

Prescription and Coherence in Luke-Acts: A Narratological Exegesis of Spirit Reception and Christian Initiation

British New Testament Society Conference 2019

David J. McCollough

david.j.mccollough@durham.ac.uk

Introduction

Discussion of Spirit reception and Christian initiation in Luke-Acts is often fraught with emotion and denominational loyalties: Sacramentalism? Evangelicalism? Enthusiasm? While the conclusions of this paper will have clear ramifications for such issues, the paper will not engage the systematic theology debates but will focus upon making a methodological contribution to Lukan exegesis and then suggesting several anthropological categories which might provide a lens to interpret newfound data. This paper will thus address two exegetical questions: first, how can prescriptive elements in Lukan narrative be identified, particularly with regard to Christian initiation, and second, does Luke present a coherent picture of Christian initiation?¹

Regarding the first question, the issue is not whether Luke teaches theology,² but how does he do it and how precisely can we ascertain what he teaches? Gordon Fee classically sums up the problem:

how does one unpack or discover Luke's *theological* interests in his individual narratives, and how does one distinguish those he *intends* to be normative from those he does not, without his giving us some clue *in the text itself*?³

¹ This paper is an adaptation of a previously published article: 'The Liminal Spirit: Ritual Experience, Ritual Initiation in Luke and Paul', *Journal of Youngsian Theology* Vol. 45 (2018), 107-142. Permission for use has been granted. It also draws conceptually upon my monograph, *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit: An Analysis of the Timing, Mechanism, and Manifestation of Spirit Reception in Luke-Acts* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2017).

² For a summary of the history vs. theology debate, see Clare K. Rothschild, *Luke-Acts and the Rhetoric of History: An Investigation of Early Christian Historiography* WUNT2 175 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 24-59. From a narratological perspective see, Ute E. Eisen, *Die Poetik der Apostelgeschichte: Eine Narratologische Studie*, NTOA 58 (Fribourg: Academic Press, 2006; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006), 13. Cf. William W. Klein, Craig L. Blomberg, Robert L. Hubbard, Jr., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, Third Edition (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 532-533; Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, Revised and Expanded (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2006), 219.

³ Gordon D. Fee, *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, A Division of Baker Publishing Group, 1991), 91, original italics.

Regarding the second question, I. Howard Marshall's 1970 observation still reflects much of current scholarship: 'it is a notorious problem that Luke's statements about the relation of the Spirit to baptism are incapable of being worked into one single pattern'.⁴

While narrative critical tools are not new to Lukan studies, this paper, building upon and critiquing my previous work in *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*, employs a unique combination of discourse analysis, narratology, and literary analysis to advance scholarly understanding of both questions. It identifies how Luke makes prescriptions regarding Christian initiation, and demonstrates, contra prevailing opinion, that Luke's prescriptions are coherent – viz., of a standard ritual structure with allowance for minor variation. Three concepts from anthropology – liminality, performative ritual, and spirit possession – are employed to advance a new critical theory of how primitive Christian initiation, as presented in Luke-Acts, could involve temporary ambiguity, how it could exhibit both structure and flexibility, and how it could shift the primary locus of initiation from John the Baptist's immersion rite to a spirit-possession experience.

Methodology

As Marshall, et al. illustrate, it is virtually a cliché to claim that Luke knows no common ritual because he seems to vary the way the Spirit comes in his Spirit-reception scenes. In Acts 2, the Spirit comes suddenly from heaven, but then is apparently promised in baptism. In Acts 8, the Spirit comes after baptism in the laying on of hands. Then again in chapter 10, the Spirit comes apart from baptism or handlaying. Surely Luke is either incoherent, or unconcerned, or poorly editing his sources. However, deployment of contemporary narrative methods, namely discourse analysis, narratology, and literary analysis, can break this impasse. Luke is not woodenly repetitive. He need not, and does not, say the same thing in every scene. Rather, current analytic methods show him coherent and internally consistent.

Exempla: The Graeco-Roman Reading Context

Joel B. Green's utilisation of discourse analysis with respect to baptism raises the issue of context, both of characters within the narrative and of the historical reading/listening audience:

⁴ I. Howard Marshall, *Luke: Historian and Theologian* (Exeter: The Paternoster Press, 1970), 198. Cf. Mikeal C. Parsons, it is 'mistaken to suggest ... that there is any clear sequence of baptism and reception of the Holy Spirit in Acts'. *Acts* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 50. Charles H. Talbert, 'There is in Acts no set procedure for receiving the Holy Spirit'. Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* Revised Edition (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2005), 72. Friedrich Avemarie, addressing Luke's baptism stories and considering the, 'disparity of the Lukan narrative', hardly expects any simple, handy result. 'Angesichts der Disparatheit der lukanischen Erzählungen ist aber ein einfaches, griffiges Ergebnis kaum zu erwarten.' Friedrich Avemarie, *Die Tauferszählungen der Apostelgeschichte: Theologie und Geschichte*, WUNT 139 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 17. Similarly, Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992), 57; Craig S. Keener, *Acts, An Exegetical Commentary Volume 2* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 1524; Richard I. Pervo, *Dating Acts: Between the Evangelists and the Apologists* (Santa Rosa, CA: Polebridge Press, 2006), 214; William H. Shepherd, Jr., *The Narrative Function of the Holy Spirit as a Character in Luke-Acts*, SBL.DS 147 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994), 22; D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12-14*, BTCL (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster Press, 1995; Grand Rapids: Baker Book House Company, 1987), 143; Eduard Schweizer, trans. Reginald H. and Ilse Fuller, *The Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980 [German, 1978]), 62.

At one level, discourse theorists would be concerned with how persons within the narrative respond to the message of baptism. At another, we would inquire into what responses Luke's narrative (and in particular his perspective on baptism) might effect among his audience. In narrative texts, which invite readerly identification with characters within the text, these two horizons often merge.⁵

Regarding Luke's historical audience, we know that across the Graeco-Roman world people were familiar with the pedagogical use of historical events and characters as models (*exempla* / *παραδείγματα*) either to imitate or to eschew.⁶ Luke's readers would have had a strong tendency, ingrained upon them since childhood, either through formal education, where rhetoric was studied,⁷ or through participating in the ubiquitous communal reading meetings common to virtually every social class,⁸ to view his characters and events as exemplars.

Here we segue from historical context to narrative context. This expectation of *exempla* belongs to the pool of presuppositions that an ancient reader could be expected by an ancient author to bring to the text and must be considered as part of the narrative structure, that is, as intrinsic to the implied author and implied reader. Luke need not overtly mark characters as exemplaric. By virtue of the cultural discourse, exemplaric reading is the default mode for Luke's implied reader.

Influencing the Implied Reader: Tools of the Literary Trade

When we speak of readers and audience we must ask what readers and what audience do we mean? The 'audience' Luke influences is the 'implied reader'. This is the ideal reader constructed by the

⁵ Green, Joel B. 'From 'John's Baptism' to 'Baptism in the Name of the Lord Jesus': The Significance of Baptism in Luke-Acts'. *Baptism, the New Testament and the Church: Historical and Contemporary Studies in Honour of R.E.O. White*. JSNT.S 171 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 157-172; 161.

⁶ As Matthew B. Roller writes, 'Exemplary discourse, then, encompasses all of Roman society, from the loftiest aristocrats to the humblest peasants, laborers, and slaves.' Matthew B. Roller, 'Exemplarity in Roman Culture: The Cases of Horatius Cocles and Cloelia', *Classical Philology*, Vol. 99, No. 1 (January 2004), 1-56; 6. Cf., Matthew Roller, 'The Exemplary Past in Roman Historiography and Culture', in A. Feldherr, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 214-230. Rebecca Langlands, *Exemplary Ethics in Ancient Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), though no claim is made here that Luke specifically modelled his 'models' after the technical Roman style. Kristoffel Demoen, 'A Paradigm for the Analysis of Paradigms: The Rhetorical *Exemplum* in Ancient and Imperial Greek Theory'. *Rhetorica: A Journal for the History of Rhetoric*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (Spring 1997) 125-158. William Kurz, 'Narrative Models for Imitation in Luke-Acts'. *Greeks, Romans and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe*. Eds. David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1990: 171-189. John M. Lilley, *The Narrative Presentation of Ethical Paradigms in Dionysius's Roman Antiquities and Luke-Acts*; PhD Dissertation, Marquette University, 1994. Werner Jaeger: 'The whole of Greek paideia [education] is founded on two very old Greek ideas – paradeigma and mimesis, the model and its imitation.' Werner Jaeger, trans. Gilbert Highet, *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* Vol. 2, *In Search of the Divine Centre* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1943), 259. For exemplars in Jewish writing see, Teresa Rash Brown, 'Sinners, Idol-Worshippers and Fools among the Men of Heseb: Ben Sira's Pedagogy in *Praise of the Fathers* (Sir 44-50)' PhD Dissertation, Graduate Theological Union, 1998.

⁷ Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), 221.

⁸ See the ground-breaking work of Brian J. Wright, *Communal Reading in the Time of Jesus: A Window into Early Christian Reading Practices* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), esp. 40-41 and 111-115. 'Virtually' all classes, for, perhaps, the slaves in the salt mines or rowers in the bowels of ships had no time for such niceties.

narrative who always responds appropriately to the ideology expressed by the implied author (also a narrative construct). As Wolf Schmid writes, the implied reader is, ‘the author’s image of the recipient that is fixed and objectified in the text by specific indexical signs’.⁹ This is not the actual reader, ancient or modern. Nor is the implied reader someone like Luke’s Theophilus. Narrator and narratee both exist within the narrative. Furthermore, when we speak of ‘Luke’, we are not speaking of the actual person, but of the implied author, a construct of the text. While the implied reader/author are constructs of the text, the text is a construct of society with its language, cultural norms, and cognitive frames.

