

ALLUSIONS TO EDUCATION IN LUKE-ACTS
SIDELIGHTS ON IMPLICIT CONCEPTIONS OF *PAIDEIA*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Greek lexeme παιδεία means “education” or “schooling” and derives from the verb παιδεύω, which contains the root word παῖς¹. The verb παιδεύω means literally “to be together with a child” or “to be concerned with a child intensively or professionally”². The substantive παιδεία is found for the first time in the works of the tragedian Aeschylus, but there it still has the same meaning as τροφή, which means simply the rearing of children, but thereby also has a rather “physical” character³. Subsequently, since the time of the first Sophists⁴ at the latest in the fifth century BC, παιδεία was understood on the one hand as the process of intellectual and ethical schooling and education⁵ and, on the other, as the result of the educational process in the sense of training, formal schooling, or insight⁶. Thus, one can understand the Sophists in a certain sense as

1. Dedicated to Jos Verheyden, a role model of education and intellect, in gratitude; cf. U. POPLUTZ, *Bildungs-Allusionen im lukanischen Doppelwerk: Streiflichter impliziter paideia-Konzepte*, in *JBTh* 35 (2020) 135-152.

2. The verbal ending -εω contained in παιδεύω is a description of a state, cf. D. FÜRST – S. WIBBING, *παιδεύω κτλ.*, in L. COENEN – K. HAACKER (eds.), *Theologisches Begriffswörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, vol. 1, Wuppertal – Neukirchen, Neukirchener Verlag, 1997, 409-412, p. 409. On the numerous meanings and attestation of the derivatives, LSJ, 1286-1289.

3. Aesch., *Sept.* 18. On the concept of education in the Greco-Roman context, see also B. ORTH, *Lehrkunst im frühen Christentum: Die Bildungsdimension didaktischer Prinzipien in der hellenistisch-römischen Literatur und im lukanischen Doppelwerk* (Beiträge zur Erziehungswissenschaft und biblischen Bildung, 7), Frankfurt a.M., Lang, 2002, pp. 75-78. The volume by J. CHRISTES – R. KLEIN – C. LÜTH (eds.), *Handbuch der Erziehung und Bildung in der Antike*, Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006, is also comprehensive and very informative.

4. The Sophist program consisted primarily of techniques of argumentation and the education in rhetorical expression, and served the formation of the individual. In a certain sense, one can characterize this as an early form of “Aufklärungspädagogik”, as R. KOERRENZ, *Pädagogik, II. Geschichte*, in *RGG*⁴ 6 (2003) 776-781, p. 777, suggests. The Sophists certainly were the first to consider *all* human beings, irrespective of their social background, as capable of education and schooling. There was, however, one restriction: they demanded an honorarium for their services.

5. The word παιδεύσις has the same meaning, cf., e.g., Aristoph., *Nub.* 961; Thuc. 2.39.1.

6. Cf., e.g., Democ. 180; Plat., *Prot.* 327d; *Gorg.* 470e; *Resp.* 378e; Aristot., *Pol.* 1338a30; cf. G. BERTRAM, *παιδεύω κτλ.*, in *TWNT* 5 (1954) 596-624, pp. 596-597; FÜRST –

the “first pedagogical movement”⁷. They distinguished three factors as important when considering the process of instruction: aptitude, educational content and drill⁸. As far as content was concerned, the Sophists, to be sure, drew on traditional elementary education in gymnastics, music, reading, writing and arithmetic, but to this traditional curriculum they added grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, geometry, astronomy and harmony⁹. The educational system was further developed by, among others, Isocrates (436-338 BC), who aspired to the ideal of a selfless intellectual education of a rhetorical-humanist character in which good thinking was intended to go hand in hand with expressing oneself well and with good behavior¹⁰; this type of education was intended to be transferrable to all professions and situations of life and was understood as political education¹¹. Plato (428-347 BC), on the other hand, distanced himself from the prevailing rhetoric that Isocrates advocated because it was not linked with any ethics. With the *Πολιτεία* he then presented his main pedagogical work. On the development of the ancient *paideia* concept as a whole, one may say:

dass die *paideia* spätestens seit Platon wie eine Ellipse zwei Brennpunkte in sich beschließt: einerseits den Bereich der Erziehung im engeren Sinn mit dem Erwerb von Wissen, Können und Haltung, andererseits die Formung des Erwachsenen, die den Gebildeten als einen Menschen ausweist, der Probleme als solche zu erkennen und Behauptungen adäquat zu beurteilen vermag¹².

WIBBING, *παιδεύω* κτλ. (n. 2), p. 409; J. CHRISTES, *Bildung*, in *DNP* 2 (1996) 663-673, p. 663. On the history of education, H.-I. MARROU, *Geschichte der Erziehung im klassischen Altertum*, ed. R. HARDER, Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 1957, is still worth reading. The most recent analysis is offered by C. AUFFARTH, *Henri-Irénée Marrou's Geschichte der Erziehung im klassischen Altertum: Der Klassiker kontrastiert mit Werner Jaegers Paideia*, in P. GEMEINHARDT (ed.), *Was ist Bildung in der Vormoderne?* (Seraphim, 4), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2019, 39-66.

7. M.A. RITTER, *Pädagogik*, in *Lexikon der Alten Welt* (1965) 2188-2192, p. 2189.

8. Cf. C. LÜTH, *Einführung: Griechenland*, in CHRISTES et al. (eds.), *Handbuch* (n. 3), p. 12.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

10. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 12.

11. See on this W. STEIDLE, *Redekunst und Bildung bei Isokrates*, in H.-T. JOHANN (ed.), *Erziehung und Bildung in der heidnischen und christlichen Antike* (Wege der Forschung, 377), Darmstadt, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976, 170-226.

12. S. VOLLENWEIDER, *Bildungsfreunde oder Bildungsverächter? Überlegungen zum Stellenwert der Bildung im frühen Christentum*, in GEMEINHARDT (ed.), *Was ist Bildung in der Vormoderne?* (n. 6), 283-304, p. 287 (“that the *paideia* since Plato at the latest comprises an ellipse with two foci within it: on the one hand the area of education in the narrower sense with the acquisition of knowledge, ability and attitude, and on the other the formation of the adult person that identifies the person so educated as a human being who is able to recognize problems as such and to judge assertions adequately”).

In this view, *paideia* is to be understood as a kind of “shaping of the entire human existence”¹³ and is not to be restricted only to a school education.

