

**THE TRIADIC SYNERGY OF HELLENISTIC  
POETICS IN THE NARRATIVE EPISTEMOLOGY OF  
DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS AND THE  
AUTHORIAL INTENT OF THE EVANGELIST LUKE  
(LUKE 1:1-4; ACTS 1:1-8)<sup>1</sup>**

*'When I use a word,' Humpty Dumpty said . . . 'it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.' 'The question is,' said Alice, 'whether you can make words mean so many different things.' 'The question is,' said Humpty Dumpty, 'which is to be master—that's all.'*

**Lewis Carroll**, *Through the Looking-Glass*<sup>2</sup>

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**Abstract**

Dionysius of Halicarnassus' critique of Thucydides' prose 'arrangement' provides the closest parallel in thought and rationale to Luke's opening assertions regarding the 'clear certainty' of the significance of all the events that he will configure in the sequence of his narrative. Undergirding both texts is a Hellenistic poetics of a trialectic synergy of (i) rhetorical 'management' of the emplotment of the narrative by the composer to (2) effect within discrete audiences realized cognitive and empathic understandings (3) of the author's intended messages and emphases. This commonly shared *diēgētic* epistemology illuminates the composition of the church's Gospels as persuasive narrative performances.

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful to the theology faculties and graduate students of the Universities of the North-west (Potchefstroom) and of KwaZulu-Natal (Pietermaritzburg), South Africa, for the opportunity to present this lecture on 30 May and 2 June, 2008, respectively. This essay represents the major conclusions of my earlier contribution to the A. J. M. Wedderburn FS but places Dionysius' work more directly in his historical and literary-critical contexts and applies his categories to both of Luke's *prooimia*; cf. Moessner (2002, 149-64).

<sup>2</sup> Norton edition (1971, 163).

Dionysius, from the same Greek coastal city of Halicarnassus<sup>3</sup> as Herodotus, was a younger contemporary of Diodorus Siculus who was also drawn to Rome about the time the Sicilian was publishing his forty volumes in the tumultuous days of Augustus' triumph and the end of the civil war (ca. 30 B.C.E.). Like both Diodorus and the 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. historian Polybius earlier, Dionysius was enamored of all things Roman and wrote a twenty-volume history contending that Rome from its very inception was a 'Greek' city (see esp. Gabba 1991). As a prime example of rhetorical historiographical composition (ποίησις)<sup>4</sup>, through frequent and lengthy set speeches<sup>5</sup> the *Roman Antiquities* sings the praises of Rome's rise and its superiority in inculcating Greek values into its institutions of law and order.<sup>6</sup>

It is, however, Dionysius' legacy as a literary critic<sup>7</sup> and the rhetorical savvy of his poetics of narrative composition that form the focus of this essay.<sup>8</sup> In Dionysius' *On Thucydides* we reach a flowering of ancient criticism in the Hellenistic Greek traditions of both speech-making and of narrative historiography,<sup>9</sup> however jejune Dionysius may seem in some of his tastes or narrow the basis that some of his comparisons may appear in the rest of his treatises or *Scripta Rhetorica*.<sup>10</sup>

#### I.

Dionysius dares to attack Thucydides, "the greatest of historians", precisely because too often the Athenian "is very weak in his powers of expression" (κατὰ τὴν δυνάμιν ἕξασθενοῦντα, *de Thuc.* 2). As Dionysius had stated earlier in his *On Demosthenes* 10, "The orator's aim is to satisfy the special needs of his case, and he makes his style conform to this practical requirement, not solely to that of permanent literary value, which

<sup>3</sup> In Caria, southwest Asia Minor.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Dionysius' description of Herodotus' and Thucydides' history narratives: "both beautiful poetic compositions" (καλαῖ μὲν αἱ ποιήσεις ἀμφοτέρων), *ad Pomp.* 3.

<sup>5</sup> On the poetic function of speeches in the overarching plot of the twenty volumes, see Plümacher (1999, 251-66)—the speeches not only interpret but also motivate the emplotted movement of the events.

<sup>6</sup> For a pithy introduction, see Russell (1981, 52-54).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Bonner (1939, 40): Dionysius is essentially a rhetorician performing literary criticism, "Whatever the literary genre, be it epic, tragedy, or lyric, be it history or philosophy, the rhetorician makes no distinction; all writers for him form a single quarry from which he may draw material for the all-important study of effective public speaking."

