the flatterers in the account of Josephus?

⁸² Dio Cassius, 62, 26,3. Flavius Philostratos took over this idea and incorporated it in his work *Apollonius*, in which he described the life of Apollonius. Apollonius met an actor/singer in the street of Rome, who was singing the songs and works of Nero. The very fact that Apollonius did not stop to listen to the verses ascribed to Nero was enough for the actor to threaten Apollonius with a charge of majesty insult and disrespect for the divine voice (ἀσεβείσθαι Νέρωνα ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἔφασκε καὶ πολέμιος εἶναι τῆς θείας φωνῆς). Cf. Vit Ap 4,36.

⁸³ Dio Cassius, 62, 20,4-6. Ὀλυμπιονῖκα οὐᾶ, Πυθιονῖκα οὐᾶ, Ἀγρουστε Ἀγρουστε. Νέρωνι τῷ Ἡρακλεῖ, Νέρωνι τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι. ὡς εἶς περιοδονικής, εἶς ἀπ' αἰῶνος, Ἀγρουστε Ἀγρουστε. ἱερὰ φωνή· μακάριοι οἱ σου ἀκούοντες.

⁸⁴ Cf. Dio Cassius, 63, 29,2. Cf. Suetonius, Nero 49,1: *qualis artifex pereo*.

⁸⁵ Cf. S. Lösch, Deitas Jesu. 21.

each other, documented this account. The question is: Where did Luke get the idea of the divine voice, which is lacking in Josephus? This question motivated the socio-historical investigation that opened up the horizons offered by the obsession of Nero, which inevitably forms the axis of the redaction of Luke.

4. *Redaction criticism*

Luke gave his account in such a way that the death of Agrippa is used to make a mockery of a known figure, whose obsession for his voice was proverbial.⁸⁶ The addition of the “divine voice” makes this argument obvious. The difference between an emperor and a king is pertinent as Luke uses a circumstance provided by a king to criticise an emperor. This is necessary because “... it would certainly have been imprudent to criticise an emperor directly...”⁸⁷

Klauck, who unravelled the mystery behind this method of Luke by exposing the literary method he applied, has worked out this aim.⁸⁸ The possibility of criticising the powerful through a disguise speech is well known in as much as the Jewish Apocalyptic embedded their polemics against Rome in disguise speeches and metaphoric languages. The ancient rhetoric has a method, which enables one to criticise a powerful enemy. Luke, well acquainted with the rudiments of Hellenistic Literature, makes use of this possibility reserved for Rhetoric, called *figure* (Latin *figura*; Greek *σχῆμα*), with which a tyrant could be mocked without mentioning his name, however, with a presentation of his character and words. Quintilian, writing a work on the formation of orators during the reign of Domitian, features *figure* as presenting a medium,

“...whereby we excite some suspicion to indicate that our meaning is other than our words would seem to imply; but our meaning is not in this case contrary to that which we express, as is the case in irony, but rather a hidden meaning which is left to the hearer to discover. As I have already pointed out, modern rhetoricians practically restrict the name of *figure* to this device, from the use of which figured controversial themes derive their name.”⁸⁹

This figure of speech is of utmost importance in situations, in which frank and open speeches appear to be dangerous, and in which an orator should know the

⁸⁶ The thesis laid down below has already enjoyed an incipient recognition by S. Lössch, *Deitas*, 23. It was later developed by H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 265f.

⁸⁷ H.J. Klauck, *Magic*, 44. The same argument has been presented in the assessment of the film of Luis Trenker, “*der Feuerteufel*”. Trenker probably castigated the figure of Napoleon in his film as an indirect criticism to the dictatorship of Hitler during the NAZI time. Rowe begins his rejection from this angle. He accepts the solution of Klauck as perceptive pointing out however that the problem remains: “Unless Luke wrote during Nero’s reign, it seems unlikely that he would be implicit... in his criticism of Nero... Klauck is correct that of the emperors Nero was the one with whom a “divine voice” was associated, but by Luke’s time one could have probably criticized him openly... Thus it seems unlikely that, if Acts 12.20-23 is an implicit critique of the imperial cult, the target would be Nero. However, if the target is not Nero, then the point about the “divine voice” is lost, and thus the connection between the implicit critique and the imperial cult.” C.K. Rowe, *Luke-Acts*, 282f.

⁸⁸ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 265f.

⁸⁹ Quintilian, *Inst Orat IX* 2,65.

dangerous implication of his words.⁹⁰ Both apply to Luke. If he is interested in showing Christianity as a new faith that does not pose any threat to the continual survival of the Roman Empire, then carefulness must be the watchword. On the other hand, he is bound to maintain a Christian point of view, and say that every Apologetic has its limits, especially when the Roman Empire seems to demand a respect considered a prerogative of God. Here is a doublespeak of immense necessity, in which the hearers and readers discover the meaning of the hidden speech on their own. Only then will the bitterness of a Christian author find an outlet in hidden criticism motivated by the conviction that the average reader knew who was meant with the divine voice. It could be taken for granted that his audience, be it his community or an average reader, would immediately understand the circumstances and the persons intended since they were a part of the secluded society. Given the fact of a regime that curtails free speech and “the knowledge that libel has to be veiled, spurs audiences and readers to scrutinize texts and performances for meanings below the surface, and, in turn, this very act of looking for a hidden content makes it more likely that... something will be found.”⁹¹ The sociologist James Scott⁹² has worked out a model, which could be of help in the process of unravelling this dynamics of the public and hidden manner of speech. He postulated the idea that power structure and oppression structure in a society meet themselves on different discursive levels, not only from the side of the powerful or tyrant but also from the side of the oppressed and those belonging to the lower cadre. Public statements (public transcript) are used by both sides, however only according to the accepted and normal way of communication between a master and a slave coloured by respect and fear. The implication of this dynamics for the oppressed calls for respect and treasure of the values of the powerful, to show their loyalty to the powerful, to respect and uphold the power structures either through a silent obedience, or through a stereotyped eye service. However, all these are on a level, which has nothing to do with the actual feeling and conviction of the lower cadre, because according to Scott, “the greater the disparity in power between dominant and subordinate and the more arbitrarily it is exercised, the more the public transcript of subordinates will take on a stereotyped, ritualistic cast... the more menacing the power, the thicker the mask.”⁹³ The oppressed or the people on the lower cadre are only masquerades or actors, who do what is required from the film or stage director. As such, they are involved in a mechanism of survival, which “... makes actors out of human beings placed in situations in which they feel themselves watched, in which their performance is subject to the evaluation of a superior who must be watched in turn to gauge his reactions...”⁹⁴ To know their actual feelings and convictions, one must have to encounter them “offstage”, especially when they

⁹⁰ Cf. Quintilian, *Inst Orat* IX 2,66: “This class of figure may be employed under three conditions. First, if it is unsafe to speak openly; secondly, if it is unseemly to speak openly...”

⁹¹ S. Bartsch, *Actors*, 68.

⁹² J.C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, New Haven 1990. After the integration of his ideas, I noticed that H. Omerzu, *Imperium*, has towed this line, though not exhaustively as I did.

⁹³ J.C. Scott, *Domination*, 3.

⁹⁴ S. Bartsch, *Actors*, 10.

are among their social equals and are free from the control of the powerful. Because of this seclusion from the powerful, which allows them the freedom to air their views by making statements, Scott calls these statements “hidden transcript”. These statements are not within the reach of the powerful, however unmasked within their group in as much as they can now articulate the feeling and intention of the oppressed. With this hidden transcript, the public transcript could be corrected, and when necessary withdrawn.

Another level of this dynamics is the publicity of this hidden transcript, however in a disguised manner. When the essence of the disguise has to do with the protection of the anonymity of the protagonist of a statement, there is every reason to believe that it is a case of open confrontation. Hidden confrontation on the other hand has to do with a disguise of the message itself through euphemism, ambiguity, mockery and innuendo.⁹⁵ According to Scott, the act of making a hidden statement the topic of a public discourse is an indication that the oppressed want to master or overcome their situation. The importance of Scott lies in the very fact of transforming language observations into a sociological model of expression in an oppressive system. Though not all the elements of the theory could be applied to the present text, however, it is clear that Luke is involved in an indirect confrontation with the imperial cult. However, he does that subtly by making a small client king in Judea an innuendo to the emperor. In the first level, which has to do with the exchange of respect, Luke would seem to be someone, who propagates the cause of the imperial cult. The situation offstage is a different situation, where he gives his hidden transcript. Transcending this stage, he articulates the message of this hidden transcript publicly, however with a disguise in the person.

It would be easier to understand the claims laid here, were one to situate the death of Paul carefully within the great persecution of Christians under Nero. The Herods play a vital role in the history of the young Christian faith: Herod Antipas killed John the Baptist, Herod Agrippa killed James and proceeded to kill Peter, however without success.⁹⁶ Luke, aware of the persecution of Christians under Nero, completes this circle of murderers with the inconspicuous inclusion of Nero, who, in addition to many killings attributed to him, killed Paul. Luke arrays three men with power over others, who were each responsible for a violent death very devastating for the survival of the young faith. Actually, Nero has succeeded where Agrippa failed. He has finished the task, which Antipas started. The theological intentions of Luke, which follow below, are part of the redactional work of Luke. With these intentions, he was able to present his work as we have it.

4.1 *The theological intention of Luke*

The theological intention of Luke, which made him adopt a tradition acquainted with a king to criticise not only the king but also the emperor could be seen only from the optic of Lukan writing.

⁹⁵ J.C. Scott, *Domination*, 136-182.

⁹⁶ These two rulers are not only associated by the common name of Herod, they also act in a similar manner, endangering God’s messengers. Cf. R.C. Tannehill, *Unity II*, 152.

4.1.1 *The offence of Agrippa within the context of Luke-Acts*⁹⁷

The very reason given by Luke for the death of Agrippa through the angel *ὡν οὐκ ἔδωκεν τὴν δόξαν τῷ Σεῶ* deserves the interest of any exegetical work on this pericope. In a very small sentence, Luke summarised the reason for the immediate punishment meted on Agrippa: *ἀνθ' ὡν οὐκ ἔδωκεν τὴν δόξαν τῷ Σεῶ*. It would be of interest to search in the works of Luke for pericopes, which preoccupy themselves with a clear demarcation of divine and human realms. Such an enterprise would help in the structuralisation of a thematic relationship in the writings of Luke.

