

CLARE K. ROTHCHILD

Luke-Acts  
and the Rhetoric of  
History

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe  
175*

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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Clare K. Rothschild

# Luke-Acts and the Rhetoric of History

An Investigation of Early Christian Historiography

Mohr Siebeck

CLARE K. ROTHCHILD, born 1964; 1992 M.T.S. Harvard University; 2003 Ph.D. University of Chicago; currently Lecturer, Biblical Studies at DePaul University, Chicago, IL.

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*For Douglas*



*Herr lehre doch mich, daß es ein Ende  
mit mir haben muß, und mein Leben  
ein Ziel hat, und ich davon muß.*

*Johannes Brahms,  
Ein Deutsches Requiem, op. 45 (Ps. 39:4)*



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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgments .....	V
Abbreviations and References .....	X
<i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i> .....	1
<i>Chapter 2: History of Interpretation</i> .....	24
2.1 Introduction: Critical Investigations of the Purpose of Acts .....	24
2.1.1 Tübingen School and Reactions .....	27
2.1.2 Franz Overbeck .....	29
2.2 Critical Investigations of Acts as History .....	32
2.2.1 Martin Dibelius .....	32
2.2.2 Henry Joel Cadbury .....	37
2.2.3 Hans Conzelmann .....	40
2.2.4 Ernst Haenchen .....	42
2.2.5 C. Kingsley Barrett .....	44
2.2.6 Paul Schubert's Festschrift .....	46
2.2.7 Recent American Approaches .....	48
2.2.8 Gregory E. Sterling .....	50
2.2.9 Hubert Cancik .....	53
2.2.10 Mark Reasoner .....	56
2.3 Summation .....	59
<i>Chapter 3: Methods of Authentication in Hellenistic and Early Roman Period Historiography</i> .....	60
3.1 Introduction .....	60
3.1.1 The Rhetoric of History: An Analogy .....	65
3.1.2 Historical Prologues .....	67
3.2 History of Interpretation .....	71
3.2.1 Rhetorical Historiography .....	71
3.2.2 Rhetorical Historiography as the Degradation of Classical Exemplars .....	72
3.2.3 Two 'School' Split .....	75
3.3 Ancient Sources on Historiographical Method .....	76
3.3.1 T. P. Wiseman .....	78
3.3.2 Lucian's κανών of Historiography .....	81

3.4 Imitation in Ancient Historiography .....	86
3.5 Authenticating Strategies in Luke-Acts .....	93
3.6 Summation .....	95
3.6.1 Four Features of Historical Rhetoric in Luke-Acts .....	96
<i>Chapter 4: Historical Recurrence as Rhetoric</i> .....	99
4.1 Introduction .....	99
4.1.1 Philosophical Background for Patterns of Recurrence .....	102
4.2 History of Interpretation .....	107
4.2.1 G. W. Trompf's Analysis of Historical Recurrence in Luke-Acts ...	111
4.3 Theoretical Basis for Reenactment as Rhetoric .....	115
4.3.1 Σύγκρισις .....	118
4.3.2 Εἰκόν .....	119
4.3.3 Two Forms of Rhetorical Imitation: Verbal Echoes and Historical Characterization .....	122
4.4 Analysis .....	124
4.4.1 Verbal Echoes .....	124
4.4.2 Historical Characterizations .....	129
4.4.3 Other Types of Repetition .....	138
4.5 Summation .....	139
<i>Chapter 5: Prediction in Historiography</i> .....	142
5.1 Introduction .....	142
5.1.1 History of Interpretation .....	145
5.2 Prediction in Ancient Historiography .....	150
5.2.1 Prediction in Hellenistic Historiography .....	156
5.3 Analysis .....	158
5.3.1 Introduction to LXX Citations in Luke-Acts .....	158
5.3.1.1 Comparative Methodology: The Gospel of Matthew .....	160
5.3.1.2 LXX Citations as Prediction in The Gospel of Luke .....	163
5.3.1.3 LXX Citations as Prediction in Acts .....	166
5.3.2 Other Prediction in Luke-Acts .....	175
5.3.2.1 Divine Prediction .....	176
5.3.2.2 Human Prediction .....	180
5.4 Summation .....	182
<i>Chapter 6: Divine Guidance as Rhetoric</i> .....	185
6.1 Introduction .....	185
6.2 History of Interpretation of Lukan Use of the Auxiliary Verb ΔΕΙ .....	189

6.3 Analysis .....	194
6.3.1 Introduction .....	194
6.3.2 Gospel of Luke .....	194
6.3.3 Acts of the Apostles .....	201
6.4 Related Examples in Hellenistic and Early Roman Period Historiography .....	208
6.5 Summation .....	211
<i>Chapter 7: Eyewitnesses and Epitomizing as Historical Rhetoric</i> .....	213
7.1 Introduction .....	213
7.2 History of Interpretation .....	218
7.3 Eyewitnesses and Epitomizing as Historical Rhetoric in Ancient Historiography and Ancient Rhetoric .....	220
7.3.1 УПЕРВОВА .....	220
7.4 Analysis .....	222
7.4.1 Introduction to the Rhetoric of Eyewitnesses .....	222
7.4.2 Introduction to Epitomizing Rhetoric .....	231
7.4.3 Special Manifestations of the Rhetoric of Eyewitnesses .....	240
7.4.4 Multiplication of Eyewitnesses: The Gospel of Luke .....	245
7.4.5 Multiplication of Eyewitnesses: The Acts of the Apostles .....	254
<i>Excursus: The 'We-passages' as Eyewitness Rhetoric</i> .....	264
7.4.6 Promotion of Eyewitnesses: The Gospel of Luke .....	267
7.4.7 Promotion of Eyewitnesses: The Acts of the Apostles .....	269
7.4.8 Epitomizing Rhetoric: Introduction .....	272
7.4.9 Epitomizing Rhetoric: The Gospel of Luke .....	275
7.4.10 Epitomizing Rhetoric: The Acts of the Apostles .....	276
7.5 Certain Exceptions to the Amplification of Eyewitnesses .....	287
7.6 Summation .....	289
<i>Chapter 8: Conclusions: Summation and Some Implications of the Analysis</i> .....	291
Bibliography .....	297
Indices .....	330
References .....	330
Modern Authors .....	362
Subjects .....	369



## Abbreviations and References

The Greek New Testament is cited from the *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Nestle-Aland 27<sup>th</sup> edition. Abbreviations correspond to the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, "Instructions for Contributors" (117/3 [1998] 555–579); the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (ed. S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth; 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Liddell, Scott and Jones, *A Greek-English Lexicon*; and G. W. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, including the following:

<i>ABD</i>	D. N. Freedman (ed.), <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
<i>AJP</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>AJT</i>	<i>American Journal of Theology</i>
<i>ANF</i>	Ante-Nicene Fathers
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
<i>BAGD</i>	W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the NT and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition (2000)
<i>BETL</i>	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester</i>
<i>BN</i>	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
<i>BT</i>	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>BZNW</i>	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CCSL</i>	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina
<i>CSEL</i>	Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
<i>CH</i>	<i>Church History</i>
<i>CurTM</i>	<i>Currents in Theology and Mission</i>
<i>Diss.</i>	Dissertation
<i>DUJ</i>	<i>Durham University Journal</i>
<i>EpRev</i>	<i>Epworth Review</i>
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudios bíblicos</i>
<i>ET</i>	English translation
<i>ETR</i>	<i>Etudes théologiques et religieuses</i>
<i>ExpTim</i>	Expository Times
<i>FC</i>	The Fathers of the Church
<i>Gk.</i>	Greek
<i>HDR</i>	Harvard Dissertations in Religion
<i>Heb.</i>	Hebrew
<i>HTR</i>	Harvard Theological Review
<i>ICC</i>	International Critical Commentary
<i>IDB</i>	G. A. Buttrick (ed.), <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>

<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
Lat.	Latin
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LE	The "Longer Ending" of the Gospel of Mark (Mk 16:9–20)
LSJ	Liddell, Scott and Jones, A Greek-English Lexicon
ms(s)	manuscript(s)
NA <sub>27</sub>	Aland, K., et al rev. and ed. <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> . 27 <sup>th</sup> ed.
NHL	J. M. Robinson (ed.), <i>The Nag Hammadi Library</i> , Revised Edition
NHS	Nag Hammadi Studies
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum, Supplements
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
<i>NTApo</i>	W. Schneemelcher (ed.), <i>New Testament Apocrypha</i> , Revised Edition
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
<i>OCD</i>	Hornblower and Spawforth (eds.), <i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition
<i>OTP</i>	J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), <i>The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i>
<i>PG</i>	J. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologia graeca</i>
<i>PL</i>	J. Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologia latina</i>
PW	Pauly-Wissowa, <i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>RAC</i>	T. Klauser (ed.), <i>Reallexicon für Antike und Christentum</i>
RB	Revue Biblique
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SBLSP	SBL Seminar Papers
SC	Sources chrétiennes
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTU	Studien zum Neuen Testament unter seiner Umwelt
<i>ST</i>	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
StudBT	Studia Biblica et Theologica
<i>TCGNT</i>	B. M. Metzger, <i>A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i>
<i>TRev</i>	<i>Theologische Revue</i>
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>VC</i>	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZKG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte</i>
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

## Chapter One

# Introduction

One must guard against what has become the tyrannical propensity to uncover typological theology or literary motif without so much as a thought for specifically historiographical methods, techniques and interests.<sup>1</sup>

As old as Homer, yet capturing many modern approaches as well, certain conventions of historiography can be broadly subsumed under the category of rhetoric. This present work is, in large part, a study of those conventions, precise definitions of which have long proved elusive to scholars of Graeco-Roman historiography. Like ancient philosophy, ancient history is, after all, a literary art of *exposing*, not *arguing* truth.<sup>2</sup> According to Quintilian, history is

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<sup>1</sup> G. W. Trompf, *The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) 137. This work, while mainly about Polybius, offers a careful comparison with Luke-Acts on the topic of historical recurrence. Cf. also the approach of John Van Seters: "The comparative study of Herodotus and Deuteronomy has also suggested that a variety of literary techniques were used in early historical prose narration to create a sense of unity in a long and complex work. These include parataxis . . . the use of speeches by major figures or the insertion of editorial comment to introduce or sum up the theme of a unit, or to provide a transition to the next unit; the periodization of history with the dovetailing of eras, themes, and *logoi*; the association of themes with principal figures . . . the pattern of prophetic and fulfillment, which may be used as two poles within a *logos* or as a link for quite widely separated units; and the use of analogies between the figures of history . . . such literary devices were widely used both in the ancient Near East generally and in early Greek prose" (*In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983] 358).