In the New Testament, the word group associated with the lexeme *paideia* appears twenty-four times in all¹⁴. Strikingly, Luke is the only evangelist who makes use of these “educational terms” (Lk 23,16.22; Acts 7,22; 22,3). To be sure, the instances where they occur do not allow us to determine immediately the Lukan educational concept standing behind them, but they can nevertheless be a starting point and a legitimate reason for pursuing a specific Lukan claim for education underlying the passages at issue. For, while Jesus and his disciples in all probability had a rather distant relationship to higher education¹⁵, and their teaching corresponded to the simplicity and rustic nature of the imagery they used (as, for example, in their parables and figurative language)¹⁶, the synoptic evangelists each in their own way altered and modified this form of

13. Cf. P. GEMEINHARDT, *Wege und Umwege zum Selbst: Bildung und Religion im frühen Christentum*, in J. RÜPKE – G.D. WOOLF (eds.), *Religious Dimensions of the Self in the Second Century CE* (STAC, 76), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2013, 259-277, p. 260 (*verbatim*: “Formgebung der ganzen menschlichen Existenz”).

14. The substantive παιδεία is found in Eph 6,4; 2 Tim 3,16 as well as in Heb 12,5.7.8.11; forms of παιδεύω are found in Lk 23,16.22 (beat, discipline); Acts 7,22; 22,3 (instruct, educate); cf. also 1 Cor 11,32; 2 Cor 6,9; 1 Tim 1,20; 2 Tim 2,25; Tit 2,12; Heb 12,6.7.10; Rev 3,19; παιδευτής in Rom 2,20 and Heb 12,9; παιδαγωγός in Gal 3,24.25; 1 Cor 4,15.

15. R. RIESNER, *Jesus als Lehrer: Eine Untersuchung zum Ursprung der Evangelien-Überlieferung* (WUNT, 2.7), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, ³1988, assesses the educational level of Jesus more optimistically; this is due to his basic thesis that the teaching of Jesus has been transmitted quite reliably in the oral process from the historical Jesus up to the Synoptic Gospels.

16. CHRISTES, *Bildung* (n. 6), p. 671: “Jesus und seine Jünger standen der ant[iken Bildung] fern. Die ‘Fischersprache’ der Bibel und *rusticitas* und *simplicitas* der Christen – überwiegend einfacher Leute – blieben lange geschmäht. Erst im Verlauf des 2. Jh. traten vermehrt Personen mit höherer B[ildung] dem Christentum bei. Die Aufwertungsversuche der frühesten Apologeten vermochten niemanden zu beeindrucken”. Recently, however, several scholars have argued that the first Christian generations were of a reasonably educated level. The strongest advocate of this view is probably Thomas Söding, who labels Christianity as a “religion of education” and, consequently, has to interpret the fact that pagan authors held the earliest followers of Jesus, women and men, in contempt because of their lack of education as pure polemic; cf. T. SÖDING, *Das Christentum als Bildungsreligion: Der Impuls des Neuen Testaments*, Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 2016. U. SCHNELLE, *Das frühe Christentum und die Bildung*, in *NTS* 61 (2015) 113-143, is equally optimistic. This view has been criticized by VOLLENWEIDER, *Bildungsfreunde* (n. 12), p. 285: “Die heutigen Anwälte eines bildungsfreundlichen Urchristentums arbeiten mit einem sehr großzügig entworfenen Bildungsverständnis. Was immer in den frühchristlichen Schriften an Lehren und Lernen, an Textproduktion und Textrezeption in Erscheinung tritt, wird unter diesem Label verhandelt. Das ist natürlich möglich. Aber die Kehrseite dieser Sprachregelung besteht darin, dass die Kategorie selber nicht mehr wirklich griffig ist”. On Jesus’ level of education, see also C. HEIL, *Analphabet oder Rabbi? Zum Bildungsniveau Jesu*, in *Id.*

teaching in the last decades of the first century AD in order to make it comprehensible and attractive for their congregations or for a wider “Christian” readership. As a matter of course, in doing so they used the existing genres of the Hellenistic-Roman culture as a medium. Luke’s self-understanding stands out especially in this context¹⁷: as a scripturally- and historically-educated Christian author writing for an audience that is obviously educated to a certain degree and has a certain measure of wealth¹⁸, he has an interest in presenting faith in Christ as attractive also for groups of people in the Roman Empire who belong to higher intellectual and social circles. In the first two centuries, Christian women and men did not develop their own school system, nor a genuine program of education¹⁹; they rather formed a sub-culture under the umbrella of the Hellenistic-Roman majority culture and were influenced by the prevailing educational system, especially in the urban milieu²⁰. However, as early as the middle of the second century Christianity was no longer a religion of just lower-class uncultured people, at least in certain places²¹.

(ed.), *Das Spruchevangelium Q und der historische Jesus* (SBAB, 58), Stuttgart, Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2014, 265-291.

17. Cf. K. BACKHAUS, *Die Apostelgeschichte: Anspruch und Aktualität: Eine Hinführung*, in ID., *Die Entgrenzung des Heils: Gesammelte Studien zur Apostelgeschichte* (WUNT, 422), Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2019, 1-19, p. 9: “Lukas ist bereits als Christ von der paganen Mehrheitskultur so geprägt, dass er sie – kritisch und selbstbewusst – nicht als Fremdes wahrnimmt: Er ist Zeitgenosse, weil ihm nichts anderes übrigbleibt, aber er ist im Neuen Testament der wachste Zeitgenosse”.

18. Cf. VOLLENWEIDER, *Bildungsfreunde* (n. 12), p. 291.

19. This is connected, of course, with the fact that the acute imminent eschatological expectation, which influenced the first Christian women and men, rendered any kind of educational program as theoretically and practically obsolete.

20. On this, VOLLENWEIDER, *Bildungsfreunde* (n. 12), p. 289: “Es ist hinlänglich bekannt, wie ungemein stark die Gravitationskraft der hellenistisch-römischen Bildung die Menschen der damaligen globalisierten Mittelmeerwelt, insbesondere ihre urbanen Eliten, bestimmt hat. Wir können im Frühchristentum des ersten und zweiten Jahrhunderts eine ganze Palette von Bildungsphänomenen beobachten, von denen sich einige gelegentlich und indirekt auf das Bildungssystem der Mehrheitskultur beziehen [...]”.

21. Cf. GEMEINHARDT, *Wege* (n. 13), p. 261, with reference to Just., 2 *Apol.* 10.8, who speaks of the fact that, along with artisans (*χειροτέχναι*) and ordinary people (*παντελῶς ἰδιῶται*), philosophers (*φιλόσοφοι*) and literarily educated people (*φιλόλογοι*) also belonged to the Christian congregation. For this reason, it may be assumed that the proportion of the elite in early Christian communities corresponded approximately to that in the rest of society. On this ambiguity, A. MERKT, “*Eine Religion von törichten Weibern und ungebildeten Handwerkern*”: *Ideologie und Realität eines Klischees zum frühen Christentum*, in F.R. PROSTMEIER (ed.), *Frühchristentum und Kultur* (Kommentar zu frühchristlichen Apologeten, Erg.-Bd. 2), Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 2007, 293-309, p. 303: “Ja, das frühe Christentum war eine Religion der Unterschichten – aber eben nicht nur. Und ebenso sehr stimmt: das frühe Christentum war eine Religion der Mittel- und Oberschichten – aber eben nicht nur. Die dürftige Quellenlage erlaubt es uns nicht, die genauen Anteile der einzelnen Stände in den christlichen Gemeinden zu bestimmen”.