Manipulating characters and events to influence the implied reader is the function of literary devices. Such include: focalisation (orienting the reader’s attention to the ‘focalised’¹⁰), functional redundancy (purposeful repetition)¹¹, narrative asides (comments directed overtly to the reader)¹², narrative spokespersons (characters who represent the implied author’s ideology, e.g., God, Jesus, and sometimes Peter), action peaks/didactic peaks (peak: an episode ‘characterized by unusual grammatico-stylistic features’¹³), type-scenes (a standard, recurring scenario; a cognitive ‘frame’ for which reference to a part can elicit awareness of the entire ‘frame’),¹⁴ exemplars, and amplification (αὐξησις, used in ancient rhetoric for expanding repeatedly upon a theme).¹⁵

By these one identifies what is brought before the implied reader’s attention, emphasised, commented upon, and marked for emulation; thus, answering Fee, resolving the perennial problem of disambiguating the merely incidental to the story from what is aligned with the implied author’s ideology. That is, differentiating the described and the didactic; distinguishing the narrated from the normative.

For example, Peter goes up on the roof to pray (Acts 10:9).¹⁶ As a main protagonist in the story, the ancient reader’s default view of Peter is exemplaric – one learns both from his good deeds and his failures. But does that mean that everything Peter does holds exemplaric value? How does the

⁹ Wolf Schmid, ‘Implied Reader’, Paragraph 1, Peter Hühn, et al. (eds.), *The Living Handbook of Narratology* (Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, URL = hup.sub.uni-hamburg.de/lhn/index.php?title=Implied_Reader&oldid=2015 [view date: 22 May 2018]). See also, Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983 [1961]), 137-138.

¹⁰ Cf., Michael Toolan, *Narrative, A Critical Linguistic Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2001), 60. Mieke Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* Fourth Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 132-153.

¹¹ On functional redundancy, cf.: Ronald D. Witherup, ‘Functional Redundancy in the Acts of the Apostles: A Case Study’, *JSNT* 48 (1992), 67-86; 84.

¹² Steven M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, JSOT, 1992), 36.

¹³ R. E. Longacre, “Interpreting Biblical Stories” in Teun A. van Dijk, ed., *Discourse and Literature: New Approaches to the Analysis of Literary Genres* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1985), 169-185; 172-173, 176; Cf., Robert E. Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse* (New York: Plenum, 1996), 37.

¹⁴ Cf. Walter Arend, *Die Typischen Scene bei Homer* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1933); Robert Alter, ‘Biblical Type-Scenes and the Uses of Convention’, *Critical Inquiry* 5.2 (Winter, 1978), 355-68; Robert Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative* (n.pl.: Basic Books, 1981), 47-62. Mary Therese DesCamp, *Metaphor and Ideology: Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum and Literary Methods Through a Cognitive Lens* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 81.

¹⁵ Malcolm Heath, ‘Invention’, In Stanley E. Porter, ed., *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C. – A.D. 400* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 89-119, 95.

¹⁶ Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit, 78.

implied reader distinguish the mundane from the meaningful? Should the implied reader hear always and everywhere hear the ideological voice of the implied author?

While Peter sometimes serves as a normative spokesperson, going up to the rooftop to pray lacks any literary device specifying it as normative. Luke gives no narrative aside, ‘God heard him because he ascended the roof’ or, ‘all the faithful were regularly praying on the roof’, nor does an apostle declare: ‘repent, be baptised, and ascend the rooftop to pray!’ Rooftop prayer is normal but not prescribed.

Similarly, selling one’s property and laying the proceeds at the apostles’ feet is encouraged in the narrative by the behaviour of characters whose status in the text renders them exemplaric for the implied reader: the fresh from Pentecost, Spirit-filled early believers, and Joseph the Levite, whom the apostles call ‘Son of Encouragement’ (Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-37). That the apostles especially represent the ideology of the implied author is signalled by the text because Jesus ‘opened their minds to understand the scriptures’¹⁷ and because of their close association with Jesus from the time of John to Jesus’ ascension. However, donations are encouraged, *but not required*, as Peter explains to Ananias (Acts 5:4). Here we see gradation in the level of narrative prescription.

Whoever produced the literary artefact that is Luke-Acts had some measure of Graeco-Roman education.¹⁸ Our immediate narratological concern is not to uncover this historical personage, but rather to understand that the implied reader would read this literate text as a part of his cultural milieu, expecting the implied author to employ characters as role models. As modern readers of the ancient text, we have the critical tools to specify precisely what the implied author puts forward as an *exemplum* / παράδειγμα, and how he advances it, whether positively or negatively, and to what degree, either as normal, or as encouraged, or as fully normative.

Using the Tools to Craft a Prescriptive Narrative: Sequential Reading, Focalisation, Type-Scenes, Implied Mental Constructs, and Discourse Normality

How then, do we employ these narrative tools? Discourse analysis, narratology, and literary analysis would all be concerned with narrative progression – one reads Luke’s scenes sequentially, observing the unfolding of the story, seeing how each scene addresses a different theme, noting how questions raised (or gaps left) in initial scenes are answered (filled in) in subsequent scenes.¹⁹ In other words, how is narrative ambiguity disambiguated?²⁰ As with the need to distinguish

¹⁷ τότε διήνοιξεν αὐτῶν τὸν νοῦν τοῦ συνιέναι τὰς γραφάς· (Luke 24:45)

¹⁸ The concern here is not the historical Luke, but the implied author, whose construction is not unsophisticated. The historical Luke’s precise educational ‘level’ is debated. Cf. Sean A. Adams, ‘Luke and progymnasmata: rhetorical handbooks, rhetorical sophistication and genre selection’, ed. A.W. Pitts, and M.R. Hauge, *Ancient Education and Early Christianity* LNTS 533 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), 137-154.

¹⁹ On filling narrative ‘gaps’, see Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Michal Beth Dinkler, *Silent Statements: Narrative Representations of Speech and Silence in the Gospel of Luke* (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2013); Kathy Maxwell, *Hearing Between the Lines: The Audience as Fellow-Worker in Luke-Acts and its Literary Milieu* (London: T&T Clark International, 2010).

²⁰ On narrative ambiguity and disambiguation of textual gaps, see Wolfgang Iser, ‘Interaction Between Text and Reader’, Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman, ed., *The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation*

between the historical author and the implied author, so too, sequential reading is a matter of implied reading practice, not actual historical reading practice. Thus, Luke and Acts need never have been read together²¹ for Luke's implied reader to read them together. As C. Kavin Rowe states, he is interested in, 'the cumulative or total effect of the passages' with which he deals.²²

Thus we come to Peter M. Phillips, who explains, what is for Luke-Acts, a crucial issue:

Most commentaries seem to deal with texts sequentially, since they work through the texts verse-by-verse, sometimes even word-by-word. However, even though they follow the sequence of the text, commentators constantly introduce interpretive elements from the rest of the text, or from other associated texts or from other general sources. This process of metatextual gap-filling disables sequential disclosure.²³

A sequential analysis of Luke-Acts will thus, for example, eliminate the problem of isolating and juxtaposing Acts 2:38 with Acts 8:17. Acts 2 and 8 are sequential components in a complex, and much larger system.

Narratology is also interested in focalisation – the narrative camera. Focalisation is not mere emphasis. It is arrangement and orientation, camera angle, as it were. For example, we do not have the actual, fully detailed, perfectly chronological knowledge of Paul's life, but we do have the Pauline story as Luke focalises it for us in his discourse.²⁴

With focalisation, working in concert with literary tools such as narrative asides, functional redundancy, didactic peaks, type-scenes, exemplars, and amplification, one identifies prescriptive narrative structures and gauges their level of normativity. Put simply, the narrative focuses attention on some aspect of the story, then comments upon the focalised. This narrative combination becomes prescriptive when the implied author holds a position of authority vis-à-vis

(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 106-119; 111-112. Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 116-118, 169.

²¹ Cf., Andrew Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period Before Irenaeus*, WUNT2 169 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003); C. Kavin Rowe, 'History, Hermeneutics, and the Unity of Luke-Acts', Andrew F. Gregory and C. Kavin Rowe, ed., *Rethinking the Unity and Reception of Luke and Acts* (Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2010), 43-65. Cf. Andrew Gregory, 'The Reception of Luke and Acts and the Unity of Luke-Acts', JSNT 29.4 (2007), 459-472.

²² C. Kavin Rowe, *Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 10-11. Cf. Rowe's sequential, cumulative reading of κῆρυξ in his *Early Narrative Christology: The Lord in the Gospel of Luke* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2006), cf., 11-14.

²³ Peter M. Phillips, *The Prologue of the Fourth Gospel: A Sequential Reading* (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 27; cf. 25-26. Whereas Phillips works phrase-by-phrase through John's prologue, Kari Syreeni sets a precedent for sequential scene analysis, 'Peter as Character and Symbol in the Gospel of Matthew', David Rhoads and Kari Syreeni, ed., *Characterization in the Gospels: Reconciling Narrative Criticism*, JSNT.S 184 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 106-152; 120-152.

²⁴ For technical discussion of fabula and sujet, see, Irene de Jong, *Narratology and Classics: A Practical Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 47; 76-77. For further reading, see Michael Toolan, *Narrative, A Critical Linguistic Introduction*, 2nd Ed. (London/New York: Routledge, 2001), esp. 60; Wolf Schmid, *Narratology: An Introduction* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2010); Peter Hühn, Wolf Schmid, Jörg Schönert, eds, *Point of View, Perspective, and Focalization: Modeling Mediation in Narrative*, Nar. 17 (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2009); one may also profitably consult *The Living Handbook of Narratology* at <http://www.lhn.uni-hamburg.de/article/focalization>.

the implied audience. That is, the text constructs an expectation on the part of the implied author of obedience on the part of the implied reader.