<sup>2</sup> According to Philodemus, rhetoric offers plausibilities, and philosophy, certainties (*Philodemi Volumina Rhetorica*, 2 vols. and suppl., ed. Siegfried Sudhaus, [Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1892—96] 1.247—70). For a discussion, see E. Asmis, "Rhetoric and Reason," *American Journal of Philology* 104 (1983) 38—50. Also, Carlo Ginzburg finds a demonstration of this point in Aristotle's comment that it is unnecessary to specify that the prize of the Olympic games is a crown because "everyone" knows it (*Rh.* 1.1357A). Ginzburg's interpretation of Aristotle's comment is that "the discourses analyzed by rhetoric refer to a specific community, not to men as rational animals. Rhetoric moves in the realm of the probable, not in that of scientific truth" (*History, Rhetoric, and Proof* [The Menahem Stern Jerusalem Lectures; Hanover: University Press of New England, 1999] 22). One modern debate, however, characterizes scientific discourse as deceptive rhetoric, scientists as

written *ad narrandum non ad probandum*.<sup>3</sup> Diodorus Siculus testifies to this similarity in his description of history as philosophy by example (1.2.2).<sup>4</sup> Arguing by means of proofs is, at least in theory, contrary to exposing truth, and as such the duty of other professions, such as politics, drama and law.<sup>5</sup> By definition, historiography, like philosophy, eschews rhetoric.<sup>6</sup>

And yet, every historian is motivated by a purpose or intent that requires technical skills for its expression. Conventions against open exhibition of argument in historiography result, therefore, in techniques of persuasion that are often creative and discreet.<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately, the subtlety of these techniques can cause them to be overlooked in interpretations of the texts or mislabeled as the “theological” or “apologetic” approach of a given historian. The goal of this project is to expose these elements in their principal capacity as conventions of historical rhetoric, reflecting theological or other interests only secondarily.<sup>8</sup> It is, further, to demonstrate that these elements are

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“rhetors in disguise.” For a description of this debate, see C. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969) 1–4; Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, New York: Anchor, 1967) 88; Herbert W. Simons, “Are Scientists Rhetors in Disguise? An Analysis of Discursive Processes Within Scientific Communities,” in *Rhetoric in Transition: Studies in the Nature and Uses of Rhetoric*, Eugene E. White, ed. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1980) 115–30.

<sup>3</sup> Quint., *Inst.* 10.1.31.

<sup>4</sup> ... πόσω μᾶλλον ὑποληπτέον τὴν προφητικὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἱστορίαν, τῆς ὅλης φιλοσοφίας οἰονεὶ μητρόπολιν οὔσαν. See Charles Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983) 116. For the argument that the material of this preface is the work of its author, see A. D. Nock, “Posidonius,” *JRS* 49 (1959) 5. Cf. also Dion. Hal. 11.1.4 and Sallust, who announces a philosophical treatise at the beginning of the history of Catiline’s conspiracy and Rome’s war with Jugurtha (*Cat. pref.*; *Jug. pref.*); also, Diod. Sic. 1.2.

<sup>5</sup> For a description of the relationships between ancient historiography, oratory, and drama, see Charles Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome*, pp. 169–75.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Plato, *Phdr.* 259E–260A.

<sup>7</sup> Diod. Sic. maintains that, whereas other types of composition may pervert the truth, in history alone are style and content in perfect agreement: μόνην δὲ τὴν ἱστορίαν, συμφωνούντων ἐν αὐτῇ τῶν λόγων τοῖς ἔργοις (1.2.7). Cf. ET by A. J. Toynbee: “There is a harmony between the facts and their literary expression” (*Greek Historical Thought from Homer to the Age of Heraclitus* [London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1924] 32).

<sup>8</sup> Identification of the rhetorical role of these elements does not, however, impute to the author any specific intention. On parallelism between Luke and Acts, Joel B. Green writes, “The question of intentionality cannot be prejudged or, for that matter, engaged by way of certifying the presence or absence of specific cases of alleged parallelism.” In place of “parallelism,” the phrase “use of rhetoric” might be inserted. (“Internal Repetition in Luke-Acts,” in *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts*, ed. Ben Witherington, III [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996] 283–99). On the integration of theological

deployed in the agonistic context of Hellenistic and early Roman period history-writing<sup>9</sup> as means of clarifying and attracting audiences to a certain version of the past.<sup>10</sup> Although it is anachronistic to impute to these ancient

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motifs in historiography, Colin J. Hemer argues that “the modern polarization between theological *Tendenz* and a hypothetical ‘history for its own sake’ is not realistic about the ordinary character of historical evidence. Facts do not come in sealed packets untouched by human hands: selection and interpretation, at however rudimentary stage, are inseparable from historical information, and it is none the worse for that” (“Ancient Historiography,” in *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, ed. Conrad H. Gempf [Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990] 69).

<sup>9</sup> Josephus, *Ap.* 1.24–7; Livy, pref. 2–3; Justin, *Epit.*, praef. 1, (*aemulatio gloriae*); Appian pref. §12, Arrian, *Anab.* 1.2; Plutarch, *Alex.* pref. Many histories of the Hellenistic period have been lost. The agonistic context of Hellenistic history-writing is the “rhetorical situation” of these ancient historians. See Lloyd Bitzer, “The Rhetorical Situation,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968) 1–14; reprinted in *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, Supplementary Issue (1992) 1–14; idem, “Functional Communication: A Situational Perspective,” in *Rhetoric in Transition: Studies in the Nature and Uses of Rhetoric*, ed. Eugene White (University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University, 1980) 21–38. Bitzer argues that for every rhetorical situation there is “at least one controlling exigence which functions as an organizing principle” (“The Rhetorical Situation,” p. 7). Bitzer’s theory, however, is not without critics; see, for example, Arthur B. Miller, “Rhetorical Exigence,” *Philosophy & Rhetoric* 5 (1972) 111–18. George Kennedy also argues for rhetoric customized to particular situations (*New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984] 33–38). Kennedy relates the “situation” to form criticism’s concept, *Sitz im Leben*, although Wilhelm Wuellner disagrees (“Where is Rhetorical Criticism Taking Us?” *CBQ* 49 [1987] 456). In the case of Hellenistic historians, however, such a connection might apply. Cf. also Alan Brinton, “Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric,” *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 14 (1981) 234–48.

<sup>10</sup> Dionysius, for example, argues that history, as moralistic, is advantageous. In difficult times, knowledge of past examples can, besides bringing pleasure, τὸ περὶ τοὺς ἀναγκαίους καιροὺς μεγάλα τὰς πόλεις ἐκ τῆς τοιαύτης ἐμπειρίας ὠφελεῖν καὶ ἄγειν αὐτὰς ἐκούσας ἐπὶ τὰ συμφέροντα διὰ τοῦ λόγου (Dion. Hal. 11.1.4). Emphasis on the widespread historiographical goals of usefulness and eternity, however, are demoted among some during the Hellenistic Period in favor of an emphasis on instant audience gratification. Cf. Thuc. 1.22.4: κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν ξύκειται; Diod. Sic., 1.1–5; Livy, pref.; Procopius, *Aed.* 1.2; 2 Macc 2:25; and 2 Macc 15:39: “And the condition of the arrangement of the narrative delights the ears encountering it [καὶ τὸ τῆς κατασκευῆς τοῦ λόγου τέρπει τὰς ἀκοὰς τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων τῇ συντάξει].” On rhetoric as an art of persuasion as opposed to ornamentation, see W. Wuellner, “Where is Rhetorical Criticism Taking Us?” pp. 448–63.