With his two-volume work, Luke represents a special landmark on this path. The way he, as a Christian writer and historian, takes up certain educational concepts and educational discourses and sublimely integrates them into his theological design is illuminated in the following by considering selected passages in his gospel and Acts.

II. COMPETENCE: JESUS *DIDASKALOS*

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus is frequently referred to as a διδάσκαλος (teacher)²², but also as an ἐπιστάτης (overseer, master)²³, while the Greek transliterations of the Hebrew ראבבִי (my master) and ראבבִוּנִי (my master) do not occur in Luke²⁴.

Already in the infancy narrative, Jesus is presented as teaching. The special intelligence and talent of the twelve-year-old emerge²⁵ when, in the temple in Jerusalem, he discusses with the scribes in such a way that they “are beside themselves” with amazement and ecstasy (Lk 2,41-51a; v. 47: ἐξίστημι) – a reaction with which the people in the course of the narrative also respond to Jesus’ miracles²⁶. Jesus is depicted here as on a par with the διδάσκαλοι, since he engages them not only as one who questions them and learns from them (Lk 2,46), but also as one who

22. Lk 7,40; 8,49; 9,38; 10,25; 11,45; 12,13; 18,18; 19,39; 20,21.28.39; 21,7; 22,11; John the Baptist (3,12) and the scribes (2,46) also are designated as διδάσκαλοι.

23. Lk 5,5; 8,24.45; 9,33.49; 17,13; this designation of Jesus is found in the New Testament exclusively in Luke; Luke in 8,24 and 9,49 replaces διδάσκαλε from the Gospel of Mark with ἐπιστάτα.

24. On the statistical data in detail, see V. TROPPER, *Jesus Didaskalos: Studien zu Jesus als Lehrer bei den Synoptikern und im Rahmen der antiken Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte* (ÖBS, 42), Frankfurt a.M., Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 17-35. Luke, in general, foregoes using Hebrew-Aramaic terms, either because his readership was no longer familiar with them, or to raise the level of his style.

25. On the other hand, J.R. BACKES, *Die Nazoräerschule: Bildung und Identität bei Lukas*, in ID. – E. BRÜNENBERG-BUSSWOLDER – P. VAN DEN HEEDÉ (eds.), *Orientierung an der Schrift: Kirche, Ethik und Bildung im Diskurs* (BTS, 170), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017, 173-188, pp. 174-175, is wrong in my opinion when he says: “Jesus ist als Schüler bereits Lehrer, wenn er als Zwölfjähriger im Tempel zu Jerusalem den Schriftexperten zuhört, sie befragt und zum allgemeinen Erstaunen ihre Fragen beantwortet kann”. It is nowhere said here that Jesus instructs his listeners; Luke rather emphasizes his particular intelligence and talent. See B. VAN IERSEL, *The Finding of Jesus in the Temple: Some Observations on the Original Form of Luke ii 41-51a*, in NT 4 (1960) 161-173, p. 166: “In Luke ii 47 Jesus does not act as διδάσκαλος, but on the contrary as a disciple, who ‘sits, listens and asks questions’”; R.E. BROWN, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke*, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1977, p. 474.

26. Cf. Lk 5,26; 8,56; see also the reaction in Acts 2,7.12; 3,10; 8,9.11.13; 10,10.45f.; 12,16.

understands them and gives them answers (Lk 2,47)²⁷. The fact that the scribes in this passage are explicitly designated with the title διδάσκαλοι, which elsewhere in the Gospel of Luke is reserved almost exclusively for Jesus²⁸, conveys a sublime message: in spite of his youth – a narrative setting unique for the gospels – Jesus is not the classic type of student who follows certain teachers and must go through an apprenticeship in order to become a teacher himself; rather he is “blessed” from the very beginning with a special wisdom (σοφία) (cf. Lk 2,40.52) to which the scribes in the temple, who are anything but credulous, independently bear witness. Without a personal connection to the student Jesus, the διδάσκαλοι who, on the basis of their profession, certainly can be considered to be the most reliable “consultants”, show their enthusiasm for his early display of understanding together with “all those who heard him”²⁹. Thus, Jesus’ outstanding talent is quasi-officially confirmed.

The circumstances in which this scene takes place is probably also typical for contemporary teaching situations: the temple area which Luke has in mind here is probably the colonnaded hall (στοά) of Solomon, in which the school of the apostles is later situated³⁰. At the same time, however, the account deviates from every known standard: while normally *one* teacher gathers around himself several students who sit “at his feet” (cf. Acts 22,3), Jesus is found alone “in the midst” (Lk 2,46) of several teachers and demonstrates his wisdom to them in conversation³¹.

27. Cf. N. KRÜCKEMEIER, *Der zwölfjährige Jesus im Tempel (Lk 2.40-52) und die biografische Literatur der hellenistischen Antike*, in *NTS* 50 (2004) 307-319, p. 313.

28. See note 22.

29. Along with σοφία, Jesus also has σύνεσις (*synesis, insight, power of judgement, understanding*), which in the Septuagint is frequently an insight nurtured by religious faith. Cf. F. BOVON, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas*. 1. Teilband: *Lk 1,1-9,50* (EKKNT, 3/1), Zürich, Benziger Verlag; Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener Verlag, 1989, pp. 157-158. According to Is 11,2 LXX, σοφία and σύνεσις are the first features of the promised Prince of Peace, who is the bearer of God’s Spirit (Is 11,1-9), cf. TROPPER, *Jesus* (n. 24), p. 131.

30. See Acts 3,11; 5,12.21.25; also Lk 11,31. H.J. DE JONGE, *Sonship, Wisdom, Infancy: Luke II. 41-51a*, in *NTS* 24 (1978) 317-354, p. 329: “Colonnades were the most usual locale for secondary and higher education in the time of Luke. *Gymnasia* consisted, according to the architectural tradition of the period, simply of four colonnades around a square courtyard, and many philosophers besides the Stoics taught their pupils in colonnades which offered protection from the sun. Furthermore, a colonnade named after Solomon, who was famous for his wisdom (Luke xi. 31), must have been, for Luke, a peculiarly appropriate place for instruction”. Cf. B. HEININGER, *Familienkonflikte: Der zwölfjährige Jesus im Tempel (Lk 2,41-52)*, in C.G. MÜLLER (ed.), *“Licht zur Erleuchtung der Heiden und Herrlichkeit für dein Volk Israel!”: Studien zum lukanischen Doppelwerk. FS J. Zmijewski* (BBB, 151), Hamburg, Philo & Philo Fine Arts, 2005, 49-72, p. 64.

