

ABSTRACT

The Elder Son's Quandary and the Rich Man's Fate:
Moral Formation, Characterization, and Rhetoric in Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31

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In this dissertation, I engage the interrelated topics of characterization, rhetorical techniques, and moral formation as a way to interpret the Parable of the Prodigals (Luke 15:11-32) and the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). I selected these parables as case studies for the ways in which characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation relate because these parables contain many semantic links and rhetorical similarities. Coming on the heels that Jesus “welcomes sinners and dines with them” (Luke 15:2), these parables accept and extend the rhetorical engagement between Jesus, the Pharisees, and the scribes. Given the similarities between the parables, this project provides an answer to the question: “Why does the Father leave the party to comfort the Elder Son (Luke 15:28-32), while nobody will be sent to warn the Rich Man’s brothers (Luke 16:27-31)?” Characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation contribute to the answer to this question. In terms of characterization, I focus on similar presentations of character in ancient literature and the contribution of *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character). By focusing on the rhetorical techniques present in these parables, key aspects of the parables receive

prominence, including the relationships between the Father and the Elder Son in Luke 15:11-32 and the role of Moses and the Prophets in Luke 16:19-31. In these parables, Luke advocates for behaviors of reckless liberality. This reckless liberality entails giving to those who do not deserve it, at inappropriate times, and in excessive amounts. One's failure to show such generosity, as advocated in Moses and the Prophets, risks locating oneself outside the party permanently.

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by

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

In recent years, Lukan scholarship has made several advances in rhetorical criticism, including examining the relationship between rhetoric and moral development and the use of rhetoric and characterization.¹ Despite the individual gains in rhetoric and moral development on the one hand and rhetoric and characterization on the other, there are surprisingly few studies that engage ancient characterization, ancient rhetoric, and moral formation.² This project makes a contribution toward bridging the gap. Further, the present study offers a new angle in this conversation in its focus on parabolic literature. I argue that Luke utilizes ancient characterization and rhetoric to contribute to the moral formation of his audience.³ Using the parables of the Prodigal Son(s) and Loving Father (Luke 15:11-32) and the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) as case studies, I argue

¹ Regarding the relationship between rhetoric and moral development, see Todd Penner, "Reconfiguring the Rhetorical Study of Acts: Reflections on the Method in and Learning of a Progymnastic Poetics," *PRSt* 30 (2003): 425–39; John York, *The Last Shall Be First: The Rhetoric of Reversal in Luke* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015); Keith A. Reich, *Figuring Jesus: The Power of Rhetorical Figures of Speech in the Gospel of Luke* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011). Regarding rhetoric and characterization, see John A. Darr, *On Character Building: The Reader and the Rhetoric of Characterization in Luke-Acts* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992); Herod the Fox: *Audience Criticism and Lukan Characterization*, JSNTSup 163 (Sheffield: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 1997); Chad A. Hartsock, *Sight and Blindness in Luke-Acts*, BIS 104 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008); David Gowler, *Host, Enemy, and Friend: Portrait of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2008).

² Parsons and Penner are notable exceptions. Both place characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation together (Mikeal C. Parsons, *Body and Character: The Subversion of Physiognomy in Early Christianity* [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011], 131 and Penner, "Reconfiguring," 433-434). Sharing a concern for moral formation need not imply that the same behaviors were inscribed. Luke seems to have a penchant for adopting and adapting familiar techniques and styles and utilizing them to his own ends, as he seems to do with ancient physiognomy (see Parsons, *Body and Character*, 82, 107-108).

³ As to the ubiquity of types, see Penner, "Reconfiguring," quoted in n. 2.

that Luke advocates for showing reckless liberality. I discuss this notion of reckless liberality more below. Reckless liberality advocates that people show generosity toward 1) people who do not deserve it, 2) at inappropriate times, and 3) in extravagant amounts, which contrasts Aristotelian notions of liberality, which entail giving 1) to the right people 2) at the right time and 3) in the right amounts. I discuss this concept more below. Before elucidating the ways in which these parables function within Luke, I first turn to ancient characterization and ancient rhetoric and their respective relationships with moral formation.

Rhetoric, Characterization, and Moral Formation

A significant goal for both ancient characterization and ancient rhetoric was the moral formation of young male elites.⁴ The formation of young orators brought together intellectual and moral education (Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.8-9, 15-19). Quintilian proposes that “to educate the perfect orator, who cannot exist except in the person of a good man. We therefore demand of him not only exceptional powers of speech, but all the virtues of character as well” (*Inst.* 1.10 [Russell, LCL]). Though not necessarily systematic, the process of *mimesis* in education ultimately led to a *mimesis* of character. Students who underwent rhetorical education would encounter examples of good rhetoric and, at the same time, examples of behaviors to emulate or behaviors to avoid through the historical figures the examples portrayed. Theon, who wrote his *progymnasmata* in the first century CE, goes a step further in his assertion that teachers ought to make clear the moral character of the exercises themselves (Theon, *Prog.* 71). The concern for a teacher’s

⁴ See Craig A. Gibson, “Better Living through Prose Composition?” *Rhetorica* 32 (2014): 1.

moral example and the concern for the moral character of the exercises reveal the understanding that educating youth addresses both their intellectual and moral formation.

By the Roman period, rhetorical handbooks included characterization as a means of advocating proper behavior. The presentation of “character delineation” in *Ad Herennium* reveals a style similar to Theophrastus. According to the work’s author, “character delineation” is a means of describing “the qualities proper to each man’s nature” (4.64 [Caplan]). Characterization thus formed an important aspect of rhetorical education. One finds similar concerns in the progymnasmatists’ discussions of *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character).⁵ Theon indicates that attributed speech ought to be appropriate to a character’s age, status, culture, gender, and circumstance (Theon, *Prog.* 115-116). These concerns reveal the importance of characterization. The demand for accuracy in both character delineation and *prosōpopoiia* contributes to the understanding that characters must be accurately portrayed in their descriptions and their speech.

Ancient characterization was likewise associated with moral formation. By the first century CE, one of Theophrastus’s redactors ascribed a moral purpose to the *Characters* and no extant manuscripts appear without this moralizing *proemium*. According to the redactor(s), part of the purpose of the *Characters* is to “set forth for you one by one which classes of character are attached to these people and how they manage,” believing “that our sons will be better if such writings are bequeathed to them, which they can use as a guide in choosing to associate with and become close to the finest men, so as not to fall short of their standard” (pref.3 [Rusten, LCL]). From a

⁵ *Prosōpopoiia* relates to speech that the author attributes to a character, whether living, dead, or imagined.

relatively early point in its redaction, the *Characters* was associated with ethical behavior.⁶

Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31 as Test Cases

The Parable of the Prodigals and the RML present a similar relationship among characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation and serve as test cases for my argument. Key to understanding what these parables accomplish in terms of moral formation is the way in which the parables are connected through similar rhetorical techniques and similarities within the narratives.⁷ Yet, the endings of these parables diverge. Despite the Elder Son and the Rich Man being regarded as τέκνα, the Parable of the Prodigals in Luke 15:11-32 leaves open the possibility the Elder Son will respond positively to his father's request, but the Rich Man's situation is fixed, and Abraham will not send anybody to warn his brothers. The ends of the two parables leave similar questions hanging: Will the Elder Son listen to his Father and join the party? Will the Rich Man's brothers listen to Moses and the Prophets? While other parables do not necessarily present the consequences in terms of ultimate situations (as in RML), Luke guides his

⁶ James Diggle, *Theophrastus Characters*, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries 43 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 12. Diggle notes the complexity of the manuscript tradition in Theophrastus, regarding it as "probably the corruptest manuscript tradition in all of Greek literature" (20).

⁷ Roose argues that the difference between the endings is that the Rich Man has died. This interpretation is somewhat unsatisfying, given the repeated regard the Father has for the Younger Son as dead at key points in the parable (15:24, 32) (Hanna Roose. "Umkehr und Ausgleich bei Lukas: Die Gleichnisse vom verlorenen Sohn [Lk 15.11-32] und vom reichen Mann und armen Lazarus [Lk 16.19-31] als Schwestergeschichten." *NTS* 56 [2010]: 13). The Rich Man's perception that Lazarus is able to cool his tongue and return to the Rich Man's brothers is, in my view, more than an indication that the Rich Man continues asserting his superiority over Lazarus. It seems the Rich Man perceives Lazarus to have some freedom of movement and even the possibility of resurrection, which seems to be in keeping with some of the Second Temple Jewish understandings of the resurrection of the righteous. I discuss this topic in further detail in Chapter Five.

readers toward an understanding of behavior as having ultimate consequences for his readers. In both parables, Luke advocates for characteristics of reckless liberality.

Aristotle argues that prodigality and meanness are at odds with the characteristic of liberality (*Eth. nic.* 4.45). For Aristotle, prodigality is an excess in spending (especially squandering money on debauchery [*Eth. Nic.* 4.1.4-5]), and meanness describes excesses in receiving but deficiencies in giving (*Eth. nic.* 4.1.37-39). Aristotle asserts that prodigality is “easily cured by age or by poverty,” but that “meanness is incurable” (*Eth. nic.* 4.31, 37 [Rackham, LCL]). The presentation of a Father who shows generosity to both sons, one of whom exhibits signs of prodigality and the other who exhibits characteristics of meanness in Luke 15:11-32, contrasts Aristotle’s estimation of meanness in *Nicomachean Ethics*.⁸ The Father is generous to his sons who do not deserve it, at times that are inappropriate, and in excessive amounts, in contrast to Aristotle’s description of liberality as giving to the right people at the right time and in the right amounts. The Father therefore shows traits of reckless liberality. In addition, the openness toward the Elder Son joining the party at the end of the parable suggests that Luke does not regard meanness as incurable, in contrast to Aristotle. In my discussion of this parable, I focus on each of the three characters, their inflection, and their *prosōpopoiia* to highlight the desired behavior of reckless liberality.

⁸ A brief note on the capitalization of “Father” in this parable is in order. I have elected to capitalize the unnamed characters in the parable as though proper nouns. When I describe the characters in ways that take the place of a proper name, I capitalize them. When I describe the characters in ways that highlight their relationships to other characters in the parable (i.e., “his father”), I do not capitalize the names. With respect to the Father’s character, in particular, this follows the rules that pertain to referring to one’s mother or father. For example, in the statement “I don’t know why Mom told me to clean my room,” “Mom” is capitalized because it functions as a proper noun, but in the statement “I don’t know why my mom told me to clean my room,” “mom” is not capitalized because it is preceded by the possessive “my.”

While the Parable of the Prodigals appears to be arguing for behaviors of reckless liberality, RML reads as a cautionary tale. RML presents the two men by way of contrast; Lazarus is laid at the Rich Man's gate, covered in sores, longing for the scraps from the Rich Man's table, while the Rich Man is well-dressed and feasts sumptuously. After their deaths, the audience learns that Lazarus receives comfort at Abraham's bosom, while the Rich Man is tormented in Hades. Upon seeing Lazarus, the Rich Man asks Abraham that Lazarus be sent to provide him relief in his turmoil. When Abraham states this action is impossible, the Rich Man asks that Lazarus be raised to go warn his brothers. The location of Abraham and Lazarus and the exchange between the Rich Man and Abraham concerning the Rich Man's brothers, Moses, and the Prophets (16:29, 31) contributes to the Rich Man's characterization. This exchange characterizes him by way of negative example, in that Abraham asserts that Moses and the Prophets could remedy the fate of the Rich Man's brothers, lest they meet the fate of the Rich Man.

Ultimately, I elucidate the ways in which Luke utilizes the rhetorical tools at his disposal to instruct his audience via patterns to imitate and patterns to avoid. More specifically, the behaviors for which Luke advocates via characterization in the parables are indicative of desired behaviors Luke describes elsewhere such as caring for the poor and releasing those in debt.⁹ I contend one of Luke's goals in the moral formation of his audience is to inscribe in his audience characteristics of reckless liberality by giving to those who do not deserve it at potentially inappropriate times and in excessive amounts.

⁹ See also Luke 1:46-55 (especially vv. 51-53); 4:18-19; 6:20-38.

Selected History of Research and Methodology

Though ancient characterization and rhetoric converged around the first century (see Quintilian, Theon, and *Ad Herennium* above), most scholarship has focused on these areas separately.¹⁰ My contribution to the conversation, however, is a thoroughgoing connection between ancient rhetoric, characterization, and moral formation by gradually drawing together these interrelated streams of research in “theory,” “practice,” and in my test case parables.

Chatman, in his 1978 *Story and Discourse*, indicates “it is remarkable how little has been said about the theory of character in literary history and criticism.”¹¹ Forty years after Chatman’s work, modern characterization studies have made much progress in gospel interpretation. During the 1980s and 90s, many of the studies of characterization in the Gospels, such as those by Culpepper and Powell, were formalist in their approach, in that their focus is on the overall structure of the text and the attempts to garner information about the text from the text itself.¹² Other characterization studies soon followed.¹³ Despite the gains in characterization, Bennema recently lamented that

¹⁰ Though I deal with the parables in my dissertation, the history of research for each of these parables merits its own brief mention. These serve as a means of introduction to the respective parables within the larger project. For the sake of clarity and conciseness, I have chosen to focus on the main areas of research that contribute to my interpretation of the parables.

¹¹ Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978), 107.

¹² Mark A. Powell, for example, indicates that characters and plot are “two riders on a seesaw,” in which the characters serve largely as plot functionaries (*What is Narrative Criticism?* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990], 51, 55). Culpepper, similarly, sees the characters’ individuality as “determined by their encounter with Jesus” and illustrative of possible reactions to Jesus (R. Alan Culpepper, *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987], 104, 146).

¹³ Dewey, Rhoads, and Michie offer distinctions between major and minor characters; they argue that, while the disciples are characterized as dense (or worse: subversive) to Jesus and his mission, the minor characters are frequently those who understand Jesus, revealing a more sophisticated level of development within the plot (David Rhoads, Joanna Dewey, and Donald Michie, *Mark as Story: An*

character “is the neglected child of literary theory.”¹⁴ Bennema seeks to fill this void by offering a theory of character in which he situates characters along the continua of complexity, development, and inner life, assigns to them a degree of characterization on this basis, and situates them within the larger narrative.¹⁵

Specific studies in Luke/Acts have also made advances in characterization. Significant among these are Gowler, Darr, Holgate, Hartsock, Parsons, and Reich. Gowler focuses his efforts on the portrayals on the Pharisees in Luke/Acts, and seeks to acknowledge the cultural scripts of Luke’s audience in terms of Greco-Roman and Jewish backgrounds.¹⁶ Darr, in his *On Character Building*, seeks to offer a culturally sensitive reading of character in Luke/Acts.¹⁷ Holgate, Hartsock, and Parsons offer studies in which they employ ancient characterization or rhetoric to interpret character in Luke/Acts. Holgate takes as his impetus Aristotle’s designation of prodigality, meanness, and liberality, and applies these notions to Luke 15:11-32.¹⁸ Hartsock and Parsons analyze

Introduction to the Narrative of the Gospel, 3rd ed. [Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2012]. Hylen, in her engagement of the characters in John, argues that the Fourth Gospel presents characters far more ambiguously than is typically understood (Susan Hylen, *Imperfect Believers: Ambiguous Characters in the Gospel of John* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009]). Myers, departing from the focus on modern characterization theory, combines ancient rhetoric with modern theory, seeking to offer a way forward in characterization studies (Alicia D. Myers, “The Ambiguous Character of Johannine Characterization: An Overview of Recent Contributions and a Proposal,” *PRSt* 39 [2012]: 289–98).

¹⁴ Cornelis Bennema, *A Theory of Character in New Testament Narrative* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2014), 2.

¹⁵ Bennema, *Character*, 62.

¹⁶ David B. Gowler, *Host, Enemy, Guest, and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke-Acts* (New York: Peter Lang, 1991), 15-27.

¹⁷ Darr, *On Character Building*, 14.

¹⁸ David A. Holgate, *Prodigality, Liberality and Meanness in the Parable of the Prodigal Son: A Greco-Roman Perspective on Luke 15.11-32*, JSNTSup187 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999). See especially p. 68: “The parable teaches the virtue of compassionate liberality and rejects the opposing

various characters' physical features in Luke/Acts using physiognomic interpretations. While Hartsock focuses on the importance of sight in physiognomic texts, Parsons focuses on the ways in which Luke subtly subverts the expected responses to physical ailments.¹⁹ Finally, in a recent article, Myers has argued that an important way forward in characterization studies is to consult ancient characterization, though it does not appear many are answering this call.²⁰

During roughly the same time period when characterization studies came to the fore, rhetorical criticism also experienced a renaissance. Kennedy argues for the legitimacy of rhetorical criticism in interpreting the New Testament, arguing that “[Paul] and the evangelists as well would, indeed, have been hard put to escape an awareness of rhetoric as practiced in the culture around them, for the rhetorical theory of the schools found its immediate application in almost every form of oral and written communication.”²¹ According to Kennedy, rhetorical criticism provides insight into

vices of prodigality and meanness. It illustrates that liberality is a source of physical and moral health and harmony, for the individual and for the community.”

¹⁹ Hartsock, *Sight and Blindness*, 53-54. Hartsock regards Jesus' opening of blind eyes as “a heuristic for understanding the Gospel” (208). As to the subversion of physiognomic expectations, see Parsons, *Body and Character*, 141, 145. Darr mentions *synkrisis* as a means of characterization (49) and the ancient understanding(s) of Herod as a fox (*On Character Building*, 139-141).

²⁰ Myers, “Ambiguous Character,” 289-298. Recent studies on character and characterization, including Frank Dicken and Julia Snyder, eds., *Characters and Characterization in Luke Acts* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), do not focus on ancient characterization, per se, but rather, use a variety of methodologies to approach characterization.

²¹ George Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983), 10. He also indicates “approaching the New Testament through classical rhetoric is thus historically justified.” Kennedy regards the parables as corresponding to *mythoi*, which offers some measure of justification for the consideration of parables in light of the *mythoi* traditions, 22-23, 70-72.

reading the New Testament, postulating that even those without formal education would have developed rhetorical expectations for their authors.²²

More recently, Parsons has offered various examinations of Luke/Acts and rhetorical techniques. In “Luke and the Progymnasmata,” he argues that the author of Acts was familiar with devices and strategies of ancient rhetoric.²³ Parsons explores *chreia*, fables, and narrative and suggests that some of the techniques Luke employs may indicate familiarity with the progymnastic exercises.²⁴ Parsons’s students have also contributed to the connections between rhetoric and Luke/Acts, including Reich’s recent contribution *Figuring Jesus*, which argues that Jesus is portrayed as a man of elevated status so that his auditors would be disposed to receive his message of reversal.²⁵

Despite the similar timelines in development of characterization and rhetorical-critical studies in the New Testament, few studies have brought these areas into conversation with one another. My project contributes an engagement of ancient characterization and ancient rhetoric, which has not yet been done in light of Theophrastus’s characters despite Theophrastus’s influence in the development of ancient

²² Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 9.

²³ Mikeal C. Parsons, “Luke and the *Progymnasmata*: A Preliminary Investigation into the Preliminary Exercises,” in *Contextualizing Acts: Lukan Narrative and Greco-Roman Discourse*, Todd C. Penner and Catherine Vander Stichele, eds., SBLSymS 20 (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 44.

²⁴ Compare Osvaldo Padilla, “Hellenistic παιδα and Luke’s Education: A Critique of Recent Approaches,” *NTS* 55 (2009): 416-417, in which he argues that Luke has not likely achieved the tertiary level of education. Though he lodges his argument against Parsons, Padilla’s assertion that the *progymnasmata* were introduced progressively earlier in a students’ education (prior to the secondary stage) does not dismantle, but rather affirms Parsons’s assertion that Luke was familiar with progymnastic techniques.

²⁵ Keith A. Reich, *Figuring Jesus: The Power of Rhetorical Figures of Speech in the Gospel of Luke*, BIS 107 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011) 1, 20. Reich argues that Jesus’s figures of speech serve as powerful and memorable indications of the ways in which Jesus’s role-reversing and subversive message was transmitted (34, 101).

characterization. Further, it also contributes a way forward in parables research by approaching them from the standpoint of rhetorical criticism and giving particular focus to the ways rhetorical techniques make important aspects of the narrative prominent.

Rhetorical criticism will guide my engagement of the parables. Per Kennedy's suggestion, I treat Luke's Gospel as a rhetorical unit, which includes various rhetorical sub-units, including the parables.²⁶ Rhetorical analysis undergirds the connections between the test case parables and informs the ways I articulate the potential relationships between the test case parables and other parables. This methodology also informs the discussion of the rhetorical function of the parables and fabulistic literature and my interpretations of the Parable of the Prodigals and RML. Further, Luke employs rhetorical devices—including characterization—in an effort to contribute to the moral formation his audience. The role of *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character) and the ways it contributes to characterization will receive special attention.

Organization

I offer here a brief synopsis of the topics each chapter covers and the ways in which these contribute to drawing together rhetoric, characterization, and moral formation. Chapter Two and Three deal with the ways characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation come together in “theory,” including the rhetorical handbooks *Ad Herennium* and Quintilian's *Orators Education*, and “practice,” which includes Plutarch's *Lives* and Chariton's *Callirhoe*. These two chapters establish the importance of moral formation in the rhetorical handbooks and in characterization, with Theophrastus's

²⁶ George Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 98.

Characters as the transition between “theory” (Chapter Two) and “practice” (Chapter Three). While Chapter Two anticipates aspects of characterization in Chapter Three, Chapter Three considers how moral formation and characterization—as the rhetorical handbooks describe them—bear out in other literature.

In Chapter Four, I consider the relationships between parables and Greco-Roman *mythoi* and other fabulistic literature. The examples within the parables and related literature and the ways moral formation is a part of these genres are prominent in this chapter. I give particular attention to the ways in which *prosōpopoiia*, or speech-in-character, contributes to characterization in anticipation of my discussion of Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31 in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five begins with a synopsis of the lexical and semantic links between Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31. This chapter examines the test case parables and elucidate their rhetorical structures and techniques and the ways in which these contribute to the moral formation of Luke’s audience. I show the ways Luke uses rhetorical techniques such as inflection, *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character), *homoioteluton* (words with similar endings), *aposiōpēsis* (ending a speech abruptly), and *synkrisis* (comparison), to emphasize and draw attention to behavior and characterization in his parables. I include indications of the relationship between the two parables and make the suggestion that the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is suited to answer the questions left hanging at the end of the Parable of the Prodigals. After discussing these parables, I also briefly engage the intervening material (Luke 16:1-18) to situate RML in its narrative context. Finally, Chapter Six summarizes the findings from Chapters Two through Five and offers suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

The *Mimesis* of Morality: Theory

Introduction: Rhetoric, Morality, and Character

By the first century, the expectation of the *paideia* was that it formed students intellectually by introducing them to classic literature such as Herodotus, Homer, and Thucydides and morally through the exercises.¹ Rhetorical education was not only for those who would go on to be orators or politicians, but rather, as Hägg asserts “it was the natural training for future officials, judges, teachers, civil servants, in short for the entire leading stratum of society.”² The rhetoricians guided their students through mimetic exercises of increasing difficulty and while it simultaneously presented examples of heroes to emulate and heroes to avoid. Though not necessarily systematic, the process of *mimesis* in education ultimately led to a *mimesis* of character.³ I engage *Ad Herennium*,

¹ Gibson asserts that “No one in ancient Greece and Rome would have doubted the claim that literary-rhetorical education was intended to make the student better in both an intellectual and a moral sense” (Craig A. Gibson, “Better Living through Prose Composition?” *Rhetorica* 32 [2014]: 1). Arguments have been marshaled that the rhetoricians were not concerned with moral formation. Philosophers did not regard rhetoric as not concerned with behavior, but rather, words, while philosophy was concerned with actual things that shaped behavior (see Plato, *Resp.* 2.362A). Rhetoricians and rhetorical handbooks disagree, arguing that philosophy could be counterfeited, whereas eloquence could not (Quintilian, *Inst.* 12.3.12). As to the rhetoricians’ concern with moral formation, see Quintilian and Theon (above). Hägg affirms the idea that rhetoric entailed both moral and intellectual formation and, further, credits rhetoric with the classical renaissance in the first centuries CE, regarding rhetoric as accomplishing for the mind what exercise and medicine accomplish for the body (Tomas Hägg, *The Novel in Antiquity* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983], 106).

² Hägg, *The Novel*, 107.

³ Gibson indicates as much, “Better Living,” 5. Penner, in a similar vein, argues for a “progymnastic poetics,” in terms of reading Acts, regarding the culture as one of repetition through which cultural mores are inscribed (Todd C. Penner, “Reconfiguring the Rhetorical Study of Acts: Reflections on the Method and Learning of a Progymnastic Poetics,” *PRSt* 43 [2003]: 431-3). He goes on to indicate “All of this is important for understanding Luke-Acts, as one observes in Lukan narrative precisely a pervasive culture of repetition and imitation of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman stories (whether in epic, novels, or

Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, and Theon's *Progymnasmata* to illustrate these claims. I have selected these texts because they reveal the state and progression of rhetorical education up to the time of the New Testament. They thus anticipate my discussion of Luke in Chapters Four and Five.

The concern for intellectual and moral instruction and the presentation of character types are not uniform across the theoretical writings pertaining to rhetorical education. This lack of uniformity is evident in my engagement of *Ad Herennium*, Quintilian's *The Orator's Education*, and Theon's *Progymnasmata*.⁴ The rhetorical handbooks and progymnasmata represent a diversity of attitudes across nearly two centuries of rhetorical education. These rhetorical handbooks reveal the ways in which rhetorical education developed over these two centuries, illuminating an increasing concern for *mimesis* of both rhetoric and character. Rhetorical education had the capacity to influence one's nature, which is especially evident in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*. Despite the variances across the texts, in each of the rhetorical handbooks considered, moral character figures prominently, whether it is part of the author's stated purpose (i.e., Quintilian) or not (i.e., *Ad Herennium*).

Perhaps fittingly, another component of rhetorical education included character delineation.⁵ According to the author of *Ad Herennium*, character delineation describes

history), as well as larger literary type scenes and stock characterizations prevalent across all genres in antiquity" (433).

⁴ I have selected these texts because they are contemporaneous or near-contemporaneous with the New Testament.

⁵ DeTemmerman argues convincingly that character delineation (and the corresponding types) were a part of rhetorical education by the 1st century BCE (Koen de Temmerman, "Where Philosophy and Rhetoric Meet: Character Typification in the Greek Novel," in *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient*

“the qualities proper to each man’s nature” (4.64 [Caplan, LCL]). Character delineation, however, tends to take character types as its impetus. DeTemmerman traces these types to Aristotle’s ethical writings on virtue and vice, which Theophrastus further developed.⁶ In keeping with the aims of rhetorical education character types presented behaviors to emulate or avoid. The discussion of character types prepares for the discussion in Chapter Three, in which I engage Plutarch’s *Lives* and Chariton’s *Callirhoe* to ascertain how these “theoretical” aspects, including typified elements and characterization, gain nuance in practice. In this chapter, I engage *Ad Herennium* and the author’s use of characterization and concern for elite social values, Quintilian’s *The Rhetor’s Education* and the moral features of the ideal rhetor and educator, and finally, Theophrastus’s *Characters* and the author’s description of unsavory behaviors. For each, I discuss key debates and disputes surrounding the text, followed by a direct engagement with the text itself.

Ad Herennium: The Rhetor and Moral Superiority

The *Rhetoric ad Herennium*, written sometime in the early 1st century BCE, is the oldest extant Roman treatise on rhetoric.⁷ Though early attributions suggested Cicero as its author, the lack of correspondence or mention in Cicero’s known works has rendered this conclusion untenable. In terms of the Roman rhetorical tradition, Caplan notes that,

Novel, J.R. Morgan and Meriel Jones, eds., *Ancient Narrative Supplementum* 10 (Groningen; Eelde: Barkhuis, 2007), 108.

⁶ In this instance, I intentionally refrain from making an argument that the types in rhetorical education were *necessarily* based upon Aristotle and Theophrastus. Rather, the character types seem sufficiently flexible to be molded by the rhetors and progymnasmatists to suit their aims.

⁷ Caplan proposes the *terminus post quem* as 88BCE and *terminus ante quem* as 82BCE for the examples, at least. Though others have argued for a date after 85BCE, the consensus is that the late 80s is the most likely date for the document.

“Regarded from a historical point of view, the treatise represents no strikingly novel system; for us, however, it has literary importance because it is our only complete representative of the system it teaches.”⁸ *Ad Herennium* is not evidence of the start of a new rhetorical tradition, but rather, a continuation of an already existing tradition. *Ad Herennium* contributes an indication of the ways orators employed rhetoric as a vehicle for social advancement.

Much attention has been given to the document’s style and what it may imply about the author and his social location. Krostenko and Sinclair both argue that the author is likely representative of the *novus homo*.⁹ Krostenko highlights the ways the author’s use of binary catchphrase helps identify his social location, revealing the author’s knowledge of the Roman cultural world and corresponding social ladders.¹⁰ Sinclair, similarly, views the author as utilizing rhetoric as a vehicle for social mobility:

Rhetoric at Rome was not only a means of persuasion, it was also an opportunity for self-invention for the would-be statesman, for the newcomer who could convincingly ‘speak the language’ of his social superior, who could incorporate the general views and opinions that were canonical to their class, who could successfully reproduce their patterns of speech and language, who, in short, could ‘act out’ their own image of themselves.¹¹

By presenting himself as thoroughly educated and knowledgeable of Roman social conventions, the erudite rhetor garners for himself honor, power, and prestige. The

⁸ Caplan, *Rhet. Her.* 34, LCL.

⁹ Patrick Sinclair, “The Sententia in *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: A Study in the Sociology of Rhetoric,” *AJP* 114 (1993): 565. While Sinclair holds open the possibility that it may refer to others than the *noui homines*, ultimately, it seems that the two were so frequently associated with the *noui homines* that the audience would have likely taken as assumed that the terms referred to socially enterprising individuals.

¹⁰ Brian A Krostenko, “Binary Phrases and the Middle Style as Social Code: ‘*Rhetorica ad Herennium*’ 4.13 and 4.16,” *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 102 (2004): 249.

¹¹ Sinclair, “Sententia,” 561.

rhetoric presents a sense of shared ethics with the elite.¹² The author's concern "is entirely directed toward creating and sustaining the impression of authority by firmly asserting beliefs conforming to the political order's cultural and political expectations (popularized philosophy, conventional truths, borrowings from the accepted classics of literature)."¹³ Though the actual social location of the author remains unknown, this handbook presents rhetoric as a means by which someone could identify himself with the cultural values of the elite. I engage *Ad Herennium* directly to support these claims and discuss the ways characterization, concern for shared morality, and elite values shape the document.

Ad Herennium

According to the work's author, "The task of the public speaker is to discuss capably those matters which law and custom have fixed for the uses of citizenship, and to secure as far as possible the agreement of the hearers" (1.2.2 [Caplan, LCL]). The rhetor is therefore one who is sufficiently knowledgeable in both cultural values and their expression (i.e. law and custom). These cultural values entail a sense of shared morality and valuation of particular character traits in keeping with the portrait of the elite. Characterization of one's self, proponents, and opponents plays into inscribing cultural values via rhetoric. Though other subjects might be studied diligently so that "even if, in public speaking, we have not reached our goal, we shall miss but little of the wholly

¹² Sinclair, "Sententia," 571: "To judge from the Auctor's examples of *sententiae*, *dignitas* resides in those which maintain a lofty level of generalization and forcefully and confidently advocate normative standards of moral obligation."

¹³ Sinclair, "Sententia," 574.

perfect life” (4.56.69 [Caplan, LCL]), he nevertheless regards rhetoric as the “path to follow” to lead one to the wholly perfect life (*vitae perfectissimae desideretur*). This wholly perfect life, for the author, entails acceptance and promulgation of the ethics of the social elite.

Characterizing one’s opponents. One of the ways in which one could gain support from one’s audience was to engender their goodwill through asserting one’s own moral values: “From the discussion of our own person we shall secure goodwill by praising our services without arrogance and revealing also our past conduct toward the republic, toward our parents, friends, or the audience” (1.5.8 [Caplan, LCL]). At the same time, by offering a negative characterization of one’s opponents, one can gain the audience’s favor by highlighting their opponents’ vices, including violence, dominance, factitiousness, lack of self-restraint, idleness, cowardice, sloth, and luxurious habits (1.5.8). Negative characterization implies and assumes the moral superiority of the rhetor. Among the components listed for the negative characterization of one’s opponents are traits that might find a sympathetic audience among the elite, such as high birth, hospitality, club allegiance, and marriage alliances. While these are an expected part of *enocomia*, the author insists that the rhetor can portray them negatively “by making clear that they rely more upon these supports than upon the truth” (1.5.8 [Caplan, LCL]). Rhetoric could thus cast aspersions on one’s character in spite of otherwise noble attributes.

The characterization of one’s opponents continues to hold sway in the author’s discussion of the ways a case may be presented to a prosecutor:

If the prosecutor contends that the motive for the crime was money, let him show that the defendant has always been covetous; if the motive was public honour, ambitious; he will thus be able to link the flaw in the defendant's character with the motive for the crime. If he cannot find a flaw consistent with the motive, let him find one that is not ... let him brand the defendant with the stigma of some one fault, or indeed, of as many faults as possible. (2.3.5 [Caplan, LCL])

The character flaws inscribe a sense of morality via negative example: The covetous and the ambitious do not fare well in the courts. Negative examples feature prominently in the author's discussion of character delineation, by which "one's ruling passion can be brought into the open" (4.51.65 [Caplan, LCL]). Character delineation includes the boastful, envious, pompous, miserly, thief, and the public informer (4.51.65), none of which are character traits that one ought to emulate. Rather, the traits are among those one ought to avoid. According to the author, the more extreme these characterizations are, the more memorable they will be because the exaggeration of one's flaws renders the flaws more memorable (3.22.36).

The rhetor assumes the position of moral superiority by publicly presenting his opponents' interior motivations via dialogue, which "consists in putting in the mouth of some person language in keeping with his character" (4.43.55 [Caplan, LCL]). The presentation of one's opponents and the assertion of moral superiority requires social acumen: one must be both sufficiently subtle to come across as not harping on morality but sufficiently clear that the opponent has failed to adhere to elite social values (1.6.9-10, 1.7.1).¹⁴ The question remains: with the list of character flaws to be avoided, what behaviors *should* one emulate?

¹⁴ The risk of advocating for someone who has been characterized negatively is significant: one becomes associated with behaviors of the company one keeps. The presentation of negative characters, taken together with the concern for the company one keeps, bears much in common with Theophrastus's

Elite social values. Character, like rhetoric, is practiced.¹⁵ Also like rhetoric, character is performed. Through negative characterization of their opponents, rhetors subtly established themselves as the opposite of their opponents (1.6.9) and claimed for themselves the moral high ground.¹⁶ It is from this vantage that the rhetor can comment on morality more generally. The commentary, found in the examples listed in book four, exhibit both positive and negative examples, though the negative examples remain more prevalent than the positive.

On the negative side, one finds a catalog of behaviors to avoid in terms of the individual and the state. Behaviors for individuals to avoid include violating oaths, betraying friends, dishonoring parents, behaving shamefully (4.8.19, 4.18.25), focusing on one's own gain (4.14.20), inscrutability or instability of personality (4.15.21, 4.18.25), greed (4.17.24, 4.25.35, 37), and inciting unrest (4.27.37, 4.28.38). Though the author exhorts individuals, he does so with an eye to the wellbeing of the state. With respect to the state, the author advocates for concord and bemoans the failures in the state to achieve it: "Since the time when from our state concord disappeared, liberty disappeared, good faith disappeared, friendship disappeared, the common weal disappeared" (4.8.19 [Caplan, LCL]). The author has in view concerns of the state and the individual within it.

Characters, in which one reads a barrage of negative characters and their behaviors, representing a treasure trove of vices—and the characters who possess them—to be avoided.

¹⁵ For more on this, see the section on Quintilian, below.

¹⁶ On this regard, see Tamás Adamik, "Eine unbekannte Atellane? (Rhet. Her. 4, 50, 63-4, 51, 65)," *Wiener Studien* 120 (2007): 129. Adamik argues that the author presents two types of characterization: one is satirical, the other is stylistic. These two examples, according to Adamik, feature prominently in the author's example of the man who portrays himself as more wealthy than he actually is.

The individual is to support the state; failure to do so affects the individual in the loss of concord, liberty, good faith, friendship, and the common good.

On the positive side, however, one can garner a few examples of behaviors to emulate. The positive examples likewise entail both behaviors of the individual and the state. In terms of behaviors of the individual, the author advocates for noble living:

“Choose the noblest way of living; habit will make it enjoyable ... All the rules for noble living should be based on virtue because virtue alone is within her own control, whereas all else is subject to the sway of fortune” (4.17.24 [Caplan, LCL]). The author also includes examples that entail avoiding base habits (4.17, 24) and hard work, the latter of which precipitates the individual’s reputation for having a good character (4.20.27-28).

Support of the state features prominently. The author intertwines an individual’s behavior with the state’s wellbeing. The description Scipio highlights the relationship between individual behavior and benefiting the state. Scipio receives credit for destroying Carthage, bringing peace, and saving the state (4.8.19). The next example expands Scipio’s behavior to the behavior of the Roman people: “It was by the justice of the Roman people that the Carthaginians were conquered, by its force of arms that they were conquered, by its generosity that they were conquered” (4.8.19 [Caplan, LCL]). Concord is one of the means by which the empire is extended: “But if we maintain concord in the state, we shall measure the empire’s vastness by the rising and the setting of the sun” (4.33.44 [Caplan, LCL]).¹⁷ Concord not only maintains peace within the state, it contributes to the extension of the state, according to *Ad Herennium*.

¹⁷ See also 4.42.54, which characterizes the wise man as one who puts the state’s best interests ahead of his own.

The purpose of these examples is for the rhetor to gain the audience's sympathy and, at the same time, to exhibit the rhetor's moral superiority. While establishing one's moral superiority, however, one must take care to not be ostentatious. In the author's view, maxims and *sententia* "show concisely either what happens or ought to happen in life," but should be used only sparingly "that we may be looked upon as pleading the case, *not preaching morals*" (4.17.24, 25 [Caplan, LCL], emphasis added). The author's regard for *apostrophē* is similar: "If we use *apostrophē* in its proper place, sparingly, and when the importance of the subject seems to demand it, we shall instill in the hearer as much indignation as we desire" (4.15.22 [Caplan, LCL]). The author is at pains not to preach morals but to engender the sympathies of the audience. Using examples of rhetorical devices sparingly and scattering throughout the discourse, improves the style of writing, according to the author. One ought to avoid ostentation yet must simultaneously exhibit technical expertise to communicate one's erudition and align one's own educational status with that of the elite.

Quintilian: The Morality and Mimesis of Education

Quintilian was born around 40CE and wrote at a time when rhetoric was experiencing a reform. One of the first people employed by the state as a rhetor by Emperor Vespasian, Quintilian presents the expected characteristics of a rhetorical treatise. He covers the methods of education and exercises youth might engage throughout their education. He departs, however, from other handbooks in his overt concern for the ways children are educated, repudiating those who beat children in order to teach them or who are insensitive to the needs of children to take breaks (1.3.8-12, cf., *Ad. Her.* 1.6.10). Kennedy's assessment is apt: Quintilian sought to make education

“more humane, more moral, more practical, somewhat more profound, slightly broader.”¹⁸ Quintilian also departs from other rhetorical handbooks in his repeated concern for the character and morality of orators and of teachers in hopes that their educational program might inscribe in students a moral grounding that adequately prepares them for public life.

Quintilian outlines the process by which children ought to be educated. His concern, however, is not purely for the education of young children.¹⁹ From the *proemium* through the final book of his work, Quintilian insists on the connection between morality and education. The perfect orator, for Quintilian, must be a good man.

Following the model of Cicero, in spite of the changed political-cultural context, Quintilian reaffirms the centrality of the figure of the orator: he must be not only a professional expert in discourse, but, more importantly, he must be a man of irreproachable character, who is well-informed about the reality in which he lives and able to interact with that reality through his speeches.²⁰

Brinton highlights Quintilian’s particular notion of the *vir bonus*, regarding the term *bonus* as highlighting the moral aspect of the ideal orator.²¹ Other rhetorical handbooks do not handle the notions of morality as explicitly.²² Beyond notions of “character” in the modern sense, in which character is internal and private, the external and public character of an individual presented in speech is essential, because “Speech indeed is very

¹⁸ George A. Kennedy, *Quintilian*, TWAS 59 (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1969), 40, 53.

¹⁹ Though most of the children educated were likely male, Quintilian advocated for the education of both male and female children.

²⁰ Maria S. Celentano, “Oratorical Exercises from the *Rhetoric to Alexander* to the *Institutio oratoria*: Continuity and Change,” *Rhetorica* 29 (2011): 362.

²¹ Alan Brinton, “Quintilian, Plato, and the ‘Vir Bonus,’” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 16 (1983): 167-168.

²² See Brinton, “Vir Bonus,” 169.

commonly an index of character, and reveals the secrets of the heart” (Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.1.30 [Rackham, LCL]; see also 3.8.36). Speech, for Quintilian, makes manifest one’s character and motivations.

Much effort has been made to situate Quintilian among his rhetorical counterparts. Connections with Cicero, Plato, and Stoic philosophy have been noted, mainly via connections to Quintilian’s notion of the *vir bonus*.²³ None, however, seems capable of laying an exclusive claim to Quintilian’s thought. Perhaps this is because Quintilian represents many aspects of the rhetorical tradition as it stood in the first century, both presenting the exercises as one would expect and adding his distinctive argument for the role of education and morality in rhetoric.

For Quintilian, the morality of teachers is paramount. Children’s formation will then be imprinted according to the example of both their teacher and the exercises they practice. Moreover, in the extensive *mimesis* required of students, Quintilian links morality and character in the ways students learn to imitate not only words but also character. Rather than “the good” occurring naturally in people, Quintilian asserts that frequent imitation leads to good character: “We obviously cannot help being either like the good or unlike them. Nature rarely makes us like them; imitation often does” (*Inst.* 10.2.3 [Rackham, LCL]). For Quintilian, good character traits—like good rhetoric—are

²³ As to the connection between Plato and Quintilian, see Brinton, “Vir Bonus.” For the connections between the Stoic Wise Man and Quintilian’s *vir bonus*, see Arthur E. Walzer, “Quintilian’s ‘Vir Bonus’ and the Stoic Wise Man,” *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 33 (2003): 25-41. Here, he connects the *vir bonus* through varied means, in that he sees the “good man” for Quintilian as the same as the “wise man” (26). Moreover, he holds that “The Stoic Wise Man would be the basis for the character of the model orator. Rhetoric would take its purpose, its social role, and its norms of ethical practice from Stoic philosophy. But as an art—as a systematic collection of techniques for speaking well in the sense of speaking effectively—rhetoric would be grounded in Ciceronian eloquence” (29).

the result of practice. Through the exercises Quintilian presents, he seeks to accomplish his aim of teaching students not to just imitate good rhetoric but also to imitate good behavior.

Quintilian and Morality via Character

Throughout his *Orator's Education*, Quintilian repeatedly returns to the notion of the good man. In Quintilian's view, the perfect orator must also be a good man. He likewise believes that teachers ought to be paragons of virtue. Quintilian asserts that, while nature may play into the character of an individual, *mimesis* contributes to one's moral character. In the educational program Quintilian outlines, youth become educated in rhetoric and social mores simultaneously. While the former imprints upon the youth patterns for communicating well, the latter imprints a pattern of honor and virtue. In the next section, I engage Quintilian's work in more detail, highlighting the various places in which he discusses the perfect orator, qualities of a teacher, the connections between education and morality, and *mimesis* and morality, respectively.

Quintilian on the perfect orator. For Quintilian, the perfect orator will also be a good man. He introduces this concept in the *proemium* to book one and returns to it throughout the *Orator's Education*. Quintilian's stated purpose entails as much: "I am proposing to educate the perfect orator, who cannot exist except in the person of a good man. We therefore demand of him not only exceptional powers of speech, but all the virtues of character as well" (1.*proem*.9 [Rackham, LCL]).²⁴ This concept is variously

²⁴ The perfect orator must also be wise; it is here that some are led to suppose connections with philosophy, whether Platonic or Stoic (1.*proem*.18).

repeated. In book one, Quintilian repeats that “no one can be an orator unless he is a good man” (1.2.3 [Rackham, LCL]). He tentatively holds open that someone other than a good man might be an orator (1.2.3), but Quintilian takes pains to claim for his orator goodness and wisdom.

It remains necessary to respond to those who argue otherwise, as indicated earlier in this chapter.²⁵ In book two, Quintilian does just this. He argues that the orator must be good from the side of those who argue that bad men can also be orators. In this discussion, he is likely responding to the attitude that orators performed in order to convince and persuade irrespective of goodness or honorability. Quintilian also claims that rhetoric is an art and further confines it to the good (2.5.1), repeating his point later in book twelve: “So let the orator whom we are setting up be, as Cato defines him, ‘a good man skilled in speaking’: but ... let him at all events be ‘a good man’” (12.1.1 [Rackham, LCL]). Quintilian refuses to allow the definition of an orator to pass without connecting it to his notions of the *vir bonus*. This *vir bonus* is a man whose eloquence is a function of his virtue. The *vir bonus* must understand honor, justice, and courage, as they exist hand in hand with his speech:

What will he do in an encomium unless he understands honour and shame? How can he urge a policy unless he has a grasp of expediency? How can he plead in the law courts if he knows nothing about justice? Again, does not oratory also call for courage, since we often have to speak in the face of threats of public disorder, often at the risk of offending the powerful, and sometimes even ... with armed soldiers all around? So, if it is not a virtue, oratory cannot even be complete. (2.20.8 [Rackham, LCL])

For Quintilian, one’s speech expresses their innermost attitudes and moral character (11.1.30). An orator thus cannot hide his true sentiments, for they are apparent in his

²⁵ See n.1.

speech, and the crowd's acceptance (or not) of the orator's speech reflects the orator's character (3.8.36).

Beyond this, an orator might persuade his audience to choose better behavior over worse. According to Quintilian, the perfect orator, who is a good, wise, and honorable person, easily persuades honorable people (3.8.38). Quintilian prepares his orator for various audiences by noting ways in which an orator might persuade those of bad character to emulate the good:

If we try to ensure the right action from persons of bad character, we must take care not to seem to be criticizing their very different way of life, but must try to affect the hearer's attitude by appealing not to honour in itself, for which he has no regard, but to praise, public opinion, and (if these vanities are ineffectual) the future advantages, or, even more, by pointing out some frightening consequences of taking the opposite course. (3.8.39-40 [Rackham, LCL])

For Quintilian, nature does not necessarily determine moral character. Quintilian does not spurn the role of nature, but he does not ascribe one's moral character to nature alone "since virtue, though it derives some impulses from nature, has none the less to be perfected by teaching, the orator must above all else develop his moral character by study, and undergo a training in the honourable and the just, because without this no one can be either a good man or a skilled speaker" (12.2.1 [Rackham, LCL]). The perfect orator will study and practice being a *vir bonus*, much like the perfect orator studies and practices speeches and the like. Through imitation of the good, in Quintilian's view, one becomes good.

Qualities of the teacher. The qualities Quintilian seeks in a teacher have much in common with the qualities Quintilian seeks in an orator. According to Quintilian, one cannot teach what one does not practice. The character of the orator must be good;

therefore, the character of teachers and supervisors must be the same (1.3.17). Parents must select a teacher not only for his rhetorical acumen but also for his character (2.4.12 [Rakcham, LCL]). A teacher must not only be a good rhetor; a teacher must set a good moral example for his pupils.

Though parents select these teachers to educate their children in rhetoric rather than in moral virtue, Quintilian does not place the teachers' rhetorical acumen before their moral character; rather, he regards their moral character as the first necessity (2.2.2, 4). Quintilian links the quality of the teaching to the teacher's moral character, going so far as to hold that the entire enterprise of educating young people is pointless if the teacher has obvious moral flaws (2.2.15).

The teacher, like the perfect orator, must be good. Like the perfect orator, teachers must combine in equal measure good character and rhetorical ability. Quintilian's perfect orator, in other words, must be educated by a perfect orator. Rather than simply teaching techniques and devices to persuade an audience, the teacher educates students by example: first, by his character, and second, by his suasive skills.

On education and morality. The democratization of education in Rome during the first centuries BCE and CE, when anyone who could pay for education could be educated, precipitated some elites' choice to educate their children at home. Quintilian argues from the parents' perspective that introducing one's children to various people and their respective moral flaws in an educational setting can lead to bad behavior because good character, like bad, is practiced. Well-meaning parents, seeking to protect their children from vice, chose to educate them at home (1.2.2).

After engaging the parents' potential concerns with public education, Quintilian turns sharply in his argument. He asserts that a child can just as easily learn sin at home as at school (1.2.4). Even if a child learns to imitate vices of other youth, this outcome is better than parents seeing their children imitate their own moral flaws. Quintilian bluntly states that

It was we who taught them, they heard it all from us. They see our mistresses, our boy lovers; every dinner party echoes with obscene songs; things are to be seen which it is shameful to name. Hence comes first the habit, then nature. The wretched children learn these things before they know they are wrong ... they do not get these vices from schools, they import them into them. (1.2.8 [Rackham, LCL])

Quintilian once again indicates that the behaviors one habitually practices shape one's character. Again, Quintilian places habit before nature. He goes on to highlight the *benefits* of public education: At school, a child will watch other children be praised and punished. A child in school will put a competitive spirit to positive use: Not to be outdone by the performance of peers, the child will strive for excellence. Quintilian argues that the child's ambition, when properly channeled, can lead to virtue (1.2.22-23).

Despite the risks placing one's children in school presents, the benefits outweigh the challenges. Students receive not only rhetorical education but moral education as well through imitating the good character of their teacher and from learning what to do and what to not do on the basis of the teacher's praise and punishment of other students.

Exercises and morality. Quintilian's notion that children learn character through imitation extends from his understanding that the teacher imprints his behavior on the youth he teaches. For Quintilian, character and moral conduct are not purely functions of nature; rather, good character may be learned by even very young children by imitating

their nurses and, by children who are slightly older, through games: “Character reveals itself too more naturally in games—but bear in mind that no age is too immature to learn straight away what is right and what is wrong, and that the best age for forming character is when they do not know how to pretend, but obey their teachers more readily” (1.3.12 [Rackham, LCL]). For Quintilian’s ideal student, the examples his teacher presents will mold him and, moreover, will teach him to emulate character through the various exercises included in education (including games).

Quintilian outlines a typical course of study using progymnastic exercises, each exercise presenting an opportunity for moral development.²⁶ For example, when engaging *encomia* and invective, the student learns to praise good qualities and blame evil qualities. Quintilian holds that, “This is useful in more ways than one: the mind is exercised by the variety and multiplicity of the material; the character is moulded by the contemplation of right and wrong” (2.4.20 [Rackham, LCL]). Through presenting *encomia* of good behavior and invective of bad behavior, students learn to emulate the good and avoid the bad.

Though Quintilian prefers actual characters over the presentation of character types, Quintilian nonetheless finds types useful to his educational program. In his discussion of commonplace, which he defines as “those in which we orate against vices in themselves—the adulterer, the gambler, the profligate—without naming individuals” (2.4.22 [Rackham, LCL]). In Quintilian’s view, there is a value to employing types when naming individuals would prevent the audience’s reception of the orator’s speech (3.8.39-40). Quintilian also employs types in his discussion of those whom one might engage via

²⁶ I.e., Narrative, fable, chreia

declamation, listing among them “the bad tempered, the easy-going, misers, the superstitious, cowards, or mockers” (3.8.51 [Rackham, LCL]). Thus, Quintilian’s perfect orator—necessarily a good man—must also represent his opposite via *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character), which may explain Quintilian’s comment that *prosōpopoiia* is the most difficult exercise (3.8.49). Though Quintilian finds the types useful, they are useful in their representation of actual characters with whom one might come into contact. The exercises *encomia* and invective condition students to react and respond to various character traits by making them the object of praise or blame.

The character types with which students come into contact in their exercises are not a purely intellectual exercise. Quintilian explicitly links *prosōpopoiia* with *ēthos/mores*: “It is quite right also to use the word *ēthos* of the sort of school exercises in which we often represent countrymen, superstitious men, misers, and cowards according to the terms of our theme. For if *ēthos* means *mores*, then when we imitate *mores* we base our speech on *ēthos*” (6.2.17 [Rackham, LCL]). Students learned by representing various characters to emulate good characteristics and avoid bad. Through the mimetic process of education, students’ presentations and imitations of various character types inscribed their moral character.

Mimesis and morality. Through imitation, memorization, and repetition, Quintilian presents an educational program in which students learned not only the art of rhetoric, as he would regard it, but also mores that would further serve the public good. The various games and exercises of the *Orator’s Education* all converge upon the goal of preparing students to become the perfect orator, whose acumen is not purely rhetorical but also moral.

Quintilian's concern for moral formation comes to the fore in his concern for the moral character of those who teach children (1.3.17) and the games and exercises that teach both rhetoric and build (moral) character. Similar to the ideal qualities parents ought to seek in teachers (i.e., first that they be of good moral character), Quintilian holds that the passages teachers select for children to read must be "not only eloquent passages but, even more, passages which are morally improving" (1.8.4 [Rackham, LCL]). Again, Quintilian places the value of a passage's moral nature above its eloquence. Both mind and character must be taken into account in education, for students will imitate both (1.8.8).

The concern for imitation extends beyond the positive notions of imitating the good. Quintilian discourages for students from imitating the most flagrant vices out of fear that they might become habit: "Nor ought he mimic the failings of drunkenness, be taught the cinging manners of a slave, or learn the emotions of love, greed, or fear. These things are not necessary for an orator, and they infect the mind, especially in the early years when it is malleable and unformed. Frequent imitation develops into habit" (1.11.2 [Rackham, LCL]). According to Quintilian, one becomes what—or whom—one imitates. If students imitate eloquence, then they will become eloquent. Likewise, if students imitate good men, then they too will become good men. Students must be surrounded with examples worthy of imitation, both in their teachers and in their exercises. For Quintilian, the first concern in both form and content is the moral character of the example.

Progymnasmata: *Mimetic Morality*

The *progymnasmata* (“preliminary exercises”) were exercises for students who could already read and write. Though the earliest extant example of a *progymnasmata* is from the first century (Aelius Theon), there is evidence of awareness of these exercises as early as the *Rhetoric to Alexander* ([*Rhet. Alex.*] 1436a25) and in Suetonius’s *Lives of Illustrious Men: Grammarians and Rhetoricians* (*Rhet.* 1.1). Beyond Theon, three other *progymnasmata* exist, dating between the third (Ps.-Hermogenes) and fifth centuries (Nicolaus the Sophist).

In these *progymnasmata* teachers led students through fourteen exercises (*chreia*, maxim, fable, narrative, refutation, confirmation, *topos*, *encomion* and invective, *synkrisis*, *prosōpopoiia*, *ekphrasis*, thesis, law)²⁷ each increasing in difficulty and building upon the last. These exercises gave students the necessary rhetorical skills for public life. Throughout the exercises students learned via *mimesis* how to not only do the exercises but also characteristics to emulate and avoid.²⁸ In the exercises,

Students learned to take their knowledge of classical literature—its myths, heroes, and ethical values—and turn it to the service of argument. The *progymnasmata*,

²⁷ Some discrepancy regarding the ordering of the various exercises exists. Theon, departing from the others, places *chreia* first, followed by fable and narrative. Ps. Hermogenes, Aphthonius, and Nicolaus place fable first, followed by narrative and *chreia*. Theon, further, includes maxim as a subsection of *chreia* and refutation and confirmation as subsections of narrative.

²⁸ Penner regards the “mimetic spirit” as “a matter of imitating the teacher, imitating the classic exemplars of antiquity, and, finally, imitating the socio-cultural value system imbedded in these exemplars” as the first of seven characteristics of a “progymnastic poetics” (“Reconfiguring,” 432-433). The third characteristic of the progymnastic poetics is the student’s participation in the plausible and ideal rather than the actual and the real (435), with the plausible and the real existing in relatively close proximity. A fourth feature of progymnastic poetics is the fluidity between genres, in that a wide variety of narrative genres are employed to inculcate students to the socio-cultural ideals. These socio-cultural ideals ultimately became, according to Penner, a “(re)configured socio-cultural world” (437), which represents the fifth feature of progymnastic poetics. The fifth feature leads to the sixth: the students’ training serves the aims of politics, even in its reconfiguration of socio-cultural values via *mimesis* (438). The seventh feature of a progymnastic poetics not only instills but creates a value system. According to Penner, “we have been so concerned to find the history behind the narrative, we have overlooked the history that it creates” (439).

then, not only show us in detail how written composition was taught in the Greek-speaking world for more than a thousand years, but also illuminate one important method by which the cultured elite transmitted the values of Hellenism to each new generation.²⁹

The *progymnasmata* inculcated cultural values and mores in students and, as a result, shaped the ways students thought. The *progymnasmata* accomplish this task by teaching the students to imitate and emulate historical examples.³⁰ These exercises inculcate—or imprint—upon students the desired morality of elite citizens.³¹ According to Webb, this imprinting has an indelible—even physical—effect on students.³² Learning to read, write, think, and speak was not simply learning a skill. As students learned these skills, they learned the virtues their society upheld. In this way progymnastic education entailed “a constructive process that unites skill and virtue, each in the service of the other.”³³ By uniting skill and virtue, students were not only prepared to write and speak publicly but to reproduce the values they learned in tandem with these skills.

²⁹ Gibson, “Better Living,” 21. See also: Kennedy, *Prog.* ix; Ruth Webb, “The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, ed. Yun Lee Too, Brill Companions in Classical Studies 1 (Boston: Brill, 2001), 309.

³⁰ Webb, “*Progymnasmata*,” 313. At the same time, however, students engaged the exercises with increasing sophistication as they learned to critique the information presented in the exercises on the basis of its plausibility, clarity, and conciseness. According to Kennedy, this prepared students to see multiple sides of the same issue, a key skill for dialectical debate (*Prog.* x). According to Penner, this represents the second of his seven characteristics of a “progymnastic poetics.” *Mimesis* of these examples, according to Penner, “results in the production of new culture” (434). See also Ronald F. Hock, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises*; Writings from the Greco Roman World 2 (Atlanta: SBL 2002), 6.

³¹ Gibson, “Better Living,” 6.

³² Webb, “*Progymnasmata*,” 309. See also Hock and O’Neill, in their examination of school exercises on wax tablets, note similarly (albeit more conservatively) that the examples often express pejorative statements toward women and barbarians as a means of distinguishing the students from these groups of people, (*The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Commentaries on Aphthonius's Progymnasmata*, WGRW 31 [Atlanta: SBL, 2012], 11-12). Others presented responses to behaviors of people in positions of responsibility (Texts 4 [P. Oslo III. 177] & 5 [P. Berol. Inv. 21258v]), honorability (Text 6 [P. Mil. Vogl. VI. 263]) and chance (Text 7 [O. Clermont-Ganneau]).

³³ Gibson, “Better Living,” 9.

As students progressed in sophistication, so too did their tasks. Whereas narration may not possess inherent moral qualities or behaviors to emulate or avoid, Gibson argues that the determination of the subject and event reveal moral concerns.³⁴ Frequently, the explanations included in narration involved moral adjudications, such as whether a soldier behaved nobly or treacherously. Students who wrote theses engaged contrasts and described good traits alongside the shameful and the expedient alongside the inexpedient, which reinforced the superiority of the good and expedient over the shameful and inexpedient.