As those who attributed Mark’s Gospel to “Mark” (ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΡΚΟΝ) recognized, this work was composed a generation or more after the original disciples (Mk 15:21). Yet even here the claim to be a second-hand report functions as a form of authentication. The author of the Longer Ending (16:9–20) of Mark, however, favored eyewitness authentication, seeking to reclaim Mark’s gospel as a reliable witness, not as others did through a thorough rewriting, but by an improved ending that includes the risen Christ’s endorsement of, among other things, unusual missionary practices. See James A. Kelhoffer, *Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark* (WUNT

authors post-Enlightenment concerns about credibility, these authors, nevertheless, had versions of this concern. Announcing their intentions to compose history (συγγραφεῖν), many ancient historians claim to avoid rhetoric or style in favor of unadorned truth in the introductions to their works. Accepting these claims at face value, many nineteenth century scholars did not recognize the persuasive strategies of these compositions.<sup>11</sup> The discursive historical narratives of Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for example, were understood as unencumbered by commitments or responsibilities of a subjective nature. Herodotus' assertion that he will exclude stories about the gods and report only what he must (ὕπὸ τοῦ λόγου ἐξαναγκάζομενος ἐπιμνησθῆσομαι, *Hist.* 2.3; cf. *Hist.* 2.65) was taken as exemplary of this commitment.<sup>12</sup> The *Antiquitates Judaicae*, Josephus' history of the Jews from Creation to the outbreak of the revolt against Rome, is still in certain quarters considered free of "theology."<sup>13</sup> Formulaic, rationalizing remarks that the reader should "make

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II/112; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000). The Fourth Gospel's self-authenticating *Tendenz* is evident in its own subtle claims to eyewitness reports, (apart from possible claims concerning the eyewitness experiences of "the beloved disciple" [John 13:23; 13:24—5; 18:15—16; 19:26—27; 20:4; 20:8; 21:7; 21:21—24]), in details such as the "six stone water jars" (John 2:6) and the "one hundred fifty-three" large fish (John 21:11). John Chrysostom affirms this interpretation: "Therefore John also at that time, in his Gospel, speaking of the blood and water, said, he himself saw it, making the fact of his having seen it equivalent, for them, to the highest testimony, although the witness of the Spirit is more certain than the evidence of sight, but not so with unbelievers" (*comm. Acts*, Hom. 1, p. 3, col. 2). According to G. Williams, this self-authenticating aim is part of a larger literary trend in which "stylistic distinctions between various genres" are "breaking down," emphasis transferring to the "personality of the individual performer" (*Change and Decline* [Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1978] 305).

<sup>11</sup> Donald Lateiner, *The Historical Method of Herodotus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989) 18.

<sup>12</sup> One manifestation of the theological *Tendenz* in ancient history is divine intervention or causation. See John Gould, "Herodotus and Religion," in *Greek Historiography* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994) 91—106. In order to fully comprehend the problem of theology in history, background on the methods of these historians is essential. In their work of combining, organizing, and ordering sources, it was incumbent upon those documenting *πράξεις*, in particular, (different from genealogy, horography, chronography et al), to impart to the records connection and significance. One way to accomplish this goal was by linking otherwise unconnected events through a nexus of causes. Another, when causes of events were unknown or implausible, was to attribute them to divine intervention (Arthur J. Droge, "The Interpretation of the History of Culture in Hellenistic-Jewish Historiography," *SBL 1984 Seminar Papers* [Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984] 135—59). Divine intervention could also be summoned in support of accounts palpably false (mythical)—those, such as accounts of origins for which sources/witnesses were unavailable. The Roman historian Livy observed: *Datur haec venia antiquitati, ut miscendo humana divinis primordia urbium augustiora faciat* (pref. 6—7).

<sup>13</sup> Louis H. Feldman, "Josephus," *ABD* 3.988—89.

up his own mind” with regard to the miraculous in Josephus and Dionysius of Halicarnassus are also touted as evidence of these ancient historians’ commitments to remain free of this perceived weakness.<sup>14</sup>

The ancient worldviews producing these histories, however, were imbued, in ways difficult to comprehend today, with theological (or mythical) concerns.<sup>15</sup> In his refutation of Paul Veyne’s theory of two different epistemological categories for history (knowing) and myth (believing) as applied to Plutarch, Christopher Pelling writes:

It is clear from the range of sources quoted within *Theseus* itself that the most influential Athidographers did not accept a firm boundary between mythical and historical material, and passed within their works from one to the other. Plutarch shares that intellectual outlook. For this continuity of conception to work, closely related sorts of things must—on the whole—have been going on in the ‘mythical’ past as in the fifth century and the first century BC: they must at least be parts of the same story. That does not sound as if the two sorts of material commanded “different sorts of belief.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Other examples of this type of remark include comments that defer to another authority (e.g., Herodotus, *Hist.* 7.152.3; Sallust, *Jug.* 17.7; Valerius Maximus 1.8.7; Pliny, *HN* 17.93; Curt. 9.1.3; Arrian, *Anab.* 1.3). On this practice Seneca remarks: *Aut, quod historici faciunt, et ipse faciam; illi, cum multa mentiti sunt ad arbitrium suum, unam aliquam rem nolunt spondere sed adiciunt: Penes auctores fides erit* (*Q Nat.* 4B.3.1). T. P. Wiseman correctly points out that the aim of these phrases is to give the “illusion that the rest of what they say is guaranteed” (“Lying Historians: Seven Types of Mendacity,” in *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, ed. Christopher Gill and T. P. Wiseman [Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press, 1993] 135; emphasis original). On use of the formula in Josephus, *Ant.*, see Harold W. Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1976) 44. In the interest of truth, in Wiseman’s words, “some credible things [are] not worth relating, and some incredible ones are” (“Lying Historians: Seven Types of Mendacity,” p. 137; emphasis original).

<sup>15</sup> “Myth,” for Herodotus, was that “which cannot be corroborated by personal observation or inquiry” (A. E. Wardman, “Myth in Greek Historiography,” *History* 9 [1960] 404). “Myth in the strict sense dealt with events of the remote past” and “had to be converted, if possible, into history; and this is why ἀρχαιολογίαι and myths are not exclusive of each other” (“Myth in Greek Historiography,” p. 408). Adjudicating likelihoods oneself and then urging the audience to decide: “myth as content was to be treated by the method of probability” (“Myth in Greek Historiography,” p. 411). “Myth is in the service of truth, and is not just an idle amusement. ... Although myth is often opposed to λόγος, in the sense of false to true, there is also a sense in which myth can help to complete λόγος. ... Even if the incident did not actually happen, it does correspond to a true state of affairs ...” (“Myth in Greek Historiography,” p. 412). Cf. also Photius’ comment on Antonius Diogenes, *Apista* (Bibb. Cod. 109a.10–13): ταῖς δὲ διανοίαις πλείστον ἔχει τοῦ ἡδους, ἅτε μύθων ἐγγὺς καὶ ἀπίστων ἐν πιθανωτάτῃ πλάσει καὶ διασκευῇ ὕλην ἑαυτῇ διηγημάτων ποιοῦμένη.

<sup>16</sup> C. Pelling, “‘Making Myth Look like History:’ Plutarch’s Theseus-Romulus,” in *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies* (London: Duckworth [and The Classical Press of Wales] 2002) 188.

One of the earliest and most profound recognitions of the theological dimension<sup>17</sup> of ancient historiography is F. M. Cornford's 1907 study of the ostensibly most objective of Greek historians, Thucydides.<sup>18</sup> Challenging the premise that historiography had been scientific, in an Enlightenment sense, in antiquity, Cornford's *Thucydides Mythistoricus* opened up concerns of objectivity in historiography. Although the details of Cornford's critique do not concern the present inquiry directly, in the decades following its publication, Cornford's skepticism led to a number of important changes in classical studies, among them rhetorical analyses of ancient historiography, beginning with the speeches in Thucydides, but ultimately including all aspects of historical narrative.<sup>19</sup>

Once the so-called scientific bulwarks imputed to ancient historiography had been cracked, other assumptions regarding truth/opinion and fact/fiction in ancient history could also be contested.<sup>20</sup> As a part of this trend, academic studies of the Bible began asking related questions. In response to German biblical scholar Gerhard von Rad's contention that "the Old Testament is a history book,"<sup>21</sup> for example, James Barr argued that the narrative material of the Hebrew Bible shared certain "features" of history, even if the events

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<sup>17</sup> The theological component of the ancient worldview does not amount to a certain belief or set of beliefs, only to "the conviction that there existed a sympathy between the gods and the world of men rendering possible the divine origin of oracles, dreams, and prodigies" and to the belief that this "sympathy" plays itself out in the course of human history. Through this "theological" worldview the historian filters his sources (Charles Fornara, *History in Ancient Greece and Rome*, p. 77).

<sup>18</sup> F. M. Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (New York: Greenwood, repr. 1969; [1907]).

<sup>19</sup> The following works and their bibliographies are helpful: H. R. Immerwahr, "Pathology of Power and the Speeches in Thucydides," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, ed. P. A. Stadter (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973) 16–31; H.-P. Stahl, "Speeches and Course of Events in Books Six and Seven of Thucydides," in *The Speeches in Thucydides*, pp. 60–77; F. W. Walbank, "Speeches in Greek Historians," in *Selected Papers: Studies in Greek and Roman History and Historiography* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 242–61. For a discussion of Acts in terms of Thucydides' programmatic statement on the accuracy of his speeches, see S. E. Porter, "Thucydides 1.22.1 and the Speeches in Acts: Is there a Thucydidean View?" *NovT* 32 (1990) 121–42.

<sup>20</sup> Such a struggle was not new. The ancients themselves sought clarification between fact and fiction in historiography. As Bowersock points out, Plutarch is aware of a difference between the two (*Thes.* 1), yet did not hesitate to compose "lives" of Romulus and Numa (G. W. Bowersock, *Fiction as History: Nero to Julian* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994] 1).