31. This corresponds to 1 Sam 10,10-11, where Saul is seen “in the midst” of the prophets (ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν) and all who knew him before wonder whether he, too, has now become a prophet; cf. M. WOLTER, *Das Lukasevangelium* (HNT, 5), Tübingen, Mohr

In this way, Luke installs an independent jury that is as large as possible and that certifies, as it were, Jesus' extraordinary talent.

The pericope illustrates in an anecdotal-narrative way the two summary framing verses Lk 2,40 and 2,52, which are inspired by 1 Sam 2,21.26³²:

And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him (Lk 2,40).

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in age and in grace with God and human beings (Lk 2,52).

Both summaries emphasize that Jesus at the age of twelve is, to be sure, no longer a (small) child, but that his development is neither physically nor spiritually nor intellectually at an end³³. While Lk 2,40 emphasizes the phase of physical growth, Lk 2,52 has in view his progression in wisdom and his mental development³⁴: Jesus becomes wiser and more esteemed with increasing age, but already as a child has a remarkable talent at his disposal. But σοφία and χάρις are not only traditional attributes of men of God³⁵; they are also found as motifs in episodes from childhood portrayed in Hellenistic biographical literature. Luke was clearly aware of these conventions; he applies them to his protagonists and also uses them in his Jesus biography³⁶. This seems to indicate that Luke knows Hellenistic biographical literature and has read certain childhood accounts. It should not be supposed that he had available a written catalogue of biographical motifs, which he inserted into his narrative about the young Jesus in the temple one after another and which he then

Siebeck, 2008, p. 148. On the training situation in this context, see C.S. KEENER, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. Vol. 3: 15:1–23:35, Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Publishing Group, 2014, pp. 3220–3222; see also T. VEGGE, *Paulus und das antike Schulwesen: Schule und Bildung des Paulus* (BZNW, 134), Berlin, De Gruyter, 2006.

32. On this complex of themes, see especially R.D. AUS, *The Child Jesus in the Temple (Luke 2:42–51a)*, and *Judaic Traditions on the Child Samuel in the Temple (1 Samuel 1–3)*, in Id. (ed.), *Samuel, Saul and Jesus: Three Early Palestinian Jewish Christian Gospel Haggadoth* (South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism, 105), Atlanta, GA, Scholars, 1994, 1–64.

33. Cf. DE JONGE, *Sonship* (n. 30), pp. 319–322. In Lk 2,43, Jesus is designated as παῖς. While a boy of twelve years of age was still considered a child for two or three years more, a girl at the age of twelve found herself on the threshold of becoming an adult, and therewith at a marriageable age. Luke knew this and for this reason – in contrast to Mark (5,42) – pointedly affixes the age of Jairus' daughter to the narrative about her healing (in Lk 8,42) and thereby makes plain the special tragedy of the situation, cf. *ibid.*, p. 320.

34. Cf. BOVON, *Lukas* (n. 29), p. 162.

35. Cf. WOLTER, *Lukas* (n. 31), p. 147; examples are given by H. CONZELMANN, *χάρις κτλ.*, in *TWNT* 9 (1973) 366.

36. On the basic discussion, see R.A. BURRIDGE, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography*, Grand Rapids, MI, Eerdmans, 2004.

ticked off from his list³⁷. Rather he casually takes up certain *topoi* from literary tradition in order to portray Jesus' extraordinary characteristics. Precisely in going beyond the conventional and familiar, he can sharpen Jesus' profile narratively.

In Greek biographical literature, not only rulers and politicians such as Cyrus, Solon and Themistocles, are depicted as amazingly intelligent while still children, but also philosophers such as Apollonius of Tyana and Pythagoras, as well as orators such as Cicero and poets such as Homer³⁸. However, the clearest parallels are found in the *Vita Augusti* by Nicholas of Damascus (ca. 20 BC), the *Vita Apollonii* by Flavius Philostratus (ca. 200 AD) and the *Vita Pythagorica* by Iamblichus (ca. 300 AD)³⁹. Although the texts are temporally relatively distant from each other, they do show numerous common motifs that apparently belonged to the standard set of motifs typical of this genre. They can be listed here only in summary form: a) all four authors (including Luke) give the *juvenile age* of their protagonists quite precisely; b) all youths undertake a *journey*, during which some of them attach themselves to various teachers and give proof of their intellectual strength; c) this journey leads Augustus, Apollonius, Pythagoras and Jesus to the *temple*, among other places, where the public receives a sample of their sayings and the outstanding wisdom of the youths is demonstrated. This σοφία now encompasses two dimensions: an intellectual one and a religious or liturgical one⁴⁰; d) all four youths, finally, *excite* and amaze the people who become cognizant of their wisdom; in various ways, *teachers*, too, play a role⁴¹.

Luke endows Jesus of Nazareth with traditional and familiar attributes borrowed from biographies – which were devoted exclusively to prominent personalities such as rulers or philosophers – especially from the

37. Cf. KRÜCKEMEIER, *Jesus* (n. 27), p. 316, *verbatim*: “Dabei hat er nicht etwa einen schriftlichen Katalog inhaltlicher Motive vor Augen, von denen er nun eines nach dem anderen in seine Erzählung vom jungen Jesus im Tempel einbaut und abhakt”.

38. Cf. DE JONGE, *Sonship* (n. 30), pp. 339-342.

39. See on this the fine analysis by KRÜCKEMEIER, *Jesus* (n. 27), pp. 307-319, to which I am indebted in the following. There are, of course, still further parallels from antiquity, also from the Jewish sphere, cf. W. RADL, *Der Ursprung Jesu: Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu Lukas 1-2* (Herder's Biblical Studies, 7), Freiburg i.Br., Herder, 1996, pp. 248-251.

40. KRÜCKEMEIER, *Jesus* (n. 27), p. 311: “Diese σοφία schließt nun zweierlei Dimensionen in sich ein: eine intellektuelle und eine religiöse bzw. liturgische Dimension”. The intellectual dimension is shown in the fact that the protagonists make public speeches or give wise answers to the questions posed to them. The liturgical-religious component is expressed in the fact that the episodes frequently take place in a temple, and that the special proximity of the youths to God is pointed at.

41. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 312-313.

section dealing with these persons' youth. Thus, Luke shows that already as a boy Jesus possessed astonishing wisdom and that the grace of God lived in him. But in addition to this, he also states that Jesus "became strong" (ἐκραταιοῦτο, Lk 2,40). This "becoming strong", which is a divinely-wrought process, implies a claim to sovereignty⁴². Moreover, the childhood episode in Lk 2,42-51 carries special weight because here we find the first words spoken by Jesus in Luke's two-volume work (Lk 2,49) and Jesus thus, for the first time, becomes his own interpreter, after only others had spoken about him up to this point⁴³. At his baptism, he is then endowed further with the Spirit (Lk 3,21-22) and proclaimed as the Son of God. The passage is marked by a motif that is already found in the birth narrative: the messiahship of Jesus⁴⁴. Such a motif is not found among the Hellenistic writers; here, Luke rather follows impulses from Jewish literature.

In Luke's view, then, Jesus obtained his competence as a teacher already in his childhood or youth and his words continued to overwhelm the people, as, for instance, at his inaugural sermon in Nazareth (Lk 4,16-30; see v. 22: "... and all were amazed at the words of grace [ἐπὶ τοῖς λόγοις τῆς χάριτος] that came from his mouth ...")⁴⁵ or during his subsequent stay in Capernaum (Lk 4,31-37, see v. 32: "they were beside themselves at his teaching, for he spoke with authority [ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ]"); also, during his later confrontation in the temple, Jesus' answers are so startling that they even silence his duplicitous questioners (Lk 20,26)⁴⁶. In the Emmaus narrative, finally, Jesus is designated as a prophet (cf. Lk 7,16) who is "mighty in deed and word" (Lk 24,19), a phrase which summarizes his effective performance in public (his miracles and teaching).

III. DEEPENING: GRACE, WISDOM AND POWER

Not only Jesus himself is filled with grace, wisdom and the Spirit, he also promises his disciples that the Holy Spirit will support them when they stand before worldly courts (Lk 12,11-12) as well as a "mouth and wisdom" (στόμα καὶ σοφία, Lk 21,15). The gifts of the Spirit and wisdom

42. Cf. W. MICHAELIS, *κράτος* κτλ., in *TWNT* 3 (1950) 905-914. In the New Testament, the word *κράτος* usually refers to the ruling power of God; see, e.g., Lk 1,51.

43. Cf. WOLTER, *Lukas* (n. 31), p. 146.

44. KRÜCKEMEIER, *Jesus* (n. 27), p. 318.

45. This amazement concerns not only the family origins of Jesus ("Is this not a son of Joseph?"), but also implicitly the modest educational milieu from which he comes. The reaction to Peter and John in Acts 4,13 reflects a similar amazement.

46. Cf. RADL, *Ursprung* (n. 39), pp. 262-263.

will result in speech of such a power that – as already with Jesus in Lk 20,26 – all their opponents must admit defeat of their arguments: “they can neither withstand (ἀντιστῆναι) nor contradict (ἀντιλέγειν)” (Lk 21,15)⁴⁷. In other words: the disciples are promised the charisma of persuasive speech – especially in a hostile environment⁴⁸.

This promise is fulfilled in the figure of Stephen: “they were unable to withstand (ἀντιστῆναι) the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke” (Acts 6,10)⁴⁹. In the context of the Stephen episode, it is then, significantly, also said that he was filled with grace (χάρις) and power (δύναμις; Acts 6,8)⁵⁰. In this way, Luke deliberately constructs a correspondence between Jesus and Stephen. The fact that Luke mentions χάρις and σοφία here as particular gifts of the Spirit and that he creates analogies between the Lord and the disciples, not just in the fate they undergo, but also in their outstanding attributes, may be taken as reflecting Luke’s editorial intention⁵¹.

These attributes have a decidedly intellectual character. This appears from Stephen’s speech in Acts 7 – incidentally, the longest speech of all in Acts – where reference is made to Joseph and Moses, among others, for whom grace and wisdom likewise are attested:

He freed him [sc. Joseph] from all his afflictions, and he gave him grace (χάρις) and wisdom (σοφία) in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he made him leader of Egypt and over his entire house (Acts 7,10).

Joseph, the descendant of Abraham living in a foreign land, is blessed by God with the wisdom of the interpretation of dreams and can be understood as the prototype of the (suffering) righteous one⁵², out of

47. How Luke imagines a pneumatically-inspired defense is shown in Acts 4,8-12, where Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, delivers an apologetic speech; cf. WOLTER, *Lukas* (n. 31), p. 446.

48. Cf. K. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz zum Reden: Die 1k. Apostel zwischen Geist und Rhetorik*, in A. VON DOBBELER – K. ERLEMANN – R. HEILIGENTHAL (eds.), *Religionsgeschichte des Neuen Testaments: FS K. Berger*, Tübingen, Francke, 2000, 79-91, p. 81.

49. The gifts of the Spirit and wisdom have qualified Stephen and the other members of the group of seven as deacons (Acts 6,3); cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), p. 82; J. ZMIJEWSKI, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (RNT), Regensburg, Pustet, 1994, p. 300.

50. E. HAENCHEN, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (KEK, 3), Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977, p. 163: “Die neben der χάρις genannte δύναμις entspricht der πίστις von V. 5”.

51. Cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), p. 82: “Es darf als redaktionelle Absicht des Lukas gewertet werden, dass er χάρις und σοφία als besondere Pneumagaben nennt und dass er den Herrn und die Jünger nicht nur in ihrem Schicksal, sondern auch in ihren herausragenden Merkmalen analogisiert”. It should be noticed that, apart from Jesus himself, Stephen and his colleagues belonging to the group of seven are the only followers of Jesus to whom Luke attributes σοφία; he does not ascribe it to the other disciples (cf. Acts 6,3.10).

52. Vgl. R. PESCH, *Die Apostelgeschichte (Apg 1–12)* (EKKNT, 5/1), Düsseldorf, Benziger Verlag; Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener Verlag, ³2005, p. 250.

whose suffering a rich blessing flows for those belonging to him precisely because of his compelling wisdom⁵³. Luke characterizes Joseph in such a way that he becomes an analogy and almost a type of Stephen, the man “full of grace and power” (Acts 6,8) and “wisdom” (Acts 6,3.10) – and ultimately also of Jesus⁵⁴: they are all three suffering righteous ones endowed with extraordinary wisdom.

As for Moses, Stephen in his speech says about him that he enjoyed an education in Egypt⁵⁵:

And Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians (ἐπαιδεύθη Μωϋσῆς [ἐν] πάσῃ σοφίᾳ Αἰγυπτίων), and he was powerful (δυνατός) in his words and deeds (Acts 7,22).