The exercises common-place, *encomia*, and invective reveal further sophistication in the students' educational progress. As students become adept at reading and writing, they learn to produce their own judgments of the moral character of events, places, and people. According to Gibson, this activity reveals what students have absorbed and imitated thus far in their education: they affirm the good and shun evil.³⁵ *Synkrisis* pairs two objects or people in proximity and invites judgments as to which is superior based on their laudable or deplorable qualities. This task requires detailed comparisons and careful judgments, which facilitate a more sophisticated judgment on the students' part as to which qualities would make something or someone superior or inferior to another.

³⁴ Though Gibson speaks in terms of the development of historians specifically, this argument might extend to orators as well: "Years of total immersion in Classical writers' views on wisdom, drunkenness, farming, impiety, bravery, city life, sexual morality, tyranny, and a host of other topics, in addition to the values of their own, would certainly have had an effect on prospective historians ... And so one might profitably ask what role the progymnasmata played in so burdening them," (Craig A. Gibson, "Learning Greek History in the Ancient Classroom: The Evidence of the Treatises on *Progymnasmata*," *CP* 99 [2004]: 125).

³⁵ Gibson, "Learning Greek History," 125.

Through the examples presented in the *progymnasmata*, students became familiar with various character types. This introduction played into the students' moral development as well. According to Webb, "another part of this cultural *koinē* which was put to use in the *progymnasmata* was the cast of character types, like tyrants and misers, who provide the material for fictional declamation themes as well as novels."³⁶ Similar to the examples in *Ad Herennium*, these examples tend to focus on negative characters, including adulterers, tyrants, temple-robbers, murders, traitors, and a doctor who kills by poison.³⁷ Theon affirms the utility of presenting characters via *prosōpopoiia*, an exercise that entails presenting another person's character traits via speech in ways appropriate to the character. Theon asserts "*prosōpopoiia* is not only an historical exercise, but applicable also to oratory and dialogue and poetry, and is most advantageous in everyday life and in our conversations with each other, and (understanding of it) is most useful in study of prose writings" (Theon, *Prog.* 60 [Kennedy]). By learning how to imitate and present another person's character traits, students gained a sense of characteristics to emulate and characteristics to avoid. By gradually teaching students to read, write, think, and speak using examples that imprint upon them moral concerns, progymnastic education functioned as one of the means by which students came to admire and reflect cultural ideals. As I show in the next section, the *progymnasmata* highlights the ways the exercises shaped students' rhetorical capacity and their moral character.

³⁶ Webb, "*Progymnasmata*," 302.

³⁷ Webb, "*Progymnasmata*," 303. The most positive among these examples is the one who commits tyrannicide.

The Progymnasmata

The various exercises students engaged in the *progymnasmata* shaped their rhetoric, built a sense of shared experience, and contributed to their moral formation. According to Theon, “We imitate most beautifully (κάλλιστα) when our mind has been stamped by beautiful (καλῶν) examples” (*Prog.* 61).³⁸ Though Theon is speaking of reading beautiful or good examples here, his concern for upstanding examples of the various exercises throughout his *progymnasmata* reveals that his concern is not only for learning beautiful speech but also good behavior, as I highlight below.

The concern for stamping—or imprinting—students is revealed in the definitions of the various exercises themselves. From the first exercise, Theon highlights the connection between good speech and good character: “Surely the exercise in the form of the *chreia* not only creates a certain faculty of speech but also good character while we are being exercised in the moral sayings of the wise” (*Prog.* 60). Ps.-Hermogenes also reveals a concern for the morality of his students in the first exercise, which for him is fable: “Fable (*mythos*) is regarded as the first exercise to be assigned to the young because it can bring their minds into harmony for the better. In this way they think to form students while tender” (*Prog.* 1 [Kennedy]). Regardless of which exercise the progymnasmatists place first, their concern for the moral character of the first exercise

³⁸ Because of their near-contemporaneity with the New Testament, Theon and Ps.-Hermogenes’s *progymnasmata* receive my focus.

shapes the rest of the *progymnasmata*. These exercises represented the building blocks of education.³⁹

In his ensuing discussion of his exercises, Theon comments on students' imitation of the various exercises. Theon argues that "the teacher must compose some especially fine refutations and confirmations ... in order that, molded by what they have learned, they may be able to imitate (*Prog.* 70-71 [Kennedy])." On the surface, Theon's words seem to pertain to the imitation of the rhetorical techniques alone, but they reveal not only concern for fine examples of rhetoric but also fine examples of behavior. Theon goes on to say: "When the students are capable of writing, one should dictate to them the order of the headings and epicheiremes and point out the opportunity for digression and amplification and all other treatments, and one must make clear the moral character inherent in the assignment (τὸ ἦθος τοῦ προβλήματος)" (71). Once again, one finds that the moral character of an assignment exists alongside the rhetorical technique.

After narrative, the order of the exercises is very similar across the *progymnasmta*. Many of the exercises, including *topos* (or *koinōs topos*), *encōmion* and invective, *synkrisis*, *ēthopoia*, *prosōpopoia*, and *eidōlopoia* entail descriptions of individuals' characters, highlighting the moral character of not only the exercises but also the individuals presented.⁴⁰

³⁹ Theon goes further. He sees rhetoric as the building block of both public speech and historical writing (*Prog.* 59). His regard for the importance of the moral character of the *khreia*, while it ought not be overstated, is suggestive of his views of what a progymnastic education ought to have as its goal.

⁴⁰ I am following Spengel's ordering of the exercises, which generally follows the order of exercises presented in the other *progymnasmata*.

Progymnasmata *and* mimesis of character. The first three exercises set the stage for the students' engagement of descriptions of individuals. In these descriptions, one continues to find evidence that the concern was not only that the exercises teach the students rhetoric but also form the students' moral character. The exercises build upon this foundation and present students not only with examples of rhetorical techniques to emulate but also with examples of characters to emulate and to avoid.⁴¹

In the first of these exercises, *topos*, Theon holds that there are two types: "one is an attack on those who have done evil deeds, for example, a tyrant, a traitor, murderer, profligate; the other in favor of those who have done something good: for example, a tyrannicide, a hero, a lawgiver" (*Prog.* 106 [Kennedy]). This exercise does not begin from a description of the characters themselves but rather, "from the moral choice made by those who have done the deeds" (*Prog.* 107 [Kennedy]), which Theon regards as the main concern of the exercise (*Prog.* 119). As students describe the moral choice made by those who have chosen to do good deeds and those who have done evil, the students see the risk of performing evil deeds, the repercussions of which include incurring the wrath of the gods (*Prog.* 108). Moreover, to this description of the moral choice, "we add our own judgment, saying something is good or bad" (*Prog.* 119 [Kennedy]), inviting further identification on the part of students with characters associated with good behaviors and dissociation with characters associated with bad behaviors.

The exercises *encomia* and invective seek to praise or dissuade particular behaviors. *Encomia* and invective differ from *topos* in that they have specific people in

⁴¹ With the exception of *ekphrasis* in Theon, which he places after *topos*. The other progymnasmatis place *ekphrasis* after *prosōpopoiia*.

mind, whereas *topos* does not necessarily have a specific person in mind (*Prog.* 106-107). According to Theon, “*encomion* is language revealing the greatness of virtuous actions and other good qualities belonging to a particular person” (*Prog.* 109). Though Theon includes the typical encomiastic topic list, including external goods (birth, city, ancestors, education, friendship, reputation, position or offices, wealth, children, manner of death), goods of the body (health, strength, beauty, acuteness of sense), and ethical virtues (prudence, temperance, courageousness, justness, piousness, generosity, magnanimity), he focuses on actions performed. This focus enables Theon to continue highlighting moral behavior, as evidenced by his indication that “goods that result from chance rather than moral choice are the least source of praise” (*Prog.* 111).⁴² Fine actions are those that are done on behalf of others, especially at the expense of the person doing the actions (*Prog.* 110). By continuing to highlight desired behaviors via his focus on fine actions, Theon places in close contact rhetorical education and moral formation.

Synkrisis offers a comparison of two people or things. According to Theon, “Comparison should be of likes and where we are in doubt which should be preferred because of no evident superiority of one to the other” (*Prog.* 112-113 [Kennedy]). The comparison of like things, then, enables the student to learn to adjudicate between the better of two good things or people. Again, Theon holds that superiority is determined on the basis of successful deeds (*Prog.* 113). Though the other components of the encomiastic list are part of the comparison between two individuals, their deeds are what set one apart from the other, thus communicating that one’s behavior, choices, and actions are what determine one’s goodness or superiority.

⁴² Ps.-Hermogenes holds, similarly, that deeds are the most important part of an *encomion* (16).

Prosōpopoiia entails the personification of another person or character, rather than describing behavior or comparing two people.⁴³ Paramount in this activity to represent people in ways appropriate to their situation in life (*Prog.* 115, 116). The exercise, however, entails generating a response from the audience “for we demand something or we exhort or we dissuade or we console or we seek forgiveness” (*Prog.* 116 [Kennedy]). Ps.-Hermogenes, writing nearly a century after Theon, divides *prosōpopoiia* into two additional categories, both of which seek to engender the sympathy—and response—of the audience: “Some personifications are ethical, some pathological, some mixed. Ethical are those in which the characterization of the speaker is dominant throughout... pathological are those in which there is emotion throughout... mixed are those which have a combination of *ēthos* and *pathos*” (*Prog.* 21 [Kennedy]). The students, after engaging exercises that stamped upon them characteristics of both good rhetoric and moral behavior, imprint upon their audiences the same.

These exercises built upon one another and prepared students for public careers, whether in the courts, society, or writing. The final exercises, thesis and law, assume interaction with and use of the prior exercises (Theon, *Prog.*, 127) and are the culmination of both the rhetorical and moral *mimesis* of the *progymnasmata*. The mimetic exercises shaped both their intellectual and moral development of the students. As the exercises progressed from most simple to most difficult, they also progressed in the expectation of the students’ role in becoming a moral authority, as indicated in the progression below. In narrative, *chreia*, and fable, students encountered examples of

⁴³ The progymnasmatists after Theon divide this exercise into three categories, one that represents actual people (*ēthopoiia*), fictitious people (*prosōpopoiia*), or the deceased (*eidōlopoiia*); see Ps.-Hermogenes 20, Aphthonius, 44.

historical, mythic, and other figures to emulate and avoid. Going a step further in the exercises, students described others' behavior via *topos*. As the students critiqued others' exercises in the classroom, they also offered judgment on others—especially their actions—through *encomia* and invective. In *synkrisis*, students would compare two good people with one another in order to adjudicate which is better. Through *prosōpopoiia*, students emulated the words of someone in order to engender a response from the audience. Finally, students prepared to deliver theses—which frequently dealt with practical matters pertaining to *ēthos*—and to discuss and debate the law, entailing the public presentation of one's rhetorical and moral superiority.

Concluding Remarks

I have now surveyed the ways in which rhetorical education contributed to moral character. While *Ad Herennium* insists that the orator avoid moralizing, the orator at the same time claims moral superiority in his defamation of his opponent (1.5.8) and does so on the basis of elite social values (4.17, 24; 4.20.27-28). Quintilian more explicitly connects one's morality and rhetoric: The good man is also a good orator; the good teacher will also be a good man and orator. Finally, in Theon's *progymnasmata*, students receive instruction on fourteen exercises of increasing difficulty and, as the difficulty of the exercises increases, so too does the level of moral commentary, from learning about examples to emulate and avoid in narrative, *chreia*, and fables to comparing behavior (*synkrisis*), imitating behavior (*prosōpopoiia*), and debate. The rhetorical tradition therefore presents rhetoric, characterization, and morality traveling hand in hand, despite the individual authors' differences in outlook.

I now turn to Theophrastus's *Characters*, which marks my transition between theory and practice. Though Theophrastus is chronologically the first of the writers considered in this chapter, he provides a ready transition toward practice, in that he does not fit neatly into either category. While Theophrastus's did not necessarily write his *Characters* with a specific moral or educational purpose in view, he presents several typified elements in his portrayal of various (negative) character traits.

Apart from presenting Theophrastus as a transition between theory and practice, his location between the sections bespeaks the tendencies of both theory (Chapter Two) and practice (Chapter Three) to utilize and represent earlier literature. Quintilian's frequent citing of Theophrastus for support of his argument suggests that Theophrastus's writings remained authoritative in the Second Sophistic.⁴⁴ Likewise, one finds similarities between Theophrastus's *Characters* and *Ad Herennium*'s presentation of character delineation (4.63), including a barrage of typified character traits that bear resemblances to Theophrastean characters.⁴⁵

Theophrastus provides a conceptual transition to "practice," which I discuss in Chapter Three. The authors I consider in the "practice" section, much like that of theory, hearken and represent earlier traditions. Plutarch does so explicitly in his estimation of historical and mythical figures. Chariton sets his novel in fifth-century Syracuse and therefore hearkens a time *prior* to Theophrastus. Based on the presentation of earlier

⁴⁴ Quintilian cites Theophrastus as an authority on various rhetorical matters, mentioning his rhetorical writings (3.1.15), his eloquence (8.1.3, 10.1.84), and Theophrastus's various rhetorical theories, including praise and blame (3.7.1), deliberative speech (3.8.62), *prooemia* (4.1.32), syllabic choices (9.4.88), and on reading poets, (10.1.27).

⁴⁵ See especially *Char.* 23.8-9.

traditions with respect to “theory” and the presentation of times past in “practice,” my placement of Theophrastus here provides both a conceptual and temporal link to both.

Theophrastus: Entertaining Moral Character

Theophrastus lived and wrote during the fourth century BCE. He was a prized student of Aristotle, who reportedly assigned him the name Theophrastus because of his rhetorical abilities (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives*, 2.36). After Aristotle died, he left Theophrastus both his library and his school (Strabo, *Geogr.*, C 609). According to Diogenes Laertius, Theophrastus’s writings were extensive (*Lives* 2.42), among which the *Characters* appears to be listed twice (Ἠθικοὶ χαρακτῆρες, 2.47; Χαρακτῆρες ἠθικοί, 2.48). Other topics on which Theophrastus wrote varied; these topics included botany, animals, behavior (apart from the characters), rhetoric, and physics, “in all 232,808 lines” (*Lives*, 2.50 [Hicks, LCL]). Apparently a man of means, Theophrastus left much of his wealth to the school and made arrangements for an estate, a garden, and improvements to a temple but did not want any fuss over himself “Let me be buried in any spot in the garden which seems most suitable, without unnecessary outlay upon my funeral or upon my monument” (*Lives*, 2.53-54 [Hicks, LCL]). According to Strabo, when Theophrastus died, he left his library to Neleus and the library fell into hands of non-philosophers, which led to damage and a series of corruptions in the texts (*Geogr.*, C 609).

Theophrastus enjoyed high regard from historians, philosophers, and rhetoricians alike. Diogenes Laertius reports on Theophrastus’s remarkable intelligence and popularity (*Lives*, 2.36-37). Aulus Gellius regards Theophrastus as “the most expert of

the philosophers” (*Noct. att.* 16.15.15). Cicero credits Theophrastus, along with Aristotle, for having joined rhetoric and philosophy (*Div.* 2.1.4).⁴⁶

Now, turning specifically to Theophrastus’s *Characters*, a work that was peculiar in relationship to his other works.⁴⁷ Diggle remarks on the uniqueness of the text, though it seems that Aristotle provided the seed of Theophrastean thought, “[Aristotle’s] persons exist, for the most part, out of time and space, moral paradigms, not flesh and blood.”⁴⁸ The notion that the *Characters* exist out of time has proved problematic, inasmuch as it renders it vulnerable to mirror-reading, as was prevalent in Theophrastean scholarship from the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries. Also problematic in Theophrastean scholarship are the corruptions that have occurred within the text. A later hand (or later hands) appear(s) to have added both the *proemium* and several of the sketches.⁴⁹ Diggle notes the complexity of the manuscript tradition in Theophrastus, and

⁴⁶ See also William W. Fortenbaugh, “Theophrastus, the *Characters*, and Rhetoric,” in *Peripatetic Rhetoric after Aristotle*, William W. Fortenbaugh and David C. Mirhady, eds., Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities (New Brunswick, N.J., 1994), 32.

⁴⁷ Millett does see a similarity, however, in Theophrastus’s penchant for organizing concepts, whether that of plant life or characters, though the sample size of writings available from Theophrastus prevents one from concluding this was characteristic of him (Paul Millett, *Theophrastus and His World*, Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society 13 [Oxford: Cambridge Philological Society, 2007], 28).

⁴⁸ James Diggle, *Theophrastus Characters*, Cambridge Classical Texts and Commentaries (New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 7. As to the uniqueness of the *Characters*, see Diggle, *Characters*, 5. Rusten argues much the same in his preface to Theophrastus’s *Characters* [LCL], 3, 28). See also Harold C. Knutson, who offers a “formula” for a Theophrastan character: “Usually no longer than a page, it normally begins with a definition of the moral category to be illustrated... the character then assumes the existence of a nameless human exemplar of the moral category in question, after which follows what was known in classical rhetoric as a *descriptio*... usually the traits appear to be listed at random, and the ending is consequently abrupt, as if the author arbitrarily chose to end his enumeration at that point” (“Three Characters in Search of a Vice: The Hypocrite in Theophrastus, Joseph Hall, and La Bruyère,” *Dalhousie French Studies* 27 [1994]: 53).

⁴⁹ Though this indication is also problematic, according to Rusten, who says “The evidence for these expansions is entirely subjective, since even the earliest papyri offer more or less the same sort of text we have today ... Even beyond its chronological absurdities and fatuous repetitions, the introductory essay

thinks that it is “probably the corruptest manuscript tradition in all of Greek literature.”⁵⁰ Theophrastus’s *Characters* has raised more questions than it has answered, both in terms of its purpose and its location within Theophrastus’s other works.

Theophrastus’s apparent silence on the purpose of the *Characters* has inspired inquiry into what he may have intended. Whereas much recent scholarship rightly finds in Theophrastus a humorous bent, the work was recognized relatively early on as serving an ethical purpose, especially in the light that there are no extant manuscripts lacking the moralizing *proemium*.⁵¹ Diggle sees both in the *Characters*: “And so a new type of work came into existence, owing something to the ethical theorizing of the Lyceum and something to the comic stage.”⁵² Millett suggests that Theophrastus intended the *Characters* for colleagues who shared his ideology and that the *Characters* serves “as an expression of knowledge and values shared by Theophrastus and the community of scholars, confirm and reinforce their sense of solidarity.”⁵³ Millett goes on to suggest the *Characters* offers even a gentle ethical critique among Theophrastus’s peers: “The circumstances already envisaged for performance of the *Characters* combine essentially playful laughter, ostensibly directed at imagined characters outside the group, with an

now preserved in all manuscripts gives a completely false picture of the work that is to follow” (Theophrastus, *Char.* 29, 30) and Diggle, *Theophrastus*, 12.

⁵⁰ Diggle, *Characters*, 12, 17, 20. See also Millett, *Theophrastus and His World*, 12.

⁵⁰ Diggle, *Characters*, 12.

⁵¹ Compare Rusten, who indicates “What ultimately defeats any attempt to find an ethical, comic, or rhetorical basis in the *Characters* is the fact that there is no trace in them of structure or analysis at all. Like any other work of fictional literature—and unlike any other work of Theophrastus—the *Characters* are presented as pure entertainment” (Theophrastus, *Char.* xxii).

⁵² Diggle, *Characters*, 9.

⁵³ Millett, *Theophrastus and His World*, 31.

element of consequential laughter, implicitly informing members of the group able to recognize among the Characters their own failings.”⁵⁴ Theophrastus’s *Characters*, according to Jauss, joins the exterior presentation of one’s behavior with one’s inner character.⁵⁵ Regardless of the presence or absence of a moralizing *proemium*, the *Characters* provides a commentary on social interactions and unsavory behaviors, which presupposes a reflection—even if a humorous one—on “what not to do in Athens.”⁵⁶

Theophrastus’s *Characters* had a significant effect on rhetorical education. Many of the exercises present typified characters. This practice was important as a student learned to characterize his opponents.⁵⁷ Indeed, from the Roman period, character types were a part of rhetorical education, which also contributed to a students’ moral formation, as I discussed earlier in this chapter.⁵⁸

Characteristics of Social Imprudence or Impiety

Whatever the purpose of the *Characters*, many of the characters’ behaviors are undesirable or unattractive behaviors. Even if one reads the *Characters* without the moralizing *proemium* or the introductory and concluding remarks, the concern for proper speech, behavior, generosity, and social relations feature prominently in the *Characters*,

⁵⁴ Millett, *Theophrastus and His World*, 32.

⁵⁵ Hans R. Jauss, “The Paradox of the Misanthrope,” *Comparative Literature* 35 (1983): 307.

⁵⁶ “Theophrastus’s overriding interest is in behavioral patterns. He stays on the surface and portrays the kinds of conduct that make people socially unattractive” (Fortenbaugh, “Theophrastus,” 17).

⁵⁷ Koen de Temmerman, “Where Philosophy and Rhetoric Meet: Character Typification in the Greek Novel,” in *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel*, J.R. Morgan and Meriel Jones, eds., *Ancient Narrative Supplementum* 10 (Groningen; Eelde: Barkhuis, 2007), 87.

⁵⁸ De Temmerman, “Where Philosophy and Rhetoric Meet,” 89. Fortenbaugh Sees the *Characters* as part of rhetorical theses (“Theophrastus,” 23-24).

even if by negative example. The *Characters*, in their entertaining presentation, highlight socially unacceptable behaviors.

Inappropriate speech. Several of Theophrastus's characters represent inappropriate speech. Speech can reveal a person's interior character and exposes those whose outward expression of speech does not represent their interior disposition or—perhaps worse—reveals an unstable inner disposition. Other characters behave in ways that show excessive self-divulsion and reveal too much of what they are thinking. Finally, ostentatious show of rhetorical acumen does not fare well in Theophrastus. In light of these descriptions, it seems apt that Theophrastus's work in the *Characters* influenced rhetorical training. One must learn to speak appropriately to the situation and person presented (see Theon on *prosōpopoiia*) and must not offer ostentatious shows of one's ability, lest one be found wanting on that very account.

In terms of those whose speech does not represent their inner disposition, one discovers the Posturer (εἰρωνείας) treats people well who mistreat him and does not speak plainly when questioned (*Char.* 1.2, 4). His external behavior does not betray his interior thoughts. Rather, “He does not confess anything that he is doing, but says he intends to and presents himself like he has just arrived” (*Char.* 1.4). The Shameless Person is similar, in that his behavior depends on those he engages, presumably to secure his own advantage: “With respect to character, this one is like a vendor and is uncouth and ready to do anything” (*Char.* 6.2, 8). The Shameless, unlike the Posturer, seems to reveal his disposition in his behavior: he is the sort that shifts to achieve his own advantage.

Excessive speech receives much attention from Theophrastus, and is represented in at least four of the characters, albeit in different ways. The Chatterer (ἀδολεξίας) shares

unsolicited information with people he does not know (*Char.* 3.2). Theophrastus imitates his speech, going from one subject to the next, stringing along non-sequiturs:

Then, as matters progress, he says that people nowadays are much more wicked than they used to be; that wheat is a bargain in the marketplace; that there are lots of foreigners in town, and that the sea lanes have been open since the festival of Dionysus. And that if it rains more, the soil will be better; that he intends to start a farm next year, and that it's hard to make a living; and that Damippos dedicated the biggest torch at the mysteries. "How many pillars are there in the Odeion?" "Yesterday I threw up!" "What day is it today?" And that the mysteries are in the month Boedromion, and the Apatouria in Pyanepsion, and the country Dionysia in Poseideon. (*Char.* 3.3 [Rusten, LCL])

The Chatterer divulges personal information in his barrage of statements and questions presented to an unwitting audience, revealing both excess of speech and of self-indulgence. By contrast, the Flatterer's excess is in his praise of another individual as he goes out of his way to "honor" him through his speech and actions (*Char.* 2.4-5, 10). The Slanderer is the opposite: when asked about another person, the Slanderer begins an invective of the person (*Char.* 28.2).

The Garrulous and the Rumor-Monger are also excessive in their speech. The Garrulous' excessive speech prevents others from accomplishing their tasks and stands in the way of jurors reaching a verdict (*Char.* 2.4, 6). The Garrulous, in addition, seeks to highlight his own rhetorical acumen by offering unsolicited commentary on events at the assembly and highlighting speeches that led to his good reputation (or so he thinks; *Char.* 7.6). The Rumor-Monger is similarly full of speech and, upon having asked another a question, fails to wait for the response (*Char.* 8.3). His overblown speech, according to Theophrastus, fails to persuade others of the importance of the topic (*Char.* 8.8).

The speech of the above characters was found wanting. Those whose presentations of themselves were unstable or excessive reveal an unappealing inner nature. Given

Theophrastus's reputation for entertaining presentations of character (Hermippus, fr. 51), one can imagine his audience responding to the foibles of those whose speech he critiques yet simultaneously making sure to check their own speech for the same faults.

Lack of generosity. Prominent among Theophrastus's characters are those who show a lack of generosity toward their friends, acquaintances or the gods.⁵⁹ These characters also exhibit qualities of greed in the generosity they expect of others, or worse—the lack of gratitude for the generosity of others. Some reveal their lack of generosity or greed in their (improper) loaning practices. Others reveal their lack of generosity or greed in their hoarding of goods.

Among those showing a lack of generosity are the ones who attempt to avoid giving loans to friends. The Dissembler tells those who ask him for a loan that he does not have enough money (1.5). The Ungenerous, having been asked for a loan by a friend, avoids meeting the friend on the road by taking a back way home (τὴν κύκλῳ οἴκαδε πορευθῆναι, *Char.* 22.9). Others, while they might loan to others do so improperly. The Grouchy loans to his friends but only after having refused and indicating his distrust (*Char.* 15.7). The Mistrustful, who may loan some cups to a relative or close friend, does so only after making it clear that he does so begrudgingly (*Char.* 19.7). Though the Absent-Minded seems to loan willingly, upon being paid back, he asks for a receipt even

⁵⁹ Many of Theophrastus's Characters fall in to multiple categories. This technique, I aver, would be one of the performative aspects of the *Characters* that would generate interest, as the descriptions fold over one another even as the Characters fall over themselves in inappropriate social expressions.

though the transaction is complete (*Char.* 14.8). The Shameless lends willingly but does so for excessive gain and charges twenty-five percent interest.⁶⁰

On the other end of the spectrum, Theophrastus presents those who seek or receive the generosity of others improperly, whether by receiving it from inopportune people, at inopportune times, or without the proper gratitude (recall Aristotle's notions of liberality). The Sponger "goes back to a man he is holding out on and asks for a loan" (*Char.* 9.2 [Rusten, LCL]). The Selfish asks for loans from out of town guests and, when traveling, asks for loans from fellow travelers (*Char.* 30.3, 7). Even when he repays his debts he does so improperly by shorting his lender (*Char.* 30.13). Though the Untimely seeks interest that belongs to him, does so at an improper time: He seeks his due while the person to whom he loaned money is celebrating a sacrifice (*Char.* 12.11). The Complainer, while he accepts loans, accepts them improperly: "If his friends get together a loan for him, and someone says 'Congratulations!' he says 'Why? Because I've got to pay the money back to each of you, and be grateful besides, as if you'd done me a favor?'" (*Char.* 17.9 [Rusten, LCL]). The social behaviors around loaning and receiving loans have as part of their expectation appropriate lenders and lendees, appropriate timing, and appropriate attitude in both lending, receiving, and paying back.

Lack of generosity and greed can also be seen in meal practices of the characters. While some are bad guests, others are bad hosts. As to bad guests, the Complainer spurns those who do not invite him to dinner, suggesting he was entitled to such an invitation (*Char.* 17.2). By comparison, the one with Petty Ambition, receives an invitation to a dinner and locates himself at the seat of honor (*Char.* 21.2, cf., Luke 14:7-11). The

⁶⁰ Rusten, Theophrastus, *Characters*, n.8.

Flatterer praises the host without ceasing and monopolizes the host's attention or, if he does not have the host's attention, seeks it (*Char.* 2.10). The Garrulous's excessive speech prevents other guests from eating their dinners (*Char.* 7.7). With respect to bad hosts, the Miserly does not fare well in Theophrastus's reckoning: he counts the number of glasses of wine his guests drink and cuts the meat into tiny portions (*Char.* 10.3, 11).⁶¹ While the Miserly shorts his guests on meat, the Greedy (αἰσχροκερδείας) shorts his guests on bread (*Char.* 30.2). When the Arrogant throws a dinner, does not deign to show up (*Char.* 25.9). All three of the bad guests who receive dinner invitations prove disruptive to other guests by not following expected social protocols: The one with Petty Ambition takes someone else's seat, the Flatterer takes the host's attention (or at least wanted too), and the Garrulous takes away the dining experience itself. All three of the bad hosts short their guests in some way, whether in terms of meat, bread, or their presence.⁶²

Impiety toward the gods. Many of the characters listed thus far also show impiety toward the gods. The Miserly, while counting his guests' drinks, offers less to Artemis than his guests (*Char.* 10.3). The Sponger, "after performing a sacrifice to the gods," which would lead one to expect he hosts a meal in celebration, "salts and stores away the meat, and goes to dinner at another's" (*Char.*, 9.2 [Rusten, LCL]). When the Grouchy's friends send him food on a festival day, does not say "Thank you," but instead indicates he will not repay and does not have regard for the gods (*Char.* 15.5, 11). The Griper complains

⁶¹ cf. The Overzealous, who prepares too much wine (13.4).

⁶² The Overzealous is an exception in this case, in that he provides an excess, which is also frowned upon. A graffito from Pompeii suggests that guests or hosts were aware of the character flaws of their hosts or guests, respectively: "The man I am having dinner with is a barbarian" (*CIL* 4.1880).

about receiving meat from a sacrifice but not a whole meal and is ungrateful to Zeus when it rains (*Char.* 17.4).⁶³ Rather than slighting the gods or failing to show piety toward the gods, the one with Petty Ambition neither slights the gods nor fails to show piety but instead takes pains that others recognize his efforts (*Char.* 21.7, 10-11). The Ungenerous offers a dedication to Dionysius when he wins a tragedy competition, but places only his name on it—thus shorting others of the credit—and sells the meat from the sacrifice in celebration of his daughter’s marriage (*Char.* 22.2, 4). Each of these characters either lacks generosity or is greedy, a behavior that extends from their treatment of friends and family to their behavior toward gods. One can expect those who behave improperly in lending or dining practices to behave improperly in their piety as well.

Improper social relations. Theophrastus offers vivid descriptions of the foibles of his characters. Many of these characters behave inappropriately in the public sphere, whether in terms of lending, borrowing, dining, or hosting. Some, however, behave outside of social norms, which marks them as humorous examples of “what not to do in Athens.” The Boor, for example, exposes himself in public (*Char.* 4.7).⁶⁴ The Obnoxious person claps when the applause has stopped and belches while others are listening (*Char.* 12.3). The Squalid person has poor hygiene in general and, in specific, uses rancid oil at

⁶³ Cf. The Superstitious (*Char.* 16) might be seen as showing an excess of piety, but none of his actions pertain to sacrifices to gods, etc., but rather, would fall under the category of magic. See Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions*, transl. Brian McNeil, Studies of the New Testament and its World (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 217-218.

⁶⁴ The Obnoxious also shares this charge (*Char.* 12.2).

the baths, diminishing the experience for the other bathers (*Char.* 19.6). The one who has Bad Taste divulges inappropriate information, along with the Chatterer (*Char.* 20.6, 3.3).

Theophrastus presents characters who behave inappropriately with respect to their situation. Those who act wealthier or younger than they are do not fare well. The one with Petty Ambition seems to present himself as more wealthy than he is: “Going to the clothing-vendors, he picks out a wardrobe totaling two talents, then quarrels with his servant because he came along without bringing any gold coins.”⁸ When he is living in a rented house, he tells someone who doesn’t know that it belongs to his family, and that he intends to sell it because it’s too small for him for entertaining” (*Char.* 23.8-9 [Rusten, LCL]).⁶⁵ The Boor presents himself as wealthier than he is: “when he is going into town, he asks anyone he meets about the price of hides and salt fish, and whether today is the first of the month, and he says right away that when he reaches town he wants to get a haircut, do some singing at the baths, hammer some nails into his shoes, and while he’s going in that direction pick up some salt fish at Archias”” (*Char.* 4.15 [Rusten, LCL]). Finally, the Rejuvenated behaves as though young despite having reached his sixties. He attempts athletic contests with youth and their teachers (*Char.* 27.5, 6, 13), tries to show off his horse riding skills only to fall off and injure himself (*Char.* 27.10, and attempts to make himself seem more athletically-trained than he is (*Char.* 27.14).

Though humorous in their presentation, Theophrastus’s characters also convey what was (not) expected in terms of social mores. In general, people were expected to be generous toward their friends and relatives in both lending and dinners, to be gracious when they received favors, and to behave in ways appropriate to their age and station.

⁶⁵ See also *Rhet. Her.* 4.63.

Those who were ungenerous or greedy toward other humans were likely to behave similarly toward the gods. Those who acted outside of their age and station could expect public humiliation or, in the case of the Rejuvenated, to injure themselves in the process of behaving as something they are not.

Conclusion

Ad Herennium, *The Orator's Education*, and the *progymnasmata*, provide insights into rhetorical education as it took shape through the last century BC through the first centuries CE. Whereas *Ad Herennium* reveals a concern for the statesman, characterization of one's opponents, and elite social values, the handbooks and *progymnasmata* reveal a concern for the ways in which moral and intellectual education travel hand in hand. Elite social values were never far from view. Despite the debates surrounding the purpose of Theophrastus's *Characters*, the *Characters* nevertheless reveal the behaviors expected of the elite by negative example: One ought to exhibit generosity measured by prudence, appropriate social behavior, and prudent social relationships fitting for the person.

The question remains: What shape does this information take in practice? In the next chapter, I turn to Plutarch's *Lives* and Chariton's *Callirhoe* as examples of the ways in which some of these concerns played out in other literature. I have selected these works for a number of reasons, among which are (1) their relationship(s) with history, whether actual or fictive (i.e., Plutarch's presentation of historical figures and Chariton's setting of *Callirhoe* in fifth-century Syracuse); (2) their presentation of rhetorical features and/or concerns; (3) their contemporaneity with the New Testament.

CHAPTER THREE

Nuancing Character(s): Rhetoric in Practice

Introduction

In this chapter, I turn toward “practice” and engage two authors writing contemporaneously or nearly contemporaneously with the New Testament: Plutarch and Chariton. My selection of these two authors is intentional. Whereas Plutarch self-consciously presents his work as one that is morally edifying and suggestive of the mimetic properties of the figures he engages, Chariton offers no such commentary on his work. Rather, it seems one of Chariton’s main goals is the enjoyment of his audience. There are several similarities between the writers that make them compelling to engage in the same chapter. Both writers engage history (Plutarch in his assessment of historical figures, and Chariton by setting his novel in fifth century Syracuse and including historical and ahistorical figures); both writers reveal a concern for education; both writers seem familiar with rhetorical features entailed in rhetorical education; and both writers present moral commentary in their respective narratives. In anticipation of my engagement with the New Testament, I have also selected these authors because of their contemporaneity and because of the various arguments that connect the Gospels to the Greco-Roman *bioi* and, less consistently, the ancient novels. This conversation aims at preparing for Chapter Five, in which I engage Luke’s use of rhetorical techniques to highlight significant aspects of his narrative and characterization to encourage his readers toward particular behaviors.

In what follows, I engage Plutarch's *Lives*, ascertain the mimetic aspects of the characters he selects, concern for education, relationship to oratory, and typified elements of his characterization of historical figures. Following my consideration of Plutarch, I consider Chariton's *Callirhoe* and focus on similar aspects as in the case of Plutarch, including the portrayals of education, rhetorical features, and characterization via typified elements. Both works connect with the aspects I presented in Chapter Two and the ways typified characterization from the theoretical works both Plutarch and Chariton nuance these traits.

Bioi, Characterization, and Moral Formation

Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* occupy a distinctive place in Greco-Roman literature. They detail the lives of Greek and Roman leaders—mythological, political, military, and rhetorical—with the ostensible aim of ascertaining one's character in light of their actions, as indicated in various prefaces to the *Lives* (*Alex.* 665, *Tim.* 235). At the same time, at least part of Plutarch's purpose is didactic: the presentation of characters, the concern for their respective *ēthos*, and the *synkrisis* at the end of many of the *Lives* emphasizes the behavior of the figures Plutarch portrays.¹ Plutarch's aims dovetail nicely, therefore, with the aims of rhetorical education that I highlighted in Chapter Two. Duff

¹ This view has achieved general consensus across Plutarchan scholarship, with varying emphases. R.H. Barrow, *Plutarch and His Times* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), 54-55; Alan Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives* (Berkeley; Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), 19; Philip A. Stadter, "The Rhetoric of Virtue in Plutarch's Lives," in *Rhetorical Theory and Praxis in Plutarch: Acta of the IVth International Congress of the International Plutarch Society* (Leuven: Peeters, 1996), 493; Christopher Pelling, *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 2002), 237.

regards Plutarch's work as customary of the education young elites received.² According to Duff, Plutarch expected an active engagement from his readers, with a "judgmental" eye toward the morality presented in the character of the men Plutarch presents.³ Therefore, the aim of Plutarch's *Lives* was not solely entertainment or diversion but rather, "as a mirror" of the audience's own lives (*Tim.* 235). Plutarch found the *Lives* edifying for himself and describes it as beneficial to his personal improvement, as I discuss below.⁴

The educational and moral aspects of the *Lives* have led some to question who Plutarch's intended audience may have been. Pelling and Stadter have argued compellingly that the intended audience for the *Lives* comprises those who are participating in public life via politics, military, or law, much like the characters considered in the *Lives*.

His biographical project, which grew to enormous size, is a teacher's response to the needs of the rhetorical situation he faced. His audience was not schoolboys, but Senecio, the Avidii, and other Roman and Greek friends, who were hungry for moral education that could help them live according to their philosophical principles in the confused, conflicting, and dangerous pressures of the world.⁵

According to Stadter, Plutarch wrote the *Lives* as a response to the complexities of participating in and contributing to public life in the late first century. In order to

² Timothy E. Duff, "Plutarch's Lives and the Critical Reader," in *Virtues for the People: Aspects of Plutarchan Ethics*, Geert Roskam and Luc Van Der Stockt, eds. (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2011), 77.

³ Duff, "Plutarch's Lives," 81.

⁴ I use "moral education" as opposed to moral formation, inasmuch as I affirm that Plutarch assumes a sufficient level of sophistication on the part of his intended audience that he likely has in his sights not young or adolescent boys, but rather, adult men.

⁵ Stadter, "The Rhetoric of Virtue," 496. Duff indicates his indebtedness to Stadter for his own views ("Plutarch's Lives," p.59, n.3).

advocate that his audience make virtue a habit,⁶ Plutarch presents characters not in their ideal form, per se, but individuals with staggering flaws and compelling capacities for greatness.⁷

Plutarch's *Lives* portray an education that assumes some rhetorical training, as would be expected of the elite *paideia*. Plutarch employs *chreiai*, apothegms, encomiastic topic lists, and *synkrisis* in the *Lives*.⁸ Though Plutarch generally follows the expected trajectory of encomiastic topic lists, the presentation of characters—flaws and all—leads Wardman to conclude that Plutarch's presentations cannot properly be considered *encomia*. Wardman aligns Plutarch with philosophical tradition, on the one hand, and with historians on the other, both of which lead Wardman to downplay Plutarch's indication of his own aims, which include moral edification.⁹ Pelling offers a more

⁶ D.A. Russell, *Plutarch* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 105.

⁷ Comapre Momigliano, who sees Roman biographers as operating with types rather than individuals (*The Development of Greek Biography*, exp. ed. [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993], 13).

⁸ See also: Timothy E. Duff, "The Structure of the Plutarchan Book," *Classical Antiquity* 30 (2011): 219.

⁹ Wardman, *Plutarch's Lives*, 3, 12. Though Wardman notes Plutarch's own indication that he is not writing history but lives (*Alex.* 665) and argues that this line has received far too much interest and weight, it seems he too easily dismisses it to connect Plutarch's writing with that of history. Perrin notes Plutarch's relationship with history, but indicates "But even in the *Lives*, Plutarch is far more moralist than historian" (*Volume I: Theseus and Romulus. Lycurgus and Numa. Solon and Publicola* [Bernadotte Perrin, LCL], xiii). In terms of rhetoric, Russell offers a more nuanced view: "Plutarch is of course by profession a philosopher, and it is therefore traditional for him to make fun of rhetoricians and their juggling with words. But he is himself a conscious artist in an elaborate manner, meticulous in his periodic structures, his studied word-patterns, his avoidance of hiatus, his carefully chosen vocabulary, and so on" (*Plutarch*, 21). Lefkowitz presents a contrast to Wardman's view on Plutarch and history. She holds that Plutarch was indebted to history but that he also took liberties in his interpretation in order to achieve his aims. "Even though the purpose of biography differs from that of history, Plutarch implies that writers in either genre must select their information from the same source materials; it seems apparent also that both biographers and historians, in composing their narratives, frequently resort to a process that might euphemistically be called imaginative research, by which they reconstruct the past in terms of the present, elicit specific detail from general inference, and derive facts from fiction" (Mary R. Lefkowitz, "Patterns of Fiction in Ancient Biography," *The American Scholar* 52 [1983]: 205). Lefkowitz goes on to argue that Plutarch's writings reflect the historical *significance* of the subjects (via Solon), 209.

nuanced view. Regarding Plutarch, Pelling argues that “As a child of Greek rhetorical culture, he could not fail to be sensitive to *logos*: he frequently stresses the import of rhetoric as a tool for politics. His interest in education, especially Greek education, is equally clear.”¹⁰ According to Pelling, Plutarch’s sensitivity toward an audience is also shaped by rhetoric.¹¹ Stadter also notes the ways in which moral education and rhetorical strategy come together in Plutarch, suggesting that part of the rhetorical strategy of the *Lives* was “holding up the mirror to their souls” so “they could learn, in the midst of imperial politics, to live according to reason and humanity.”¹² The complexities of the character presentation and the concern for rhetorical and moral education come together here, similarly to the presentation in Chapter Two, but in the *Lives* Plutarch presents individuals and exposes their flaws and their capacity for greatness.

In the simultaneous presentation of flaws and capacity for greatness, Plutarch upholds and departs from the rhetorical handbooks and Theophrastus. Plutarch employs principles from both rhetorical education, including virtues to emulate and vices to avoid. Rather than presenting typified characters, such as virtue and vice, Plutarch presents virtuous and vicious behaviors side by side. Plutarch’s *Lives* therefore offer a complexity not found in the “theoretical” documents discussed in Chapter Two. To explore this further, I engage Plutarch’s indications of his purpose, his understanding of education, and the typified characteristics Plutarch engages within the lives in order to show that his

¹⁰ Pelling, *Plutarch*, 339.

¹¹ Pelling, *Plutarch*, 341. See also Stadter, “The Rhetoric of Virtue,” 510.

¹² Stadter, “The Rhetoric of Virtue,” 410. See also n. 4.

Lives bore much in common with the theoretical aspects of rhetorical education engaged earlier in this chapter and, at the same time, adds complexity to them.

Plutarch's Lives

There are several pertinent aspects of Plutarch's *Lives* for the purposes of the present study. These include: (1) Plutarch's concern for *mimesis* and morality; (2) Plutarch's concern for education; (3) Plutarch's discussion of oratory and his estimation of it; (4) The possible relationship(s) between the "theory," highlighted in Chapter Two, and "practice" in the engagement of history and of the *Lives*. I engage each of these aspects in turn.

Mimesis and Morality

In Chapter Two, I demonstrated relationship between morality and *mimesis* and suggested that "theory" closely links the two. Quintilian and the *Progymnasmta* reveal this connection most clearly. The relationship between morality and *mimesis* is also present in "practice." Throughout the *Lives*, and especially in his *proemium*, Plutarch reveals his concern for virtue and imitation.

In his introduction to *Pericles*, Plutarch highlights the benefit he sees in presenting the *Lives*. Here, Plutarch focuses on the capacity for individuals to choose to pursue virtue:

Our outward sense, since it apprehends the objects which encounter it by virtue of their mere impact upon it, must needs, perhaps, regard everything that presents itself, be it useful or useless; but in the exercise of his mind every man, if he pleases, has the natural power to turn himself away in every case, and to change, without the least difficulty, to that object upon which he himself determines. It is meet, therefore, that he pursue what is best, to the end that he may not merely regard it, but also be edified by regarding it ... Such objects are to be found in

virtuous deeds; these implant in those who search them out a great and zealous eagerness which leads to imitation. (*Per.* 1.3-4 [Perrin, LCL])

Upon this encounter with an example of virtuous deeds, Plutarch imagines that his task is not simply for one's consideration or edification: Examining virtuous deeds inspires one's imitation thereof.¹³ The implantation of this desire for virtue, for Plutarch, is not necessarily based on one's nature but rather, based on one's choice of whom to imitate. Plutarch, however, does not simply present examples to emulate; he also presents examples of individuals to avoid. In his introduction to *Demetrius*, Plutarch begins with a similar discussion of impressions made upon one's senses, distinguishing between the senses, which only receive information, and the arts, "which proceed by the use of reason to the selection and adoption of what is appropriate, and to the avoidance and rejection of what is alien to themselves, contemplate the one class of objects with direct intent and by preference yet incidentally contemplate the other class also, and in order to avoid them" (*Demetr.* 1.3 [Perrin, LCL]). Plutarch goes on to say: "I think we also shall be more eager to observe and imitate the better lives if we are not left without narratives of the blameworthy and the bad" (*Demetr.* 1.6 [Perrin, LCL]).¹⁴ By presenting examples to avoid, Plutarch entices his audience imitate those who exemplify virtue, similarly to the *proemium* to Theophrastus's *Characters*, as I showed in Chapter Two.

¹³ Recall *Inst.* 10.2.3, see also: n. 20.

¹⁴ Though I affirm that the introduction to Theophrastus's *Characters* is a later addition, the similarity between Plutarch and the *proemium* to the *Characters*, as it stands, is striking: "I believe ... that our sons will be better if such writings are bequeathed to them, which they can use as a guide in choosing to associate with and become close to the finest men, so as not to fall short of their standard" (Theophrastus, *Char.proem.*3 [Edmonds, LCL]).

The benefit of the examples in Plutarch's *Lives* are not only for its auditors. In his introduction to Timoleon and Aemilius Paulus, Plutarch indicates that he too has been improved by his endeavors:

I began my writing of my 'Lives' for the sake of others, but I find that I am continuing the work and delighting in it now for my own sake also, using history as a mirror and endeavouring in a manner to fashion and adorn my life in conformity with the virtues therein depicted. For the result is like nothing else than daily living and associating together ... 'and oh! What greater joy than this canst thou obtain' and more efficacious for moral improvement (ἡθῶν ἐνεργότερον)? (*Aem.* 1.1 [Perrin, LCL])

By using history as a "mirror," Plutarch sees himself as benefitting from learning the subjects' virtues. At the same time, Plutarch regards his endeavors as helpful in avoiding the subjects' vices:

But now in my own case, the study of history and the familiarity with it which my writing produces, enables me, since I always cherish in my soul the records of the noblest and most estimable characters, to repel and put far from me whatever base, malicious, or ignoble suggestion my enforced associations may intrude upon me, calmly and dispassionately turning my thoughts away from them to the fairest of my examples. (*Tim. proem.* 1-3 [Perrin, LCL])

Plutarch continues to hold that—for his audience and himself—the choice between virtue and vice is ever-present.

Plutarch's concern for *mimesis* is not only present in indications of his purposes in the *Lives*: Plutarch argues that associating with those who exemplify vice makes one vulnerable to the same vices. Early in his life, Antony's friends influenced him for the worse rather than the better. Of Antony's friend Curio, Plutarch says, "he fell upon him like a pest" and was "unrestrained in his pleasures" (*Ant.* 2.3). These traits influence Anthony later in life, when he possesses unrestrained passion for Cleopatra, which ultimately leads him to leave behind the good (ἀπολακτίσας τὰ καλά, *Ant.* 36.1) and defend shameful deeds (ἀλλ' ἀγαθὸς ὢν ἐγκαλλωπίσασθαι τοῖς αἰσχροῖς, *Ant.* 37.3).

Plutarch describes Agesilaüs similarly, indicating that “he could not bring himself to censure his friends when they did amiss, but actually prided himself on aiding them and sharing in their misdeeds” (*Ages.*, 5.1 [Perrin, LCL]).¹⁵ Pompey also followed after his friends and was led astray by not wanting to disappoint them, thus “abandon[ed] his best laid plans, a thing which even in the master of a ship, to say nothing of a general in sole command of so many nations and armies, would have been unbecoming” (*Pomp.* 67.4 [Perrin, LCL]). According to Plutarch, one’s friends have an incredible capacity to lead one astray, whether by emulation or approval of their deeds, as in the case of Antony and Agesilaüs, or by following after their hopes and desires, as in the case of Pompey.

Inasmuch as friends could lead one astray, friends could also have a positive influence. When Cato was young, he “attached himself most closely to Fabius Maximus, who was of the highest reputation and had the greatest influence, but this was more by way of setting before himself the character and life of the man as the fairest examples he could follow” (*Cat. Min.* 3.4 [Perrin, LCL]). Rather than indicating Cato followed after Fabius Maximus because he was successful as a statesman or one of his other professional qualities, Plutarch indicates Cato attaches himself to Fabius Maximus because of his character and example of his life. Similarly, Cicero surrounded himself with those with good character and leading statesmen (*Cic.* 3.1-2). Cicero’s friends, however, encouraged him to take cases that were advantageous for his garnering of fame (*Cic.* 3.4). This course of events seems to have been the beginning of his craving of the sort of recognition that comes from public speaking, which precipitates his downfall (*Comp. Dem. Cic.* 2.3). Admittedly, the positive influence of friends who exhibit virtue figures less prominently

¹⁵ See Theophrastus’ “Patron of Scoundrels” (*Char.* 29).

than the risk of befriending those who exhibit vice. The caution, however, remains the same: choose to befriend those who exhibit virtue rather than vice, lest you fall into the same behaviors as the latter.

Concern for Education

Concern for education of the young occurs throughout the *Lives*. Duff notes well the ways in which education forms the individual, on the one hand, and the ways one's attitude to education reveals aspects of one's character.¹⁶ The relationship between character and education bears striking resemblances to Quintilian's understanding of education, by which one's natural inclinations can be (positively) influenced (*Inst.* 1.2.8). Typically, when one receives proper education, it has positive effect on one's character and, when one's education is neglected or ignored, it has a negative effect on one's character.

Themistocles was attracted to oratory early in his education. He created and practiced mock speeches for himself, showing great promise, but he did not tend the aspects of education that formed character. Rather, he was confident in his natural ability alone (*Them.* 2.2). By depending on his natural abilities rather forming his character, even his speeches came to reflect his negative traits:

But in the first essays in youth he was uneven and unstable, since he gave his natural impulses free course, which, without due address and training, rush to violent extremes in the objects of their pursuit, and often degenerate; as he himself in later life confessed, when he said that even the wildest colts made very good horses, if only they got the proper breaking and training. (*Them.* 2.5 [Perrin, LCL])

¹⁶ Timothy E. Duff, "Models of Education in Plutarch," *JHS* 128 (2008): 1, 19.

Despite his practice and the attention he gave to oratory, because Themistocles spurned proper education and training, his speeches were less effective. Not only did the failure to tend proper education affect his speeches, it led to the indulgence of his natural inclinations toward violence and degeneracy. By indicating Themistocles's own reflection on his failures in his education, Plutarch asserts that, with proper training, even those who are by nature wild can be trained.

Though Plutarch describes public education negatively as “bands of boys” (τῶν τρεφομένων παίδων, *Ages.* 1.1.1 [Perrin, LCL]), he also affirms Quintilian's notion that competition with one's peers can have a positive effect on one's character.¹⁷ Plutarch describes Agesilaüs as “high-spirited.” He,

wishing to be first in all things, and having a vehemence and fury which none could contend with or overwhelm, on the other hand he had such a readiness to obey and such gentleness, that he did whatever was enjoined upon him, not at all from a sense of fear, but always from a sense of honour, and was more distressed by censure than he was oppressed by hardships. (*Ages.* 2.1. [Perrin, LCL])

One might expect a youth whose qualities include spiritedness, vehemence, and fury to be disobedient and aggressive rather than obedient. Agesilaüs's desire to be first with respect to his peers has a positive affect on his nature with respect to his education.

The importance of education in developing character is also revealed by Plutarch's high estimation of those who educate their children properly. Aemilius Paulus and Marcus Cato both sought to improve their sons via education. Aemilius “sought ... a reputation arising from valour, justice, and trustworthiness” (*Aem.* 2.3 [Perrin, LCL]) and was “neither spoiled and elated by the insolence which prosperity brings, nor humbled by adversity” (*Comp. Aem. Tim.* 2.5 [Perrin, LCL]). Throughout Aemilius's life, his

¹⁷ See Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.2.22-23.

character reveals his determination to pursue valour, justice, and trustworthiness, manifested prominently in his generosity toward the Roman people which precipitated his putting so much money in the treasury there was no need for taxes (*Aem.* 38.1). Aemilius also one saw to the education of his sons, which was more rigorous than his own (*Aem.* 6.5), showing Aemilius's concern for education. Cato educated his own son: "Cato wrought at the fair task of moulding and fashioning his son to virtue, finding his zeal blameless, and his spirit answering to his good natural parts" (*Cat. Min.* 21.2 [Perrin, LCL]). Plutarch lauds both Aemilius and Cato's efforts to educate their sons, an education that entailed both intellectual and moral education.

Oratory and the Lives

The relationship between education, *mimesis*, and character found in Plutarch finds some compelling similarities in Quintilian, as noted above. There also exists a striking similarity between the ways in which Quintilian and Plutarch view the orator. Quintilian is explicit that a good orator is necessarily a good man; for Plutarch, a good statesman will also be a good orator. Oratory is a necessary skill of the statesman; what distinguishes proper oratory from improper is one's underlying motivations: "It is necessary, indeed, that a political leader should prevail by reason of his eloquence but ignoble for him to admire and crave the fame that springs from his eloquence" (*Comp. Dem. Cic.* 2.3 [Perrin, LCL]). Plutarch finds fault with both the character and the oratory of those whose desire for fame (or money) motivates their speech; conversely, he upholds both the character and oratory of those whose motivation is the improvement of the state.

Oratory can be used to promote justice and support the state and is thus the business of the statesman. According to Plutarch, when individuals fail to use oratory in

the service of the state and serve their own interests instead, it affects both their oratory and their morality. Plutarch's attitude toward oratory is best revealed in his estimation of Demosthenes. Both Demosthenes and Cicero loved distinction (τὸ φιλότιμον) and lacked courage in war and danger (*Dem.* 3.3). Demosthenes's attraction to oratory was the result of gaining fame (*Dem.* 5.3), and his motivations in oratory were also financial: he sought to reclaim his inheritance (*Dem.* 1.1-2) and compromised a case for the sake of money (12.1-2). Despite his reputation as eloquent orator (*Dem.* 9.1-2), Plutarch describes Demosthenes's failures in speech. Demosthenes had "a certain weakness of voice and indistinctness of speech and shortness of breath which disturbed the sense of what he said by disjoining his sentences" (*Dem.* 6.3 [Perrin, LCL]). Demosthenes, as a result of his unfavorable reception, sought to remedy his situation by extravagant means: he created an underground study where he rehearsed his speeches (*Dem.* 7.3) and spoke with pebbles in his mouth (*Dem.* 11.2). Plutarch highlights the discrepancy between Demosthenes's efforts in his speech and his efforts in war: "in the battle [against the Macedonians], he displayed no conduct that was honourable or consonant with his words, but forsook his post, cast away his arms, and ran away most disgracefully" (*Dem.* 20.2 [Perrin, LCL]). Demosthenes, who was weak in speech and in body, also shows cowardice in battle according to Plutarch.¹⁸ When Demosthenes, however, used his speech to defend the Greeks against Philip, "he quickly won a reputation and was lifted to a conspicuous place by the boldness of his speeches" (*Dem.* 12.4 [Perrin, LCL]). Plutarch offers an extended discussion on Demosthenes's weakness as an orator and his cowardice

¹⁸ See also Cato, of whom Plutarch says, "The influence which Cato's oratory won for him waxed great, and men called him a Roman Demosthenes; but his manner of life was even more talked about and noised abroad" (4.1 [Perrin, LCL]).

in war but interprets Demosthenes's speech differently when it is in the service of the state. When he uses his speech for the defense of the state, Demosthenes's boldness, rather than his weakness, comes forth in his speech.

Cicero, similarly to Demosthenes, was attracted to the recognition that oratory brings but his desire for praise often "confounded his saner reasonings" (*Cic.* 6.5 [Perrin, LCL]) and his oratory sometimes led him to disregard propriety (*Cic.* 25.1). The flaws in his oratory at least to an extent, match these flaws in his character. Plutarch relates "it is said that [Cicero], too, no less than Demosthenes, was weak in his delivery" (*Cic.* 5.3 [Perrin, LCL]). At the same time, Plutarch acknowledges Cicero's reputation for integrity and fairness (*Cic.* 9.1). He also notes, when used rightly, oratory behooves the statesman:

For this man beyond all others showed the Romans how great a charm eloquence adds to the right, and that justice is invincible if it is correctly put into words, and that it behooves the careful statesman always in his acts to choose the right instead of the agreeable, and in his words to take away all vexatious features from what is advantageous. (*Cic.* 13.1 [Perrin, LCL])¹⁹

According to Plutarch, the statesman must utilize his rhetorical skills to serve justice, to choose the right, and to promulgate advantageous action.

The good statesman, for Plutarch, is also a good orator. Among those who garner this distinction from Plutarch are Pericles, Fabius Maximus, and Caesar. Plutarch upholds both these individuals' oratory and their character. According to Plutarch, Pericles

used the people's hopes and fears, like rudders, so to speak, giving timely check to their arrogance, and allaying and comforting their despair. Thus he proved that rhetoric, or the art of speaking, is, to use Plato's words, 'an enchantment of the soul,' and that her chiefest business is a careful study of the affections and

¹⁹ Compare Agesilaüs, who, "in his discourse he was always declaring that justice was the first of the virtues; for valour was of no use unless justice attended it, and if all men should be just, there would be no need of valour ... yet in his acts he no longer observed these opinions, but was often carried away by ambition and contentiousness" (*Ages.* 23.5 [Perrin, LCL]). According to Plutarch, one ought not crave reputation based on mere words (*Cat. Min.* 22.4). Here, Plutarch characterizes negatively those whose words do not match their action. See Theophrastus's notions of dissembling (*Char.* 1, especially 1.4).

passions ... The reason for his success was not his power as a speaker merely, but ... the reputation of his life and the confidence reposed in him as one who was manifestly proven to be utterly disinterested and superior to bribes. He made the city ... the greatest and richest of all cities and grew it to be superior in power to kings and tyrants. (*Per.* 15.4-5 [Perrin, LCL])

Plutarch praises Pericles's use of rhetoric to guide the "rabble," but this is not the chief reason for Pericles's success, despite Plutarch's repeated indications of his abilities as an orator (*Per.* 5.1, 8.1). Rather, Pericles's success stems from his reputation (*Per.* 1.4, see also *Caes.* 3.2).