The pericope of the temptation of Jesus presents a wonderful comparison between Jesus and Herod. From the very action of Jesus, one is more prepared to understand the depravity of Herod in the face of an alluring idolatry. In the second item of the temptation of Jesus, the devil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the inhabited world in an instant promising him all their glory and the authority over them, *ἔδειξεν αὐτῷ πάσας τὰς βασιλείας τῆς οἰκουμένης ἐν στιγμῇ χρόνου*. However, he must worship the devil before the authority over these kingdoms could be his, *σὺ οὖν ἐὰν προσκυνήσῃς ἐνώπιον ἐμοῦ, ἔσται σοῦ πᾶσα*. Jesus made a programmatic decision in accordance with the dictates of Deut 6:13 stating that worship should be a prerogative of God, *γέγραπται, Κύριον τὸν Θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις*. That Herod could not say a vehement “no” to the acceptance of a divine praise given to him by the crowd places him on the realm of the demonic. He therefore deserves identification with the devil, who claims authority over all the kingdoms of the inhabited world⁹⁸ and as such yearns for worship, because he did not reject the praise and honour due to God.

Luke pursues this intention with vehemence in Acts. In Acts 10, Peter comes to the pagan centurion Cornelius, who fell down before Peter greeting him as if he were one with a supernatural power, *πεσὼν ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας προσεκύνησεν*.⁹⁹ Peter reprimanded Cornelius immediately telling him to get up because he is also an ordinary human being, *ἀνάστηθι, καὶ ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπός εἰμι*, and actually acts in obedience to God.¹⁰⁰ He rejects radically the implication of the homage, which should be a prerogative of God just as Jesus said in Lk 4:8.¹⁰¹ Peter, fully convinced of his being only a human, redirected to God an honour due to Him. Luke presents Peter as a veritable figure of comparison with Agrippa. The heathens,¹⁰² *δῆμος*, accorded Agrippa a divine praise just as Cornelius, a heathen,¹⁰³

⁹⁷ For a thorough treatment of this topic is the contribution of O.W. Allen, *Death*, 112-115, indispensable.

⁹⁸ Cf. L.T. Johnson, *Luke*, 75.

⁹⁹ The reaction of Peter to this “falling down” made by Cornelius makes it clear that it must have had a relationship with religious worship.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. Acts 10:28f.

¹⁰¹ Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 461.

¹⁰² In Acts 12:22, Luke described the crowd as *δῆμος*, and not as *λαός* just to show that the crowd consists of non-Jews. The word, *λαός*, in the course of history, became the honorary and religious designation of Israel as the people of God, and the community or assembly, who belong to Jahweh and keep his ways. Cf. Judg 5:11; 1 Sam 2:24; Isaiah 51:4; Zeph 2:4. With the identity between the Jewish and non-Jewish Christians, Christians inherited the title, which came to refer to the assembly of those who believe in Jesus the Christ. Cf. Acts 15:14; 18:10; 1 Pet 2:10; 2 Cor 6:16; Heb 8:10. Cf. C. Spicq, *Lexicon II*, 371f.

¹⁰³ From the description of Cornelius, it should be taken that he is a heathen prompting the unpleasant accusation of the brethren against Peter that he has been interacting and eating with

accorded Peter a divine respect. Agrippa, in his hubris, had not the courage to direct the praise to God, while Peter, in recognition of his mortality, accorded God the glory due to him.

The mention of *φωνή* (Acts 2:6) and *φωνήν* (Acts 2:14) in the Pentecost pericope gives a counter presentation to the present pericope. When Peter and the other apostles raised their voices to address the assembly, the problem of usurping the position of God did not arise, in as much as the assembly was able to differentiate between these voices and the great works of God *τὰ μεγαλεῖα τοῦ Θεοῦ* (Acts 2:11) they were proclaiming. Owing to this correct differentiation, they were able to present the correct reaction, which involved repentance and the readiness to be baptised (Acts 2:41).¹⁰⁴ Another pericope in Acts 3:1-26 shows the importance of this absolute condemnation of idolatry in the theology of Luke. A lame man was sitting before the temple begging for alms. Peter and John, instead of giving him alms, gave him the power to walk again by curing him. The people could not believe their eyes knowing fully well that the man has been lame from birth. Luke documented their surprise thus: *καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν θάμβυς καὶ ἐκστάσεως ἐπὶ τῷ συμβεβηκότι αὐτῷ*. Out of fear that this expression of wonder and excitement could give the impression that the apostles in question had divine powers in them, Peter and John thought it wise to put them on the right way by enlightening them. Peter addressed them in v. 12: *ἄνδρες Ἰσραηλῖται, τί θαυμάζετε ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἢ ἡμῖν τί ἀτενίζετε ὡς ἰδίᾳ δυνάμει ἢ εὐσεβείᾳ πεποιηκόσιν τοῦ περιπατεῖν αὐτόν*. The question expresses Peter's surprise over the reaction of the people. By asking this question, Peter forestalls a possible divinisation through the people, seeing the miracle as an action of God, while John and he are simple instruments or agents. In this account, Luke shows an example of what it means to give God the glory.¹⁰⁵ This enlightenment could not have come from one, whose interest lies only in power and in domination. One other pericope that shows the depravity of Agrippa, and the necessity of demarcating the realms belonging to God and to man, is documented in Acts 14:8-18.

Following the healing of a lame man in Lystra, the people took Paul and Barnabas for gods, who have come down to the earth in the likeness of men: *οἱ θεοὶ ὁμοιωθέντες ἀνθρώποις κατέβησαν πρὸς ἡμᾶς*. Barnabas received the name *Zeus* and Paul the name *Hermes* because of his preaching role. The priest of the god Zeus and the people wanted to sacrifice Bulls to Paul and Barnabas. They were ready to initiate an apotheosis for the two apostles. The reactions of Paul and Barnabas present a vivid contrast to the reaction of Agrippa. They presented a clear manifestation of their horror and distaste for such an impending blasphemy¹⁰⁶ and misplacement of honour and praise by tearing their clothes¹⁰⁷ and rebuking the people,¹⁰⁸ whereas Agrippa never thought it necessary to put

pagans in Acts 11:3f. The contact with Cornelius and the conversion of non-Jews to Christianity culminated in the first church conference documented in Acts 15.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 267.

¹⁰⁵ The purpose of the speech of Peter is to correct a misunderstanding on the part of the people, who tended to regard Peter and John as the source of the power, with which the lame beggar was cured. Cf. J.A. Fitzmyer, *Acts*, 281.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Magic*, 59.

¹⁰⁷ This is of course in accordance with Jewish law and custom. Cf. Gen 37:29; Esth 4:1; Jdt 14:16,19; Lk 10:13.

of his royal mantle, not to talk of tearing it¹⁰⁹ or rebuking the people. The promptness of the apostle's reaction (*ἐξεπήδησαν*) against such a blasphemy contrasts the complacency of Agrippa in the face of the acclamation of the crowd in Acts 12:22, which ultimately provoked the reaction of the angel.¹¹⁰ The royal garb incidentally became his burial shroud.¹¹¹ Luke criticises Agrippa because of his self-projection done through his royal garb.¹¹² A related self-projection of the scribes has already been criticised by Jesus in Lk 20:46.

This is not only a blasphemy in the Jewish understanding but also an abomination in the Christian awareness.¹¹³ The reader understands immediately that

“...der König sich die gotteslästerliche Schmeichelei ohne Widerspruch gefallen ließ, ein vom jüdischen Standpunkt aus unerhörtes Sakrileg, das nach unverzüglicher Ahndung rufen mußte.”¹¹⁴

The testimony of Paul and Barnabas is aimed at the rectification of a wounded relationship between God and man, which invariably involves the recognition of the correct line of demarcation between God and man, and ultimately demands a clear conviction that God is the creator of all things including Paul and Barnabas: *καὶ ἡμεῖς ὁμοιοπαθεῖς ἐσμεν ὑμῶν ἄνθρωποι*. The careful reader sees a parallel to the statement of Peter in the house of Cornelius, and notices the contrast between the reactions of the apostles and the reaction of Herod. The apostles recognise and accept their not being God. Seen from this perspective, the offence of Agrippa consists in the silent acceptance of an honour due to God. The death of Herod serves as punishment for accepting an acclamation meant for God, not for demanding it. However, the immediacy of this dire consequence suffices to elucidate that the acclamation is not a court formality, which Herod has to accept as a king.¹¹⁵ He committed the most fundamental of sins.¹¹⁶ As a contrast to the behaviour of Herod Luke presents Christians who do every thing possible to give

¹⁰⁸ The tearing of their clothes has an extended didactic message: “Diejenigen, die halbnackt sind und sich mit anderen Leuten auf die gleiche Ebene stellen, würde man kaum noch für Götter halten.” S.-C. Lin, *Wundertaten*, 238.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. O.W. Allen, *Death*, 113. The tearing of clothes is a biblical symbol of distaste for a prevailing situation. At times, it can also be a sign of sorrow in combination with the practice of throwing ashes on one's head. Cf. the book of Jonah, where the people of Nineveh performed these rites as a sign of sorrow and repentance.

¹¹⁰ The story of the miracle in Lystra and the reaction of the people remind one of the account of Luke in Acts 28:6, where the „Barbarians“ of the island of Malta thought that Paul was a god because he survived the bite of a snake. The emphatic description of these people as “Barbarians” must have pardoned their ignorance, in addition to their extraordinary hospitality and philanthropy to Paul and his group. That Paul did not react to this opinion could be explained by pointing out that he never knew that the people thought of him in this category.

¹¹¹ Cf. C.G. Müller, *Kleidung*, 200.

¹¹² Cf. C.G. Müller, *Kleidung*, 202.

¹¹³ Barrett summarised this idea in this manner, „...like Jews, Christians would be horrified by the thought that Herod claimed to be divine. It belongs to the area in which Jews and Christians are one.“ C.K. Barrett, *Acts I*, 572.

¹¹⁴ H. Schreckenberg, *Josephus*, 201.

¹¹⁵ Contrary to G. Schille, *Apostelgeschichte*, 267, who opines: „Die Huldigung entsprach also keineswegs der tatsächlichen Einschätzung des Königs. ... Die Huldigung gehörte zum Hofstil.“

¹¹⁶ Cf. C.K. Barrett, *Acts I*, 591.

glory to God (Acts 11:18). Even after a miracle, in which they have acted as instruments, they undertake much to prevent a distraction of the glory due to God (Acts 3:6, 12-16; 14:14-18).

The broader concern of Luke in the account of the death of Agrippa is not only to make a mockery of the imperial cult. He also wants to typify Agrippa as a contrast to the heroes of his writings.¹¹⁷ Beginning with Jesus, who not only rejected the alluring demands of the devil but also directed all honour and worship to God, he ends with the disciples, who recognised their rightful status before God, and directed every praise and honour to God, the rightful source.

4.1.2 *Conclusion*

With this pericope of the death of Herod Agrippa, Luke seems to be denying any involvement in any type of Apologetic. He has already begun to manifest this inclination in Acts 4:27, where the client king of the Jews, Herod Antipas, is not the only one mentioned as championing the cause of the death of Jesus with the Jews and the pagans. A high representative of the Roman aristocracy Pontius Pilate is as well mentioned as belonging to the group, who possibly had something to gain with the death of Jesus. Luke used the figure of Agrippa to drive a message home, which is of utmost importance for his theology. The persecution of the early Christians, especially through Nero, is presupposed. He narrates an event that took place approximately in 44 A.D. to incorporate the ordeals his community is undergoing. A strict obedience to the first commandment entertains no compromise in the theological understanding and conviction of Luke.¹¹⁸ One of the intentions of Luke in his writings is the presentation of Christianity as a religion that could be reckoned with in matters of loyalty to the Roman Empire.