<sup>21</sup> "The Beginnings of Historical Writing in Ancient Israel," in *The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays*, trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1966) 166–204; originally published as "Der Anfang der Geschichtsschreibung im Alten Israel," *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 32 (1944) 1–42.

themselves are essentially “stories.”<sup>22</sup> In his article summarizing these arguments, John J. Collins describes the shift in academic study of the Hebrew Bible as moving from “an insistence on historical reliability to an appreciation of literary form,” adding that the OT does not “provide a guaranteed corpus of historical facts.”<sup>23</sup> For Collins, the Hebrew scriptures cannot be considered history or even “revelation in history,” even if they possess history-like features.<sup>24</sup> Focusing on “divine activity” as the primary obstacle for objectivity within the biblical corpus, Collins writes:

Any attempt to treat the OT narratives as reliable historical information is beset by the problem that there is a gulf between anything that can be established by critical historiography and the confession of divine activity that is central to the biblical texts.<sup>25</sup>

Divine intervention in history cannot, however, be confined to the “confession” of a theocentric worldview. Whether in classical, Jewish, or early Christian historiography, divine intervention is as much a matter of the stylistic imitation of literary forerunners, independent of an individual author’s theological beliefs.<sup>26</sup> The aim of such stylistic imitation was to

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<sup>22</sup> James Barr, “Story and History in Biblical Theology,” *JR* 56 (1976) 6. Elsewhere Barr distinguishes between two types of biblical writing: informational writing containing facts with “referents” in the real world of the author and literary writing used to imbue the work with an added “aesthetic” value, complementing its accuracy with interest and appeal. A narrative with both types is neither fiction, nor history, but a fictive account with some basis in actual events (*The Bible in the Modern World* [New York: Harper & Row, 1973] 53–74; cf. also “Reading the Bible as Literature,” *BJRL* 56 (1973) 10–33). On Israelite historiography, see B. Albrektson, *History of the Gods: An Essay on the Idea of Historical Events as Divine Manifestations in the Ancient Near East and in Israel* (Lund: Gleerup, 1967); R. C. Dentan, ed., *The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955); J. M. M. Roberts, “Myth versus History: Relaying the Comparative Foundations,” *CBQ* 38 (1976) 1–13; John Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History*.

<sup>23</sup> John J. Collins, “The ‘Historical Character’ of the Old Testament in Recent Biblical Theology,” p. 187. For a more recent review of the positions see Thomas M. Bolin, “History, Historiography, and the Use of the Past in the Hebrew Bible,” in *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts*, ed. Christina S. Kraus (Leiden: Brill, 1999) 113–40.

<sup>24</sup> Meir Sternberg (*Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987]) has his own, strictly literary, explanation of the distinctions (pp. 23–35).

<sup>25</sup> John J. Collins, “The ‘Historical Character’ of the Old Testament in Recent Biblical Theology,” p. 191.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. the comment by Thomas L. Thompson, “Salvation history did not happen; it is a literary form which has its own historical context” (*The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narrative: The Quest for the Historical Abraham* [Berlin/New York: W. de Gruyter, 1974] 328).

enable a historian to inscribe himself within a certain, elite literary tradition,<sup>27</sup> an attachment with a distinctly competitive edge.<sup>28</sup> Divine sanction in ancient historiography is no mere religious “confession”—a relaxation of critical reasoning and a succumbing to the theocentric climate of the day. It is, rather, at least for Herodotus and his tradents, a self-referential literary strategy of authentication.<sup>29</sup>

Ancient Greek historiography emerged from within the literary context of the epic poem.<sup>30</sup> The desire to perpetuate the Homeric history-writing

<sup>27</sup> Historiography is, however, not simply a prose version of epic in the Ancient Near East or in Greece. While epic and prose share a common literary context, a genealogical connection cannot be proven. Moreover, the distinction of history as elite and epic as popular is oversimplified. In *Tradition as Legacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), while admitting that “Homer is the source of every significant literary genre” (p. 31), Marianne Palmer Bonz sets up such a false distinction between epic and history (p. 56), failing to acknowledge the latter as an innovation of the former (the key modification, of course, its prose form). She claims that epic addresses “more profound and universal questions of human existence” (p. 20), has a wider “audience appeal” (p. 20), lends itself better to “oral performance” (p. 189), more frequently employs literary parallelism and prediction (p. 22), emphasizes “historical and moral concerns” (p. 48), and subordinates “historical concerns” to both creativity and literary control (pp. 58, 184, 186)—all well-known features of both epic and history. Her description of the “eschatological fulfillment of Fate’s providential plan, as proclaimed in the *Aeneid*’s *ex eventu* prophecy (prophecy after the fact)... designated as unfolding in the historic present of Augustus’ reign” (p. 77) is more commonly referred to as historical recurrence—a *topos* of ancient (and modern!) history. Although Bonz accurately characterizes epic’s convention of divine-human interaction (“generally left unexplained or dismissively attributed to *τυχή* or *fortuna*” in ancient historiography), she does not clarify where divine-human interaction of “epic proportion” is evident in Luke-Acts. The argument is reminiscent of Mark Reasoner’s critique of H. Cancik (“The Theme of Acts: Institutional History of Divine Necessity in History?” *JBL* 118 [1999] 635—59; Hubert Cancik, “The History of Culture, Religion, and Institutions in Ancient Historiography: Philological Observations Concerning Luke’s History,” *JBL* 116 [1997] 673—95). For my assessment of these arguments, see ch. 3 of the present work. (Like Reasoner’s view of Cancik’s article, Bonz’s view of Greg Sterling’s work is that it represents a view of Luke-Acts that “lose[s] sight” of its wonder [p. 186]). In the end, absence of “poetic form” in Luke-Acts amounts to much more than an “important exception” to its categorization as epic (p. 190; cf. also p. 29). On the contrary, it is a distinguishing one.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Pliny, *Ep.* 16. A. E. Wardman refers to “the prestige of myth” which, he argues, may have been considered “harmful to historical writing” (“Myth in Greek Historiography,” p. 413).

<sup>29</sup> E.g., Arrian, *Anab.* 5.1.2: Τὰ γάρ τοι κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ξυντιθέεντι οὐ πιστά, ἐπειδὴν τὸ θεῖον τις προσῆθῃ τῷ λόγῳ, οὐ πάντῃ ἀπιστὰ φαίνεται.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Quintilian 10.1.31 ff.; Pliny, *Ep.* 5.9 both of which regard history, if prose, as more poetic than oratory. This connection is overlooked by Bonz, causing her to overstate differences between history and epic, claiming for Luke-Acts one category *over* the other (*Tradition as Legacy*, pp. 189—93). This thesis of the present inquiry also calls into question other binary oppositions such as the political content of history vs. the moralizing content of biography. Neither opposition is a necessary reading of the ancient texts. The

tradition was a principal motivation for Herodotus' work.<sup>31</sup> Although Herodotus aims to reduce reports narrating divine involvement in his depiction of the Greek war with the Persians, he cannot and does not wish to completely extricate himself from all such frames of reference,<sup>32</sup> not because he is still partially trapped in a theocentric worldview, but because the Homeric corpus is among his most illustrious forerunners. One of many examples is found in his claim that the coincidental death of the sons of two Spartan heralds represented a "divine act (θεῖον ... τὸ πρῆγμα)" (*Hist.* 7.137.2). For whatever reason, this particular incident provided, for Herodotus, unmistakable evidence of divine intervention. The point here is that Herodotus' modification of divine involvement in history over literary forerunners is expressed incrementally out of a desire to uphold connections with the most highly regarded exemplars of the historiographical tradition. Such connections function as a kind of 'rhetoric of history' in so far as they are the narrative strategy that facilitates a historian's argument for the authority of his rendition of the past through a discriminating imitation of select forerunners. Modifications by later historians modeling their works after Herodotus' repeat this pattern.<sup>33</sup>

Although divine intervention is only a minor point on which Herodotus demonstrates modification of his forerunners, in terms of narrative strategies, it has a special value. As a literary technique, divine causation is reserved by historians to describe events for which natural explanations fall short in terms of either plausibility or capturing an event's "truth," or significance, or both. In such cases ancient historians seemed to believe that their concept of

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history/biography debate is particularly shallow, having yielded few insights over the past hundred plus years of scholarship. To be sure, Hellenistic and early Roman period authors of many genres and styles increased the biographical content of their works for a variety of purposes, among them, the rhetorical one of clarifying and attracting audiences—a development related to Alexandrian/Callimachean innovations. (I am grateful to David Balch for his willingness to discuss this point.) The basis of biblical historiography in epic traditions is disputed. Calling this assumption into question is John van Seters: *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History*, pp. 18—31. Cf. the opposing views of W. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962 [1940]) and F. M. Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1973).

<sup>31</sup> The "climate of Ionian rationalism" is that in which Herodotus' "publication of research" originates (T. P. Wiseman, "Lying Historians: Seven Types of Mendacity," p. 136).

<sup>32</sup> It should be noted also that elements of Ionic rationalism are already evident in Homer through the inclusion of causality and motivation. Thanks to Hubert Cancik for this point.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Cic. *Inv. rhet.* 1.2 where Cicero uses a line from an epic poem to illustrate history. Cf. also *Rhet. Her.* 1.8.13.

“historical truth” suffered neglect in the bare presentation of facts.<sup>34</sup> The biblical narratives provide an example. Collins makes the point:

The biblical way of describing an event such as the Exodus is evidently an attempt to express the significance of that event, from the perspective of the Israelite community. By affirming that the event in question is an act of God, the biblical account is claiming that it had an abiding significance for the community since it provides, in effect, a revelation of God. The significance of such an event cannot be adequately appreciated by merely asking whether it happened. We must also ask in what way the event illuminates the subsequent experience of the community, and indeed, what implications it may have for humanity at large.<sup>35</sup>

An author’s claim of divine intervention, then, is important as a rhetorical strategy, not only for establishing connections with elite forerunners in the tradition, but also, for its ability to render mere facts as truth, the point, according to many ancient historians, of recording history in the first place.