Fabius Maximus and Caesar receive a similar estimation from Plutarch. Their success comes from their capacity as rhetors and their military prowess. According to Plutarch, a successful leader of the state will be an able rhetor and good military leader. Fabius Maximus was successful because he trained his body for war and his voice for speech, which he utilized to persuade the people (*Fab.* 1.5). Caesar, similarly, cultivated his talent for oratory and also showed promise in politics and war (*Caes.* 3.1-2). Caesar, unlike Fabius Maximus, gave greater prominence to his campaigns and political activities, whereby he gained his political superiority.²⁰

For Plutarch, good statesmen were also good orators. Individuals who utilized their oratory for the sake of justice and for the sake of the state tended to receive positive regard, as in the case of Pericles, Fabius, and Caesar. Those whose speech is motivated by the love of glory or money Plutarch regards as lacking in their rhetorical capacities, as highlighted in Plutarch's portrayal of Demosthenes's early career.

²⁰ See Antony, who received a negative reception from Plutarch, both in terms of his capacity in war and in speech: "he soon became sated with [Clodius'] madness, and fearing the party which was forming against him, left Italy for Greece, where he spent some time in military exercises and the study of oratory. He adopted what was called the Asiatic style of oratory ... which ... bore a strong resemblance to his own life, which was swashbuckling and boastful (κομπώδη καὶ φρυαγματίαν), full of empty exultation and distorted ambition" (*Ant.* 2.4-5 [Perrin, LCL]).

Typified Elements within the Lives

It is important to note that by “typified elements,” I am not suggesting that Plutarch was directly dependent upon Theophrastus’s *Characters*, though Plutarch cites Theophrastus with some regularity.²¹ Rather, it is a nod toward the ways in which virtues and vices in Plutarch are often associated with other virtuous or vicious behaviors. Unlike the presentations of typified traits in rhetorical treatises, *progymnasmata*, and Theophrastus, Plutarch nuances the relationship between virtues and vices; for Plutarch, great natures exhibit both (*Dem.* 1.8).

Courage and cowardice. Plutarch continues to frame his estimation of behavior in light of what is becoming (or not becoming) of a statesman. Plutarch frames courage as a behavior befitting the statesman and cowardice unbecoming of a statesman. Plutarch praises Fabius Maximus, for example, for “having a spirit and a dignity of character that fully matched the greatness of the office and being moreover at the time of life when bodily vigour still suffices to carry out the counsels of the mind, and courage works together with prudence (συγκέκραται τῷ φρονίμῳ τὸ θαρραλέον)” (*Fab.* 3.6 [Perrin, LCL]). This quality enables Fabius Maximus to stay the course with his army and renders him invulnerable to others’ opinions, slander, and unjust censure (*Fab.* 3.6).²² Plutarch also regards Aemilius Paulus as showing courage in battle and when his sons die. Courage is necessary to endure the whims of Fortune as well (*Aem.* 36.1). Plutarch associates courage with virtue, as shown by Cato the Younger who possessed zeal and

²¹ *Per.* 23.1; *Sulla* 26.1-2; *Dem.* 17.3; *Them.* 25.1, 36.6.

²² Cf., *Pomp.*, 14.6 and *Fab.* 3.6.

discipline in virtue (τῇ προθυμίᾳ καὶ ἀσκήσει τῆς ἀρετῆς), along with good discipline and self-control (εὐταξίαν καὶ ἐγκράτειαν) (*Cat. Min.* 8.1-2). Plutarch thus associates courage with other virtuous behaviors, including prudence, discipline, and self-control.

By contrast, Plutarch frequently associates cowardice with other vices. In most cases, Plutarch associates cowardice with fleeing from battle, as in the cases of Demetrius and Demosthenes. I have already discussed Demetrius's negative reception from Plutarch (*Demetr.* 1.3-6). Cowardice is highlighted among Demetrius's vices. Plutarch reports that Demetrius fled battle on multiple occasions (*Demetr.* 44.6-7; 49.3). Plutarch associates Demetrius's cowardice with losing his power and his wrecked fortunes (*Demetr.* 45.1). Plutarch reports that, after a poorly-received speech, Euonymus castigates Demetrius for "throwing himself away out of weakness and lack of courage (ἀτολμίας καὶ μαλακίας), neither facing the multitude with boldness, nor preparing his body for these forensic contests, but suffering it to wither away in slothful neglect (τροφῇ περιορῶν)" (*Dem.* 6.4 [Perrin, LCL]). The tendency to flee from difficult situations continues into adulthood for Demosthenes; though he takes pains to become bold in speech, Demosthenes shows cowardice in battle, which Plutarch regards as dishonorable and inconsonant with his words (*Dem.* 20.2).

The behaviors Plutarch associates with courage entail virtue, prudence, and discipline. The behaviors Plutarch associates with cowardice include laziness, wrecked fortunes, and loss of power. Cowardice does not necessarily rule out the capacity for doing good. Demetrius, though cowardly, receives credit for bringing the Greek cities into league with one another (*Demetr.* 23.1).

Generosity and greed. Plutarch frequently associates generosity and greed with other virtuous and vicious behaviors, respectively. Fabius Maximus shows generosity to Marcus Minucius and those who oppose him, which leads to him gain victory over Hannibal. Fabius Maximus's behavior, according to Marcus Minucius, not only exhibited generosity but also wisdom and kindness. Fabius Maximus was an example to those who opposed him (*Fab.* 13.4). Alexander, whom Plutarch consistently holds in positive regard, shows generosity to Darius by providing for his wife's funeral, even as Alexander was making preparations for war against him (*Alex.* 30.3-5). According to Plutarch, Alexander's generous behaviors increased as his wealth increased (*Alex.* 39.1). In these cases, Plutarch heightens the generosity of his subjects by showing their munificent behaviors in the face of opposition.

In the case of others, such as Aemilius Paulus, Plutarch utilizes generosity to highlight his other positive characteristics. Aemilius Paulus, who put so much money in the treasury taxes were not needed, possesses freedom of spirit and greatness of soul (*Aem.* 38.1). The reason he was praised, according to Plutarch is that "he would not consent even to look upon the quantities of silver and the quantities of gold that were gathered together from the royal treasuries, but handed them over to the quaestors for the public chest" (*Aem.* 28.6 [Perrin, LCL]). Aemilius's generosity illustrates his greatness of soul: He sought the wealth of the state rather than personal gain.

Lack of generosity and greed, however, are not becoming of the statesman, and often lead to other problems. Plutarch reports Themistocles's generous behaviors, but ultimately portrays him as greedy: "Some say that was an eager money-maker because of his liberality; for since he was fond of entertaining, and lavished money splendidly on his

guests, he required a generous budget. Others, on the contrary, denounce his great stinginess and parsimony, claiming that he used to sell the very food sent in to him as a gift” (*Them.* 5.1 [Perrin, LCL]). Plutarch goes on to describe the faults in Themistocles’s character, including his ambition and ostentation (*Them.* 5.2). Later, Plutarch reports that Themistocles increased the privileges of the common people against the nobles (*Them.* 19.4) and attempted to exact money from allies (*Them.* 21.1).²³

Greed can also lead to events that reflect negatively on one’s character. Demosthenes’s passion for gold led ultimately to his imprisonment, from which he escaped and lived in exile, only to eventually poison himself (*Dem.* 25.3-4). Demetrius’s greed precipitated his lawless behavior (*Demetr.* 27.1-2) and immoderate reception of honors (*Demetr.* 30.5). He vexed his subjects with his luxurious living (*Demetr.* 42.1). Plutarch includes Demetrius among worthless kings (φάυλοις βασιλεῦσι), and indicates that “wicked and foolish are they, not only because they seek after luxury and pleasure instead of virtue and honor, but also because they do not even know how to enjoy real pleasure or true luxury” (*Demetr.* 42.3 [Perrin, LCL]). Demetrius, even though he sought luxury and craved gold, did not understand how to enjoy it because of his greed.

Ambition, love of glory, and love of honor. I now turn my attention to three similar behaviors: ambition, love of glory, and love of honor. In many cases, these characteristics travel together. All three are detrimental when placed in service of the

²³ Themistocles was not all bad, however: “But the greatest of all his achievements was his putting a stop to Hellenic wars, and reconciling Hellenic cities with one another, persuading them to postpone their mutual hatreds because of the foreign war. To which end, they say, Cheileos the Arcadian most seconded his efforts” (*Them.* 6.3 [Perrin, LCL]).

individual statesman because they can distract one from the task of leading. Conversely, when statesmen use these behaviors to inspire service to the state, they receive a positive reception.

According to Plutarch, ambition is typically detrimental to a statesman. In his comparison of Aristides and Cato, Plutarch indicates “Freedom from ambition is no slight requisite for the gentleness which should mark a statesman; and, on the contrary, ambition is harsh, and the greatest fomentor of envy” (*Comp. Arist. Cat.* 5.3 [Perrin, LCL]). Though a frequent quality among the *novus hominibus*, ambition is at odds with the statesman. In his discussion of Lysander and his ambition to take the throne from Agesilaüs, Plutarch goes further in his estimation of ambition: “ambitious natures in a commonwealth if they do not observe due bounds, work greater harm than good” (*Ages.* 8.4 [Perrin, LCL]). Plutarch holds that Agesilaüs should have anticipated Lysander, but nevertheless casts aspersions upon Lysander’s ploy for the throne.

Ambition could also lead one astray in his efforts as a statesman. After several misfortunes, Demetrius began drinking heavily. Plutarch comments that his behavior was either the result of trying to smother his present condition or “because he had convinced himself that this was the real life, which he had long desired and striven to attain, but had foolishly missed it through folly and empty ambition, thereby bringing many troubles upon himself, and many upon others” (*Demetr.* 52.2 [Perrin, LCL]). Assuming the latter of Plutarch’s possibilities was the case, ambition led Demetrius to bring troubles upon himself and others. By contrast, when Pericles spent public funds excessively, it was unclear whether his behavior was inspired magnanimity or ambition (*Per.* 14.1-2). For Caesar, ambition was a good thing because it inspired more achievements (*Caes.* 58.2).

Statesmen who are lovers of glory do not fare well in Plutarch's estimation of them. In his comparison of Agis and Cleonmenes, Plutarch rails against such attraction:

For such men, consorting with glory, which we may call an image of virtue (εἰδῶλω τῇ δόξει), produce nothing that is genuine and of true lineage, but much that is bastard and monstrous (νόθα καὶ μικτὰ πολλὰ πράττουσιν), being swept now long one course and now along another in their attempts to satisfy desire and passion." (*Comp. Ag. Cleom. cum Ti. Gracch.* 1.1 [Perrin, LCL])²⁴

Plutarch continues by describing the statesman who follows after glory as a slave of the multitude, which also highlights his supposition that those who chase after glory risk surrendering their better judgment for the sake of what is advantageous to their craving for glory.²⁵ On the other hand, Plutarch upholds the man who has no need of glory: "The man, indeed, whose goodness is complete and perfect (ἀπηκριβωμένος καὶ τελείως ἀγαθός) will have no need at all of glory, except so far as the glory gives him access to achievement by reason of the confidence men have in him." (*Ag. Cleom.* 2.1). Whereas the love of glory can lead one astray from one's better judgment, the man who has no need of it is a better leader.²⁶

Plutarch affirms love of honor (φιλοτιμία) when it is in the service of the state, as in the case of Caesar inspiring his army (*Caes.* 17.1). The same characteristic, when one uses it for his own glory, could lead the statesman astray. In the case of Pompey, love of honor brought with it other undesirable behaviors, including dissimulation and ambition (*Pomp.* 30.6). Themistocles, though Plutarch recounts his memorable words and deeds, he

²⁴ See also Alexander, who restrained his passion in a kingly manner (*Alex.* 21.4).

²⁵ Plutarch describes Pompey as having done just this: in following after his friends' hopes and impulses, he abandons his own plans, "a thing which even in the master of a ship, to say nothing of a general in sole command of so many nations and armies, would have been unbecoming" (*Pom.* 67.4).

²⁶ See also *Cic.*, 6.5.

did not receive honors not at the proper time but strategically accepted them so that others might regard him as great and powerful (*Them.* 18.1).²⁷

Obsequiousness and flattery. Though obsequiousness and flattery are not traits that feature prominently among Plutarch's subjects, Plutarch highlights the ills of those who are vulnerable to obsequiousness and flattery. Demetrius once again comes to prominence among those who associate with flatterers and the obsequious. As to the latter, Plutarch downplays the honors received by Demetrius from the Athenians by presenting Stratocles as responsible for conceiving them. Plutarch regards Stratocles as not only a flatterer, continuing in the line of heaping vicious behaviors upon one another, but also as audacious (παράτολμος), scurrilous (βωμολοχίαν), and a buffoon (βδελρίαν) who lived an abandoned life (βιβιωκῶς ἀσελγῶς) (*Demetr.* 11.1-2). By comparison, Plutarch praises Pericles for having resisted obsequious allies (*Comp. Per. Fab.* 3.4).

Demetrius also employs flatterers who take it upon themselves to mislead others. Upon a praiseworthy victory over Menelaüs, Demetrius sends the arch-flatterer Aristodemus of Miletus, one of King Antigonos's friends, to announce the victory (*Demeter.* 9.2). As Aristodemus approaches King Antigonos with news of victory, he is guilty not only of flattery but dissimulation: he approaches the king downcast, as if the battle had been lost. In response, King Antigonos vows his deed will not go unpunished

²⁷ See also Aristides, who "was gentle by nature, and a conservative in character. He engaged in public life, not to win favour or reputation, but to secure the best results consistent with safety and righteousness, and so he was compelled ... to oppose [Themistokles] often, and to take a firm stand against his increasing influence" (*Them.* 3.2 [Perrin, LCL]).

(*Demetr.* 17.5). In this case, the statesman who trusts flatterers as friends is led astray by their dissimulation.

Those who are vulnerable to flattery likewise find their desire for praise leads them astray. Antony, vulnerable to the praises of flatterers, “seized property from well-born men (εὐγενεῖς ἀνθρώπους) and gave it as a gift to flatterers and scoundrels (μαστιγίαις καὶ κόλαξι)” (*Ant.* 24.4 [Perrin, LCL]). Plutarch goes on to intimate that Antony is unintelligent in his inability to detect flattery: “For he could not believe that those who used bold speech in jest could flatter him in earnest, and so was easily captivated by their praises, not knowing that some men would mingle bold speech, like a piquant sauce, with flattery, and thus would take away from flattery its cloying character” (*Ant.* 24.7-8 [Perrin, LCL]). In the event that one does not recognize Plutarch’s suggestion that Antony is not particularly intelligent, he indicates that Antony is slow of perception (βραδεῖα αἴσθησις), even if eager to repent of his ills (*Ant.* 24.6). Plutarch regards Antony as responsible for his own downfall, listening to the flattery of some and abandoning the goodwill and confidence of others (*Comp. Demetr. Ant.* 4.3, 6.1).

Those who are not fooled by flattery receive praise. In the election of Aemilius Paulus, Plutarch discusses the temptation of the Roman people to choose a general on the basis of flattery. Here, Plutarch praises the Roman people for having “passed by the flatterers” to choose “a general who had resolution and frankness of speech,” which leads to Plutarch’s regard for Rome as a servant of virtue and honor (ἀρετῆς καὶ τοῦ καλοῦ δοῦλος) (*Aem.* 11.3 [Perrin, LCL]). The people, in their choice of Aemilius Paulus, reveal the capacity to resist the temptation toward flattery.

Coming to the aid of misdeeds. Finally, it is unbecoming of a statesman to come to the aid of misdeeds. In many cases, this vice tended to relate to one's behavior toward friends' vices. Coming to the aid of the misdeeds of one's friends leads one's association with their misdeeds. Agesilaüs, for example, "could not bring himself to censure his friends when they did amiss, but actually prided himself on aiding them and sharing in their misdeeds" (*Ages.* 5.1 [Perrin, LCL]). When Phoebidas began war during a time of peace, Agesilaüs "did not scruple to come to the help of Phoebidas, and to openly say that they must consider whether the act itself was serviceable or not" (*Ages.* 23.5 [Perrin, LCL]). The justification of Phoebidas's behavior leads Plutarch to intimate Agesilaüs's views on justice and valor were at odds with his own behavior (*Ages.* 23.5), which was carried away by ambition and contentiousness (*Ages.* 23.6).

Antony also had friends who exhibited vicious behaviors, but Plutarch describes Antony's relationship with Cleopatra as the most troublesome because he confers shameful honors upon her (τὸ αἰσχρὸν τῶν τιμῶν ἀνιάρωτατον) (*Ant.* 36.3). Antony was "adept at putting a good face on shameful deeds," which Antony exhibits in his justification of fathering two children by Cleopatra (*Ant.* 36.3-4). According to Plutarch, Cleopatra led Antony to "drop from his hands great undertakings (μεγάλας πράξεις) and necessary campaigns (στρατείας ἀναγκαίας)" (*Comp. Demetr. Ant.* 3.3 [Perrin, LCL]) and brought upon him the greatest of his evils (*Comp. Demetr. Ant.* 4.1).

There is danger for the individual who comes to the aid of those who do misdeeds. Agesilaüs was associated with and a party to such misdeeds, including justifying war during a time of peace. Plutarch negatively estimates Antony's attempts to

justify his behaviors associated his relationship with Cleopatra. For all his other faults, Plutarch regards Antony's relationship with Cleopatra as the most egregious fault.

Nuancing the Typical Behaviors

Plutarch does not present the individuals about whom he writes as all good or all bad. Recall his view that those who possess great virtues also possess great vices (*Dem.* 1.8). It is significant that Plutarch makes this claim within his discussion of Demosthenes, whom he portrays negatively, as though to show assumptions that figures are either all good or all bad. In this section, I engage Themistocles and Agesilaüs as representative examples of the way in which Plutarch's characters receive nuance beyond the typified elements.

Plutarch describes Themistocles from the start as impetuous (*Them.* 2.1) and failing to tend the aspects of education that would form his character for the better (*Them.* 2.2), a veritable "wild colt" of a boy (*Them.* 2.5) who lacked proper training. Some viewed Themistocles as generous and good and others as parsimonious and miserly:

Some say that Themistocles was an eager money-maker because of his liberality; for since he was fond of entertaining, and lavished money splendidly on his guests, he required a generous budget. Others, on the contrary, denounce his great stinginess and parsimony, claiming that he used to sell the very food sent in to him as a gift. When Philides the horse-breeder was asked by him for a colt and would not give it, Themistocles threatened speedily to make his house a wooden horse; thereby darkly intimating that he would stir up accusations against him in his own family, and lawsuits between the man and those of his own household. (*Them.* 5.1 [Perrin, LCL])

Plutarch nuances Themistocles's characterization. Themistocles shows elements of both liberality and of miserliness. In addition to the other negative traits, Plutarch portrays Themistocles as ostentatious (*Them.* 5.2) and indicates that he comes to the aid of commoners in court (*Them.* 5.5) and infringes the purity of speech (*Them.* 6.3). Despite

these traits, Plutarch does not present Themistocles as all good or all bad, but rather, nuances his behaviors. Themistocles put a stop to the Hellenic wars, reconciled the Hellenic cities, and enticed them to join forces against the Persians (*Them.* 6.3), all of which are significant accomplishments. By portraying him as neither all good or all bad, Plutarch presents Themistocles as a realistic character with both great vices and great virtues.

Plutarch associates Agesilaüs with various negative traits because he does not observe the bounds of appropriate behavior with respect to his social situation or his age. As Lysander attempts to wrest the throne from Agesilaüs, Agesilaüs responds poorly, and Plutarch comments: “Agesilaüs must surely have known another and more blameless way of correcting a man of high repute and ambition when he erred” (*Ages.* 8.4 [Perrin, LCL]). Agesilaüs, even worse, does not correct his friends in their wrongdoings. Rather than observing the bounds of decorum, joins them in their (bad) behavior (*Ages.* 5.1-2). Agesilaüs does not observe the appropriate bounds for his age when he prepares for war when he is advanced in age. Plutarch comments “Honourable action has its fitting time and season; nay, rather, it is the observance of the due bounds that constitutes the difference between honourable and base actions” (*Ages.* 36.3 [Perrin, LCL]), suggesting that Agesilaüs’s decision to go to war is a base action. Agesilaüs, however, also shows magnanimity in bequeathing a portion of his estates to his family upon noticing their poverty (*Ages.* 4.1) and comes to the aid of Phoebidas, who begins war during a time of peace (*Ages.* 23.4). Plutarch regards Agesilaüs, for all his faults, as a better leader and a better general than Pompey (*Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 3.3-4.3). In terms of political virtue, Agesilaüs had in mind the common good rather than personal gain: “with an eye to the

welfare of his country he renounced such great fame and power as no man won before or since his day, except Alexander” (*Comp. Ages. Pomp.* 2.3 [Perrin, LCL]). Surpassed only by Alexander in seeking the welfare of his country, Agesilaüs’s character receives significant nuance from the wild colt of a boy the reader met at the beginning of his life, showing—once again—both greatness of virtue and of vice.

Plutarch shows in his *Lives* the ways in which great virtue and vice travel together. Themistocles and Agesilaüs, rather than being the exception to the portrayal of individuals in the *Lives*, are representative thereof. The *Lives* reveal not only typified elements in their portrayal of individuals, but rather, combinations of typified elements that serve to nuance the characters, rendering them more convincingly human than would be the case if he had presented them as only praiseworthy or only blameworthy.

Concluding Remarks

In his *Lives*, Plutarch reveals some similar concerns to those encountered in the Chapter Two. With education and the statesman as orator figuring prominently, it seems Plutarch offers a nod toward the Greek *paideia*. In his portrayal of characters, Plutarch combines typified elements in a way that acknowledges the association of negative character traits with positive. Plutarch’s portrayal of these characters resists neatly fitting into designations of being either praiseworthy or blameworthy. Rather, Plutarch presents the individuals in his *Lives* as simultaneously having the capacity for both great virtue and vulnerable to great vice.

Ancient Novels

Debates surrounding the ancient Greek romances/novels are many and varied. These include the genre and development thereof, the possible audience(s) for the novels, the use (or lack thereof) of rhetorical techniques, and characterization.²⁸ Many of the debates surrounding the romances, at their core, pertain to the subject matter of the novels. The novels typically present two young (beautiful) people falling in love, encountering hardship (often associated with an extended journey motif and separation), facing struggles that might precipitate the end of their relationship, and, finally, reuniting.²⁹ On the surface, the novels do not appear to offer what the expected mimetic quality we have seen in the other literature considered thus far. Rather, the authors of the romances are more concerned with entertainment and the audiences' investment in the heroines and heroes than presenting moral examples to emulate.

As to the last two debates, the romances reveal characterization and rhetorical techniques that suggest some level of interaction—even if not direct awareness of—the “theoretical” components discussed in Chapter Two. It seems appropriate to include a discussion of the ancient novels as I continue to investigate the ways in which characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation came together in the first century. In what follows, I focus my discussion on the readership (and the education thereof), the relationship between the novels and rhetoric, and characterization. I then consider the

²⁸ The possible connections between the romances and the Gospels might begin to be drawn here, inasmuch as many of the same debates feature in Gospels scholarship. Ramelli, further, suggests that there may be a similar morality and *Weltanschauung* in the New Testament and the novels (Ilaria Ramelli, “The Ancient Novels and the New Testament: Possible Contacts,” in *Ancient Narrative* 5, ed. Maaïke Zimmerman et al. [Groningen; Eelde: Barkhuis, 2007]: 57).

²⁹ Longus's *Daphnis and Chloe* is a notable exception to the extended journey motif, though Chloe is kidnapped for a time (*Daphn.* 2.20).

ways in which Chariton's *Callirhoe*, which is nearest to the New Testament in contemporaneity, presents these aspects.³⁰

Audience

One's image of the Greco-Roman world when the novels came to the fore shapes the ways one locates the novels as literature and, in some cases, the readership of the novels. The early consensus that the elite were not the primary audience of the novels has recently given way to the notion that the readership of the novels is the same as other literature of the time, including history, epic, and other "high-brow" literature.³¹

Hägg regards the readership as attracting similar audiences as the mystery religions and Christianity. He also holds that significant part of the readership was women.³² Hägg contends that readership of the novels was unsophisticated and argues that the way a less educated readership would encounter the novels was via public readings thereof.³³ Perry likewise assigns to the novels a non-elite readership and posits a readership of juveniles and the poor-in-spirit and other similarly "frivolous-minded

³⁰ I refer to *De Chaerea et Callirhoe* as *Callirhoe* because she is the most prominent character in the novel.

³¹ As to the traditional consensus, see Tomas Hägg, *The Novel in Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 90, 93. To be fair, Hägg does go on to nuance his claim, holding open the possibility for an educated readership, and seeing in the novelists an effort to maintain classical values (*The Novel in Antiquity*, 98). While Stephens holds it would have been possible for public readings of the novels to have occurred, she thinks this argument is undercut by the presence of other accounts of public readings and/or performances by rhetoricians, reasoning that if we have indications of public readings/performances of other works, we would likewise have indications of public readings of the novels (Susan A. Stephens, "Who Read Ancient Novels?" in *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. James Tatum [Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994], 409). Perry, in his view of the dominant academic forces in the first century, argues that the novels were an embarrassment to the other literature of the era (see n. 4).

³² Hägg, *Novel*, 95-96.

³³ Hägg, *Novel*, 93.

people.”³⁴ For both Hägg and Perry, the subject matter of the novels seems to condition their estimation of the novels’ audiences.

Recently, scholars have expressed the view that the assertions that a female, juvenile, or otherwise “frivolous-minded” audience is untenable. These arguments insinuate that the previous consensus is guilty of mirror-reading twentieth century academic concerns into the ancient novels. Bowie suggests this is an effort to undermine the claims of or cast doubts upon the literature.³⁵ Whitmarsh suggests that the desire to assign to the novels a non-male or non-elite readership to the novels is reflective of the concerns of contemporary academia.³⁶ Instead, based on the expensive papyri used for printing the fragments, Whitmarsh suggests an elite readership.³⁷ In keeping with the earlier consensus, Stephens argues that most of the non-elite lacked time and resources to garner sufficient literacy to read the novels, which she believes would have taken several years.³⁸ Functional literacy in the first century, however, suggests that the non-elite were

³⁴ Ben E. Perry, *The Ancient Romances: A Literary-Historical Account of Their Origins*, Sather Classical Lectures 37 [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967], 4-5). He regards as the purpose of the novels the edification of “little girls and boys” (16, 98).

³⁵ Ewen Bowie, “The Readership of Greek Novels in the Ancient World,” in *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. James Tatum (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 436.

³⁶ Tim Whitmarsh, “Class,” in *The Cambridge Companion to The Greek and Roman Novel* (New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 73. Leaving open the possibility for Hägg’s suggestion of public readings of the novels, Whitmarsh concedes that we cannot assume an exclusively elite audience (72, 87). Stephens argues similarly that denigrating the readership of novels on the basis of a perception of their romantic nature or fanciful tales are reflective of cultural prejudice (Stephens, “Who Read Ancient Novels?” 415).

³⁷ Whitmarsh, “Class,” 72, 87, respectively. Ruiz-Montero remains agnostic as to the readership of the novels but instead focuses on the widespread nature of the fragments discovered as evidence for a wide reception (Consuelo Ruiz-Montero, “The Rise of the Greek Novel,” in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, Gareth Schmeling and Graham Anderson, eds., Mnemosyne Supplements 159 [Boston: Brill, 1996], 85).

³⁸ Stephens, “Who Read Ancient Novels?” 407. Anderson who argues the sophistication and structure of the novels suggests an educated readership (Graham Anderson, “Popular and Sophisticated in the Ancient Novel,” in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, Gareth Schmeling and Graham Anderson, eds., Mnemosyne Supplements 159 [Boston: Brill, 1996], 108) but also sees possibilities for a middlebrow

familiar with elite literature, illustrated by the various graffiti of the opening lines of the *Aeneid* scrawled on walls in Pompeii and Herculaneum. This functional literacy reveals the relative accessibility of elite literature, which ought to give one pause before designating a particular audience—whether elite or non-elite—to the novels, whether on the basis of their subject matter, their accessibility, or the education required to apprehend them.³⁹

The Novels, Rhetoric, and Characterization

Part of the shift in the attitude toward the readership of the novels arises from the perceived sophistication of rhetorical techniques in the novels. Typically, the perception of the sophistic novels is that they present sophisticated rhetoric, whereas the estimation of the pre-sophistic novels is that they are more simplistic in terms of their rhetoric and their allusions,⁴⁰ for which Anderson offers a helpful corrective, arguing that pre-sophistic is not necessarily indicative of the presence (or lack thereof) of rhetorical

audience for *Callirhoe* (111). He more recently, however, indicates the audience of *Callirhoe* is most likely “cultivated private reading” (Graham Anderson, “Chariton: Individuality and Stereotype,” in *A Companion to the Ancient Novel*, Edmund P. Cueva and Shannon N. Byrne, eds. [Oxford: Blackwell, 2014], 23). Bowie likewise holds that both the early and sophistic novels were aimed at an educated readership, “The Ancient Readers of the Greek Novels,” 105-106. Cueva argues, on the basis of literary allusions and myth and the subtlety of the novels is suggestive of at least *some* of the audience as having been educated (Edmund P. Cueva, *The Myths of Fiction: Studies in the Canonical Greek Novels* [Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004], 92).

³⁹ I am indebted to Dr. Bruce Longenecker for his keen eye for graffiti and his knowledge of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

⁴⁰ Hägg regards rhetoric as central in the sophistic novels: “Of central importance in the rebirth of the classical spirit were the schools, which had concentrated more and more on rhetoric. ‘Rhetoric’ was as necessary and prestigious a part of a good education as the ‘humanities’ were until recently in our own educational tradition. Rhetoric forms and cultivates the mind ... it is to the soul what gymnastics and medicine are to the body. The sophist was responsible for formal training offered by the schools, but at the same time he also taught philosophy and morals” (*Novel*, 106).

features.⁴¹ Rather, as Laird suggests, rhetoric is central to understanding ancient fiction.⁴²

Ruiz-Montero goes even further, regarding ancient novels and rhetoric as inseparable from the novel's inception.⁴³

Related to the discussion of rhetoric in the novels is the discussion of the Greek *paideia* and the progymnasmata. Hock holds that the progymnasmata reveal some of the conventions of thought for both readers and authors of the novels.⁴⁴ Ruiz-Montero regards the progymnasmata as “collaborat[ing] in the construction of the fictional genre” and the means by which authors expressed their creativity and talent.⁴⁵ Reardon regards Chariton as well-educated based on his awareness of the Greek *paideia*, which is exemplified in his allusions to Greek literature within *Callirhoe*.⁴⁶ Ruiz-Montero, in an examination of the Progymnasmata of Aelius Theon and *Callirhoe*, sees evidence for the mimetic aspects of literature present in other literature of the time.⁴⁷

⁴¹ Anderson, “Individuality and Stereotype,” 16.

⁴² Andrew Laird, “Approaching Style and Rhetoric,” in *The Cambridge Companion to The Greek and Roman Novel*, ed. Tim Whitmarsh (New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 210, 216.

⁴³ Ruiz-Montero, “The Rise of the Greek Novel,” 68.

⁴⁴ Ronald Hock, “The Rhetoric of Romance,” in *The Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 400 B.C.-A.D. 300*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Boston: Brill, 1997), 454-455.

⁴⁵ Ruiz-Montero, “The Rise of the Greek Novel,” 67.

⁴⁶ Bryan P. Reardon, “Major Authors Greek (A-E) and Roman (F-H),” in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, Gareth Schmeling and Graham Anderson, eds., Mnemosyne Supplements 159 (Boston: Brill, 1996), 323-324.

⁴⁷ Consuelo Ruiz-Montero, “Caritón de Afrodísias y los Ejercicios Preparatorios de Elio Téon,” in *Actes del IX^e Simposi de la Seccio Catalana de la SEES: St. Feliu de Guixols, 13-16 d’Abril de 1988* 2 (Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 1991), 710. In terms of specific exercises, Hernandez Lara sees in Chariton evidence of various rhetorical features including *anaphorē*, *paranomasia*, *polyptōton*, *homoiooteleuton*, *isocolon*, *antithesis*, and concludes, “The author is conscious of the rhetorical precepts of the time and uses them. Of course, his style is not so extreme as the one in the so-called sophistic romances, but the presence of Rhetoric is unquestionable” (Carlos Hernandez Lara, “Rhetorical Aspects of Chariton of Aphrodisias,” *Giornale Italiano di filologia* 42 [1990]: 274). Hock argues that the presence of ῥητορικὰ

DeTemmerman links the use of character types with rhetorical education, though he argues the characters presented in the novels extend beyond the types.⁴⁸ Reardon sees the types as stemming from New Comedy types, including the “hapless heroine, vapid hero, villain, resourceful slave, rival, noble seigneur.”⁴⁹ Billault argues that some of the characters are developed from the types but in the case of others, the genre creates them, among whom are the dutiful policeman, the parents, and bandits.⁵⁰ The typical characters, according to Billault, have social position and personal features and are compared with gods and heroes, which intimates their individualization.⁵¹

Callirhoe

In order to gain another perspective on the ways in which rhetorical features and characterization played out in practice, I now turn to Chariton’s *Callirhoe*. *Callirhoe* is significant because it sets the stage for many of the novels that follow. The basic plot of *Callirhoe* involves two young characters who fall in love upon first sight, encounter difficulties associated with an extended travel motif, nearly lose one another, and are reunited at the end of the novel. *Callirhoe*, through its concern for education, its presentation of rhetorical features, and characterization, relates to some of the key aspects

in the romances is crucial in terms of understanding the attitudes and motivations of the characters (Ronald Hock, “The Rhetoric of Romance,” 457).

⁴⁸ Koen de Temmerman, “Where Philosophy and Rhetoric Meet: Character Typification in the Greek Novel,” in *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel*, J.R. Morgan and Meriel Jones, eds., Ancient Narrative Supplementum 10 (Groningen; Eelde: Barkhuis, 2007), 108.

⁴⁹ Reardon, “Chariton,” 331

⁵⁰ Alain Billault, “Characterization in the Ancient Novel,” in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, Gareth Schmeling and Graham Anderson, eds., Mnemosyne Supplements 159 (Boston: Brill, 1996), 117.

⁵¹ Billault, “Characterization in the Ancient Novel,” 122

of the theoretical understanding of characterization, rhetoric, and concern for the behavior of its (noble) characters. In the following sections, I trace these aspects of *Callirhoe*, entertaining the notion that Chariton represents a mimetic quality that is in line with the other literature we have engaged thus far.

Callirhoe and Education

Though *Callirhoe* does not expressly state a concern for education, Chariton upholds the education of Chaereas and Dionysius as part of their virtue. In both cases, Chariton associates education with the men's other positive features. Likewise, in the case of Chaereas, Chariton highlights some of the common elite attitudes toward public education, which Quintilian also reflects in the *Orator's Education*. By connecting education with other features and with common attitudes toward public tutelage, Chariton reveals awareness of the basic assumptions surrounding education in the first century, as exemplified in both the theory (Quintilian and the *Progymnasmata*, respectively) and in practice (Plutarch's *Lives*).

Early in the narrative, Chariton suggests that part of the reason Chaereas is susceptible to the dissembly of Callirhoe's other suitors is the quality of his education: "Chaereas, brought up in the gymnasium and not acquainted with youthful follies, can easily be made suspicious and lured into youthful jealousy" (1.2.6 [Goold, LCL]).⁵² Whereas Chaereas's vulnerability to suspicion and jealousy might be seen as negative aspects of his education, they suffice to separate him from the "wild bands of boys" (*Ages*. 1.1.1 [Perrin, LCL]). Rather, the other suitors seem to behave as a wild band of

⁵² I say more about dissembly in the characterization section of this chapter.

boys, with Malice (πθόνοϛ) leading them. They compete with each other romantically and lose to Chaereas. They bear their defeat poorly. Acragus, who represents the sentiment of the group, suggests that the way in which they will become leaders is by trickery (τὰς τυραννίδας πανουργίᾳ) rather than force (βίᾳ κτώμεθα), reflecting two options that one might expect from a wild band of boys—gaining power either by trickery or by force.⁵³ The other suitors regard Chaereas as an “unlikely poor nobody” (1.2.3) and Chariton further differentiates Chaereas from the other suitors by describing his ignorance of the sins of youth, which stem from his education (νεωτερικῶν ἁμαρτημάτων, 1.2.6).

Though one might regard Chaereas’s education as lacking because it renders him vulnerable to the designs of the other suitors, Chariton returns to Chaereas’s education later in the narrative. During the war against Babylon, Chaereas receives increasing amounts of power and regard from the other soldiers and the Egyptian leadership. In this case, Chariton presents Chaereas’s education positively: Chaereas was made the Pharaoh’s advisor, “for he displayed intelligence and courage, and trustworthiness besides, for he was not without a noble character and education” (φύσεως ἀγαθῆς καὶ παιδείας πίστιν, 7.2.5 [Goold, LCL]).⁵⁴ Chariton does not associate Chaereas’s education with vulnerability or naivete but with intelligence, courage, trustworthiness, and nobility.

Other Ionians introduce Dionysius by describing him to Theron, who kidnapped Callirhoe and has designs on selling her as a slave. When Theron questions Dionysius’s identity (1.12.6), the crowd responds with incredulity that Theron has not heard of

⁵³ The latter of the two seems an expected means by which one might gain power, especially in light of war, though Plutarch presents Tiberius as lamenting this “solution” to human problems (*Ti. Gracch.* 15.3). See also Plutarch’s description of the Barbarians going to war against Rome (*Mar.* 11.8-9).

⁵⁴ Recall *Inst.* 1. *proem.* 9, 1.2.3, 12.1.1.

Dionysius, whom they describe as “outrank[ing] all other Ionians in wealth, family, and education, and is a friend of the Great King besides” (1.12.6 [Goold, LCL]). As a result, perhaps, of the former, Dionysius has garnered a reputation for his *paideia*. Callirhoe appeals his *paideia* upon being sold to him, begging Dionysius to not deprive her of her family or her country and to release her (2.6.11).

Concern for education comes to the fore as Callirhoe prepares to leave her son in Dionysius’s care. Upon her departure, Callirhoe writes Dionysius and asks three things that she thinks will serve her son’s future: 1) She asks that he not experience a step-mother, 2) that he marry his half-sister when he becomes a man, and 3) that Dionysius will “ensure he has an education worthy of us” (ἐκτρέφειν τε καὶ παιδεύειν ἀξίως ἡμῶν, 8.4.5). Callirhoe believes these three requests will secure her son’s future despite her abandonment of him. Dionysius is to ensure the boy’s upbringing, education, and marriage, each of which would leave lasting marks upon him, conforming him to the spirit and character of nobility that Callirhoe and Dionysius share (τρόπου συγγένεια, 2.5.8). Callirhoe asserts her ongoing presence of spirit with Dionysius through the child (8.4.5).

Both of the men who marry Callirhoe are known for their education. Chariton links both Chaereas and Dionysius’s *paideia* with their other (mostly laudable) characteristics. For Chaereas, these characteristics relate to other aspects that one might expect one to garner from the mimetic aspects of education.⁵⁵ Dionysius’s education, on the other hand, is expected on the basis of his noble birth and wealth. By associating both men with education and other positive attributes, Chariton reflects the general

⁵⁵ See Chapter Two: *Mimesis* and Education.

attitudes toward education in the first century, as discussed in Chapter Two. In addition, Callirhoe's concerns for her son upon her departure seek to secure his future. She asks on behalf of his upbringing, education, and spouse, in order to ensure that her son receives an education and a spirit worthy of the spirit she and Dionysius share.

Callirhoe and Rhetoric

The presence of rhetorical features in *Callirhoe* not only reveals the acumen of the author but emphasizes key events within the narrative. Among these techniques are *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character), which frequently occurs when Chaereas or Callirhoe experience misfortune, and other features including *anaphora* (omission of words between successive phrases), *paronomasia* (words that sound similarly but have different meanings), *polyptōton* (repetition of words in different cases) and *homoioteluton* (repetition of word endings). The *prosōpopoiia* below suffice not only to illustrate Chariton's use of rhetorical devices but also provide a summary of the novel itself in my investigation thereof.

Callirhoe, renowned for her beauty and often mistaken for Aphrodiate, garners the attention of many suitors. Upon Chaereas's interest in her and their falling in love, the community persuades her father Hermocrates to agree to the marriage. After Callirhoe and Chaereas's marriage, the rejected suitors attempt to foil Chaereas's success in marriage. After an extended speech regarding the insult Hermocrates's choice of Chaereas poses to them, the prince of Rhegium's speech closes with an extended *homoioteluton* to describe Chaereas (ὁ δὲ ἄπορος ... μηδενὸς ... αὐτός, 1.1.3) and to describe his plan for Chaereas's fate (ἀνόνητον ... ἄθλον καὶ τὸν γάμον θάνατον, 1.1.3). In these sentences, the suitors emphasize Chaereas's status (a poor nobody) and the ploy

for what will happen to him in his marriage: Chaereas will experience failure and death on his wedding night. The speech does not persuade the other suitors; instead, appealing to Hermocrates's power, they devise a plan to make Callirhoe appear unfaithful. In an attempt to persuade Chaereas the truth of the news, Acragus employs one of his friends "who was smooth-tongued and full of every social grace" (1.4.1 [Goold, LCL]) who goes to Chaereas and appeals to him through the admiration his dead son had for Chaereas (ὦ Χαιρέα ... θαυμάζων καὶ φιλῶν) and his regard for Chaereas now as his own son (σὲ υἱὸν ... κοινὸν ἀγαθόν, 1.3.3, *homoioteluton*). Chareas becomes convinced of Callirhoe's infidelity and kicks her in the stomach. As a result, she falls to the ground and appears to be dead. Chaereas does not beg for mercy at his trial but asks the crowd to kill him and, rather than bury him, toss him into the sea. In his emotional appeal, Chareas's speech employs both *isocōlon* (similar beginnings of successive phrases) and *homoioteluton* (μὴ θάψητέ με, μὴ μιάνητε τὴν γῆν, 1.5.5), which draws further attention to his dire situation. After his acquittal, Chaereas spares no expense for Callirhoe's funeral.

Meanwhile, Callirhoe is not dead. She wakes to the sound of grave robbers outside her place of rest. Theron, the leader of the pirates cum grave robbers, determines to take the riches from the grave and to sell the young woman. Upon meeting Dionysius and discussing the terms of Callirhoe's sale, Theron flees the scene and Callirhoe becomes a slave, and laments her fate (1.14.6). Upon meeting Dionysius and recounting her story to him, she describes her situation and her new owner using *paranomasia* (ἄφρων ἐξ αἰφνιδίου ... δέομαί σου, Διονύσιε, 2.6.10-11). The endings of the central phrases ἐμπνέουσιν, ἐσίγησεν, and ἔασαι also draw interest to this speech.⁵⁶ Eventually,

⁵⁶ Callirhoe conveniently omits her marriage to Chaereas.

Dionysius and Callirhoe marry but only after she has “buried” Chaereas, expressed via *paronomasia* (οὐκ ἔχει δ’ ἡμῶν οὐδέτερος οὐδὲ τὸν νεκρόν, 4.1.12). As the novel progresses, Callirhoe’s summaries of her troubles (often addressed to “Envious Fortune”) continue to present rhetorical techniques and connect subsequent scenes to the narrative.

The trial scene is the place where rhetorical features are most prominent. Callirhoe, supposing she is on trial for adultery, presents her misfortunes via *asyndeton*, or the omission of conjunctions (τέθνηκα, κεκήδευμαι, τετυβωρύχημαι, πέπραμαι, δεδούλεθκα ... καὶ κρίνομαι, 5.5.2).⁵⁷ She asks how she is to face the judge (ὀφθαλμοῖς ὄψομαι, 5.5.3). Dionysius, in his speech addressing the Great King, demonstrates his role as husband and father ἀνὴρ ... πατήρ, beginning the sentence with one and ending with the other (5.6.5). At the height of Dionysius’s argument, he insists that Chaereas is either still alive or Mithridates is a liar (ἢ Χαρέαν ζῆν, ἢ Μιθριδάτην ἠλέγχθαι μοιχόν, 5.6.9, *anaphora*). In Dionysius’s speech, Chaereas’s name is inflected (*polyptōton*) in the nominative (5.6.10), genitive (5.6.5), accusative (5.6.7, 9), and dative cases (5.6.7), which communicates Chaereas’s prominence in Dionysius’s argument.

Mithridates’s response includes *prosōpopoiia* within a *prosōpopoiia*. He presents a hypothetical argument he would use, were he guilty, and the response he would expect to get from Dionysius if he made such claims. He makes his argument by presenting what might have been said (*preterition*, 5.7.6). Mithridates arranges for Chaereas to appear at the trial after Mithridates’s appeal to the gods (θεοί ... βασίλαιοι ἐπουράνιοι ... ὑποχθόνιοι, *homoioteluton*) and begs him to appear upon Callirhoe’s summons (σε ἢ σή,

⁵⁷ In this case, the conjunction is likely present due to the intervening address to Fortune, which breaks up the list.

5.7.10, *polyp̄tōton*). Chaereas appears and the crowd responds with a mix of emotions, which Chariton presents as opposing pairs (δάκρυα, χαρά, θάμβος, ἔλεος, ἀπιστία, εὐχαί [tears, joy, amazement, disbelief, pity, and prayer], 5.8.3). Chaereas and Dionysius then engage in an anaphoric war of words (5.8.5-6).

The Great King debates between Dionysius and Chaereas, posing rhetorical questions to himself, which emphasizes struggle of his decision and reveals that he, too, had fallen in love with Callirhoe (6.1.9-10). Meanwhile, Babylon and Egypt go to war, and Dionysius fights on the side of the Great King. The army leaves Chaereas behind in Babylon and Chaereas threatens to kill himself. Polycharmus, Chaereas's friend, promotes a plan to fight on the side of Egypt and, before he has finished, Chaereas interrupts him, cutting off the speech (*aposiōpēsis*).

Chaereas joins the war effort on the side of the Egyptians and, eventually, becomes the general (στρατηγός). To encourage the troops, Chaereas encourages them on the basis of their nobility and also by what they might gain (ἔνδοξοι καὶ περίβλεπτοι ... πλουσιώτατοι [glory and recognition and the greatest riches], 7.3.11), which Chaereas also stands to gain from the war. Chaereas eventually commands the Egyptian fleet on which Callirhoe is a prisoner, though both are ignorant of the others' presence. Ironically, Egyptian soldier tells Callirhoe that his commander (Chaereas) is generous and would marry her, Callirhoe protests and indicates she would rather die than submit to marriage (φόνεθσόν ... μᾶλλον ... γάμον ... θάνατον, 7.6.8, *homoioteluton*) and sends a message back that—even under torture—she will refuse (κεντείωσαν καὶ καέτωσαν, 7.6.8, *paronomasia*) and will make the ship her tomb (τάφος ἐμός ἐστιν οὗτος ὁ τόπος, 7.6.8, *homoioteluton*). Chaereas appreciates her refusal and ensures her safe conduct.

Finally, Chaereas and Callirhoe recognize one another. Polycharmus, Chaereas's friend and traveling companion, reacts to the couple's reunion (ἀνάστητε ... ἀπείλήφατε ἀλλήλους [stand, you have recovered one another], 8.1.9). After the war ends, Chaereas and Callirhoe return home. The exchange between Hermocrates and Callirhoe heightens the joy of her unexpected return. The phrases he uses to describe his joy begin with the same verb and ending with first person middle endings:

ζῆς, τέκνον, ἢ καὶ τοῦτο πεπλάνημαι;
ζῶ, πάτερ, νῦν ἀληθῶς, ὅτι σε τεθέαμαι. (8.6.8)

Do you live, child, or have I been deceived in this also?
I live, father, now truly, because I have seen you.

Upon their return, the people beg Chaereas to tell them of his journeys, even if they are disturbing or troublesome (λυπηρότερον ἢ πικρότερον), regarding the end of the story to be worth the struggles entailed to arrive there (λαμπρὸν γένόμενον, 8.7.4, *homoioteluton*). The story ends with Callirhoe's prayer to Aphrodite, and Callirhoe's plea that she and Chaereas have a happy life (βίον μακάριον καὶ θάνατον κοινὸν κατάνεθσον ἡμῖν [a blessed life and meeting death together], 8.8.16, *homoioteluton*).

The rhetorical features throughout *Callirhoe* reveal Chariton's efforts to present his characters as articulate and well-educated. By including within *prosōpopoiia* rhetorical features such as *homoioteluton* and *paronomasia*,⁵⁸ Chariton draws attention to important turning points in the text, including the suitor's traps for Chaereas, Callirhoe's kidnapping and sale, the trial between Dionysius and Mithridates, Callirhoe and

⁵⁸ Also present in the narrative are *synkrisis* between Callirhoe and Rhodogune (5.3) and between Dionysius and Chaereas, which occurs over the course of their presentation in the narrative (see Callirhoe and Characterization, below).

Chaereas's recognition of one another on an Egyptian warship, and, finally, their return home.

Callirhoe and Characterization

Chariton characterizes the individuals within his narrative by means other than *prosōpopoiia* as well. By including some elements that might be considered typified and nuancing them to make his characters believable, Chariton reveals a window into one's status—whether noble or ignoble—and into one's behavior—whether courageous, ambitious, or dissembling.⁵⁹ In this section, I consider traits of nobility, which Chariton associates with beauty, behavior, and courage. I then discuss less attractive characteristics, especially dissembly and its associated traits. These typified elements assist Chariton both in his characterization—especially in the case of positive characteristics and the main characters—and in moving his narrative forward, especially in the case of negative characteristics and the minor characters.

Nobility, beauty, and behavior. Throughout *Callirhoe*, Chariton relates the nobility of Chaereas, Callirhoe, and Dionysius. Chariton associates nobility with both external and internal features of the characters. As to the external features, Chariton associates nobility with beauty. As to the internal features, Chariton associates nobility with chastity and self-control.

From early in Chariton's narrative, he describes Chaereas and Callirhoe as those whose "beauty had been matched with nobility" (τοῦ κάλλους τῇ εὐγενείᾳ συνελθόντων,

⁵⁹ See Theon's virtues of a narrative: clarity, conciseness, and convincingness or believability in his *Progymnasmata* (*Prog.* 79).

1.1.6 [Goold, LCL]). Callirhoe's beauty is described as divine rather than human (1.1.2). At the same time that Callirhoe's beauty is matched with her nobility, it is simultaneously nuanced by its association with hardship. Callirhoe regularly curses her beauty for having precipitated her separation from Chaereas and kidnapping by the pirate Theron (1.1.14), the trial (for which she supposes *she* is on trial for adultery, 5.5.4), and the Great King's admiration of her (6.6.3). Even in the midst of Callirhoe's misfortunes, her beauty identifies her as noble. When Leonas describes Callirhoe to Dionysius, Dionysius responds that it is impossible for someone who is beautiful to not be of noble birth (ἀνθρώπων εὐγενῶν, 2.1.5). Dionysius is so convinced of this belief that he seeks to prove that Callirhoe was not only not a slave but of noble birth (2.5.6) and sees in Callirhoe a kinship of character (τρόπου συγγένεια) with himself, though she has been purchased as his slave (2.5.8). Callirhoe's beauty leads Dionysius's other slaves to regard her as their mistress: "Then you could see that royalty comes by birth, as with the king in a swarm of bees, for they all of their own accord followed after her as though she had been elected by her beauty to be their mistress" (δεσποίνῃ κεχειροτονημένη, 2.3.10). Callirhoe's beauty, even in the middle of her slave-status, identifies her as noble. Finally, after Callirhoe has been reunited with Chaereas, she returns Statira to Callirhoe, who recognizes in her nature a nobility associated with her beauty (8.3.14).

Nobility, in addition to its association with beauty, frequently governs the behavior of the nobles who fall in love with Callirhoe. Dionysius, upon meeting Callirhoe, wrestles with his passion for Callirhoe and his nobility. It is his nobility (γενναῖος) that inspires him to resist Callirhoe (2.3.4). Eros regards this resistance as an

insult and increases Dionysius's passion for Callirhoe. Dionysius nevertheless resolves to resist his passion for Callirhoe until they are married (3.2.6).

The Great King also falls in love with Callirhoe. In an extended *prosōpopoiia*, the Great King attempts to reason with himself the love he has for Callirhoe and, though he has not engaged Callirhoe regarding his affections, feels shame when he thinks about his wife Statira (6.1.9-11). The Great King seeks the counsel of his eunuch, who suggests there is no remedy except Callirhoe herself, to which the Great King responds that he still has self-control (ἄξρασίαν, 6.3.2). In response, his eunuch advises the Great King to remain noble and overcome desire (6.3.8). The Great King attempts resist his desire for Callirhoe by calling a hunt as a distraction (6.4.1). Though the hunt is ultimately unsuccessful in distracting the Great King, it reveals the lengths to which he will go to preserve his nobility. Fortuitously, as the Great King grows increasingly tempted to woo Callirhoe, war with Egypt begins, at which point Chariton speaks in the first person, offering commentary on the situation: "I can well imagine that he [Artaxates, the king's eunuch] was grateful to the war for having cut short this passion of the king which had been fed by idleness" (6.8.4 [Goold, LCL]). The war thus provides a sufficient distraction until Chaereas and Callirhoe are able to be reunited and return home.

Chariton also associates nobility with courage. During the war with Egypt, Chaereas joins the Egyptian forces in order to oppose Dionysius. As he encourages the Egyptian troops in preparation for battle, he appeals to their birth: "We must show that we surpass the others not only in noble origin but also in courage" (7.3.9 [Goold, LCL]). The contest in the war between Egypt and Babylon, then, is not only a contest of strength or military acumen but a contest of nobility and courage. Similarly, when the Pharaoh

suspects he is losing the war, Chaereas encourages him, “Many are the setbacks which occur in war: we must never flinch before them, but tackle them, ever holding before us like a shield the hope of success” (7.3.5 [Goold, LCL]). Though nobility is not specifically associated with the latter quote, Chaereas’s words reveal characteristics of courage, which Chaereas previously associated with nobility. In war, as in times of peace, nobility governs the behavior of the main characters, enabling courage in the former and self-control in the latter.

Ambition. Though ambition could be considered a negative character trait for those who sought vainglory, it could be considered a trait that inspires one to be a good leader, general, etc., as we have seen in Theophrastus, Quintilian, and Plutarch.⁶⁰ Chariton connects both Dionysius and Chaereas to ambition, regarding it as a positive trait in both cases. Upon going to war with Egypt, Dionysius

made it plain that he would serve with distinction, since he was naturally ambitious (φύσει φιλότιμος), and far from considering bravery a secondary virtue he counted it as one of the noblest. Moreover, on this occasion, he felt some slight hope that, if he proved himself useful in the war, he would be given his wife by the king as a reward for his valor without a trial. (6.9.2-3 [Goold, LCL])

Dionysius’s ambition and his bravery come hand in hand. His ambition, working together with his bravery, leads him to hope that Callirhoe will be his wife. Chariton nuances Dionysius’s bravery, however: though he is sufficiently brave to station himself at the front lines in war, he hopes to avoid a trial where he would meet his competition head-on. Dionysius’s natural ambition, though prominent in war, is less prominent in matters of love.

⁶⁰ As to the former, see Theophrastus, *Char.* 21.7, 10-11; Plutarch, *Them.* 5.2, *Ages.* 8.4; regarding the latter, see Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.2.22-3; Plutarch, *Per.* 14.1-2, *Cae.* 58.2.

In Chariton's portrayal of Chaereas and his respective ambition in war, there is no mention of his hopes to gain back Callirhoe. Similar to the ideal statesman in Plutarch, Chaereas insists he is not ambitious for personal glory but for the common glory (δόξης οὐκ ἐμῆς ἀλλὰ κοινῆς ὀρέγομαι, 7.3.10).⁶¹ Chaereas supports his desire for the common glory by indicating his willingness to serve as a soldier rather than as a general (7.3.10), upon which the other soldiers insist upon Chaereas leading them. Chaereas, further supporting his commitment to the common good, indicates that all will receive glory, fame, wealth, and recognition as heroes (7.3.11). This statement highlights not only Chaereas's courage and ambition but his liberality as well. Though he ostensibly includes himself among those who will gain honor, riches, and fame, Chaereas imagines sharing these gains with his fellow soldiers.

Chariton's presentation of both Dionysius and Chaereas's ambition reveals his attention to their characterization. Whereas Dionysius's bravery is chief among the virtues, he hopes he will gain Callirhoe in exchange for his bravery. Chaereas, conversely, associates his ambition with the common good, which will gain honor, riches, and fame for he and his soldiers.⁶² Not only is Chaereas ambitious and courageous; he also shows traits of liberality in his desire for the common good. Chaereas here shares an affinity with Plutarch's ideal statesman.

⁶¹ For Plutarch's estimation of courage: *Fab.* 3.6; generosity: *Alex.* 39.1; ambition: *Comp. Ag. Cleom. cum Ti. Gracch.* 2.1.

⁶² Compare with Plutarch's portrayal of Aristides: "Aristides was gentle by nature, and a conservative in character. He engaged in public life, not to win favour or reputation, but to secure the best results consistent with safety and righteousness, and so he was compelled ... to oppose [Themistocles] often, and to take a firm stand against his increasing influence" (*Them.* 3.2 [Perrin, LCL]).

Though I have thus far considered positive characteristics pertaining to the main characters, offering significant focus to Callirhoe's husbands, there are also in the narrative negative characteristics, many of which are connected to secondary characters. These negative characteristics serve, in my view, to move the narrative forward because occurring at key turning points within *Callirhoe*.

Dissembly, associated behaviors, and forward narrative momentum. Dissembly, or intentional misleading through prevarication, occurs at key points within the narrative. One discovers this characteristic in the failed suitors' attempts to break up Chaereas and Callirhoe, at the sale of Callirhoe, and during the war between Babylon and Egypt. I consider these events and the ways in which dissembly is associated with other negative character traits and the ways in which it moves the narrative forward. I give special attention to the places in which Chariton offers moral commentary on this behavior, especially with respect to the failed suitors and Theron's behavior.

The failed suitors' dissembly in their attempts to break up Chaereas and Callirhoe sets the course of the novel in motion. Unsuccessful in their first attempt to make Chaereas believe that Callirhoe had been unfaithful to him (1.3.7-1.4.1), the suitors employ a "smooth-tongued crony" (1.4.1 [Goold, LCL]) to convince Chaereas of Callirhoe's unfaithfulness. Not only is this person smooth-tongued, he is described as a *μυαρός*, portraying him not only as one who is convincing but also morally depraved.⁶³ The plan to convince Chaereas that Callirhoe has been unfaithful works. When Chaereas sees a man entering her bedroom to encounter Callirhoe's maid, he supposes the suitor is

⁶³ BDAG 650, s.v. *μυαρός*.

approaching Callirhoe instead. Chaereas comes to accuse Callirhoe and Callirhoe comes to meet her beloved; both are the victims of the failed suitors' dissembly. Though Chaereas is guilty for Callirhoe's "death," the dissembling behaviors of the smooth-tongued man receive moral commentary via his identification as ὁ μιάρως.⁶⁴ Dissembly sets the narrative of Chaereas's and Callirhoe's separation in motion.