An important aspect of the problems envisaged by the Lukan community is the discrepancy between the hope in the imminence of the kingdom and the real delay of this Parousia of Jesus, which seems to take its time. The original conviction presupposes that what is hoped for is near, which makes this hope to be irreconcilable with the apparent delay.¹¹⁹ Luke attempts a weakening of this eschatology in the face of the obvious reality that the church is present in a world that is changing. This consciousness has been lacking because of the belief that the end was imminent. As part of this weakening process, Luke appeals to the Christian converts to concentrate on their every day life and leave the matters of Parousia to the realm of God. This expectation is in principle preserved. In reality however, weakened. The acceptance of the reality of the world would imply finding out ways of coming to terms with the Roman Empire. However, this quest for survival and recognition does not imply living without principles. One of these

¹¹⁷ C.K. Barrett, Acts, 572. „For Luke there is an added point of contrast. Peter, in humble obedience to God, was prepared to accept death as the price of faithfulness, and was delivered from death; Herod in his arrogance claimed the position of an immortal god, and was delivered to a gruesome death.”

¹¹⁸ Luke is convinced of the fact that the struggle between God and the powers of evil is one between two kingdoms as already shown in the temptation narrative. Cf. L.T. Johnson, Luke, 75. Believing in God while at the same time interested in the kingdom of the devil is a contradiction, which cannot be tolerated in the community of believers.

¹¹⁹ Cf. H. Conzelmann, Theology, 96f.

principles is the unalloyed and undivided obedience to the dictates of the first commandment.

In order to show the importance of this commandment, the account of the death of Herod is presented as that of a *θεομάχος*,¹²⁰ not only because of his joy in the persecution of Christians but also because of his blasphemous acceptance of God's glory.¹²¹ Hatred for God, shown in a clear manner in the hatred for His church, goes hand in hand with the hubris towards God. The name of Herod involves an omen of danger for the readers of the writings of Luke, especially his gospel. The reader is already prepared not to expect anything favourable for the church from this king. The opposition of a Herod against the Messiah has already been mentioned in Acts 4:27. As if it were not enough, another Herod threatens not only the life of the key apostles, but also wants to assume the position of God. The account presents itself as being of importance for the intention of Luke, who wishes to demonstrate the disgraceful end of this seemingly powerful monarch.¹²² At this point, the apologetics of Luke loses its respect for the state, since the state has trespassed in a realm reserved for the transcendent. The careful and detailed portrayal of the contrast between this pinnacle of pride exhibited by Herod and the agony of his death would strike anyone confronted with the story.¹²³ The *ὑβρις* of claiming to be a god or of permitting this claim to be made on his behalf is so supreme and sacrilegious that God must have to react.

The presentation of Agrippa and the circumstances leading to his death makes it clear that Luke takes front against the imperial cult. The acclamation of the people in respect of the divine voice of the king reminds one not only of the acclamations of the people in respect of the voice of Nero, but also the obsession of Nero with his voice, which reached an outrageous height in its divinisation. The similarity between the acclamation to Nero and the acclamation to Agrippa in Luke's account suggests that this account of the death of Herod has more to it than meets the ordinary eyes.¹²⁴ It could be that it is more inclusive and has more than the death of Herod in mind.

Nero falls under the same judgement of doom as Agrippa if the well-attested obsession with his voice and his wish that his voice be treated divinely are well and widely known. It could even be assumed that his flight and suicide are part of the fulfilment of this judgement. In addition, the great persecution of Christians under the reign of Nero plays a very important role in this assessment. Besides, it

¹²⁰ Within the Lukan writing, this designation does not only refer to one who purposefully blasphemes, but also to people, who are against the church. That is clear in the instruction of Gamaliel to the members of the Sanhedrin in Acts 5:39, "... but if it from God, you cannot destroy them, you will even find yourselves being *θεομάχοι*."

¹²¹ Cf. W. Radl, *Befreiung*, 94.

¹²² Cf. R.C. Tannehill, *Unity I*, 152.

¹²³ Cf. C.K. Barrett, *Acts I*, 572.

¹²⁴ Although Conzelmann appreciated the analogy between the acclamation of the people during the return of Nero and the acclamation of the pagans towards Agrippa, he is however convinced that this analogy is only a seeming analogy, since "... es sich in unserem Fall nicht um die Verehrung der Stimme, sondern der Person handelt (die an ihrer Stimme als „göttlich“ erkannt wird)...". H. Conzelmann, *Apostelgeschichte*, 72. This idea of Conzelmann is not at all convincing. An attempt at distinguishing between a person and his voice, just as Conzelmann did, appears to miss the mark of the context of the Lukan account. He did not appreciate the very context of Luke's writing. He would have found out that Agrippa is used as a means of criticising an emperor well known for the obsession with his voice.

should not be forgotten that Nero is the Caesar before whom Paul, the mentor of Luke, must appear.

With the foregoing arguments, one can say that the death of Agrippa, viewed literally and from the perspective of the theological intention of Luke, is seen as a general death of those interested not only in the extermination of the church, but also in the usurpation of God's role and power. These are, however, the powerful. Through a literary means, Agrippa dies the collective death of all interested in the death of the Christian God. Only with the extermination of such rulers is the church enabled to go about its missionary role, paving way for the increase and growth of the word of God.¹²⁵

The death of Agrippa is also presented as a collective failure and defeat of the Jews interested in the end of the Christian faith. Having stated that Agrippa is a *θεομάχος* not only because of his hubris and blasphemy, but also because of his wicked killings of the Christian members, it becomes necessary to follow this issue consequently. Luke documents in Acts 12:3f that the killing of James was pleasing to the Jews, which motivated the arrest and imprisonment of Peter. The miraculous release of Peter from prison motivated Peter to say "Now I know that God truly sent his angel to rescue me from the hand of Herod and from all that the Jews were expecting."¹²⁶ On the strength of this account, Agrippa represents the Jews and their intentions and expectations. That he could not succeed with his intention for Peter is presented as a collective failure of the Jews.

The death of Agrippa falls within the theological perspective of the reversal of fortune, which plays a very important role in Luke. In the *Magnificat*, Mary praises God who, in his mercy and infinite wisdom, raises the lowly and scatters the proudhearted. He has also removed the powerful from their throne. Herod fits in in the negative actions: He not only belongs to the ruling class, he is also proudhearted, which made him accept divine praise without equanimity. The mention of the royal rostrum or throne (*βῆμα*) of Herod during his appearance brings the reader to realise that Luke is still in pursuit of the fulfilment of one of the promises of the *Magnificat*: *καθεῖλεν δυνάστας ἀπὸ θρόνων*. The Christian faith, represented by Peter, experiences a wonderful rescue and a glorious development expressed in Acts 12:24, in accordance with the conviction of the *Magnificat* that God has uplifted the lowly, *καὶ ὑψώσεν ταπεινούς*. With the death of Herod, a narrative fulfilment of one of the promises of the *Magnificat* is achieved.

By way of conclusion, one might say that Luke adopted and transformed an oral tradition dealing with Herod, existing not only among the Jews but also among the early Christians, to show the non-acceptance and repudiation of offences against

¹²⁵ Cf. Acts 12:24.

¹²⁶ Acts 12:11. This seeming anti-Semitism in the account of Luke has its root in the historical parting of the ways between the Christians and the Jews, since the synagogue serves as the central and common meeting point for the two adherents. By this reference to the "Jews", Luke paints a picture of the Jews as cut off from the history of salvation. However, he upholds the name "Israel", which is no longer a prerogative of the Jews but a collective name for believers. Conzelmann sees it thus: "We can say that the Jews are now called to make good their claim to be "Israel". If they fail to do this, then they become "the Jews"". H. Conzelmann, *Theology*, 145. The view of Roloff is not out of place, as he said that the zeal to maintain the wonderful relation with the Pharisees motivated this persecution of Christians, hoping to punish a heretical movement that was operating outside the known Jewish religious community. Cf. J. Roloff, *Apostelgeschichte*, 186, and C.K. Barrett, *Acts*, 574.

the first commandment. In the reception and transformation of this tradition, he connected it with two other Herod traditions dealing with the execution of James and the miraculous deliverance of Peter from prison. With this unique tradition, he was able to castigate the convictions of the imperial cult generally and the practices of Nero in particular under the regime of an Emperor Domitian, who was seen and regarded as Nero *redivivus*,¹²⁷ as Dio Chrysostom affirmed “...there was nothing to prevent his continuing to be emperor for all time... And the great majority do believe that he is, although in a certain sense he has died not once but often along with those who had been firmly convinced that he was still alive.”¹²⁸ Dio, who is convinced that Domitian could rival Nero in matters concerning tyranny, undertakes a favourable comparison of Nero and Domitian, who exiled him from Rome.

After the fall of the republic ushering the institution of the imperial system with the attendant meaning of *maiestas*, it would have been unwise and imprudent of an author or actor to criticize an Emperor. Luke is in the same dilemma avoiding a direct criticism of an Emperor, even when he is no longer living, since the incumbent Emperor Domitian might think that he is being referred to,¹²⁹ albeit indirectly. Domitian has already instigated the fear that any artist using an innuendo could meet the fate of Hermogenes of Tarsus, who was not only executed at his order for the allusions made in his history, but also suffered the enmity of Domitian, who also had the scribes crucified, who were involved in the multiplication of his work.¹³⁰ In addition, Suetonius documented that Domitian executed Helvidius Priscus for referring to his marital situation on stage.¹³¹ With the help of *figure* however, he used an ordinary king as a cover up and dealt a theological blow to the convictions and obsession of an emperor. His audience or the Lukan Christians, being informed and enlightened with the cultural and religious developments of their days, just as Luke was, were better placed to understand and appreciate the criticism and language of Luke. This is as a result of the certainty “... that the same kind of ingenuity was exercised by contemporaries to pick up meaning in oblique references. They had been trained

¹²⁷ Martial (Epig 11.33) used Nero for Domitian while Juvenal called him “the bald-headed Nero”. Nero was not bald-headed, Domitian was. Pliny (Pan. 53.4) made an observation in the direction of Domitian: “I suppose he, who avenged Nero’s death, would allow Nero’s reputation and his life to be criticised; I suppose he would refrain from interpreting what was being said about a man so similar to himself as being directed against himself.” It has been alleged that the fear of a possible identification with Nero was such a torture for Domitian that he had to give up his interest in poetry after his accession. Cf. H. Bardon, *Empereurs*, 287f.

¹²⁸ Dio Chrysostom, Or. 21.10.