This understanding of literary traditions of historiography, of course, presupposes the discrediting of widespread generalizations, either that the Jewish scriptures represent history in contrast to, for example, Greek myths, or that they represent historical progress in contrast with the cyclical quality of the history of its neighbors.<sup>36</sup> Jewish and Greek historiography alike emerge from literary contexts that make divine-human relationships explicit whenever such relationships are necessary for the exposition of truth.<sup>37</sup> One

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<sup>34</sup> According to Sempronius Asellio in *Res Gestae: id fabulas pueris est narrare, non historias scribere* (Asellio fr. 1P in Hermann Peter, *Historicorum Romanorum Reliquiae*, vol. 1<sup>2</sup> [Leipzig: Teubner, 1914] pp. ccxlii—ccxlv, 179—84). Cf. the citation of Sempronius Asellio in Aulus Gellius, *NA* 5.18.9.

<sup>35</sup> John J. Collins, “The ‘Historical Character’ of the Old Testament in Recent Biblical Theology,” p. 197. Collins also cites V. A. Harvey on H. Richard Niebuhr who “suggests that revelation might best be understood as an event that so captures the imagination of a community that it alters that community’s way of looking at the totality of its experience. It is an event that strikes the community as illuminatory for understanding all other events” (V. A. Harvey, *The Historian and the Believer: The Morality of Historical Knowledge and Christian Belief* [New York: Macmillan, 1966] 253, paraphrasing H. R. Niebuhr, *The Meaning of Revelation* [New York: Macmillan, 1946] 93).

<sup>36</sup> John J. Collins, “The ‘Historical Character’ of the Old Testament in Recent Biblical Theology,” p. 199. See also G. W. Trompf, *The Idea of Historical Recurrence in Western Thought*, p. 117.

<sup>37</sup> That the truth must not be withheld in history is attested by Cicero, *De or.* 2.15.62—64: “Do you see how great a responsibility the orator has in historical writing? I rather think that for fluency and diversity of diction it comes first. Yet nowhere do I find this art supplied with any independent directions from the rhetoricians; indeed its rules lie open to view. For who does not know history’s first law to be that an author must not dare to tell anything but the truth? And second that he must make bold to tell the whole truth? That there must be no suggestion of partiality anywhere in his writings? Nor of malice? This groundwork of course is familiar to everyone; the completed structure however rests upon the story (*rebus*) and the

might say that the art of ancient historiography, biblical and otherwise, falls somewhere in between von Rad's "history" and Barr's "story" as the culmination of a process of imbuing factual data with significance for the manufacture of truth.<sup>38</sup>

Of course, the rhetoric of historical texts has long been a topic of discussion, particularly within the field of the philosophy of history. Much of the debate, however, is motivated by *a priori* decisions about the meaning of the word "rhetoric" and its implications for investigations of facts.<sup>39</sup> As noted above, such concerns were common in antiquity. Although ancient historians reflect the influences of concurrent developments within philosophy and science in their move toward empirical "research" (ιστορία) of wars and related political events and antiquarian origins, modification of earlier historiography such as the epics was gradual. Maintaining some myth or theology, both dignified the works through connections to important predecessors, and served a historian's obligation to impart truth. Furthermore, ancient historiography never prohibited logical application of literary principles derived from rhetoric.<sup>40</sup> Absence of handbooks on how to write history suggests not that the application of rhetoric to history was forbidden, but that it was customary and that the rhetorical handbooks were sufficient for this purpose. Historians availed themselves of rhetoric to the extent necessary for the accomplishment of the goal of their work—the facts about what took place with their significance. Aristotle's definition of "rhetoric" as "available means of persuasion (ἔστω δὴ ῥητορικὴ δύναμις

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diction (*verbis*). The nature of the subject needs chronological arrangement and geographical representation: and since, in reading of important affairs worth recording, the plans of campaign, the executive actions and the results are successively looked for, it calls also, as regards such plans, for some intimation of what the writer approves, and, in the narrative of achievement, not only for a statement of what was done or said, but also of the manner of doing or saying it; and, in the estimate of consequences, for an exposition of all contributory causes, whether originating in accident, discretion or foolhardiness; and, as for the individual actors, besides an account of their exploits, it demands particulars of the lives and characters of such as are outstanding in renown and dignity. Then again the kind of language and type of style to be followed are the easy and the flowing, which run their course with unvarying current and a certain placidity, avoiding alike the rough speech we use in Court and the advocate's stinging epigrams. Upon all these numerous and important points, do you observe that any directions are found in the rhetoricians' systems?" (ET by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham).

<sup>38</sup> That is, imbuing data with significance is a well-known aim of ancient historiography although Aristotle criticized this genre in favor of poetry, characterizing history as mere recording of facts and poetry as addressing universal truths (*Poet.* 9).

<sup>39</sup> Henry J. Cadbury, "Four Features of Lucan Style," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, ed. Leander Keck and J. Louis Martyn (Mifflintown, PA: Sigler, repr. 1999 [1966]) 87.

<sup>40</sup> "Both poet and historian operate within rules which were originally rhetorical" (D. A. Russell, "Rhetoric and Criticism," *Greece and Rome* 14 [1967] 135).

περὶ ἕκαστον τοῦ θεωρῆσαι τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον πιθανόν)” (*Rh.* 1.2.1; cf. 1.2.7) itself suggests varied applications within ancient literature.

It has long been alleged, however, that in the Hellenistic and early Roman periods, historians allowed considerations of rhetoric to impinge on their works over their predecessors’ altering the value of their works as factual. Hellenistic historians in particular have been charged with degrading the tradition they inherited. The following analysis seeks to show, on the contrary, that exploitation of persuasive means cannot be relegated to a handful of tragic or second-tier historians categorized as adherents to a rhetorical or an Isocratean school. Rather, as a result of competition,<sup>41</sup> well-established literary *topoi* of earlier ancient historical composition, such as divine intervention, patterns of recurrence and prediction, were appropriated by even the most scientific of Hellenistic historians—those claiming roots in the Thucydidean tradition—as types of rhetorical proof in defense of the credibility of the author’s version of the events. Properly understood, prediction in history, therefore, reflects not theology, but rhetoric. Although in some Hellenistic and early Roman historical works, as the comments of Polybius and Lucian attest, sensational, tragic, moralistic and psychological effects are patently abused, in others, however, more scientific literary strategies are deployed for the purpose of clarifying and commending one version of the events over competing versions. Both strategies are rhetorical in that these elements function as “available means of persuasion” by facilitating a case for one version of the events over others—every historian’s argument.<sup>42</sup> Both types of rhetoric are rooted in earlier historiographical traditions: sensational, tragic, moralistic and psychological effects in the history-writing of ancient epics and the more critical or scientific strategies in the historiography of Herodotus, Thucydides and tradents. For Hellenistic period historiography, the former strategy, properly understood as rhetoric of history, has been investigated thoroughly by scholarship. The latter strategy, however, also to be understood as rhetoric of history, has not.

From the outset of this study it is important to establish that rhetoric is meant here neither exactly in its technical sense nor in some un- or ill-defined looser sense. It is, in particular, not used to invoke theories of an Aristotelian/Isocratean split in Hellenistic historiography. The term is used, rather, to identify that ancient historians, once students of handbook precepts, worked within generic constraints requiring the subterfuge of argument in favor of unadorned presentation of truth apart from opportunities afforded by

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<sup>41</sup> Competition was not new in the Hellenistic period. On this point, I thank Hubert Cancik for an advance copy of his article, “Standardization and Ranking of Texts in Ancient Institutions,” in *Homer, the Bible, and Beyond: Literary and Religious Canons in the Ancient World*, ed. Margalit Finkelberg and Guy G. Stroumsa (Leiden: Brill, 2003) 117–30.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Arrian, *Anab.* 1.3.

speeches. Just like other ancient authors, however, historians possessed pragmatic concerns for their works. Rhetoric for Hellenistic and early Roman period historians is, therefore, what it was for other ancient authors, that is, an instrument “of communication and influence”<sup>43</sup> facilitating practical responses to present and often pressing conditions.<sup>44</sup> Many ancient historians, after all, orated, argued, and eulogized elsewhere, in their non-historical works (for example, Isocrates, Theopompus, Dionysius). If not for the swelling numbers of mediocre historians emerging with ingratiating accounts of Alexander’s conquest and other popular events during the Hellenistic Period, Hellenistic historians might also have reserved argumentation for these other types of works. But situational exigencies of the Hellenistic and early Roman periods compelled these historians to resort, even within historical accounts, to application, *mutatis mutandis*, of techniques of persuasion in the competitive interests of authentication.<sup>45</sup> Aiming both to clarify their versions of the past (whether remote or recent) and to attract students, these accounts are, thus, riddled with elements of a rhetoric of history, emphasizing certain events, deemphasizing others, in the interest of proving one historian’s case over competing versions of the same events.<sup>46</sup> These literary techniques, therefore, make it neither true that

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<sup>43</sup> C. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* p. 513.

<sup>44</sup> In scholarship, investigating the “rhetoric” of Luke-Acts is often construed as identifying either insignificant or imprecise parallels between Luke-Acts and the ancient rhetorical handbooks. Among others (additional bibliography in Ch. 3), see R. Morgenthaler, *Lukas und Quintilian: Rhetorik als Erzählkunst* (Zürich: Gotthelf, 1993) and Philip E. Satterthwaite, “Acts against the Background of Classical Rhetoric,” in *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting*, pp. 337–79.