Dissembly, likewise, moves the narrative forward from Callirhoe's grave, as Theron and his pirate crew come upon the tomb and determine to steal its treasures. Theron, the leader of the pirate band, is a "cunning rogue" (πανοῦργος ἄνθρωπος, 1.7 [Goold, LCL]), who enlists the help of others whom he enlisted from the brothels and taverns (πονείοις, καπηλείοις, 1.7.3).⁶⁵ Under the guise of returning Callirhoe to her parents (1.9.7), Theron places her under guard and asks the other pirates what they suppose ought to be done with her. Instead, he devises his own plan: They will sell Callirhoe and leave before the purchaser recognizes their mistake (1.10.8).

Theron continues his dissembly as he prepares to sell Callirhoe. He tells Leonas that he purchased Callirhoe from a jealous mistress.⁶⁶ As Theron ingratiates himself to Leonas, the reader once again encounters the description of him as a πανοῦργος ἄνθρωπος, as though to remind the reader the sort of person Theron is. Though Theron's dissembly convinces Leonas, it does not convince Callirhoe. Upon Theron's return to the ship, he attempts to convince Callirhoe that he had made attempts to return her home, but

⁶⁴ N.b.: The negative characterization Chaereas receives as a result of his action is primarily his own (1.4.4-5), to which Hermocrates responds by coming to Chaereas's defense.

⁶⁵ Recall the concern for the company one keeps in Plutarch (*Tim. proem.* 1-3; *Cic.* 3.1-2; *Ages.* 5.1).

⁶⁶ Note the similarity here between Theron's story and what occurs to Anthia in *The Ephesian Tale* (2.10).

the sea had prevented her return (1.13.8) and that, as a result of her seasickness, Theron was going to leave her with friends in Ionia. In response to his prevarication, Callirhoe regards Theron as ἀνόητον (a fool). Dionysius is likewise privy to Theron's character and recognizes him as a kidnapper (2.1.8).

Theron and his crew flee the scene and set off. Theron continues his dissembly in his departure. His dissembly is prominent not only in his ill-gotten riches and greed but in his willingness to steal from the other pirates. Theron leaves Callirhoe behind only to realize that Providence has departed as well (3.3.10). Even the sea and land offer commentary on Theron's behavior, as "Dry land refused to accept such villains" (3.3.11), and the sea tosses the ship, threatening to break it apart. Ironically, the pirates begin to die of thirst while on the sea, with no help from their "unjust riches" (πλοῦτος ἄδικος). The pirates' greed and the riches they had gained were of no use. Theron, however, persists in his dissembly by secretly stealing water from the other robbers, but Providence was preserving him for a worse fate (3.3.12).

Eventually, Theron lands in Syracuse and the Syracusans imprison him. He attempts to continue his dissembly in the narrative. In the narrative he constructs for the Syracusans, Theron casts himself as a pious traveler who accidentally boarded a ship of grave robbers rather than the leader of the gang who were grave robbers. According to Theron's narrative, he was preserved "because never in [his] life [had he] done any wrong" (ὁ μόνος σωθεὶς δι' ἀσέβειαν, ἵνα ἐπὶ πλέον κολασθῇ, 3.4.9 [Goold, LCL]). A fisherman recognizes Theron, however, and the crowd believes the fisherman rather than Theron. It is only after his torture that Theron finally tells the truth. The narrator comments that "conscience is a powerful force in everyone, and truth prevails in the end"

(3.4.13). Conscience and truth prevail over dissembly. In this instance, Theron's truth telling moves the narrative forward. Chaereas, now aware of what has happened to Callirhoe, sets sail to find her.

The failed suitors and Theron are not the only parties to be guilty of dissembly. Among the other characters who are guilty of dissembly are the couple Plangon and Phocas, whose actions move forward the narrative between Callirhoe and Dionysius. It is they who hasten the meeting of Dionysius and Callirhoe and their actions precipitate Dionysius and Callirhoe's first kiss (2.7.4). Phocas tells Dionysius that Chaereas is dead though he is not. Phocas's intent to deceive is manifest in his indication that he will tell Dionysius the truth of the Syracusan ship. Though he indicates the ship has come to take Callirhoe back to Syracuse, Phocas relates the news that Chaereas is dead (3.9.10). Phocas tells Callirhoe that Chaereas had been confirmed dead as well, leading to Chaereas's burial and Callirhoe's marriage to Dionysius (4.1.4), thus advancing the narrative of Dionysius and Callirhoe's union.

Nuancing typical behaviors: Nobles, jealousy, eros, violence, and dissembly.

Though Chariton presents Callirhoe, Chaereas, and Dionysius as beautiful, well-educated, and noble, one must weigh these characteristics against less attractive characteristics. Chaereas and Dionysius's vulnerability to Eros's schemes lead Chaereas to violence and Dionysius to hope for the affections another man's wife (to be fair, Dionysius believes Chaereas to be dead). Callirhoe, despite her hopes that Chaereas is alive, marries Dionysius after she discovers she is pregnant with Chaereas's child, whom Callirhoe allows Dionysius to believe is his child. Finally, dissembly comes into play with each of these characters as each uses it to suit their own purposes.

After Chaereas's first supposition that Callirhoe has been unfaithful, he becomes angry but ultimately believes her indications of fidelity and forgives her (1.3.6-7). When doubts arise again, Chaereas waits at Callirhoe's chamber and supposes the maid's suitor is Callirhoe's. Chaereas responds to Callirhoe's joyful greeting violently and kicks her in the stomach, which causes her to appear to be dead (1.4.12). Chaereas's first response is not remorse—it is interrogation and torture of the maidservants (1.4.2). After questioning and torturing them, Chaereas learns the truth and *then* mourns for his wife. For all his nobility and the potential virtues of his education, Chaereas's vulnerability to jealousy leads him to violent action and to other characters' accommodation of this characteristic in order to avoid negative repercussions. Most prominently, Chaereas's jealousy leads to Callirhoe's separation from Dionysius and her son (8.4.4).

Dionysius's jealousy also shapes his relationship with Callirhoe. Callirhoe, upon learning that she is pregnant, debates being honest with Dionysius about the child's paternity. Plangon cautions her against this because she supposes that Dionysius's jealousy will prevent her from raising a child that is not his (2.10.1). Upon the blessings received by Callirhoe's son whom Dionysius believes is also his son, Dionysius learns that Chaereas might still be alive, to which he responds with jealousy. He suspects the worst on account of his wife's beauty (3.9.4). Dionysius displays his jealousy during the trial before the Great King as well. When asked which husband she prefers, Chariton reminds the audience of Dionysius's character and training but also that his jealousy takes over (5.9.9) and leads him to regard his son's birth as a burden (5.10.1). Dionysius, in the end, recognizes that it has been jealousy that has been his ruin and will, in the end, lead to his loneliness (8.5.15).

Dionysius and Chaereas use dissembly to suit their own purposes similarly to the failed suitors and Theron. When Dionysius discovers the letter that Chaereas wrote to Callirhoe confirming that he was living, “He refused to believe that Chaereas was alive because that was the last thing he wanted” (4.5.9 [Goold, LCL]). Though Dionysius might find a ready alibi in his belief that Mithridates was using this letter as a ploy to gain Callirhoe for himself, to be safe, Dionysius mentions nothing of this letter to Callirhoe, “for himself he adopted the following method of protecting his interests” (4.6.7). Instead he seeks official action against Mithridates, a governor, and undergoes trial before the Great King (4.6.7). The trial advances the narrative because it confirms that Chaereas is alive. Dionysius places his dissembly, like his ambition, in the service of gaining Callirhoe.⁶⁷

By contrast, Chaereas places his dissembly, like his ambition, in the service of war. As he seeks to penetrate the Babylonian forces, Chaereas goes to them under the auspices of joining their efforts, indicating they are Greek mercenaries who, unpaid by the Pharaoh, seek to gain revenge by fighting against Egypt (7.4.4). Upon being let into the city of Tyre, Chaereas kills the guard who lets him in. By the time the Tyrians realize what has happened, the city is captured (7.4.9). Having sacked Tyre, the war against Babylon takes a decisive turn in Egypt’s favor and leads to Chaereas beginning to fight by sea, gaining swift and decisive victory (7.6.1-5).

Callirhoe is also guilty of dissembly. Having discovered she is pregnant by Chaereas, she considers aborting the child. Plangon, however, encourages her to convince

⁶⁷See also 7.1.4, in which Dionysius leaves for war but has someone tell Chaereas that Dionysius had been given Callirhoe in advance of the war to ensure his loyalty. This action leads to Chaereas joining forces with the Egyptians.

Dionysius that the child is his. For Callirhoe, it is more than a decision between aborting her child and dissembly. As Plangon indicates, telling the truth would entail “discard[ing] every trace of [her] noble birth and abandon[ing] all hope of returning home” (2.10.7 [Goold, LCL]). Callirhoe is not suspicious of Plangon’s plan because she is “ignorant of servile cunning” (2.10.7 [Goold, LCL]).⁶⁸ Upon her betrothal to Dionysius, Callirhoe’s two options remain intact: She will either hang herself and does not become a mother or she will marry and become a mother and raise her child as Dionysius’s (3.1.6).⁶⁹ Callirhoe, aware of her dissembly, prays to Aphrodite “give me words to speak regarding the child” (3.2.13). The confirmation of her prayer comes as Callirhoe leaves the temple and some onlooking boatmen mistake her for Aphrodite and kneel in homage to her (3.2.14). Whereas one might expect dissembly to receive a negative commentary, in the case of Callirhoe, her deception passes undetected and, moreover, seems to be blessed by Aphrodite herself.

Though I have not covered all of the typified elements that one might engage in *Callirhoe*,⁷⁰ I have illustrated representative samples of the ways in which Chariton utilizes typified elements to characterize individuals and to advance the narrative. In terms of the former, Chariton imbues typified elements with nuance by combining them.

⁶⁸ Recall the similar indication of Chaereas’s ignorance of the failed suitors’ behaviors (1.2.6).

⁶⁹ One of the ways in which Theron advocates for Leonas’s purchase of Callirhoe is presenting her as a nurse-maid for Dionysius’s daughter, who was his widow’s child (1.12.8).

⁷⁰ Others include σωφοσύνη, which guides Dionysius’s behavior toward Callirhoe (2.6.3), Polycharmus and Chaereas’s endurance of unjust punishment (4.3.3), and Mithridates’s appeal in court (5.7.2); and greed, which is highlighted as the sea threatens to break apart Theron’s ship, whose riches cannot guard him against shipwreck (3.3.11).

Dionysius and Chaereas, for example, are portrayed as noble, ambitious, and courageous, all of which might be considered positive traits. Chariton associates both men with jealousy and dissembly. Chariton likewise nuances Theron. Though Chariton consistently portrays him as a rogue, Theron tells the truth to the Syracusans, which shows that even a dissembling pirate such as Theron is not beyond the pangs of his conscience or immune to the power of the truth. Further, dissembling behavior frequently occurs at turning points in the narrative, precipitating Callirhoe's "death," her capture and sale, the fate of her and her child, her marriage to Dionysius, the trial between Dionysius and Mithridates, and the events in the war between Egypt and Babylon.

Though typified elements appear in *Callirhoe*, these elements do not necessarily represent static or fixed notions of character. Rather, through the use and combination of typified elements, Chariton succeeds in nuancing his characters and in advancing his narrative. Chariton accomplishes an additional goal in his presentation of and the narrator's commentary on the dissembling behaviors of the smooth-tongued rogue and Theron: he offers an indication of his expectations for (moral) behavior.

Callirhoe and Moral Formation

Chariton's purpose—whatever it might have been—was not the moral formation of his audience, nor was it necessarily to present paragons of virtue that his audience imitate.⁷¹ Chariton does, however, offer moral commentary on his characters within his novel through the words of the narrator and through his own first-person intrusions into

⁷¹ Compare Plutarch, *Per.* 1.3-4.

the text. Through these intrusions, Chariton indicates general expectations for praiseworthy—or blameworthy—behavior.

Chariton presents Callirhoe and both of her husbands as noble characters. As discussed in the section pertaining to nobility, nobility guides the behavior of Dionysius and prevents the Great King from violating Callirhoe. Both Chaereas and Callirhoe's vulnerability to the schemes of minor characters (the failed suitors and Plangon, respectively) serve to highlight Chaereas and Callirhoe's noble characteristics. Chaereas is "ignorant of the sins of youth" (1.2.6), suggesting that his behavior—from youth—did not include such behavior. Whereas one might argue that this offers a negative commentary on Chaereas's education, his education later receives praise from the Pharaoh, suggesting Chaereas was not lacking in this aspect (7.2.5). Upon Plangon's advice to Callirhoe to forget her nobility and become a slave after aborting her child, the narrator indicates that "Callirhoe was quite unsuspecting of Plangon's advice, since she was a well-bred girl (μειραξ εὐγενής) and ignorant of servile cunning (πανουργίας ἄπειρος δουλικῆς)" (LCL 2.10.7 [Goold, LCL]). Callirhoe keeps the child and raises him as Dionysius's son. In both cases, Chaereas and Callirhoe's vulnerability to the schemes presented to them are a result of their (noble) upbringing. Their vulnerability heightens this upbringing and engenders sympathy for the hero and the heroine. This sympathy, however, does not suggest the characters are without nuance. Both Chaereas and Callirhoe are complex characters. They are both noble and beautiful yet jealous and dissembling. This combination of characteristics, especially in the cases of the main

characters, renders them more believable.⁷² Their negative characteristics, however, pale in comparison to their positive characteristics, as the narrator and other characters generally regard them positively.

Theron, however, does not receive such a positive reception from the narrator. Repeatedly referred to as a cunning rogue (πανούργος ἄνθρωπος), Theron steals from graves, and he steals water from his pirate band, which characterizes him as a robber of robbers. The Syracusans eventually find Theron out. The commentary provided by the narrator highlights the presence of conscience and the power of truth, which suggests that these prevail even against the schemes of the unjust and the dissembling. By presenting the truth as that which prevails in the end (παγκρατὴς ἢ ἀλήθεια, 3.4.13), the narrator offers moral commentary on the designs of those who would behave out of accordance with the truth. They will not prevail.

Regarding the role of truth, Chariton's own words regarding the last book highlight the importance of truth:

I think that this last book will prove the most enjoyable for my readers as an antidote to the grim events in the preceding ones. No more piracy or slavery or trials or fighting or suicide or war or captivity in this one, but honest love and lawful marriage. How then the goddess brought the truth to light and revealed the unsuspecting lovers to each other, I shall now relate. (8.1.4 [Goold, LCL])

Chariton presents the final chapter, in which there is no piracy, slavery, trials, fighting, suicide, war, or captivity, but rather, honest love, as an antidote to all that preceded, suggesting that the reader will be relieved to read a tale of honest love and lawful marriage. The truth, according to Chariton, comes through the goddess (Aphrodite) who

⁷² See Theon's *Progymnasmata*, in which he indicates the virtues of a narrative are clarity, conciseness, and plausibility or convincingness (*Prog.* 79).

has received the piety of the main characters throughout the narrative (1.1, 2.3, 3.2, 8, 6, 8.8). Further, Chariton associates the denouement of the narrative with truth, bringing it to its completion. The novel ends similarly to the way in began: Callirhoe grasps the goddess' feet and offers prayers for herself and Chaereas (1.1.7, 8.8.15-16).

While it would be remiss to claim that Chariton's *main* goal, or even *a* goal of his narrative is the moral formation of his audience, Chariton nevertheless presents expectations for the behavior of noble characters. He likewise highlights the importance of truth and its precedence over lies and dissembling.

Concluding Remarks

Chariton's narrative—in its concern for education, its presentation of rhetorical features at key points in the narrative, and its use of typified elements—reveals similar concerns to the other literature surveyed in Chapter Two and in the Plutarch section of this chapter, even if its presentation appears *sui generis*. Throughout this chapter, I have shown the ways in which *Callirhoe* reveals similar concerns to other contemporaneous literature, including Plutarch and Quintilian. Though I surmise Chariton's purpose in writing is different from that of both Plutarch and Quintilian, the cultural lexicon from which it takes root is similar: *Callirhoe* is conversant with history, thoughtful in its rhetoric, and reveals awareness of the Greek *paideia*. I therefore disagree with Perry's supposition that popular work becomes impoverished in terms of its moral and aesthetic quality or reflective of new spiritual and intellectual norms.⁷³ rather, Chariton presents

⁷³ Perry, *The Ancient Romances*, 47.

the expected social norms in an unexpected genre. Even if Chariton's main goal was entertainment, this goal does not mean rejection of social norms or mores.⁷⁴

Conclusion

In my consideration of both Plutarch and Chariton, I argued that both of these authors are conversant with the theoretical aspects of the Greek *paideia* I discussed in Chapter Two. I have engaged both authors in terms of their relationship to education, rhetoric, and moral formation. Though each author reflects the genre in which they write, their respective works fit well with the concerns of *paideia* and reveal the authors' awareness thereof. Admittedly, Plutarch's purpose is more overtly moral, in that he sees engaging the great men of the past a benefit, whereas the moral formation of his audience is not likely to have been among Chariton's goals. It is of note, regardless, that both authors take pains to present their characters as nuanced and, rather than present their characters as only good or only bad, they present characters that are convincingly human.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Ruiz-Montero, "The Rise of the Greek Novel." 50

⁷⁵ Recall the third feature of Theon's characteristics of narrative (clarity, conciseness, and plausibility or convincingness (*Prog.* 79).

CHAPTER FOUR

Turning toward the New Testament: Parables and Fables

Introduction

Having engaged rhetoric and the ways in which it contributes to moral education and characterization in “theory” (Chapter Two) and in “practice” (Chapter Three), I now turn my attention to the New Testament. In this chapter, I argue that the polysemy and ubiquity of fables and related literature open the way for a consideration of the similarities between fables and New Testament parables without discounting their differences. Though scholarly discussions of fables frequently include parables from the Old Testament (2 Sam 12:1-13 and 2 Kings 14:9), efforts to distinguish New Testament parables and fables are prevalent.¹ The polysemy of fables and related literature, however, frustrates a tidy separation of the genres.² With respect to ancient authors,

¹ Most notably, references to these fables appear in Perry and Blackham, neither of whom connect fables with New Testament parables. Though Blackham admits the Old Testament fables (Judges 9:8-15 and 2 Sam 12:1-7), he attempts to do separate fables from parables: “The difference between parable and fable is not between a story that might be real and one that could not be, as is sometimes supposed. The distinction is between independence and generality in the one case, dependence confined to the particular in the other” (H.J. Blackham, *The Fable as Literature* [London: The Athlone Press, 1985], xv). Perrin argues similarly (Norman Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976], 104). This distinction fails to explain different parables that exist in similar contexts, suggesting a flexibility within the genre of parable and, at the same time, the ways fable and their narratives are interrelated (cf., Theon, *Prog.* 75). It seems likely that, faced with a collection of parables with no narrative context, they, too, would appear independent and general. Walter Wienert also argues for the distinction between fables and parables, in “Das Wesen der Fabel,” in *Proverbia in Fabula: Essays on the Relationship of the Proverb and the Fable*, ed. Pack Carnes (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 54. Lindner argues that parables and fables were functionally identical until the 17th century (Herman Lindner, “Von der Gattung der Fable zur Schreibweise der Parabel?” in *Fabel und Parabel: kulturgeschichte Prozesse im 18. Jarhundert* [München: W. Fink, 1994], 19).

² As to the polysemy of the fables, see Gert-Jan van Dijk, *Ainoi, Logoi, Mythoi: Fables in Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic Greek Literature with a Study of the Theory and Terminology of the Genre*, Mnemosyne Supplements 166 (Boston: Brill, 1997), 20. He adds “a fundamental difference between fable and parable does not exist.” See also p. 113, where he indicates “As regards the proximity of fables and other genres, which is indicated by the very polysemy of the terminology and ultimately accounts for the

Aristotle and the author of *Ad Herennium* include *parabolai* among literature associated with fables (*Rhet.* 20.3, *Rhet. Her.* 6.10), which provides an indication that ancient authors associated fables with various other genres.³

In addition to the polysemy of fabulistic literature, the presence of rhetorical techniques within the Gospels—including progymnastic exercises such as *homoteluton* (inflection), *ekphrasis* (descriptive speech), *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character), *chreia* (short illustrations in response to a question or statement), and *synkrisis* (comparison)—suggest that the Gospel writers likely had some interaction with Greek *paideia*. Further, the rhetorical function of parables in the New Testament, in some cases, is similar to that of fables in secular literature. Both fables and the New Testament parables 1) assume a rhetorical or educational context, 2) support the overarching argument, and 3) can contribute to characterization and moral formation.⁴ Fables and parables' role in the

seemingly endless theoretical discussion, the close (reciprocal) relationship of fable and proverb is emphasized in both modern and ancient theory and apparent also from the terminology, whereas comparisons, parables, myths, and fairy tales are also compared with fables from both antiquity and modern times" (36). Dithmar also notes the connections among fable, parable, and proverb (Reinhard Dithmar, *Tezte zur Theorie der Fabeln, Parabeln, und Gleichnisse* [München: DTV Deutscher Taschenbuch, 1982], 12). Dithmar highlights the functional similarities between parables and fables: "Thus I conclude that the fables and the parables are similar, at their root, so the fables are nothing other than lovely parables, and may even be said to be the same, because they accomplish the same goal as parables" (84 [all translations from the original languages are mine unless otherwise noted]). See also p. 102-103. Nøjgaard affirms the similarity between parable and fable, arguing against Thiele's efforts to distinguish them (Morten Nøjgaard, *La Fable grecque avant Phèdre*, vol. 1. of *La Fable Antique* [Copenhagen: Forlag, 1964], 53-54).

³ See van Dijk, *Ainoi, Logoi, Mythoi*, 113. Adrados notes the distinguishing between fabulistic literature and non-fabulistic literature is primarily a modern—rather than ancient—problem: in his discussion of ancient collections, he states "These model collections contain more than animalistic fables (and fables with plants involved); they also include others in which stories are narrated about gods or men, which we may qualify either as mythos or anecdotes, or else as tales, short stories, χρεῖαι (a type of episode concluding with a biting and instructive phrase), etc." (Francisco Rodríguez Adrados, *Introduction and from the Origins to the Hellenistic Age*, vol. 1 of *History of the Graeco-Latin Fable*, Francisco Rodríguez and Gert-Jan van Dijk, eds., *Mnemosyne Supplements* 201 [Boston: Brill, 1999], 3).

⁴ Many other functions are possible; I mention this one because I engage characterization both in this chapter and in Chapter Five.

overarching argument(s) in a rhetorical encounter bring additional connections between the two genres.⁵

I use the term “rhetorical encounter” to speak of the ways rhetors and authors used fables and parables in both speech and writing to suit their purposes and overall arguments. Indicative of this relationship is Theon’s indication that fables as especially useful in narrative (*Prog.* 74-75). In Theon’s examples, the fables suit the purposes of the writer, typically offering an exemplum to extend the illustration of a particular character or experience. Plutarch uses fables to characterize some of his subjects and often utilizes rhetorical features such as *prosōpopoiia* to further contribute to characterization. In the New Testament, parables contribute to the overall argument of the author and characterization through their unique presentation of stories and characters, utilizing features such as *prosōpopoiia* to characterize the individuals within the parables.⁶

As indicated by Snodgrass, “Parables by their very nature seek to make a rhetorical point”⁷ or points, taking Theon’s indication that *mythoi* need not have only one point (*Prog.* 75). The rhetorical point or points support the overall thrust of the narrative and, moreover, frequently takes as its starting point the context in which it is uttered.⁸

⁵ I define “rhetorical encounter” broadly, in that rhetoric was used in public speaking—in the courtroom, in symposia, etc.—and in writing. While I regard parables as “fabulistic” literature, because the similarities and differences among fabulistic literature leave room for parables to be considered alongside other genres, such as *paroimia*, *fabella*, *mythos*, etc.

⁶ I refrain from discussing the ways in which parables might characterize those outside the parables (i.e. Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, Samaritans, etc.).

⁷ Klyne R. Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 2.

⁸ Though Levine regards the background of the parables as solidly Jewish (4), she holds that parables “express concerns that appear elsewhere in the Jesus tradition; they echo themes heard in his teachings and debates” (Amy-Jill Levine, *Short Stories by Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* [New York: Harper One, 2014], 11).

Jeremias regards parables as being “mostly concerned with a situation of conflict—with justification, defence attack, and even challenge. For the most part, though not exclusively, they are weapons of controversy.”⁹ According to Linnemann, one of the purposes of the New Testament parables is to “affect the other, to win his agreement, to influence his judgment in a particular direction, to force him to a decision, to convince him or prevail upon him.”¹⁰ Thurén, similarly, regards parables as a persuasive device.¹¹ The presentation of the parables, therefore, seeks to generate a response from the audience and gain their sympathy for one’s particular argument, a purpose also noted by the author of *Ad Herennium* (1.6). There have been efforts, however, to distance the New Testament parables from fables and *mythoi*, much of which seems to be done in the service of establishing a Jewish background for the parables.¹² While I am not arguing

⁹ Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1972), 21, though Jeremias militates against seeing the parable in terms of Greco-Roman rhetoric, suggesting doing so “impose[s] upon them an alien law” (20).

¹⁰ Eta Linnemann, *Parables of Jesus: Introduction and Exposition* (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 18. Linnemann distinguishes between parable, similitude, and example stories (11). “The similitude gets its force from its appeal to what is universally acknowledged, while the parable achieves its power by making the particular credible and probable” (12).

¹¹ Lauri Thurén, *Parables Unplugged: Reading the Parables in Their Rhetorical Context* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2014), 10.

¹² To this end, see John D. Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 15: “A parable tells a story which, on its surface level, is absolutely possible or even factual within the normalcy of life. A myth tells one which is neither of these on its surface level.” Hultgren distances the New Testament parables’ rhetorical context from philosophy, rhetoric, and rabbinic teachings: “The parables of Jesus are not used for argumentation in the sense of the ‘parables’ of ancient philosophers, popular rhetoricians, or rabbinic masters” (Arland J Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 9). Hultgren nevertheless holds that the parables of Jesus fit within the context of the מְשָׁלִים of rabbinic literature. Bernard B. Scott defines parables in NT as “a *mashal* that employs a short narrative fiction to reference a symbol. This definition attempts to account for one type of *mashal* represented in both the Jesus and rabbinic traditions” (Bernard B. Scott, *Hear then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989] 8). He holds that Jesus parables are antimyth (39) and a subversion of myth (40) because they make a new reality possible. The parables, however, seem just as likely to describe present reality as are fables, as noted by Hultgren (*Parables*, 9); it remains unclear how Scott ascertains that the fables did *not* have as one of their aims some form of change in attitude or belief by their audiences. Others, such as Via, take a mediating position. Via argues that “Parables are in various ways elaborated comparisons, and this is a feature which Jesus’s

here for an exclusive Greco-Roman background to the parables, the relevance of the larger Greco-Roman rhetorical context in which the Gospels are composed should not be underestimated and receive the focus of my argument. Among these insights are the understanding of parables' capacity to respond to a rhetorical situation—including opportunities for teaching and responding to conflict—and the ways rhetorical figures highlight important aspects of the parables, including characterization and typified behaviors.

The various approaches and backgrounds for the parables, some of which I noted above, make for an unwieldy history of research. In light of this varied trajectory, I offer a brief history of research for each of the parables considered in the next chapter but refrain from offering a detailed history of research on the New Testament parables.¹³

Though various approaches—including historical, sociological, and literary approaches—abound, there are only a few rhetorical approaches to the New Testament parables.¹⁴

parables share with some of the *meshalim* of the Old Testament and, also, with the parables of the Greek tradition” (Dan O. Via, *The Parables: Their Literary and Existential Dimension* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967], 11).

¹³ Perrin offers a detailed history of research (Norman Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976], 89-193). For recent histories of research, see Norman Perrin, *Parable and Gospel*, ed. K.C. Hanson, Fortress Classics in Biblical Studies (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), 35-50, Ruben Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus: Methods and Interpretation* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2015), and David B. Gowler, *The Parables after Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Publishing Group, 2017). Zimmerman traces the parables through various methodologies and, at the end of his book, interprets select parables in light of the methodologies he presents. Gowler traces the parables from their earliest reception to 21st century interpretations of the parables. Snodgrass highlights some of the arguments among scholars in *Stories* 4-7.

¹⁴ Representative of the historical approaches are Jülicher (Adolf Jülicher, vol. 1 of *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu* [Tübingen: JCB Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1899], 25-118), Charles H. Dodd (*The Parables of the Kingdom* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961], 5-20), and Jeremias (*Parables of Jesus*, 11-22). Representative of the sociological approaches are Kenneth E. Bailey (*Poet and Peasant and Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke*, comb. ed. [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983], 27-37) and William R. Herzog (*Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994], 16-29). As to literary approaches, see Via (*Parables*, 2-3, 10-11, 105-106), Crossan (*Parables*, 26-47, 122) and David B. Gowler (*What Are They Saying about The Parables?* [New York: Paulist Press, 2000], 36-38, 101-103). Parsons offers commentary

Whereas many regard the parables as having a Jewish background,¹⁵ recently the calls for Greco-Roman background have gained momentum, though they remain sufficiently few that Snodgrass regards Greco-Roman backgrounds as a lacuna in the field.¹⁶ This study contributes by addressing this lacuna in its focus on the ways Greco-Roman rhetoric and provide tools for interpretation of New Testament parables.

In the following sections, I discuss the definitions offered for fables and New Testament parables and draw into closer connection on the basis of their polysemy and ubiquity. After discussing the definitions of the genres, I engage the form and function of fables, highlighting the fluidity of the former and the usefulness of the latter. The function of the fables shares some common traits with the function of the New Testament parables. Finally, I demonstrate the ways in which some particular rhetorical techniques in the fables and parables simultaneously contribute to characterization and to moral formation. The discussion in Chapter Four sets the stage for Chapter Five, where I

on the rhetorical aspects of the parables (Mikeal C. Parsons, *Luke: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007] and in *Body and Character in Luke and Acts: The Subversion of Physiognomy* [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011]). While neither of these books focus on the Lukan parables, both include parabolic literature and rhetorical interpretations thereof.

¹⁵ “The origins of this provocative genre, with its personal, social, and moral barbs, appear in the scriptures of Israel” in Levine, *Short Stories*, 4. Wojciechowski attempts to connect parables and Aesopic fables but ultimately concludes that the connections “are partial and do not reach deep” (Michael Wojciechowski, “Aesopic Traditions in the New Testament,” *JGRChJ* 5 [2008]: 109). The connections, on the basis of similarities in structure or subject material, are admittedly partial. When looking for a 1:1 connection between the Aesopic fables and the New Testament parables, one’s quest may be admittedly frustrated by the different concerns of the respective authors. The rhetorical context and function of fables and of parables, however, may provide a way forward for shared conversation between Greco-Roman rhetoric, fables, and New Testament parables.

¹⁶ Klyne R. Snodgrass, “From Allegorizing to Allegorizing: A History of the Interpretation of the Parables of Jesus,” in *The Challenge of Jesus’ Parables*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 19. Part of the justification for the exploration of potential Greco-Roman backgrounds is the temporal separation—in some cases, centuries, as noted by Snodgrass—between the rabbinic *Mashalim* and Jesus’s parables (*Stories*, 42).

discuss the ways rhetorical techniques function in the parables of the Loving Father or Prodigal Son(s) and the Rich Man and Lazarus.

On Defining Fables: Polysemy and Ubiquity

The fable held an important role within the Greek *paideia* and literary culture. Fables were among the first *progymnasmata* students would learn. The fable formed one of the significant building blocks of education. Fables were recited in speeches, in court, at the dinner table, and in symposia. Philosophical texts, educational texts, historiography, and novels all employed fables.¹⁷ Though regarded by both ancients and moderns as a “slave genre,” by the first centuries BCE and CE, the fable’s prevalence among the educated frustrates this designation.¹⁸ The use of fables in the *progymnasmata* as a means of education for the elite and its presence in Plutarch’s *Lives* exemplifies its usefulness as

¹⁷ Christos A. Zafiroopoulos, *Ethics in Aesop’s Fables: The Augustana Collection*, Mnemosyne Supplements 216 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 19, 22. Laes attributes the ubiquity of fables in literature to its role in education: “The prevalence of fables in various genres of classical literature ranging from speeches, satire to moral examples and novels is undoubtedly caused by the use of fables in various stages of education and points to a pervasive presence of the fable in the collective consciousness of the *literati*” (Christian Laes, “Children and Fables, Children in Fables in Hellenistic and Roman Antiquity,” *Latomus* 65 [2006]: 899).

¹⁸ Phaedrus mentions that fables originated as a coded language among slaves (3.*proem*.33-37), but also maintains that the path of glory is open: “The Athenians set up a statue in honour of the gifted Aesop, and by so doing placed a slave on a pedestal of everlasting fame, that all men might know that the path of honour lies open and that glory is awarded not according to birth, but according to merit” (2.9.1-4 [Perry, LCL]) and sees his effort as a learned one (2.9.15). Granted, slaves were frequently educated in the service of their masters; it is less likely, however, to expect slaves to gain recognition for their “educated labors” because the recognition or honor would be assigned to the master. In recent scholarship, Ilaria Marchesi regards fables as the language of freedpersons, saying “The presence of a language and a genre culturally associated with slavery in a literature produced and consumed by their owners well fits the situation of the Roman social fabric in which slaves coexisted with their masters in a power continuum of submission and domination” (Ilaria Marchesi, “Traces of a Freed Language: Horace, Petronius, and the Rhetoric of Fable,” *Classical Antiquity* 24 [2005]: 328). Johnson sees fables as representing both the voices of the elite and the disenfranchised and were a place in which individuals would “negotiate issues of power” (Cara T. Johnson, “Voicing Power through the Other,” PhD diss., University of Toronto [2013], 45).

a way to inculcate elite values and, at the same time, offer commentary on a character's morality or social standing.

Efforts to define fables on the basis of their morality exist both in the ancient collections and in modern scholarship. Phaedrus says, "A double dowry comes with this, my little book: it moves to laughter, and by wise counsels guides the conduct of life" (1.prol.3-4). Chambray holds that what differentiates a story from a fable is its moral lesson and resists arguments that the moralizing *epimythia* represent Byzantine commentary on the fables.¹⁹ Wienert argues that the main object is the morality of the fable.²⁰ Paulsen regards fables as "imparting moral insights" before ethics became a philosophical endeavor.²¹ Others, however, see the moralizing aspect as only one possibility for the purpose of the fable. For example, Perry holds that fables cannot be identified by their moral purpose alone.²² He suggests that the fabulists shaped and stylized fables to suit their purposes to serve the plot of the story.²³ Van Dijk also

¹⁹ Aesop and Émile Chambry, *Fables* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2005), 21, 37-38, cf., Adrados, who regards the *epimythia* as a Cynic embellishment during the Imperial age (*Origins*, 457). Reece regards the *epimythia* as reflective of Byzantine Christian influence (Steve Reece, "'Aesop', 'Q' and 'Luke,' *NTS* 62 [2016]: 364). Grubmüller, by contrast, believes the *epimythia* serve an orienting function and were introduced into the literature to maintain the original function of the fables after their transmission via collections such as those of Babrius and Phaedrus (Klaus Grubmüller, "Der Weg der äsopischen Fabel ins Mittelalter," in *Meister Esopus: Untersuchen zu Geschichte und Funktion der Fable im Mittelalter*, MTU 56 [Zürich; München: Artemis Verlag, 1977], 50).

²⁰ Wienert, "Das Wesen," 47.

²¹ Thomas Paulsen, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jun. GmbH & Co., 2004), 92. Paulsen holds that the fable's goal is a single point, by which he means the *promythium* or *epimythium*, which offers the life application. While the moralizing *promythia* or *epimythia* may offer an application for the parable, they also serve various other functions, as I detail below. Further, as Theon advocates, fables need not have a solitary point (*Prog.* 75).

²² Ben E. Perry, "Fable," *Studium Generale* 12 (1959): 22.

²³ Ben E. Perry, "Fable" in *Proverbia in Fabula: Essays on the Relationship of the Proverb and the Fable*, ed. Patrick Carnes (New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 24, 85.

acknowledges the possibilities for moral instruction or sociological commentary offered by the fables but indicates that one cannot ascribe to the fables a singular function.²⁴ It is worthwhile to note that there is general consensus that the fable was useful in rhetoric and in writing as a means of illustration, despite its many possible functions. The fables' function in *progymnasmata* simultaneously inscribed values and served as a means by which students would learn exercises including inflection, expansion, summarization, and memorization. The flexibility of the fable enables its use in a wide variety of contexts and suits the purposes of the varied contexts—from *progymnasmata* to *bioi*.

One of the main difficulties modern fable scholarship encounters is how to define the genre “fable.” Contributing to this difficulty are the many words used to indicate fabulistic literature, including *mythos*, *ainos*, *ainigma*, in Greek and *apologus*, *apologatio*, *fabula*, *fabella*, and *affabulatio* in Latin.²⁵ In addition to the polysemy of

²⁴ Gert-Jan van Dijk, “Ἐκ τῶν μύθων ἄρξασθαι. Greek Fable Theory After Aristotle: Characters and Characteristics,” in *Literary Theory After Aristotle: A Collection of Papers in Honour of D.M. Schenkeveld*, ed. I. Sluiter et al. (Amsterdam: VU University Press, 1995), 237-38.

²⁵ Van Dijk notes the difficulty inherent in the polysemy of fabulistic literature and defines the fable quite similarly to Theon, calling it “a fictitious, metaphorical narrative” (*Ainoi, Logoi, Mythoi*, 113). Wienert’s definition is similar to Theon’s: “The plot of a fable is indeed fictitious, but it must also, however, be represented as true, not merely as possible” (“Das Wesen,” 47). Nøjgaard holds that a distinct genre by the name “fable” does not exist: “The response to this question depends uniquely on the arbitrary definitions of the scholar. Therefore, one could very well establish a category that would include most of the texts which are known as fables, from antiquity to the present. But then we must content ourselves with assuming a category with a meaning so vague, namely, a set of allegories that contain animals, that it would be deprived of practical interest with such an insignificant genre ... if therefore one accepts the existence of a fable as a general genre, we must find other names for all the forms of allegorical animal tales through time, and because this process only impedes the understanding of the texts, such a category is absolutely useless. It seems fair to argue that in a general sense a genre by the name ‘fable’ does not exist” (*La Fable*, 23). Nøjgaard, however, does proceed to define fable on the basis of its timelessness (25). Holzberg notes the ways in which fables resist a singular definition (Niklas Holzberg, *The Ancient Fable: An Introduction*, trans. Christine Jackson-Holzberg [Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002], 19), cf., Zafiropoulos, whose definition attempts to leave open multiple possibilities for form and content, which leads to a rather cumbersome definition: “The Greek fable is a brief and simple fictitious story with a constant structure, generally with animal protagonists (but also humans, gods, and inanimate objects, e.g. trees), which gives an exemplary and popular message on practical ethics and which comments, usually in a cautionary way, on the course of action to be followed or avoided in a particular situation” (Zafiropoulos, *Ethics in Aesop’s Fables*, 1).

fabulistic literature, other literature—such as parable, illustration, and proverbs—existed in close proximity to fables. The ancient fable collections further frustrate the modern efforts to define fable, in that they include texts that resist definition on the basis of form and of content.²⁶ According to Johnson, “in antiquity no differentiation often existed between fable and other *mythoi* or *logoi*.”²⁷ As to the form of the fable, its flexibility and presence in various contexts frustrates clear distinctions between fables and other genres, a topic I address.²⁸ Also problematic are the early collections of fables, which, according to Adrados “contain more than animalistic fables (and fables with plants involved); they also include others in which stories are narrated about gods or men, which we may qualify either as *mythos* or anecdotes, or else as tales, short stories, *χρεῖαι* (a type of episode concluding with a biting and instructive phrase), etc.”²⁹ The polysemy of fables, along with their ubiquity, makes a hard-and-fast definition difficult to determine.

The progymnasmatists’ definitions of fable were far less specified than their modern counterparts and serve as my guide. The *progymnasmata* present fables as one of the first exercises a student would learn, and the progymnasmatists hold fables in high regard. It is important to note that this regard probably stems from the usefulness of

²⁶ See Adrados, *Origins*, 17-18. Adrados also highlights the similarities between fables and *χρεῖαι*, holding that fables might be representative of expanded *chreiai* and *chreiai* condensed versions of the fables (150, 192).

²⁷ Johnson, “Voicing Power,” 10.

²⁸ Gert-Jan van Dijk, “There Were Fables Before Aesop in Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic Greek Literature,” *Reinardus* 11 (1998): 205.

²⁹ Adrados, *Origins*, 3.

fables in education.³⁰ I engage the *progymnasmata* in the order in which they were written, and I consider Theon, Ps.-Hermogenes, and Aphthonius's definitions of fable.

Theon defines fable as “a fictitious story that resembles truth” (*Prog.* 72). He militates against those who make distinctions among fables with respect to their characters and their plausibility: “There are those who would say, on the one hand, there are some fables that pertain to unspeaking beasts and others to humans, some to impossible things and others to things that could happen, seems to me a wrong-headed designation” (*Prog.* 73). Theon, by contrast, offers a simple definition. After an extended discussion of the ways in which fables relate to associated terms, such as *logos* and *ainos* (*Prog.* 74), Theon indicates the main point of the fable is instruction, though he acknowledges that the fables need not have one conclusion (rather, there are many conclusions [πλείονες ἐπίλογοι]) and many fables might arrive at the same conclusion (*Prog.* 75). For Theon, the fables are a flexible building block upon which one can expand through additional exercises such as inflection (*polyptōton*), speech-in character (*prosōpopoiia*) and descriptive language (*ekphrasis*) and could condense by removing such additions.

Ps.-Hermogenes's *progymnasmata* offers a brief commentary on the usefulness of fables. Ps.-Hermogenes places fables ahead of narrative and *chreia*.³¹ According to Ps.-Hermogenes, “Fable is regarded as the first exercise to be assigned to the young because it can bring their minds into harmony for the better” (*Prog.* 1.1 [Kennedy]). Further, they ought to “be useful for some aspect of life” (*Prog.* 1.2 [Kennedy]). Ps.-Hermogenes also

³⁰ Quintilian admits this in *Inst.* 1.9.2.

³¹ As does Aphthonius (*Prog.* 21).

offers practical ways animals may represent humans, such as representing someone who is clever with a fox and someone who imitates others as an ape (*Prog.* 1.2).³² In terms of fables' usefulness in oratory, Ps.-Hermogenes indicates that orators sometimes employ fables in place of examples (*Prog.* 1.4), which seems to bear some similarity to the ways in which some parables function in the New Testament (more on this below).

Aphthonius's description of fables is the briefest of the three considered in this section. He accepts Theon's definition (*Prog.* 21) but goes on to describe various types of fables despite Theon's disdain for such efforts: "some fables are rational, some ethical, some mixed; rational when a human being is imagined as doing something, ethical when representing the character of irrational animals, mixed when made up of both irrational and rational" (*Prog.* 21 [Kennedy]). As the *progymnasmata* tradition developed, the progymnasmatists made distinctions among the fables not found in Theon.

Fables present a semblance of truth, according to the progymnasmatists. The *progymnasmata*, in addition, explicitly highlight the moralizing function of the fables. Given the ways each of the progymnastic exercises built upon the former ones, the fable served as both a moral and educational foundation for youth.³³ Fables often provide illustrations or examples of behaviors to avoid and, in the view of the progymnasmatists and Phaedrus, are useful for one's moral formation or remedy. Furthermore, the polysemy and ubiquity of fables makes it difficult to arrive at concrete definitions of what

³² In this instance, Ps.-Hermogenes includes some similar aspects to zoological physiognomy.

³³ Teresa Morgan, *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire* (New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 60.

they entail beyond a story that “images truth.” In the end, none has successfully gone beyond Theon’s definition.

On Defining Parables

Defining New Testament parables is also fraught with difficulty. Similar to fables, New Testament parables entail many forms, yet are be useful as *exempla* in the Gospel narratives. Some efforts to define the New Testament parables take pains to distance parables from their Greco-Roman counterparts while others attempt to define New Testament parables on their own terms, which leads to unwieldy and caveat-ridden definitions. Snodgrass rightly determines that the difficulty in defining parables lies within the parables themselves: “Hardly anything said about parables—whether defining them or explaining their characteristics—is true of all of them ... any definition that is broad enough to cover all the forms is so imprecise that it is almost useless.”³⁴ Nevertheless, attempts to define and designate the New Testament parables abound. In what follows, I offer a brief survey of definitions of New Testament parables.

Jeremias, in his attempts to uncover the aspects of the parables original to Jesus, opts for a wide definition that encompasses parable, comparison, symbol, commonplace, proverb, riddle, and rule. Noting that the Hebrew terms *mashal* or *mathla* cover a similarly broad scope, Jeremias associates the parables with them.³⁵ As we saw above, however, fabulistic literature has varying associated terms and a wide definition as well.

³⁴ Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 7.

³⁵ Jeremias, *Parables*, 20.

Therefore, should diversity of terms and literature be sufficient for association with a particular tradition, it remains unclear why Jeremias dismisses Greco-Roman rhetoric.

Scott also defines parables in terms of *mashal*. According to him, a parable is “a *mashal* that employs a short narrative fiction to reference a symbol. This definition attempts to account for one type of *mashal* represented in both the Jesus and rabbinic traditions.”³⁶ In order to support his claim, Scott explores the parables’ relationship to Greek usage, marshaling as evidence the lack of development of parable in Greco-Roman literature, and its inconclusive definition.³⁷ In the Lukan parables, specifically, Scott finds a range of use similar to that of *mashal*.³⁸ He goes on to say that Luke “anticipates his readers by providing an explicit reading before they read the parables, thus robbing *mashal* of one of its chief characteristics, the need for interpretation” and that Luke’s “formulas of introduction and conclusion achieve a remarkable integration of parable into narrative discourse.”³⁹ The inclusion of *promythia* or *epimythia*, which are introductory and concluding statements, respectively, that highlight the rationale(s), point(s), or lesson(s) the *mythoi* seek to make, along with the ways in which Luke fits his parables into narrative discourse suggests that defining parables in terms of fabulistic literature would be at least an equally plausible and fruitful approach to interpretation.⁴⁰

³⁶ Bernard B. Scott, *Hear then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 8, see also p. 42.

³⁷ Scott, *Hear then the Parable*, 19.

³⁸ Scott, *Hear then the Parable*, 27.

³⁹ Scott, *Hear then the Parable*, 27-28.

⁴⁰ Scott, *Hear then the Parable*, 27-28.

Levine attempts to hear the parables as Jesus's audiences would have heard them. Assuming an audience in ancient Palestine, "The parables in that first century context need to make sense without any knowledge of how Jesus's followers came to understand him after the Romans crucified him. They need to make sense not only to those who chose to follow him, but to those who found him just a wise teacher, a neighbor in Nazareth, a fellow Jew."⁴¹ Though Levine helpfully reminds readers of Jesus's Jewish context, the only access we have to the parables—through the Gospels—assumes a post-crucifixion context and a Greek-speaking audience. Further, the Hellenization of Palestine, evidenced by authors such as Philo and Josephus, was well in place by the time Jesus would have uttered his parables. The authors of the Gospels, having received education through Hellenistic-Jewish or Greco-Roman means, likely experienced some form of the Greco-Roman *paideia*. The rhetorical figures and techniques present in the Gospels, including *ekphrasis*, inflection, and *prosōpopoiia* heighten this possibility.⁴² Though Levine's efforts to correct misconceptions of the Jewish worldview of the first century are insightful and helpful, assuming an exclusively Jewish context in the Greco-Roman world during the first century is problematic.

Without explicitly determining a Greco-Roman or Jewish background to the parables, Zimmerman offers an unwieldy definition of parables:

A *parable* is a short narrativel (1) fictional (2) text that is related in the narrated world to known reality (3) but, by way of implicit or explicit transfer signals, makes it understood that the meaning of the narration must be differentiated from

⁴¹ Levine, *Short Stories*, 17.

⁴² Morgenthaler views Luke as shaping his text rhetorically (342), shows concern for words that flow well (345), and that Luke's appropriation of sources is similar to the ways the rhetoricians appropriated sources (417) (Robert Morgenthaler, *Lukas und Quintilian: Rhetorik als Erzählkunst* [Zürich: Gotthelf Verlag, 1993]).

the literal words of the text (4). In its appeal dimension (5) it challenges the reader to carry out a metaphoric transfer of meaning that is steered by contextual information (6)⁴³

Zimmerman sees both points four and five as supplemental.⁴⁴ The above criteria adhere to the notion that the New Testament parables are a component of a rhetorical encounter and fit into the overall narrative structure and argument of the Gospels. At the same time, however, Zimmerman does not regard the New Testament parables as corresponding to the use of *parabolē*, *similitudo*, and *paroimia* in ancient rhetoric because he does not think the phenomena they describe do not correspond.⁴⁵

Others regard Greco-Roman backgrounds as more prevalent than Jewish backgrounds. Earliest among these is Jülicher.⁴⁶ Vouga takes Jülicher's suggestions a step further, and sees parables as inhabiting similar space to examples, fables, and *fabula*, which affirms Theon's definition of *mythos*.⁴⁷ He also helpfully notes the polysemy the term *parabolē* entails. He states, "The hypothesis according to which the term 'parable' would be used to denote certain literary forms or genres is falsified by the fact that the term is used in connection with various literary forms and genres."⁴⁸ Jesus's parables

⁴³ Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables*, 137 (emphasis original).

⁴⁴ Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables*, 138.

⁴⁵ Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables*, 132.

⁴⁶ In his first volume, Jülicher argues against reading parables as metaphors (*Die gleichnisreden*, 1.52-58) and as allegory (1.60-63). Jülicher argues that the parables share a similar narrative form to those of Stesichorus and Aesop and that they function similarly within the overall argument in which they are used (1.98).

⁴⁷ François Vouga, "Die Parabeln Jesu und die Fabeln Äsops: Ein Beitrag zur Gleichnisforschung und zur Problematik der Literalisierung der Erzählungen der Jesus-Tradition," *Wort und Dienst* 26 (2001): 152.

⁴⁸ François Vouga, "Zur form- und redaktionsgeschichtlichen Definitionen der Gattungen: Gleichnis, Parabel/Fabel, Beispielerzählung," in *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu 1899-1999: Beiträge zum Dialog mit Adolf Jülicher*, ed. Ulrich Mell (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1999), 80. More specifically in the case

cannot be severed from either their Jewish or their Greco-Roman backgrounds. Though the rabbinic *mashal* and *mathla* took shape after the crucifixion of Jesus, this tradition—like other oral traditions—most likely began developing prior to its literary tradition. In order to understand the parables in their Hellenistic-Jewish first-century context, it seems most prudent to leave open the possibilities the traditions exist alongside each other and are difficult to separate. The New Testament parables frequently illustrate concepts familiar to Jewish audiences, such as scheming younger sons who end up with a blessing despite all evidence to the contrary and care for the poor. The ways parables function within the Gospels respond and react to rhetorical situations similarly to Greco-Roman fables, in that they function as *exempla* and contribute to an understanding of behavior to be emulated or avoided. It is important to note that this mode of communication, given the widespread nature of Hellenism and Greek *paideia*, was likely familiar to—if not employed by—Jewish writers at the time as well.

Snodgrass and Beavis, who leave open the possibility that both traditions are plausible, have paved the way for this conversation. Parables are “not general stories with universal truths ... they are framed on the reality they seek to show, or they cannot make their point ... this is also true of most rabbinic and Greco-Roman parables.”⁴⁹ The ways parables function as *exempla* within their narrative contexts, along with fitting into the narrative trajectory of the Gospels, fit well within both rabbinic and Greco-Roman

of Luke, Vouga sees the parables functioning as a rhetorical tool: “The term παραβολή has been found in Luke’s redaction of Mark. Luke has received it in such a way that it is a) a literary genre and a rhetorical tool, and that b) corresponds to the classical meaning of the term: a παραβολή is a picture that should clarify the facts [of the argument]” (88-89), and that Luke uses parables the parables as a rhetorical tool by which Luke introduces the audience to the Word of God, asking them to behave in accordance with this Word (90).

⁴⁹ Snodgrass, *Stories*, 20.

traditions. Snodgrass defines parables broadly, noting that “In most cases then *a parable is an expanded analogy used to convince and persuade*.”⁵⁰ He, like Vouga, alludes to Theon’s definition of *mythos*.⁵¹ Beavis argues for a common ancestry in Jewish and Greco-Roman backgrounds, pointing out a paradox that exists in parables scholarship: “The Synoptic parables ... continue to be described in terms of Greco-Roman literary classes, while ... it is held that the multiform Semitic *mashal* or *mathla* provides the essential background for understanding Jesus’s use of parables.”⁵² She describes the way that defining fables as animal stories is problematic because not all fables feature animals as characters (more on this below).⁵³ In Beavis’s view, there are five key similarities between fables and parables, including 1) their narrative structure, 2) content, 3) religious and ethical themes, 4) elements of surprise or irony, and 5) secondary morals or applications.⁵⁴ Both Snodgrass and Beavis represent approaches that hold open the possibilities that there are Greco-Roman and Jewish backgrounds in view, though both authors advocate for continued research on the former, because the weight of research has existed on the side of the latter.

Luke presents the disciples themselves as questioning the meaning, purpose, or rationale for telling parables. Luke 8:10 might provide a distinction sufficient to sever the relationship between parables and fabulistic literature; according to Luke 8:10, parables

⁵⁰ Snodgrass, *Stories*, 9 (emphasis original).

⁵¹ Snodgrass, *Stories*, 8.

⁵² Mary Ann Beavis, “Parable and Fable,” *CBQ* 52 (1990): 474.

⁵³ Beavis, “Parable and Fable,” 478.

⁵⁴ Beavis, “Parable and Fable,” 483.

are cryptic indications of the secrets of the Kingdom of God.⁵⁵ This presentation of parables suggests that they obfuscate rather than illustrate the secrets of the Kingdom of God. The definition in Luke 8:10 receives nuance from other engagements with parables in Luke. The purpose of parables Luke 8:10 describes is problematic. Jesus makes this statement *after* the disciples inquire what a parable means, illustrating that the insiders are unaware of the parable's interpretation. Various people outside Jesus's immediate circle of disciples, including the scribes, chief priests, and Pharisees, understand the parables Jesus tells them (Luke 7:45, 10:36-37, 20:19). By contrast, in some places, the disciples wonder whether the parables apply only to them or to others, which suggests the secrets of the kingdom are not as exclusive as Luke 8:10 intimates (cf., Luke 12:41). Finally, in terms of the justification for telling parables throughout the Lukan narrative, many parables come in response to a question or statement made by another character in the narrative and seem intended to illustrate or support Jesus's argument (i.e., Luke 15:3, 18:9, 19:11). Therefore, Luke 8:10 is insufficient to explain the purpose of parables, given the ways in which parables are difficult for insiders to identify for themselves and the ways Jesus's presentation of parables responds to a question, statement, or behavior within the Gospel.

⁵⁵ Compare Mark 4:11-12, "And he said to them, 'To you the mysteries of the Kingdom of God have been given, but to those ones who are on the outside, everything becomes as a parable to them.'" This notion, at face value, reveals a notion similar to Phaedrus's estimation of "slave literature" in n.17, where I contend that the genre is not suited for such a designation. The disciples' confusion surrounding and questions about the parables, however, suggest that parables could remain obscure to "insiders," because the disciples are "insiders" with respect to Jesus's ministry and mission. As indicated above, the capacity for those against whom Jesus tells parables to recognize their significance suggests a less exclusive—and less secretive—reception as well.

The survey above highlights efforts to situate the parables within either a Jewish context or a Greco-Roman context. Determining one tradition over and against the other removes from the interpreter potential information about the first-century hearers. Given the relationship between the Scriptures of Israel and synagogue communities and the prevalence of Greco-Roman *paideia*, it seems best to regard the New Testament parables as inhabiting a definition that might be both Jewish and Greco-Roman. In the end, Theon's definition of *mythos* is sufficiently broad to serve my purposes of engaging literature that is part of a rhetorical encounter, available to us only within a narrative, and purports to illustrate or provide examples that support the overall narrative argument. A parable is, at its base, a fictive story that "images truth."

Fables and Parables: Form

In this section, I discuss the form of fables and parables and highlight the diversity within both. My discussion of the form includes fables' characters, subject matter, and structure. The fable collections of Babrius and Phaedrus receive the bulk of my focus. Along the way, I demonstrate the ways New Testament parables may be seen as functioning similarly and the ways in which they depart from fabulistic literature. In the following sections, I offer a brief introduction to Babrius and Phaedrus and a discussion of the various components of form mentioned above. The fables' form is sufficiently varied that it is difficult to define them on the basis of form. The difficulty in definition on the basis of form increases the difficulty of developing a formal distinction between the New Testament parables and other fabulistic literature.

Babrius and Phaedrus's collections of fables came into being between the mid- to late-first century CE. Little is known of Babrius. Though his origins are likely Italian, he writes from the eastern part of the Roman Empire. Perry speculates that he was either in Syria or in Asia Minor on the basis of Babrius's familiarity with Arab culture.⁵⁶ As to the influence of Babrius's fables, Perry suggests the possibility that Quintilian was aware of Babrius—or his imitators—though Quintilian does not specifically name him.⁵⁷ Babrius set his fables to iambic verse, which leads to speculation that Babrius's origins are noble than Phaedrus's.

More is known of Phaedrus than of Babrius, though—as in the case of Babrius—much room for speculation remains. Phaedrus relates that he was a freedman of Augustus. According to Phaedrus, he was born on the Pierian mountain, under the shadow of the muses. Having devoted himself to education, Phaedrus sees himself as having gained a place among the poets, though alludes to the distaste of his reception by them (3.prol.21-24). Phaedrus also situates himself in the company of Aesop based on their similarities, as Aesop was also born a slave yet renowned for his fables (3.prol.50-54). Seneca and Martial knew of Phaedrus, and though the Martial regards Phaedrus as an *improbi locos*, Martial's dig at Phaedrus suggests that Phaedrus had gained a sufficient audience to merit mention (*Epigr.* 3.20.5). Holzberg's estimation of Phaedrus is that he “uses the truth to disguise the truth ... And only readers who can see through this trick

⁵⁶ Babrius, Phaedrus, *Fables*, transl. Ben E. Perry, LCL 436 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), xlvii, l.

⁵⁷ Babrius, Phaedrus, *Fables*, l.

will appreciate that the substance of Phaedrus's fables is as profoundly significant as the wisdom camouflaged by the fool with cap and bells."⁵⁸ Phaedrus's fables may offer a subtle critique of the elite even as they describe the reality of life. In this reality, the less fortunate remain less fortunate and the powerful remain powerful, as in the case of the Wolf and the Lamb, in which a savvy lamb provides justification that the wolf not eat him and is nevertheless torn apart by the wolf (Phaedrus 1.1). Similarly, when a cow, she-goat, and a sheep go into partnership with a lion and kill a stag, the lion eats all four of the animals' shares on the basis of being a king over the cow, a partner with the goat, and stronger than the sheep (Phaedrus 1.5). In the end, the powerful remain powerful and the weak(er) remain in their service. Though the *epimythia* in both cases critique the powerful as being unjust and ruthless, respectively, the fables inscribe their injustice and ruthlessness because they offer no recourse for the weak(er) parties.