¹²⁹ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Stimme*, 265. In support, S. Bartsch, *Actors*, 93 writes: “... under Domitian, that criticism of Nero and his reign could serve as veiled criticism of the ruling emperor...” A further strength of this observation is seen in the interpretation of Schubert, *Studien*, 441, who maintained that the name “Nero” was no longer a pseudonym but a suitable name, which could stand for any tyrant. Contrary to this view is the conviction of M. Meiser, *Staatsmacht*, 183: “Kritik an *vergangenen* Autoritätspersonen war unter den Bedingungen des Prinzipates mit seinen *wechselnden* Herrschern und Herrscherhäusern nicht unbedingt gefährlich, sondern konnte sich durchaus mit der >offiziellen< Linie vereinbaren lassen, zumal dann wenn besagte Personen... in Ungnade gefallen waren.”

¹³⁰ Cf. Suetonius, Domitian 10.1.

¹³¹ Cf. Suetonius, Domitian 10.4.

to the game by their experience with terror... Fear sharpened people's perceptions."¹³²

At this moment, we should not lose sight of the main interest of the dissertation, which is the critical posture of Luke towards power and dominion. In the course of this chapter, it has been shown that Luke's apologetics was not all that compromising in matters relating to the state and the empire, in which Christianity found itself. His critical stance to the powerful and the mighty has also continued in Acts. Aspects of the hidden and public transcripts according to Scott are the ambiguity and innuendo involved. The worship and the deification of abstract ideas like *eirene*, *themis*, *nike* and *eunomia* in the Greek world and *pax*, *concordia*, *fides* and *victoria* in Rome represent a religious phenomenon obtainable in the cult life of Greece and Rome.¹³³ With this abstract nature, the power rather than the personality of the gods involved is emphasized. It is, however, very interesting to see that some of the words, which were common in the imperial cult, were not only made to undergo a rebirth but were used differently in Acts: Acts 9:31; 15:33; 24:2 peace (*εἰρήνη* - *pax*); Acts 3:21; 15:18 aeon (*αἰών* - *saeculum*); Acts 5:23 security (*ἀσφάλεια* - *securitas*); Acts 8:39; 16:30 lord (*κύριος* - *dominus*); Acts 5:31 saviour (*σωτήρ* - *salvator*). That is also an indication of the criticism against the *pax romana*. Agrippa, a representative of the mighty, is criticised because of how he used his power. In the face of all these polemics regarding the respect Luke has for the state, it would be out of place not to uncover this criticism meted out on the mighty. The very beginning of chapter 12 is very apt in the description of the character of Agrippa. It gives an insight into the Lukan conception of power and dominion. No reason is given for the beheading of James. Agrippa killed him because he had the power and authority to do so.¹³⁴ The reason for the most likely second killing was to impress the Jews. A ruler or king who kills on the trivial reason of impression is also as bad as one who assumes the glory of God.

The social and the human dynamics, which Luke wants to bring across, can be summarised thus: Power and arrogance go together, not only in relation to fellow men, as is the case between Agrippa and James, but also in relation to God. In his arrogance, the powerful transcends his ordinary level and aspires to the level and sphere reserved for God. Agrippa is powerful. His power nourished his arrogance, which made him not only to kill messengers of God, but also to arrogate to himself the honour and glory of God. The same applies to Nero, who is also under attack in the account of Luke. He has the power as the Emperor. His arrogance made him not only to divinise his voice, but also to lay hands on those who do not acclaim him as their God. His early death and the circumstances surrounding this death are portrayed as bearing the seal of God.¹³⁵

The narrative frame of the double work of Luke beginning from Lk 1:5 and ending with Acts 28 is offered in a chronological perspective covering approximately four generations of the Herodian dynasty.¹³⁶ It would be naive to

¹³² R. MacMullen, *Enemies*, 44.

¹³³ J.R. Fears, *Cult*, 828.

¹³⁴ Cf. O.W. Allen, *Death*, 77.

¹³⁵ Cf. H.J. Klauck, *Magic*, 44.

¹³⁶ In Lk 1:5, the narrative begins with "it happened in the days of King Herod..." which refers to the conception and birth of John the Baptist. The ruler referred to here is Herod the Great, the chief ancestor and founder of the Herodian dynasty. In Acts 25:13-26:32, Paul has the

believe that Luke is not well informed with the intricacies of the Herodian dynasty, which made him to identify the ruler in Acts 12 only as Herod. With this singular act of not giving a further determination of who is meant by Herod, Luke is not only interested in pursuing a general condemnation of the dynasty; he is also condemning power and dominion, not only as exhibited by this dynasty but also as a social reality of his time.

It is from the perspective of hubris, idolatry and persecution that Luke offers a sizable criticism of worldly powers in his works.¹³⁷ These three items are taboos in any Christian or Jewish community. Agrippa, representing the mighty and the powerful, is presented as an example of what power and dominion could cause in people having power over others.

opportunity of defending himself before another Herod, who is identified with his name. This time it is Agrippa II, the son of the principal actor of our pericope, Agrippa I. For a further analysis of the importance of the Herodian family for the construction of Luke, confer F.W. Horn, *Haltung*, 215-220. However, he used the connection to the Herodian family to ascertain the appeasement approach of the Lukan theology.

¹³⁷ The hubris and arrogance of the powerful are the reasons for pulling them down from their throne in the *Magnificat*, (Lk 1:52). The Christmas message in Luke's gospel is preoccupied with the celebration of a saviour, who is a saviour and not a persecutor (Lk 2:11). This saviour has also come to be the serving one (Lk 22:27). The temptation of Jesus castigates the powerful because of their readiness to dance to the whims and caprices of the devil to get and retain their power (Lk 4: 5-8).

1. *Conclusion*

The aim and intention of the dissertation is to explore the Lukan theology from a different perspective. Although it has been ancestral working out the repudiation of Luke concerning the social dichotomy between the rich and the poor, little has been done to work out the critical stance of Luke to the powerful, their thoughts and imaginations. The preoccupation with the six texts in the double work of Luke is hopefully unambiguous in portraying the interest of Luke within the theme of dominion and power. This interest is understandable in as much as a general evaluation with its recurrent theme in the Lukan scholarship has always been one of seeing Luke as doing a theology of appeasement: He purposely chose to present the powerful and those with and in authority in the most positive light of history. With this stance, he hopes to see Christianity attain the status of a *religio licita* as a religion that does not pose any potential harm for the state. A neutral observation will not only acknowledge the half-truth of this observation, it will however state clearly the sheer futility involved in the reduction of the whole theological work of Luke to an appeasement theology.

The yield of the research into the theme of power and dominion could be summarised as follows: Although Luke presents some positive images of the ruling class in his gospel, he however, never hesitates to attack the powerful and the ruling class especially when they fall in conflict with God and his laws. Secondly, where and when he criticises the ruling class without any conflict with the laws of God, he does that in such a subtle manner that the reader needs a second and third sight in order to understand and appreciate the message. The criticism meted on the powerful and the socially well placed in the gospel of Luke is evident. In comparison with the other gospels, the gospel of Luke is second to none when it comes to addressing political matters.

This observation, however, leads to the question of the socio-political importance and influence of the Lukan church with the attendant question of the status mixture of the Lukan community. Was it a homogenous structure of the powerful or of the inconsequential or a heterogenous society comprising of the well to do and the poor? The question would invariably demand an answer that is inclusive in character. Both groups were represented in the community of Luke. The criticism of Luke to a particular group serves to sustain the other group. In criticising the rich and the powerful, he calls their attention to the plight of the poor and the powerless in the community: "Lukas wendet sich mit seiner Paränese vorwiegend an die Reichen in seiner Gemeinde und ruft sie angesichts der Gefahr des Glaubensabfalles zur Distanz zum Reichtum auf... Christliche Existenz findet nicht im Reichtum und Überfluß ihr Ziel, vielmehr in der Bereitschaft zum Liebesdienst am Nächsten."¹ As such, the community of Luke is heterogenous, which, on the other hand, explains the impossibility of pinning down the work of Luke to the category of an appeasement theology.

Far from being only an appeasement to the ruling class, he prefers to go a different way in his attempt to visualise the importance and the socio-political implication of the announced child. In adopting an already existing hymn in his

¹ U. Schnelle, Einleitung, 291.

Magnificat full of antithetic parallelism, chiasmus, ultimate rhymes and aorist verbs, he presents the importance and the meaning of this child in a very opposing structure to the powerful, who will eventually be overthrown. The promised child will initiate a reversal of fortune² that will empower the powerless, however, not in the sense of continuing the unjust and oppressive work of the powerful but to establish an everlasting justice. If it is the will of God to inaugurate a change in destinies, in order to bring salvation, it then means that salvation is essentially connected with the satisfaction of the needs of the oppressed and the marginalised, which however presupposes the removal of oppression. “Das politisch-soziale Zustandsbild der Welt ist genau das Gegenteil von dem, was Gott sich gedacht hat. Nur eine Revolution, die von Gott kommt, besser: die Realität, die mit dem Kommen Gottes kommt, kann da Abhilfe schaffen.”³

Consequently, all these happenings belong to the plan of God, who is called the mighty (v.49),⁴ in his infinite mercy and justice. In this hymn, the criticism meted on the powerful is more than evident. In addition, it is presented in such a martial manner that a Christian reader is forced to ask the question behind the source of this hymn. The Magnificat is not just a criticism, it is also a hymn of derision. Criticisms against the political enemy of the young Christian community are not allowed. A hymn makes the criticisms more pronounced and everlasting, while retaining the ability of making the criticisms latent and tolerable. “In einem solchen Kontext ist die Sprache des Magnificats als Sprache des Widerstandes zu verstehen. Es ist ein Lied, in dem das, was nicht gesagt werden darf, herausgesungen wird. Es bringt zum Ausdruck, was in politischen Diskursen nicht erlaubt ist, denn explizite Herrschaftskritik wurde nicht geduldet.”⁵ With this hymn, however, Luke is able to thematise the reality of oppression, subjugation and exploitation. Over and above these realities, he presents a higher societal reality of justice found in God.

The importance of the Old Testament in the nativity story of Luke is solidified especially in the Birth of Jesus. Luke is undaunted in his conviction to show the powerful the limits of their power. With terms and terminologies belonging to the Imperial Cult, however known to the Old Testament, Luke hopes to initiate a contrast theology. For the readers of Luke, probably well acquainted with the message of this Imperial cult, the vividness of the portrayal of Luke must have been very striking. He sets out to undertake a subtle comparison between the

² The reversal of fortune or of destiny is a literary and eschatological method employed by Luke. It helps to explain God’s actions that are incomprehensible for mortals. Elizabeth became pregnant at her old age. A woman of humble origin is chosen to be the mother of the saviour. The news of the birth of the saviour is given to the shepherds, who do not belong to the ruling class. Lazarus had his poverty reversed in beatific joy, while Dives ended up in hell (Lk 16). The rejection of the Jews, who believe that salvation is their birthright explains the missionary concern for the gentile world in Acts of the Apostles. Political leaders try to go against the will of God. Eventually they end up serving this will (Acts 4: 25-28). Saul, who was bent on wiping out the early seeds of Christianity, later became the great apostle Paul.