In our text, the narrator, who is always narratologically distinct from, but in Luke-Acts is ideologically aligned with, the implied author, establishes himself in an authoritative teaching role for Theophilus, the narratee, with whom the implied reader identifies. For a slightly imperfect,²⁵ but otherwise helpful example, in C.S. Lewis' *The Screwtape Letters*, the advice that Screwtape the demon offers Wormwood his nephew is quite the opposite of what the implied author expects the implied reader will view as good and Godly. Such a contrast between implied author and narratee is not the case in Luke-Acts. Consequently, then, when Luke's camera focalises, say, handlaying, and Luke narrates the significance of handlaying, the implied reader receives the Lukan commentary on the focalised as authoritative.

Literary analysis also pays particular attention to type-scenes. Robert Alter is recognised for his pioneering work with Biblical type-scenes, of which there are a variety:

the annunciation ... of the birth of the hero to his barren mother; the encounter with the future betrothed at a well; the epiphany in the field; the initiatory trial; danger in the desert and the discovery of a well or other source of sustenance; the testament of the dying hero.²⁶

The classic Biblical example is 'boy meets girl at village well' (e.g., Abraham's servant for Isaac meets Rebekah, Jacob meets Rachel, Moses meets Reuel's daughters). The basic elements of the story are repeated with different characters, but typically, someone draws water, they eat at the girl's family's home, they marry. The power of the type-scene is multifaceted: it allows for diversity within a basic structure and mention of just a part of the type-scene can evoke memory of the entire frame. In Luke's case, the baptism/Spirit-reception cum Christian initiation type-scene can exhibit diversity in various instantiations while remaining recognisable as the same basic scene. Luke need not always repeat his scenes verbatim, nor elaborate the whole scene in each and every instantiation, because reference to one element, such as baptism, can evoke for the implied reader the entire type-scene.

Finally, with the concept of following the implied reader's mental constructs, or 'entity representations' as developed by Catherine Emmott,²⁷ one monitors what the implied reader knows about any particular character, setting, aspect of the plot, theme, or ideological perspective of the story, at any particular point in the storyline. This means that as each initiation type-scene is read, we will identify what Luke says about initiation and accumulate a full picture as we progress through the narrative. Luke will not necessarily repeat his statements in subsequent scenes, as he may have different purposes in each scene. Nevertheless, discourse analysis indicates that what

²⁵ Lewis does provide a preface, which explicitly clarifies the letters from Screwtape. C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (London: Geoffrey Bles: The Centenary Press, 1942) 9-10. However, the preface does not provide a reified implied author, but really another character in the book, e.g., 'I have no intention of explaining how the correspondence which I now offer to the public fell into my hands' (9).

²⁶ Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 51.

²⁷ Catherine Emmott, *Narrative Comprehension: A Discourse Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. Cf., Herre van Oostendorp and Susan R. Goldman, ed., *The Construction of Mental Representations During Reading* (Mahwah, New Jersey; London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers, 1999).

Luke states in each scene, i.e., what he focalises and comments upon, carries forward into subsequent scenes, which are read in light of what has gone before.

But what of Luke's diversity? Accumulation does not mean simplistic adding together of contradictory statements. Implied readers make sense of variation, not by assuming the implied author is careless or irrational, but by interpreting new information in light of past precedent. Green understands this under the discourse concept of 'normality'. The reader expects things to proceed according to the normal functioning of the universe, unless the text indicates differently. He writes that an implied audience will,

attribute coherence to Luke's narrative unless it is forced to infer otherwise. Even in those cases where a change in normal practice is perceived, the analysis of "language in use" presumes that change to be minimal.²⁸

Exegesis: The Spirit Reception Scenes in Narrative Sequence

Nativity to Pentecost

How then does a narrative-critical approach flesh out Luke's initiation structure? A sequential reading begins where the story does, with the Spirit experiences of Elizabeth, John, Zacharias, Mary, and Simeon. Here, the reader associates Spirit experience with miraculous conception, loud prophecy, physical movement, and guidance. Here, particularly righteous, or exceptional individuals already within the people of God experience the Spirit. However, the nativity stories, while involving the Spirit, modelling prophecy, and even tangentially including initiation (John and Jesus' circumcision), are not integrally tied to any ritual act, nor to any initiatory structure.

Jesus' Spirit reception (Luke 3:21-22), however, is intimately associated with baptism²⁹ and is the first iteration of an oft to be repeated type-scene. Luke presents the Spirit coming after Jesus' immersion and during his prayer (having been baptised and while praying³⁰), thus making prayer integral to the baptism ceremony and linking the coming of the Spirit to the prayer immediately following immersion, but not to the water of immersion per se.³¹ Significantly, his Spirit experience is accompanied by a divine voice of approbation.

²⁸ Green, 160. See also, Michael Toolan, 'Coherence' in Peter Hühn, et al., *Handbook of Narratology* Second Edition, Volume 1 (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2009), 44-62.

²⁹ John proclaimed a baptism of repentance that brought sinful Jews, who had strayed from their righteous Abrahamic heritage, back into the position of being people of God, thus escaping God's fiery wrath (Luke 3:7-9). This is a status change, and, as such, can be considered a rite of passage. Victor Turner draws upon Arnold van Gennep, developing at length the concept of a middle period in rites of passage. Turner defines these rites as 'transitions between states' and by 'state' he means 'a relatively fixed or stable condition'. Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1967, 93.

³⁰ Ἰησοῦ βαπτισθέντος καὶ προσευχομένου ἀνερχομένου τὸν οὐρανὸν... (Luke 3:21)

³¹ Similarly, François Bovon, *Luke the Theologian: Fifty-five Years of Research (1950-2005)* Second Revised Edition (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2006), 268, 'The account of Jesus' baptism therefore distinguishes the baptism of water from the outpouring of the Spirit'.

Alfred Loisy's work is insightful and representative of several early twentieth century commentators³²:

One would think one attends, one in fact attends, a baptism in the early Christian communities; after the baptismal immersion, they prayed to obtain the outpouring of the Spirit (cf. Acts 8:15-17). The description of the baptism of Jesus developed into a prototype of Christian baptism.³³

However, caution is in order, for Jesus' baptism is not a stand-alone model of Christian initiation as per Loisy, et al. A modern sequential reading approach avoids the argumentation surrounding whether Jesus' baptism models Christian baptism, by understanding it as an initial building block of the implied reader's mental construct for Christian initiation. That mental construct must be allowed to fully develop. It is not until the entire Luke-Acts narrative is traversed that the reader has a full grasp of what it means to be initiated into the early Christian community. Luke's implied reader sees in Jesus' baptism, not a perfect correspondence with every aspect of his own baptism, but simply the precursor to what would later in Acts become the full Christian initiation process.

Later, in chapter eleven, Jesus teaches on shamelessly persistent prayer, encourages his followers to ask their Father for the Spirit, and then relates the story of a demoniac initially delivered from his demon but later repossessed. The reader asks himself what the demoniac should have done to prevent repossession and the foregoing narrative about persistent prayer to the Father for the Spirit provides the answer. His house was clean, but empty and thus vulnerable. In this way, Luke encourages initiates, that is, all who experience the delivering power of the finger of God acting through Jesus, to persist in prayer for the Spirit at the time of their deliverance from bondage.

³² In 1901, Eduard Freiherrn von der Goltz asserted, based on Jesus' baptismal prayer and Acts 8:15, 16, 'that with baptism the prayer for reception of the Holy Spirit must be bound'; 'dass mit der Taufe das Gebet um Empfang des heiligen Geistes verbunden sein muss'. Eduard Freiherrn von der Goltz, *Das Gebet in der Alttestamentlichen Christenheit: Eine Geschichtliche Untersuchung* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1901), 3. Similarly, Eduard Meyer, *Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums*, Dritter Band, *Die Apostelgeschichte und die Anfänge des Christentums* (Berlin: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1923), 246. In 1913, Adalbert von Stromberg wrote, 'the baptism of Jesus mirrors the baptismal praxis of the church'; 'daß die Taufe Jesu die Taufpraxis der Gemeinde widerspiegeln'. A. von Stromberg, *Studien zur Theorie und Praxis der Taufe in der christlichen Kirche der ersten zwei Jahrhunderte* (Aalen: Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1973 [1913]), 135. Moreover: 'It is certain to be accepted that the communication of the Spirit in the church took place with prayer (bound with handlaying)'; 'Sicher ist anzunehmen, daß die Geistesmitteilung in der Gemeinde unter Gebet (verbunden mit Handauflegung) stattfand'. He footnotes Acts 8:15f.; 19:6; 9:17, Von Stromberg, *Studien*, 139. McCollough, PhD Dissertation, *Ritual Water Ritual Spirit* (Middlesex University, 2014), 214.

³³ 'L'on croirait assister, l'on assiste en effet à un baptême dans les premières communautés chrétiennes; après l'immersion baptismale, on pria pour obtenir l'effusion de l'Esprit (cf. ACT, VIII, 15-17). La description du baptême de Jésus se développe ainsi en prototype du baptême chrétien'. Alfred Loisy, *L'Évangile Selon Luc* (Paris: Émile Nourry, 1924), 142. McCollough, PhD Dissertation, 214.