<sup>8</sup> Contrast Russell's view (1981, 54) with Bonner (*ibid.*): "Dionysius comes closer to modern ideas of a literary critic than any earlier writer."

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Bonner (1939); Rhys Roberts (1910); Kendrick Pritchett (1975); Toye (1995); Grube (1950).

<sup>10</sup> Again, Russell's judgment (1981, 54) is apposite: "He [Dionysius] is not unworthy of the age of Virgil and Horace."

the historian [i.e., Thucydides] had in mind”.<sup>11</sup> To be sure, the Halicarnassan champions the imitation of the classic Attic style in both oratory and prose composition<sup>12</sup> and, as I will try to show, in his prose ‘management’ (οἰκονομία) offers telling insights into the formatting and sequencing of the church’s narrative Gospels as rhetorical persuasion. In particular, I want to argue that we discover in Dionysius’ critique of Thucydides’ ‘arrangement’ the closest parallel in thought and rationale to Luke’s opening assertions (Luke 1:1-4)—not simply by pointing to a cluster of parallel technical poetics terms—but, more importantly, to a commonly shared epistemology of narrative that informs both authors.<sup>13</sup>

Humpty Dumpty’s ‘Which is to be master?—that’s all!’ could well serve as the mantra for Dionysius’ ‘managed arrangement’ (οἰκονομία) of the “partitioning” (διαίρεσις), the “sequencing” (τάξις), and the “coordination of the methods of development/elaboration” (ἐξεργασίαι) to secure a narrative performance that will deliver the author’s intended messages.<sup>14</sup> In two of his extant works on literary criticism, namely his *Letter to Gnaeus Pompeius (ad Pomp.)* and his *On Thucydides (de Thuc.)*, Dionysius turns his attention to a composer’s ability to arrange prose sequence (τάξις) in larger blocks of material, and curiously, restricts his analysis to composers of history, with one exception, namely Demosthenes.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> This valuing of the immediate impact of Thucydides’ style on the average hearer/reader differs considerably from a later critic Lucian, who will applaud Thucydides’ determination to write for posterity! (*How to Write History* §§38-40, 42); see the discussion below. On the rhetorical emphasis in the Hellenistic period, cf. Gabba (1991, esp. 60-92); Fox (1993); Balch (1982).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Grube (1950, 95): “We have far more of his work than we have from the hand of any Greek critic after Aristotle. Only the writings of Cicero and Quintilian compare with his in bulk.”

<sup>13</sup> Luke 1:1: The “many” who have already “set to hand” are, like the evangelist Luke himself, “drawing up/compiling (ἀνατάξασθαι) the sequence of a narrative” (sg., διήγησις).

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Reid (1995, 190): “The effort by fifth and fourth century Greek writers to provide prose the dignity and affective power of oral poetry through the literate embellishment of written discourse began a shift in the consciousness of rhetorical intellection, invention and literate disposition.”

<sup>15</sup> The sequence and therefore also the *Sitze im Leben* of Dionysius’ literary productions are much disputed. Russell in *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1996, 478) presents the least unsatisfactory solution: the literary works stem from his teaching and mostly precede his *Antiquities*, which exemplify the emphases of the *Scripta Rhetorica* in reprising classical prose. The earliest, *On Imitation*, survives only in fragments, followed in order by his analysis of individual orators, *de Oratoribus Antiquis* [Lysias, Isocrates, Isaeus], *On Demosthenes*,

Given the Halicarnassan's special concern to revive the craft of the orator "to bewitch (γοητεύειν) the ear" with words that "were a power loosed",<sup>16</sup> this exception may not seem so extraordinary.<sup>17</sup> For Demosthenes is Dionysius' master *par excellence* in his incomparable ability to impact audiences,<sup>18</sup> even besting the great composers Herodotus and Plato,<sup>19</sup> whose words were not always "achieving the appropriate force of expression" (*On Demosthenes* [*de Dem.*] 58; cf. 41-42; *ad Pomp.* 1-2).<sup>20</sup> Demosthenes' ability to raise the persuasive potency of Attic Greek to new heights through the 'arrangement'/'management' (οικονομία) of 'subject matter' (πραγματικός τόπος)—whether in the conjunction of periods or relation of larger sections to a whole—qualifies Demosthenes as the most admired model of Greek oratory.<sup>21</sup>

Dionysius nuances this dependence of rhetorical categories upon the composed orality of *narrative* in one particularly illuminating passage.<sup>22</sup> In his *On Demosthenes* 51, Dionysius divulges his reasons for applying the

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several "occasional" works (*On Dinarchus*; *On Thucydides*); two letters to Ammaeus, and a letter to G. Pompeius. His most mature, and least rhetorical work, *On the Arrangement of Words* (*De compositione verborum*), is presupposed in the last part of the *On Demosthenes*, §35ff.