³ H. Schürmann, *Lukasevangelium*, 76

⁴ The composer deliberately used *δυνασταί* and not *δυνάτοι*, in order to show the contrast between God as the almighty, and the worldly rulers with limited power.

⁵ C. Janssen – R. Lamb, *Lukas*, 519.

mighty emperor in Rome, who issues an edict that will affect the whole inhabited world and the weak child born in a manger in an unknown and obscure hinterland of Bethlehem. His contrast theology in this pericope is exemplified not only in transferring the titles reserved for the emperor to the poor and helpless child born in the manger. He also uses the concept of the “good news” (εὐαγγέλιον) to announce the birth of Jesus, a concept conventionally reserved for the imperial entity and politics.

In addition, Luke presents this pericope systematically to show the irony of the power of the emperor: With his brutal decree that all in the inhabited world should be registered, he unknowingly provides the ambience for the fulfilment of the prophecy that the son of God, the real saviour should be born in Bethlehem. Moreover, his bid to catalogue the inhabitants of the world for his brutal taxation politics creates a wonderful opportunity for the birth of the saviour, whose coming would initiate the dawn of the true salvation. Although the then world acclaimed Augustus for the peace he provided in the inhabited world, it should however not be forgotten, that this peace was extremely expensive. In order to sustain this peace within the empire, the census with its attendant ruthlessness became very imperative. The very mention of this census at the beginning of the second chapter of Luke is a constant reminder of the vassal status of the Jews. The census was synonymous with oppression, domination and injustice. Besides, it gives a portrayal of the emperor as the oppressor of the Jews and evokes negative associations,⁶ which ultimately rob him of all affections having to do with a peaceful saviour.

It is interesting to note that the Lukan information politics is a total affront against the ruling class. The angelic information that the saviour is born was not given to the political aristocrats surrounding the emperor. Rather, the shepherds were the first to come to the joy of this news. Shepherds, as peasants, located at the bottom of the scale of power and privilege are highly esteemed in the birth narrative because the esteem and the recognition denied to the ruling class are given to them.⁷ “Mangy, stinking, bathless shepherds are in their ritual uncleanness an encouragement for all who lack religious status.”⁸ Good news comes to the peasants and not the powerful, whose power has experienced a re-evaluation and correction in the information politics of the birth narrative. For the modern reader not well versed in the information politics of antiquity, this jumping of protocols would not imply any political insinuation. The very fact that Luke speaks of good news that has nothing to do with the imperial surroundings is already a rejection of the formative and essential basis of the imperial cult. Walter Schmitthals has summarised in a single sentence the theology of Luke in this pericope: “Der Friede auf Erden kann nicht dort erwartet werden, wo dem Menschen die göttliche Ehre dargebracht wird.”⁹ In the light of this portion of criticism is a re-evaluation

⁶ Cf. R. Pesch, *Weihnachtsevangelium*, 109.

⁷ Cf. J.B. Green, *Luke*, 130f.

⁸ F. W. Danker, *Jesus*, 27.

⁹ W. Schmitthals, *Weihnachtsgeschichte*, 293.

of the friendly and compromising stance of Luke towards the ruling class imperative.

The second item in the temptation pericope (Lk 4: 5-8) presents in a succinct manner the risks involved in the search for power. The Devil not only ascertains that all power has been given to him; he also claims the ability of giving it to whomever he wants. A synoptic comparison not only shows the difference between the version of Matthew and of Luke; the reader stands a better chance of seeing and appreciating the intentions of Luke which are very well highlighted in his version. The inordinate search for power has the potentiality of carving an inroad for idolatry. The pride in man makes him not to appreciate his status in the universe; he wants to be more than he is already. Whoever is not in the position of appreciating his status, thereby longing for a higher one, presents a fertile ground for the growth of idolatry and will easily do every thing to come to power. The devil claimed to be in the position of giving Jesus the authority over the kingdoms of the inhabited world. However, Jesus must have to pay a heavy price, if he wants to accept the offer of the devil; a shift in allegiance. This price would involve a denial of his relationship with God. As such, this pericope is axiomatic: The devil does nothing without a selfish motive. Faust and Simon Magus got all they wanted from the devil but they had to devote their whole life to the service of the devil. What Luke wants to say to his community is that an offer of power from the devil cannot be an offer a Christian could take because the devil can go at any length and with many promises to satisfy his longing of being offered a proskynesis. Any offer of the world and the authority over all its kingdoms can only come from the evil one. Whoever wishes such an offer will surely end in the bosom of the devil. The ability to have others at his beck and call runs contrary to the life and understanding of Jesus, who had to set up priorities from a *theologia crucis* to a *theologia gloriae*. He says a decisive “no” to the bondage and pact of those who derive joy by enslaving others.

From the perspective of a mild imperial cult, where the son of an emperor calls himself a divinified (*divus*) after the apotheosis of his late father, one can say that Luke purposely outlayed his composition to be against this practice. However, the ruthless aspect of the imperial cult provides a more potent reason for this criticism. The reign of Caligula and the occasions he presented against the monotheistic values of the Jews could have been very instrumental in the composition of this pericope, at least in the Q version.¹⁰ His attempt to rob the temple in Jerusalem of its sanctity and awe by allowing that his image be placed there presents a central challenge for a monotheistic religion like Judaism. Domitian, though not as ruthless as Caligula, was also interested in divine honours and must have had an influence on the composition of the Lukan gospel since Luke wrote within his principate. The doubts cast on his assertion of godly honours in modern history should not blind the fact that he authorised his being addressed as *deus ac dominus*. That the *damnatio memoriae* became his lot has much to say in the general evaluation of his personality.

¹⁰ Cf. G. Theißen, Lokalkolorit, .

With such knowledge concerning the intentions of the imperial cult, the reader is made to understand that respect given to political leaders should be determined from their relation to God. The human honour due to them should be given to them. However, when they insist on taking honours due to God, the Christian should see in them the devil who wanted the son of God to give him the honour due to his father. At the face of such a reality, the Christian is expected to take measures against this unbecoming intention of the powerful.

A particular text, which has not attracted a worthy and lengthy discussion by exegetes, is also treated as part of this dissertation. A part of the problem involved in the treatment of this pericope has to do with a long tradition of a stereotyped interpretation attached to it: Lk 19:11-28 has always served as the biblical basis for reward and punishment; efforts should be rewarded and laziness unrewarded and at worst be punished. A nauseating aspect of the interpretation of this text is the unacceptable identification of the throne claimant with Jesus. Lack of consideration of the context of this narration in the Lukan version is a possible cause of this traditional interpretation. That this parable falls after the encounter with Zacchaeus and before the entry into Jerusalem has more to say than meets the eye. Jesus encounters a son of Abraham, who is ready for a *Seitenwechsel* after working for a well-hated group of military occupants as collaborator against his own nation. In the ensuing parable, the figure of Zacchaeus is typified in a courageous servant, who has had enough of the wicked practices of his master and is therefore no longer willing to collaborate with such a master, who takes forcefully what does not belong to him. With the slaughtering of his enemies, the master confirms the information of the servant. Jesus proves to his audience that he has nothing to do with such a king by entering into Jerusalem in a peaceful and humble manner.

All this while, no attention has been paid to the accusations of the servant on his master, which the master corroborated by repeating those accusations as part of his self-understanding. The saying of the king regarding the dispossession of those, who have little and giving those who have more, underlines the unjust reality of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer in the society.¹¹ Less attention has been paid to the poor relation between the prince and his subjects, which warranted their sending emissary after the prince stating unanimously and uncompromisingly that they would not like him to be their king. That he slaughtered the opposition to his kingship after he has got the crown seems to play no role in the traditional evaluation of the king as doing what he did because as king he should do that. The wickedness of the master, which made the servant to hide his mina, has been proved in the wicked and merciless treatment meted on the opposition.

The observation that Luke shares this tradition with Matthew seems to blind many exegetes regarding the uniqueness of the composition of Luke. Both shared a tradition of a master who went away after entrusting his servants with different amounts of talents according to their capacity, with the hope that they will trade with the money in the course of his absence and make more out of it. The

¹¹ Cf. M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 130.

uniqueness of the version of Luke is however, the combination with a different tradition having to do with Archelaus, the son of Herod, who received a recognition from Rome, notwithstanding the opposition that followed this enterprise, though he had expected more kingdoms as was actually given to him. Out of annoyance, he swore a merciless revenge. As part of this vengeance, he ordered all killed, who were part of the opposition. The neglect of such a historico-traditional reality in the interpretation of this text is unimaginable, moreso as Luke explicitly mentioned Jericho in his documentation. The separate consideration of the version of Matthew could warrant a different exegesis. However, any exegesis of the version of Luke, which fails to take cognisance of this variety in the tradition and the context of the parable in Luke, stands the danger of interpreting Luke from the perspective of Matthew. A part of the problem could be seen in the observation that many exegetical works refer to the version of Luke as the parable of the talents, although there was no mention of talents but minas. The version of Matthew, in the simplicity of its tradition, enjoys a wider range of familiarity than the version of Luke. It is therefore necessary to consider Luke in its uniqueness in order to grasp the core of the teaching of the evangelist.

With the figure of this king and the figure of Jesus, Luke was able to characterise the ruling class in their wickedness juxtaposing them with the example of Jesus, who presented a different image of a king in his triumphant entry to Jerusalem. A contrary view that sees Jesus as using the figure of the throne claimant to represent his eschatological coming would have the general difficulty of adapting the meekness and forgiving stance of Jesus to the utmost mercilessness of the kingly figure. In addition, it would be faced with the difficulty of stating the relevance of the ruthlessness and the brutality involved in the parable for the coming of Jesus. Moreover, a comprehensive assessment of the teaching of Jesus in the gospel of Luke would constitute a further difficulty in the bid of marketing such a view and interpretation. Maintaining this view involves introducing a contrast that will eventually displace the teaching of Jesus, which invariably requires a revisitation of the traditional view held on Jesus. With the criticism meted on the political and temple aristocrats, it becomes understandable why Jesus was crucified: A figure having the impetus to criticise a very dangerous and ruthless system cemented on a political logic of extortion at the doorpost of its capital would certainly end up as a dangerous enemy of the system.¹²

All these undertakings would however be superfluous with the courageous and tenacious conviction that Jesus criticised the ruling class for their normal way of solving problems arising from the opposition of the subjects. In the parable, Jesus shows what a king should not be, but with his entry to Jerusalem in the next chapter, Luke shows how a king should behave, and maps out the way a king should go. The readiness to suffer and to die for others should play a very important role in the determination of the moral character of a king.