In 1925, Joseph Coppens similarly argued, 'The Synoptics and the Gospel of Saint John confirm in a certain measure the existence of a postbaptismal sacramental rite'; 'Les synoptiques et l'évangile de saint Jean confirment dans une certaine mesure l'existence d'un rite sacramental postbaptismal'. Joseph Coppens, *L'Imposition des Mains et Les Rites Connexes dans le Nouveau Testament et dans L'Église Ancienne: Étude de Théologie Positive* (Paris: J. Gabalda, Éditeur, 1925), 210. McCollough, PhD Dissertation, 214.

Luke thus adds a small but important detail to his initiation type-scene: *persistent* prayer for Spirit experience. The implied reader adds this detail to his mental construct for initiation.³⁴

Luke's next Spirit reception scene is Pentecost, with its wind and fire and tongues. Regarding the climax of Peter's Pentecost sermon, Max Turner writes:

Only on the assumption that 2.38-39 provides something of a 'norm' adequately explains why Luke does not feel obliged to record the reception of the Spirit by the converts who are baptized in 2.41; that is, he could assume the reader would interpret references to people being baptized ... as occasions when they received the Spirit unless (as in 8.16) it is explicitly stated otherwise.³⁵

Sequential, cumulative reading confirms Turner and adds a key element to his interpretation. When the reader comes to Peter's 2:38 promise that if the crowd will repent and be baptised, they will receive the very same gift of the Spirit that they saw the 120 had received, the implied reader, having previously witnessed Jesus' baptism and prayer, and having received Jesus' teaching on persistent prayer to receive the Spirit, already has an expectation that prayer for the Spirit will follow immersion. Having progressed sequentially through the story, the implied reader will not now expect the Spirit to come in the water, but rather in the prayer that immediately follows the water. Both the water and the prayer for the Spirit are one liminal initiation process. There is no separation of Spirit reception from Christian initiation here. Spirit experience belongs integrally to the Christian ritual process. Yet, neither is there instantaneous reception of the Spirit at the moment of belief, for each of the 3,000, having believed Peter's preaching, and having made the decision to repent and be baptised, must wait their turn in the queue before they can actually be immersed and then receive the Spirit. Liminality is present – that ambiguous state of being betwixt and between, of being neither in nor out, of being in process.³⁶

Neither was this a corporate experience, as with the 120, but a series of individual ritual experiences. Luke does not show his reader the moment of Spirit reception for each of the 3,000. Luke's narrative camera fails to capture those thousands of individual events. All Luke says is that 3,000 were baptised. The implied reader knows, however, because Peter, the Spirit-baptised apostle, who stands with the eleven, promised it, that upon their repentance and baptism they would each receive the Spirit. Turner is right.

But, by what mechanism did the 3,000 receive the Spirit? The reader expects, based upon the previous story of Jesus' immersion, prayer, and Spirit experience, and upon Jesus' teaching on persistent prayer, that the 3,000 will pray persistently at their baptisms and receive the Spirit in association with the prayer – not the water. However, in not explicitly showing the Spirit reception

³⁴ Type-scene and entity representation are to be distinguished. A reader may have an entity representation (accumulated mental construct) of Luke's attitude towards the Romans, but this attitude may not be instantiated in a particular type-scene. It may be expressed in various ordinary, non-archetypal scenes, or speeches, or narrative comments.

³⁵ Max Turner, *Power from on High: The Spirit in Israel's Restoration and Witness in Luke-Acts*, JPT.S 9, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000 [1996]), 359. Cf. Lorenz Oberlinner, 'Das Wirken des Geistes und das Handeln der Menschen: Der Weg der Mission in der Apostelgeschichte', Philipp Müller, ed., *Seelsorge in der Kraft des Heiligen Geistes: Festschrift für Weihbischof Paul Wehrle* (Freiburg: Herder, 2005), 161-177; 164.

³⁶ On liminality, see Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1969), 95.

experiences of the 3,000, Luke left a narrative gap. The reader wonders whether the lacuna will be filled in later.

What then, does the implied reader now have in his mental construct for initiation and Spirit reception? The protocol is: belief in the kerygma, repentance, immersion, persistent prayer by the initiate, and Spirit reception. Luke will later explain that Spirit reception and baptism can, atypically, occur in reverse order, but here Luke uses multiple narrative devices to define the proper, standard initiation sequence. New believers now fill the role which Jesus had occupied in the first initiatory type-scene.

Dissociative Language-Speaking for All: Luke's Precise Focus on the Experience of Every New Initiate

In addition to the matter of liminality, the Pentecost story calls for further examination with respect to the nature of the Spirit reception experience. Here Luke focalises dissociative language-speaking repeatedly from multiple angles (an example of amplification). The narrator states initially that tongues speaking, that is, speaking in other languages, occurred.³⁷ Then the crowd moves toward this collective voice (τῆς φωνῆς ταύτης) of the disciples' language-speaking. Then the crowd asks three times about the language-speaking (Acts 2:7, 8, 12). Then some of the crowd mock the tongues – 'they are drunk'. After this flurry of action, Luke has Peter rise to answer the questions and mockery of the crowd – in discourse terms, the reader arrives at a didactic peak.

The verb for Peter's declarative response is ἀπεφθέγγατο, 'to express oneself orally, w. focus on sound rather than content, *speak out, declare* boldly or loudly (of the speech of a wise man ... but also of an oracle-giver, diviner, prophet, exorcist, and other inspired persons)'.³⁸ Luke uses the same verb of the initial Spirit-inspired language-speaking,³⁹ thus explicitly linking Peter's sermon to the authority of the Spirit.⁴⁰ Peter's fresh Spirit experience, his stance 'with the eleven',⁴¹ and his oracular declaration by the Spirit, unequivocally present him, in this moment, as a narrative spokesperson delivering the ideological viewpoint of the implied author.

Peter informs the crowd that, 'this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel' (Acts 2:16). The crowd asks and Peter answers. The referent of discourse between Peter and the crowd is neither wind nor fire, rather it is the inebriated language-speaking. In psychological terms, they were

³⁷ We cannot here engage the debate on whether the miracle was oral or aural, but simply note, following Craig Keener, that the language speaking is said to have occurred (2:4) before any crowd was present to understand the languages. I argue at length that Luke presents the 'tongues speaking' as an oral miracle and as genuine languages, McCollough, *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*, 111-112. Cf. Craig Keener, *Acts Volume 1* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 823.

³⁸ Walter Bauer, rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker, et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 125.

³⁹ καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν ἅπαντες πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ ἤρξαντο λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις καθὼς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐδίδου ἀποφθέγγεσθαι αὐτοῖς.

⁴⁰ ἀποφθέγγεσθαι is employed only once more in the New Testament when Paul declares 'true and rational words' before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 26:25). But, φθέγγεσθαι occurs in 4:18 when the Peter and John are forbidden to 'speak or teach in the name of Jesus'.

⁴¹ Σταθεὶς δὲ ὁ Πέτρος σὺν τοῖς ἑνδεκά ἐπῆρεν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀπεφθέγγατο αὐτοῖς (Acts 2:14a).

dissociating. In good ‘this is that’ style,⁴² Peter identifies the inebriated (dissociative) language-speaking as the prophetic outpouring of the Spirit promised in the Scriptures of Israel. Having equated the inebriated language-speaking experience with the foretold experience of the Spirit, Luke then presents the converse. Peter announces that Jesus has received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and ‘poured out this which you even see and hear’ (Acts 2:33b).⁴³

What then did they see and hear? Luke has presented the crowd as inquisitive, yet the crowd never asks about the wind or fire that had been narrated previously. All the crowd asks about is the language-speaking. The implied reader knows that what they saw and heard was what they had been asking about – seemingly inebriated language-speech – the discourse referent. Hence Luke’s second equation: The experience of the promised Spirit is inebriated language-speaking.

Luke, again using amplification (and functional redundancy), has constructed two narrative equations and moves on to a third. In response to the crowd’s appeal to Peter and the rest of the apostles⁴⁴ for help – ‘What should we do?’ – Peter instructs them:

Repent, he says, and let each of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children and to all those who are far away, as many as the Lord our God should call. (Acts 2:38-39)

⁴² This is not a claim that Luke knew anything about peshet or Qumran. It is simply the observation that Luke’s interpretive practice of identifying a current event with a biblical prophetic text was not unusual for his time. As Markus Bockmuehl proposes, albeit tentatively, the Qumran community may have been influenced by the interpretive practices of Alexandrian Hellenistic Jewry (‘The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Origins of Biblical Commentary’ in Ruth A. Clements and Daniel R. Schwartz, eds., *Text, Thought, and Practice in Qumran and Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 3-29; 25). Pieter B. Hartog expands upon Bockmuehl’s article at monograph length, arguing that we should, ‘conceive of the Pesharim as syncretistic entities bringing together elements from a wide range of other interpretative traditions’, including Alexandria and Mesopotamia (*Peshet and Hypomnema: A Comparison of Two Commentary Traditions from the Hellenistic-Roman Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 16. If Bockmuehl and Hartog are correct, then Luke’s ‘this is that’ formulation reflects the interpretive milieu of his time.

⁴³ James Dunn, while denying any indexicality for tongues-speaking, acknowledges that Luke holds a ‘rather crude concept of Spirit as almost identical with glossolalic and prophetic inspiration’, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1975), 122.

Gonzalo Haya-Prats also recognises the link, but denies its significance: ‘there is a certain interchangeability between the Holy Spirit and its charismatic manifestation: ‘this that we both see and hear.’ This might lead one to believe that the gift of the Holy Spirit can be reduced to the charisma of glossolalia or of prophecy. Such a minimalist interpretation would, at the very least, contradict the importance that the author attributes to the Pentecostal episode.’ Gonzalo Haya-Prats, trans. Scott A. Ellington, ed. Paul Elbert. *Empowered Believers: The Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011 [French version, *L’Esprit, Force de l’Église: Sa nature et son activité d’après les Actes des Apôtres*, 1975]), 52, cf.106.