This education in the diaspora is depicted without reservation as something positive; this is evident from the fact that, according to Luke, its result was that Moses “was powerful in his words and acts”. In Luke’s days, this was in no way a matter of course⁵⁶. Josephus, for example, affirms that the wisdom of all the peoples had its origin in the Jewish law and that the Greek philosophers up to Plato made use of this blueprint⁵⁷. Similarly, Artapanos of Alexandria makes Moses the teacher of the Egyptians⁵⁸. Luke seems to signalize his esteem for the pagan education that, in his view, Stephen and his Hellenistic colleagues enjoyed⁵⁹. Luke’s readers will have taken notice of this with approval and will have been able to interpret it as an appreciative recognition of themselves and of their own pagan or Jewish diaspora past.

The characterization of Moses as “powerful in his words and deeds” takes up the characterization of Jesus in Lk 24,19 and is repeated with slight variation when Apollos’ rhetorical abilities are mentioned in Acts 18,24. The interesting part of this is that Stephen, or rather Luke, attests Moses’ empowerment *before* the burning bush scene (Acts 7,30), in clear deviation from the biblical narrative. Ex 4,10 emphasizes that Moses was not exactly eloquent and considered this as a great deficit⁶⁰:

53. Cf. ZMIJEWSKI, *Apostelgeschichte* (n. 49), p. 310.

54. Luke here expands Gen 41,33.39 by adding the attribute of wisdom, cf. ZMIJEWSKI, *Apostelgeschichte* (n. 49), p. 317; K. KLIESCH, *Das heilsgeschichtliche Credo in den Reden der Apostelgeschichte* (BBB, 44), Köln – Bonn, Hanstein, 1975, p. 156.

55. See also Philo, *Mos.* 1.20-23; Josephus, *Ant.* 2.232-237.

56. Cf. C.S. KEENER, *Acts: An Exegetical Commentary*. Vol. 2: 3:1-14:28, Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Academic, 2013, pp. 1385-1386.

57. Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2.257, 280-281.

58. Artapanos 3.6-8; cf. PESCH, *Apostelgeschichte* (n. 52), p. 252.

59. Cf. KEENER, *Acts* (n. 56), p. 1387. This is clear from the well-composed speech and the historical narrative that Luke puts into the mouth of Stephen.

60. Cf. *ibid.*

But Moses said to the Lord: Lord, I am not a man of words, neither in the past nor even now that you have spoken to your servant; I am slow of speech and slow of tongue (Ex 4,10).

Josephus (and along with him Sir 45,3) omits this apparent weakness on the part of Moses and makes him into a highly-gifted person from a very early age who was not only “of impressive appearance”, but also “possessed the gift of having an influence upon the masses through his natural eloquence”⁶¹. Keener is certainly right in his judgement: “Indeed, Josephus makes Moses into a Hellenistic orator (3.14-23)”⁶². The Lukan image of Moses (“powerful in his words”) is in agreement with that of Josephus; Luke presents Moses as having had an education in the entirety of Egyptian wisdom, which recalls Jesus’ increasing wisdom in Lk 2,40.52. Jesus, though, does not need instruction, he has the advantage of the fullness of the Spirit over Moses (Lk 4,1)⁶³.

Grace (χάρις) and wisdom (σοφία) irrefutably play a prominent role in the history of Hellenistic thought and ideas, to which we can merely refer here⁶⁴. Striving for σοφία is seen as the highest goal not only in early Jewish speculation about wisdom, but also in the Greco-Roman environment. For Philo, χάρις, σοφία and perfection are closely connected⁶⁵. While χάρις is the endowment of the human being through creation⁶⁶, only the pious person can recognize it as such.

For Quintilian, the Roman rhetorician and contemporary of Luke, wisdom and rhetoric were originally two sides of the same coin, which, however, had been carelessly torn apart over the course of time:

These two disciplines, as Cicero very clearly argues, were once so closely joined by nature and united in function, that philosophers and orators were taken to be the same (*ut idem sapientes atque eloquentes haberentur*). The

61. Josephus, *Ant.* 3.13. See also *Ant.* 2.230: “The age of the boy, though, remained behind his intelligence and sagacity, for he was so developed in wisdom and education in the Spirit that he would have done honor to one at an advanced age”.

62. KEENER, *Acts* (n. 56), p. 1387. In Acts, Luke also makes Paul, who himself recognizes his “weakness, fear and trembling” (1 Cor 2,3), into a brilliant speaker.

63. Cf. ZMIJEWSKI, *Apostelgeschichte* (n. 49), p. 319; the formulation “filled with the Holy Spirit” (πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου, Lk 4,1) is found also in reference to the circle of the seven from Jerusalem (Acts 6,3.5), Stephen (Acts 7,55) and Barnabas (11,24).

64. Cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), pp. 82-83; further instances may be found in U. WILCKENS, *σοφία κτλ.*, in *TWNT* 7 (1964) 498-503; in detail: D. ZELLER, *Charis bei Philon und Paulus* (SBS, 142), Stuttgart, Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990.

65. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 33-128.130. On the whole subject, E. FRÜCHTEL, *Philon und die Vorbereitung der christlichen Paideia und Seelenleitung*, in PROSTMEIER (ed.), *Frühchristentum* (n. 21), 19-33, is most instructive.

66. CONZELMANN, *χάρις* (n. 35), p. 380 (*verbatim*: “die Ausstattung des Menschen durch die Schöpfung”).

subject then split into two, and it came about, through failure of art, that there were thought to be more arts than one⁶⁷.

If philosophy and rhetoric are the same in regard to their origins, then the only good speaker is the one who also is a good man (*vir bonus*) and a philosopher⁶⁸. The *gratia varietatis*, the art of diversified speaking, is the mark of the professional rhetor – it implies graceful speech and its aesthetic embellishment –⁶⁹, while *sapientia* (wisdom) is rather the name for the side concerned with content. In Greco-Roman thought, σοφία is a designation for the ideal of education *per se*⁷⁰.

If one considers the Lukan conception of σοφία against this background, it becomes clear how unmistakably the author of Luke-Acts picks up the thread of the traditional range of meanings of the term in order to make the main Christian characters of his narrative compatible for educated (Jewish-)Hellenistic circles. The fathers in the history of Israel had already distinguished themselves through wisdom and grace (bestowal of favor), which gave them the ability of explaining Scripture or also interpreting dreams (Joseph). Jesus and Stephen continue this line seamlessly⁷¹. In Hellenistic literature, rulers, miracle workers and philosophers were blessed with the gift of persuasive speech that manifested itself, in part, at a youthful age; Jesus and Stephen, too, possess this charismatic gift enabling them to outdo their opponents in argument.

Along with σοφία, the πνεῦμα now appears as an attribute of the Lukan Jesus and Stephen: speaking wisdom is decidedly a gift from God⁷². To be sure, χάρις, too, has the aspect of being a gift of grace, a bestowal of favor – mediated through a higher power or a divinity – but it is, in the Septuagint, for instance, *not* a theological concept⁷³.