At a central moment in the earthly life of Jesus, Luke permits an insight into the internal structure and wishes of the apostles. Jesus expresses the wish to have a

¹² Cf. A. Zorzin, *Reflexiones*, 12. Cited by M. Fricke, *Talente*, 42.

last dinner with his apostles. After the institution of the Eucharist and the announcement of his suffering and death, the apostles were involved in a discussion concerning who would seem to be the greatest among them. The instruction Jesus gave began with a summary of societal realities, where the kings lord it over others and the powerful allow themselves to be called benefactors. These realities, however, might be adequate for the society but not for the apostles, who should have a different status quo because of their higher vocation. The greatest should be like the smallest and the person who leads should be like the one who serves at table. Jesus did not answer the question regarding a particular person who should be the greatest; he only gave them measures for determining greatness and who should be termed great. In order to buttress this point, the instruction was followed by a life instance presented with the service at table. The question concerning the greater between the person sitting at table and the person serving was answered in favour of the person sitting at table. However, Jesus presents himself as the person serving at table and not as the person reclining at the table. The aspect that is very important for the topic of the dissertation is the assertion of the reality in the society. The statement that the kings lord it over their subjects should not only be seen as an assertion; it is also a criticism of the *status quo*. From the documentation of Luke, the reader has the conviction that this assertion belongs to the normal life of the kings, which it really is. However, it would have received a different evaluation, if it were portrayed positively. The words ὑμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως summarise the position of Jesus to the *status quo* of the kings, notwithstanding the fact that Luke seems to have refused the Markan compound word κατακυριεύουσιν for κυριεύουσιν. The very use of this seeming mild variation of the verb does not however mean that Luke was friendly with the ruling class.¹³

The assessment of the actions of the powerful in allowing themselves to be called benefactors captures a cultural aspect and value of the Hellenistic world, which later made its way to Rome. This instance makes a thorough appreciation of the phenomenon of patronage and clientism, in which the institution of benefactors is rooted, imperative. In the acceptance of an act of benefaction, a subordinate declares his status and promises *salutatio* to the superior benefactor, on whom he depends for help especially on the acquisition of a political office or post. The misuse of this phenomenon in the time of Luke must have warranted this low regard. Without thorough carefulness, it stood the risk of being degraded to slavery. The so-called benefactors donated to the common purse not out of conviction, but out of calculation, especially when aspiring for a political post. Over and above all, this title of benefactors played a very essential role in the imperial cult. In the course of time, it came to be seen and used as an official part of the imperial title and appellation. Luke is very much aware of these details and development. The use of benefactor in this pericope is uniquely Lukan, in as much as Mark und Matthew did not use this particular appellation. The example of Jesus with the powerful and their relation to their subjects presupposes that the apostles were thinking in this direction of greatness, where the greatest have

¹³ Cf. P. Walaskay, Rome, 85.

others in their yoke. The introduction of the theme of greatness and slavery in a meal commemorating the victory of freedom against slavery not only shows the ignorance of the apostles concerning the mission and work of Jesus. It also shows the reader that the apostles are products of their culture and milieu. The dissonance of this theme with the intention of Jesus and with the feast being celebrated is part of Luke's contribution in highlighting the central value, which the question of greatness occupies.

The pericope is not just a testament of instruction. As farewell speech, the concentration on the previous good works of the apostles is as well important. Although they missed a very important mark in the discussion on greatness by running after the standards of worldly rulers, however, this mistake should not blind the fact that they have been faithful to their master in his many tribulations. As such, Jesus will give them his kingdom as a legacy, which he has received from God. Once again, a counteraction of the devil's claim in the second item of the temptation becomes evident. Here, Jesus is presented as handing over a kingdom to his apostles, which has been entrusted to him by his father. The characteristics of this kingdom would be joy and happiness expressed by eating and drinking as acts of a liberated group. The greatness, which the apostles are looking for is upgraded to involve a universal honour of sitting on thrones, where they will judge the twelve tribes of Israel. The lonely hegemony over a group of apostles gives way for the universal judgement over the world. In order to reach this stage however, they have to abide by the principles of greatness given to them by Jesus.

Luke sees in the suppression of freedom the principal and essential acts and intentions of the world's rulers. The question of a domineering greatness introduced in the serenity of a celebrated freedom, the impending death of the master for the freedom of all and the answer and analogies of Jesus present the apostles as thinking within the categories of the world. Presenting Jesus as an example, Luke enjoins his community not to behave like the worldly rulers. In this injunction, a sizable portion of criticism is meted on the violence of the ruling class in lording it over their subjects. The Lukan community is told not to be a part of this mentality. The placement of this injunction within the farewell address of Jesus highlights the importance of this injunction for the Lukan community. The teaching at this particular station in the life of Jesus should have the efficacy and durability of a life legacy.

Amidst the many texts in the Acts of the Apostles, which deal with the criticism meted on the powerful, the hubris of Herod Agrippa in the twelfth chapter stands out because of its significance for the continued existence and progress of the young Christian faith. Agrippa's death is the summary of a life devoted to hatred and calumny against the faith reaching its height in a complacent acceptance of an honour due alone to God. The killing of James, the brother of John, as an avenue of getting the love and fidelity of the Jews presents Agrippa as a king, who is not interested in the administration of justice. Justice is overlooked if it serves the ideals of his popularity. Killing to impress is as dangerous as assuming the honour due to God alone. Having seen that the Jews accepted his action of killing James, he went further to arrest Peter, hoping to present him to the Jews on the day after

the Passover feast. The deliverance of Peter presented another side of Agrippa, who killed all entrusted with guarding Peter. He went down to Caesarea probably to receive the honour, which he could have received if he had succeeded in killing Peter, but could not receive because of the deliverance by the angel of God. After addressing the emissaries of Tyre and Sidon, they acclaimed that his words were that of a god and not of a man. By his acceptance of this honour, he projects himself as not falling into the profile of those presented as models of faith in the Acts like the apostles, especially Peter and Paul, who would have instantly rejected such an honour with the correction that this praise is entitled only to God. The type of death that he experienced exemplifies Agrippa as a typical persecutor of God and takes him up in the biblical group of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. The Lukan characterisation of Agrippa presents him as one who killed because he could kill. As such, he is presented as sharing in and perfecting the ruthlessness and brutality of the Herods, who not only killed John the Baptist, but James as well, and have now failed in the execution of Peter. With his death, Luke marks an important epoch in the young history of the church, since the word of God, which is the background for the young church, increased and multiplied. With this singular statement, Luke makes it clear that the danger facing the young Christian community has been removed, although temporarily.

However, reading in between the lines has shown a wonderful literary device of Luke in accordance with the sociological dynamics of open/public transcript and hidden transcript. A deeper preoccupation with the text has shown that the figure of Agrippa was used to criticise a higher figure in history. It would have been a dangerous venture for Luke if he had criticised Nero directly. The incumbent emperor Domitian could understand this criticism as an indirect one against him. This would have spelt doom for Luke and his community. Choosing a lesser evil would imply criticising a lower figure as a representative of a higher figure, which his audience would readily understand and appreciate. With the sense of *figura*, Luke succeeded in using the figure of Agrippa to criticise the obsession of Nero. Nero was so much convinced of his singing capability that he considered being trained as a professional singer. The allusion to the divine voice in the pericope justifies the conviction that Agrippa is being used to criticise Nero, while the historical data cement this approach. The fact that a great persecution under Nero opened the series of the persecutions of Christians helps in the perfection of the identification of these figures. In addition, the immersion of Nero in the tenets of the imperial cult could also be a sign of a possible hubris on his own part. The appearance of the emperors with the ovation involved leaves no doubt as to the appropriateness of this identification. Furthermore, the background information that the mentor of Luke, Paul, suffered martyrdom during the reign of Nero makes this identification understandable. These are rulers, who are responsible for the death of important and significant figures in the history of Christianity.

2. Yields from the research

An important aim of the dissertation was to open up a new trajectory for a better understanding and appreciation of the Lukan theology. This trajectory involved the projection of a new tapestry for the theology of Luke from the perspective of

seeing the Lukan writings as full of political gunpowder. However, tracing this tapestry would ultimately involve making the ancestral view on the appeasement theology of Luke obsolete, or at least relativising it. That this would not be an easy venture was clear. However, it is better opening up a different horizon for an overall evaluation of the Lukan double work.

Since the sixties of the last century, the awareness of the key position of Luke-Acts in the scholarship of the New Testament has been very overwhelming. One needs only to take a glance through the bibliographies of works in the New Testament in order to appreciate the attention bestowed on the double work of Luke. However, this interest blinds at times to the danger of rigidity. This danger of rigidity involved in the scientific scholarship of the New Testament could be assessed as the rigidity involved in following a set out order. Such rigidity is catastrophic especially if it fails to take into consideration a shift in the study of the New Testament. Failing to do this, the ability for young scholars to labour in the exegetical field as scholars and not as parrots is impeded. No one dares to question a stereotyped method in traditional way of reading and understanding the books of the Bible. One only needs to read a commentary on Luke and is sure of having all he needs since the whole commentaries are saying the same thing. A case of initiative contra tradition seems to be typical of this discussion. Because of the seeming liberal stance of Luke to the Roman aristocracy and the powerful of his time, it is no longer interesting to work out facts nurtured by the predilection with a contrary thesis. This would involve a revisitation of the convinced ancestry that Luke was very accommodating to the powerful because he hopes to show that the Christian religion was a peaceful religion interested in the maintainance of order and tranquillity in the Roman Empire.¹⁴ The conviction of this revisitation justifies the topic as its *raison d'être*. As such, this special aim of the dissertation could be seen as exemplifying the proverbial swimming against the current, however in line with the opinion of Peter Oakes, who is convinced that the position of the early church to the empire is coloured with a tension involving positive and negative factors as is exemplified in the book of Acts. He writes therefore: "Roman officials in Acts... are portrayed in varying ways, both positive and negative... portraying a range of officials whose character and behaviour varies... We could read the officials as uniformly representing Rome, but a Rome that was, in Luke's eyes, a paradoxical mixture of good and bad... sometimes acting well and sometimes badly. Luke's Rome is a mixture of efficiency, openness, justice and corruption."¹⁵ Luke's view therefore articulates a tension between appreciation and resentment.

Whether this swimming against the current was able to yield any dividend is left for the reader to assess after a thorough preoccupation with the theme. The texts and the methods used have shown the possibility of understanding the writings of

¹⁴ Cf. H. Omerzu, *Imperium*, 33. "Es ist deutlich geworden, dass die lange Zeit die exegetische Forschung beherrschende Annahme, die Apostelgeschichte liefere eine Apologie – sei es im Sinne der Rechtfertigung des Christentums gegenüber Rom oder als Verteidigung des Imperiums gegenüber dem Christentum – zu kurz greift. Lukas stellt durchaus auch kritische Aspekte des Imperiums dar – sowohl direkt als auch indirekt."

¹⁵ P. Oakes, *States*, 87f.