⁴⁴ Several commentators have observed the narratively significant point that, since the crowd asks all the apostles, and Peter responds, therefore Peter’s response is representative of all the apostles and thus authoritative. So, Richard F. Zehnle, *Peter’s Pentecost Discourse: Tradition and Lukan Reinterpretation in Peter’s Speeches of Acts 2 and 3*, SBLMS 15 (New York: Abingdon Press, 1971), 36. Otto Glombitza, ‘Der Schluss der Petrusrede Acta 2:36-40: Ein Beitrag zum Problem der Predigten in Acta’, *ZNW* 52, 1-2 (January 1, 1961), 115-118; 117. Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), 183.

If Turner is right that Peter's instructions function normatively, and the narrative analysis employed heretofore confirms that he is, then the experiential nature of the Spirit reception promised by Peter is also normative. Here I previously failed to grapple with the implications of Luke's argument and denied that it was prescriptive. However, in this third equation, the gift of the Spirit, already defined as inebriated language-speaking, is rendered as the promise in perpetuity; Luke locks dissociative language-speaking into his initiation ritual.

That is, Peter has argued:

1. The dissociative language-speaking experience is the Scripture foretold prophetic Spirit experience (2:16)
2. The promise of the Holy Spirit, spoken of by Jesus, given by the Father, is the dissociative language-speaking experience (2:33)
3. The gift of the Spirit/the Promise is for all who repent and are baptised, both now and in the future, in Jerusalem and far away, for all whom God should call (2:38-39).

Therefore, as Hans Windisch stated in 1908:

When Peter at Pentecost promises all repentant the gift of the Holy Spirit, they should all, therefore, themselves experience what they just then from the disciples had heard and seen: glossolalia and witness-speaking 2:33, 38 cf. 4:31.⁴⁵

However, I previously argued that:

Luke has not explicitly excluded other possible manifestations (or non-manifestations) of the Spirit. This leaves the narrative door open for Luke to later suggest that the Spirit could manifest his arrival some other way, or even in no visible manner at all'.⁴⁶

I further argued that just as Luke later modified the ritual sequence of Acts 2:38, so too, he could modify 'the expectations generated by Acts 2:16, 33, 38-39.'⁴⁷

But, what I did not consider is that no narrative device requires the Acts 2:38 sequence of repentance, baptism and Spirit reception to always occur in that specific, precise order. So, while Luke does emphasise the sequence, i.e. it is uttered by a normative spokesperson at a critical point in the storyline and is consequently a programmatic statement, he does not require that the sequence will forever be the same. As discussed in the methodology section, normativity in Luke is finely graded. Here with regard to sequence we have emphasis on 'the way things are done' without exclusion of other possible sequences. The later narrative will demonstrate that this standard structure is flexible.

Yet, Luke's argument that the promised Spirit experience is the dissociative language experience, and the promised Spirit experience is for all, everywhere and in perpetuity, whom God should call,

⁴⁵ 'Wenn Petrus zu Pfingsten allen Bußfertigen die Gabe des heiligen Geistes verheißt, so sollen sie alle an sich erfahren, was sie soeben von den Jüngern gehört und gesehen haben: Glossolalie und Zeugenreden 2 33.38 vgl. 4 31', Hans Windisch, *Taufe und Sünde im ältesten Christentum bis auf Origenes: Ein Beitrag zur altchristlichen Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, Paul Siebeck, 1908), 93.

⁴⁶ McCollough, *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*, 125.

⁴⁷ 122.

does have a locking mechanism to it. All receive the Promise. The Promise is the language experience. All, therefore, receive the language experience. Luke explicitly locked languages into his conception of Spirit reception. He need not, therefore, explicitly include or exclude other possibilities, of which there could be an infinite number. No narrative door is left open.

Going forward in the narrative, to receive ‘the Promise’, the gift of the Spirit, is to dissociate and speak in languages. There is no discourse need for Luke to repeat this extensive definition of Spirit reception. In subsequent scenes, Luke will address other concerns. Thus, the foundational type-scene of Jesus’ immersion, prayer, Spirit experience, and divine voice has been elaborated upon, but not significantly altered. The divine voice is now speaking, not from above the initiates, but from within them.

From a social anthropological perspective, one might speak etically of a phenomenological cluster of glossolalia, altered states of consciousness (ASCs), and spirit-possession, understood emically by the Early Christian Sect as Holy Spirit reception.

Samaria: Focusing on the ‘Narrator Opinion’

As to the aforementioned matter of narrative gap-filling, the next Lukan story in which *new* initiates receive the Spirit is Samaria (Acts 8).⁴⁸ Laying on of hands is prominent here, and there are several responses among interpreters. Bovon argues that baptism is a sign of forgiveness and calling upon Jesus’ name, handlaying a sign of giving the Spirit. He states, ‘Luke affirms that the gift of the Spirit is related to prayer and the imposition of hands’ and cites Acts 8:15; 17; 18-20; 19:6.⁴⁹ But this linkage troubles Avemarie and he cannot decide:

Is the Spirit-mediating handlaying thus for him [Luke] a rite sui generis, which only then comes up when the mediation of the Spirit does not come about through other ways, or is it a natural component of the Christian initiation ritual?⁵⁰

C. K. Barret is adamant that, despite appearances, handlaying is not normative:

Luke’s fundamental conviction, which is that the Spirit does not respond to certain stimuli, such as the laying on of hands, more or less in the manner of Pavlov’s dog, but is given solely *ubi et quando visum est Deo*. It is God, not magicians or even apostles, who gives his own Spirit.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Acts 4 deals with initiated community members having a renewal of their liminal Spirit experience in an intensification ritual.

⁴⁹ Bovon, *Luke the Theologian*, 268-269.

⁵⁰ ‘Ist die geistvermittelnde Handauflegung also für ihn ein Ritus sui generis, der nur dann zur Taufe hinzutritt, wenn die Geistvermittlung nicht auf anderem Wege zustande kommt, oder ist sie ein selbstverständlich Bestandteil des christlichen Initiationsrituals?’ *Die Taufersählungen der Apostelgeschichte*, 166-167.

⁵¹ C. K. Barrett, ‘Light on the Holy Spirit From Simon Magus (Acts 8,4-25)’, J. Kremer, ed., *Les Actes des Apôtres: Traditions, rédaction, théologie* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1979), 281-295. Similarly, Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1998), 288; Daniel Marguerat, trans. Ken McKinney, et al., *The First Christian Historian: Writing the ‘Acts of the Apostles’* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 127.

Avemarie's uncertainty and Barrett's emotional appeal notwithstanding, here we find Luke again employing redundant focalisation – three times he orients the reader towards human hands as a means of imparting the Spirit. First, he narrates that the apostles prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Spirit (8:15), that the apostles were laying hands upon them and that they were receiving the Spirit (8:17). Second and third, Luke presents the procedure from the perspective of a character:

but Simon, having perceived (Ἰδὼν) that through the laying on of the hands of the apostles the Spirit was given (δίδοται), offered (προσήνεγκεν) them money saying, 'give also to me (δοῦτε καὶ μοι) this authority that upon whomever I should lay hands he might receive the Holy Spirit' (8:18-19).⁵²

Normally, the present passive δίδοται, 'is given', would take the time of its matrix verb, Ἰδὼν (which in turn is subordinate to προσήνεγκεν), and be rendered, 'was given'. However, Stephen H. Levinsohn notes:

When ὅτι occurs as a *complementizer*, this indicates that the propositional content of the complement is not the author's description of a state of affairs, but rather the representation of a character's thought or inference about that state of affairs. One of the reasons for choosing ὅτι is when what is perceived relates back to and interprets a previous utterance.⁵³

By 'representation', Levinsohn means that it is not a direct quote. He observes regarding the function of ὅτι:

Certain languages have 'an explicit linguistic indicator of interpretive use' whose function is to signal that the utterance concerned is not a simple report of what was said on a particular occasion, but rather is an interpretation or representation of an utterance or thought which it resembles.⁵⁴

Following Levinsohn, the ὅτι clause presents the event, not as a direct quote from Simon, but as a representation of what Simon thought/saw and, in doing so, links his perception back to, and reinforces, Luke's immediately previous statements that the apostles were laying hands on people and they were receiving the Spirit. This is redundant focalisation of handlaying.

Drawing upon Levinsohn, an alternative translation would recognise ὅτι as signalling the representation of Simon's thinking. Consequently, δίδοται, being the main verb of an independent thought, would be rendered 'is given'.

⁵² Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Σίμων ὅτι διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων δίδοται τὸ πνεῦμα[†], προσήνεγκεν αὐτοῖς χρήματα ἰλέγων· δότε καὶ μοι τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην ἵνα ὅ ἂν ἐπιθῶ[‡] τὰς χεῖρας λαμβάνῃ πνεῦμα ἅγιον.

⁵³ Stephen H. Levinsohn, 'Is ὅτι an Interpretive Use Marker?' in Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, eds., *The Linguist as Pedagogue: Trends in the Teaching and Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 161-180; 179-180.

⁵⁴ Levinsohn, 'Is ὅτι an Interpretive Use Marker?', 163.

But Simon, having perceived – through the laying on of the hands of the apostles the Spirit is given – offered money...

Under this reading, Simon recognises what the narrator just narrated. Simon's perception is aligned with the narrator's presentation.

However, under a reading not influenced by Levinsohn, we then have an authorial side comment. Simon sees, but the narrator speaks, informing the reader of the state of affairs which Simon came to recognise.⁵⁵ In this case, too, the narrative aside aligns with what was previously narrated.