67. Quint., *Inst.* 1.13; cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), pp. 82-83; further instances in WILCKENS, *σοφία* (n. 64); in more detail, ZELLER, *Charis* (n. 64).

68. Quint., *Inst.* 1, Pr. 18: “So let our orator be the sort of man who can truly be called ‘wise’, not only perfect in morals (for in my view that is not enough, though some people think otherwise) but also in knowledge and in his general capacity for speaking”.

69. Cf., for example, Quint., *Inst.* 9.4.43; 8.3.52; also 8.3.3: *sublimitas profecto et magnificentia et nitor et auctoritas expressit illum fragorem*. “It was, after all, the sublimity and the splendor, the elegance and the authoritative manner that evoked that storm of applause”.

70. Cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), p. 83.

71. The parallelism between Jesus and Stephen shining through again and again becomes also clear in the fact that Stephen, under comparable circumstances, dies like Jesus (cf. Lk 23,46; Acts 7,59-60); see on this K. BACKHAUS, *Mose und der Mos Maiorum: Das Alter des Judentums als Argument für die Attraktivität des Christentums in der Apostelgeschichte*, in Id., *Entgrenzung* (n. 17), 257-282, p. 274.

72. Cf. WILCKENS, *σοφία* (n. 64), p. 515.

73. Cf. CONZELMANN, *χάρις* (n. 35), p. 379, for the evidence.

IV. AMPLIFICATION: THE ART OF ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ

The charismatic and efficacious speech of the chief protagonists in Acts can be delineated more precisely by considering the concept of παρρησία (plain, fearless speech)⁷⁴. The term occurs five times and generally in pivotal passages (Acts 2,29; 4,13.29.31; 28,31). The prominent significance that Luke attaches to παρρησία appears from the fact that it is the next-to-last word in Luke-Acts: in spite of his house arrest, Paul can proclaim the sovereignty of God and the teaching about Jesus Christ the Lord in the center of the world at that time, in Rome, “in all openness, unhindered” (μετὰ πάσης παρρησίας ἀκωλύτως).

In Acts, παρρησία and παρρησιάζεσθαι are connected quite closely with the λαλεῖν and διδάσκειν of the apostles (4,29.31; 9,27-28; 18,25-26)⁷⁵. The forum before which παρρησία comes into play is always the popular public and the political-judicial authorities⁷⁶. Thus, it would appear that this concept too has an affinity with Hellenistic παιδεία and rhetoric⁷⁷. In point of fact: bold, fearless and plain speech was an important goal for a philosopher of the first century⁷⁸. However, he regularly got into difficulty through it if a humorless emperor sat in his audience. “Several famous philosophers in the later first century, especially under Nero and the Flavian dynasty, faced death or exile for their endless moral prattling. [...] As Epictetus said before he was exiled by Domitian, ‘Tyranny hates wisdom’ (*Discourses* 1.29.10). The mark of a true philosopher therefore was a determination to speak out with *parrhēsia* without regard for the consequences”⁷⁹.

In Quintilian’s view (to take him once again as an authority), παρρησία (Latin *licentia*) is much more than just a rhetorical device chosen for reasons of flattery; it attempts to contain the risk of negative reactions

74. Cf. M. BECKER, *Lukas und Dion von Prusa: Das lukanische Doppelwerk im Kontext paganer Bildungsdiskurse* (Studies in Cultural Contexts of the Bible, 3), Paderborn, Schöningh, 2020, pp. 112-120; W.C. VAN UNNIK, *The Christian’s Freedom of Speech in the New Testament*, in Id., *Sparsa collecta: Collected Essays*, 2 (SupplINT, 30), Leiden, Brill, 1980, 269-289, pp. 279-283.

75. Cf. H. SCHLIER, *παρρησία, παρρησιάζομαι*, in TWNT 5 (1954) 869-884, p. 880.

76. It is in general either the Jews (Acts 2,29; 9,27f.; 13,46; 18,26; 19,8), the Jewish authorities (Acts 4,13; 26,26) or the Jews and the people (Acts 14,2-3; together with the political representatives Acts 4,29.31), cf. SCHLIER, *παρρησία* (n. 75), p. 880.

77. Cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), p. 84.

78. Musonius defines παρρησία quite generally as the “non-concealment of what one thinks” (Muson., *Diatr.* 9.48.14-15).

79. S. MASON, *Flavius Josephus and the New Testament*, Peabody, MA, Hendrickson, 21993, pp. 219-220.

through a certain well-considered mixture of praise and reproach⁸⁰. Rather all speech should basically show *παρρησία*:

The same may be said of Free Speech (*oratio libera*), which Cornificius calls licence (*licentia*), and the Greeks *parrhesia*. For what is less 'figured' (*figuratum*) than true freedom (*vera libertas*)? Yet flattery (*adulatio*) is often concealed under this cover⁸¹.

Παρρησία is thus not just a rhetorical figure; it rather focuses on the truth and mentions it without flattery or timidity. Technique and virtue blend together here⁸². In early Jewish wisdom literature, on the other hand, *παρρησία* is above all a quality of the just and wise person⁸³, but can also be the mode of expression of Wisdom itself⁸⁴, or of God⁸⁵.

A key passage for understanding the Lukan concept of *παρρησία* – but also for comprehending the theme of education that interests us in this contribution – is Acts 4,1-22. Here it is said that Peter and John, because of their impressive sermon in the temple, are brought before the Synedrium. In the situation of his interrogation, Peter, now "filled with the Holy Spirit", speaks with all *παρρησία* (Acts 4,8-13.29), a boldness which even outruns Jesus' promise in Lk 12,12 (see also 21,12-15). Plain, fearless speech is thus attributed here to pneumatic inspiration.

The reaction leaves nothing to be desired and fits in with the already-known series of reactions that follow upon Spirit-filled words and deeds:

But as they saw the fearlessness (*παρρησία*) of Peter and John and realized that they were illiterate and uneducated people, they were astonished. It became clear to them that they belonged to Jesus. And since they saw the

80. Of course, *παρρησία* is also a rhetorical stylistic device (see, for instance, Cic., *Or.* 3.205: *vox quaedam libera*; for further examples, see SCHLIER, *παρρησία* [n. 75], pp. 869-872). Quintilian, though, campaigns for a deeper understanding that goes beyond *παρρησία* as pure ornamentation (*ornatus*); this fits generally with his criticism of modern orators, whose style in his view is too extravagant and opulent and is geared alone toward the pleasure of the uneducated crowd (cf. Quint., *Inst.* 10.1.43); see on this F. KÜHNERT, *Quintilians Stellung zu der Beredsamkeit seiner Zeit*, in *Listy Filologické/Folia Philologica* 87 (1964) 33-50, p. 36: "Quintilian tadelt also an den modernen Rednern im allgemeinen, dass sie nur auf den Beifall der Menge, nicht aber auf den Nutzen und den Sieg der von ihnen vertretenen Sache bedacht sind, dass sie ihre Redekunst prahlerisch zur Schau stellen, dass sie mit ihrer Beredsamkeit, die schlaff und verweichlicht ist, nur dem Genuss und Vergnügen der Zuhörer dienen".