<sup>45</sup> On the development of competition between prose forms in antiquity, see Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome*, pp. 175–93. Bowersock describes the situation: “The problem that confronted those two Greek writers [Celsus and Lucian] in the time of Marcus Aurelius was therefore not a new one. But in their day it acquired a special urgency because apparent fictions about both past and present were proliferating at a rate that the classical world had scarcely seen before. The ease of communication and transport in the Roman Empire meant that local marvels were local no more. They soon merged into an international conglomerate of fantasy and the supernatural. History was being reinvented all over again; even the mythic past was being rewritten, and the present was awash in so many miracles and marvels that not even the credulous or the pious could swallow them all” (*Fiction as History*, p. 2). Bowersock also points out that both authors (Celsus and Lucian) wrote works “signaling the issue of truth”: Ἀληθὴς Λόγος and Ἀληθῆ Διηγήματα, respectively (*Fiction as History*, p. 2). Additionally, the proliferation of historical accounts is related to an “explosion of fiction” that Bowersock assigns to the reign of the emperor Nero (*Fiction as History*, p. 22).

<sup>46</sup> D. Earl considers Sallust an example, claiming about the prefaces to his monographs: “Sallust was announcing that what followed was not straight history but a philosophical disquisition on politics and public affairs of which the historical facts were, so to speak,

Hellenistic historians did not use rhetoric, nor exactly true that they did. Rather, they represent an application of rhetoric specialized to a certain literary genre during a certain epoch. Some historians of the Hellenistic and early Roman periods imitated the narrative techniques of the oldest form of Greek history-writing, ancient epic, with the hope of obtaining an instant effect through sensationalism, moralizing, emotional evocation, and exploring psychological and tragic dimensions of their characters and plot.<sup>47</sup> Others, however, adopted a more critical tack, attracting audiences through imitation of their more scientific predecessors such as Herodotus, Thucydides, and their tradents, for a hard-won credibility meant to last.<sup>48</sup>

Since the acknowledgment by both classical and biblical scholars that theology is a part of ancient historiography, the two enterprises have been considered as simultaneous goals of an otherwise homogenous enterprise. On an analogy with DNA, they are two strands (history and theology) in one double-helix model (historiography). The present interpretation, however, aims at a description that is more integrated—namely, that elements valued as evidence of the author's theology operate at a more fundamental literary level. These elements reflect, first and foremost, the author's craft of writing history *as opposed to* any beliefs about the divine. These theological elements, in conjunction with other narrative techniques, are employed as proofs in an argument for a certain version of the events over competing versions. Recourse to fate as a causative explanation for a certain event, for example, not only imparts greater significance to a particular set of circumstances, but in so doing enhances the impression of the overall work as clear, accurate and true. By artificially amplifying the 'truth' of a given historical report, theological elements function as history's rhetoric.

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extended *exempla*" ("Prologue-Form in Ancient Historiography," in *ANRW* I.2, ed. H. Temporini [Berlin/New York: W. de Gruyter, 1972] 856). One implication of the contention that the author of Luke-Acts viewed his work as a case to be pleaded is that the author regarded the concern *not* for truth, but for success—or, not for truth in the sense of plain fact, but in the sense of an attractive and convincing plausibility, as his highest aim—what J. R. Morgan describes as the difference between "make-believe" and "make believe!" ("Make-Believe and Make Believe," in *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, p. 187).

<sup>47</sup> E.g., on Josephus' moralizing, see Harold W. Attridge, *The Interpretation of Biblical History in the Antiquitates Judaicae of Flavius Josephus*; on elements of tragic history in Duris of Samos, Phylarch, Cleitarch, Curtius Rufus, 2 Maccabees, and Luke-Acts, see E. Plümacher, *Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller: Studien zur Apostelgeschichte* (SUNT 9; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1972).

<sup>48</sup> Inasmuch as classical Greek historiography retains many features of its predecessors (including the epics), crossover techniques are inevitable. Prediction is an example. See ch. 5 of the present work.

*Luke-Acts*

Hermeneutical investigations of Luke-Acts over the past century parallel the development from an interest and insistence on historical reliability, to literary and other methodological strategies.<sup>49</sup> In the nineteenth century, well-known representatives of the Tübingen school, including F. C. Baur, E. Zeller, and A. Hilgenfeld, argued against the historical reliability of Acts, pointing in particular to a high frequency of supernatural and miraculous events and proposing apologetic strategies to explain them (such as, which community was being defended [e.g., Paulinists], and which, opposed). Building on this work, literary approaches to Acts experienced a surge of interest at the turn of the twentieth century, particularly in England with the work of J. H. Ropes, F. J. Foakes-Jackson, Kirsopp Lake, H. J. Cadbury, and others. By the mid-twentieth century, however, Hans Conzelmann spearheaded a movement, inspired by the transition from the literary method of form criticism to the literary method of redaction criticism, of interest in theological approaches to Luke-Acts.<sup>50</sup> Conzelmann believed that all self-delimiting methodological approaches should be subsumed under the broader aegis of the problem of the work's purpose, which was for Luke-Acts, he thought, determinatively theological. Conzelmann thus proposed a comprehensive theological explanation for the purpose of Luke-Acts. This work's author, Conzelmann claimed, was responding to the historical problem in his own day of the delay of the *parousia*—the existence of the church in a continuing period of time. This theological interpretation by Conzelmann represented a reaction, not to scholars arguing against the historical reliability of the texts, but to those (like von Harnack) who refused to step out from behind literary approaches to confront the necessary implications of their literary interpretations.<sup>51</sup> Conzelmann's interpretation commenced a movement of theological approaches to Luke-Acts lasting over a decade.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup> For a survey of recent literary approaches to Acts, see F. S. Spencer, "Acts and Modern Literary Approaches," in *The Book of Acts in its Ancient Literary Setting*, vol. 1, ed. B. Winter and A. D. Clarke (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1993) 381–414, which offers a review of recent literary approaches to Acts. In Spencer's summary: "This survey demonstrates that modern literary investigations of Acts typically maintain some interest in the book's ancient historical and cultural setting, while at the same time they promote a significant shift in interpretive focus from author and event (major concerns of historical criticism) to text and reader" (p. 381).

<sup>50</sup> Famously referred to by W. C. van Unnik as a "storm center" of activity ("Luke-Acts, A Storm Center in Contemporary Scholarship," in *Studies in Luke-Acts*, pp. 15–32).

<sup>51</sup> A. von Harnack, *Beiträge zur Einleitung in das Neue Testament. IV. Neue Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte und zur Abfassungszeit der synoptischen Evangelien* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1911); *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1909–1910); *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1908); *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1924); *Lukas der Arzt: der Verfasser des dritten Evangeliums und der*

Unfortunately, most interpretations of Luke-Acts since World War II are more or less permutations of early 20<sup>th</sup> century literary or mid-20<sup>th</sup> century theological approaches. Some stress theological presuppositions, motifs, and allusions connected to the Hebrew Bible, such as Abraham, Moses, the Exodus, or Elijah.<sup>53</sup> Others allege that descriptions of Acts as ancient historiography overestimate parallels with Graeco-Roman historiography (for example, adaptations of the *Kleinliteratur* argument),<sup>54</sup> offering variant, even hybrid, generic solutions (for example, the “historical novel”) in its place.<sup>55</sup>

In contrast, this project proposes a critical investigation of elements of Lukan literary style,<sup>56</sup> neither as unspecified literary techniques, nor as

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*Apostelgeschichte* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1906); *Reden und Aufsätze* (Giessen: A. Töpelmann, 1906). Von Harnack was not alone among scholars focusing on the sources of Acts. E. Haenchen summarizes these approaches in *Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971) 26–33.

<sup>52</sup> As a sign of the times, the ET of Conzelmann’s *Die Mitte der Zeit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1957 [1953]) has the title, *The Theology of St. Luke* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960).

<sup>53</sup> See Turid Karlsen Seim, “Abraham, Ancestor or Archetype? A Comparison of Abraham-Language in 4 Maccabees and Luke-Acts,” in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret M. Mitchell (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001) 27–42. Some of these studies explore the author’s use of the LXX and related biblical language; see also the response by Mark Reasoner, “The Theme of Acts: Institutional History of Divine Necessity in History?” to Hubert Cancik, “The History of Culture, Religion, and Institutions in Ancient Historiography: Philological Observations Concerning Luke’s History.”

<sup>54</sup> Background for this idea was provided by Franz Overbeck who argued that Christian literature developed at a greater distance from the surrounding world than previously supposed (*Über die Anfänge der patristischen Literatur* [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1954 (orig. 1882)] 36). This idea was later developed by Karl Ludwig Schmidt, “Die Stellung der Evangelien in der allgemeinen Literaturgeschichte,” in *Neues Testament-Judentum-Kirche*, ed. K. L. Schmidt (TB 69; Munich: Kaiser, 1981[1923]) 66–67.

<sup>55</sup> Examples include arguments that Greek historiography represents sophisticated, whereas Acts represents popular literature or arguments that the subject of Greek historiography is war and politics, whereas the subject of Luke-Acts is religion. As Richard Pervo once wrote about the genre of Acts: “newly formed oriental sects need not apply” (*Profit with Delight* [Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1987] 7).