Luke from a different perspective and have therefore presented a reason to consider this understanding in the analysis of the Lukan writings. Luke was not very keen to dance to the tune of the music dictated by the powerful of his time. In subtle but skilful ways, he dishes a good portion of criticism to the powerful. Beginning with the Magnificat through the narrative of the birth of Jesus and the temptation in the wilderness, he creates a theology of the powerless that runs across the parable of the throne claimant before entering into Jerusalem and his farewell speech, finding its perfection in the hubris and death of Agrippa. No matter the duration and the seeming proficiency of the appeasement theology and the attendant *religio licita* as a way of explaining the theology of Luke, a most formidable yield of this research in the work of Luke is the conviction that the work of Luke cannot alone be explained and understood from the perspective of appeasement theology. In many skilful ways and methods, he was able to articulate his sentiments against the powerful of his time. Even in the text, in which he used imageries well known in the Imperial cult, the methods of public and hidden transcripts help to understand that he used these imageries in order to make a mockery of the beliefs of the imperial cult. He did not forget to raise his voice against the social abuses in the community of Christians by condemning the rich by pointing out that they have already had their blessing, nor did he keep quiet in the face of idolatry in return for a political authority as in the temptation of Jesus.

The last aim in the exegetical part of the work would be to enjoin others involved in the exposition of the theology and aim of Luke to undertake a comprehensive assessment of his thoughts and ideas. Such an enterprise would not immediately demystify the apologetic approach as an avenue of understanding Luke. It will however, underline the necessity of carefulness and personal conviction in the preoccupation with the double work of Luke. As a general summary of the study, it remains to be said that amidst the seeming docility of Luke towards the powerful of his time, he castigated the powerful of his time, especially when they show the tendency of assuming the power due only to God. In this case, the Christians should see them as the incarnate of the devil, who wanted the fall of their master by presenting him in a series of temptation a pact that could guarantee their master an unabridged power and authority.

3. Proceeds for the day-to-day life

Until now, I have attempted an exegesis of some of the texts of Luke, exploring the way it was meant to be understood for the first readers of Luke. However, the crucial question deals with the problem of application for the modern world. The Bible is a work of life and a work for life. As such, the messages involved therein are meant to concretise God's love for us in actions he took in the past.¹⁶ From these actions, we come to know what he characteristically does, and what he has

¹⁶ This conviction of the usefulness and necessity of the Bible explains the actions of a group of poor farmers in a particular Latin American country a long time ago. The farmers hid their Bible in the earth to escape confiscation. The powerful wanted to take the Bible away from them because it talks of the God of Exodus and of liberation.

already begun to do in those, who hear his words. Exegesis and the study of the scripture would lose their excitement, if they have no practical meaning for the day-to-day life of the readers and hearers of the Bible. Working out the literary development and uniqueness of a book of the Bible without the intention of showing any practical link to the life of the hearer would only expose exegesis as wearing a false garment as an extended form of comparative literature. That the documentations of the Bible are not fairy tales is the conviction of every Christian, although a word for word reception of the Bible is neither intended nor expedient. Seeing the biblical message as having something to say to others and not to me as an individual is part of the problems involved in the interpretation and reception of the bible. Much greater is the erroneous view that the words of the bible have nothing to say to the modern man.

Beginning with the Magnificat, a modern day reader could see that the liberation, which the covenant race experienced within a particular time in Exodus, belongs to the profile of a God, who would not accept the treatment of a particular race as an appendage. That this God has something to say and to do when people suffer and are being subjugated creates a formidable picture of a liberating God. This conviction underlies the uniqueness of this experience for the race involved. That God has taken over power is a message that intends to usher in hope, especially for the afflicted and the downtrodden. The inception of the messianic age would bring about a change in the course of history, and obviously a change in the destiny of many. It is God's power, that "...der Hybris der Mächtigen ein Ende setzt und die erniedrigten Armen ins Recht setzt."¹⁷ His actions create the awareness that social injustice is not a *Randthema* but a very essential project based on the pivotal aspect of human communications and society. Secondly, the reader knows and appreciates the fact that the experienced social injustice has a cause, which is ultimately rooted in the greed and insatiable nature of the human person, who sees himself as the powerful. It is from this perspective that a correct appreciation of Luke's stance on power and dominion could be justified. The correction of this avarice could be appreciated from the perspective of the reversal of fortune, which is a motif running through the second part of the Magnificat. The destiny or fortune introduced by the powerful will experience a complete overhauling with the justice and mercy of God. That is a signal that God is still in charge and in control.

This development is not without history: "Das aus dem Judentum, vielleicht auch aus gewissen sozialkritisch orientierten christlichen Kreisen übernommene Umkehrungsprinzip mit seinen revolutionär klingenden Einschlügen (Zerstreuung der Hochmütigen V. 51b; Entthronung der Mächtigen – Erhöhung der Niedrigen V. 52; Gaben für die Hungernden; Leerausgehen der Reichen V 53) ist ein tragendes Bauelement."¹⁸ The Old Testament motif that gave rise to the development of this hope for reversal of destiny is obviously Psalm 107: 9. The way God acted belongs to his normal way of acting.

¹⁷ K. Löning, *Geschichtswerk*, 97.

¹⁸ J. Ernst, *Portrait*, 75.

In his documentations, Luke uses images and paradigms to drive home his point, as he favours paradigms as part of his didactic methods.¹⁹ Paradigms have to do with what is common, or what has a general validity. In this regards, the paradigmatic has to do with the typical. Didactically, it helps in the pedagogic direction of individuals to see in someone a model worthy of emulation. Accordingly, Luke used Mary as a paradigm to elucidate symbolically what a Christian should be like. In combining the paradigmatic and the typical, Luke intends to leave a didactic message that will affect not only the intellectual, but also the moral character of the reader of his work. “In this way a Gentile Christian imitating the mother of Jesus is able to recognize himself in Maria the representative of Israel and rejoice over the mercy God shows “to Abraham and his children’s children forever” (Lk 1:53). In so doing, the Christian reader has surrendered himself, probably quite willingly, to Luke’s manipulation. Provocatively, one might say that the reader is involved in a kind of give-and-take. As a paradigmatic figure Maria demands the reader’s moral commitment, but in exchange she offers intellectual security by enhancing the reader’s interpretation of reality – which, of course, is Luke’s interpretation, too.”²⁰

In the Magnificat Luke reinforces the paradigmatic nature of Mary. As a typical individual, Mary is one of us. That would have another meaning on the paradigmatic level: every one of us Christians can become like her. As such, any one wishing to be identified as a Christian can sing the Magnificat. The praise of God is not a prerogative of Mary. Rather, Luke uses her as a prototype, in order to convey his message. That would imply that these typical features of Mary are directly at the service of Luke. They are there for purposes, which are didactic in character. To the collective meaning of paradigms is the wish included that the Christian makes the correct option exemplifying this paradigm. A correct appreciation of this paradigm however abhors violence since the Magnificat should not be seen as a manifesto for violent revolution. Interpreting the Magnificat in a nationalistic manner misses the mark of the intention. Luke did not criticise the the views expressed in this hymn because as a hymn the Magnificat is commentary exemplifying the significance of the event. That is why Luke never attempted a corrective to what Mary said. A corrective could at most be seen in the manner of interpretation.²¹

The birth of the saviour in the manger typifies the identification of God with the weak and the inconsequential even in the modern democratic conception of society. This identification shows this group of people that not all hope is lost. The addressees of this message are the poor as well as the powerful. The biblical

¹⁹ There are many paradigms in Luke-Acts. As noted above, Mary is a paradigm in the Lucan composition. Other paradigms in this composition are Elizabeth and Zechariah as well as Simeon and Anna. They represent the pious Jews hoping for the fulfilment of the salvation promise. Using impressive fictional characters Luke hopes to move his reader to make a choice: The good Samaritan embodies a positive paradigm, while the rich fool is presented as a negative paradigm. Zacchaeus exemplifies the positive picture of a repentant sinner. Using the story of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5: 1-11), Luke hopes to warn Christians about the dangers involved in dishonesty and avarice.

²⁰ K. Syreeni, *Paradigms*, 44f.

²¹ Cf. I.H. Marshall, *Interpretations*, 194.

message should have the capacity of having a general relevance for humanity. Luke has already begun to open the doors of salvation for the Gentiles by naming Abraham in the Magnificat. For this general relevance to be a reality, the message of the bible and of Luke has to transcend ethnic and social boundaries, in which it was confined at the beginning arising from the need of a particular time. Only with this character will it retain its capacity of fitting into every culture that never even belonged to the traditional understanding of the Gentiles in the time of composition. That implies that the woes and curses pronounced in the writings of Luke retain their possibility, only when a particular individual makes a conscious decision and fails to follow the paradigms mapped out in the Lukan writing.

The actuality of the theology of Luke concerning power and dominion seems to be taking an unending dimension in the course of history. An interested political analyst well versed in this theme of Luke can only marvel at the foresight of Luke in the light of facts that politicians in the western world and dictators in third world countries do all possible to retain power all in the name of a correct political process of democracy. The general election that took place in Nigeria in April 2007 offers a wonderful optic for the appreciation of the actuality of this biblical message. The message of Luke is not an obsolete message that is foreign to the modern political understanding in Africa. The teaching and injunction of the departing Jesus within his farewell speech not only thematises a political system based on patronage and clientism of the classical and Hellenistic age. It creates the horizon for understanding the modern system of the powerbrokers, the seeming unending power of the godfathers and the undaunting perseverance of some members of the common folk to get connected to the powerful, with the utmost conviction that cut out from them one can do nothing politically. The godfather (patron) has social, economic and political resources, which he can dish out to the clients. In return, a client gives expressions of loyalty and honour that might be helpful for the godfather.²² In political parlance, he might swear that the proceeds from any financial undertaking would belong to the godfather. This conviction is not only an organised crime, but also an institutionalisation of a modern form of voluntary slavery as a “refined” form of political awareness or dynamics. Borrowing the ideas and intentions of Seneca,²³ M. Ebner gives an apt description of this system in the time of Jesus: “Mit diesen Beispielen spielt Lukas auf die Reziprozitätspraxis an, den gesellschaftlichen Kitt der Alten Welt. Jede Gabe fordert zu einer Gegengabe heraus, die dann ihrerseits wieder Ansatzpunkt für eine neue Gegengabe wird. Bei diesem prinzipiell unendlich zu perpetuierenden Gütertausch geht es nicht nur um Geld, sondern auch darum, den einen „mit Bürgerschaft, den anderen mit Einfluss, einen anderen mit Rat, wieder einen anderen mit heilsamen Lehren“ zu unterstützen oder auch den Zugang zu begehrten Ämtern zu verschaffen. Solcherlei Austausch pflegen Reiche ... gegenüber ihren Klienten, die allerdings in ungleich schlechterer Ausgangslage sind: Dafür, dass sie von ihrem Patron in Rechtsstreitigkeiten unterstützt werden und jeden Tag eine *sportula*, einen kleinen Geldbetrag, auf die

²² Cf. H. Moxnes, *Relations*, 242.