Ute Eisen, though, makes a narratological case that Simon's perception is *not* aligned with the narrator's opinion by contrasting what is called 'free indirect discourse' with direct speech. Independent of Levinsohn's work, Eisen identifies the ὅτι clause as free indirect style or '*erlebte Rede*'.⁵⁶ Free indirect style/speech/discourse is a widely discussed phenomenon in modern literature. Michael Toolan explains that it is 'free' because it lacks an introductory 'framing' clause which tells who is thinking or speaking (he thought/said). It is 'indirect' because it is a combination of a character's speech or thought with the perspective of the narrator. But, it always uses the tense of the narrator.⁵⁷ Eisen understands it similarly, though she emphasises, not the lack of identification of the speaker, but the lack of *verbum dicendi*, or words of speaking. She points out it is a combination of direct and indirect speech, an 'in-between form'.⁵⁸ So, for example (to borrow a turn of phrase from Käte Hamburger⁵⁹):

- I said, 'Tomorrow is Christmas!' (direct speech)
- He said tomorrow was Christmas! (indirect speech)
- He had been so busy. Tomorrow was Christmas! (Free Indirect Discourse)

Eisen's identification of the ὅτι clause as *erlebte Rede* could be challenged by noting first that there is a framing clause, 'Simon, having perceived' (Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Σίμων). Though, as under Eisen's paradigm, there is no verb of speaking. Moreover, Luke uses *δίδοται*, which is present passive, not imperfect like the tense of the narrator in the previous verse (τότε ἔπετίθεσαν τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐλάμβανον πνεῦμα ἅγιον).

However, Levinsohn's discourse analysis makes clear that we are *not* dealing with what Toolan calls 'Direct Thought' – 'the exact words a character has formulated in thought, their precise

⁵⁵ On authorial side comments, see Steven M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts*, JSNT.S 72 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, JSOT Press, 1992), 36.

⁵⁶ Eisen, *Die Poetik der Apostelgeschichte* 115-117.

⁵⁷ Michael J. Toolan, *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction* Second Edition (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 120-121. Cf. Monika Fludernik: 'Free indirect discourse is called 'free' because the introductory verbs of saying (He claimed that...) are dispensed with; 'indirect' because the utterances represented are referentially aligned and tenses shifted in accordance with the surrounding narrative discourse.' Monika Fludernik, trans., Patricia Häusler-Greenfield and Monika Fludernik, *An Introduction to Narratology* (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 67

⁵⁸ 'eine Zwischenform zwischen direkter und indirekter Rede'. Eisen, *Die Poetik der Apostelgeschichte* 115.

⁵⁹ Käte Hamburger, *Die Logik der Dichtung* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1957), 33-34.

mental utterance'.⁶⁰ The ὅτι indicates resemblance, interpretation, representation. Rather, we have some form of Toolan's Indirect Speech or Indirect Thought, which 'offers the sense but not the precise grammar or wording of a character's thought'.⁶¹ We have a combination of narrator involvement and character utterance – as Eisen puts it, 'eine Zwischenform'.

Whether it is precisely free indirect discourse, or simply indirect discourse, Eisen's argument must be considered. For her, the implication of understanding the ὅτι clause as free indirect speech is that it makes the clause represent the perspective of the character, not of the narrator. In this, she is in agreement with Levinsohn. However, she objects to viewing Simon's perspective presented in the ὅτι clause as authoritative because of Simon's direct speech (λέγων· δότε καὶμοὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην):

In the scene of the encounter of Peter and John with Simon Magus, Simon's observation is not narrator opinion (Acts 8:15-24). Much more, the direct speech of Simon betrays his magical misunderstanding (Acts 8:19).⁶²

However, *pace* Eisen, an imperfect character is perfectly capable of expressing the implied author's ideology. For example, at Jesus' trial, Pilate says, 'I found no reason for death in him' (Luke 23:22). Pilate is no hero, but his words encapsulate the ideology of the implied author. This ability of a villainous character to represent the mind of the author means that even if an author renders a character's perspective, either with indirect discourse, or, with a ὅτι clause, or with both, that does not automatically mean the character's thoughts are wrong. This is especially so when one considers Levinsohn's point that the ὅτι clause refers back to the immediately preceding narration.

Moreover, even if we were to reject both Eisen's understanding of Acts 8:18 as containing free indirect discourse, and hence, the thoughts of the character, and Levinsohn's discourse analysis that the ὅτι clause represents the thoughts of the character, we would still be left with a case of an authorial aside about what Simon perceived (*viz.* that the Spirit was given in a certain way). That narrative aside would align with the immediately previous narration about hands being laid upon people and the people receiving the Spirit. Nevertheless, we find no reason to reject either Eisen's point about indirect discourse or Levinsohn's discourse analysis conclusion that we are dealing with a representation of a character's thoughts.

However, we note that Simon's observation is not qualified with some statement as, 'Simon, *having supposed* – the Spirit is given by the laying on of apostolic hands', or 'Simon, *having incorrectly assumed* – the Spirit is given by the laying on of apostolic hands'. Luke is very willing to supply such a qualification if needed:

⁶⁰ Toolan, *Narrative*, 120.

⁶¹ Toolan, *Narrative*, 120.

⁶² 'In der Szene der Begegnung von Petrus und Johannes mit Simon Magus ist Simons Beobachtung ... nicht Erzählermeinung (Act 8,15-24). Vielmehr verrät die direkte Rede des Simon sein magisches Missverständnis (Act 8,19)'. Eisen, *Die Poetik der Apostelgeschichte*, 116-117. Translation from McCollough, *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*, 141. Similarly, K. Haacker, 'Einige Fälle von "Erlebter rede" im Neuen Testament' *Novum Testamentum* Vol. 12, Fasc. 1 (Jan., 1970), 70-77; 74; Robert C. Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts, A Literary Interpretation*, Vol. 2, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 106; Ju Hur, *A Dynamic Reading of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts* (London: T & T Clark, 2004; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, JSNT.S 211, 2001), 136.

- 1) '[the sailors], having presumed (δόξαντες) they had achieved their purpose' (Acts 27:13)
- 2) '[the jailor], supposing (νομίζων) the prisoners had escaped' (16:27)
- 3) [Paul and his companions go to the river where] 'we were supposing (ἐνομίζομεν) prayer to be' (16:13).
- 4) 'and having stoned Paul, they were dragging him out of the city, supposing (νομίζοντες) him to have died' (Acts 14:19)
- 5) 'but having supposed (νομίσαντες) him to be in the caravan, they went a day's journey' (Luke 2:44)

No, Luke presents Simon having perceived (Ἰδὼν δὲ ὁ Σίμων) that the procedure in use by the apostles was handlaying. In an unqualified manner, Luke states that Simon saw how the apostles transferred the Spirit. Simon's follow on request in verse 19 for τὴν ἐξουσίαν ταύτην that he might impart the Spirit with his hands, represents further focalisation of handlaying, not as a rite with magic power in itself, but as a means of expressing tangible authority, an authority which Simon is eager to purchase. Peter's rebuke (8:20-21) does not correct a misunderstanding about the efficacy of apostolic authority, but about the ability of Simon to crassly buy it. Bovon is, therefore, correct.

Furthermore, Luke does not provide a caveat such as, 'on this unique occasion' or 'uniquely here in Samaria'. On the contrary, Luke combines redundant focalisation of the handlaying rite with normative, exemplar characters. Peter and John, representing the authority and praxis of Jerusalem, demonstrate for the implied reader the impartation method in use – the ritual practice sanctioned by the implied author, the *Erzählermeinung*.

In this way, Luke fills in the narrative gap from Acts 2. Now the reader knows how the 3,000 received the Spirit. They repented, were immersed, prayed persistently, received prayer from apostles, and had apostolic hands laid upon them. Thus, Luke has added yet more detail to the now familiar type-scene, and the implied reader has added new information to his composite picture of Early Christian initiation. In addition to personally praying for the Spirit, the initiate must allow the community leaders to pray and lay hands upon him to receive the Spirit. Thus the mental construct for initiation so far is: belief in the kerygma, repentance, immersion, persistent prayer for the Spirit by the initiate, prayer and handlaying by apostles to impart the Spirit, inebriated language-speaking understood as Spirit reception.

Luke presents baptism as a fixed, liturgical ritual which lower level leaders may administer, but portrays Spirit impartation as a flexible, performative ritual which high level leaders dispense as they, prayerfully, see fit. However, Daniel Marguerat argues that the prayer which accompanied the handlaying necessarily denies 'resident power' to the apostles:

The prayer preliminary to the imposition of hands is important, because it shows that Peter and John did not enjoy resident power at their disposal. Praying in the place of dependence on God's power, they seek to act, while maintaining the inviolable liberty of the Spirit.⁶³

⁶³ 'La prière préliminaire à l'imposition des mains est importante, car elle montre que Pierre et Jean ne jouissent pas d'un pouvoir à demeure. Prier les place en dépendance du pouvoir de Dieu, qu'ils sollicitent d'agir, tout en maintenant

But, Marguerat has not considered the entire Luke-Acts narrative, where Jesus and Peter both demonstrate resident power, e.g., when a woman touches Jesus' garment virtue flows out (Luke 8:46); power is present for Jesus to heal (Luke 5:17); power goes out from Jesus (Luke 6:19); Peter's shadow is thought to heal (Acts 5:15-16). The question is not either/or. The narrative allows the apostles to be in prayerful harmony with God, yet remain powerful human agents mediating the Spirit with their own hands.