Though the fabulists Babrius and Phaedrus did not necessarily garner the respect of their contemporaries, the use of fables in historians and in the *progymnasmata* (by which the elite were educated) illustrates the potential for interaction between the elite and fables. As Clayton suggests, "The fables would have been an important part of the shared oral culture of Athens and would have been remembered from childhood and shared among adults."⁵⁹ The fables, as one of the building blocks of education, especially literacy, formed a part of the common culture of the elite.

⁵⁸ Holzberg, *Fable*, 50.

⁵⁹ Edward Clayton, "Aesop, Aristotle, and Animals: The Role of Fables in Human Life," *Humanitas* 21 (2008): 188.

Characters in Fables

Some designations of fables differentiate them on the basis of their characters. Aphthonius, as noted above, separates fables into rational, ethical, and mixed, with the first pertaining to human characters, the second to animals, and the third to both.⁶⁰ The presence of animals in fables may seem sufficient to distinguish them from New Testament parables. While the New Testament parables do not assign human characteristics to animals, but they assign to animals and other irrational objects—such as seeds and plants—characteristics that relate to humans and the Kingdom of God. I offer a few examples of the various ways characters interact within the fables similarly to the New Testament parables and the ways non-human characters feature within the New Testament parables.

Animals and non-human characters feature prominently within fabulistic literature. In some fables, animals are the only characters, whereas in others, animals interact with humans, and in others still, animals or humans interact with the gods. In fables that present animals interacting with one another, the animals have human qualities. Beyond the capacity to speak, animals possess human characteristics including human occupations, physical attraction, and concern or disdain for the gods. The gods as characters in fables interact with humans and animals alike. Because such diversity exists, it is difficult to define fables on the basis of the presence of animal characters. Likewise, distinguishing New Testament parables from fables solely on this basis is

⁶⁰ Aphthonius, however, does not mention fables that include the gods, who feature as characters in several fables (Babrius 10, 20, 30).

insufficient because it fails to take into account the ways New Testament parables likewise present non-human characters as analogues to humans.

In the fables, the gods participate in human and animal affairs. In “Aphrodite and the Slave Girl” (Babrius 10), a slave girl believes that she enjoys the affections of her master because Aphrodite made her beautiful. Aphrodite, upon receiving the girl’s thanks, responds that she is not blessing the girl, but rather, punishing her master. In this case, a god corrects a human’s perception of their blessings. In “Heracles and the Ox Driver” (Babrius 20), an ox driver finds himself and his team in a deep ravine. Upon hearing the man’s prayer, Heracles appears to him and tells him to pray to the gods only after he has done something to solve his problem. Though Luke does not present similar subject matter in parables, the parables nevertheless present God as a character who challenges or corrects human perceptions, as in the case of the Parable of the Rich Fool, telling him his storehouses and barns will be useless when he dies (Luke 12:16-21).

In the fable “Physician, Heal Thyself” (Babrius 120), a frog asserts his abilities as a physician. He brags of medicines of which “not even the Paeon who dwells on Olympus” knows (120.5 [Perry, LCL]). A fox, however, calls the frog’s bluff, asking how the frog manages to remain so pale if he is such a skilled healer. This fable relates to Luke 4:23 as the crowd begins to question Jesus’s identity. Rather than regarding the statement “doctor, heal thyself” as a *paroimia* or proverb, Jesus relates that this statement is a *parabolē*. While it would be foolish to place too much weight of my argument upon this statement, it is peculiar that this is the only place in which the NRSV translates *parabolē* as anything other than “parable,” instead favoring the term “proverb.” Luke, however, does not distinguish between this pithy saying and the other *parabolai*. In the

potential connection between the fable and the parables, it is possible that Luke sees the parables as functioning similarly to fables. If this fable—or a similar fable—is in view in Luke 4:23, it might help to explain the questioning of Jesus’s identity, especially in matters pertaining to divine abilities, such as power over nature (Luke 8:22-25) and the capacity to forgive sins (Luke 5:21, 7:49). In all of these cases, Jesus’s power brings up questions about his identity.

Humans and animals also appear on equal footing in some of the “mixed” fables, as in Babrius 3, “The Goat and the Goatherd.” This fable presents a goat who lingers behind the others as they go into the fold. The goatherd, upon discovering her, throws a rock at her horn and breaks it. The goatherd then regards the she-goat as a συνδούλη (a fellow slave) and begs her to not tell their master. Her response is that, even if she is silent (κἄν ἐγὼ σιωπήσω) her horn will shout the truth (τὸ κέρας κέκραγε, 3.11). Not only does the goatherd an animal as a fellow slave, an inanimate object—her horn—communicates the goatherd’s guilt. Though he does not do so in a parable, Luke describes inanimate objects shouting the truth. As Jesus approaches Jerusalem, when the Pharisees ask that Jesus tell his disciples to be quiet, he asserts that if his disciples were to be silent (ἐὰν οὗτοι σιωπήσουσιν), the stones would shout out (κράξουσιν). I am not arguing that Luke had this particular fable in mind during this interaction; rather, it is sufficient to notice that both Luke and the fabulists regard inanimate objects, animals, and humans as participants in their works.

Non-human characters also feature in the parables. Seeds, the earth, birds, and plants feature within the parables to illustrate aspects of human life and the Kingdom of God. The parable of the sower and its interpretation (Luke 8:4-15) presents seeds as

representative of humans' reception of the Gospel. Luke also compares the Kingdom of God to plants or inanimate objects, including mustard seeds (Luke 13:18-19) and yeast (13:20). Whereas speaking animals do not feature in New Testament parables, non-human characters can act as an analog for humans or for the Kingdom of God. Moreover, in the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:16-21), God appears to correct and critique human perceptions.

Subject Matter

The subject matter of fables is diverse.⁶¹ While some fables present behaviors one ought to emulate, others communicate behaviors one ought to avoid. Other fables still make fun of particular groups of people. A few examples of these fables illustrate the ways they present their subject matter.

In "Outwitting the Birds" (Babrius 33), a farmer devises a plan to rid himself of the starlings who were eating his seed. After the starlings learn to avoid the fields when the farmer asks for his sling, the farmer tells his slave boy that he is not going to ask for his sling, but rather, for "bread." The word "bread" becomes the boy's signal to hand the farmer the sling. After the farmer hits several starlings with stones, some cranes inquired after what had happened. The starlings reply, "Avoid this generation of wicked humans; for while they say one thing to each other, they do something else entirely" (33.23-24 [Perry, LCL]). The fable cautions the audience against guile and deceit.⁶²

⁶¹ Danger and risk (Babrius 44); the value of friendship (Babrius 47, cf. 46, in which a stag's friends eat his sustenance), liberality and miserliness (Babrius 67), pride (Babrius 13), sharing burdens (Babrius 7), acting in contrast to one's nature (Babrius 28, 41), laziness (Babrius 37), flattery (Babrius 77), stealing (Babrius 78), and care for the poor (Babrius 107).

⁶² See also 50.15, 126.

There are also fables that caution against greed. These fables suggest that those who are greedy end up with less than what they had previously enjoyed. In “The Dog and His Shadow” (Babrius 79, Phaedrus 1.4), a dog carrying a piece of meat sees his reflection in a river. Supposing the reflection to be another dog carrying a larger piece of meat, the dog charges after his reflection. In the process, the dog loses the meat he is carrying. Babrius’s *epimythium* suggests that the greedy man’s life is insecure, whereas Phaedrus indicates that those who covet another’s possessions end up losing what they have. Despite their different emphases, both fables present the greedy characters as losing what they have. In “Killing the Golden Goose,” (Babrius 123), a man has a goose who lays golden eggs. Supposing her to be made of gold on the inside, the man kills her only to find her insides are ordinary. The man, out of his greed, loses the source of his treasure. These fables, in their representation of the greedy losing the benefits they enjoy or finding their ultimate reward wanting, are reminiscent of the parable of the Rich Fool and the Rich Man and Lazarus (more on the Rich Man in the next chapter).

Finally, those who support scoundrels or come to their aid fare poorly in the fables. In “Dr. Heron’s Fee” (Babrius 94, Phaedrus 1), a wolf promises to pay a heron for removing a bone lodged in his throat. After removing the bone, the heron asks for his fee, to which the wolf replies the heron’s payment was having removed his neck from a wolf’s mouth. The *epimythium* affirms “You’ll get no good in return for giving aid to scoundrels (κακοῖς), and you’ll do well to not suffer some injury (κακὸν πάσχειν) yourself in the process” (Babrius 94.9-10, Phaedrus 1.8). Those who assist evildoers may

come to some sort of ill or evil themselves.⁶³ The results are direr in “The Snake’s Harmfulness to the Merciful” (Phaedrus 4.20). In this fable, a merciful man warms a freezing snake. After the snake is warmed and revives, he kills the man. When another serpent questions his actions, the unmerciful serpent responds, “To teach men not to do good to the wicked” (4.20.6). These fables reveal that one places oneself at risk for experiencing evils themselves when they give aid to the wicked.

The subject matter of the Lukan parables is also wide-ranging. They engage topics including agriculture (Luke 8:4-15, 13:6-9), the generosity of those who owe debts (Luke 7:41-42, 16:1-9), unwitting friends (Luke 11:5-8), dinner parties (Luke 14:7-11, 16-24), persistent widows (Luke 18:1-8), and slaves entrusted with vast sums of money (Luke 19:11-27). Among the parables, one finds exhortations to emulate certain behaviors, such as generosity and persistence, and avoid others, such as ungratefulness and unmercifulness. Whereas the topics in the Lukan fables suit the purposes of his overall narrative, the diversity of topics used to communicate are similarly wide-ranging to those found in the fables.

Content

It will not come as a surprise, given the examples that precede this section, that the content of fables is also wide-ranging. By “content,” I am referring specifically to whether or not fables include *promythia* and *epimythia*, along with whether or not fables

⁶³ Compare 2 John 10-11 “If someone should come to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house and do not greet him, for the one who welcomes him shares in his evil works.” I am indebted to Dr. Andrew Arterbury for bringing this connection to my attention.

include contexts or rationales for their telling. Fables may or may not include *promythia* or *epimythia*, but some fables appear with neither.⁶⁴ While some fables indicate a context in which they were told, others do not. Though some have moralizing themes, others do not. Perry rightly notes “There was no tradition in Greek literature, previous to the Alexandrian age, as to what a fable should be, stylistically or in content, but each writer uses it, shapes it freely, and stylizes it, in accordance with his own needs and occasions.”⁶⁵ The wide-ranging characters, structure, and content seem to be in keeping with the diverse occasions in which an orator or author might employ a fable.

Phaedrus relates that Aesop first told “The Frogs Ask for a King” (Phaedrus 1.2) when the Athenians bewailed having a tyrant as a ruler. The Athenians, who had flourished under democracy, eventually lost their sense of discipline. Aesop, as Phaedrus relates, tells the Athenians to accept their present situation lest a worse one befall them (1.2.30-31). Phaedrus relates another fable Aesop told at the wedding of a thief, in which the frogs complained about the sun’s nuptials. When Jove asks why they are complaining, the frogs respond with their concerns about the sun procreating when its heat already contributes to their demise (1.6).⁶⁶ Despite the association with a particular context in these fables, most often, Babrius and Phaedrus do not provide an indication of the occasions for the telling of the fables.

⁶⁴ Phaedrus is more likely to include a moralizing or thematizing *promythia* or *epimythia* than Babrius.

⁶⁵ Ben E. Perry, “Fable,” 24.

⁶⁶ Cf., Phaedrus 1.24.

The presence or absence of *promythia* and *epimythia* varies widely among the fables. Many in Babrius lack both, such as “The Goat and the Goatherd” (3), “The Horse and the Ass” (7), “The Fox and the Grapes” (19), “Heracles and the Ox Driver” (20), and “Hermes on Sale” (30). Others include an *epimythium*, including “The Fisherman and the Fish” (4), “The Fire-Bearing Fox” (11), “Better Lose the Ox than Catch the Thief” (23), and “The Old Age of the Race Horse” (29). Phaedrus’s fables tend to include *promythia* rather than *epimythia*. Some, such as “The Poet, On Believing and Not Believing” (Phaedrus 3.10), include both, but others, such as “The Eunuch’s Reply to the Scurrilous Fellow” (3.11), do not include either. Though Phaedrus includes more *promythia* than *epimythia*, the latter appear in “The Weasel and the Man” (1.22), “The Bullock, the Lion, and the Robber” (2.1), “The Eagle, the Cat, and the Wild Sow” (2.4), “The Two Mules and the Robbers” (2.7), and “The Butcher and the Ape” (3.4). In “The Butcher and the Ape,” Phaedrus tells his readers that he chose this fable “more for the sake of a laugh than regard to the truth,” suggesting that the content of fables—while they may give an image of truth—could also have the laughter and goodwill of the audience. A few fables later as motivators. In “The Bees and the Drones Get Judgment from the Wasp” (Phaedrus 3.13), Phaedrus’s *epimythia* indicates that it is a riposte against his rivals (3.13.14-15). Similarly, while some parables include an introduction or rationale and a conclusion, other parables have one or the other, and some parables lack both.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Parables that include both introduction and conclusion, explanation, or *epimythia*—Luke 10:25-37 and 18:9-14; parables that include an introduction but no conclusion, explanation, or *epimythia* Luke 12:15-21; 14:7-11; and 15:3-32; parables that include no introduction, but include a conclusion, explanation, or *epimythia*—Luke 6:39-40; 8:4-15, and 21:29-33; parables that include neither—Luke 4:23, 5:33-36, 13:6-9; and 20:9-19. Nb.: I regard parables whose introduction is “and he told this parable” without further introductory rationale or comment as a non-introduction. Also, note that this list is not exhaustive of the Lukan parables, but rather, shows a sampling of the various inclusions and exclusions of introductory and conclusionary material.

Concluding Remarks

The many configurations of *promythia*, *epimythia*, both, and neither illustrate the flexibility of this genre. The subject matter includes moralizing and entertaining themes. The characters range from gods to inanimate objects, which also reveals an incredible flexibility. In light of this dexterity, Perry's indication that "Fable is as fable does"⁶⁸ is apt. What, then, does a fable do? To assess what a fable does, one must engage fables' function, to which I now turn.

Fables and Parables: Function

In this section, I discuss the function of fables within Phaedrus, the *progymnasmata*, and in Plutarch's *Lives*. The fables, in each of these cases, serve a particular function. In Phaedrus and in the *progymnasmata* the authors laud fables for their capacity to positively influence one's behavior.⁶⁹ The *progymnasmata* also use fables as a means to teach students rhetorical techniques, such as inflection, writing, memorization, expansion, abbreviation, and characterization. In Plutarch's *Lives*, Plutarch uses fables to characterize some of his subjects and to support his overall argument, revealing how fables function within a narrative structure. In keeping with the trajectory thus far, I show the ways in which New Testament parables are in keeping with these aspects of fables.

⁶⁸ Perry, "Fable," 18.

⁶⁹ Quintilian asserts that children who learn to paraphrase, abbreviate, and embellish fables "will be capable of learning anything" (*Inst.* 1.9.3 [Russell, LCL]).

The Progymnasmata

In the *progymnasmata*, fables were one of the first exercises students would learn. For the progymnasmatists, fables were the building blocks of both education and morality, as I demonstrated in Chapter Two. Theon's *progymnasmata* presents fables as useful for *exempla* to illustrate a characters' behavior and their interrelation with narratives. Aphthonius's use of fables in his *progymnasmata* brings to the fore the ways in which fables are useful for communicating desired or undesired behaviors. The Lukan parables are similar, in that Luke utilizes parables (via Jesus) to illustrate characters' behaviors within the narrative and to exhort his audience to emulate or avoid behaviors.

According to Theon, fables are useful in narrative. In the example he presents, Theon demonstrates the way one might present a fable to cast aspersions on the morality of one's opponent, "There was once a camel that desired horns and, even so, his ears were cut off; after first pointing this out, continue the narrative in like manner: 'It seems to be Croesus the Lydian suffered similarly to the camel,' and then [relate] the whole story about him'" (*Prog.* 75 [Kennedy]). Croesus, who desired to reign over Cappadocia, ended up losing the kingdom over which he had control. With this fable, Theon offers a subtle commentary on those who desire more than what they have been given. The next fable ("The Dog Carrying a Piece of Meat and His Reflection") Theon presents a fable with a similar theme and explicitly indicates that "those who desire better things lose themselves and what is theirs" (*Prog.* 75 [Kennedy]). In both cases, Theon's moral commentary casts aspersions on those who desire more than what they have. These examples illustrate fables' capacity to offer commentary on a character's behavior and

examples of behaviors to avoid, at least in the cases of the examples presented in his discussion of *mythoi*.

Ps-Hermogenes advocates for appropriate attributions of characteristics in fables, along with their plausibility. These aspects of fable prepare students for both narrative and *prosōpopoiia*, assuming Theon's assessments of both (*Prog.* 79 and 116, respectively). Ps-Hermogenes presents "The Apes Who Founded a City" as an example of how to expand or abbreviate a fable. The fable tells of a group of apes who determine to found a city, complete with walls, until an old ape restrains them by telling them walls will make them easier to capture. Ps-Hermogenes models the expansion of the fable through attributing speech (*prosōpopoiia*) to an ape who desires to have the city built and suggests that the fable be further expanded by assigning a speech to the old ape as well (*Prog.* 3). Ps-Hermogenes illustrates well the ways fables can conform to aspects of both narrative and *prosōpopoiia*, which prepare students for other exercises. Ps-Hermogenes also argues that one may use fables in place of examples, as Theon modeled in his *progymnasmata*.

Aphthonius relates the "Ants and the Cicadas" as an example of an ethical fable to designate fables that contain only animals.

It was the height of summer and the cicadas were offering up their shrill song, but it occurred to the ants to toil and collect the harvest from which they would be fed in the winter. When the winter came on, the ants fed on what they had laboriously collected, but the pleasure of the cicadas ended in want. (Aphthonius, *Prog.* 22 [Kennedy])

For the purposes of his *progymnasmata*, Aphthonius ascribes the following *epimythium* to the fable, "The youth that does not wish to toil fares badly in old age" (*Prog.* 21 [Kennedy]). Aphthonius culls from this fable a moralizing theme that advocates for

diligence on the part of his students. The *epimythium*'s exhortation extends beyond a particular rhetorical situation, as the handbook does not necessarily assume use only for Aphthonius's students but rather, those who would utilize and teach from his handbook as well.

The *progymnasmata* reveal the flexibility and usefulness of fables. In terms of their flexibility, the progymnasmatists see them as fitting well within narratives, useful as *exempla*, and as a vehicle for teaching skills such as inflection, expansion, abbreviation, and memorization. Regarding their usefulness, Theon's *progymnasmata* presents fables as useful for illustrating a person's character and within narrative. Ps-Hermogenes affirms the role of fables in narrative and assigns to fables the characteristics of credibility, one of Theon's key characteristics of narrative, and appropriateness, one of Theon's key characteristics of *prosōpopoiia*. Aphthonius reveals fables' capacity to reach a wide audience and advocates for particular behaviors on the part of that audience.

One finds some compelling similarities between these indications of fables' flexibility and usefulness and Lukan parables. The parables, in Luke, serve to characterize Jesus's tablemates, opponents, and can be a corrective to their attitudes.⁷⁰ The last is the case in Luke 7:36-50, which Jesus tells while he dines at a Pharisee's house. While there, a woman anoints his feet with oil, to the scorn of Jesus's dining companions. In response to his dining companions, Jesus tells a parable as a corrective to the attitudes around the table, most notably, to his host's attitude toward the woman who anoints Jesus. In this case, the parable characterizes the woman as forgiven, rather than as a sinner, as Jesus's dining companions suppose (Luke 7:48-50).

⁷⁰ Recall Phaedrus 3:13.14-15, where Phaedrus uses fables to respond to his adversaries.

Luke 20:19 indicates the scribes and chief priests realized Jesus told the preceding parable against them. In the parable (Luke 20:9-16), Jesus describes an absentee vineyard owner who sends three slaves to gain his share of the produce, all of whom the caretakers beat and send away empty-handed. The vineyard owner finally sends his son, hoping the tenants will respect him, but the tenants kill him. The vineyard owner, in response, destroys the tenants and gives the vineyard to others, to which the people respond, “heaven forbid.”⁷¹

The Lukan parables are also useful in the narrative. They often feature as examples in response to a question, behavior, or comment. Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) to answer a lawyer’s question what he must do to inherit eternal life (Luke 10:25-37; cf., Luke 18:18-30). The Parable of the Rich Fool comes in response to a request for Jesus to settle an inheritance dispute (Luke 12:13-21). Apart from questions and requests to settle disputes, parables are also useful in responding to comments from the crowds, such as the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24), which Jesus tells in response to a comment from the crowd about the blessedness of those who eat bread in the Kingdom of God. Finally, parables may also be told in response to underlying attitudes, such as the Parable of the *Mina*, which Jesus tells as a corrective to those who anticipate the kingdom appearing immediately (Luke 19:11-27). Therefore, the usefulness of fables in the *progymnasmata* are similar to the ways in which parables are useful in Luke’s Gospel.

⁷¹ This indication comes in light of the last third person plural to refer to Jesus’s audience, which is “the people.” Though it could be argued that those responding are the people against whom the parable is directed, on various occasions audience members to whom a parable or statement is not necessarily directed respond, as in the case of the Rich Ruler (18:26), and internally within a parable, as in the case of Luke 19:11-32.

The Lukan parables' usefulness in responding to comments, questions, and underlying attitudes or behaviors of Jesus's audience contributes to the narrative by revealing correctives to behavior or attitudes and by illustrating through the use of comparison. Rather than secretive stories only insiders can understand, the parables reveal familiar characters, themes, and topics. The parables, similarly to *mythoi*, have a remarkable flexibility in their capacity to respond to different situations and offer a corrective or answer to these comments, questions, and behaviors. Having briefly discussed the similarities between fables within the *progymnasmata* and Lukan parables, I now turn to some of the similarities between the Lukan parables and the fable collections of Babrius and Phaedrus.

Phaedrus

Though the function of the fables has been debated among modern scholarship, Phaedrus seems to have seen his fables as morally instructive, hearkening the role fables have in the *progymnasmata*: Fables "guide the conduct of one's life" (1.prol.3) and that fables can correct the mistakes of mortals and sharpen one's wits (2.prol.1-6). Significant efforts have been made to ascertain the morality of the fable collections, but they resist hard-and-fast designations of morality, such as the fable in which a dying father adjures his sons to stick together because they are stronger together (Babrius 47) while the fable immediately preceding recounts a stag who is ill and dies not because of his illness but because the friends who come to visit ate the food sources around him (Babrius 46). Rather than engaging the treachery of discerning the overarching morality of the fables as presented by Babrius and Phaedrus, I focus on the typified elements present in the fables.

The typified elements found within the fables, in several cases, are reminiscent of Theophrastus's *Characters*. One finds examples of dissembly, gullibility, flattery, greed, cowardice, patron of scoundrels, and rejuvenation.⁷² The traits listed above contribute to my argument that the fables present typified behaviors. In addition, many of the behaviors the fables present entail behaviors to avoid rather than behaviors to emulate. Further, characters in the fables who do not behave according to their nature find themselves incurring trouble which, as I argued in Chapter Two, finds a ready similarity in Theophrastus's concern for proper social behavior.

The characteristics dissembly and gullibility play together to wreak havoc on the characters in the fables. In the fable "The Eagle, the Cat, and the Sow" (Phaedrus 2.4), the cat, the eagle, and the sow all placed their young in the same tree. The cat "by deceit and malice"—or dissembly—tells the eagle that the sow intends to uproot the tree to kill the eaglets. The cat tells the sow that the eagle intends to carry off the piglets as food for her young.⁷³ To perpetuate her ruse, the cat behaves as though frightened during the day and hunts for her young at night, leaving the eagle and the sow, along with their offspring, to starve. The *epimythium* cautions against gullibility, "In this fable stupid credulity may find an object lesson showing what disaster a double-tongued person often cunningly creates" (Phaedrus 2.4.26 [Perry, LCL]).⁷⁴ In this instance, the cat—who uses

⁷² Others that are present but not included in this chapter are "The Fox and the Grapes" (Phaedrus 4.3) and Theophrastus *Char.* 9.8; 17; and 30, in which individuals who fail to achieve their goals blame someone else or, having experienced a boon, distrust it.

⁷³ Theophrastus *Char.* 2.2, "The dissembler is the sort who goes up to his enemies and is willing to chat with them" (Rusten, LCL).

⁷⁴ Though the fables tend to present deceit and dissembly negatively, there are cases in which those who lie fare better than those who are honest. Phaedrus 4.13 relates the story of men who come into a

disassembly to her advantage—fares better than the eagle and the sow, whose gullibility precipitates their demise.

Those who are vulnerable to flattery crave the praise of others. In the fable “The Fox and the Crow” (Babrius 77, Phaedrus 1.13), a fox notices a crow holding a piece of cheese. Desiring the cheese, the fox complements the bird on his wings, eyes, and neck, but accuses him of being mute. The crow, unable to resist the temptation to show off his voice, begins to caw, and consequently drops the cheese from his mouth. The fox, claiming his prize, accuses the crow of having all things except brains (Babrius 77.12). In this case, flattery helps the fox gain the object of his desire. The crow who is vulnerable to flattery is in the end equally vulnerable to insult.

Greed in the fables can also lead to one losing what little one has. Recall the fables “The Dog and His Shadow” (Babrius 79, Phaedrus 1.4) and “The Hen Who Laid Golden Eggs” (Babrius 123). In both cases, greed leads the characters to lose something of value to them. The greed of the dog precipitates the loss of his meal; similarly, the greed of the hen’s owner leads to his loss of income from her golden eggs.

The cowardly fare poorly in the fables as well. In “Two Soldiers and a Robber” (Phaedrus 5.2), a robber descends upon two soldiers traveling together. One soldier flees, leaving the other to defend himself. After the robber departs, the cowardly soldier returns, offering to fight on behalf of the courageous soldier.⁷⁵ Calling the cowardly soldier’s bluff, the courageous soldier says, “Sheathe your sword, and your tongue too, since both

kingdom of apes. One man flatters the apes and is allowed to escape unharmed, whereas the other man tells the apes the truth and was killed as a result.

⁷⁵ See Theophrastus *Characters* 25.

are equally useless. You may be able to deceive others who do not know you, but I have learned by experience how stoutly you run away, know also how true it is that no trust can be put in your valour” (5.2.10-13 [Perry, LCL]). This fable brings into question both the valor of the soldier and the veracity of his words.⁷⁶

Several fables illustrate the problem of characters behaving contrary to their natures. In “The Ruptured Frog and the Cow” (Phaedrus 1.24), a frog envies a cow’s size to the extent that she expands herself in an attempt to be as big as the cow. When her children tell her that she is not bigger than the cow, the frog puffs herself up more. Upon hearing the cow is still bigger, the frog expands even further and bursts. The *promythia* cautions one against those without resources imitating the powerful (1.24.1). Babrius recounts a similar fable. In his version, an ox steps on a baby toad while the toad’s mother was away. After her return, the mother learns of her child’s death and attempts to ascertain how large the creature who killed her child was. When she puffs herself, her children caution her, “No use inflating yourself. You will burst in the middle sooner than you will attain the likeness of that beast” (28.9-10 [Perry, LCL]). Those who attempt to make themselves larger or more powerful than they are risk their own destruction.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ See the discussion in Chapter Three regarding Plutarch’s comments on Demosthenes, whom he regards as failing in speech and lacking courage. Compare Babrius 25, in which a group of hares presume themselves the weakest of all creatures, as cowardly, and as only able to flee danger. They therefore determine to kill themselves by jumping into the pond. Upon approaching the place of their anticipated demise, the hares see a group of frogs jumping into the slime. Apparently presuming the frogs are attempting suicide, the hares determine to live because there are creatures weaker than they are.

⁷⁷ See also Babrius 129, in which a donkey attempts to engage his master the same as the master’s puppy, receiving a beating as a result; Babrius 139, similarly, relates an ass who wore a lion’s skin and supposed himself to be fearsome. When the wind blew, however, he was discovered for who he was and was beaten as a result.

Other fables recount animals falling in love with humans, as in the case of a weasel who falls in love with a man (Babrius 32) and the lion who falls in love with a woman (Babrius 98). The goddess Cyprus transforms the weasel into a woman. The wedding guests find out the woman's true identity when she chases a mouse across the room at the wedding feast, a behavior that ends the marriage nearly as soon as it begins. The lion, by contrast, does not have a chance to marry the object of his affection. Upon hearing that the object of his affection will not consent to marry him with his sharp teeth and claws, the lion has them removed. He approaches the prospective father-in-law and, instead of gaining the object of his affection, he meets his demise. Attempting to change one's nature risks the revelation of one's true self at an inopportune moment or, worse, one's own demise.

The fables also caution against those who either present or see themselves as better than they are. I have already discussed "The Slave Girl and Aphrodite," which fits into this category. In addition, "The Middle-Aged Man with Two Mistresses" (Babrius 22, Phaedrus 2.2), a middle-aged man has two mistresses, one young and one old. While the young mistress wants the man to appear younger and plucks out his gray hairs, the old mistress wants the man to appear older and plucks out his black hairs. The man, having pretended to be old and young at the same time, has neither gray nor black hairs.⁷⁸

Though it is difficult to ascribe to the fabulists Babrius or Phaedrus a particular morality, it is sufficient to note that the fables advocate for certain behaviors and

⁷⁸ It will be noted that the *epimythium* suggests the commentary of this fable is on the women who pluck out the man's hair rather than on the man who behaves as though still young. It seems, however, that given the negative commentary on the rejuvenated in other literature, such as Theophrastus and Plutarch (see the section on rejuvenation in Chapters Two and Three), this fable provides an example of the ills of rejuvenation than the ills of women.

discourage other behaviors. These behaviors are similar to some of Theophrastus's *Characters*. Another similarity fables have with Theophrastus's *Characters* is fables' tendency to reveal behaviors to avoid rather than behaviors to emulate. Though examples of behavior to be emulated exist within the fables, these represent the minority. Phaedrus seems to affirm the tendency of fables to catalogue behaviors to avoid in his indication that they are useful to "correct one's mistakes" (2.prol.1 [Perry, LCL]). By seeing the pitfalls of the characters in the fables, perhaps one can ascertain how to conduct one's life (Phaedrus 1.1), even if by negative example.

Typified behaviors occur within the New Testament parables as well. The theme of a rogue or cunning younger brother is well known in both the Jewish and in the Greco-Roman traditions. Luke 15:11-32, to which I turn in Chapter Five, represents this theme well. Several Lukan parables address the role of greed and its negative estimation, including the Parable of the Rich Fool, who builds bigger barns to hold his grain only to die the night he celebrates his accomplishments (Luke 12:13-21) and the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31), in which a Rich Man dines sumptuously and lives in luxury only to find himself in Hades upon his death.

The Lukan parables, however, present generosity favorably. Jesus praises the woman who anoints him for her act of generosity (7:46-47). The Parable of the Good Samaritan reveals a Samaritan as an example of generosity toward a man who was beaten and left for dead (10:25-37). The Parable of the Great Banquet reveals a host who invites to his feast those who cannot repay him and upholds his behavior by the indication that his repayment will be at the resurrection of the righteous (14:7-14, 15-24). Both parables and fables engage typified behaviors. Also, both parables and fables present behaviors to

emulate and to avoid. The conclusion of the Parable of the Good Samaritan affirms this notion by saying, “You also go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37), which exhorts the lawyer (and the those who hear the parable) to provide for those who cannot repay.

Plutarch: Fable as Exemplum

In the *Parallel Lives*, Plutarch utilizes fables to illustrate characteristics of the historical figures he presents. In the examples used, Plutarch uses fable to highlight the figures’ negative characteristics. Through the use of fable, Plutarch also communicates the behaviors or practices he finds unsavory, including leaders becoming the slave of their constituency, love of honor, and cowardice in the face of challenge. It is peculiar that Plutarch’s use of fables presents behaviors he regards negatively, which provides a potential connection to the predominantly negative characteristics presented in the fables of Babrius and Phaedrus. At the same time, the fable provides an opportunity for Plutarch to gain the sympathy of his audience, illustrating the function of fables in *Ad Herennium* 1.6, and to offer commentary on the behaviors of his subjects, illustrating the function of fables presented in the *progymnasmata*.⁷⁹ Finally, Plutarch’s *Lives* serves as an example of how fables contribute to the overall narrative and argument of a particular narrative.

Themistocles, as I noted in Chapter Three, does not receive many favorable comments from Plutarch. Plutarch regards him as showing disdain for education (*Them.* 2.2), as both greedy and generous (*Them.* 5.1), as ambitious and ostentatious (*Them.* 5.2). Plutarch, however, credits Themistocles as putting an end to the Hellenic wars (*Them.*

⁷⁹ “While fables could be employed as *exempla*, they were frequently used for *captatio benevolentiae*, to win the favor of the audience through humour, to relieve the audience’s mind with something light and often make fun of the opposition through animal analogies” (Johnson, “Voicing Power,” 44).

6.3). The negative and positive characteristics Plutarch presents together show the capacity for his character to reveal both virtue and vice. After describing Themistocles as an honor-lover (φιλοτιμότητος), Plutarch highlights the ways in which Themistocles distrusts the honor he receives by alluding to the fables pertaining to ungratefulness: “Also he used to say of the Athenians that they did not really honour and admire him for himself, but treated him for all the world like a plane-tree, running under his branches for shelter when it stormed, but when they had fair weather all about them, plucking and docking him” (*Them.* 18.3 [Perrin, LCL]).⁸⁰ Plutarch thus portrays Themistocles as entitled to honor on the basis of his achievements. He, at the same time, portrays those who benefit from Themistocles’s achievements as ungrateful.

Demosthenes also receives a primarily negative estimation from Plutarch. He, similarly to Themistocles, loves distinction (*Dem.* 3.3) and sought to gain fame through oratory (*Dem.* 5.3). Plutarch portrays Demosthenes, additionally, as cowardly (*Dem.* 20.2). Demosthenes, also similarly to Themistocles, receives praise for uniting the Greek cities (*Dem.* 23.1) yet, at the same time, abandons the embassy sent to Alexander out of fear. After being summoned by Alexander, Plutarch portrays Demosthenes as telling the fable of the sheep surrendering their watchdogs to the wolves, casting orators as dogs defending the people and Alexander the “Macedonian arch-wolf (μονόλυκον

⁸⁰ See Aesop’s fable of the Walnut Tree (Chambry 152, Perry 250): “A nut tree, standing along the path, and the passersby would throw rocks against it. The nut tree, suffering said to itself, ‘Woe is me, who each year am repaid with insults and abuse.’ This fable is for those who suffer because of their own goods.” See also the fable of the Plane Tree (Chambry 257): “Two travelers, in the heat of midday, stopped to rest. As they rested under a plane-tree, and they rested and reclined under the shade. When they looked up and saw it was a plane tree, they said to one another ‘How useless [this tree] is, with respect to humans: its fruit is its leaves.’ Being abused thusly, the tree said: ‘Oh, ingrates! You rest under my goods, and yet you dishonor me and call me useless!’ So too it is when someone is dishonored by people as they do good works for those who don’t believe they receive their gifts.”

προσηγόρεθσεν)” (*Dem.* 23.4 [Perrin, LCL]).⁸¹ This fable on Demosthenes’s lips highlights the character of Demosthenes’s opponent (Alexander) and Demosthenes himself. The fable calls into question whether Alexander has the Greek cities’ best interest in mind, adhering to the argument in Chapter Three that, when in service of the state, Demosthenes’s oratory receives positive regard. The fable also characterizes Demosthenes as an orator seeking to protect the city, which Plutarch uses to subtly hearken Demosthenes’s love of distinction.

Plutarch regards Agis, too, as one who loves distinction (*Ag. Cleom.* 1.1-2, 2.1-2). Agis sought to equalize the wealth of his city (*Ag. Cleom.* 6.1-2) after the nobles’ greed had led them to incur significant poverty in Sparta (*Ag. Cleom.* 2.6, 3.1, 5.3-4). In his efforts, Agis gained the support of the common people, and was enticed to “act in conformity with the desires and impulses of the multitudes, making themselves attendants and slaves in order that they may be called popular leaders and rulers” (*Ag. Cleom.* 1.2 [Perrin, LCL]). In this case, Plutarch highlights the fable of the Serpent Whose Tail Wished to Lead: “Having taken the lead, its freedom for lawlessness fared badly, and it lacerated its head; because it followed after something that is—by nature—eyeless and earless.”⁸² The fable supports Plutarch’s concern that leaders not be desirous of glory or popularity, lest they become the slaves of the multitude. Doing so places not only the

⁸¹ See Chambry 217 (Babrius 153), in which wolves approach sheep and tell them their safety will be secured if they hand over the dogs. Upon realizing this, the dogs ask the sheep what will happen to them once they have handed over the dogs, who serve as their protection.

⁸² Compare this to the fable as it appears in Chambry (288): A snake’s tail wishes to lead, to which the rest of the members say “How, without eyes and ears, will you lead us?” and to Luke 6:39-42, which deals with issues of leadership, including the blind leading the blind, the role of teachers, and seeing the faults in another person before one sees one’s own faults. (Credit is due to Dr. Andrew Arterbury for making the Lukan connection.)

individual (i.e., the snake's head) but the city or state (i.e., the snake's whole body) at risk. Eventually, this would play out in Agis's life, the end of which was spent seeking asylum in Athena's temple until he was executed by the ephors. Sparta would then return to a situation similar to the one in which Agis gained power, in which self-interest and private gain won the day (*Ag. Cleom.* 2.2.1).

The use of fables in Plutarch's *Lives*, highlighted above, shows the ways in which Plutarch employs fables in the service of characterization. In the cases of Themistocles and Demosthenes, Plutarch utilizes both fables and *prosōpopoiia*, which emphasize their roles in characterization. While Themistocles's and Demosthenes's *prosōpopoiia* intends to cast aspersions on their opponents, the words also highlight the characterization of Themistocles and Demosthenes themselves. In the case of Agis, Plutarch relates the fable as an example illustrating Agis's leadership style. Plutarch's employment of the fable seems to serve as a fable not only for Agis's leadership style but also as a metaphor for Agis's life, which those whom he expected to support him cut short. In each case, fables present an opportunity to characterize not only the subjects of the *Lives*, but the behaviors of those around them as well. As suggested in the conclusion of the previous section, the use of fables to characterize and to advocate or discourage particular behaviors is similar to the use of Luke's parables to do the same.

Concluding Remarks

I have illustrated the ways in which fables functioned within the *progymnasmata*, Babrius's and Phaedrus's fable collections, and in Plutarch's *Lives*. In the cases of the *progymnasmata* and Plutarch's *Lives*, the authors illustrate fables' usefulness within narrative. Fables' usefulness as *exempla* is prominent. In all three of the genres

considered, fables contribute to an understanding of desirable behaviors to emulate and undesirable behaviors to avoid. These characteristics are similar to characteristics found in Luke's parables. Though fables and the Lukan parables remain distinct in terms of their subject matter, their functions bear some striking similarities. Lukan parables, like fables, contribute to characterization, communicate behaviors to emulate and avoid, and enhance the overall narrative by fitting into the structure of the argument or aims of the author.

Fables and Parables: Prosōpopoiia and Characterization

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the Gospel writers—Luke, in particular—include several rhetorical techniques that the *progymnasmata* teach. In anticipation of my focus on characterization in Chapter Five, in this chapter I discuss the contribution of *prosōpopoiia* to characterization. The *progymnasmata* introduce *prosōpopoiia* among the last of their exercises and the technique is prevalent in many genres, including Greco-Roman legal proceedings, history, *bioi*, orations, and novels. For the purposes of this project, I focus exclusively on the use of *prosōpopoiia* in fabulistic literature. In many cases, *prosōpopoiia* represents a character's description of themselves, which is a powerful admission in the cases of undesirable behaviors and a tool for praise in the case of desirable behaviors. I begin by describing the characteristics of *prosōpopoiia* as presented in the *progymnasmata* and rhetorical handbooks. I also engage an extended discussion of *prosōpopoiia* in the fable collections of Babrius and Phaedrus and then turn to the ways in which Luke uses *prosōpopoiia* in his parables.

The Progymnasmata

The presentation of *prosōpopoiia* vary slightly across the *progymnasmata*. While Theon does not distinguish among the varying types of *prosōpopoiia* and its related terms, Ps-Hermogenes and Aphthonius present a few variations of *prosōpopoiia*, including *ethopoiia*, and *eidōlopoiia*.⁸³ The three designate whether the character is a fictitious or non-living character, a living character, or a deceased character, respectively. The terms presuppose characterization, in that they are “making the character” of a person, whether imagined, living, or dead. In addition, Ps.-Hermogenes and Aphthonius indicate that *prosōpopoiia* typically begins by describing the present, relating the past, and anticipating the future. Theon, however, makes no such distinctions among type or temporality. Regardless, according to the progymnasmatisers, *prosōpopoiia* must be appropriate to the character and is useful in contributing to the audiences’ reaction to the rhetorical engagement.

Theon insists that *prosōpopoiia* be appropriate to the portrayed person’s age and station:

Different ways of speaking would also be fitting by *nature* for a woman and for a man and by *status* for a slave and a free man, and by *activities* for a soldier and a farmer, and by *state of mind* for a lover and a temperate man, and by *their origin* the words of a Laconian, sparse and clear, differ from those of a man of Attica, which are valuable ... what is said is also affected by the places and occasions when it is said: speeches in a military camp are not the same as those in the assembly of the citizens, nor are those in peace and war the same, nor those by victors and vanquished; and whatever else applies to the persons speaking. (*Prog.* 116 [Kennedy], emphasis original)

⁸³ For the sake of clarity, I will follow Theon’s lead and will not distinguish among the various types; I will thus refer to all the categories as *prosōpopoiia*.

Theon insists that those who present *prosōpopoiia* take into account nearly every aspect of a person, from their age to the circumstances in which they speak. Though the other progymnasmatisers mention the importance of appropriateness in their *progymnasmata*, they are not nearly as detailed or insistent as Theon.⁸⁴

Though Theon does not divide into these categories, he demonstrates the usefulness of *prosōpopoiia* in exhortation, consolation, or contrition. Theon's description of these categories points to the ways in which he anticipates gaining the audience's sympathy through *prosōpopoiia* (116-118). Theon presents *prosōpopoiia* as useful in not only characterization but also in appealing to the audience. Because Theon's *progymnasmata* is nearer to the New Testament in contemporaneity, when there is a discrepancy among the progymnasmatisers, I follow Theon's lead.

Babrius and Phaedrus: Prosōpopoiia and Characterization

The fabulists frequently present the *moralia* on the lips of one of the characters. These *moralia* offer key insights in terms to the characterization of and moral commentary on the character's behavior. The use of *prosōpopoiia* to characterize and offer moral commentary on characters presents an indication of behaviors to avoid, which, as stated in the previous section, are a significant component in the moralizing aspect of the fables. In this section, I engage the characteristics and criteria of *prosōpopoiia* from the *progymnasmata* and rhetorical handbooks. Following this engagement, I investigate the relative prevalence of *prosōpopoiia* in Babrius and Phaedrus and its efficacy in communicating the characters' flaws. Rather than presenting an exhaustive list of fables

⁸⁴ See Ps.-Hermogenes 21, Aphthonius does not discuss the appropriateness of the character, but rather, advocates for clarity of style, 35R.

that include *prosōpopoiia*, I focus on a few examples to illustrate their capacity for characterization.⁸⁵

Prosōpopoiia is useful in first-person and second-person accounts of characterization. In the second-person accounts, a character presents another character's behavior, demonstrating the flaws in their behavior, their reasoning, or both. In "The Goat and the Goatherd" (Babrius 3), discussed above, is one such fable. The goat's speech reveals the flaws in the goatherder's logic. Even if she does not betray the goatherd, her horn will betray him. His appeals to her to not tell their master will be thwarted, regardless of whether or not she speaks.

"The Oak and the Reeds" (Babrius 36) tells of an oak uprooted by the wind. The oak marvels (θάμβος ... εἶχε) at the reeds' resilience while he, a great oak, has fallen. The reeds respond, "Marvel not. You fought the winds and therefore lost the battle; but we always bend ourselves in meek and yielding mood, if only with a little wind the breeze bestirs our tops" (Babrius 36.9-12 [Perry, LCL]). The oak, by refusing to bend to the wind, finds himself toppled, whereas the reeds, who seem weak, preserve themselves by yielding.⁸⁶ The reeds' speech reveals a flaw both in the oak's reasoning and his behavior. The oak's presumption that his greatness is sufficient to withstand leads him to refuse to bend to the wind, precipitating his demise.

In some cases, however, *prosōpopoiia* entails both first- and second-person characterization. In Babrius 131, a young man loses his fortune playing dice, except for

⁸⁵ Recall also Plutarch's use of προσωποποιία highlighted in the previous section.

⁸⁶ Similarly, see the mouse's words to the ox in Babrius 112.9-10: "It is not always the great one that has the power; rather, there are times that being weak and humble is stronger" (Perry, LCL).

one garment to cover himself. That spring, upon seeing a swallow, the young man forfeits his garment in a game of dice, only to experience a late-season storm. Peeping from behind a door, the naked young man discovers the sparrow has died. In response to this sight, the young man says “Poor creature ... I wish I hadn’t seen you before. You fooled both yourself and me” (131.17 [Perry, LCL]). The young man thus describes both his and the bird’s folly, which portrays them both as foolish and, as a result of their foolishness, both have lost everything.

The first-person characterization through *prosōpopoiia* presents a character reflecting on his or her own behavior. Through *prosōpopoiia*, characters characterize and judge themselves, which presents an effective tool for communicating behaviors to avoid. In “The Horse and the Ass” (Babrius 7), an ass carrying a heavy burden asks a horse to share the burden with him, lest the ass die from the weight of the burden. The horse refuses to help, and the ass dies. After the master places the ass’s load on the horse, the horse responds, “How poor was my judgment; that very burden, of which I was unwilling to share even a small part, has now of necessity been put upon me in its entirety” (7.14-16 [Perry LCL]). The horse who was unwilling to help the ass recognizes the flaw in his refusal to share: what would have been a shared burden now becomes a heavy load.

In several cases, first-person characterization reveals the downfall of characters who attempt to behave contrary to their natures. In the case of “The Wolf Who Played Doctor” (Babrius 122), a donkey approaches a wolf-doctor. Presuming the wolf will eat him, the donkey requests that the wolf remove the thorn from his foot so that he might die free from pain. Upon the removal of the thorn, the donkey kicks the wolf in the face and escapes. The wolf responds, “This is what I deserve to suffer. Why, at this late date, did I

undertake to heal the lame, in the role of a physician, when the only profession I ever learned was that of a butcher?” (122.14-16 [Perry, LCL]). The wolf-doctor accepts his smashed face as his punishment for his attempt to be something other than what he was.

Similarly, in “The Donkey Who Played Puppy” (Babrius 129), a donkey becomes jealous of the master’s affection for his puppy. Wanting to behave toward the master as the puppy, the donkey crashes into the dining room and attempts to lick the master’s face. The donkey, as a result, receives a beating. As he is being beaten, the donkey responds, “I’ve suffered what I deserved, unlucky cuss. Why didn’t I keep my station with the mules, instead of matching myself, to my ruin, with a little dog?” (129.24-25 [Perry, LCL]). The donkey, like the wolf-doctor, admits he deserves the punishment he receives for behaving as something other than what he is.

One finds similar indications in “The Jackdaw Who Would Be an Eagle” (Babrius 137) and in “Preposterous Leadership” (Babrius 134). In the latter, the serpent’s tail desired to lead its head, only to admit “Mistress head, save us, if you will. ‘Twas an evil strife that I ventured on, and evil has been the consequence. If you’ll put me where I was at first I’ll be more obedient and you’ll not worry about getting into trouble again under my leadership” (134.15-19 [Perry, LCL]). In each case, *prosōpopoiia* reveals the character’s own commentary on the faults in their behavior and their deservingness of their punishment. In this way, the characters provide moral commentary and judge their own actions.

Prosōpopoiia in the fables presented above both characterizes and offers commentary on the characters’ actions. In the cases of second-person characterization, the judgment on a character’s actions is self-evident, as revealed by the goat’s broken

horn, the oak's uprooted circumstances, the gambler's nakedness, and the swallow's demise. First-person characterization through *prosōpopoiia* describes the fault in the character's action and frequently indicates that the character deserves his or her punishment. Though these indications of judgment or moral commentary do not provide sufficient grounds to describe a *particular* morality found within fables, they do, nevertheless, provide indications of behaviors to avoid through *prosōpopoiia*.

Lukan Parables: Prosōpopoiia and Characterization

Prosōpopoiia occurs in several of the Lukan parables.⁸⁷ This rhetorical technique functions similarly in Luke to the ways Theon describes it in his *progymnasmata*: it contributes to the characterization of the people described and exhorts the audience. In the case of Luke, the exhortation advocates that the audience imitate desired behaviors and avoid undesirable behaviors.

Behaviors to emulate include generosity, shrewdness, and persistence. Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan in response to a lawyer who inquires whom his neighbor might be. In the parable, a Samaritan provides care for a man beat up and left for dead on the side of the road. Taking him to an inn and caring for the man there, the Samaritan tells the innkeeper to look after the man, saying "Care for him, and whatever more you should spend I myself will pay back to you when I return" (Luke 10:35). Luke portrays the Samaritan as merciful and generous by his reaction to the man left for dead and his provision for the man's healing through oil and wine and paying for the man's lodging and continued care. The Samaritan's words affirm his generosity and care for the

⁸⁷ Luke 10:25-37, 12:13-21, 14:7-11, 15-24, 15:3-6, 8-10, 11-32; 16:1-9, 19-31, 18:1-8, 9-14, 19:11-27.

man. In the case of this parable, the exhortation is explicit in the conclusion, “You go and do likewise” (Luke 10:37). This parable admonishes the lawyer—and those within earshot—to emulate the behaviors of the Samaritan.

Likewise, Luke encourages his auditors to show generosity to those who cannot repay them, as Luke 14:12-14 indicates. In the parable that follows, a person throws a great banquet only to have the original invitants reject the offer. In this parable, the excuses are *prosōpopoiia*. Though the banquet-thrower responds angrily, he nevertheless conforms to the exhortation presented in Luke 14:12-14 by saying, “Go out quickly into the streets and alleyways and lead the poor and the crippled and the blind and the lame in here.” Chillingly, the banquet-thrower also indicates that the original invitees are no longer welcome at the feast. The exhortation that introduces the parable is confirmed by the parable, along with a word of caution: People are to invite the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame, and those who reject the invitation will find themselves rejected. The parable thus includes behavior to be emulated and behavior to be avoided. In this case, it is unclear how one might characterize the banquet-thrower. Despite his anger, he shows the generous behavior advocated in Luke 14:12-14. On the other hand, his refusal to let the original invitees into the party might characterize him as harsh and unforgiving.

The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21) is a clearer example of behaviors to be avoided. Luke presents this parable in response to a man who asks Jesus to arbitrate his inheritance, exhorting the audience to avoid greed. In the parable, a rich man has such a good crop his barns are insufficient to hold the grain. He asks himself what he will do, and answers himself, “I will do this: I will tear down my barns and I will build bigger ones and I will gather together all of my grain and goods there, and I will say to myself:

‘Self, you have stored up many good things—enough for many years—recline, eat, drink, and celebrate’” (Luke 12:18-19). The man, whose crop inspires him to build bigger barns, thinks that he will be able to relax and celebrate once he has stored it up, only to have his life demanded of him. The man’s own speech characterizes him as greedy: He plans to store up his grains and celebrate his fortune. The conclusion highlights the risk of such behaviors: those who are not rich toward God may enjoy the same fate as the rich fool.⁸⁸

The parables surveyed above illustrate the ways *prosōpopoiia* can contribute to ascertaining behaviors to emulate and behaviors to avoid. Though, in some cases, *prosōpopoiia* provides a rather straightforward characterization of positive or negative qualities—as in the case of the Samaritan and the Rich Fool, respectively—in the case of the banquet thrower, characterization is more complex. The complexity of this characterization reveals the capacity for nuance within *prosōpopoiia*, which sets the stage for the engagement of Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31 in Chapter Five.

Conclusion

I have discussed the ways in which fables and parables might relate. I began by discussing the difficulties in definition of both parables and fables. This difficulty led to an investigation of the potential similarities between fables and parables in terms of form and function. Both are notoriously difficult to define, which I admit does little to advance my case. At the same time, both bear some striking similarities in terms of the flexibility

⁸⁸ I return to the topic of interior monologue and *prosōpopoiia* in Chapter Five. Noteworthy, however, is Dinkler’s work on interior monologues in Luke and their contribution to selfhood (Michal Beth Dinkler, “‘The Thoughts of Many Hearts Shall Be Revealed’: Listening in on Lukan Interior Monologues,” *JBL* 133 [2015]: 373-399). She notes well that six out of the seven times interior monologue appears in Luke occur in parables (384-385). Interior monologue, similarly to other instances of *prosōpopoiia* I discuss below, serve to make apparent the interior characteristics of the speaker.

of their form and the ways they serve the purposes of the wider narratives in which they appear. I demonstrated the ways *prosōpopoiia* contributes to characterization and encourages emulation of desired behaviors and discourages appropriation of undesired behaviors. All of these factors, taken together, suggest that those familiar with the Greek *paideia* would not have regarded the New Testament parables as *sui generis*. Rather, parables would have seemed familiar to first century audiences because they have similar aims and serve similar functions to fables in secular literature.

Thus far I have built the rhetorical context in which to read the Lukan parables. To recapitulate the argument's trajectory thus far: I began with a discussion of the ways in which characterization works in theory and in practice. Chapter Two presented the ways in which moral formation and Greco-Roman *paideia* were intertwined, giving special focus to the ways in which Quintilian saw education forming moral character. I transitioned between theory and practice via Theophrastus, whose work presents typified characters whose behaviors represent those that ought to be avoided. Chapter Three turned toward practice, engaging the ways in which morality and characterization receive prominence in Plutarch's *Lives* and in *Callirhoe*.

Now, I turn my attention to two Lukan parables as a case study. I engage the Parable of the Loving Father or Prodigal Sons and the Rich Man and Lazarus as case studies. I selected these parables because they have compelling semantic and thematic links. Further, the parables illustrate the ways *prosōpopoiia* is useful for characterization and advocate for emulation of desired behaviors and discourage undesired behaviors.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Elder Son's Remedy and the Rich Man's Fate: Moral Formation, Characterization, and Rhetoric in Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31

Introduction

In this chapter, I respond to the calls for engagement of rhetorical criticism in biblical scholarship, interaction with the parables in light of Greco-Roman literature, and focus on aspects of characterization as presented in Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31. My study contributes to the interpretation of these passages by reading them in light of three interrelated streams of thought (rhetoric, characterization, and moral formation). I do not attempt to offer a comprehensive evaluation of the parables and the role of parabolic literature. Rather, in this chapter, I situate the parables in the context of *exempla*, characterization, ancient rhetoric, and moral formation, and in the context of the preceding chapters.¹

In Chapter Two, I demonstrated the way in which rhetorical education and moral formation worked hand in hand in the education of young male elites. Chapter Three discussed Plutarch and Chariton's use of characterization and *prosōpopoiia*, and the ways this rhetorical technique contributes to the moral formation of their audiences, particularly in the case of Plutarch. Chapter Four demonstrated the ways that parables

¹ For recent work in parables scholarship, see Amy-Jill Levine, *Short Stories By Jesus: The Enigmatic Parables of a Controversial Rabbi* (New York: Harper One, 2014); Lauri Thurén, *The Parables Unplugged: Reading the Lukan Parables in their Rhetorical Context* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2014); Ruben Zimmerman, *Puzzling the Parables of Jesus: Methods and Interpretations* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2015); and David Gowler, *The Parables After Jesus: Their Imaginative Receptions across Two Millennia* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017).

respond to the rhetorical situation, utilize *prosōpopoiia* as a means of characterization, and often entail behaviors to emulate or avoid with a view toward morality. The connections made in this chapter travel in the reverse order: I maintain the notion that the Lukan parables responded to the rhetorical situation of their speaker and presented various ideas on behaviors to be emulated and avoided (building on Chapter Four). I show that *prosōpopoiia* and other rhetorical techniques heighten both the narrative and the characterization of those presented therein (building on Chapter Three). Finally, I argue that one of the implied author's goals in the parables was the moral formation of their auditors (building on Chapter Two).²

Coming on the heels of the charge that Jesus “welcomes sinners and dines with them” (Luke 15:2), and anticipating Luke 16:16 “The law and the prophets [were in effect] up until John, but since then the reign of God has been proclaimed and all are compelled to enter it,” the parables found in Luke 15 and 16 respond to and extend the moral inquiry in Luke 15:2. In these chapters, Jesus engages with an audience that includes his disciples, scribes, and Pharisees. While Jesus may speak directly to different groups in Luke 15 and 16, Luke makes no indication the audience has changed. Using the Parable of the Prodigal Sons and the Loving Father (Luke 15:11-32) and the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) as case studies, I demonstrate Luke's use of characterization and rhetorical techniques and the potential ways that these contribute to the moral formation of his readers.³ Though I also comment on Luke 16:1-13, my

² I do not think the parables need to have only one goal. In this case, I follow after Theon, who argues that *mythoi* may have more than one point (*Prog.* 75). The capacity for multiple goals is part of the reason the parables have garnered so much attention over the centuries, along with their myriad interpretations.

³ I chose these parables because of their lexical and semantic similarities, along with their unique presentation in Luke (for more on the selection of these parables, see Chapter One and the following

primary focus is on the Parable of the Prodigals and RML. This focus stems from the similarities and connections between the Parable of the Prodigals and RML.

The parables, as I argued in Chapter Four, relate to other aspects of the Lukan narrative, including the exhortation for welcoming the lost and disenfranchised and showing generosity to those who either do not deserve it or cannot earn it (14:7-24). Likewise, as I argued in Chapter Four, the parables functionally serve as *exempla* to respond to the immediate rhetorical situation in Luke 15 and 16. These parables also utilize rhetorical techniques, including *polyptōton* (inflection) and *prosōpopoiia* (speech-in-character) to contribute to characterization. Finally, these parables present behaviors that Luke's auditors should emulate and behaviors they should avoid.

I first discuss the reasons for engaging the Parable of the Prodigals and RML. The semantic similarities between the Parable of the Prodigals and RML raise the question, "Why does the Father leave the party to comfort the Elder Son (Luke 15:28-32), while nobody will be sent to warn the Rich Man's brothers (Luke 16:27-31)?" The answer to this question necessitates engagement of rhetorical techniques, characterization, and moral formation. I focus on each of the parables individually, offering a brief history of research and an assessment of the characters presented through rhetorical techniques and character types, giving particular attention to the use of *prosōpopoiia* in the service of characterization. In the conclusion, I discuss the ways in which the Elder Son in the Parable of the Prodigals and the Rich Man's brothers in RML are at risk and the consequences of that risk.

section of this chapter). I henceforth abbreviate the parable in Luke 15:11-32 as "Parable of the Prodigals" and the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus as "RML."