²³ Cf. Seneca, *De Beneficiis* I 2,4.

Hand bekommen, müssen sie Tag für Tag in der Villa ihres Patrons zum Morgenappell antreten, ihn anschließend zum Forum begleiten und seine Reden mit lautem Klatschen bekräftigen. Kurz: minimale rechtliche und soziale Unterstützung wird mit maximalem Ehrerweis zurückerstattet.”²⁴ This description of the societal convention in the time of Jesus is however painted in a moderate niveau, and therefore seems to be nothing compared to the real situation in the modern world of African politics.²⁵

In addition, the biblical message in the gospel of Luke cannot be a fairy tale if it is true that political aspirants swear everlasting loyalty and obedience to a godfather in case of victory before a local shrine. That many politicians from the Christian southeastern block swore an oath before a local deity hoping to get power from such acts paints a vivid picture of the second item of the temptation pericope in the fantasy of the reader, without however, neglecting the affinity of this phenomenon to the instruction of the departing Jesus. In the face of these events, the second item of the temptation of Jesus in the version of Luke gains meaning and implications for the modern day life. The brutality of dictators and political rulers in the third world countries in their bid to maintain their power mirrors the understanding of power that existed within the prebiblical and biblical time as the story of Archelaus has shown. The postbiblical period was not devoid of these aberrations. Even in the medieval period, a philosopher of Italian origin Niccolo Machiavelli enunciated and cemented this brutality as belonging to the elements founded on Staatsräson, if one were to maintain his power and authority. Unfortunately, the wars, rivalries, subjugations and annihilations at the root and foundation of Europe, which atimes had the institutional church as a participant, seemed to prove him right.

The titles, which dictators and politicians of the third world countries assume, show that the instructions of Jesus within the last supper are *ad rem* and capture in its entirety the realities of the intricacies of power in his time and thereafter. In the course of the political process of the last century, the world has experienced many leaders involved in classical personality cult. Rafael Trujillo of the Dominican Republic assumed the title of benefactor of the fatherland (benefactor de la patria) although he is considered the bloodiest of the rulers of this island. His motto “God and Trujillo” (Dios y Trujillo) enjoyed an extention in the slogan “God in heaven, Trujillo on earth, which was later changed to “Trujillo on earth, God in heaven”. Knowingly or unknowingly, a division of authority between him and God is the

²⁴ M. Ebner, *Widerstand*, 125.

²⁵ In the early nineties of the last century in the Nigerian society, there was a mushroom of rich and influential people, who got their prominence either because of their connection to the military dictators of the then Nigerian politics or because of their financial prominence arising from the involvement in illegal trade. They had the habit of travelling in a long motorcade accompanied with beautiful young ladies seated in flashy cars. It was a part of the system that they should be escorted by armed and unarmed escorts, who were then titled “*otimkpu*” (criers) since their work involved the trompetting of the magnificence and indispensability of the “*nnukwu mmanwu*” (great masquerades), clearing the roads for them and giving up their lives, if necessary, for their “masters”. All these they did because of the graces they must have received from these influentials, or which they hope to receive from them. This system became so normal that a native highlife musician Oliver de Coque had to document it in a song.

full implication of this slogan. The dictatorship and the action of Jean-Bédél Bokassa, who proclaimed himself an Emperor of the Central African Empire not only show the dangers of power but also the wish to be accorded titles. One needs only to grasp the complete title of Idi Amin²⁶ and Joseph Mobutu²⁷ during their brutal dictatorship in Uganda and Congo respectively to appreciate this obsession with titles as recurrents in political establishment. Mobutu worked out a clear-cut propaganda system that will instigate fear into his subjects who would regard him as a god, whose presence is announced by the eruption in the clouds. All these were achieved through a television programme. From this perspective, the Biblical message remains a formidable guideline for a liberated life.

As contribution to a liberating liberation theology, it is of utmost importance to outline the basic fact that the subjugation and dominion of others that go with power and authority cannot be the meaning of the authority of Christ, who came to map out the way to liberation by healing the sick and the possessed. In this way, he creates the possibility of a complete assimilation back to the society: “Der Besessene war von unwiderstehlichen Kräften in Grabeshöhlen getrieben worden, hatte alle Bindungen an die menschliche Gemeinschaft zerstört, war desozialisiert. Der Geheilte sitzt wohl wortlos zu Füßen Jesu. Er kann also menschliche Beziehungen aufnehmen, sie aushalten, ohne von irgendetwas getrieben zu sein; ganz ruhig, sozusagen in nonverbaler Kommunikation. Er kann sogar in seine Familie und in ein Dorf zurückgehen und über seine eigene Heilung berichten. Aus einem Desozialisierten ist ein Resozialisierter geworden.”²⁸ The healing of the demoniac of Gerasa in Lk 8: 26-39 exemplifies the posture of Jesus to liberation. Just as he was able to rehabilitate this demoniac by mapping out a programmed corporate healing, he is also in a position to liberate the poor from the possession of the rich and from the suppression of the powerful.

The dissertation has shown that power and its quest have many attendant problems. In the writings of Luke, the cult of rulers and of Emperors are criticised mainly from the perspective of hubris. The dynamics of power follows such a trajectory that with time the tendency to see oneself as the last means becomes a reality. If the danger of hubris is not present, the powerful finds himself confronted with another danger, which is difficult to resist. That is the danger of idolatry. In order to maintain the access to power, fetish ideas and beliefs are

²⁶ Idi Amin (1928-2003) was the president of Uganda from 1971-1979. His reign was characterised by human right abuses, ethnic persecutions and political repressions. With about 500,000 killings during his regime, his reign became a prototype of African dictatorship. These are some of his “official” titles: His excellency, president for life, field marshal Al Hadji Doctor Idi Amin Dada, VC, DSO, MC, lord of all the beasts of the earth and fishes of the seas and conqueror of the British Empire in Africa in general and Uganda in particular. Cf. Wikipedia.org.

²⁷ In the course of his dictatorship (1965-1997), Mobutu (1930-1997) decreed the abolition of western names in Congo. Consequently, he adopted these names: Mobutu Sese Seko Nkuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga: The all-powerful warrior who, because of his endurance and inflexible will to win, goes from conquest to conquest, leaving fire in his wake. Cf. Wikipedia.org.

²⁸ L. Lies/S. Hell, Heilsmysterium, 19. This quotation is in accordance with the portrayal of Jesus as the miracle working Lord and the saviour from evil that is common in many african societies. Cf. J.S. Mbiti, ΣΩΤΗΡ, 397-414.

imagined as being the guarantor of power. Behind these fetish practices is the devil, who claims to distribute power and authority as he likes because all the power and the authority have been given to him. The rich and the powerful, who are still thinking in this category, are ultimately in need of this liberation, which will lead to a fuller understanding of the message of the scripture.

A liberation theology worth its name should make it clear that the subjugation, oppression and the brutality that go with power ultimately help in rendering the claim of the devil to be a reality. Africa, with its seasoned and long history of military decadence, corruption and brutal wars, is already in need of a liberation theology. The idea expressed here does not wish to revisit the importance of inculturation theology as being important for the African race in its quest to understand and appreciate the Christian message. However, thinking that liberation theology is only an enterprise for Latin American Christians would totally miss the mark of the global situation of the present world.

The liberation theology in question is not a Marxist foundation enunciating the path to communistic socialism, but one that ultimately sees the message and deeds of Jesus in the Bible as liberative. The danger of a Marxist liberation theology atimes is the fact that the spirituality enunciating the peace incarnated in Jesus, which should come first, is neglected. This might lead to a violent revolution. This danger of a revolutionary liberation theology notwithstanding, the New Testament underlying the new Covenant is in its entirety a message that deals with liberation. This understanding enables all, who see the Bible as a treasure to appreciate the very fact that they have not only been liberated, but are also bound by the same treasure in reading the Bible to liberate others, because "...Befreiungsgeschichten haben ...Dynamit in sich, wenn sie von geschehener Befreiung erzählen und Impuls für neue Befreiung sein wollen."²⁹ This message is especially addressed to those who have the authority of lording it over others. The examples given above exemplify the conviction that African readers are in a privileged position to understand the wishes and intentions of the bible better in as much as the questions, realities and optic of the biblical message are the questions, realities and optic of the modern day Africa.³⁰ The magical world that still forms the essence of the African Weltanschauung give them the enviable position amongst the races for getting a better understanding the bible.

The preoccupation with working out the rudiments of a consolation theology for the African race thought as the panacea for reviving the faith in the Christian God is a *Bankrotterklärung* of African theologians and church leaders in the face of a far-reaching erosion of social and integrative awareness and can only consolidate the despair that seems to undermine the élan to work for the word of God. The long history of the church with its bright and dark moments has shown that the church needs the God of Exodus, especially where and when it is persecuted.³¹ In addition, this history has shown that the church can only be credible, trustworthy, and with a higher prospect of reaching the heart of the people only when it is

²⁹ P. Weimar/E. Zenger, Exodus, 168.

³⁰ Cf. G.O. West, Eve, 100.

³¹ Cf. W. Radl, Befreiung, 95.

ready to preach a Jesus, whose readiness to sympathise and take sides with the downtrodden cannot be doubted, a Jesus of the Beatitudes, who never hesitated to raise his voice in the face of suppression and oppression from the part of the powerful and the rich. He achieved this not by experiencing a military victory coloured by killings, maimings and looting. With the power of his words and his teachings, he was able to cement a credible and formidable picture of himself as the liberator par excellence. In the face of these realities concerning the essence of the person of Jesus, there is no alternative to seeing him as a liberator and the Bible as full of liberating messages. In this aspect, the church plays a very important role in the presentation of the Bible as a credible word of life by being the church,³² by not being part of a system interested only in self aggrandizement, by being bold enough to resist the temptation with wealth and power, and by not allowing herself to be bought over.³³ Such convinced attitudes say more than a thousand words. Supporting the preached word with these clear motives and seeing in the Magnificat and some of the texts handled above as the seeds of a theology that promotes service to the oppressed,³⁴ the problems and agony of oppressed races would be lindered, especially since these liberating messages are not only founded on the person of Christ but also preached by a convinced community of God. With the biblical message given in this way, the fascinating but false idea that the Bible has nothing to contribute to the modern society will be rendered absurd. The transmission of these liberating messages has to be made in such a way that the hearers and the final receivers of this message, especially the rich and the powerful, will react and echo the question of the Jews and the Gentiles after the Pentecost preaching of Peter in the Acts of the Apostles 2:37: “What shall we do brothers?”

³² Cf. C.H. Talbert, Luke, 25.

³³ Cf. M. Ebner, Widerstand, 130.

³⁴ Cf. C.H. Zorrilla, Justice, 221.

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