Damascus: Liminality and a Caveat

Next is the story of Saul's 'conversion'.⁶⁴ In the first iteration of the story (9:1-19), after three days of Saul, blinded and fasting, Jesus assures Ananias that the erstwhile persecutor is now safe to initiate, 'for behold, he is praying' (9:11c). The precise moment of repentance is not identified, but it has happened.

Luke then focalises the healing of Saul's eyes through Ananias' hands, rather than Saul's Spirit reception, though the latter is not omitted. It is mediated by Ananias, according to his own assertion, 'Jesus sent me so that you ... may be filled with the Holy Spirit' (9:17c). Saul is then baptised, indicating that Saul's Spirit reception preceded his baptism,⁶⁵ and finally partakes of food. Thus, there is process in Saul's conversion, there is an intermediate period – liminality.

Moreover, Luke adds a caveat to the reader's mental construct for initiation – a non-apostle appropriately empowered by Jesus may administer the Spirit ad hoc, in the moment, even before baptism. Yet the elements of the familiar type-scene remain in Luke's story. Thus, while the handlaying gesture and immersion continue to be employed, Luke emphasises power from Jesus within the ritual administrator, rather than power in a rite.

Caesarea: Power in the Person and Performance per Pentecost

But, where then is the liminality in the Cornelius story? The Spirit comes (Acts 10:43-44) precisely at the moment of belief! This is true, but what follows? Water baptism. Luke does not neglect the necessary water ritual. The type-scene is still there. However, the mode of the Spirit's

l'inviolable liberté de son Esprit', Daniel Marguerat, *Les Actes des Apôtres (1-12)*, CNTDS (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2007), 296 ; translation from *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*, 151.

⁶⁴ It is considered next because, in the standard NA28 text, the Ethiopian eunuch does not receive the Spirit at his baptism. However, alternate mss read: 'the Holy Spirit fell on the eunuch, and an angel of the Lord caught away Philip....' Cf. *Ritual Water, Ritual Spirit*, 164-166 for extensive discussion.

⁶⁵ In Saul's second recounting of his experience (22:10), which will not be discussed in the main text due to adherence to sequential reading, Saul explains that Jesus identified himself to him, and then he responds by asking, 'what should I do, Lord?' In this statement, Saul is submitting himself to obey the one he formerly had persecuted. He knows Jesus is raised from the dead and he calls him Lord (τί ποιήσω, κύριε;). According to the story logic, Saul has repented and become of follower of Jesus. Thus, Luke ultimately pinpoints the moment of 'conversion'. Of course, Ananias still goes through the initiatory rituals (22:16), water baptism and calling upon the name of the Lord. Nevertheless, the reader knows that Saul has already submitted to Jesus as Lord and has already received the Spirit through Ananias' initial handlaying.

Thus, there exists a liminal period in Saul's conversion – repentance on the road to Damascus, but Spirit and baptismal initiation three days later in the city.⁶⁵ Here Luke deftly identifies what is essential: not the ritual form, but the experiential reality. Yet, the ritual form is not to be dispensed with, it too is necessary for acceptance into the community of Jesus' followers. The seminal discussion of the three stories of Saul's conversion is Ronald D. Witherup, 'Functional Redundancy in the Acts of the Apostles: A Case Study', *JSNT* 48 (1992), 67-86.

coming sheds light upon initiation and ritual experience in Luke's presentation of the early Christian movement.

First, the very Gentiles who initially honoured Peter as their guest, interrupted his speech with outbursts of language-speaking. That is not normal behaviour, it is dissociative. Moreover, Luke gives no list of persons who understood the languages – we have unrecognised language-speaking. Second, through a narrative aside the reader learns that the leaders of his community knew that initiates had received the Spirit because the leaders heard them speaking with languages and magnifying God (Acts 10:45-46). Thus, for Luke, when no one present recognises the languages spoken, the Spirit reception experience has to have an intelligible component (verbal or non-verbal, the text does not specify) that verifies the language-speaking as directed Godward.

Third, the main community leader in the story so far, Peter, validated the new initiates as having received the Spirit by comparing their Spirit experience to the Spirit experience of the apostolic leadership on the Day of Pentecost. Four times Peter equated the initiates' experience with that of the apostles (Acts 10:47; 11:15, 17; 15:8). This redundancy is not otiose, it functions to establish the initial Spirit experience of the group's founders as the archetype of all new initiatory Spirit experiences and instructs those conducting initiation to initiate according to the template of Pentecost. Significantly, the liminal transition from Gentile Godfearers to full-fledged members of God's people was sealed with table fellowship (Acts 10:48; 11:3). In the final shared meal vis-à-vis the initial proclamation of the kerygma, Luke provides bookends to his initiation ritual.

The implied reader, having previously read Peter's Acts 2:38 sequence of baptism and Spirit reception, far from concluding that Luke poorly edited his sources, integrates the Cornelius sequence into the initiatory structure previously stipulated by Luke. Drawing upon the extensive emphasis on handlaying power in the immediately previous Samaritan and Saul stories, and the leitmotif of emanating power, viz. the power/aura associated with Jesus in Luke 5:17 ('power of the Lord was present for him to heal'⁶⁶); 6:19 ('power from him was going out and healing all'⁶⁷); 8:46 ('I perceived power having gone out from me'⁶⁸); and with Peter in Acts 5:15 (viz. his powerful shadow), the implied reader understands that the power upon an apostle may be so great that people receive the Spirit through his mere presence and word even without baptism or handlaying. At the same time, this spontaneous outbreak of the Spirit can be viewed in the text (Acts 11:17) as God sovereignly acting, interrupting Peter.

That a variant initiatory possibility exists, viz., 'spontaneous impartation' from an apostle's inner power, does not negate the format already established by Luke as standard through multiple literary devices in the earlier Pentecost story. Luke emphasises power within the ritual administrator, not within the rite. In Luke's world, power flows from a person in whom Christ has placed power, not from a ritual in which Christ has placed power.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ ἡ καὶ δύναμις κυρίου ἦν εἰς τὸ ἰᾶσθαι αὐτόν.

⁶⁷ καὶ πᾶς ὁ ὄχλος ἐζήτουν ἄπτεσθαι αὐτοῦ, ὅτι δύναμις παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐξήρχετο καὶ ἰᾶτο πάντα.

⁶⁸ ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· ἦψατό μου τις, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔγνωνα δύναμιν ἐξεληλυθυῖαν ἀπ' ἐμοῦ.

⁶⁹ Cf. Bovon, 'Luke does not say that the laying on of hands transmits the Holy Spirit *ex opere operato*.' *Luke the Theologian*, 269. 'the imposition of hands is more than a prayer or a symbol of the act of God in Zwingli's sense. Luke thinks – whether we call it naïve or *frühkatholisch* – that God has entrusted a power to God's people....' *Luke the Theologian*, 270.

Ephesus: The Last Type-Scene

Finally, then, the reader comes to the last Spirit reception type-scene in Luke-Acts, the story of the Ephesian disciples. Regardless of how one defines them,⁷⁰ liminality is present in the ritual process. They believe Paul's instructions about Jesus, then they are baptised, then Paul lays hands upon them, and then they receive the Spirit. All of this takes time. Paul did not baptise them all at once, nor did he lay hands upon them all at once, he had to do each ritual act separately for each individual. To make the point clear, Luke does not present a non-individuated corporate experience of the Spirit, rather, he presents individual reception experiences in a liminal ritual process.

Paul embodies the ecclesial ideology of the implied author.⁷¹ Paul demonstrates the standard ritual process. Every detail of the full type-scene for initiation is not repeated, for the reader already knows that apostles and initiates pray. The implied reader maintains all the data in his progressively accumulated mental construct for initiation. In the Ephesus story, Luke delimited the ritual structure: repentance (already accomplished with John's baptism) belief in Jesus as Messiah, baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus, handlaying, Spirit reception manifested in language-speech with a control element (i.e., something intelligible), in this case, prophecy.⁷²

Solving for Structure and Diversity: Spirit Impartation as Performative Ritual

Risto Uro, in discussing Jesus' healing practices, employs a distinction drawn by anthropologists between the fixed, routinized rituals conducted by someone like a priest in a temple, and those 'rituals' conducted by a 'shaman'.⁷³ The latter are 'performance-centred', while the former are 'liturgy-centred'.⁷⁴ In contrast to liturgy-centred ritual, performance-centred ritual displays 'more improvisation and selection from a wide range of possible scenarios'.⁷⁵ Uro cites Jane Atkinson's description of the Wana shaman's performance:

As a performance-centred ritual, a *mabolong* cannot be described or analysed as a preordained progression of delineated steps to which ritual practitioners and

⁷⁰ They were disciples of John, members of what Luke viewed as the people of God, but not yet members of the Christian community.

⁷¹ Cf. William Kurz on Paul's Miletus speech in 20:17-38, 'Narrative Models for Imitation in Luke-Acts' *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honour of Abraham Malherbe*, Eds., David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress Press, 1990), 171-189; 175.

⁷² Cf. Bovon, 'Normally, water baptism in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and the imposition of hands for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit form two moments of one ceremony. Acts 19:5-6 reflects the general rule....' *Luke the Theologian*, 269.

⁷³ The term, 'shaman', is here used broadly as descriptive of a ritual practitioner who mediates between humans and the 'spirit-world' for the benefit of the humans. The great diversity among such ritual practitioners the world over is recognised.

⁷⁴ Risto Uro, *Ritual and Christian Beginnings: A Socio-Cognitive Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 108.