Connecting the Parable of the Prodigals and RML

Many have connected the Parable of the Prodigals with RML. Räisänen draws these parables together via soliloquy.⁴ Dinkler asserts that the interior monologues in Luke offer a helpful argument against those who perceive the ancients to be anti-introspective and highlights the rhetorical function of these monologues: “Rhetorically, the interior monologues foster readerly identification with the thinker; readers who accept this invitation will experience the corrections implied by the narrative rhetoric.”⁵ Levine connects the Rich Man and the Prodigal Son in their failure to show repentance using their speeches as evidence for her argument, but does not sufficiently differentiate the two in their narrational roles within Luke.⁶ Sanders also relates the parables because both have two parts (*zweigipfelig*) and, in his view, “form a polemic against the Pharisees and the Scribes.”⁷ Roose offers the most comprehensive indication of the similarities between the parables and describes them *Schwestergeschichten*.⁸ Despite the relationships noted between the parables and attention given to the soliloquy and rhetorical function of the

⁴ Heiki Räisänen, “The Prodigal Gentile and His Jewish Christian Brother,” vol. 2 of *The Four Gospels: Festschrift Frans Neirynck*, F. van Segbroeck, C.M. Tuckett, G. van Belle and J. Verheyden, eds., BETL 100 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1992), 1619. Räisänen also includes among these the Parable of the Rich Fool.

⁵ Michal Beth Dinkler, “‘The Thoughts of Many Hearts Shall Be Revealed’: Listening in on Lukan Interior Monologues,” *JBL* 133 (2015): 373, 375-77. Dinkler goes on to link the use of Luke’s interior monologue with other Hellenistic and Jewish authors (381-382).

⁶ Levine, *Short Stories*, 266.

⁷ Jack T. Sanders, “Tradition and Redaction in Luke xv.11-32,” *NTS* 15 (1969): 434, 438.

⁸ Hanna Roose, “Umkehr und Ausgleich bei Lukas: Die Gleichnisse vom verlorenen Sohn (Lk 15.11-32) und armen Lazarus (Lk 16.19-31) als Schwestergeschichten,” *NTS* 56 (2010): 2-4. The chart below includes some of the similarities she lists (YS’s desire to eat the pigs’ food and Lazarus to satisfy himself with table scraps; the view of the Prodigal and Lazarus from a distance by the Father and the RM; and the conversations between the Father figures and the ES and RM, respectively). The table below includes my additions, including the role of dead-now-living characters, the comfort provided by the Father figures, and the *prosōpopoiia* that ends each of the parables.

monologues, the ways rhetorical techniques connect the parables and the ways *prosōpopoiia* advances characterization in the parables have not been an area of focus.

The semantic links between the parables include the notions of isolation, hunger, and dependence. The Younger Son's own actions cause his separation from his family, whereas first a gate and later a great chasm separate Lazarus from the Rich Man. Both the Younger Son and Lazarus long to satisfy themselves (ἐπεθύμει χορτασθῆναι and ἐπιθυμῶν χορτασθῆναι, respectively) with food that is either meant for animals or cast aside. The Younger Son is regarded as dead and having risen (νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἀνέζησεν, Luke 15:24), and in RML, Lazarus dies but the Rich Man believes Lazarus could go to warn the Rich Man's brothers (Luke 16:27). Both the Younger Son and Lazarus receive welcome and a place of honor with a father figure. The father figure in both parables refers to the Elder Son and the Rich Man with the vocative τέκνον, a term of endearment that describes those who—by the end of the parable—are outside the party or outside the place of comfort.⁹ For the sake of clarity, I have included a table of the similarities in the parables below.

⁹ Other similarities include the presentation of the parables in two parts; because I am engaging the parables from the standpoint of rhetorical criticism, however, I focus on the parables in their rhetorical context, meaning that I regard Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31 as rhetorical units without breaking them into constituent parts. It is important to note that many who interpret the Parable of RML in two parts frequently accept Gressmann's argument. Gressmann interprets the first part of the parable as being based on an Egyptian Folktale and the second part is Jesus's unique contribution to the well-known tale (Hugo Gressmann, *Vom reichen Mann und armen Lazarus: eine literargeschichte Studie; mit ägyptologischen Beiträgen von Georg Möller*, AW 7 [Berlin: Verlag der Königl. Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1918], 31). The notion of a rich and poor man dying and discovering their afterlives were the opposite of their earthly lives is sufficiently widespread—similarly to the notion of a wayward son—that identifying a solitary cultural background would be a tenuous task. Hughes regards determining a singular story behind this as "both impossible and unnecessary" (Frank W. Hughes, "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) and Graeco-Roman Rhetoric," in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference*, Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht, eds., JSNTSup 90 [Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993], 37). Lehtipuu and Stigall cite various possibilities for backgrounds (Outi Lehtipuu, *The Afterlife Imagery in Luke's Story of the Rich Man and Lazarus*, NovTSup 123 [Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2007], 20); Stigall devotes Chapter Two of his dissertation to Greco-Roman backgrounds and Chapter

Table 5.1. Connections between the Parable of the Prodigals and RML

Connection	Parable of the Prodigals	RML
Separation	The Younger Son goes to a distant country (χώραν μακράν, 15:13)	Lazarus is placed outside the Rich Man's gate (πρὸς τὸν πυλῶνα αὐτοῦ εἰλκωμένος, 16:20)
Presence of animals	The pigs (οἱ χοῖροι, 15:16)	The dogs (οἱ κύνες, 16:21) ¹⁰
Desiring food meant for animals	The Younger Son longs to fill himself with the pigs' food (ἐπεθύμει χορτασθῆναι ἐκ τῶν κερατίων ὧν ἤσθιον οἱ χοῖροι, 15:16)	Lazarus longs to fill himself with the Rich Man's table scraps, which would presumably be thrown out and scavenged (καὶ ἐπιθυμῶν χορτασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν πιπτόντων ἀπὸ τῆς τραπέζης τοῦ πλουσίου, 16:21)
Character viewed from a distance	The Father sees the Younger Son from a distance (Ἐτι δὲ αὐτοῦ μακράν, Luke 15:20)	The Rich Man sees Abraham and Lazarus from a distance (ὁρᾷ Ἀβραάμ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν καὶ Λάζαρον, 16:23)
Characters who die or are regarded as dead	The Father regards the Younger Son as having been dead (ὁ υἱὸς μου νεκρὸς ἦν, 15:24)	The Rich Man and Lazarus die (ἐγένετο δὲ ἀποθανεῖν, 16:22)
Association of dead characters with being raised	The Father regards the Younger Son as being alive after having died (νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἔζησεν, 15:32 and 15:24)	The Rich Man asks that Lazarus be sent from the dead to his brothers (ἐάν τις ἀπὸ νεκρῶν πορευθῇ πρὸς αὐτούς, 16:27, 30, 31)
Father figure offers comfort	The Father comforts the Elder Son ὁ δὲ πατήρ αὐτοῦ ἐξελθὼν παρεκάλει αὐτόν (15:28)	Lazarus receives comfort at the bosom of Abraham (νῦν δὲ ὧδε παρακαλεῖται, 16:25)
Character(s) feasting in fancy clothing	The Father has the Younger Son dressed in the best robe, a ring, and sandals, and they sacrifice a calf for the feast (στολὴν τὴν πρώτην ... καὶ δότε δακτύλιον ... καὶ ὑποδήματα εἰς τοὺς πόδας, καὶ φέρετε τὸν μόσχον τὸν σιτευτόν, θύσατε, καὶ φαγόντες εὐφρανθῶμεν, 15:22-23)	The Rich Man is dressed in purple and fine linen and feasts sumptuously (ἐνεδιδύσκετο πορφύραν καὶ βύσσον εὐφραίνόμενος καθ' ἡμέραν λαμπρῶς, 16:19)
Separation	The Elder Son separates himself from the party, and the Father separates himself from the party to comfort the Elder Son (ἐξελθὼν, 15:28)	The Rich Man is separated from Abraham and Lazarus by a great chasm (μεταξὺ ἡμῶν καὶ ὑμῶν χάσμα μέγα ἐστήρικται, 16:26)

Three to early Jewish and Christian backgrounds (Joshua Stigall, "Reading the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus [Luke 16:19-31] as the Authorial Audience," PhD diss., Baylor University [2012]).

¹⁰ In this case, I presume that the dogs that lick Lazarus's wounds are street dogs because they are outside the gate with him rather than inside the Rich Man's (or another's) gate.

Table 5.1. Connections between the Parable of the Prodigals and RML—continued

Connection	Parable of the Prodigals	RML
Character on the outside as τέκνον	The Father calls the Elder Son “child” (τέκνον, σὺ πάντοτε μετ’ ἐμοῦ εἶ, 15:31)	Abraham calls the Rich Man “child” (τέκνον, μνήσθητι ὅτι ἀπέλαβες τὰ ἀγαθὰ σου ἐν τῇ ζωῇ σου, 16:25)
Parable ends with <i>prosōpopoiia</i> ascribed to the father figure	The Father communicates the necessity of the feast (εὐφρανθῆναι δὲ καὶ χαρῆναι ἔδει (15:32 BNT)	Abraham says that if someone does not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded if someone is raised from the dead (οὐδ’ ἐάν τις ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῇ πεισθήσονται, 16:31).

Despite the semantic links between the two parables and the regard the father figures have for the Elder Son and the Rich Man, respectively, the endings of the parables contrast one another, in that the Father compels the Elder Son to join the party, whereas Abraham does not acquiesce the Rich Man’s request that someone be sent to his brothers.¹¹ While there are several parallels between the Elder Son and the Rich Man (the father figure regards each of them as τέκνον, they are located outside of the proverbial party, and they do not show generosity to the Younger Son and Lazarus, respectively), there is also a parallel between the Elder Son and the Rich Man’s Brothers. They are both at risk in these parables, whereas the Rich Man is no longer at risk—he has met his fate. If the Elder Son does not join the party, he risks the same fate as the Rich Man’s brothers if they fail to listen to Moses and the Prophets. The Elder Son already has all that the Father has, just as the Rich Man’s brothers already have Moses and the Prophets. Just as the Elder Son should listen to the Father’s beckoning, so too should the Rich Man’s brothers listen to Moses and the Prophets. By contrast, however, while the Father goes out to encourage the Elder Son to join the party, Lazarus is not able to go out from the

¹¹ On the capitalization of “Father,” see Chapter One, n. 9.

place of comfort to warn the Rich Man's brothers of their anticipated fate. In both parables, *prosōpopoiia* contributes significantly to the characterization of the primary characters. For both of these parables (and later, the Parable of the Shrewd Steward), along with the Parable of the Shrewd Steward, I engage the contribution of *prosōpopoiia* to characterization for each of the main characters and demonstrate aspects moral formation. In response to the charge in Luke 15:2, Jesus advocates for reckless liberality that both exceeds and frustrates ancient expectations of liberality, calling instead for a reckless liberality that gives to those who do not deserve it, at inappropriate times, and in excessive amounts.

Parable of the Prodigals

Luke 15:3-10 presents two other parables that recount objects lost and then recovered. The Parable of the Prodigals follows naturally after the rather foolish behaviors of the shepherd who leaves ninety-nine sheep to find one who has wandered off and the woman who turns her house upside down to find a solitary coin when she has nine in her possession. The third parable likewise fits with the extravagant rejoicing the first two characters experience when they recover what had been lost. In the first two parables, neither of the characters regard the lost possession as having been dead and made alive like the Father regards the Younger Son. The lost sheep and the lost coin are not the active parties in the parables that precede. Rather, the efforts of their owners are what precipitate the sheep and the coin's recovery. The Younger Son, however, returns home of his own accord.

Luke draws additional attention to the Parable of the Prodigals by virtue of the length of the parable but also with the rhetorical techniques he presents in it. As if taking

a page from a *progymnasmata*, Luke includes inflection and *prosōpopoiia* for each of the three characters he presents in the parable. Luke tacitly compares the two sons with each other and the Elder Son with the Father in their responses to the Younger Son's return (*synkrisis*). The Younger Son's speech upon his return involves *antistrophē* (ending successive lines with the same sound) and *aposiōpēseis* (ending a speech before it has been completed).¹² The Parable of the Prodigals therefore highlights one of the key functions of *mythoi* as building blocks for presenting other rhetorical techniques (Theon, *Prog.* 59; Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.9.3).

The parable has received much attention, with considerable debates existing around whom the main character may be,¹³ the legality and appropriateness of the

¹² The Parables of the Lost Sheep and Lost Coin utilize *prosōpopoiia*, but only after the object that was lost has been recovered. The other parables, however, describe the situation with more sparing language and do not otherwise draw attention to the object that was lost or their owners through other rhetorical techniques.

¹³ As to the Father being the main character, see Keith A. Reich, *Figuring Jesus: The Power of Rhetorical Figures of Speech in the Gospel of Luke*, BIS 107 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011) 40-42, who argues that Luke identifies the main character in light of *anadiplōsis*, *polyptōton* and *antistrophē*. His argument affirms Parson's argument based on *polyptōton* (Mikeal C. Parsons, "The Quest for the 'Rhetorical' Jesus," in *Literary Encounters with the Reign of God*, Sharon H. Ringe and H.C. Paul Kim, eds., [New York: T&T Clark 2004], 35 and *Luke*, Paideia Commentaries on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 240. Hultgren likewise holds that the Father is the main character in *The Parables of Jesus: The Bible in its World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 72. See also Christopher D. Marshall, *Compassionate Justice: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue with Two Gospel Parables on Law, Crime, and Restorative Justice* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012), 184. Conversely, despite the acknowledgement of the Father's central role, some maintain that the Younger Son remains central. See Greg Carey, "Luke and the Rhetorics of Discipleship: The 'L' Parables as a Case Study," in *Rhetorics and Hermeneutics*, James D. Hester and J. David Hester, eds., Emory Studies in Early Christianity, (New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 166: "Despite the pathos linked to the Father, his own point of view is represented only externally, through his actions and his speech. While this restraint is typical of ancient characterization, the Younger Son receives an inside view (we overhear his speech to himself) while the Elder Son's perceptions and emotions are described (he heard the music and became angry)." Carey does, however, admit that the Father unifies the story (166). Green argues that "As important as the father is to this parable, center stage belongs to the younger son – and especially to the contrasting patterns of response occasioned by his recovery" (Joel B. Green, *Luke*, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997], 578). Forgiving and merciful fathers also receive prominence, along with fathers who disinherit their wayward or conniving sons. One of the sayings of Menander indicates that Ὀἰὸν μέγιστον ἀγαθόν <ἐστ> ἔμφορον πατήρ. Generous fathers are also used to illustrate rhetorical techniques, such as *polyptōton* (inflection): Pater hic tuus nunc denique est, ut egestatem tuam deberer alere videatur? Patrem nunc appellas, quem prius egentem auxilio tuo ut alienum deseruisti? Patris tui filius es ad potiundas opes, cuius ad senectutem violandam crudelissimus hostis fuisti? Nimirum nullo consilio filios procreamus: nam maiorem partem ex illis doloris et conteumeliae campimus

Younger Son's request¹⁴ and whether or not the Younger Son's soliloquy entails repentance.¹⁵ Though recent studies have considered Lukan parabolic literature in light of ancient rhetoric, the Prodigal Son has received less attention in light of ancient rhetorical categories.¹⁶ Based on Luke's facility with Greek and his employment of rhetorical conventions such as fable, *synkrisis*, ekphrastic language and *prosōpopoiia*, it seems the author of Luke was aware of or had some level of education in the *progymnasmata*.¹⁷ To

("So at last is this man your father, whom you previously deserted as though no relation when he was in want? Are you now once again the son of your father so that you might obtain a share of his livelihood, you who like the cruelest of enemies injured your old man? Surely it is by no one's counsel that we beget sons, for from them we derive a large degree of pain and abuse" (Rutilius Lupus, Book I, 10 [*Rhetores Latini Minores*], p.7, my translation).

¹⁴ Some, such as Bailey, view this as tantamount to wishing for the father's death (Kenneth E. Bailey, *Poet and Peasant; and Through Peasant Eyes: A Literary-Cultural Approach to the Parables in Luke*, comb. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961). Hultgren holds it would be remarkable for a son to request his inheritance before father died, *Parables*, 73. Kloppenborg, on the other hand, views this request as neither uncustomary nor inappropriate in light of Greco-Egyptian papyri (John S. Kloppenborg, "The Parable of the Prodigal Son and Deeds of Gift," in *Jesus, Paul, and Early Christianity*, Rieuwerd Buitenwerf, Harm W. Hollander and Johannes Tromp, eds., NovTSup 130 [Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2008], 173, 182). Bovon suggests that "nothing indicates that the younger son went beyond his rights in making the request he did to his father. At most he lacked wisdom and probably consideration" (Bovon, *Luke: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, vol. 2 of *Luke*, trans. Donald S. Deer, Hermeneia [Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2013], 424).

¹⁵ Representative of those who hold that the Younger Son is repentant are Marshall, *Compassionate Justice*, 209-210; Sun-Jong Kim, "Lecture de la parabole du fils retrouvé à la lumière du Jubilé," *NovT* 53 (2011): 217; see also David A. Holgate, *Prodigality, Liberality and Meanness in the Parable of the Prodigal Son: A Greco-Roman Perspective on Luke 15.11-32*, JSNTSup 187 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 158, and Bovon, who notes that "for Hellenistic Judaism and early Christianity it expressed a decisive step of 'conversion', a return to God" (*Luke*, 426). Those who are skeptical of the Younger Son's repentance include Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, 172-176; Philip Sellw, "Interior Monologue as a Narrative Device in the Parables of Luke," *JBL* 111 (1992): 246, Susan Eastman, "The Foolish Father and the Economics of Grace," *ExpT* 117 (2006): 403, and Levine, who connects the Younger Son's lack of repentance with that of the Rich Man's request from Hades: "The wealthy man's cry is also not dissimilar to the prodigal's evoking of his filial relationship ... I doubt the prodigal was all that repentant and I see no acknowledgement of sin on the rich man's part either" (*Short Stories*, 266).

¹⁶ For relatively recent studies, see Stigall, "Reading RML."

¹⁷ The parables seem to bear much in common with the progymnasmatists' descriptions of fables (more on this in the subsequent section). As to *synkrisis*, see Luke 1:5-4:13. For a helpful chart, see Parsons, *Luke*, 23-24. For ekphrastic language, see Luke 3:21-22; 9:28-36; Acts 2:1-4. See also George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism; Studies in Religion* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 97, 107-108, 114-115, and Mikeal C. Parsons, "Luke and the Progymnasmata: A Preliminary Investigation in to the Preliminary Exercises," in *Contextualizing Acts: Lukan Narrative and Greco-Roman Discourse*, Todd C. Penner and Caroline Vander Stichele, eds.,

illustrate the ways in which Luke highlights the characterization of all three individuals in the Parable of the Prodigals, I engage the use of inflection within the parable and the role of *prosōpopoiia* in characterization. From here, I discuss the prevalence of character types and Luke's use of *prosōpopoiia* to nuance the characters.

A Main Character? Inflection in the Parable of the Prodigals

The trope of a person who squanders his patrimony is well-worn in the ancient world. The indications of prodigal children appear in Jewish, Greco-Roman, and Buddhist cultures.¹⁸ Though many have sought to ascertain the cultural background of the parable, the widespread nature of similar tropes suggest that wayward children would be considered familiar to Luke's auditors.¹⁹ Similarly, one finds indications of individuals

SBLSymS 20 (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 44. See also Robert Morgenthau, *Lukas und Quintilian: Rhetorik als Erzählkunst* (Zürich: Gotthelf, 1993), especially pp. 342-345, 415-417.

¹⁸ The Lotus Sutra (1st C BCE-1st C CE) relates a tale quite similar to that of the Parable of the Prodigals, in which a man's son leaves home on the advice of his foolish friends and is forced to beg for food and clothing. Meanwhile, the father goes searching for his son and comes into considerable wealth. The son travels to the town in which his father lives and, not recognizing his father, comes upon the estate. He flees, fearing that he will be made a slave. The father employs lowly people to ask the son to become a servant (who cleans the cesspools) because the father fears the son will not recognize the father in his nobility, and eventually, the son is placed in charge of his father's money and shows indications of nobility. Upon these behaviors, the father reveals his identity and bequeaths his property to his once-wayward son.

¹⁹ Schottroff argues that the parable is best understood in light of Greco-Roman backgrounds; in particular, she notes the typologies behind Ps.-Quintilians 5th Declamation and the parable: "This declamation is part of a long chain of rhetorical tradition. The golden rule has its home in this tradition ... and this tradition cultivates the reflections on theories of equality since Aristotle" (Luise Schottroff "Das Gleichnis vom verlorenen Sohn," *ZTW* 68 [1971]: 47. Bovon, however, takes issue with her interpretation, indicating "The themes of the return from a trip, the father who forgives, and the rivalry between two brothers are much too anchored in biblical tradition to make one venture into another civilization" (*Luke the Theologian*; 2nd English ed; transl. Ken McKinney [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2006], 325). Holgate, on the other hand, sees behind the parables Greco-Roman comedies: "Greek and Roman comedies and mimes provide most points of contact both in terms of plot, theme and detail," in Holgate, *Prodigality*, 34. Callon also sees behind the parable Greco-Roman comedies, but critiques Holgate, inasmuch as he "seems to err (as do other scholars...) in attempting to find a realistic or historical counterpart for the accusation [of harlotry] in Luke, when ... a literary context should be sought instead. In the genre of Greco-Roman comedy specifically there is a connection between these verbs of consumption and the squandering of patrimony and, though less attested, a link between these and prostitutes or courtesans" (Callie Callon, "Adulterantes and Meretrices: The Correlation between Squandered Patrimony and Prostitutes in the Parable of the Prodigal Son," *CBQ* 75 [2013]: 273. Bailey has offered a significant body of work on this

who squander their patrimony littered throughout legal and rhetorical texts alike.

Quintilian utilizes patrimony in his *Institutio Oratoria* as an example in his discussions of legal techniques including conjecture (3.11.13-17), cause (4.2.72-74), chance (5.10.48), and justification (6.3.75), and in his examples of rhetorical techniques, including metonymy (8.6.26), *homoioteluton*, and *paronomasia* (9.3.80).

Many have attempted to identify the main character in the Parable of the Prodigals. Even more, the popular name of the parable leads readers to focus on the Younger Son as the main character. Despite efforts to re-name the parable, many still nod with familiarity when hearing the title “The Parable of the Prodigal Son.” Though some interpretations focused on the Younger Son, Jeremias asserts that the parable “might more correctly be called the *parable of the Father’s Love*.”²⁰ Indeed, the Father unites the two parts of the parable, appearing in a scene with only he and the Younger Son and in a scene with only he and the Elder Son. Parsons determines yet another way forward through rhetorical techniques, identifying the Father as the main character on the basis of inflection (πατήρ appears in all five cases).²¹ The Elder Son, in contrast, receives little attention, ostracized from the party even in scholarship.²² The Elder Son’s role in the

parable and attempts to establish the issues at stake in the (Palestinian, according to his reckoning) cultural background. See especially *Poet and Peasant*, 161-181 and *The Cross and the Prodigal: Luke 15 through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants*; 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 37-146.

²⁰ Jeremias, *Parables*, 128 (emphasis original).

²¹ See Parsons, “The Quest,” 35: “An ancient audience hearing Luke 15, who were conditioned, even unconsciously, upon ‘hearing’ a word inflected to identify that term as the subject of the story at hand, would have naturally understood that the subject of the parable was the Father and his love.”

²² Parsons is a notable exception. In his discussion of the interpretations (or lack thereof) of the Elder Son, Parsons notes the negative estimation of this brother: “The Elder Brother is viewed as the Other, an Outsider, obdurate and incapable himself of repentance, sometimes even identified with the ‘Devil’!” (Mikeal C. Parsons, “The Prodigal’s Elder Brother: The History and Ethics of Reading Luke 15:25-32,” *PRSt* 23 [1996], 148). Parsons goes on to indicate “attending to the literary details of the parable, however,

Parable of the Prodigals, however, is key. He represents the response ancient audiences were likely to expect to the Younger Son's return, and, at the same time, illustrates Luke's openness to characters to adopt the kingdom *ēthos*, in which the hungry are fed, the poor are lifted up, and those who cannot repay are all invited to the party.

Inflection in the parable of the prodigals. Parsons notes well that πατήρ is the only term that is inflected in the Parable of the Prodigals.²³ By inflecting this term, the Father receives prominence in the parable. The Younger Son and Elder Son are also inflected, however, when one considers personal pronouns in addition to the titles used to refer to the sons, as Theon advocates in his *progymnasmata*.²⁴ The Sons, in addition, are the impetus for the Father's actions in the parable.

The Father is inflected in the dative and vocative cases in Luke 15:12 as the Younger Son requests his share of the patrimony. The Father appears in the genitive case as the Younger Son comes to himself and realizes that his father's hired hands have it better than he does (15:17), and in the accusative case as the Younger Son rehearses his plan to return to his father and ask to be made one of the hired hands (15:18, 20).

"Father" appears in the nominative case as the father sees his younger son at a distance.²⁵

demonstrates that the rejected elder son theme is actually not perpetuated by the parable but subverted by it" (171).

²³ Parsons, "The Quest," 35.

²⁴ Theon advocates for inflection in *chreiai* (*Prog.* 101-102), *mythoi* (*Prog.* 74-75), and narrative (*Prog.* 85-86).

²⁵ "Father" appears in some cases more than once. Beyond what I have listed above, πατήρ appears in the nominative case once in 15:22 and twice in 27. The term appears in the dative case in 15:29.

Table 5.2. Inflection of the Father

Case	Verse
Nominative	Ἔτι δὲ αὐτοῦ μακρὰν ἀπέχοντος εἶδεν αὐτὸν ὁ πατήρ αὐτοῦ (15:20b)
Dative	καὶ εἶπεν ὁ νεώτερος αὐτῶν τῷ πατρί· (15:12a)
Genitive	πόσοι μίσθιοι τοῦ πατρός μου περισσεύονται ἄρτων (15:17)
Accusative	ἀναστὰς πορεύσομαι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μου καὶ ἐρῶ αὐτῷ· (15:18a, 20)
Vocative	πάτερ, δός μοι τὸ ἐπιβάλλον μέρος τῆς οὐσίας. (15:12b) πάτερ, ἡμαρτον εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐνώπιόν σου (15:18, 21)

The inflection of the term πατήρ draws attention not only to the character of the Father but also to key aspects of the narrative of the Younger Son. The Younger Son addresses his father when he wants something (such as his patrimony), when he realizes that his father's hired hands fare better than he does, and in both the rehearsal and execution of his return.

The Younger Son and Elder Son are also inflected, though their inflection is not of the specific term υἱός but in combination of the term υἱός and personal pronouns used to reference the two men.²⁶ The nominative relates to the Younger Son as he prepares to ask for his inheritance (15:12), the genitive as he squanders his patrimony (15:14), and the dative when nobody gives him anything to assuage his hunger (15:16). As he comes to himself, the accusative case refers to the Younger Son (15:17).

Table 5.3. Inflection of the Younger Son

Case	Verse
Nominative	καὶ εἶπεν ὁ νεώτερος αὐτῶν τῷ πατρί· (15:12a)
Dative	καὶ ἐπεθύμει χορτασθῆναι ἐκ τῶν κερατίων ὧν ἤσθιον οἱ χοῖροι, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐδίδου αὐτῷ. (15:16)
Genitive	δαπανήσαντος δὲ αὐτοῦ πάντα ἐγένετο λιμὸς ἰσχυρὰ κατὰ τὴν χώραν ἐκείνην (15:14)
Accusative	εἰς ἑαυτὸν δὲ ἐλθὼν (15:17)
Vocative	—

²⁶ There is no reference to the Younger Son in the vocative case.

Similar to the references to the Father, the inflected terms heighten the narrative surrounding the Younger Son's descent. They emphasize his request for the patrimony, his squandering of what the Father gave him, and his realization that his life would improve if he returned home—even as a hired hand.

The Elder Son is inflected in all five cases, much like the Father. His inflection occurs within a shorter span of verses, which draws increased attention to the Elder Son. Luke 15:31 presents the Elder Son in every case except the accusative: ὁ δὲ εἶπεν αὐτῷ (dative)· τέκνον (vocative), σύ (genitive) πάντοτε μετ' ἐμοῦ εἶ, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐμὰ σὰ ἐστίν (nominative). The accusative case anticipates the exchange between the Father and the Elder Son, as the Father comes to comfort him (παρακάλει αὐτόν, 15:27). Though the Elder Son tends to receive less prominence as a character in this parable, his inflection follows after some of the progymnastic exercises, in which a single term would be inflected within a sentence or two.²⁷

Though the term πατήρ is inflected—and one might quibble that neither of the sons are progymnastic-perfect presentations of inflection—the use of inflection with reference to the sons slows the assumptions of who the main character of the parable may be. Though Luke does not refer to the Younger Son in the vocative case, his narrative is bound up with the inflection of the Father, inasmuch as the Younger Son's engagement with his father is the means by which the inflection of πατήρ occurs. While the presentation of the Father in every case draws attention to his character, the presentation of the Elder Son in every case (except the accusative) within a single verse draws

²⁷ See footnote 12, in which Rutilius Lupus presents an example of a short narrative about a son disowning and then acknowledging his father in which the term “Father” is inflected.

significant attention to his character and to his father's efforts to console him (παρεκάλει αὐτόν, 15:28). This presentation is a helpful corrective to the underestimation of the Elder Son, who responds believably to the return of his patrimony-squandering brother. He receives prominence in the exchange with the Father, which draws increased attention to the end of the parable and the question of whether or not the Elder Son will be compelled by his Father's words.

Prosōpopoiia and Characterization

Before addressing the other aspects of characterization, it is important to note the role of *prosōpopoiia* in such an endeavor. Having already demonstrated the contribution of *prosōpopoiia* to characterization in fabulistic literature in Chapter Four, I now engage the technique more fully in light of Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31. This discussion anticipates the individual examinations of *prosōpopoiia* in the Parable of the Prodigals and RML.

According to the progymnasmatists, students were to include elements of *prosōpopoiia* as a means of extending the previous exercises.²⁸ Quintilian's definition of the use and purpose of *prosōpopoiia* is insightful for understanding the ways Luke employs it in the Parable of the Prodigals. According to him,

These both vary and animate a speech to a remarkable degree. We use them (1) to display the inner thoughts of our opponents as though they were talking to themselves (but they are credible only if we imagine them saying what it is not absurd for them to have thought!), (2) to introduce conversations between ourselves and others, or of others among themselves, in a credible manner, and (3) to provide appropriate characters for words of advice, reproach, complaint, praise, or pity. (*Inst.* 9.2.30-31 [Russell, LCL])

²⁸ John of Sardis indicates that "Ethopoeia occurs in almost all the previous exercises and is a part of each, starting with fables" (*Prog.* 213 [Kennedy]).

In the Parable of the Prodigals, we find all three instances: Luke displays the inner thoughts of the Younger Son (Luke 15:17-19); the conversation between the Father and the Elder Son (Luke 15:29-32); and, finally, the words the Father speaks to encourage the Elders Son to join the celebration.

Theon defines *prosōpopoiia* as “The introduction of a person to whom words are attributed that are both appropriate to him/herself and pertinent to the matter discussed” (*Prog.* 115 [Kennedy]). The speaking must be appropriate to the characters in terms of their age, attitude, etc., and to the situation (*Prog.* 115-116). The use of *prosōpopoiia* to exemplify characterization within the other exercises (including *mythos*) supports the view that it is appropriate to consider its function in terms of characterization within the Lukan parables. Though many of the examples of *prosōpopoiia* the progymnasmatisists present involve significantly longer speeches than what one finds in Luke 15:11-32, the centrality of *prosōpopoiia* in characterization and the role it has in the narrative mitigates their brevity.²⁹ Luke’s presentation of the speeches of the Younger Son, the Father and the Elder Son cohere with Quintilian’s second and third purposes of *prosōpopoiia*. Furthermore, Luke’s use of *prosōpopoiia* answers the question “what would a character’s response be (in light of age, circumstance, etc.) to a particular scenario, such as the return of a wayward son or brother?”

²⁹ See George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric*, transl. George A. Kennedy and Hugo Rabe, WGRW 15 (Atlanta: SBL, 2003), 116-117, 213.

Character Types and Characterization in the Parables

As discussed in Chapter Two, one of the main goals of the *progymnasmata* was the moral formation of young elite men.³⁰ Through mimetic exercises performed in the *progymnasmata*, students learned behaviors to emulate and avoid through hearing examples from history and literature, augmenting or condensing them, and finally presenting them.³¹ Early redactions of Theophrastus's *Characters* includes in the introduction much the same goal (*Char.* pref.3).³² Theophrastus presents a series of characters whose behaviors are more likely among those to be avoided rather than followed.³³ Both the *progymnasmata* and the *Characters* reveal a concern for proper behavior.

Among the characteristics to be avoided are shamelessness and miserliness, which are germane to my evaluation of the Younger and Elder Sons, respectively.³⁴ In light of

³⁰ See Todd Penner, "Reconfiguring the Rhetorical Study of Acts: Reflections on the Method in and Learning of a Progymnastic Poetics," *PRSt* 30 (2003): 432-434, 439.

³¹ Theon explicates the ways students benefit from the exercises. Regarding *chreiai*, he says "what is said in the *chreia*, to the effect that it is true or noble or beneficial, or that other famous men have thought the same" (*Prog.* 103 [Kennedy]). In *topoi*, students describe actions of others "language amplifying something that is acknowledged to be either a fault or a brave deed" (*Prog.* 106 [Kennedy]). He argues similarly with respect to *prosōpopoiia* that "We shall say that what we are urging is possible and easy and noble and appropriate; that it is beneficial, just reverent... that it is pleasant" (*Prog.* 116 [Kennedy]).

³² ὑπολαμβάνω γάρ ... τοὺς υἱεῖς ἡμῶν βελτίους ἔσεσθαι κατελειφθέντων αὐτοῖς ὑπομνημάτων τοιούτων, οἷς παραδείγμασι χρώμενοι αἰρήσονται τοῖς εὐσημονεστέροις συνεῖναι τε καὶ ὁμιλεῖν, ὅπως μὴ καταδέεσθαι ὧσιν αὐτῶν.

³³ These include: εἰρωνεία (pretensions); κολακείαν (flattery) ; ἀδολεχία (garrulity); ἀγροικία (boorishness); ἀρέσκειά (obsequiousness); ἀπὸνοιά (madness) ; λαλία (excessive speech); λογοποιία (rumor-making); ἀναισχυντία (unconscionableness); μικροπολογία (miserliness); βδελυρία (buffoonery) ; ἀκαιρία (tactlessness) ; περιεργία (meddlesomeness) ; ἀναισθησία (stupidity); αὐθάδεια (surliness); δεισιδαιμονία (superstitiousness); μεμπιμορία (querulousness); ἀπιστία (faithlessness); δυσχέρεια (nastiness); ἀγρία (bad-breeding); μικροφιλοτιμία (pettiness); ἀνελευθερία (parsimoniousness); ἀλαζονεία (pretentiousness); ὑπερηφανία (arrogance); δειλία (cowardice); ὀλιγαρχία (oligarchy); ὀψιμαθία (late-learning); κακολογία (back-stabbing); Φιλοπονηρία (lover of evildoers); αἰσχροκέρδεια (meanness).

³⁴ It would not be difficult to draw other connections between the *Characters* and the sons in the parable; for the sake of clarity, I confine myself to these examples. Holgate acknowledges that the Father

the Father's support of both sons, he, too, presents characteristics similar to that of the "Patron of Scoundrels."³⁵ Aristotle, on whom Theophrastus likely based his understanding of characters, considers prodigality and meanness as two things that are opposed to liberality, and deals with these in light of each other in his *Nicomachean Ethics*.³⁶ Aristotle's pairing of these two characteristics, along with liberality, is suggestive that these types are interrelated (*Eth. nic.* 4.1.2).³⁷ Aristotle regards this characteristic as one that gives the right amount at the right time, which does not seem to be the case in Luke 15:11-32. The Father, rather, comes to the aid of those who do not deserve it at inappropriate times (throwing a party after one son has squandered his patrimony and leaving the same party to comfort the other son, who refuses to join). In this way, none of the characters in the Parable of the Prodigals fares well in terms of their characterization. Luke, however, nuances their characterization through *prosōpopoiia*, heightening the *ēthos* and *pathos* of all three of the characters.

Though there may be analogues between Theophrastus's *Characters* and the characters Luke presents in the Parable of the Prodigals, this need not imply that Luke

acts in accordance with notions of Liberality, from which position I depart. In addition, he connects only the Elder Son to the Characters μικρολογία, ἀνελεθυερία, and differentiates him from αἰσχροκέρδεια (*Prodigality*, 232).

³⁵ Theophrastus, *Char.* 29.

³⁶ See Chapter Two, p.3.

³⁷ "Meanness is always applied to those who care more than is proper about wealth, but Prodigality is sometimes used with a wider connotation ... but this is not the proper application of the word: really it denotes the possessor of one particular vice, that of wasting one's substance; for he who is ruined by his own agency is a hopeless case indeed" (*Eth. nic.* 4.1.5 [Rackham, LCL]). For a more detailed conversation regarding the connections between these, see Holgate, *Prodigality*, 90-130, but specifically 103-104. Holgate, noting the propensity to deal with these character types in light of Aristotle and the *topos* of covetousness, holds that the characters act in accordance with their types, even if he regards Luke's philosophy as eclectic (250-251).

employed Theophrastus's specific designations, nor need it imply that Luke must employ the specific vocabulary Theophrastus used in order to identify possible character types. Rather, based on the associations of prodigality, meanness, and liberality in Aristotle and those who followed after him, the ubiquity of the types is sufficient for recognition of a person who behaves according to the type. In the following sections, I discuss the characterization of the Younger Son, the Elder Son, and the Father in light of ancient character types and rhetorical techniques, paying special attention to the use of *prosōpopoiia* and the ways Luke uses it to contribute to characterization.

The shameless Younger Son. The Younger Son has received the bulk of the attention in interpretations of the parable. His character is prominent in the narrative, with over half of the verses in the parable pertaining to him (vss. 12-21). In addition, he is the only character to appear "on stage" by himself. These aspects of Luke's presentation of the Younger Son draws attention to him and the character types he presents. The Younger Son's character receives further prominences through *prosōpopoiia*, which gives auditors a window into the inner thoughts of the Younger Son at his lowest point in the narrative and his return home.

Character types and the Younger Son. As indicated in the introduction to this section, the trope of patrimony squanderers and wayward sons is prevalent in the ancient world, and can be found in legal proceedings, rhetorical handbooks, comedies, and historiographical documents.³⁸ In what follows, I draw together Theophrastus's and

³⁸ Considerable debates exist around the background of this character. Hock asserts that the traditional focus on Jewish backgrounds has led to the failure to tend the similarities in the Greek Romances (Ronald F. Hock, "Romancing the Parables of Jesus," *PRSt* 29 [2002]: 18). Räisänen agrees, seeing the parable as "much more at home in a Hellenistic-Roman environment than in a Palestinian-

Aristotle's descriptions of the Shamelessness and prodigality.³⁹ In addition, I demonstrate some similarities between the Younger Son and the Gambler in Babrius 131. These efforts make clear that the trope of a wayward young man was a familiar type in the ancient world.

According to Theophrastus, "shamelessness is endurance of dishonorable things both in word and deed ... the shameless man is ... of a ne'er-do-weel, decency-be-damned, devil-may-care disposition ... there's no trade so low but he'll follow it" (*Char.* 6.1, 3, 5 [Edmonds, LCL]). Theophrastus goes on to say that "He will turn his mother out-of-doors" (*Char.* 6.6 [Edmonds, LCL]).⁴⁰ This brief description has much in common with the Younger Son in the Parable of the Prodigals. Though the Younger Son does not throw his father out of doors, he recklessly squanders (διεσκόρπισεν τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ ζῶν ἁσώτως, Luke 15:13) his patrimony (τὸν βίον, Luke 15:12).⁴¹ The Younger Son's

Rabbinic one" ("The Prodigal," 1629). Evans, by contrast, notes the similarities between this parable and rabbinic parables, citing connections to rabbinic parables that suggest the eating of carob pods is the beginning of repentance (*Lev. rab.* 13.4), how a wayward son's poverty reminds him of the comforts of his father's house (*Deut. rab.* 2.24), and the ways those who are impoverished are regarded as if dead (*Gen. rab.* 71.6) (Craig R. Evans "Parables in Early Judaism," in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 74). Parsons traces this parable's representation forward from late antiquity to the modern era ("Elder Brother," 147-74). Regarding the ubiquity of the backgrounds, recall Plutarch's discussion of Themistocles, who he thought that—were he to have been properly trained as a child—would not have ended up as though a "wild horse" in the end (*Them.* 2.5). Similarly, see the ways Plutarch portrays Demetrius's downfall as a result of his desire for wealth (see Chapter Three).

³⁹ I preserve the capitalization of Theophrastus's characters because they represent individuals but do not capitalize Aristotle's descriptions of prodigality, meanness, and liberality, because they pertain to traits.

⁴⁰ See Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 4.1.34 "Moreover, being indifferent to nobility of conduct, they are careless how they get their money, and take it from anywhere" (Rackham, LCL).

⁴¹ I translate τὸν βίον as "patrimony" in this instance, given the context. It is interesting, however, that the other time another person spends τὸν βίον in Luke it is the Widow, who places in the Temple offering πάντα τὸν βίον (Luk 21:4). While I do not think the Younger Son's request would have been heard as wishing his father were dead as many have done (Marshall, *Compassionate Justice*, 199; Hultgren, *Parables of Jesus*, 73; Scott, *Hear the Parable*, 11; John T. Carroll, *Luke* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012], 315; Talbert, *Reading Luke*, 149), the request separates the son from his family of origin, based on the Elder Son's (and Father's) response to his return. Vinson notes the extravagance of the

request does not, in itself, reveal his shamelessness, but it does set the stage for what is to come. After squandering everything, a famine comes upon the land, and the Younger Son finds himself in want. He joins himself with a local and acquires a job as a hog farmer. Neither Jewish nor Greco-Roman culture would have regarded this occupation as respectable, which reflects the lowness of the career the Younger Son took up. Upon feeling his hunger pangs and jealousy for the pigs' food, he comes to his senses and decides to go home.⁴²

Aristotle's description of prodigality is insightful for what happened when the Younger Son experienced hunger and poverty:

Prodigality is sometimes used with a wider connotation, since we call the unrestrained and those who squander money on debauchery prodigal; and therefore prodigality is thought to be extremely wicked, because it is a combination of vices. But this is not the proper application of the word: really it denotes the possessor of one particular vice, that of wasting one's substance; for he who is ruined by his own agency is a hopeless case indeed, and to waste one's substance seems to be in a way to ruin oneself, inasmuch as wealth is the means of life. This then is the sense in which the term prodigality is here understood. (*Eth. Nic.* 4.1.4-5 [Rackham, LCL])

Father's actions (Richard B. Vinson, *Luke* [Macon, GA: Smith and Helwys, 2008], 512). Others, however, do not find the request as particularly odd (Eta Linnemann, *Parables of Jesus: Introduction and Exposition* [New York: Harper and Row, 1967], 75). Callon argues that this trope was prevalent in Greco-Roman comedies and that, moreover, "The connection between squandered patrimony and prostitutes would hardly have been shocking, nor would it have confounded an audience in antiquity familiar with the stock tropes of Greco-Roman comedy, as Luke's community was." Callon regards this as a comedic trope that would have been recognized by Luke's readers, in which a son requests his inheritance, goes off to a distant country and squanders it on women ("Adulscientes and Meretrices," 260, 272). The Father, in this case, may find a parallel in the Widow of Luke 21. The Father—at one point in the narrative—disperses not only τὸν βίον but loses two sons. In a similar way, the Widow spends τὸν βίον in the gift of her two coins. Nevertheless, it does not seem to be the case that the Younger Son wishes for the father's death in his request. Rather, I think it is important to note that none of the characters in the story seem surprised at the Younger Son's behavior. The Elder Son does not seem surprised at his brother's return, necessarily, but is more focused on what he has not received.

⁴² As suggested by Dionysius of Halicarnassus. He distinguishes Remus and Romulus from those of lower origin: "When they came to be men, they showed themselves both in dignity of aspect and elevation of mind not like swineherds and neatherds, but such as we might expect those to be who are born of royal race and are looked upon as the offspring of the Gods (*Ant. rom.* 1.79.11 [Cary, LCL]).

The Younger Son, having squandered his substance (Luke 15:13), is ruined by his own doing. His reckless spending, combined with his failure to prepare for unforeseen instances such as famines, leads him to an undesirable job. At his lowest point, the Younger Son envies even the pigs, who seem to have the good sense to not spurn the sustenance that has been given to them. Aristotle goes on to indicate that the Prodigal individual may be “easily cured by age or by poverty” and may even come to exhibit behaviors of liberality (*Eth. nic.* 4.1.31 [Rackham, LCL]). Taken together, Theophrastus’s description of the Shameless and Aristotle’s description of prodigality bear much in common the traits the Younger Son presents.

The characteristics of shamelessness and prodigality also appear in fabulistic literature. Babrius 131 relates a story of a young man who gambles away his livelihood and eventually loses his last article of clothing to his vice:

A young man who had lost his fortune in playing dice saved apart for himself just one garment, lest he should suffer from the cold in winter-time; but in the end a throw of the dice stripped him even of that. Before spring had arrived a swallow left Thebes of the South and appeared out of season. Hearing the bird faintly twittering, the youngster said to himself: “What need have I now for extra clothing? Behold, here is a swallow. That means warm weather.” So saying, he went off and joined in the dice game, and, after playing a little, was beaten and forfeited his only garment. Then a snowstorm came on and a shivering hail, and everyone had need of extra clothing. Naked, he peeped out from the door and saw the noisy swallow lying dead like a young chick from the cold, “Poor creature,” he said, “I wish I hadn’t see you before. You fooled both yourself and me.” (Babrius 131 [Perry, LCL])

In this fable, the gambling young man loses everything except for his coat and, apparently taking the advice of a swallow, loses his coat to gambling as well. In this case, the young man takes advice from a source that is not trustworthy, recalling the connections between those in Plutarch’s *Lives* who base their decisions on individuals who ultimately lead them astray (i.e., *Ages.* 5.1, *Ant.* 36.3).

Other indications of individuals who squander their patrimony are prevalent. In his *Lives*, Diogenes Laertius relates Bion's quip to one who devoured his patrimony: "To some one who had devoured his patrimony he said, 'The earth swallowed Amphiaras, but you have swallowed your land'" (*Lives* 7.48 [Rackham, LCL]). Bion suggests that the person who has died is better off than the person who has squandered his patrimony. Whereas the dead person no longer needs financial support, the one who is alive cannot live without it, expressed negatively in RML after the Rich Man has died and positively the Parable of the Shrewd Steward in the preservation of his wellbeing.

Quintilian likewise casts aspersions on those who squander their patrimony. In his discussion of Cause, he offers two brief quotations regarding someone who lost his estate: "He was extravagant; he has exhausted his estate. He has lived a scandalous life; everyone hates him" (*Inst.* 5.10.48 [Russell, LCL]). Those who live recklessly, according to Quintilian, might expect to be hated by those around them. Plutarch likewise has a low estimation of those who spend money recklessly (*Per.* 14.1-2; *Them.* 5.1).

With respect to *Callirhoe*, one might recall the negative estimation of Theron who discovers Callirhoe in her grave and contrives to sell her only to find his ill-gotten gains are of no help to him when his ship threatens to break apart during a storm (3.3.11-12). These negative estimations of a person who spends recklessly, squanders their patrimony, or possess ill-gotten gains illustrate shamelessness and prodigality of the Younger Son. At the same time, these examples also help explain the Elder Son's reaction to his brother. Interpretations of the Elder Son—even in those who seek to avoid allegorical interpretations—risk overlooking the normalcy of his response to the Younger Son's arrival home.

Luke's presentation of the Younger Son has much in common with Theophrastus's presentation of the Shameless character and Aristotle's presentation of prodigality. One finds these characteristics represented in both theory (via Quintilian) and in practice (via Diogenes, Plutarch, and Chariton). The similarities between the Younger Son and the presentations in these authors show the prevalence of individuals who behave prodigally in literature and the negative reactions authors may have expected ancient audiences to have toward these squanderers. These descriptions fit nicely with the characterization of the Younger Son in Luke 15:11-18.

Prosōpopoiia and characterization: The Younger Son. As indicated above, one of the goals of *prosōpopoiia* was to imagine the way a character might respond to a particular situation in a manner that is appropriate to their age, status, etc. The speech Luke (via Jesus) attributes to Younger Son expresses his inner thoughts, thus fulfilling the first purpose of *prosōpopoiia* Quintilian delineates. *Prosōpopoiia* gives a window into the Younger Son's characterization by presenting his thoughts.

The first speech the Younger Son utters involves his demand for his share of the patrimony. The son's demand includes no pretense and no niceties. "Father, give me the part [of the estate] that falls to me" (Luke 15:12). Unlike Lazarus's unfulfilled desire for some crumbs that fell to the floor, the Younger Son's desire for his share of the patrimony inspires his first move. From here the Younger Son descends in the narrative, though there is no mention of what happens in the meantime, how the money is squandered, or what sort of dissolute living the Younger Son engages. He nevertheless exhausts everything by his reckless living and experiences a famine besides. Accepting

his presumably undesirable position feeding the pigs, the Younger Son envies the pigs' food.⁴³

As he envies the pigs' food, the Younger Son reminisces his past experiences of his father "How many of my father's hired hands have bread to spare, yet here I am, perishing in the famine?" (Luke 15:17). The Younger Son hatches his plan "I will get up and go to my father and say to him 'Father, I have sinned in the sight of heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me as one of your hired hands'" (Luke 15:18-20).⁴⁴ Luke's presentation of the Younger Son's speech reveals the inner thoughts of the character, demonstrating his *ēthos* in the potential change in his character, and if not *ēthos*, then his *pathos* for the deterioration of his situation, even if of the Younger Son's own making. Furthermore, the Younger Son's speech answers the question "What would a wayward son say if he had lost everything, got hired to do a degrading job, and was starving in the midst of a famine?" The answer: the son would

⁴³ This indication might be a fruitful place to explore the potential role of physiognomy in the parable. In his *Physiognomics*, Aristotle indicates that pigs are ignorant (811b), stupid (812b), and sexually excitable (808b). In light of Luke 15:11-32, the Younger Son is accused of exhibiting these qualities: in light of his father's generosity (15:18), one might think his initial request and descending state would be due to his ignorance or stupidity. His brother's accusation that he has squandered property with prostitutes seems in keeping with the expectation that pigs are sexually excitable. These characteristics may cohere with Plutarch's discussion of incontinence in his *Table Talk*: "of faults in dealing with pleasure, some are due to incontinence and others to misapprehension and oversights. Wherever the harm is obvious, the fault is indulged because people fail to control themselves and forcibly suppress their reason. But acts that do not impose the penalty for incontinence directly and immediately, they choose and perform in ignorance of any harm to come. Thus those whose shortcomings are in eating and drinking and sexual indulgence, which are attended by a numerous train of diseases and financial losses as well as ill fame, we call incontinent" (Plutarch, *Mor.* 10 [Edwin L. Minar, F. H. Sandbach, and W. C. Helmbold, LCL]).

⁴⁴ There does not seem to be consensus regarding whether this "confession" was credible or calculating as I indicate in n. 14. In light of the son's return and his attempt to relate his speech, however rehearsed, to his father, it seems the son indicates (1) his willingness (and expectation) that he can no longer be received as a son and (2) his willingness to work as a hired hand for his father, which would be an improvement upon his current situation. Perhaps he knows that his father would not hear of him serving as a hired hand, but perhaps, like the indications in rabbinic literature and in Aristotle, the Younger Son's poverty has finally cured him of his prodigality.

return home with a posture of repentance—whether contrived or not—to benefit from his father’s generosity.

Luke draws additional attention to the Younger Son’s *prosōpopoiia* through use of *antistrophē*, ending each clause with σου as the son begs to be made one of his father’s hired hands:

ἥμαρτον εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἐνώπιόν σου,
οὐκέτι εἰμὶ ἄξιος κληθῆναι υἱός σου. (Luke 15:21)

I have sinned against heaven and before you
I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

In this indication of wrongdoing and willingness to be treated as one of the hired hands, Luke departs from the expected behavior of shameless characters in that the Younger Son discovers there is a job so low that he would rather return home.⁴⁵ The Younger Son’s willingness to be a servant suggests his willingness to work for his food, even if in his father’s household. Luke draws additional attention to the Younger Son’s speech in its second iteration to his father through *aposiōpēsis*, in which the speech is left unfinished. The Younger Son’s speech ends with an indication of his unworthiness to be considered his father’s son, omitting the third line of the rehearsed speech. By leaving the second part of the speech unfinished, Luke draws attention to the intended speech the Younger Son works out in its initial iteration. Before he can finish his speech, his father has embraced him as a dead son who has come back to life.

The familiar tropes of wayward sons and patrimony squanderers set up the expectation for one’s reaction to the Younger Son. Though expectations that the Younger

⁴⁵ This coheres with Aristotle’s indication that prodigals can remedy their ways, *Eth. nic.* 4.1.36-37. One might regard his request as shameless, nevertheless.

Son will receive a negative reaction are possible based on Quintilian and Plutarch, there is also the expectation that the Younger Son's poverty might mitigate his prodigality based on Aristotle. Luke draws attention to The Younger Son's descent through the use of *prosōpopoiia* and generates further interest by using *antistrophē* and *aposiōpēisis*. Based on the gravity of the Younger Son's situation, regardless of his fault in arriving there, it seems Luke expects his auditors to react to the Younger Son's *pathos*—if not his *ēthos*—sympathetically.

The Miserly Elder Son

The Elder Son, admittedly, does not receive the same amount of space or focus in Luke's narrative: he is hard-working and obedient (Luke 15:29). Similarly, those who work hard or follow the rules do not feature prominently in ancient tropes. At the outset, it appears the Elder Son is among those who are healthy who have no need of a doctor (Luke 5:31-32). The Elder Son's reaction, based on the expectations of Quintilian and Plutarch, does not depart from the expected responses to a patrimony-squanderer. Moreover, given that the Elder Son, as the possessor of "all that the Father has" (Luke 15:31) would have likely shared in the hosting of the party, though he was not aware the party was happening until after it had begun.⁴⁶ Through Luke's inflection of his character in Luke 15:31, the Elder Son's character is prominent as his father encourages him to join the party. The Elder Son's *prosōpopoiia* expresses his anger and jealousy at the Father's generosity toward the Younger Son and his own feelings of having worked hard but received nothing in return. The Elder Son, who stood to inherit the entirety of the

⁴⁶ Bailey, *The Cross and the Prodigal*, 81.

remaining estate, perceives that he has been wronged. His *prosōpopoiia*, however, reveals the reason for his frustration. The Elder Son does not mention the possibility of the Younger Son's return impinging upon his inheritance or the expectation that he would be instrumental in throwing a party. The Elder Son's *prosōpopoiia* communicates his frustration that he—despite having worked hard—has received nothing, whereas the Younger Son—who squandered his patrimony—receives a party upon his return. The Elder Son's response is expected. His mindset likely represents a limited-good economy, a reaction that would be expected among first century audiences.⁴⁷ Luke frustrates this mindset throughout the Gospel, especially in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), the Sermon on the Plain (Luke 6:20-26), and in light of the calls to invite to banquets those who cannot repay (Luke 14:12-24). The Elder Son is, nevertheless, invited into the party, and it remains unclear whether he will join. By leaving open the possibility that the Elder Son will join the party, Luke reveals the attitude—*contra* Aristotle—that the Elder Son is not beyond remedy.

Character types and the Elder Son. The Elder Son, despite his understandable response to his brother's return, bears much in common with Theophrastus's description of the Miserly. Theophrastus describes the Miserly as one who, "When a servant breaks a clay pot or serving dish, he deducts it from his daily rations. And if his wife drops a three-penny piece, he is capable of moving the dishes, couches, and chests, and searching

⁴⁷ Regarding limited-good economies, see Douglas E. Oakman, "The Countryside in Luke-Acts," in *The Social World of Luke-Acts*, ed. Jerome Neyrey (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 159-164, and Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, "Honor and Shame in Luke-Acts: Pivotal Values of the Mediterranean World," in *The Social World of Luke-Acts*, ed. Jerome H. Neyrey (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 31.

the floorboards” (*Char.* 10.5-6 [Edmonds, LCL]). The Miserly is concerned with possessions and regards as unfair situations in which another person gains a better deal or in which he supposes he has been cheated (*Char.* 10.4, 7-8). The Miserly, though he will seek to gain what has been lost, does so without joy or celebration in response to its recovery (*Char.* 10.5-6). Finally, the Miserly does not like to see others loan out what he perceives to be his (*Char.* 10.13-14) and recounts what is lost in celebratory gatherings (*Char.* 10.4). The Elder Son does not show joy at his younger brother’s return. Instead, he calculates his own lack in the light of the Father’s generosity toward the Younger Son (15:29).⁴⁸ Rather than immediately joining the party, the Elder Son complains about the Father’s extravagant generosity for the wayward son who does not deserve it.

Aristotle’s description of meanness bears much in common with Theophrastus’s discussion of the Miserly and is insightful for the characterization of the Elder Son. In his comparison of meanness with prodigality, Aristotle demonstrates the problematic nature of meanness:

Meanness ... is incurable; for we see that it can be caused by old age or any form of weakness. Also it is more ingrained in man’s nature than Prodigality; the mass of mankind are avaricious rather than open-handed. Moreover Meanness is a far-reaching vice, and one of varied aspect: it appears to take several shapes. For as it consists in two things, deficiency in giving and excess in getting ... The characters described by such names as niggardly, close-fisted, and stingy all fall short in giving, but they do not covet the goods of others nor wish to take them. (*Eth. nic.* 4.1.37-39 [Rackham, LCL])

Though Aristotle sees the faults in prodigality, he counts the faults of meanness as more insidious and incurable. One can find some common traits between the Elder Son and the

⁴⁸ As noted by Plummer (Alfred Plummer (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*, 5th ed., The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments 28 [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1922], 379).

description above. The Elder Son's frustration that his father has slaughtered the grain-fed calf for the Younger Son reveals his deficiency in giving. At the same time, his estimation that he has behaved as a slave and received nothing (15:29) despite possessing all that his father has (15:31) reveals both his underestimation of and excess in receiving. The narrative implies that the Elder Son is jealous of his father's generosity toward the Younger Son. If this is the case, the Elder Son departs from Aristotle's description of meanness, in that he covets what his brother receives.

Though those who are diligent and hard-working receive less prominence in literature, it is important to note that those who seek glory or recognition fare poorly in the estimation of Plutarch. Recalling the comparison of Agis and Cleomenes discussed in Chapter Three, Plutarch casts aspersions on those who seek to present themselves as virtuous when they, in fact, are not. These individuals, according to Plutarch, are "swept now along one course and now along another in their attempts to satisfy desire and passion" (*Comp. Ag. Cleom. cum Ti. Gracch.* 1.1 [Perrin, LCL]).⁴⁹ The Elder Son, believing that he has "slaved away" for his father (15:29), becomes angry when the Younger Son receives a celebration for his return. Seeing the celebration in honor of the Younger Son, the Elder Son laments his inability to celebrate with his friends, tacitly accusing the Father of being miserly toward him. Even if the Elder Son possess all that the Father has, he has either failed to recognize it or failed to take advantage of it.