<sup>16</sup>See Reid (1994, 427-47; 1996, 46-64); cf. Dionysius' *On the Arrangement of Words* 12.

<sup>17</sup>Cf., e.g., Bonner's (1939, 99) sentiment: "[Dionysius] shows what misguided judgments can arise from the application of rhetorical principles to an author of a totally different genre."

<sup>18</sup>Dionysius' fuller treatment of Demosthenes' compositional arrangement was either lost or never completed; yet what is found in the extant *On Demosthenes*, as well as numerous references to Demosthenes throughout the *Scripta Rhetorica*, indicate clearly enough what Demosthenes' supreme achievement was.

<sup>19</sup>These latter chapters on the historians, however, are quoted excerpts from one of Dionysius' lost treatises, which Dionysius cites himself as "Essays which I addressed to Demetrius on the subject of imitation" (περὶ μίμησις), a survey in 3 books of model poets and prose writers for students of rhetoric. This work must precede his analysis of Greek orators (*de Oratoribus Antiquis*), the earliest extant work, given internal cross-references within the entire corpus and an epitomator's summary of Book II (Papyrus Oxyrynchus VI).

<sup>20</sup>But in *On the Arrangement of Words* 19, Dionysius states about Herodotus, Plato, and Demosthenes: "In discourse variation (μεταβολή) is a most attractive and beautiful quality. I take as examples of it all the writings of Herodotus, all those of Plato, and all those of Demosthenes. It is impossible to find other writers who have used more digressions, more timely variations, or more figures of different kinds, the first in the framework of historical narrative (ἱστορία), the second in that of elegant dialogue (διαλόγοι), the third in the practical application of forensic oratory (λόγοι ἐναγωνίοι)" [titled: *On Literary Composition, Dionysius of Halicarnassus Critical Essays* II; LCL 152-55].

<sup>21</sup>Cf. *On Thucydides* 55: "Of all of the orators, I am persuaded that Demosthenes was the finest."

<sup>22</sup>Cf. Grube (1950, 97): "Dionysius maintains that composition, more than anything else, makes the difference between one writer and another."



speeches. Without that critical common denominator, Dionysius' entire argument in promoting Demosthenes as a standard-bearer would self-destruct. There is never a hint that Dionysius 'pulls some new trick out of his hat' to best an opponent from a competing rhetorical tradition. To be sure, different 'systems' of speech composition and delivery were in evidence among rhetorical schools at the turn of the millennia,<sup>28</sup> yet in no passage does Dionysius have to argue for the superiority of his categories against contending schemes. --The second comment follows from the first: Dionysius' criteria for prose writing are consistent throughout his entire *oeuvre*, whether in the earliest extant *de Oratoribus Antiquis* or the later *Letter to Gnaeus Pompeius*.<sup>29</sup> Through all of his teaching of rhetoric in Rome, Dionysius appeals to the probative value of narrative-prose for persuading his audiences of the unsurpassed rhetorical potency of words and periods properly selected and arranged.

Like a skilled surgeon, Dionysius wields the critic's knife to Thucydides' corpus and finds it sorely wanting in 'arrangement.' A few lines after his quote from *On Thucydides* 9 above, Dionysius explains his disapproval by applying the first category of "division"/"partitioning" (διαίρεσις):

Wishing to follow a new path, untraveled by others, he [Thucydides] divided (ἐμέρισε) his history by summers and winters. This decision produced an outcome contrary to his expectations: the seasonal *division* by time periods (ἡ διαίρεσις τῶν χρόνων) did not lead to greater *clarity* (σαφεστέρα) but to *greater difficulty in following the narrative* (δυσπαρακολουθητοτέρα). It is rather amazing how he failed to realize that a narrative (ἡ διήγησις) that is broken up into small sections, which taken together are to describe the many events (πολλὰ πράγματα) that took place in many different places, will not catch that "pure light" that "shines from afar"<sup>30</sup> as becomes obvious from [the following of] the events themselves. As an example from the third book . . . he *begins to write* (ἀρχάμενος γράφειν) about the Mytileneans, but before *completing* this whole section of the narrative (ὅλην ἐκπληρῶσαι τὴν διήγησιν), he withdraws to the affairs of the Lacedaemonians. And he does not even round these events off before relating the siege of Plataea. What is more, even this he leaves *unfinished* (ἀτελῆ) in order to recount the Mytilenean War. Then from there he switches his narrative (ἄγει τὴν διήγησιν) to the affairs of Corcyra . . . . He then leaves this account, too, *half-finished* (ἡμιτελῆ) . . . . What more do I need to say? The *whole* (ὅλη) of