⁷⁵ 108.

congregants collectively conform. It is rather a repertoire of ritual actions available to performers acting independently in the ritual arena'.⁷⁶

This performance vs. liturgy dichotomy 'parallels a distinction between shamanistic and priestly ritual, or between charismatic and routinized religious practice'.⁷⁷

Uro's distinction applies to Christian initiation. We have seen in the stories of Samaria, Damascus, Caesarea, and Ephesus, potent individuals imparting the Spirit, sometimes through handlaying, sometimes through a spontaneous outburst of power in the style of Jesus of Nazareth. While water immersion remains a necessary rite, for Luke, supernatural power does not reside within it, but rather in powerful representatives of the Christian community. Jesus' apostles need not be labelled 'shamen', but their Spirit-impartation praxis does tend toward the performative. The baptising activity of apostles and their subordinates, on the other hand, is better glossed as liturgical ritual.

The Cardinal Initiation Rite? Baptism vis-à-vis Spirit Possession

Uro writes, 'It would be probably generalizing too much to argue that the whole of primitive Christianity was a possession cult... but it certainly hosted groups that can be called such'.⁷⁸ However, *pace* Uro, the foregoing narratological exegesis of Luke-Acts demonstrates that, at least with respect to Christian initiation, and as far as Luke's perspective can be said to reflect the entire Jesus movement, spirit-possession, with accompanying altered states of consciousness (ASCs), was indeed a universal characteristic of the Early Christian Sect.

Currently, ritual scholars view baptism as the central primitive Christian initiatory rite. István Czachesz writes of baptism as, 'the initiation ritual par excellence of the movement'.⁷⁹ Richard E. DeMaris writes that Christian baptism was distinct from the Jewish *mikveh* and the Roman bath, not only because it was a 'boundary-crossing rite,' but because of 'its ability to mediate the Holy Spirit, or, in social-scientific terms, to induce an altered state of consciousness'.⁸⁰

However, I have shown that for Luke, post-baptismal prayer and handlaying, employed to impart/induce the Spirit reception/possession/ASC glossolalia cluster, is the cardinal initiation ritual (in a performative, not liturgical, sense) and water baptism, while still important, did *not* mediate spirit possession and is consequently not the primary ritual in Early Christian Sect initiation.

⁷⁶ Uro 108, Jane Monnig Atkinson, *The Art and Politics of Wana Shamanism* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, Oxford: University of California Press, 1989), 15.

⁷⁷ 15.

⁷⁸ Uro, *Ritual and Christian Beginnings*, 119.

⁷⁹ István Czachesz, 'Ritual and Transmission' in Risto Uro, et. al, *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Ritual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 122. Similarly, Uro, 164.

⁸⁰ Richard E. DeMaris, 'Water Ritual' in Risto Uro, et. al, *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Ritual* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 391-408; 398-399.

Shamanic vs. Early Catholic: An Indicator that Luke Reflects a Universal and Early Christian Practice

How universal, then, is Luke's depiction of Christian initiation? Following Richard Bauckham, we can view Luke as writing, not for an isolated local community, but for Christians generally.⁸¹ That Luke reflects universal early Christian practice is also indicated by the fact that Luke does not argue for his praxis against other practices. That is, he does not say, 'we do this, but they do that'.

Moreover, consider the Lukan liturgical/performative combination, which is not *frühkatholisch*, but, with verisimilitude, suggestive of an earlier time before the routinization of charisma placed power in rites rather than in persons. That is, the relationship between charisma and gesture can be viewed as a continuum. Initially, powerful individuals expressed their charisma by performing wondrous deeds. Their personal charisma often manifested through their mere bodily presence (including shadows), or verbal commands, as well as typical gestures, such as handlaying or grasping by the hand. Gradually, charisma shifted towards the gesture end of the spectrum until an authorised (vs. powerful) person expressed ecclesial (vs. personal) authority through ritual acts. The power then was vested in the rites and in the ecclesial structure that validated both the ritual administrator and the sacred rituals.

This shift can be illustrated from ca. 200 in Tertullian's *On Baptism*, chapter 4: 'for at once the Spirit comes down from heaven and stays upon the waters, sanctifying them from within himself, and when thus sanctified they absorb the power of sanctifying'.⁸² Here, the supernatural power is not in a person, but in the water. Neither does Tertullian require an especially powerful individual to perform the handlaying act by which the Spirit is actually conveyed, though he does expect the imposition to be by 'holy hands' (chapter 8).

That Luke is shamanistic rather than early catholic is a strong indicator that Luke's material, regardless of when Luke finally published, reflects early Christian practice, because 1) it differs from later Christian belief that located power in rites themselves, 2) it is closer to the gospel's shamanic picture of Jesus as a healer/exorcist/miracle worker/communicator with angelic spirits,⁸³ 3) it is closer to Paul's shamanic self-depiction in his letters, viz. he is a signs-and-wonders miracle worker, glossolalist, and ecstatic visionary.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Richard Bauckham, 'For Whom Were Gospels Written?' in Richard Bauckham, ed., *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (Grand Rapids, MI/Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 9-48.

⁸² Tertullian, *On Baptism* translated by Canon Ernest Evans, 1964, and published by SPCK. See also Robin M. Jensen, *Baptismal Imagery in Early Christianity: Ritual, Visual, and Theological Dimensions* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012). For discussion of the diversity within Christianity see, Maxwell E. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: the Liturgical Press, 1999).

⁸³ Cf. John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 315, 336-337.

⁸⁴ Cf. John Ashton, *The Religion of Paul the Apostle* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000). Colleen Shantz, *Paul in Ecstasy: The Neurobiology of the Apostle's Life and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). Guy Williams, *The Spirit World in the Letters of Paul the Apostle: A Critical Examination of the Role of Spiritual Beings in the Authentic Pauline Epistles* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 205-217.

Luke-Acts as Artefact: Validating the Move from Literary Analysis to Historical Studies

But, one might object, is it valid to jump from literary analysis, discussing implied author and implied reader, to historical analysis, discussing the ‘Early Christian Sect’? In response, we observe that in Luke-Acts we have a historical artefact, similar to an ancient piece of pottery, or tile mosaic. Someone expended significant effort to create it. It is not unreasonable to ask why it was made nor to analyse it artistically to seek answers regarding its origins.

Was it entirely non-historical, fabricated from whole-cloth simply for entertainment purposes? If so, then why did the churches receive it if did not resonate with their knowledge of their own beliefs, practices, and origins? The twin facts of its existence and reception by the churches (definitively by Irenaeus, ca. 185)⁸⁵ indicate, at minimum, historical verisimilitude. That is, though every twist and turn of the story may not be historical in the modern sense of perfectly chronological, the story is sufficiently ‘true to life’, it sufficiently represents the beliefs, practices, and origins of the sect, for the sect to accept it as authoritative, even inspired.

In addition to its existence and reception history, the shamanic nature of its content indicates that it fits the Pauline ministry praxis and is aligned with the Gospels’ depiction of Jesus. Thus, literary analysis tells us about the artefact, allowing us to locate it in space and time, and allowing us to identify reasons for its creation, e.g., to instruct new sect leaders like ‘Theophilus’ in the history, beliefs, and practices of the sect.

Conclusion

This paper has first addressed the question of how the Lukan narrative prescribes ritual behaviour. Understanding protagonists as exemplars was noted as the default approach to story in the Graeco-Roman world. Hence, Luke need not overtly state that his heroic characters are to be emulated for his readers to do so. However, Luke does establish himself as an authoritative teacher vis-à-vis his implied reader. He further employs an array of narrative techniques to construct textually normative structures, that is, arguments within the text that the implied reader understands as prescriptive. Such normative structures often take the form of focalisation plus commentary upon the focalised.

Secondly, the paper has shown that the ritual initiation procedure which Luke prescribed was in fact coherent. The narrative critical tools of sequential reading, focalisation, mental constructs, and type-scenes, have been employed to demonstrate that Luke presents Christian initiation as consisting of belief in the kerygma, repentance, immersion in water, persistent prayer by the initiate for the Spirit, prayer with handlaying by particularly powerful ritual administrators to transmit the Spirit, and, climactically, dissociative language-speaking that is consistent with the traditional language-speaking practices of the community (viz. modelled after the Pentecost story and integrating an intelligible control element identifying the language-speaking as God-magnifying), and that is conceptualised as the experience of Spirit reception. This standard format may be modified due to the impact of radiating charismatic power from an apostle, also interpreted

⁸⁵ Cf. Andrew Gregory, *The Reception of Luke and Acts in the Period before Irenaeus* WUNT2 169 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 3, 350-351.

as the sovereign intervention of God. Finally, the initiate partakes of table fellowship with the believing community.

Thirdly, the paper has drawn upon three concepts from anthropology – liminality, performative ritual, and spirit-possession – to explain the data obtained through narrative exegesis and to suggest that the shamanic character of the data better reflects Early Christian Sect practice than later ‘early catholic’ practice. Within Early Christian Sect initiation, the gift of the Spirit is liminal, mediated, and manifested. The Spirit is liminal in that it is typically given to initiates during a ritual process that takes a certain amount of time to be completed.⁸⁶ Occasionally it may occur at the outset of the ritual process, but never does it occur subsequent to initiation, for it is the climax of initiation. It is mediated in that powerful individuals, not powerful rituals, performatively impart the Spirit. It is manifested in that spirit-possession cum dissociative language-speech is indexical of the Early Christian Sect’s theological concept of Holy Spirit reception. In this way, spirit-possession, not baptism, becomes the cardinal ritual experience of Early Christian Sect initiation.

⁸⁶ This is not to be understood as identical with James Dunn’s concept of conversion-initiation, which is vertical in nature, i.e., God responds to human faith actualized in water baptism, and which occupies no more temporal space than is required by the split-second moment of faith. James Dunn, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1970; 100, see also, 37, 81, 91, 94-96.