Several fables caution individuals who show behaviors of jealousy, self-pity, or whose focus on others' vices precludes recognition of one's own vices. In Phaedrus 3.18,

⁴⁹ Cf., Alexander, who restrained his passion in a kingly manner (*Alex.* 21.4).

a peacock complains to Juno on the basis of her discontentment with what she has received, only for Juno to respond

It is by the will of the Fates that your respective lots have been assigned; to you beauty, strength to the eagle, to the nightingale melody, to the raven prophecy, unfavorable omens to the crow. All these are contented with their own particular gifts; strive not for that which has not been given to you, lest your hope be deluded and relapse into self-pity. (3.18.10-15 [Perry, LCL])

According to this fable, one ought not to wish for that which they have not been given or behave jealously toward those who have gained something one does not possess—such as, for instance, a calf.

Fable 175 in Chambry's *Ésope* reveals a similar concern between two dogs, one of which the master raised as a hunter and the other as a guard dog. After the guard dog receives some of the spoils of the hunting dog's work, the hunting dog reviles him. The guard dog responds he is not to blame, but rather, the master, who did not teach him to hunt (ὅς οὐ πονεῖν με ἐδίδαξεν) but to feast on the toil of others (ἀλλοτρίους δὲ πόνους κατεσθίειν). Though the hunting dog finds the situation unfair, both dogs do what the master has trained them to do. One hunts and one benefits from the other's spoils. The fable illustrates the potential tensions when two children are treated differently in the same household. The *epimythium* affirms this further, "So too neglected children are not to blame, when the parents raise them thusly."⁵⁰ In the case of the Elder Son, who protests the party thrown for the Younger Son, his blame for their father is in keeping with this fable. The Elder Son highlights the Younger Son's profligacy and the Father's apparent rewarding of such behavior.

⁵⁰ Οὕτω καὶ τῶν παίδων οἱ ῥάθυμοι οὐ μεμπτέοι εἰσὶν ὅταν αὐτοὺς οἱ γονεῖς οὕτως ἄγωσιν (*Aesopica* 175.10-11).

The Elder Son reveals not only the extravagant generosity the Father shows to the Younger Son but also the Younger Son's presumed vices. Phaedrus 4.10 cautions those who would perceive others' vices as more flagrant than their own. "Jupiter has put upon us two open wallets. That one of them which is filled with our own faults he placed at our back, the other, heavy with the faults of other people, he has suspended in front of our breasts. For this reason we are unable to see our own vices; but as soon as others commit errors we become their critics" (Perry, LCL). Though I am not arguing that Luke had these particular fables in view, the cautionary tales in the fables are sufficient to indicate that warnings against entitlement, self-pity, and judgment of others were likely familiar to audiences in the first century.

Prosōpopoiia and characterization: The Elder Son. Having already alluded to the Elder Son's interaction with his father, I now turn to Luke's presentation of the Elder Son via *prosōpopoiia*. The speech the Elder Son utters occurs as the Father attempts to console him. The Father leaves the party in honor of the Younger Son—at which he was presumably the host—to go to the Elder Son and reminds the Elder Son that "all I have is yours," (Luke 15:31) which illustrates the generosity of the Father and his willingness to show generosity at an inappropriate time (during a party). While the Younger Son returns willing to work as though a slave or hired hand, the Elder Son perceives he has been working as if a slave: "For all these years, I have worked like a slave for you ... and you never gave me so much as a goat in order that I might celebrate with my friends, but when this son of yours came, you sacrificed the grain-fed calf in his honor!" (Luke 15:29-30). The Elder Son does not rejoice in his brother's return, which both his anger at and his initial refusal to enter the party reveal. He supposes that he has been cheated,

inasmuch as the fatted calf has been sacrificed in his brother's honor, but he has received nothing with which to celebrate.⁵¹ Finally, the Elder Son's *prosōpopoiia* suggests the Father has squandered something of his, which one might expect given the Father's division of the property between the two sons (15:12) and the indication that πάντα τὰ ἐμὰ σὰ ἐστίν (15:31). The Elder Son's *prosōpopoiia* reveals his frustration at the party thrown for the Younger Son. Rather than rejoicing, the Elder Son refuses to enter the party. The Elder Son thereby exhibiting behaviors of miserliness, in that he does not rejoice at the recovery of his lost brother and counts what has been lost in the celebration. Though these responses would be expected in a limited-good economy, Luke has set up the expectation for his audience to behave according to a different ethic—to celebrate at the recovery of what had been lost and to invite into the party those who cannot repay.

The Elder Son's response to his father introduces a conversation between two people “in a credible manner” (Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.31), which adheres to the second function Quintilian lists for *prosōpopoiia*. The Elder Son's response to the Father's pleading seems quite believable, despite the expectation that the Elder Son would share

⁵¹ Many note the Elder Son's jealousy at his younger brother, including Plummer (*Luke*, 377); Carroll, though he notes that the Elder Son's response is unsurprising, regards the Elder Son as responding out of self-interest (John Carroll, *Luke* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012], 317). Others who note that the Elder Son's response might be expected include Evans, who indicates the Elder Son's objections “are not dismissed in v. 31, but are “acknowledged as justified, or at most are gently put in a different light” (Craig F. Evans, *Saint Luke* [London: SCM Press, 2008], 592). See Darrell L. Bock, *Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 1316-1317. The notion that the Younger Son's return may impinge on the Elder Son's inheritance is also prominent. Ringe describes the potential financial losses to the Elder Son: “The scribes and Pharisees in Luke's setting of the parable would not be the only ones to understand such a reaction on the part of the older son. So would almost everyone else in the crowd” (Sharon H. Ringe, *Luke* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995], 208). Tannehill argues against the notion that the Younger Son's return would impinge the Elder Son's financial wellbeing, citing the Father's words “All that is mine is yours” (Robert C. Tannehill, *Luke* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996], 243). Marshall indicates the surprise that the Elder Son is not made aware of the party, but also suggest that the Elder Son's failure to celebrate is because he did not ask, rather than because the Father was unwilling (I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978], 613). Vinson regards the Elder Son as “unforgiving” and “ruder than his younger brother” (*Luke*, 314-315). Green contrasts the Father and the Elder Son's reaction to the Younger Son's return (Green, *Luke*, 585).

some of the hosting duties. He has just come in from the field and learns from a slave (rather than his father) that there is a party in his brother's honor. If the Elder Son is to share in the hosting duties, he would have needed to know there was a party. The Elder Son perceives himself as hard working and obedient, which is highlighted by *anaphora*:

καὶ οὐδέποτε ἐντολήν σου παρήλθον,
καὶ ἐμοὶ οὐδέποτε ἔδωκας ἔριφον ἵνα μετὰ τῶν φίλων μου εὐφρανθῶ· (15:29)

And I never disobeyed your command
And you never even gave me a goat so that I could rejoice with my friends.

The Elder Son never disobeyed and never received anything for his obedience. The Younger Son squanders his patrimony and receives a party while—as if to add insult to injury—the Elder Son is slaving away in the field, unaware of the event.⁵²

The Elder son responds in a credible manner to the return of someone who exhibits characteristics of shamelessness and prodigality, supplying ways the Younger Son may have squandered his patrimony. His response draws attention to the Younger Son as belonging to the Father with *homoioioteleuton* (ὁ υἱός σου οὗτος, 15:30), along with drawing attention to the Younger Son's wayward behavior and the Father's extravagance (-ov and -ων endings) through *homoioteluton*:

ὁ καταφαγὼν σου τὸν βίον μετὰ πορνῶν ἦλθεν,

⁵² Gowler characterizes the Pharisees in light of the ancient cultural scripts of the Greco-Roman Mediterranean *milieu* (David B. Gowler, *Host, Guest, Enemy, and Friend: Portraits of the Pharisees in Luke and Acts*, Emory Studies in Early Christianity 2 [New York: Peter Lang, 1991], 15-27). While Gowler acknowledges that the portrayal of the Pharisees is not exclusively positive or negative, he admits “more often they serve—because of their flawed nature—as a legitimization device *via negativa* (179). With respect to the Parable of the Prodigals, Gowler holds that Luke 15:1-32 represents an indirect presentation of the Pharisees (251) and that “the portrait of the elder son reflects the faces of the Pharisees and scribes. His actions closely parallel the actions of the Pharisees and scribes in Luke 15:2” (253). While I readily admit the response of the parables to the immediate rhetorical situation suggests that Jesus is attempting to persuade the scribes and Pharisees of his position, it is important to note that the brother is not necessarily a 1:1 presentation of the Pharisees. While the presentation of the Pharisees is primarily negative, as Gowler points out, Jesus dines with them *and* with the sinners and tax collectors. In addition, it seems the Pharisees are aware of the proverbial party occurring with Jesus, the sinners, and the tax collectors, whereas the Elder Son is not aware of the party being thrown for the Younger Son until after it has already begun.

ἔθυσας αὐτῷ τὸν σιτευτὸν μόσχον. (15:30)

The one who devoured your patrimony with prostitutes came,
And you sacrifice the grain-fed calf for him.

In these instances, rhetorical techniques within *prosōpopoiia* add prominence to the Elder Son's anger and the reasons for his anger.⁵³

The Elder Son exhibits a plausible answer to the question “How might an older sibling respond to the return of a good-for-nothing, squandering brother who is now the guest of honor at a party you did not know about?” The Elder Son's response heightens his *ēthos* and *pathos*. He has been working this whole time and has received nothing. He, was working during his brother's party and learned the occasion of the party from one of the slaves rather than his father. While the audience would have likely been sympathetic toward the response of the Elder Son, Luke nevertheless continues advocating for behaviors that show reckless liberality. After the exchange between the Elder Son and the Father, Luke leaves the question hanging: Will the Elder Son join the party? Luke, by leaving the question of whether or not the Elder Son will join the party unanswered, holds that even the Miserly can remedy his ways, in contrast to Aristotle's expectation that meanness cannot be remedied.⁵⁴ By ending the parable thusly, Luke suggests that neither prodigality nor meanness are incurable (see Luke 18:27). There is room for both the Younger and the Elder Son at the party.

The Elder Son exhibits some of the characteristics of the Miserly and meanness, neither of which fare well in contemporaneous Greco-Roman literature or in fables. The

⁵³ For the use of rhetorical techniques within *prosōpopoiia* to heighten the narrative in *Callirhoe*, see Chapter Two, pp. 37-42.

⁵⁴ Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 4.1.37: ἡ δ' ἀνελευθερία ἀνίατός ἐστιν.

end of the parable, however, challenges Aristotle's expectation that those who exhibit meanness are beyond remedy. Given the characteristics that describe the Younger Son and the negative estimations of patrimony-squanderers, the end of the parable invites similarly open attitude toward the Elder Son. The Elder Son's response to the Younger Son's return represents a reasonable response to the situation, even though Luke—via the Father—ultimately advocates for the Elder Son to join in the party in honor of his brother.⁵⁵

The Generous Father

I now turn my attention to the Father, who likewise exhibits traits of Theophrastus "Patron of Scoundrels" and, though he exhibits qualities of liberality, does not seem to fit Aristotle's description. The Father shows extravagant generosity to both sons, though neither deserves it. He shows generosity toward the Younger Son by throwing a party upon his return and toward the Elder Son by leaving said party in order to comfort him (παρακάλει αὐτόν, 15:28). After a brief discussion of Theophrastus and Aristotle, I demonstrate the negative estimation of those who show generosity to the unworthy in Plutarch and fabulistic literature. The Father's behavior, much like that of the two sons, receive prominence through *prosōpopoiia*, which offers further indications of the character of the Father in the parable. Luke casts the Father's reckless liberality as a laudable trait, which departs from what one might expect given the descriptions of character types in contemporaneous literature.

⁵⁵ This indication, however, does not negate the invitation to the brother, nor does it presuppose that, should the Elder Son refuse to join the party, he will be regarded as being in the right. Rather, it heightens the invitation and paints a stark picture of the consequences for continued refusal to join the party.

Character types and the Father. Theophrastus describes the “Patron of Scoundrels” as having sympathy for the wicked (ὁμοπαθεία κακίας [*Char.* 29.1, Edmonds, LCL]) and one who comes to the defense of the wicked. “He is apt to say ‘You must judge the case, and not the man’ ... he is apt to come to the defense of riff-raff, testify for the defence in cases involving the wicked” (*Char.* 29.4-5 [Edmonds, LCL]). In other words, the “Patron of Scoundrels” supports wicked people and estimates their actions in the best possible light. In the Father’s exchange with the Elder Son the Father comes to the aid of the patrimony-squandering Younger Son. The Father does not defend or justify the Younger Son’s behavior but rather highlights the necessity of the celebration (εὐφρανθῆναι δὲ καὶ χαρῆναι ἔδει, Luke 15:32) because the son who was once dead is now alive. While the Father’s defense of the celebration highlights his generosity and extravagance with respect to the Younger Son, the Father’s willingness to leave the party in order to comfort his Elder Son (παρεκάλει αὐτόν, Luke 15:28) reveals the Father’s generosity toward him as well. The Father throws a party for a son who squandered his patrimony and begs the intransigent son who refuses to join the party to enter.

By showing generosity to his undeserving children, the Father departs from Aristotle’s description of the characteristics of liberality. According to Aristotle, liberality consists of giving rightly, “for he will give to the right people, and the right amount, and at the right time, and fulfil all the other conditions of right giving” (4.1.12-13). Aristotle goes on to say

On the other hand, the liberal man will not give to the wrong people, nor at the wrong time, and so forth, for this would not be an act of Liberality at all; and if he spent his money on the wrong objects he would not have any to spend on the right

ones. In fact, as was said before, the liberal man is one who spends in proportion to his means as well as on the right objects; while he that exceeds his means is prodigal. (4.1.22-23 [Russell, LCL])

The Father has dispersed τὸν βίον. One son spends it recklessly. The other spurns the Father's generosity, implicitly accusing the Father of stinginess (15:29). At the same time, the Father exhibits characteristics of "greatness of soul": "He does not bear a grudge, for it is not a mark of greatness of soul to recall things against people, especially the wrongs they have done you, but rather to overlook them" (*Eth. nic.* 4.3.30 [Rackham, LCL]). The return of a dead or lost son is an appropriate cause for celebration, but the Father's celebratory behavior is nevertheless extravagant for a son who has squandered his patrimony. Similarly, the Father's departure from the party to comfort the Elder Son reveals generosity toward the Elder Son at a time poorly suited to offering such consolation. The Father's defense of the celebration in honor of the Younger Son and his willingness to comfort the Elder Son hearken the behavior of the Patron of Scoundrels: He is generous to those who spend his generosity recklessly and who ignore or spurn his extravagance.

Showing liberality to the wrong people or at the wrong times recalls Plutarch's estimation of Themistocles, who exhibited characteristics of liberality to some and stinginess toward others (*Them.* 5.1). Those who come to the aid of those who do misdeeds fare poorly in Plutarch's estimation. In this case, recall Agesilaüs, who "could not bring himself to censure his friends when they did amiss, but actually prided himself on aiding them and sharing in their misdeeds" (*Ages.* 5.1 [Perrin, LCL]). Agesilaüs's defense of Phoebidas, and his attempts to encourage others to defend Phoebidas bears

much in common with Theophrastus's description of the "Patron of Scoundrels" and Luke's depiction of the Father coming to the aid of his wayward sons.

Those who show pity to the wicked fare poorly in fabulistic literature as well. Babrius 143 is instructive here. "A farmer picked up a viper that was almost dead from the cold and warmed it. But the viper, after stretching himself out, clung to the man's hand and bit him incurably, thus killing (the very one who wanted to save him). Dying, the man uttered these words, worthy to be remembered: 'I suffer what I deserve, for showing pity to the wicked'" (143.5-6 [Perry, LCL]). The farmer, rather than receiving a reward for showing pity to a creature who was nearly dead, instead dies as a result of his good deed. Similarly, the *epimythium* to "Dr. Heron's Fee" contends that "You'll get no good in return for giving aid to scoundrels, and you'll do well not to suffer some injury yourself in the process" (Babrius 94.9-10 [Perry, LCL]). Those who aid people (or, in this case, animals) who do not deserve it, often find themselves worse off for it. Unlike like Babrius, Luke does not indicate whether the Father meets a fate like those in the fables who show generosity toward the undeserving. The parable ends before one learns whether the Elder Son joins the party or if the Younger Son has truly remedied his ways.

According to the characters presented in this section, the Father behaves similarly to the "Patron of Scoundrels" by showing generosity toward his sons. Though those who do well to scoundrels often fare poorly in literature, such as in Plutarch's *Lives* and in the fables. The Father's behavior is consistent, however, with the Lukan insistence of giving to those who cannot repay and showing kindness to those who (presumably) do not

deserve it.⁵⁶ Though the Father in Luke 15:11-32 may depart from the expected behaviors of liberality and generosity in the first century, the Father behaves in accordance with the expectations set up in the Luke's Gospel in terms of reckless liberality in his generosity toward those who cannot repay.

Prosōpopoiia and characterization: The Father. The speech attributed to the Father highlights his reckless generosity. Upon seeing the Younger Son at a distance (Ἔτι δὲ αὐτοῦ μακράν, Luke 15:20), the Father runs to meet him.⁵⁷ Cutting off the Younger Son's rehearsed speech, the Father interrupts with instructions to a slave:

ταχὺ ἐξενέγκατε στολὴν τὴν πρώτην
καὶ ἐνδύσατε αὐτόν,
καὶ δότε δακτύλιον εἰς τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ
καὶ ὑποδήματα εἰς τοὺς πόδας,
καὶ φέρετε τὸν μόσχον τὸν σιτευτόν, θύσατε,
καὶ φαγόντες εὐφρανθῶμεν,
ὅτι οὗτος ὁ υἱός μου νεκρὸς ἦν
καὶ ἀνέζησεν, ἦν ἀπολωλὼς
καὶ εὗρέθη. (Luke 15:22-24)

Quickly, bring the best robe
And clothe him
And give him a ring for his finger
And sandals for his feet
And bring the grain-fed calf, sacrifice it,
And, as we eat it, let us rejoice
For this son of mine was dead
And has been raised, was lost

⁵⁶ See Luke 10:25-37, 13:6-9 (note the non-human character here), 14:12-24. These indications, however, are challenged by others in the narrative, such as Luke 17:7-10 (cf. Luke 12:35-38).

⁵⁷ Many point out the indignity of running. See Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "A Dysfunctional Family and its Neighbours: The Parable of the Prodigal Son," in *Jesus and His Parables*; ed. V. George Shillington (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 156; Greg Forbes, "Repentance," *JETS* 42 (1999): 219; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2002), 150. Others, however, point out that this behavior would be regarded as perfectly normal for a Father who sees a long-lost son returning home (Levine, *Short Stories*, 54).

And found.

The repetition of καί (*anaphora*) in this passage emphasizes what the Father does to welcome the Younger Son home. The Younger Son is to be clothed, to have a ring on his finger, sandals on his feet, and the grain-fed calf is to be sacrificed and, eating it, they will all celebrate this dead-lost son who is now home, alive and found.

In the meantime, the Elder Son learns what is happening from a slave, becomes angry, and refuses to join the party. The Father leaves the party to console the Elder Son (15:28). The Father's words to his Elder Son defend his actions. Celebration and rejoicing are necessary because the Younger Son was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found. Through his pleading, the Father attempts "to provide ... words of advice, reproach, complaint, praise, or pity" (Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.31 [Russell, LCL]). The Father exemplifies to Quintilian's third use of *prosōpopoia*. The Father does not chide the Elder Son, as if he expects the Elder Son's response, nor does he justify the behavior of the Younger Son. Instead, the Father says:

τέκνον, σὺ πάντοτε μετ' ἐμοῦ εἶ,
καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐμὰ σά ἐστιν·
εὐφρανθῆναι δὲ καὶ χαρῆναι ἔδει,
ὅτι ὁ ἀδελφός σου οὗτος νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἔζησεν,
καὶ ἀπολωλὼς καὶ εὗρέθη.
(Luke 15:31-32)

Child, you are always with me
And all that is mine is yours
But it was necessary that we celebrate and rejoice
Because this brother of yours was dead and lives
Was lost and was found.

The Father's speech receives further prominence through similarly-sounding endings (-ου, -α, -ῆναι, and -ός, *homoioteluton*). The *homoioteluton* in the second and fourth lines

draws out the relationship between the Father and the Elder Son and the Elder Son and the Younger Son, respectively.

Luke emphasizes the Father's speech by leaving it open-ended. The speech may have been appended through *aposiōpēsis*, as in the case of the Younger Son's speech. If this is the case, one might expect the Father to conclude his speech with an imperative directed toward the Elder Son, much like the Younger Son's initial rehearsal of his speech ended with an imperative directed toward the Father. The Father's words to his Elder Son answer the question "How would a Father respond to a miserly son who refuses to join in the celebration?" The Father's pleading with the Elder Son is as extravagant as his welcome of his Younger Son. In both cases, the Father shifts the expectation for the liberal individual to give to the right people at the right time in the right amounts, giving his sons gifts that exceed expectation (at least in the case of the Younger Son) at the wrong time for showing generosity (especially in the case of the Elder Son). Luke heightens the anticipation in the Father's speech to the Elder Son. Will the Elder Son join the party or will he remain on the outside, and what will happen to him if he chooses to remain on the outside?

Concluding Remarks: Moral Formation in the Parable of the Prodigals

In this section, I demonstrated the ways the characters in the Parable of the Prodigals adhere to or depart from expected character types and how *prosōpopoiia* and other rhetorical features highlight key aspects of the narrative. In each case, the use of *prosōpopoiia* adheres to Quintilian's indications of their proper use to reveal a character's inner thoughts, conversations between characters, or the exhortation of one character to another. The Younger Son, in his request to his father and his rehearsed speech upon

returning home, reveals that his relationship with his father seems to revolve around his own want or need. The Elder Son, in his anger and insistence that he has worked as though a slave, reveals his jealousy of the generosity the Father shows the Younger Son and his feelings of entitlement to his own celebration. The Father, in his words to the slave upon the Younger Son's return and his pleading with the Elder Son to join the party, reveals his extravagant generosity toward individuals who do not deserve it. Furthermore, the potential use of *aposiōpēsis* at the end of the Father's speech draws attention to the possibilities of Elder Son's response.

The Father's generosity bears much in common with the Lukan calls to give to those who cannot repay (Luke 10:25-37, 14:13-14). The Younger Son's return home marks his willingness to take the position of a servant in the Father's household. Because he is willing to return home without expectation of renewal of his status, the Younger Son's return marks his repentance. His poverty has cured his prodigality, as Aristotle suggests. Luke leaves unanswered the question of whether or not the Elder Son joins the party, but the correct answer to the question is obvious. The Elder Son should join the party and imitate the Father's reckless liberality. The risks the Elder Son faces, should he not enter the party, have severe consequences.

Luke 16:1-18: The Parable of the Shrewd Steward

Luke makes no indication that the settings or the audience have changed between Luke 15:32 and 16:19, which portrays the parables in Luke 15 and 16 as *exempla* within the same rhetorical encounter. Though the Parable of the Shrewd Steward will not receive the bulk of my focus in this chapter, given the similarities I have already highlighted between the Parable of the Prodigals and RML, it also merits consideration.

The parable of the Shrewd Steward is notorious for its difficulty, the interpretive gymnastics it has inspired, and the disagreements it has incurred. Herzog is correct in his estimation that “To discover the meaning of the parable, one must understand why the master commended the steward for what appears to be dishonest and deceitful behavior.”⁵⁸ Though widespread disagreement exists as to how one might legitimately arrive at the master’s praise in v. 8a, the praise of the steward is consistently upheld.⁵⁹ What is more, those who indicate the difficulty and complexity of arriving at the master’s praise, nevertheless, seek to make sense of it, whether in light of the actions of the steward or the mercy of the master.⁶⁰ As to the former, wide-ranging solutions exist to explain how the master’s praise might be attained, whether by debt-reduction and/or participation in almsgiving, eschatological preparedness in light of judgment, or challenging an exploitive system of usury and debt.⁶¹ The purpose of my consideration of

⁵⁸ William R. Herzog, *Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as the Pedagogue of the Oppressed* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 234.

⁵⁹ As indicated by Bailey “Luke 16:9-13 has its own integrity and it should be read and interpreted apart from the parable that precedes it” (*Poet and Peasant*, 110) and Jeremias: “The shock, much discussed, naturally produced by a parable which seems to present a criminal as a pattern, disappears when we consider the parable in its original form (vv. 1-8), and disregard the expansions (vv. 9-13)” (Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 2nd ed. [New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1972], 103).

⁶⁰ Fewer advocate for the mercy of the master. Notable examples are Bailey, *Poet and Peasant*, 98, and Douglas M. Parrott, “The Dishonest Steward (Luke 16.1-8a) and Luke’s Special Parable Collection,” *NTS* 37 (1991): 512.

⁶¹ Many theories exist to explain what this debt reduction represents. According to Derrett, this reduction of debt represents the interest, which was illegal by Jewish law code, but found a loophole in Pharisaical interpretation. In this case, “If the contracts with the debtors had originally been usurious in their nature, he was a sinner in entering into them, and in releasing the debtors from the usurious portion of the debts he was acting righteously, and making amends” (J. Duncan and M. Derrett, “Fresh Light on St. Luke XVI.1 The Parable of the Unjust Steward,” *NTS* 7 [1961]: 209). Fitzmyer follows this interpretation: “In his management of the estate, he had indulged in the commonly practiced usury of the time. He lent his master’s goods or land to fellow Jews at an interest apparently customary to the practice of the day, even though unauthorized to do so by his master. This was his profit. Such a practice, however, was a violation of the Torah and especially of the Pharisaic, rabbinical interpretation of it” (Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “The Story of the Dishonest Manager,” *Theological Studies* 25 [1964]: 35). Cheong indicates the Steward’s act as representative of serving God: “Jesus’ application (i.e., ‘No servant can serve two masters’ and ‘You cannot serve God and mammon’ in v. 13) allows the steward’s conduct to be judged by the reader: the

this parable is not to attempt to solve these myriad interpretive issues. Rather, I seek to connect this parable to the preceding and following parables vis-à-vis characterization and *prosōpopoiia*.

According to Cassius Dio, the behavior a master tolerates of those in his household—whether slave or free—reflects upon him. “For everything they do, whether good or ill, will be set to your account, and you will yourself be considered by the world to be of a character akin to the conduct which you do not object to in them (ἐκείνοις ποιεῖν ἐπιτρέπῃς)” (*Hist. Rom.* 52.6 [Cary and Foster, LCL]). Similarly, Seneca indicates that the one who employs a squanderer is known as a “pessime beneficia” regardless of to whom he might offer beneficence.⁶² The concern for the behavior of one’s household members

image of the debt-reduction by the steward is naturally understood as an act of serving God” (C-S Abraham Cheong, *A Dialogic Reading of The Steward Parable [Luke 16:1-9]* [New York: Peter Lang, 2001], 118). Goodrich makes a compelling argument that Luke has in view practices in the Roman Empire. By facilitating a better relationship between the master and his tenants, Goodrich holds that the steward managed to benefit both himself and his master. He benefits himself by ingratiating himself to the debtors and his master by incurring honor on his behalf for the reduction of debts. Debt reduction during years of famine was not unheard of in the Roman Empire (Pliny, *Epistulae*, 9.37.2 and 10.8.5; John K. Goodrich, “Voluntary Debt Remission and the Parable of the Unjust Steward [Luke 16:1-13],” *JBL* 131 [2012]: 553). Green states “Faithfulness is evidenced in the cancellation of debts and in almsgiving on behalf of the poor. These behaviors grow out of dispositions shaped by an orientation to the new aeon, the age to come, and so are rooted in a commitment toward solidarity across social lines. Lack of faithfulness, on the other hand, is related to dishonest practices – that is, practices that reflect a fundamental commitment to the present aeon” (*Luke*, 595); and Johnson that “the crisis character of the story is essential. It is the manager’s ability to respond to this crisis, literally a ‘visitation of his Lord,’ which is the point of the story, the reason for the master’s admiration, and the example for the disciples” (Luke T. Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina 3 [Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991], 247). Snodgrass also views this parable in light of eschatological scenarios: “The parable is about the wise use of possessions *in view of the eschatological crisis*” (*Stories*, 416); even Porter, who interprets this passage ironically, also states: “Established within this context is another of Luke’s major themes, economic issues, as several scholars have recently made clear, but it is economics undeniably tied to eschatology” (Stanley E. Porter, “The Parable of the Unjust Steward [Luke 16:1-13]: Irony is the Key,” in *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, David J. A. Clines, Steven E. Fowl, and Stanley E. Porter, eds. [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990], 136). Finally, many see the Steward as among the models for Christian behavior, as Fitzmyer indicates (“Dishonest Manager,” 37).

⁶² “Quomodo male filiae suae consulit, qui illam contumeliose et saepe repudiate collocavit, malus pater familiae habebitur, qui negotiorum gestorum damnato patrimonii sui curam mandaverit, quomodo dementissime testabitur, qui tutorem filio reliquerit pupillorum spoliatores, sic pessime beneficia

recalls the reactions to the return of the Younger Son in the Parable of the Prodigals. In the case of the Parable of the Prodigals, both sons' actions reflect upon their father. While one may expect the Elder Son's reaction to his brother's return, the Elder Son reacts to the *party* thrown in honor of the Younger Son, not to the affect this might have on his inheritance or relationship with his father. Nevertheless, despite the Elder Son's having voiced his objection and distanced himself from the Younger Son's behavior (and party), the Father invites the Elder Son to join the party to celebrate that the Younger Son was dead and now living, lost and now found. The party is not only proper, it is necessary. In the case of the Steward, however, the Master objects to the Steward's squandering behavior yet, after the Steward reduces the Master's profits further, the Master regards him as wise. The accusations that the Steward has squandered his Master's property therefore present difficulties in interpreting the Master's praise in v. 8a. Many scholars rightly point out the complications inherent both in the Master's praise and the Steward's presentation as an example to be emulated.⁶³

Making sense of the master's praise is troubling, calling into question where the parable ends or determining ways to separate the description of the Steward's actions as wise or shrewd (φρόνιμος)—often taken as his willingness to prepare in the face of an

dare dicetur, quicumque ingratos eligit, in quos peritura conferat" (*Ben.*, 4.27.5). It must be noted, however, that this regards a guardian of an estate, though the similar theme of mismanagement is represented here.

⁶³ Landry and May question the master's praise: "If the master is angry with his steward for bringing an insufficient return on his investments, then it makes no sense whatsoever for the master to commend the steward in 16.8a for having slashed profits even further when he forgives the sizable portions of the debts owed in 16:5-7" (David T. Landry and Ben May, "Honor Restored: New Light on the Parable of the Prudent Steward [Luke 16:1-8a]," *JBL* 199 [2000]: 305). Hultgren represents many when questions the praise of the steward: "Why the main figure of a parable would be a dishonest person, and then, too, a model for emulation by others, seems exceedingly strange" (*The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000], 147).

uncertain future—and his description as unrighteous (ἀδίκιος)—what he does to prepare for such a future.⁶⁴ While the praise of the steward may be sarcastic, as Mathewson notes, “There is nothing in the context of the parable itself to suggest that irony or sarcasm are present apart from the perceived difficulty of how Jesus could uphold the steward as an example to be followed.”⁶⁵ Lacking obvious clues in the narrative as to the ways in which one might interpret the descriptions of the steward, characterization of the Steward is varied: is he representative of behaviors to emulate or behaviors to avoid? As in the Parable of the Prodigals, I begin with an examination of fabulistic literature and descriptions of similar behaviors elsewhere and then examine the speech-in-character (*prosōpopoiia*) to ascertain his characterization.

Between Prodigal Squandering and Profligate Celebration: Prosōpopoiia in the Parable of the Prodigals, RML, and the Shrewd Steward

The similarities between the Parable of the Prodigals, RML, and the Shrewd Steward are well-noted. While some liken the Steward to the Prodigal, others view him as a contrast to the Rich Man.⁶⁶ The similarities between the Steward and the Prodigal, at

⁶⁴ As indicated by Bailey “Luke 16:9-13 has its own integrity and it should be read and interpreted apart from the parable that precedes it” (*Poet and Peasant*, 110).

⁶⁵ Dave L. Mathewson, “The Parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-13): A Reexamination of the Traditional View in Light of Recent Challenges,” *JETS* 38 (1995): 38. Jeremias, interestingly, notes this possibility but ultimately discards it: “But it is doubtful whether the man was really presented as an example at all. In vv. 10-12, we have a third interpretation of the parable in the form of a proverb composed of two antithetic members, which deals with faithfulness and unfaithfulness in unimportant things, and in vv. 11-12 is applied to mammon and the everlasting riches. On this third interpretation the steward is not an example, but a dreadful warning – the parable being understood by contraries” (*The Parables of Jesus*, 47).

⁶⁶ As to the former, see Cheong, who says: “The younger son’s self penitential acknowledgement (15:17-19) also reinforces that of the steward, particularly in his monologue (16:3-4),” in *A Dialogic Reading of The Steward Parable*, 98. Regarding the latter, Ireland indicates the Steward is unlike the Rich Man, in that the Rich Man has given little thought to and made no provision for the life to come,” in *Stewardship and the Kingdom of God*, 177.

first glance, seem obvious: both face a crisis and must act decisively, and the turning point for both are their respective soliloquies, which mark the Prodigal's return home and the Steward's behavior toward the debtors. Luke offers insight into the thoughts of both the Prodigal and the Steward through their soliloquies. The Prodigal, upon squandering his portion of the inheritance, realizes that his father's slaves eat better than he does. The Steward, upon the accusation of squandering his master's property and the subsequent loss of his job, realizes he must act to ensure his future wellbeing. Both act in order to secure their futures, which contrasts the Rich Man. In order to ascertain the characterization of the Steward, I examine in this section the ways *prosōpopoiia* within the parable highlights his action and the ways in which he serves as a middle point of between the Parable of the Prodigals and RML.

The beginning of the parable reveals that the master has been made aware of the charge that the steward is not doing his job and is subsequently going to be released from his employment.

τί τοῦτο ἀκούω περὶ σοῦ; ἀπόδος τὸν λόγον τῆς οἰκονομίας σου, οὐ γὰρ δύνη ἔτι οἰκονομεῖν. (Luke 16:2)

What of these things I am hearing about you? Give me an accounting of your stewarding, for you are not able to continue stewarding.

The master does not offer the steward the opportunity to rebut the charges and demands an accounting of the Steward's records. The repeated σοῦ at the end of the first two clauses (*homoioteluton*) connects the Steward with the report the master has received and the job that the steward is losing as a result of this report.

The steward assumes his release and discusses his next steps. Rather than discussing ways to defend himself or keep his job, the steward devises a plan:

τί ποιήσω, ὅτι ὁ κύριός μου ἀφαιρεῖται τὴν οἰκονομίαν ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ; σκάπτειν οὐκ ἰσχύω, ἐπαιτεῖν αἰσχύνομαι. ἔγνων τί ποιήσω, ἵνα ὅταν μετασταθῶ ἐκ τῆς οἰκονομίας δέξωνταί με εἰς τοὺς οἴκους αὐτῶν. (Luke 16:3-4)

What am I going to do—my master has taken the stewarding job away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, I am ashamed to beg. I know what I will do so that whenever I am turned away from stewarding, they will welcome me into their homes.

The *proδoποποιia* in this narrative heightens the characterization. The Steward is not strong enough to dig and not willing to beg, and he seems to anticipate that he will not be able to find another job stewarding after he has been fired from his present master. The first scenario suggests that the Steward could accept a demotion within the master’s household, whereas the second presupposes that he has left the security of the master’s household.⁶⁷ The Steward, like the Younger Son, devises a way to preserve his future. His plan will ensure that he will be welcomed into people’s homes when the master takes his job from him.⁶⁸ The point of crisis for the Steward and the Younger Son occurs while they are still alive. Like the Younger Son, the Steward devises a plan. This point in the parable is key. The auditors do not know how the Steward squandered the Master’s property before. The Steward’s hatching of a plan to secure welcome presupposes a shift in his use of wealth; otherwise he would have already secured his welcome in the homes of his master’s debtors. Rather than the ways he employed his master’s wealth before, *now* the steward is going to use it to secure his future.

⁶⁷ See Parsons, *Luke*, 245.

⁶⁸ Though the Master has dismissed the Steward, in the interim the Steward is still employed and is not certain when his employment will end. In his speech, he still includes the possessive genitive μοῦ and μετασταθῶ suggests that the job has not yet been taken from him. Finally, as we will find out in his next speeches, he has not yet handed over the books for an accounting of his work.

The Steward's plan entails reckoning two of the bills owed to his master. As discussed above, one cannot with confidence indicate that the Steward reduces bills to correct for interest or commission. His statement "How much you owe my master?" for the first borrower is appended to "How much do you owe?" in the case of the second, likely as a result of *anacoluthon*. The command to "Sit, and quickly write" (καθίσας ταχέως, 16:6) may also be omitted as the result of *anacoluthon*, which the swiftness of the debtors' summons and decisive reduction in their bills implies. As a result of the Steward's swift and decisive action, the Master praises him and regards him as having behaved wisely (φρονίμως ἐποίησεν, Luke 16:8), an attractive quality for stewards to have, his squandering notwithstanding.

The Steward's squandering behavior connects him to the Younger Son in the Parable of the Prodigals. There is much, however, to differentiate the two characters. Whereas the Steward squanders that which is not his, the Younger Son recklessly spends what has been given to him as his. The Steward's speech, when compared with the Prodigal's, differentiates them further. The Younger Son is ostensibly willing to become "a hired servant" for his father. If we take the Steward at his word that he is unable to dig and ashamed to beg, perhaps we should take the Younger Son at his. The Younger Son is willing to work for his wages. Though both the Steward and the Younger Son devise plans at critical moments in the narratives, the Younger Son's squandering has precipitated his return home: hunger and poverty seem to have cured him of his prodigality. The Steward, however, continues squandering someone else's property in his significant reduction of debts in order to ensure his wellbeing among his master's debtors. To secure his future the Prodigal admits he has sinned and is willing to claim a

lower status, while the Steward seeks to avoid digging and begging by ingratiating himself to others. The Shrewd Steward's generosity with his master's property reveals reckless generosity. He acts as a benefactor to his master's debtors by significantly reducing their bills. By showing generosity to others, the Shrewd Steward hopes to receive generosity in return.

The Younger Son is not the only one in the Parable of the Prodigals to whom the Shrewd Steward is similar. The Father in the Parable of the Prodigals gives to the wrong people at the wrong times and in extravagant amounts. The Steward, after he has received notification of his dismissal, gives away what is not technically his to give, revealing an inappropriate source. Rather than behaving shrewdly when he was employed, he does so after he has been dismissed, which is an inappropriate time for action in terms of his relationship to the Master. His timing, much like the Father's timing, is out of necessity. Just as the Father found it necessary to celebrate when the dead-lost son returned, so too the Shrewd Steward finds it necessary to act to secure his future. The Steward therefore exhibits qualities at odds with Aristotle's notions of liberality but, on the other hand, acts decisively to secure his future. The end of the parable, similarly to the Parable of the Prodigals and RML, leaves the question hanging of what happens to the Steward. Is he dismissed right away? Is he welcomed into the debtor's homes?

By employing "unrighteous Mammon" in his favor, the Steward acts to secure a welcome into the homes of his master's debtors. The provision for his future differentiates him from the Rich Man who does not make provisions his future. Though the Steward continues squandering, his orientation toward "unrighteous Mammon" has

shifted to squandering in such a way that he gains the praise of the master and anticipates depending on the generosity of others.

Finding welcome. The Steward ties together the parables in his connections to the Younger Son, the Father, and the Rich Man. At the same time, the Steward is not analogous to any of the other characters. Like the Younger Son, the Steward squanders the property entrusted to him. Like the Father, the Steward gives (via debt reduction) in inappropriate amounts at what is an inappropriate time with respect to his employment. Unlike the Prodigal's indication that he is willing to serve as a hired hand, the Steward indicates that he is either not able or not willing (or both) to accept a lower station. Unlike the Rich Man, who does not make provision for his future, the Steward places "unrighteous Mammon" in the service of securing welcome. The question remains: is the Steward's behavior to be emulated or avoided?

The repetition of ᾧδὲκός in association with the Steward, Mammon, and faithfulness might lead one to believe the Steward represents behavior to be avoided rather than emulated. The implication of Luke 16:11-12, however, is that the Steward has been faithful in his employment of "unrighteous Mammon," by placing it in the service of securing his future rather than in the service of securing his present well-being. At the point of crisis, the Steward devises a plan. This determination marks a reorientation to "unrighteous Mammon," in that the Steward's plan to place it in the service of his future relationships was evidently a shift from his previous behavior. By his profligate

generosity in debt reduction, the Steward garners praise from his master and hopes of welcome from the master's debtors.⁶⁹

The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

The fate of the Rich Man in RML offers a possible answer to the question of what will happen if the Elder Son does not join the party and, at the same time, reveals the risk one faces if they fail to prepare for their futures. The many semantic links that exist

⁶⁹ Though Luke 16:14-18 provides the transition to RML, my focus is on *prosōpopoiia*, characterization, and moral formation *within* the parables. Nevertheless, I offer some brief commentary on Luke 16:14-18 here. Luke 16:14-18 heightens the rhetorical sparring between Jesus and the Pharisees. The Pharisees respond to the Parable of the Shrewd Steward by scoffing (ἐξευκτῆριζον αὐτόν, 16:14). Luke—via Jesus's words—differentiates worldly ethics and honor with that of the Kingdom of God: "For that which exalts a person in the eyes of humanity is an abomination in the eyes of God" (Luke 16:15)). The interpretive issues in Luke 16:16 have been well-noted. Tannehill notes their contextual difficulty (*Luke*, 250; see also Evans, *Luke*, 605 and John Nolland, *Luke*, WBC 35b [Dallas: WBC, 1993], 814), and many point out the characterization of the Pharisees is more likely hyperbole than accurate (Tannehill, *Luke*, 250; Ringe, *Luke*, 215; Bovon, *Luke*, 463). Parsons observes that the verses are tied to what precedes and follows in its connection to the "theme regarding the abuse of wealth" (*Luke*, 249). Nolland sees Luke 16:14-18 as indicative of the intensification of the demands of the law with respect to entry into the Kingdom of God (*Luke*, 820, 822). The main difficulty in Luke 16:16 surrounds the interpretation of βιάζεται. Danker divides interpreters into two groups: those who interpret it *in bonam partem* and those who interpret it *in malam partem*. Ultimately, Danker argues that it reads more easily *in malam partem* but admits that "We observe that the interpretation which employs the word *in malam partem* appears linguistically, grammatically, and theologically most tenable, but is contextually deficient" (Frederick B. Danker, "Luke 16:16: An Opposition Logion," *JBL* 77 [1958]: 236). Danker's solution is to assign the words to the Pharisees, with Luke 16:16 representing their grumbling. Bovon interprets the term *in bonam partem*: individuals are striving to enter the Kingdom of God (*Luke*, 466). Bock affirms the passive sense of the verb (that all are being compelled to enter): "This view fits remarkably well in the current context. Why is Jesus warning and exhorting his opposition so constantly? Because he is attempting them to respond morally" (*Luke*, 1354). Cortés and Gatti come to much the same conclusion (Juan B. Cortés and Florence M. Gatti, "On the Meaning of Luke 16:16," *JBL* 106 [1987]: 253). Ramelli also interprets the term passively, but sees it as a divine passive, by which "all are being forced into it" (Ilaria L.E. Ramelli, "Luke 16:16 The Good News of God's Kingdom is Proclaimed and Everyone is Forced into It," *JBL* 127 [2008]: 738). Bruehler disagrees with Ramelli and offers an argument sensitive to the rhetorical sparring between Jesus and the Pharisees and the narrative setting of the parables surrounding the *logia*. He argues that the middle sense of the term is most accurate in light of the narrative context: people will strive to enter the kingdom by whatever means necessary (Bart B. Bruehler, "Reweaving the Texture of Luke 16:14-18," *JBPR* 5 [2013]: 61-62). Finally, Bednarz sees behind the parable forensic rhetoric, highlighted by the use of irony and hyperbole, the latter of which is in play in Luke 16:16. Nevertheless, she holds that Luke advocates—via the Law and the Prophets—for the care of the "little ones" (Teresa Bednarz, "Status Disputes and Disparate Dicta: Humor and Rhetoric in Luke 16:14-18," *BibInt* 21 [2013]: 405). In light of the invitation to enter the party issued to the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame (Luke 14:13, 21), the invitation of the Father to the Elder Son to join the party, and Abraham's suggestion that the Rich Man's brothers ought to listen to Moses and the Prophets to avoid meeting a similar fate (Luke 16:29), I translate βιάζεται in the passive sense: All are compelled to enter.

between the Parable of the Prodigals and RML, as noted earlier in this chapter, heighten the possibility that the ends of the parables are interrelated. This possibility garners further support in the similarities in the exchanges between the Father and the Elder Son and Abraham and the Rich Man. Both regard the Elder Son and the Rich Man as τέκνον, and both parables incorporate *prosōpopoiia* attributed to the father figure, the Father in the Parable of the Prodigals and Father Abraham in RML. The *prosōpopoiia* attributed to Abraham in Luke 16:31 leaves a similar question hanging to the question left hanging in Luke 15:32. Instead of the question of whether the Elder Son will join the party, the question is “Will the Rich Man’s brothers be persuaded by Moses and the Prophets?” The risk, by the end of RML, is clear. Not entering the party or, similarly, failing to find Moses and the Prophets persuasive risks locating oneself outside permanently.

Considerable debate exists around various issues in RML. One of the key debates is the background of the parable. Gressmann posited nearly a century ago that the background of the parable is an Egyptian folktale.⁷⁰ Though many, including Jeremias and Crossan, agree with Gressmann’s argument, this position has recently come under scrutiny.⁷¹ Whereas some, such as Hock, strive to determine potential background(s) for

⁷⁰ Gressmann posits that the folktale bears indications of both Greek and Egyptian culture, in its connections to Antaios and Tantalos and magic, respectively. He posits that the folktale originated in Egypt and was brought to Palestine by Greek-speaking Jews (*Von Armen*, 20). Gressmann distances the parable from Rabbinic parallels and highlights the similarities of the two-part narrative of Setme Chamoïs and Si-Osiris with the two-parts of RML (31) and sees behind the appropriation of the fairy tale the “Hellenistic fusion process” (37). For his discussion of the similarities between the Si-Osiris fairy tale and RML, including his debate with Jülicher, see especially 54-61.

⁷¹ Jeremias, *Parables*, 183. John Dominic Crossan, *In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 66-68. Hock offers a detailed history of research and an exhaustive accounting of who affirms Gressmann’s conclusion (Ronald F. Hock, “Lazarus and Micylus: Greco-Roman Backgrounds to Luke 16:19-31,” *JBL* 106 [1987]: 448-455, especially n.7).

the parable,⁷² more recently Lehtipuu has argued that these backgrounds would have been ubiquitous in the Mediterranean world.⁷³ Some, such as Brookins and Gilmour, highlight the role of rhetoric within the parable, though Brookins finds in the parable a debate with Stoicism and Gilmour reminiscences of Homer.⁷⁴ Similar to the Parable of the Prodigals, the *topoi* found in RML is ubiquitous to the ancient Mediterranean world.

⁷² Hock takes issue with Gressmann and those who accept his argument because the Egyptian folktale does not seem to ask—or answer—the same questions as the Parable of RML. Hock instead regards the parable as bearing much in common with the narrative of a poor shoemaker named Micyllus and a wealthy tyrant named Megapenthes in Lucian's *Catalpus* and Gallus and connects the parable to Cynic philosophy as a potential backdrop ("Micyllus and Megapenthes," 457, cf. n.56). Bauckham offers a comprehensive summary of the different backgrounds that may have informed the parable, critiquing those who see behind the parable the folktale of Si-Osiris, in that the afterlife in Si-Osiris is explicitly linked to the individual's deeds, whereas in the RML it is not (Richard Bauckham, "The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Parable and the Parallels," *NTS* 37 [1991]: 228).

⁷³ Lehtipuu, *Afterlife*, 53. Carroll concludes similarly that "Epigraphic and literary evidence, however, suggests much broader interest within the Greco-Roman world in the choreography of the afterlife, including various destinies of people and, occasionally, reversals of circumstance for rich and poor and also the possibility of disclosure to the living of the condition of the dead" (*Luke*, 336). Evans points out the familiarity of the parable to Jesus's audiences, given the ubiquity of similar narratives within the culture (*Luke*, 248). Gowler likewise comments "We should not point to any particular ancient story as being a generative influence for the creation of this parable. Instead, the Lukan parable appears to be a written performance of a cultural tradition" ("At His Gate," 259).

⁷⁴ Brookins sees behind the parable a dispute with Stoicism, who viewed one's earthly circumstances as *adiaphora*, and notes that Luke regards poverty and sickness as specifically *κᾱκα* (40), and interprets the parable in light of rhetoric, finding in it similarities to techniques of Stoic declamation (45), several *progymnasmata* associated with declamation (45), the use of *ethopoeia* (45), *sententiae*, and stylistic devices (46). In his view, "In no other New Testament parable do we find this one-to-one syncretism between two individuals, *ethopoeia* involving a historical character, or the bulleting of forensic-type *sententiae* in the style of point-by-point rebuttal" (Tim Brookins, "Dispute with Stoicism in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," *JGRChJ* 8 (2011): 46-47. Gilmour, in contrast, sees similarities between Homer's epic poetry and the parable. He notes well the ubiquity of Homer in the Mediterranean world, and he finds similarities in various components of the narrative and Homer, including a chasm of separation, unsatisfied thirst, wealth in life not helpful in death, concern for living loved ones, importance of burial, the presence of a wise man in the afterlife (Michael J. Gilmour, "Hints of Homer in Luke 16:19-31?" *Did* [1999]: 28-31). Like Brookins, Gilmour notes the connections between Luke and the *progymnasmata*, and suggests Homer's prevalence in progymnastic education as supporting his claims: "Two considerations must not be overlooked: 1) Homer had an exalted role in rhetorical education. Since this education influenced Luke, hints of Homeric verse in his writings seems like a reasonable conjecture. 2) Homer's influence on similar stories must also be recognized. It seems inappropriate to limit Luke exclusively to Jewish backgrounds given the similarities found in Homer and other Graeco-Roman texts" (33). Reinmuth, however, associates the afterlife imagery to Ps-Philo's LAB 33.1-5 (Eckart Reinmuth, "Ps.-Philo, Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum 33, 1-5 und die Auslegung der Parabel Lk 16:19-31," *NovT* 31 [1989]: 33, 36).

Other aspects of the parable that have garnered debate are the nature of the afterlife and the reasons for Lazarus and the Rich Man's respective positions. Lehtipuu and Stigall have explored the various backdrops for the afterlife imagery in RML. Both argue that the attitudes toward the afterlife in Greco-Roman and Jewish thought existed side by side.⁷⁵ In terms of the reasons for the two men's positions in the afterworld, many mention that Luke offers no moral commentary on Lazarus or the Rich Man's behaviors. Luke neither portrays Lazarus as particularly righteous nor the Rich Man as particularly impious.⁷⁶ Bauckham suggests that the reason for the reversal does not pertain to moral behavior, but rather, to the reversals that are well attested in Luke (1:46-55, 6:20-26).⁷⁷ Alongside the expectations for reversal, however, it is helpful to note the Lukan calls to provide for those who cannot repay (Luke 10:25-37, 14:13-14). In the case of RML both the Lukan indications of reversal and the calls to provide for those who cannot repay are

⁷⁵ Lehtipuu, *Afterlife*, 117-126, especially 117 and 119. Stigall focuses on the journeys to the place of punishment in Greco-Roman literature, saying, "In the first place, Greco-Roman journeys to the place of punishment raise the question of whether one who has journeyed to the place of punishment is able to return to the land of the living with a message. In the second place, the journey to the place of punishment in Jewish and Christian literature raises questions about the possibility of postmortem repentance for the wicked dead and/or the efficacy of intercessory prayer on behalf of the wicked dead. The answers to these two questions have important implications for how the authorial audience would have understood the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus in its narrative context in the Gospel of Luke" ("Reading RML," 71). Gilmour finds in this parable a possible Lukan corrective to wrong views of the afterlife ("Hints of Homer," 31).

⁷⁶ Hanna Roose, "Umkehr und Ausgleich," 9; Roose goes on, however, to note that the Rich Man does not seem to repent of his (apparent) deeds, but the Younger Son does (22). Hock also highlights the lack of morality mentioned in the parable, critiquing those who find in the parable a moral dimension of mirror-reading ("Lazarus and Micylus," 454), but does go on to highlight the implicit critique of the Rich Man in his efforts to parallel the Rich Man and Megapenthes (462).

⁷⁷ "The common Jewish eschatological assumption that the next world exists to put right the injustices of this world can be taken for granted. What has to be put right is the fact that one man lived in luxury while another was destitute. The next world compensates for this inequality by replacing it with a reverse inequality. The rich man has already received his good things: it is now his turn to suffer. Lazarus has already suffered enough; he should now be 'consoled'" (Bauckham, "The Rich Man and Lazarus," 232). This is certainly true, but to downplay the perpetual calls in Luke for redistribution of wealth overlooks another aspect that might be taken as implicit.

instructive. The two men's fates are not particularly surprising, in light of the narratives and parables that precede Luke 16:19-31.⁷⁸ RML not only relates to the expectations for reversal and calls for provision but also relates to the quandary presented at the end of the Parable of the Prodigals. This parable answers the question "What will happen if the Elder Son does not join the party?" and adds "What will happen to the Rich Man's brothers if they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets?"

Having discussed some of the key debates within the history of research, I now turn my attention to RML and the role of characterization and rhetoric in the parable. In this discussion, I focus on the way Luke emphasizes the exchange through rhetorical techniques and give specific attention to *prosōpopoiia* in the exchange between Abraham and the Rich Man. Abraham's association with the resurrection of the righteous in early Jewish and Christian literature also figures into the discussion of his contribution to the characterization of the Rich Man and Lazarus.

Characterization in RML: The Rich Man

The portrayal of the Rich Man in Luke 16:19-31 does not describe him as morally flawed or make any mention of wrongdoing. While Luke portrays the Rich Man's clothing and his feasting as extravagant, this extravagance echoes the Father's extravagance in the Parable of the Prodigals, who gives his son a ring, the best robe and sandals, and slaughters a grain-fed calf for the occasion of the Younger Son's return.

⁷⁸ Compare Scott, who thinks Jewish audiences would have been surprised at the reversal in RML (*Hear then the Parable*, 155). Levine disagrees: "This commendation of the Law and the Prophets would not have disturbed Jesus's initial audience, and it makes good sense on the lips of Jesus the rabbi" (*Short Stories*, 270).

Luke does not describe the Rich Man's behaviors as objectionable or cast aspersions upon them. The expectations for behavior of the rich and the poor, as presented in fables, Plutarch, and Quintilian, suggest that it is not wealth itself but how one employs wealth that determines its goodness or badness.⁷⁹

Character types in RML: The Rich Man. In considering the position Babrius's and Phaedrus's fables present, one finds indications to care for the poor, that wealth cannot preserve a person, and sometimes wealth precipitates one's own demise. Babrius 107 relates a tale of a lion who preserves the life of a mouse, despite his initial intent to make the mouse into a meal. The fable shows that preserving the little ones (or the poor) can be of benefit to the powerful (or the wealthy).

A lion caught a mouse and was about to eat him. The little house-bred thief, now close to death, poor creature, faintly muttering begged for life with words like these: "Twere well for you to hunt down stags and horned bulls, and with their flesh make fat your belly. A mouse is not meal enough for you to taste with the edges of your lips. Come, I pray you, spare me. Perhaps some day, though small, I shall repay this favour." The beast laughed and let his suppliant live. But he himself ere long fell in with youthful lovers of the chase, was taken captive in their net, made helpless, and bound fast. The mouse ran forth unnoticed from his hole, and, gnawing the sturdy rope with his tiny teeth, set the lion free. By saving thus in turn the lion's life, he made a recompense well worth the gift of life that he'd received. [The meaning of this fable is clear to men of good will: Spare the poor, and don't hesitate to rely on them, considering that a mouse once freed a lion caught in a trap.] (Babrius 107 [Perry, LCL])

In return for the lion's preservation of the mouse's life, the mouse repays the favor. The appended *epimythium* encourages being kind to and depending upon the poor. While it is

⁷⁹ Johnson argues similarly and cautions against the idolatry of possessions. "It is the serving of possessions as ultimate which is evil and which prevents people from responding to God" and "To refuse to share what we have is to act idolatrously. Not only is that mandate clear, but also the symbolic function of possessions; because we are somatic creatures, the way we dispose of possessions signals and effects our response to God and other people in this world" (Luke T. Johnson, *Sharing Possessions: Mandate and Symbol of Faith* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981], 64, 108-109).

important to note that the portrayal of the poor is not consistent in Greco-Roman literature, in this case there are also reminders that the wealthy receive benefits for doing good to the poor.

According to Babrius, there are things that money cannot buy. In the “Crane and Peacock,” the one in a threadbare coat is honored, whereas the one who is fabulously dressed lives without honor:

A crane of ashen hue contended in words of rivalry with a handsome peacock who was flapping his golden plumage. Said the crane in reply: “But with these wings of mine, whose colour you deride, I soar on high close to the stars and to Olympus; while you with those gilded feathers flutter about on the ground like a barnyard cock. You are not seen above.” I would rather be admired in a threadbare coat than live without honour in rich attire. (Babrius 65 [Perry, LCL])

The peacock, on account of his attire, presupposes that he has the upper hand in a contest with a crane, only to be reminded that his color does not bring him honor. Though the peacock does not purchase his beautiful colors, per se, his rich attire does not presuppose honorable behavior.

In the case of the Country and City Mouse, two mice determine to live with one another. In an attempt to determine where to live, the city mouse visits the country mouse and turns his nose up at the meager fare.

It’s the life of a miserable ant that you live here, eating scanty bits of barley meal in the depths of the earth. As for me, I have an abundance of good things, even more than I need. Compared with you, I live in the Horn of Plenty. If you will come with me to my house, you will indulge your appetite as much as you like and leave this ground for the moles to dig up. (Babrius 108.8-13 [Perry, LCL])

Upon arriving in the city, the country mouse is impressed with the city mouse’s food. In order to procure the food, the mice contend with the humans who also use the pantry. In response to a close call with one of the humans, the country mouse determines that his meager fare is superior to that of the city mouse, saying “Farewell to you and such feasts as

these; enjoy your wealth and revel all by yourself in superfine banquets. This abundance of yours is full of danger. As for me, I'll not desert the homely clods, under which I munch my barley free of fear" (Babrius 108.28-32 [Perry, LCL]). In this case, the rich food of the city mouse was not sufficiently tempting for the country mouse, who does not regard the food as worthy of its concomitant danger.

Babrius recounts a fable about Simonides, who a poor poet who sought his fortune by traveling to famous cities. Simonides, in the fable, was on a ship that got caught in a storm and was destroyed. Simonides, when asked whether he was taking along his resources, responded that he had all his possessions with him, though he carried nothing off the ship. Those who attempted to keep their fortunes either perished at sea or arrived safely at shore only to be robbed. One of Simonides's fans,

Having recognized him by his speech alone, received him with the greatest eagerness into his own house and supplied him with clothing, money, and servants in abundance. The others (who had been shipwrecked) carried their pictures around and begged a living. Simonides, when he happened to meet them, remarked: "I told you that all my possessions were with me; what you carried off in such a hurry you lost." (Phaedrus 4.23.21-25 [Perry, LCL])

The wealth of those on the ship, much like that of Theron in *Callirhoe*, does not preserve them. Rather, in the case of Simonides's shipmates, it precipitates their ruin.