<sup>56</sup> In many ways this project builds directly on Dibelius’ essay, “Style Criticism of The Book of Acts,” in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles* (repr.: Mifflintown, Pennsylvania: Sigler, 1999). This essay represents Dibelius’ abandonment of his *Formgeschichte* approach to the gospels (*Die Formgeschichte des Evangeliums* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1919; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1933]) for his interpretation of Acts: “In Acts we are not at all entitled to presuppose the same state of affairs which prompted the examination of the Gospels from the ‘Formgeschichte’ point of view; the fact that authors preserve the forms created by tradition. For we have yet to consider whether the author of Acts had any such tradition at his disposal. So we cannot, in the first place, consider this work from the aspect of ‘Formgeschichte,’ but only from that

evidence of the author's theology, but rather in terms of their distinctively historiographic significance. The present investigation aims to demonstrate the ways in which Luke-Acts both imitates and updates select historiographic predecessors as a means of authenticating the account within the agonistic context of Hellenistic and early Roman historiography, both pagan and Christian.<sup>57</sup> The goal is not to prove that Lukan history and Lukan theology should not be analyzed separately on occasion or to diminish the value of such analyses. Distinguishing one from the other remains valuable on many different fronts of biblical scholarship today.<sup>58</sup> The goal of the present project is simply to allow the ancient art of historiography to be viewed, momentarily, in this fuller sense.

With a focus on Luke-Acts, then, this study exposes specific techniques of a type of specialized historical rhetoric with its basis in ancient critical historiography and examines the roles of these elements in the overall art and mission of the work as a historical composition. Although branches of the academic study of classical and biblical historiography have caught the wave of interest in rhetorical perspectives on ancient texts, no comprehensive evaluation of Luke-Acts on these terms has been undertaken. Even extensive literary studies of the two *logoi* have failed to recognize prediction, for example, for its obviously rhetorical role.

That the author of Luke-Acts shares literary conventions with contemporaries of diverse backgrounds and intents is widely recognized. The

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of its style" (*Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 3—4). Research since Dibelius has made little progress on the problem of forms and sources in Acts.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. the observation of Hans Frei: "... a realistic or history-like (though not necessarily historical) element is a feature, as obvious as it is important, of many of the biblical narratives that went into the making of Christian belief. It is a feature that can be highlighted by the appropriate analytical procedure and by no other, even if it may be difficult to describe the procedure—in contrast to the element itself. It is fascinating that the realistic character of the crucial biblical stories was actually acknowledged and agreed upon by most of the significant eighteenth-century commentators. But since the precritical analytical or interpretive procedure of isolating it had irretrievably broken down in the opinion of most commentators, this specifically realistic characteristic, though acknowledged by all hands to be there, finally came to be ignored, or—even more fascinating its presence or distinctiveness came to be denied for lack of a 'method' to isolate it. And this despite the common agreement that the specific feature was there!" (*The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1974] 10).

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, John J. Collins' review of the canonical critical method employed by Brevard Childs and Jon Levenson: "Historical Criticism and the State of Biblical Theology," *The Christian Century* 110/2 (July 1993) 743—47. The theological element of historiography is as intimately connected with philosophy as the two are with each other. Consequently, while distinct, in historical works, history, theology and philosophy are thoroughly integrated. Cf. R. G. Collingwood's observations regarding philosophy and history (*The Idea of History* [rev. ed.; Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1940] 4).

specifically rhetorical quality of these conventions, however, still warrants attention.<sup>59</sup> The present work thus revisits a few well-known elements of Lukan literary technique, valued in the past for their contribution to an understanding of the author's theological disposition—literary patterns, the prediction-fulfillment scheme, use of the simple verb, *δεῖ*, and Lukan “hyperbole”—for their more fundamental roles as elements of this author's rhetoric, the presentation strategy of his history. Analyzing Luke-Acts in comparison with analogues in Jewish, Greek, and Roman historiography, this project seeks to establish these techniques as adaptations of earlier historical works as well as distant cousins of the precepts of the rhetorical handbooks, crucial to a historian's attempt to authenticate his work. These techniques are not “elements of an alien discursive system” corrupting otherwise pure, historical forms.<sup>60</sup> Nor do they represent the author's “careful use of ethos, pathos, and *logos*”—George Kennedy's proposal for how the evangelists solved their “rhetorical problems.”<sup>61</sup> Rather, these elements arise *within* historiography, in accordance with Aristotle's definition of rhetoric as “available means of persuasion,” as creative responses to a distinctly competitive situation,<sup>62</sup> not in limited types of historical narrative such as

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<sup>59</sup> Christopher Mount describes the phenomenon of Hellenistic historiography as more complex than often assumed, arising from the “interplay of rhetoric, fictional narrative and particular facts of the past” (*Pauline Christianity: Luke-Acts and the Legacy of Paul*, [Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2002] 82). Cf. the excellent study of the history and value of genre classifications of ancient historiography by John Marincola, “Genre, Convention, and Innovation in Greco-Roman Historiography,” in *The Limits of Historiography: Genre and Narrative in Ancient Historical Texts*, ed. Christina S. Kraus (Leiden: Brill, 1999) 281—324; here, 320—21: “... the historiographical genres of the Greeks and Romans were not static categories in which one writer merely followed all or most of the aspects of his predecessors, but rather that they were constantly dependent upon change and innovation and that they functioned, in Conte's words, as ‘strategies of literary composition’ which may have provided a framework for the historians' representation of the world, but in no way prescribed for him how things had to be done.” In the process of coming to a more precise understanding of ancient historiography, Marincola continues, “categorization can play some limited role ... but it must not be permitted to serve as a substitute for analysis of individual works. Rather, our approach, like that of the ancients, must remain fluid and adaptable ... Only by a process of comparison and an attempt to find the fluid border between convention and innovation will we come closer to an understanding of genre and the individual work that both comprehends and challenges it” (p. 321).

<sup>60</sup> Joseph Farrell, “Towards a Rhetoric of (Roman?) Epic,” in *Roman Eloquence*, ed. W. J. Dominik (New York: Routledge, 1997) 131.

<sup>61</sup> George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, p. 101.

<sup>62</sup> Amos N. Wilder, *Early Christian Rhetoric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1964) 118: “It was the novelty of grace and the fundamental renewal of existence which brought forth a new fruit of the lips, new tongues and new rhetorical patterns. Such modulation of discourse was also conditioned by the changing theatres of Christian activity.

prologues and speeches, but pervasively throughout these works.<sup>63</sup> In terms of Luke-Acts, the speeches do, however, provide an initial clue that the author was familiar with Hellenistic rhetorical precepts. Citations in the seventeenth chapter of Acts and the “we-passages” further suggest the author’s rhetorical skill.<sup>64</sup> A third example is provided by the author’s approach to his Markan source. Luke Timothy Johnson’s description is helpful:

[Luke’s redaction of Mark] tends toward correctness, clarity, and consecutiveness. ... Luke corrects Mark’s infelicities ... clarifies small confusions Mark’s narrative creates ... [and] arranges the narrative into a more logical order.<sup>65</sup>

For improving his Markan source the author of Luke-Acts availed himself of the most fundamental skills of rhetoric and in this sense falls into the tradition reflected in Livy’s prologue of *novi semper scriptores aut in rebus certius aliquid allatuos se aut scribendi arte rudem vetustatem superatuos credunt* (Livy 1.1–2).<sup>66</sup> Accepting this evidence as only preliminary, however, the

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In each such new cultural setting the primal dynamic reshaped the particular language-world and language-vehicles to its own purposes and in its own defence.”

<sup>63</sup> Joseph Farrell, “Towards a Rhetoric of (Roman?) Epic,” in *Roman Eloquence*, p. 131.

<sup>64</sup> Regarding the twenty-four speeches in Acts, Dibelius writes, “The author does not wish to be impartial, indeed he wants to *plead his cause*” (“The Speeches in Acts and Ancient Historiography,” in *Studies in the Acts of the Apostles*, p. 151; emphasis added).

<sup>65</sup> “Luke-Acts, Book of,” *ABD* (1992) 4.408. The aim to clarify meaning is stated in Lk 1:4: “that you may know the truth of things about which you have been instructed.” A need for catechetical clarification is also attested in Ps.-Clem., *Hom.* 1.18.1–4, utilizing the metaphor of a house: “The will of God has fallen into oblivion for many sorts of reasons, above all in consequence of inadequate instruction, careless upbringing, bad company, unseemly conversation and erroneous statements. Thence there comes ignorance, and there come also dissoluteness, unbelief, unchastity, avarice, vanity and innumerable vices of this kind, which have occupied the world as if it were a house which, like a cloud of smoke, they have filled; they have thus made muddy the eyes of those who dwell in the house and have prevented them from looking up and recognizing the Creator God from his works and inferring his will. Therefore the friends of truth who are in the house must cry from the depth of their heart for help for their truth-seeking souls, that if someone is outside that smoke-filled house, he may come and open the door, so that the sunlight from outside may invade the house and that the smoke within may be dissipated.” The emphasis in Luke-Acts on Jesus as prophet (e.g., Lk 7:16; Acts 3:22) also coincides with this section of the Pseudo-Clementines (ET by Johannes Irmscher and Georg Strecker, *NTApo*, p. 510).