81. Quint., *Inst.* 9.2.27-28.

82. Cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), p. 85.

83. Cf. Prov 13,5; 20,9; Wis 5,1; 4 *Macc* 10,5; SCHLIER, *παρρησία* (n. 75), p. 874: "Der δίκαιος, nicht der άσεβής, hat *παρρησία*. Dabei ist der δίκαιος zugleich der σοφός, so dass die hellenistische Auffassung, die dem Philosophen Parrhesie zuschreibt, hier in einer der jüdischen Orientierung am Gesetz entsprechenden Umwandlung wiederkehrt".

84. Prov 1,20.

85. Cf. Ps 93,1 LXX.

man who had been healed standing before them, they could say nothing in answer to them (Acts 4,13-14).

The interesting part of this passage is the fact that the astonishment of the members of the Synedrion at the rhetorical abilities of Peter and John has to do with the low level of the apostles' education. Luke considers this lack of education positively here, unlike what he does usually. When Luke elsewhere in his writings comes to speak about the educational level of people portrayed by him, then for the most part he underscores what is positive to it and expresses his appreciation⁸⁶. Here, on the other hand, the members of the Synedrion show themselves astonished at the apostles' eloquence and *παρρησία* because these stand in contradiction to their modest educational background: Peter and John are called illiterates (*ἀγράμματος*) and uneducated (*ἰδιῶται*). Along with Matthias Becker, I assume that this reference to the apostles' lack of education is not meant as a (historical) statement about the socio-cultural background of the apostles; it is rather to be understood as a means to differentiate true *paideia* from the useless abundance of too much learning⁸⁷. One can illustrate this by referring to the self-dramatization of Dion of Prusa: the reference-point of Dion's philosophical ideal is not the highly-educated philosophers making use of a comprehensive general education, but rather such rudimentarily educated personalities as Socrates and Diogenes. Dion considers himself to be "far removed" even from these⁸⁸. With his critique of education, Dion joins the ranks of certain circles of the Cynic, Stoic, Epicurean and Sceptic schools of thought. Seneca, for instance, can ask:

We might even make the statement that it is possible to attain wisdom without the 'liberal studies' (*sine liberalibus studiis*); for although virtue is a thing that must be learned, yet it is not learned by means of these studies. What reason have I, however, for supposing that one who is ignorant of letters will never be a wise man, since wisdom is not to be found in letters? (Sen., *Ep.* 88.32)⁸⁹.

There is every reason not to rule out the possibility that pagan-educated readers of Luke who were familiar with this kind of educational critique

86. Cf. BECKER, *Lukas* (n. 74), p. 615, with reference to Acts 7,22; 22,3; 18,24–19,1; Jesus, in Luke, also is never designated as a carpenter (Mk 6,3) or as a son of a carpenter (Mt 13,55).

87. See (also on the following) *ibid.*, pp. 615-616.

88. Dion, *Or.* 72.16: "Just so, though each of us has the garb of Socrates and Diogenes, in intellect we are far from being like those famous men, or from living as they did, or from uttering such noble thoughts. Therefore, for no other reason than because of our personal appearance, we, like the owls, collect a great company of those who in truth are birds, being fools ourselves besides being annoyed by others of like folly".

89. Translation by R.M. GUMMERE (LCL, 1920).

were able to see the analogy between Acts 4,13 and the connection made in Cynic-Stoic philosophy between the lack of linguistic-literary education and the true pursuit of virtue and wisdom⁹⁰. In that case, one message conveyed by this text would be that being a Christian makes no special demands on one's education; Christianity rather appeals to all social classes. In addition to this it becomes clear that free, plain speech is a divine gift that transcends every kind of human schooling: it simply cannot be acquired in schools of rhetoric, but rather is – like χάρις and σοφία – a gift of the Holy Spirit⁹¹. All of these gifts enable those who have received them to impart their message in such a persuasive manner that they astonish those who hear them.

V. RESULT: IMPLICIT *PAIDEIA* ALLUSIONS

The remarks presented here, which intentionally did not focus on the apostle Paul's educational biography (Acts 22,3) or his speech on the Areopagus (Acts 17,16-34), but rather on pronounced allusions to (rhetorical) educational concepts and discourses, show how subtly Luke integrates his affinity for education in his narrative. The starting point was the image of the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple, who, blessed with wisdom (Lk 2,40.52), displays such extraordinary abilities in the understanding of Scripture that the διδάσκαλοι present are amazed at his wisdom. This unique episode of Jesus' youth can be fitted into the context of ancient biographies concerned with the precocious intelligence of famous personalities. The intended readers with a pagan and/or Jewish education could understand the episode against this background of the ancient biography. However, Luke's readers could also recognize the feature in which it deviates from usual youth biographies: the σοφία with which Jesus is blessed is conceived as independent of any kind of human παιδεία whatsoever – it is exclusively due to God, the source and giver of all wisdom.

Being filled with grace, wisdom and the Spirit, Jesus promises his disciples the charisma of persuasive speech, which is realized particularly in Stephen where Luke, over long stretches of the text of Acts 6–7, draws analogies between him and Jesus. In Stephen's speech he points out that Moses had received schooling in the Egyptian diaspora – and even before the scene with the burning bush. This schooling is interpreted positively

90. With BECKER, *Lukas* (n. 74), p. 621.

91. Cf. ERLEMANN, *Lizenz* (n. 48), p. 87.

so that potential readers with an analogous *paideia* experience could appreciate their schooling positively. Charismatic speech is a fruit of the endowment with wisdom (σοφία) and grace (χάρις). In the case of Stephen – as already in the case of Jesus – the πνεῦμα is an additional factor of primary importance.

The striking and efficacious speech that Jesus and the apostles display culminates in *παρρησία*, which the chief protagonists display in public, but also and above all before political-judicial audiences. *Παρρησία*, plain speech, is also a rhetorical stylistic device, but according to Quintilian, it should be orientated towards the truth. In early Jewish literature it is a quality of the righteous and wise person. The remark made by the Jewish leaders in Acts 4,13, which seems to deny the apostles Peter and John any education at all, may at first glance be somewhat irritating, but can be understood as corresponding to a well-known educational discourse: the Christian message makes no specific demands on people's education, but can be spread by every believer. Plain speech is not acquired in schools; rather it is a divine gift, granted to women and men without their agency, just as is the gift of wisdom and grace.

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