Though these portrayals of wealth are negative, it is crucial to note that wealth—in and of itself—was not necessarily good or bad. Quintilian highlights as much in his discussion of *encomium*. What is good or bad is how a person employs her or his wealth: "All external goods, and all things that come to men by chance, are praised not because a man has them, but because he has made honourable use of them. Wealth, power, and influence, because they give such strength for good or ill, are the surest test of character:

for we are either better or worse because of them” (3.7.14-15 [Russell, LCL]).⁸⁰ The proper use of wealth is what conditions attitudes toward it. Plutarch affirms this sentiment. Plutarch casts aspersions on those whose relationship to wealth revealed their greed, as in the case of Demetrius, whose greed made it so he was unable to enjoy his wealth (*Demetr.* 42.3), and Demosthenes, whose passion for gold led to his imprisonment and eventually his exile (*Dem.* 25.3-4).

The literature surveyed addresses issues of wealth. So far as fabulistic literature is concerned, wealth does not presuppose honorable behavior or ensure one’s success. At the same time, as Quintilian suggests, the possession of wealth is not good or bad, but what one does with one’s wealth. Fabulistic literature, Quintilian, and Plutarch therefore lack a consistent portrayal of the characterization of the wealthy.

Luke, similarly to the fables, Quintilian, and Plutarch, does not necessarily regard wealth in itself as evil. Luke upholds those who support the Jesus-mission out of their finances (Luke 8:1-3, cf., Luke 7:1-10) and for the good of others (Luke 10:25-37). Luke has already discussed themes of reversal, envisioning the hungry as filled and satisfied (ἐνέπλησεν, χορτασθήσεσθε, 1:53, 6:20) and the rich as empty and hungry (κενοῦς, πεινάσετε 1:53, 6:25). In addition, the indication in Luke 14:13 that those giving banquets who invite the poor will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous offers foreshadowing to this parable. Though Luke does not inform us of what precipitates the fates of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke has prepared the way for the turn of events in the Rich Man and Lazarus’s post-mortem states.

⁸⁰ Recall also Aristotle’s description of liberality.

Prosōpopoiia and characterization: The Rich Man. The narrator briefly indicates that the Rich Man and Lazarus both die. The Rich Man goes to Hades and the angels carry Lazarus to the bosom of Abraham, where he receives comfort. Carey notes that interior monologues tend to occur at times in which the characters find themselves in crisis.⁸¹ Though the Rich Man’s speech is not an interior monologue but a conversation with Abraham, it happens at the point in which the Rich Man finds himself in crisis, being tormented in Hades. The speech adheres to Quintilian’s second depiction of *prosōpopoiia*, in that it presents a believable conversation between two parties. Seeing Abraham from a distance (ἀπὸ μακρόθεν, Luke 16:23; recall Luke 15:20), the Rich Man calls out to Abraham, asking for mercy and relief:

πάτερ Ἀβραάμ, ἐλέησόν με καὶ πέμψον Λάζαρον
 ἵνα βάψῃ τὸ ἄκρον τοῦ δακτύλου αὐτοῦ ὕδατος
 καὶ καταψύξῃ τὴν γλῶσσάν μου,
 ὅτι ὀδυνῶμαι ἐν τῇ φλογὶ ταύτῃ.
 (Luke 16:24)

Father Abraham, have mercy on me and send Lazarus
 So that he might the tip of his finger in water
 And may cool my tongue
 Because I am suffering in this flame.

The Rich Man requests mercy from Abraham and a bit of water for his tongue from Lazarus. The –ov endings (*homoioteluton*) make both the request for mercy and the sending of Lazarus prominent. At the point of crisis, the Rich Man lifts his eyes to see Lazarus and Abraham, and he asks that Abraham might send Lazarus to alleviate his pain.

⁸¹ “Their narration encourages the audience to identify with characters of relatively high status, who in crisis find themselves looking ‘up’ to their supposed inferiors for assistance, reconciliation, or example” (Carey, “Luke and Discipleship,” 147).

Though some have argued that the Rich Man's request is tantamount to continuing to assert his superiority in the afterlife, the Rich Man seems well aware of his situation.⁸² The exchange between the Rich Man and Abraham illustrates this awareness. If Abraham, at whose bosom Lazarus rests, is able to hear the Rich Man's cries from Hades, Lazarus is able to hear the Rich Man's requests as well. The imperatives the Rich Man utters address Abraham (ἐλέησόν με καὶ πέμψον Λάζαρον, Luke 16:24), not Lazarus.⁸³ Rather than using imperatives to tell Lazarus what to do directly, the Rich Man's requests of Lazarus are in the subjunctive mood (16:24b, 27). If the Rich Man wanted to command Lazarus, why would he not do it directly if he still viewed Lazarus as one to whom he could make commands?

The Rich Man recognizes he is in need of mercy. He is suffering in the flames in a place of torment (Luke 16:28). The Rich Man also recognizes that he is not at liberty to ameliorate his present situation without the mercy of Abraham or the help of Lazarus. Though the Rich Man does not offer help to Lazarus during his lifetime, the Rich Man recognizes Lazarus as the one who could potentially help him in the afterlife.⁸⁴ The Rich Man, based on the requests he makes of Abraham, expects Lazarus to have freedom of movement that he does not expect of himself. The Rich Man's next speech illustrates this expectation.

ἐρωτῶ σε οὖν, πάτερ,

⁸² See Gowler, "At his Gate" 255n28, cf., Bovon, who suggests the Rich Man accepts his fate (*Luke*, 474, 482).

⁸³ The second request the Rich Man makes, however, is in the subjunctive mood (ἵνα πέμψῃς αὐτόν, 16:27).

⁸⁴ Danker supposes the Rich Man misses an opportunity to be a benefactor to Lazarus (Frederick B. Danker, *Jesus and the New Age: A Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 276.

ἵνα πέμψῃς αὐτὸν εἰς τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρός μου,
ἔχω γὰρ πέντε ἀδελφούς, ὅπως διαμαρτύρηται αὐτοῖς,
ἵνα μὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔλθωσιν εἰς τὸν τόπον τοῦτον τῆς βασάνου.
(Luke 16:27-28)

I beg you, then, Father,
So that you might send him to my father's house
For I have five brothers, thereby warning them
So that they do not come into this place of torment.

The Rich Man expects Lazarus to be able to cool his tongue, presumably by physically Lazarus leaving the place of comfort to go to the Rich Man in the place of torment. When Abraham responds that this is not possible, the Rich Man makes another request that presupposes Lazarus has some freedom of movement: He asks that Lazarus be sent to his brothers. The Rich Man does not ask that he be able to go to his brothers to describe the horrors of his condition; he asks that Abraham send Lazarus. The Rich Man evidently does not suppose that Lazarus's inability to reach him precludes Lazarus's ability to visit his brothers. In fact, the Rich Man supposes that Lazarus could return from the dead to warn his brothers (ἐάν τις ἀπὸ νεκρῶν πορευθῇ πρὸς αὐτοὺς μετανοήσουσιν, Luke 16:30).⁸⁵ Though some have suggested that the Rich Man's request assumes Lazarus will go to his brothers as an apparition rather than be bodily present, this assumption severs the first request from the second.⁸⁶ If the Rich Man presupposes Lazarus's can convey water to cool his tongue, assuming Lazarus's physical presence, the lack of mention of any shift in the Rich Man's expectation suggests that he thinks Lazarus can physically

⁸⁵ "Should someone go to them from the dead, they will repent." This is a third-class condition, which likely represents the hypothetical nature of the Rich Man's assertion.

⁸⁶ Bovon regards the request as hoping for an apparition (*Luke*, 484). Levine suggests that, if the Rich Man is bold enough to ask that Lazarus be sent, that the Rich Man himself might go (*Short Stories*, 269). Carroll regards Abraham as escalating the conversation to entail resurrection but does not necessarily see resurrection in view in the Rich Man's request of Abraham (*Luke*, 338). Culpepper views Abraham's response likewise (*Luke*, 319).

leave the place of comfort to travel to the realm of the living. Luke has already mentioned dead being brought back to life (Luke 7:11-17, 8:40-56) and, more recently, that the Younger Son was dead and had been raised (νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἀνέζησεν, Luke 15:24; νεκρὸς ἦν καὶ ἔζησεν, Luke 15:32). The request of the Rich Man is therefore in keeping with the expectation that the dead could be raised.

Characterization in RML: Lazarus

Beyond the descriptions of Lazarus's earthly suffering and comfort in the afterlife, there is little indication of Lazarus's characterization. Luke does not describe his behavior or attribute *prosōpopoiia* to him. Nevertheless, discussions of the relationships between the wealthy and the poor exist in fabulistic literature and are prominent in Quintilian. Whereas Babrius and Phaedrus indicate the wealthy ought to support the poor and describe situations in which wealth is of no use, they present the poor as at the mercy of the rich. Though Quintilian does not necessarily have a negative estimation of the poor, many of his examples in the *Institutio Oratoria* pertain to the wealthy and poor interacting in court. In this section, I present some examples of interactions between the poor and the wealthy to suggest Lazarus's silence is unsurprising.

Character types and RML: Lazarus. Phaedrus describes the vulnerability the poor experience in relation to the rich in his *promythia* to "The Battle of the Bulls," saying, "Poor folk suffer when the mighty quarrel." The fable describes frog witnessing a battle between two bulls:

A frog looking out from a marsh upon a combat between two bulls, exclaimed: "Alas, what great destruction is verging upon us!" Being asked by another frog why he said this, since those bulls were contending for the sovereignty of the herd and, as cattle, lived their lives at a distance from the frogs, he replied: "Granted that their

range is remote from ours, and that their species is different, nevertheless, whichever of them is driven from the lordship of the meadow, and takes to flight, will come to the secret recesses of our marsh and will tread us down and crush us with his hard hoofs. Thus their fury has something to do with our own safety. (Phaedrus 1.30 [Perry, LCL])

Phaedrus's description of the two bulls and the frogs' ensuing conversation reveals that, despite the seeming distance between the powerful and the lowly, the battles of the powerful affect them. Furthermore, the battles of the powerful have the capacity to crush the lowly.

Phaedrus 1.15 recounts the story of an old man pasturing his pack animal notices enemy soldiers approaching. When the old man urges the animal to run to avoid capture, the pack animal asks whether his tasks will be any more arduous under the enemies: "I ask you, are you assuming that the conqueror will load me with two packs at a time?" The old man responds "No," to which the pack animal responds, "Then what difference does it make to me whose slave I am, so long as I carry only one pack at a time?" (1.15.7-10 [Perry, LCL]). The task for the animal remains the same, regardless of whom he serves. While the animal is at the mercy of the person who owns him, his lot is not necessarily improved depending on who owns him. The *promythium* prepares the reader for this exchange: "A change of sovereignty brings to the poor nothing more than a change in the name of their master" (1.15.1-3 [Perry, LCL]). Whereas in the Battle of the Bulls, the poor are at the mercy of the wealthy, Phaedrus 1.15 reveals that the situation changes little when changes in leadership come.

By way of contrast, fables sometimes portray the poor as the object of humor, as in the case of the rustic in Babrius 18. In this fable, the North Wind and the Sun have a contest to see who can disrobe a rustic clothed in a goatskin. The North Wind blows, and

the man shivers and pulls the coat more tightly around him. “Then the Sun peeped forth, welcome at first, bringing the man relief from the cold, raw wind. Next, changing, he turned the heat on more, and suddenly the rustic felt too hot and of his own accord threw off the cloak, and so was stripped. Thus was the North Wind beaten in the contest” (18.9-14 [Perry, LCL]). The fable makes fun of the rustic man, making him not only the object of a contest between the North Wind and the Sun, but also the object of the audience’s expected laughter. Though not explicitly stated, Babrius 18 presumes the rustic is poor. He is not adequately prepared to clothe himself when the weather changes, and his goatskin cloak is apparently the only article of clothing he is wearing. While inadequate preparation need not imply he is poor, wearing only the goatskin cloak when traveling presupposes a lack of clothing. The *epimythium* offers a lesson to the North Wind from the Sun:

“Cultivate gentleness, my son; you will get results oftener by persuasion than by the use of force” (18.15-16 [Perry, LCL]). The fable treats the disrobed rustic as an object of humor.

The fables above portray the poor as being at the mercy of the powerful, and their situation changes little when new masters or leadership come into view. Theophrastus’s description of Squalor goes further to describe an individual as covered in sores, suggesting that the man’s situation is his own fault.

Squalor is a neglect of one’s body which produces distress. The squalid man is the sort who goes around in a leprous and encrusted state, with long fingernails, and says these are all inherited illnesses; he has them like his father and grandfather before him, so it won’t be easy to smuggle an illegitimate child into their family! You can be sure he is apt to have sores on his shins, whitlows on his fingers, which he doesn’t treat but lets fester. His armpits might belong to an animal, with hair extending most of the way down his sides. His teeth are black and decayed. And things like this: he wipes his nose while eating, scratches himself while sacrificing, shoots spittle from his mouth while talking, belches while drinking. He sleeps in bed with his wife without washing. Because he uses rancid oil in the baths, he smells. He goes out to the market wearing thick underwear, and a very thin cloak full of stains. (*Char.* 19 [Rusten, LCL])

Squalor, according to Theophrastus, results from neglect of one's own body and uncleanliness. Though RML makes no indication of how Lazarus came to be in his condition, Luke describes him as covered in sores, which attract the dogs who clean his sores (Luke 16:20-21). Whereas Luke does not necessarily use humor in his presentation of Lazarus, the description of his condition—covered in sores and placed at the Rich Man's gate—along with his desire to eat table scraps (16:21) emphasize that the situation is both the direness and the helplessness of his situation.⁸⁷ Lazarus's desire for the table scraps is reminiscent of the Younger Son's desire for the food of the pigs (ἐπιθυμῶν χορτασθῆναι, 16:21; ἐπεθύμει χορτασθῆναι, 15:16). In both cases, the men's desire for food given to animals or tossed aside highlights the severity of their conditions and the low points of their characters within the narrative. In addition, while Theophrastus intimates that squalor is the result of a person's own doing, Luke makes no indication that Lazarus is to blame for his situation; rather, Luke uses passive terms to refer to Lazarus.

Quintilian presents diverse indications of the poor in his *Institutio Oratoria*. In his examples of *sententiae*, Quintilian states: "A better sententia comes from an effective contrast of opposites ... 'What of the fact that the poor man, though unable to speak, could not keep quiet?'" (*Inst.* 5.5 [Russell, LCL]). Though Quintilian here presents the poor man as speaking out of turn (or potentially garrulous), he notes that the poor are "unable to speak," suggesting that there is an expectation that the poor will remain silent, especially on

⁸⁷ Though some have argued that the dogs' presence adds insult to injury, the dogs were most likely offering Lazarus relief in his condition. As to the former indication, see Jeremias, *Parables*, 184; Hultgren, *Parables*, 112; Scott, *Hear Then*, 151; Snodgrass, *Stories*, 425. Levine, however, argues that dogs' saliva was believed to have healing properties in the ancient world (*Short Stories*, 258, 260). Levine also takes issue with indications that wealth would have necessarily been seen as God's blessing (250-251), *contra* Herzog, *Parables*, 206.

the affairs pertaining to the courts. This statement also likely pertains to the lack of education of the poor. Their inability to speak may reflect not only to the distrust of their witness in court but also to the lack of rhetorical fluency the poor were expected to have, which assumes (in some cases wrongly) their lack of education. At the same time, Quintilian alludes to orators who are poor, asserting that the orator, even if poor, must not accept a fee, but rather, receives gratitude instead (*Inst.* 12.8.12). At the same time, Quintilian insists that orators must be men of good moral character. Thus, while Quintilian regards the poor as unable to speak, perhaps referring to social status, rhetorical ability, or both, he acknowledges that rhetors—whom he expected to be able to speak eloquently and be of good character—might be poor.⁸⁸

Finally, in *Callirhoe*, in the trial scene in which Chaereas sees her again for the first time, Callirhoe does not embrace him. Chaereas, in this case, supposes that her lack of affection stems from his loss of status and money. “When Callirhoe saw me, she did not come and kiss me. Though I stood at her side, she felt shame before another man. She need not be embarrassed! I shall anticipate the decision. I shall not wait for an ignominious end. I know that I am a weak rival to Dionysius, being foreign, poor, and already alienated” (*Call.* 5.10.7). Because he is now foreign and poor, Chaereas believes he is not a viable suitor to Callirhoe, though he is her first husband. In this instance, one discovers a character who, though once wealthy and powerful, has lost his wealth and power and indicates via *prosōpopoiia* the perceived results of such a loss. In this case, Chaereas’s self-perception reveals the attitude that the poor cannot contend with the wealthy and, moreover, that the poor are at the mercy of the powerful.

⁸⁸ Quintilian, in addition, associates the financially poor with poor character (*Inst.* 5.7.24)

Whereas Luke presents the Younger Son in control of his situation and makes a plan to return home, Lazarus offers no speech in reaction to his situation. Luke portrays Lazarus similarly to the man beaten and left for dead (Luke 10:25-37), in that both men experience bodily discomfort and are at the mercy of those around them. While a Samaritan offers the man in the road help, Lazarus receives no such help, except from the dogs who lick his wounds. Lazarus, like the portrayal of the frogs in Phaedrus 1.30, is at the mercy of the powerful both in his life and in his death (the Rich Man and Abraham, respectively). Luke draws further attention to Lazarus's dependence by using a combination of participles, passive voice, and non-indicative moods to describe his condition. Without speaking a word or performing any action other than his unfulfilled desire to be satisfied, Lazarus dies and the angels transport him to the bosom of Abraham.

The resurrection of the righteous: Lazarus. After Lazarus and the Rich Man die, the Rich Man sees Lazarus receiving comfort. The Rich Man's expectation that Lazarus would be able to offer him aid in their afterlives offers a key aspect of Lazarus's characterization. Though there is diversity in perspectives and expectations, the Hebrew Bible and the writings of early Judaism anticipate and inform the expectation of the resurrection of the righteous.⁸⁹ There is also diversity in Greco-Roman perspectives, but

⁸⁹ Novakovic traces the development of the expectation of the resurrection in the Hebrew Bible and early Judaism in her *Resurrection: A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016), Novakovic traces the instances of imagery of re-animated corpses in Eze 37:1-14, the "third day" imagery Hosea employs (6:1-3), and argues that Isa 26:14 and 19 pertain to the punishment of the wicked and the resurrection of the righteous, respectively. In her view, Dan 12:1-3 offers the clearest indications in the Hebrew Bible of the expectation of the resurrection of the righteous. Novakovic traces the further development of the expectation of the resurrection of the righteous in early Judaism through 1 En. (1-36, 37-71, 85-90, and 91-105), which resist harmonization and notions of a progressive development, in which ideas about resurrection build directly on one another in a chronological framework, Jubilees (in which Abraham's death narrative is narrated alongside notions of the end-time), 2 Macc, in which the Maccabean martyrs' bodies are envisioned as being reconfigured, and literature from the Dead Sea Scrolls (7-26). Novakovic includes literature from the second century as well but, for the purposes of the present project, I confine myself to literature that may have been prominent during the 1st century. Novakovic highlights the

one frequently finds the portrayal of heroes who successfully visit and escape the underworld. Some go there on behalf of another person, while others go to the underworld to seek information to bring back to the realm of the living.⁹⁰ Though Luke makes no indication of Lazarus's actions during his life—whether good or bad—his situation in the afterlife reveals his character. The Rich Man, who views Lazarus in a place of eschatological comfort, expects some freedom of movement for Lazarus, as discussed above. This freedom of movement bears much in common with the depictions of Greco-Roman heroes and gods traveling to the underworld on behalf of another person and those who carried information from the afterlife to the realm of the living. The Rich Man's expectation of Lazarus's capacity for resurrection, further, fits nicely with the early Jewish expectations for the resurrection of the righteous.

Beyond the Rich Man's perception of Lazarus's freedom of movement and of resurrection, Lazarus's location at the bosom of Abraham also highlights Lazarus's righteous status. Luke has already associated Abraham with the afterlife and with the suffering of those outside the place of comfort: ἐκεῖ ἔσται ὁ κλαυθμὸς καὶ ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων, ὅταν ὀψησθε Ἀβραὰμ καὶ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ καὶ πάντας τοὺς προφῆτας ἐν τῇ

diversity of Jewish beliefs surrounding the resurrection, noting disagreements regarding the particulars of resurrection but, in spite of the diversity of specific expectations, the prevalence of resurrection hope (42-44). See also Lidiya Novakovic, *Resurrection from the Dead According to Scripture*, Jewish and Christian Texts 12 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012), 68-113.

⁹⁰ Regarding the former, Persephone is kidnapped to the underworld (Ovid, *Metam.*, 5.489) and, after Demeter searches for her, she learns of Persephone's location (in 5.501-501), Demeter asks that she be released. When this proves impossible, Jove allows Persephone to spend half of the year with Demeter and the other half with her husband (5.564-571). Aeneas in search of his father (who tells him about the nature of life and death, *Aen.* 6.724), and Dionysius in search of his mother (though Pausanias doubts the likelihood of Semele dying at all, his mention of Dionysius bringing his mother from Hades suggests the view was prevalent (*Description of Greece*, 2.31.2; 2.37.5; Ovid recounts Semele's journey to the underworld, but not Dionysius's recovery of her, *Metam.*, 3.253-315). As to the latter, Odysseus goes to the underworld to see blind Tiresias to find his way back home (*Od.* 11.90-149).

βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐκβαλλομένους ἔξω (Luke 13:28).⁹¹ Lazarus’s location at the side of Abraham communicates his righteousness; the Rich Man’s separation from Lazarus and Abraham communicates his unrighteousness. Whereas Luke does not comment on the goodness or badness of either of the men’s behaviors, their status in the afterlife presupposes them. It is possible that the reversal of Lazarus and the Rich Man is simply that which Luke 1:46-55 and 6:20-26 describes, but Lazarus’s close association with Abraham suggests that more is in view than a simple reversal of Lazarus and the Rich Man’s earthly situations. Abraham’s role in the parable is instructive for understanding the post-mortem situations of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Abraham’s association with the resurrection of the righteous and hospitality, emphasized by *prosōpopoiia* attributed to him, helps explain the respective locations of Lazarus and the Rich Man.

Characterization in RML: Abraham

This section is not intended to offer an in-depth discussion of the characterization of Abraham in RML; rather, I show the ways Abraham’s righteousness and his hospitality contribute to the characterization of Lazarus and the Rich Man, respectively. Abraham’s *prosōpopoiia* emphasizes these characterizations. The examples illustrate Abraham’s association with righteousness and the resurrection, which need not imply Luke’s

⁹¹ “There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, whenever you (pl.) see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you (pl.) having been cast outside.” Compare also Luke 13:24 ἀγωνίζεσθε εἰσελθεῖν διὰ τῆς στενῆς θύρας, ὅτι πολλοί, λέγω ὑμῖν, ζητήσουσιν εἰσελθεῖν καὶ οὐκ ἰσχύσουσιν (strive to enter through the narrow door, but many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able) with 16:16 Ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται μέχρι Ἰωάννου· ἀπὸ τότε ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ εὐαγγελίζεται καὶ πᾶς εἰς αὐτὴν βιάζεται (The law and the prophets [were in effect] up until John, but since then the reign of God has been proclaimed and all are compelled to enter it).

dependence on the particular sources, but rather, the prevalence of Abraham's connection with characteristics of righteousness and resurrection.

The resurrection of the righteous: Abraham's contribution. The notion Abraham's righteousness surrounds the promise of the birth of a child and his testing in the demand that he sacrifice Isaac. In Gen 15:5, Abram receives the promise that he will have descendants as numerous as the stars. Though it is unclear in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint whether it is God or Abram who regards the other as righteous (καὶ ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβραμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην, Gen 15:6), later traditions associate Abram with righteousness. These indications of Abraham's righteousness occur both in intertestamental and Pauline literature. First Maccabees relates Abraham's righteousness on the basis of his testing: "Was Abraham not tested and found faithful and it reckoned to him as righteousness? (1 Macc 2:52).⁹² Both the passive εὐρέθη and ἐλογίσθη refer to Abram, making it clear that it is Abram whom God regards as righteous. Paul relates Abraham's righteousness on the basis of his belief (Gal 3:6, Rom 4:1-3).⁹³ Abraham's role in RML is as providing comfort for Lazarus, and Luke associates Lazarus's character through his proximity to Abraham.

The author of 4 Maccabees associates Abraham with the realm of the living and, at the same time, presents Abraham as receiving the righteous ones after they die. The narrative describes Abraham as living in the sight of God, which is similar to Luke's

⁹² Ἀβρααμ οὐχὶ ἐν πειρασμῷ εὐρέθη πιστός καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην;

⁹³ "Was not Abraham, on the basis of his having been tested, found faithful, and it (was it not) regarded to him as righteousness?" Paul also explicitly associates Abraham with righteousness in association with Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:1-3; Gen 15:6 also appears to be quoted in Gal 3:6, but Paul is not as plain here as he is in Rom 4 regarding Abraham's righteousness, though it is certainly implied with the context.

association with Abraham and the realm of the living in 20:37-38.⁹⁴ In 4 Macc. 13:17, the Maccabeans anticipate their martyrdoms and suggest they will reside with Abraham thereafter, at a location not unlike that of Lazarus (οὕτω γὰρ θανόντας ἡμᾶς Ἀβρααμ καὶ Ἰσαακ καὶ Ἰακωβ ὑποδέξονται καὶ πάντες οἱ πατέρες ἐπαινέσουσιν).⁹⁵ This text imagines an afterlife for the faithful martyrs in which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob receive (or welcome) them. This portrayal is similar to the picture Lazarus in RML, who is borne by the angels and received by Abraham.

The presentation of Abraham in Luke/Acts is similar to the presentation of Abraham in other early Jewish and Christian literature. I have already discussed Luke 20:37-38, in which Luke connects Abraham and his offspring with the Kingdom of God. Abraham, further, is an important part of the arguments made by Peter and Paul in Acts 3 and 13, respectively. In Acts 3, as Peter addresses those in Solomon's Portico, he associates Jesus with Abraham and his progeny (Acts 3:13). Peter continues by connecting his Jewish audience with the prophets and the promise that in Abraham the nations would be blessed and that Jesus was part of that intended blessing (Acts 3:22-25). Paul's argument in Acts 13 bears similarities to Peter's argument in Acts 3. After describing his auditors as Abraham's descendants (Acts 13:26), he recounts the events of Jesus's death and resurrection. Paul continues by associating Jesus with the Davidic psalms (Acts 13:35, cf., Ps 16:10), asserting that Jesus was the one of whom the Psalms spoke and the one who fulfilled the Abrahamic promises. Acts does not specifically

⁹⁴ There are parallels in Mark 12:26-27 and Matt 8:11, 22:32.

⁹⁵ "For if we die thusly, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will welcome us, and all the ancestors will praise us."

associate Abraham with the realm of the living or with the place of eschatological comfort, as in Luke 20:35-36. In both Acts 3 and 13, however, Jesus's resurrection is associated with the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises.

In the case of Abraham's association with Lazarus, Luke portrays Lazarus as at his bosom and offers him comfort.⁹⁶ Abraham's association with the God of the living, the reception of the righteous, and with resurrection via Jesus in Acts suggests further that Abraham's reception of Lazarus identifies Lazarus among the righteous, even though the conditions or behaviors that contribute to that status remain unknown. A great chasm separates the Rich Man from Abraham, which serves as a critique of the Rich Man's character. The Rich Man has failed to show hospitality to Lazarus because he does not provide for him even though the Rich Man was aware of Lazarus's existence. Though the Rich Man does not address Lazarus during their lifetimes, he is sufficiently aware of Lazarus to recognize him and know his name in the afterlife.

Prosōpopoiia and Abraham: Abraham and the Rich Man. The *prosōpopoiia* Luke attributes to Abraham serves similar functions to the presentation of *prosōpopoiia* between the Father and the Elder Son in Luke 15:31-32. In both cases, the father figure responds to characters who are separated from the party, in the case of the Parable of the Prodigals, and from the place of comfort, in the case of RML. After the Rich Man sees Lazarus at Abraham's side, the Rich Man addresses Abraham and asks for mercy and Abraham responds.

εἶπεν δὲ Ἀβραάμ· τέκνον, μνήσθητι ὅτι ἀπέλαβες τὰ ἀγαθὰ σου ἐν τῇ ζωῇ σου, καὶ Λάζαρος ὁμοίως τὰ κακά· νῦν δὲ ὧδε παρακαλεῖται, σὺ δὲ ὀδυνᾷσαι. (Luke 16:25)

⁹⁶ In this instance, recall the Father's interaction with the Elder Son, in which he comforts him by telling him all that the Father has is his (Luke 15:28, 31).

But Abraham said, “Child, remember that you received your good things during your life, and Lazarus likewise bad things, but now here he is being comforted, but you are suffering.

Abraham does not accuse the Rich Man here of any wrongdoing. Without explicit moral commentary, Abraham describes the reversal of the Rich Man and Lazarus’s earthly and post-mortem situations. Abraham continues, indicating the intractability of the separation:

καὶ ἐν πᾶσι τούτοις μεταξὺ ἡμῶν καὶ ὑμῶν χάσμα μέγα ἐστήρικται, ὅπως οἱ θέλοντες διαβῆναι ἔνθεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς μὴ δύνωνται, μηδὲ ἐκεῖθεν πρὸς ἡμᾶς διαπερῶσιν. (Luke 16:26)

And besides all these things, there has been placed a great chasm between us and you (pl.), so that those who wish to cross over to here from you (pl.) are not able to, neither are we able to cross over there.

In the second part of Abraham’s description of the Rich Man and Lazarus’s post-mortem situations, the direness of the separation and their respective locations is evident. While Abraham does not offer any commentary on the Rich Man’s situation as punishment, the Rich Man’s indication of suffering, Abraham’s affirmation of that suffering, and the indication of the chasm separating the “us” (Abraham and Lazarus) from “you all” communicates that the Rich Man will receive no relief. He is separated from the place of comfort. Given Abraham’s association with the reception of the righteous in their post-mortem state, the Rich Man’s suffering and post-mortem state is a stark contrast to the association of Lazarus and Abraham.

At the same time, Abraham’s address of the Rich Man as τέκνον recalls the exchange between Jesus’s healing of the “Daughter of Abraham” who was unable to straighten her back (Luke 13:15) and anticipates Jesus’s inclusion of Zacchaeus among the children of Abraham (Luke 19:9). In these cases, Luke’s description of individuals as children of Abraham is a positive designation and, with regard to Zacchaeus, Luke

associates his inclusion among the children of Abraham with salvation “Today salvation has come to this house since he, too, is a son of Abraham” (Luke 19:9). In the more immediate context, calling the Rich Man τέκνον recalls the Father’s words to the Elder Son as the Father sought to comfort him. In these cases, the τέκνον finds himself outside the proverbial party. While Abraham does not offer comfort to the Rich Man, like the Father offers the Elder Son, Abraham’s first speech fits well with Quintilian’s second descriptions of *prosōpopoiia* because it presents a conversation between two people in a credible manner (*Inst.* 9.2.31). In light of the prevalence of Greco-Roman gods and heroes who traveled to Hades, engaged with the individuals there, and safely returned to the realm of the living, ancient audiences were unlikely to have been surprised by such a situation.

Abraham’s speeches do not offer moral commentary regarding the Rich Man. Rather, the Rich Man provides this commentary by associating himself with his brothers. The Rich Man’s request that Abraham send Lazarus to his brothers to witness to them about the place of torment implies the Rich Man thinks his brothers will meet the same fate that he will. Abraham responds that they should listen to Moses and the Prophets, to which the Rich Man responds by saying no and repeats his request (ἐάν τις ἀπὸ νεκρῶν πορευθῇ πρὸς αὐτοὺς μετανοήσουσιν, 16:30). The Rich Man’s response to Abraham suggests that neither he nor his brothers have heeded the warnings of Moses and the Prophets.⁹⁷ By hearing the exchange between the Rich Man and Abraham, one learns from the Rich Man why he is in Hades: He has failed to follow Moses and the Prophets, presumably by failing

⁹⁷ In this instance, it is plausible that Moses and the Prophets could be a circumlocution for Scripture as a whole (see Luke 24:27). Given Luke’s repeated concern for widows, orphans, and the poor, that Luke could have in view the call of the Pentateuch to care for the widows, orphans, and aliens among the Hebrew people (Exod 22:22, 23:6) and the call of the prophets to do the same (Isa 10:1-2, 58:10; Amos 2:6-8; Eze 16:49; Mal 3:5); Luke’s depiction of Jesus reading from the scroll of Isaiah in Luke 4:17 also is suggestive of this conclusion (cf., Isa 61:1, 58:6, 61:2).

to care for the needy, a topic Luke mentions on various occasions (Luke 10:25-37, 14:12-14, 15-24). As a result, Abraham's interaction with the Rich Man fits within Quintilian's description of the third use of *prosōpopoiia* "(3) to provide appropriate characters for words of advice, reproach, complaint, praise, or pity" (*Inst.* 9.2.30-31 [Russell, LCL]). In this case, the interaction between the Rich Man and Abraham offers words of reproach.

Abraham responds to the Rich Man's final request and the parable, much like the Parable of the Prodigals, ends with the words on the father figure's lips. Abraham says:

εἰ Μωϋσέως καὶ τῶν προφητῶν οὐκ ἀκούουσιν, οὐδ' ἐάν τις ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῇ
πείσθονται. (Luke 16:31)

If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, then neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.

Though some argue that this use of ἀνίστημι does not relate to the resurrection, the association with ἀνίστημι and the separative ἐκ νεκρῶν occurs in Luke 20:35, which describes the resurrection of the righteous, and in Luke 24:46, which describes Jesus's resurrection. Luke also uses ἐγείρω with the separative ἐκ νεκρῶν to describe Jesus's resurrection in his passion prediction in Luke 9:7. The association of ἀνίστημι, ἐγείρω, and ἐκ νεκρῶν, taken together with the anticipation of the resurrection of the righteous and Abraham's role therein, suggests that the most natural reading of this passage pertains to resurrection. The indications that Jesus has already raised the dead (Luke 7:11-17, 8:40-56) and the regard for the Younger Son as having been dead but alive (Luke 15:32), as mentioned before, affirm that such an indication is in keeping with what has preceded it in Luke.

The parable ends with Abraham's *prosōpopoiia*, much like the ending of the Parable of the Prodigals. Whereas the Parable of the Prodigals leaves open the question of

whether or not the Elder Son will join the party, the Rich Man is outside the place of comfort. His exchange with Abraham raises doubts as to whether the Rich Man's brothers will heed the invitation to join the party. The Rich Man's brothers, like the Younger and Elder Sons in the Parable of the Prodigals, are alive and therefore still capable of repentance. Again, the conversation between the Rich Man and Abraham is instructive. The Rich Man's brothers have Moses and the Prophets, but the Rich Man's protest suggests that Moses and the Prophets are insufficient in convincing his brothers to repent.⁹⁸ According to Abraham, if Moses and the Prophets are insufficient for the Rich Man's brothers, "they will not be persuaded even if someone comes back from the dead" (Luke 16:31).⁹⁹ The Rich Man anticipates his brothers meeting a fate like his own and therefore suggests they will be separated from Lazarus and Abraham after they die. Likewise, the Elder Son has separated himself from the party in honor of his formerly lost-and-dead and now found-and-alive brother. The risks for the Elder Son and the Rich Man's brothers are the same at the ends of their respective parables. Both the Rich Man's brothers and the Elder Son risk remaining on the outside of the party permanently. In the case of the brothers in RML, their perceived failure to be convinced by Moses and the Prophets (presumably to care for the poor) raises suspicions that their chances of joining the party are significantly diminished. In the case of the Elder Son in the Parable of the Prodigals, he

⁹⁸ Many raise doubts as to whether the Rich Man's brothers will respond. Plummer notes Abraham's skepticism at the Brothers' response (*Luke*, 397), as do Culpepper (*Luke*, 318), Vinson (*Luke*, 531), Carroll (*Luke*, 531), Esler (*Community and Gospel*, 119), Ringe (*Luke*, 217-218), and Culy, Parsons, and Stigall (*Luke: A Handbook on the Greek Text*, BHGNT [Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010], 538). Danker holds that time is running out for the Rich Man's Brothers, but there is nevertheless a chance for them to be compelled to enter the party as well (Frederick B. Danker, *Luke*, 2nd ed., Proclamation Commentaries [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987], 108), as does Tannehill (*Luke*, 253).

⁹⁹ I interpret Abraham's response as a third-class condition (rather than a first-class condition), but the negative particle οὐδὲ intimates that sending someone from the dead will be ineffective.

has been compelled to enter, and he has learned the necessity of the feast (Luke 15:32). The brothers in both parables are still compelled to enter—but will they join?

Abraham will not send Lazarus to compel the Rich Man's brothers to repent not because they are incapable of repentance, but because of their refusal to be convinced thus far. According to Abraham, Moses and the Prophets should be sufficiently compelling for the brothers to heed their calls. If the Brothers find Moses and the Prophets unconvincing, they would not be convinced if someone was raised from the dead (Luke 16:31). The end of the Parable of the Prodigals remains open to the Elder Son joining the feast because it is not yet clear whether he will be convinced to join the party for someone (his brother) having been raised from the dead. The end of the parable implies that the possibility of remedy for the Elder Son exists, just as there is still a chance that the Rich Man's brothers will heed Moses and the Prophets. The brothers in both parables face great risk. The Rich Man teaches through negative example. The audience should listen to Moses and the Prophets, lest they meet the same fate as the Rich Man. The Elder Son teaches that the proper response to being compelled to join the party, which includes the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame, the tax collectors, and the sinners, is to accept the invitation (Luke 14:13, 21, 15:1-2).

Conclusion: Moral Formation in the Parable of the Prodigals and RML

I began this chapter by raising the question of why the Father compels the Elder Son to join the party but Abraham refuses to send someone to the Rich Man's brothers. Just as the Elder Son should be convinced by his Father's begging, so too should the Rich Man's brothers be compelled by Moses and the Prophets. I discussed each of the parables individually, showing how the parables employ *prosōpopoiia* in the service of

characterization and the coherence of Luke's presentation of *prosōpopoiia* with Quintilian's description of its uses. With respect to the Parable of the Prodigals, I likened Luke's presentation of the three characters in the Parable of the Prodigals to Theophrastus's descriptions of Shamelessness, Miserliness, and the Patron of Scoundrels and to Aristotle's descriptions of prodigality, meanness, and liberality. In the cases of the Rich Man and Lazarus, I discussed the typified behaviors of the wealthy and the poor, along with the notion that wealth in itself is not regarded as morally good or bad, but rather, the way in which one employs that wealth. I also engaged the Parable of the Shrewd Steward to demonstrate the character of the Steward and his respective similarities and differences between the Younger Son, the Father, and the Rich Man. At the moment of crisis—the Steward devises a plan to secure his future, which entails a reorientation to “unrighteous Mammon,” securing the Steward's place in the debtors' homes. The Younger Son's crisis, similarly, marks a reorientation toward his father's house and his return home. The Rich Man, however, fails to reorient his relationship to Moses and the Prophets before it is too late. These moments of crisis emphasize the crisis faced by the Elder Son and the Rich Man's Brothers—much is at risk.

In these parables, Luke presents examples of behavior to emulate and behavior to avoid, thus showing concern for the moral formation. While moral formation need not be the only goal of the parables (recall Theon, *Prog.* 75), it is nonetheless an important aspect in Luke 15 and 16, especially given the charges marshalled against Jesus in Luke 15:2. The ways Luke employs these parables as *exempla* and draws attention to the presentation of characters' thoughts and attitudes through *prosōpopoiia* illustrates the way moral formation, characterization, and rhetoric work together. Luke 15 and 16, further, show

Jesus's acceptance and extension of the charge that he "welcomes sinners and dines with them" (Luke 15:2). These parables extend the discussion by communicating that sinners are not only welcome in the Kingdom of God, they are compelled to enter (Luke 16:16). This compelling does not mean that all will enter the party, which presents the risk the Elder Son and the Rich Man's brothers face at the ends of their respective parables. With respect to the Parable of the Prodigals, Luke presents the reckless liberality of the Father as behavior to emulate, which contrasts Aristotelian notions of liberality. The Father rejoices like those in Luke 15:1-10 who celebrate recovering what they had lost and, at the same time and is similar to those who include those who cannot repay at their banquets in his generosity toward the Younger Son. Luke intimates the correct response to the question of whether or not the Elder Son should join the party (he should) but does not provide the answer. In RML, Luke illustrates what happens to those who fail to listen to Moses and the Prophets, hearkening the repeated calls to care for the poor. By failing to listen to Moses and the Prophets, one risks separation from the realm of the righteous. Finally, the Shrewd Steward's reorientation to "unrighteous Mammon" leads to his praise and anticipates the generosity that will be shown to him, inviting others to embrace such a reorientation to ensure the generosity of others.

I focused on the parallels between the Elder Son and the Rich Man in their locations within their respective parables. At the beginning of the Parable of the Prodigals and RML, the Elder Son and the Rich Man are both on the "inside." At the end of RML, the Rich Man is "outside," located across a great chasm fixed between him and Abraham and Lazarus. The Rich Man provides an analog for the Elder Son by illustrating what happens when one is compelled to enter but refuses to join the party (Luke 16:16). Refusing to join the party

causes one to risk being left permanently on the outside (Luke 14:24) and demonstrates the risk that the Elder Son and the Rich Man's brothers face if they do not enter the party, whether at the invitation of the Father in the Parable of the Prodigals or at the invitation of Moses and the Prophets.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

Bringing Together the Threads and Ways Forward

In this project, I utilize rhetorical criticism and connect the interrelated topics of characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation.¹ These three topics come together in the test case parables of the Parable of the Prodigals (Luke 15:11-32) and RML (Luke 16:19-31). This chapter situates the parables within Luke's notions of reversal and caring for those who cannot repay. A discussion of the ways in which these parables relate to the other parables in Luke follows. Admittedly, in both these cases, my comments are brief rather than exhaustive and therefore suggestive of further avenues of research and ways forward in interpretation.

Bringing together the Threads: Characterization, Rhetoric, and Moral Formation

In Chapters Two through Five, I drew together the ways characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation interrelate. Though these relationships seem obvious, few studies have explicitly connected these interrelationships. My contribution—in combining characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation—aids in interpretation of the parables, inasmuch as the parables entail a response to a rhetorical situation, employ rhetorical techniques, entail characterization, and contribute to the moral formation of the audience.

¹ Regarding the calls to bring together rhetoric and New Testament studies, see Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, "The Ethics of Biblical Interpretation: Decentering Biblical Scholarship," *JBL* 107 (1988): 3, and Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 46.

Chapter Two: The Mimesis of Morality—Theory

Chapter Two explored the ways the rhetorical handbooks and *progymnasmata* relate to moral formation. In the case of the rhetorical handbooks and *progymnasmata*, *mimesis* in education ideally led to a *mimesis* of character. Despite the diversity of attitudes in *Ad Herennium*, Quintilian, and Theon's *Progymnasmata*, aspects of moral character are consistent across the three authors. For example, in *Ad Herennium*, one of the ways a rhetor can cast aspersions on his opponents is by presenting their (flawed) moral character (*Ad. Her.* 2.3.5). Quintilian explicitly connects education and moral formation. For him, speech betrays one's character: "Speech indeed is very commonly an index of character and reveals the secrets of the heart" (Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.1.30 [Rackham]). Likewise, Quintilian asserts that those who are good rhetors are also necessarily of good moral character (1.*proem.*9, 1.2.3) and that teachers of rhetoric must also exhibit exemplary behavior (1.3.17; 2.2.2, 4; 2.4.12). Similar to Quintilian's views on education and moral formation, Theon asserts that progymnastic education entails imprinting the students' minds with good examples (*Prog.* 61). Though this indication suggests that Theon has only in mind good examples of rhetoric, he makes other statements that suggest the valence of this term also includes notions of moral behavior. In his discussion of *chreia*, Theon indicates, "Surely the exercise in the form of the *chreia* not only creates a certain faculty of speech but also good character while we are being exercised in the moral sayings of the wise" (*Prog.* 60 [Kennedy]). Theon also indicates of *epichiremes* and headings that the teacher makes plain "the moral character inherent in the assignment" (*Prog.* 71 [Kennedy]). Finally, Chapter Two concludes with a discussion of Theophrastus's *Characters* as a bridge between the rhetorical "theory"

presented in the rhetorical handbooks and *progymnasmata* and “practice” presented in Plutarch and in the ancient novels. Though a later hand added the moralizing *proemium*, there are no extant manuscripts that lack it, and there is consensus that this redaction occurred early in the transmission of the *Characters*. In the *Characters*, Theophrastus primarily presents characteristics to avoid rather than those to emulate.

Chapter Three: Nuancing Characters—Rhetoric in Practice

In Chapter Three, I presented Plutarch’s *Lives* and Chariton’s *Callirhoe* as examples of ways in which moral formation and education took shape in “practice.” The concerns of these authors are admittedly different. Whereas Plutarch is explicit in the ways his examination of historical figures is edifying for his own behavior (*Alex.* 665, *Tim.* 235), Chariton does not intimate having moral formation as one of his goals. Both authors, however, reveal a concern for education, employ rhetorical techniques, and are concerned for the moral aspects of their narratives. For Plutarch, examining another person’s virtuous deeds leads to one’s imitation of that virtue (*Per.* 1.3-4). Further, Plutarch thinks his endeavor is effective for moral improvement (*Aem.* 1.1). Plutarch portrays characteristics one ought to emulate and illustrates characteristics that one ought to avoid. Plutarch shows concern for keeping company with those who are of good moral behavior. He presents those who surround themselves with unsavory characters as being led astray by them (*Ages.* 5.1; *Pomp.* 67.4). Though Plutarch’s presentations of the rhetors Demosthenes and Cicero are not particularly positive, he regards education as important to the development of character (*Them.* 2.2, 5). Plutarch nuances the presentation of moral behavior in his indication that great virtue and vice travel together (*Dem.* 1.8). The historical figures he represents are rarely ever only good or only bad.

Callirhoe relates to some of the key aspects of the understanding of characterization, rhetoric, and concern for behavior in its presentation of the noble characters, including Callirhoe and the Great King. Likewise, *Callirhoe* reveals concern for the education of its characters in its presentation of Chaereas and Dionysius. Finally, *Callirhoe* utilizes rhetorical techniques within *prosōpopoiia* to generate further interest in the characters' speeches. With respect to nobility, *Callirhoe* associates it with both external and internal features of the characters. Chariton associates nobility with beauty (external), and with chastity, courage, and self-control (internal). Before he meets Callirhoe, Dionysius insists that she must be noble based on the descriptions of her beauty (2.5.6, 8). Dionysius's other slaves also recognize Callirhoe's nobility (2.3.10). The nobility of characters also inspires their chastity, courage, and self-control. Dionysius and the Great King, in particular, appeal to their nobility as the reason they restrain their affections for Callirhoe (Dionysius, 2.4.6, 3.2.4; The Great King, 6.3.2, 8; 6.4.1). In addition, Chareas's courage in war stems from his nobility (7.3.9). As to education, while the narrator indicates Chaereas's education makes him vulnerable to the schemes of the failed suitors (1.2.6), it serves him well in his endeavors in Egypt during the war (7.2.5). When Dionysius's slaves describe him to Theron, his education is among the traits they laud (1.12.6). Finally, Chariton uses *prosōpopoiia* and rhetorical techniques embedded within it to draw attention to key aspects of the narrative, including Callirhoe's misfortunes, the trial between Chaereas and Dionysius, and Chaereas and Callirhoe's return home. Though not as prevalent as in Plutarch, the concern for moral formation in *Callirhoe* comes to the fore in concern for education, behaviors of nobility, and in the piety of the main characters. The truth, according to Chariton, comes through the goddess

(Aphrodite) who has received the piety of the main characters throughout the narrative (1.1, 2.3, 3.2, 8, 6, 8.8). Chariton associates the denouement of the narrative with truth, bringing it to its completion. The novel ends similarly to the way in which it began: with Callirhoe grasping the goddess's feet and offering prayers for her and Chaereas (1.1.7, 8.8.15-16).

Chapter Four: Turning Toward the New Testament—Fables and Parables

Chapter Four brings together the way fables and parables function similarly within their respective rhetorical encounters. Fables and parables can both function as *exempla*, respond to a rhetorical situation, and serve the overall aims of the narrative in which they appear. Though there are striking differences between fables and parables, such as the frequency of animals as characters in fables, parables do feature non-human characters such as fig trees (Luke 13:1-9), and Luke presents inanimate objects, such as rocks, performing tasks of humans, such as shouting out (Luke 19:40). In addition, I argued that the polysemy and ubiquity of fabulistic literature are sufficiently wide that parables ought to be considered among such literature. I summarized some additional similarities between the fables and parables.

The presentation of typified behaviors features prominently in both the fables of Babrius and Phaedrus and in Luke. In the cases of all three narratives, behaviors of generosity and hospitality tend to be upheld. Luke, however, advocates doing good to those who do not deserve it and to those who cannot repay, in contrast to Babrius and Phaedrus. For example, Babrius 94 (cf., Phaedrus 1.8) describes a heron who helps a wolf with a bone lodged in his throat. When the heron asks for payment, the wolf responds that “It’s enough pay for your medical services to have taken your neck out of a wolf’s mouth

safe and sound” (94.7-8 [Perry, LCL]). The *epimythium* affirms the heron’s fault was in offering help to a scoundrel: “You’ll get no good in return for giving aid to scoundrels, and you’ll do well not to suffer some injury yourself in the process” (94.10 [Perry, LCL]). Rather than being praised for his work, the heron receives a negative assessment because he helped a scoundrel. The man who warms a snake (Phaedrus 4.20) does not fare as well as the heron. After warming the snake to preserve its life, the snake fatally bites the man. When asked why he bit the man, the snake replied: “To teach men not to be good to those who are no good” (4.20.6 [Perry, LCL]). The *promythium* indicates similarly that the one who aids the wicked suffers afterward (Phaedrus 4.20.1). Babrius and Phaedrus, in these cases, illustrate Aristotle’s concern for the liberal person: this person must give to the right people at the right time and in the right amount. By supporting the wrong people, the heron and the man who warmed the snake fare poorly in their respective narratives, whether by not being paid fairly or losing one’s life. Luke, however, advocates for his audience to give to those who cannot repay (Luke 14:12-14) and upholds the behavior of those who give generously to those who do not deserve it (Luke 15:11-32).

The fables in the *progymnasmata* and Lukan parables contribute to both characterization and the moral formation of their audiences. Theon’s example of the dog who was carrying a piece of meat and saw its reflection pertains to those who want more than their fair share, includes both a characterization and an *epimythium* that suggests those who exhibit behaviors of greed will come up wanting, thus revealing a behavior that the audience ought to avoid (*Prog.* 76). Aphthonius, on the other hand, presents a fable indicative of behavior to be emulated. In the Ants and the Cicadas, the ants receive

praise for their hard work and diligence, which serves as an exhortation to Aphthonius's students and readers to be diligent in their study (*Prog.* 21). One finds some compelling similarities in the Lukan parables. The parables, in Luke, serve to characterize Jesus's tablemates (Luke 7:36-50), opponents (Luke 20:9-16), and as a corrective to their attitudes (Luke 12:13-21).

These similarities invite and demand an investigation of the parables in light of fabulistic literature, characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation. I have brought together not only the three threads of characterization, rhetoric, and moral formation but also drawn into closer relationship fabulistic literature and parables as a potential sub-genre.

The Test Cases: Parable of the Prodigals and RML

Chapter Five discussed the Parable of the Prodigals and RML in light of the discussions in Chapters Two through Four. This chapter discussed the ways in which characterization and rhetoric come together in the service of moral formation in Luke 15:11-32 and 16:19-31. The Parable of the Prodigals and RML bring to the fore both Luke's notions of reversal, found in the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55) and the Beatitudes (Luke 6:20-26), and the calls to provide for those who cannot repay, as exemplified in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) and in the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:12-14, 15-24). By representing themes found elsewhere in Luke, the Parable of the Prodigals and RML are effective test cases for illustrating the behaviors of reckless liberality Luke advocates for his audience.

Rather than representing Aristotelian notions of liberality, Luke advocates that his audience give to those who cannot repay and who do not deserve it. In addition, Luke

presents characters who show generosity at times that would not be considered appropriate for such generosity, such as the Father's departure from the party—at which he was the host—to comfort the Elder Son (Luke 15:11-32). Luke also departs from Aristotelian notions of miserliness by holding open the possibility that the Elder Son might join the feast. Luke draws attention to the Elder Son and the question of whether the Elder Son will join the party unanswered. The audience likely recognizes that the correct answer to this question is for the Elder Son to affirm the necessity of the party and join.

The Parable of the Shrewd Steward connects the Parable of the Prodigals and RML. I argue that the Shrewd Steward shares some character traits with both the Prodigal and the Father and contrasts the Rich Man. The Steward squanders similarly to the Younger Son. At the same time, his debt-reduction reveals similar aspects to the Father's reckless liberality because the Steward gives in excessive amounts at what is an inappropriate time with respect to his employment, but an appropriate time with respect to his future well-being. Like the Younger Son's speech, the Steward's soliloquy marks a turning point in the narrative and marks his reorientation to "unrighteous Mammon." By re-orienting his attitude toward "unrighteous Mammon," the Steward gains praise and the expectation that he might depend on the generosity of others.

RML answers the question of what will happen if the Elder Son chooses to refuse to show generosity to the Younger Son, represented by his refusal to join the party. If he refuses to join the party, the Elder Son risks remaining outside the party permanently. As the representative of righteousness, the association between Lazarus and Abraham suggests that Abraham has provided what the Rich Man did not: comfort. Now outside

the proverbial party, the Rich Man has no recourse because he was not compelled to heed the warnings of Moses and the Prophets. Instead, he advocates for his brothers. Rather than sending Lazarus to warn the Rich Man's brothers, Abraham indicates that the brothers should listen to Moses and the Prophets. If they do not, they risk meeting the same fate as the Rich Man.

Ways Forward: Future Research

In the light of the arguments in the preceding chapters, there are several ways forward that this research anticipates. By drawing together the threads of rhetoric, characterization, and moral formation, I have demonstrated that these three belong together and indeed, ought to be treated together. Despite the increase in attention toward rhetorical criticism in the Gospels in recent years, the parables and their rhetorical role within the Synoptic Gospels remains open for further study.

Rhetoric, Characterization, and Moral Formation

The parables' capacity to bring together rhetoric, characterization, and moral formation offers many possibilities for future research. Given the prevalence of *prosōpopoiia* in parables, attending to this rhetorical technique may give greater insights into Luke's use of characterization. In addition, characterization's contribution to moral formation provides additional avenues for continuing to ascertain the way Luke employs parables in light of his wider argument.

Among the parables that would benefit from increased attention to rhetorical techniques—especially *prosōpopoiia*—are the Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:16-21) and the Parable of the Mina (Luke 19:11-27). In these parables, Luke attributes speech to

multiple characters and the speeches pertain to a character's situation and the corresponding plan of action. *Prosōpopoiia* occurs at significant points in the narrative—when the rich man has had a successful year, and when a slave returns to his master exact change—and might offer ways forward in interpreting these parables. The Rich Fool's plan, much like that of the Younger Son and the Shrewd Steward, is to determine a course of action that he thinks will preserve his well-being.² By contrast, in Luke 19:11-27, the Third Slave's speech and Master's response illuminate the character of both the Slave and of the Master. Rather than inviting interpreters to interpret the parables allegorically, the use of *prosōpopoiia* invites interpreters to engage the parables rhetorically.

A third parable that presents *prosōpopoiia* and various rhetorical techniques is the Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:15-24). This parable presents speech attributed to multiple characters, much like the Parable of the Prodigals and RML. The incorporation of other rhetorical techniques, such as *homoiooteleuton* (Luke 14:18, 19, 24), draws further attention to the parable and its role within Luke. Finally, this parable—like the Parable of the Prodigals—advocates for inviting those who cannot repay to a party, thereby providing another illustration for Luke's advocacy for reckless liberality.

Rhetorical criticism has much to offer with respect to ways forward in parables research. Beyond slowing attempts to interpret parables allegorically, rhetorical criticism allows the parables to remain within their narrative contexts and tends the ways the

² The Rich Fool's similarity to the Younger Son and the Shrewd Steward ends with the plan. His plan is to build bigger barns; rather than returning to familial relationships, as in the case of the Younger Son, or by endearing himself to others, as in the case of the Shrewd Steward, the Rich Fool seeks to prepare for his own future without regard for others, in which case he bears a striking similarity to the Rich Man in RML.

parables advance the narrative. Tending the rhetorical aspects of the parables provides a way forward for both characterization and, in the case of the Parable of the Prodigals, RML, and the Shrewd Steward, for moral formation as well.

Conclusion

By drawing together rhetoric, characterization, and moral formation, along with focusing on the function of *prosopopoiia* in the Parable of the Prodigals and RML, I demonstrated Luke's use of rhetorical techniques to illustrate behaviors to emulate and behaviors to avoid. In particular, within the Parable of the Prodigals and RML, Luke advocates for behaviors of reckless liberality. Unlike Aristotelian notions of liberality, which proffer the view that one ought to give to the right people in the right amounts at the right time, Lukan notions of liberality advocate that one give to the wrong people at the wrong time in extravagant amounts.

In the case of the Father in the Parable of the Prodigals, his reckless liberality exemplifies a trait to emulate. In the case of the Rich Man in RML, the Rich Man's failure to care for Lazarus during his lifetime reveals his lack of the desired reckless liberality and, what is more, his failure to listen to the Law and the Prophets. Given the various lexical and semantic similarities between the two parables, Luke draws them into close relationship with one another. As a result, it is plausible that RML responds to the questions left hanging at the end of the Parable of the Prodigals, Will the Elder Son join the party, and what will happen if he does not? My conclusions address significant but frequently overlooked aspects of the parables—the rhetorical techniques embedded within them. In addition, by drawing together ancient rhetoric, moral formation, and characterization, I situate the parables within their first-century context, during which

time these aspects frequently traveled together. These techniques provide the audience with additional clues by generating interest through *homoteleuton*, *paranomasia*, *aposiōpēsis*, and *ekphrasis*, among others.

Both the Parable of the Prodigals and RML relate to aspects of the Kingdom of God. In light of the indication “The Law and the Prophets were in effect up until John, but since the Kingdom of God has been proclaimed, all have been compelled to enter” (Luke 16:16), and in light of the indications whom one ought to invite to a feast in Luke 14:13, the Parable of the Prodigals and RML demonstrate both the invitation to enter the party and, at the same time, the necessity to invite those who cannot repay. The Kingdom of God is full of reckless liberality—things given to the wrong people at the wrong time and in excessive amounts. The Kingdom of God, whatever else it may be, is a party filled with people who do not deserve it, who cannot repay, and those who regularly squander what has been given to them. The Kingdom of God compels those who are hard-working and diligent to enter alongside the sinners and squanderers. And so the Elder Son’s quandary is left unanswered, and the parable ends with the Father’s indication of the party’s necessity. The question of whether or not the Rich Man’s brothers will listen to Moses and the Prophets is likewise unanswered, and Abraham’s words about the resurrection of the dead hang in the air. The party’s necessity is not only for the Younger Son. It is as necessary for the Elder Son as it is for the Younger, just as listening to Moses and the Prophets is as necessary for the still-living brothers as it was for the Rich Man during his lifetime. The invitation to enter the party remains open.

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