<sup>66</sup> On competition among Hellenistic historians, cf. also the summaries of Book I (lost) of Q. Curtius Rufus: “Many Greeks have written of the life and deeds of Alexander, who took from the Persians their empire and transferred it to Greece. Some of these were witnesses of his exploits, some even his companions and officers (Arr. i., praef.). Being eager for glory and for the perpetuation of his memory, he summoned some, for example Callisthenes of Olynthus, for the very purpose of transmitting his history to posterity (Justin xii.6.17). Besides the greatness of his exploits, the innate love of the Greeks for fable led some of them to record marvels rather than sober history. Ptolemy, who was afterwards king of Egypt, and

present appraisal attempts to demonstrate the author's use of rhetoric both more subtly and more discursively throughout the narrative. It is not a study of "purple passages"<sup>67</sup> with "quasi-magical features" meant to effect persuasion.<sup>68</sup> It is a critical, exegetical investigation of the texts, revealing their author pleading the reliability of his account in spite of often exotic, implausible, and highly segmented sources and traditions.<sup>69</sup> Throughout, this project presses the author's own claims for his work in Lk 1:1–4 (for example, ἀκρίβεια, ἀλήθεια, ἀσφάλεια, and research ἀπ' ἀρχῆς) keeping them at the forefront in terms of an understanding of the work's purpose and the method employed to exact it.<sup>70</sup>

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Aristobulus seem to be the most trustworthy (Arr. 1.c.). When they agree, I have preferred their account to that of the rest; when they differ, I have taken from the abundance of material those things which seemed nearest to the truth. This practice the Greeks who had some regard for the truth, after Alexander's day, seem to have followed, and lately Diodorus of Sicily. Those of the Romans who have given attention to history, content with the affairs of their own nation, have neglected those of others; for the deeds of a victorious people furnished an abundance of material, which seemed likely to be more useful to their fellow-citizens. Nevertheless I believe that I shall be free from reproach if I shall make known to my country that king who in the shortest time conquered the greatest extent of territory, and if I shall show that, in general, success corresponds with character, and that no good fortune is lasting which lacks virtue" (LCL; ET by John C. Rolfe).

<sup>67</sup> T. P. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics: Three Studies in Greco-Roman Literature*, p. 30.

<sup>68</sup> Amos N. Wilder, *Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of the Gospel*, p. xxiv.

<sup>69</sup> Plutarch expresses a shared aim in his *Lives* of individuals from earlier periods of time which he characterizes as neither "accessible to probability," nor "based on facts" (*Thes.* 1.1–2), but "full of marvels and unreality, a land of poets and fabulists, of doubt and obscurity." Such a task, Plutarch writes, is one of "purifying the mythic (τὸ μυθῶδες) ... while making it submit to reason (λόγῳ) and take on the look of history (ιστορίας ὄψιν)" (*Thes.* 1.3). Greek and Roman fascination with the bizarre which often played itself out in Hellenistic fiction, (cf. Bowersock's comment that "Greeks and Romans had had a notorious taste for freaks" [*Fiction as History*, p. 33]), necessitated even more strategic arguments for unusual events recorded by historians claiming ἀλήθεια and ἀκρίβεια.

<sup>70</sup> The central purpose of a historical prologue is to secure preliminary approval for the upcoming account. An author able to assume audience favor requires only a brief introduction (Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.5). Additionally, although generic descriptions largely fail with respect to Luke-Acts (this work is a hybrid product of early Christian creativity), one purpose of this study is to demonstrate that pervasive historiographical techniques convey a commitment to history over any other form of narrative, against history *pro forma* arguments (e.g., ἐν ἱστορίας εἶδει [Julian., *Ep.* 301b]), and despite certain similarities with fiction. Although as Bowersock has written, "Parallels in form and substance between the writings of the NT and the fictional production of the imperial age are too prominent to be either ignored or dismissed as coincidental" (*Fiction as History*, p. 124), these parallels do not dictate the work's overall purpose as history. Of many well-known perspectives on this topic, see N. Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976) and F. Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979). Cf. the famous admonition of van Unnik which the current project attempts to address: "... the preface the author of Luke-

In conclusion, a few presuppositions warrant mention. In terms of the history of tradition, I take for granted that a single author wrote Luke-Acts as a two-volume corpus, the volumes intended, at least by the composition of the second, to be read together.<sup>71</sup> The possibly complex reception history of the second volume does not bear appreciably on the present argument; nor does its textual tradition, although I do not wish to minimize the complexities involved in either of these specialized branches of Lukan scholarship.<sup>72</sup>

Another important presupposition of this project is that—even when I refer to an “author”—my assumption is that authorship of the biblical texts is layered. Not only can sources and redactors be identified, but, on careful examination, even layers of redaction are detectable. Even if the layers often cannot be neatly separated, a tri-partite model for understanding authorship is proposed, each level representing an unknowable number of individual contributors. Most recent is the level of redaction of the work as a whole as it has been passed down, for the most part, in tradition. A layer deeper or older is the level of sources, prior texts or pieces of texts that comprise parts of the new whole, they themselves subjected in the past to an unknowable number of adaptations.

At the core level is the phenomenon of the events as they actually happened. A point of clarification about the events as they actually happened is, however, necessary. This clarification is that sufficiently sophisticated understandings of ancient views of historical events take into consideration the theological component of the ancient worldview of the events ‘on the ground’ as they actually happened. Julius Caesar prevaricates about going to the Senate on the Ides of March on the basis of omens.<sup>73</sup> Although theological in nature, appeals to omens represents an accurate depiction of the action of *bona fide* historical individual. Theology must, thus, be integrated into our understanding of the events at this core level of fact.<sup>74</sup> Recognized as

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Acts presents gives unmistakable directions as to where the reader is to look in order to comprehend the nature and design of his work. It would be advantageous if, before determining the individual character of the Third Gospel as well as that of Acts, more consideration were to be given to this aspect than has, until now, been the case” (W. C. van Unnik, “Remarks on the Purpose of Luke’s Historical Writing,” in *Sparsa Collecta: The Collected Essays of W. C. van Unnik* [NovTSup 29; Leiden: Brill, 1973] 15).

<sup>71</sup> Such assumptions about “authors” of other canonical gospels cannot be made without taking into account pre-Synoptic layers of redaction. The argument for a single author of Luke-Acts, here, is based primarily on its stylistic continuity.

<sup>72</sup> The “Western” text—characterized by stylistic smoothness, clarity, and resolution of diverse tensions—is over 8 1/2% longer than the “Alexandrian.” See Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft/German Bible Society, 1994) 222—36; esp. p. 223 n. 3.

<sup>73</sup> Plutarch, *Caes.* 63.3—64.7. I thank H. D. Betz for this example.

<sup>74</sup> Charles Fornara, *History in Ancient Greece and Rome*, p. 77.

such, certain theological elements in historiography offer less than previously thought in terms of a given historian's theological perspective.

This study also assumes that composition of the Third Gospel is not separated significantly from the date of the composition of its companion or, if it is, that such a separation is irrelevant to historical-critical exegesis. It also assumes the author's original composition of most of Acts. This is in agreement with Dibelius, who argued that the text of Acts poses insurmountable challenges to source, form, and redaction methods of criticism due to the inability to discern sources in this text. It is also in agreement with Cadbury, who demonstrated strong stylistic continuity throughout both volumes. Prologues, speeches, and summaries are sure examples of the author's original composition.<sup>75</sup> They provide, therefore, the strongest evidence for arguments regarding the work's purpose.<sup>76</sup> This project also assumes that the prologue of the Gospel of Luke (Lk 1:1–4), whether written before or after Acts, was intended to cover both volumes.

Only limited ground can be covered within the constraints of a single project. That said, it is nevertheless true that the most effective interpretations of ancient texts have always focused on the texts in comparison with as many parallels as possible, balancing the idea of novelty with that of tradition.<sup>77</sup> H. D. Betz warns with respect to certain "linguistic studies" on the Sermon on the Mount:

Their value is greatly limited ... by idiosyncratic "methodologies," self-limitation to examination of one text only, and lack of corroboration by literary parallels and the criteria of classical philology and literary criticism.<sup>78</sup>

Although many Graeco-Roman parallels to Luke-Acts are supplied in this work both in the text and the notes, a complete understanding of the rhetoric

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<sup>75</sup> See H. J. Cadbury, *Style and Literary Method of Luke*, 2 vols. (HTS 6; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1919–20; repr. New York: Kraus Reprints, 1969).

<sup>76</sup> Moreover, the twenty-four speeches in Acts represent approximately one-third of the second λόγος.

<sup>77</sup> Amos Wilder emphasizes early Christian rhetoric's reliance on its context in the following manner: "... every step of the way, beginning with Jesus himself, [Christian speech] represented an identification with and a renewal of existing idioms" (*Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of the Gospel*, p. 39). The "renewal" process of "existing idioms," however, was such that finished products sometimes bore only strained resemblances to their models. To be sure, nascent Christian literary art resists most systematic qualifications. As a result, an abiding concern of this project is to avoid simplistic binary divisions between absolutes such as historical-theological, fact-fiction, history-fiction, truth-falsehood—in favor of a more holistic understanding of ancient literary methods and practices.

<sup>78</sup> H. D. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1995) 49.

of Hellenistic and early Roman period historiography would require comprehensive analyses of other important exemplars on their own terms.

Finally, little background on ancient rhetoric is provided either in the text or the footnotes for two reasons. First, no brief history of classical rhetoric does justice to the topic. The project assumes some knowledge of this background. Second, the focus of the present work is away from traditional understandings of classical rhetoric looking from the vantage point of the handbooks either back to Aristotle or forward to the early Church Fathers. In particular, tensions between history and rhetoric evident since 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Greece and available in modern incarnations today advise against any simplistic approach to the problem. Where significant background in ancient rhetoric is assumed, the reader is commended in the notes to consider additional works and bibliographies on the topic compiled by specialists in the field.

Finally, the appellation, “Luke,” wherever found, is used for the sake of convenience without bias with regard to the original author. This work is based on the critical text of NA<sup>27</sup> following the Alexandrian text tradition. Relevant Western and Byzantine text readings are supplied in the notes. Except where indicated, translations of ancient texts are my own.