<sup>28</sup> See, e.g., Lucian's sentiments and comparisons of varying approaches in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE; cf. Avenarius (1956, esp. 30-35); and Hohmeyer (1965, esp. 45-60).

<sup>29</sup> Whether in *de Oratoribus Antiquis*, *de Demosthenes* (e.g., 37-42), or *de Thuc.* (e.g. 9-20).

<sup>30</sup> Allusion to Pindar, *Phythian Odes*, iii.75 [so Usher, LCL I.483].

the book is chopped up in this way, and *the continuity of the narrative* (τὸ διηλεκτὸς τῆς ἀπαγγελίας) is destroyed. As we would now expect, we wander around here and there, *finding it difficult to follow the events* that have been described (δυσκόλως τοῖς δηλουμένοις παρακολουθοῦμεν), because our mind is confused by *the scattering of the events* (ἐν τῷ διασπᾶσθαι τὰ πράγματα) and cannot easily or *reliably* (ἀκριβῶς) remember *the half-completed references* (τὰς ἡμιτελεῖς . . . ἀναφερούσης) which it has heard. Rather, a history narrative should be a flowing and uninterrupted written account (τὴν ἱστορικὴν πραγματείαν εἰρομένην εἶναι καὶ ἀπερίσπαστον), especially when it is concerned with a considerable number of events that are difficult to learn about. It is manifest that Thucydides' principle is neither right nor appropriate to the writing of history. For none of the historians who succeeded him *divided* (διεῖλε) his narrative by summers and winters, but all followed the well-worn paths which lead to a clarity of understanding (σαφήνειαν) (de Thuc. 9. Translation and emphasis mine).

Dionysius faults Thucydides for the confused sequence of his narrative that prevents any clear understanding of the lasting significance of the events. The readers cannot “follow” (παρακολουθῶ) the events (πράγματα) and therefore cannot *reliably, with proper understanding* (ἀκριβῶς) construe sufficient clarity (σαφήνεια) to determine their relative importance. Because the interconnections of the ‘subject matter’—the relation of each part to other parts in the whole of the narrative—are bewildering, so is any adequate grasp of their meaning as intended by the author. The blame for this falls squarely upon Thucydides himself who should have ‘divided up’ his subject matter in ways that would render those relationships clear.

At the heart of this critique of Thucydides’ ‘management’/ ‘arrangement’ of his narrative material, therefore, is the resulting lack of a “unified whole”. ‘The continuity of the narrative’ is destroyed. Dionysius will formulate this same complaint in his *To Pompey* 3 when he contrasts the arrangement of Thucydides to Herodotus who “did not break the continuity of the narrative” (οὐ διεσπᾶσε τὴν διήγησιν). “Whereas Thucydides has taken a single subject and divided the whole body into many parts, Herodotus has chosen a number of subjects which are in no way alike and has made them into one harmonious whole”. “Fragmentation” of the narrative is the result of an ill-conceived organization which issues in ‘un-completed’ (ἄτελῆ) or ‘half-completed’ (ἡμιτελῆ) presentations of events. Thucydides’ descriptions are not “unfinished” simply or even primarily because he neglects to come back to scenes which he has abruptly interrupted—although he is certainly “guilty” at times of that failure in Dionysius’ estimation. Rather, more

destructive of the narrative wholeness which good ‘arrangement’ should vouchsafe is the absence in Thucydides of a viable bodying forth of the coordination of each part or event within the larger whole. Only through an unambiguous ensemble of the entire work can an auditor attend to the proper causal connections, discern significances of specific events, and draw the proper moral and pragmatic conclusions regarding actions and characters connected together in this particular way. Unless a reader is able to “move” from one section of the narrative to another and ‘follow’ (παρακολουθέω) a developing plot of complication and resolution of a whole series of events, the author has failed to imbue the reader with “the pure light shining from afar”.

Moreover, it is also the case that as early as Herodotus and in the developing four centuries through Diodorus, authorial intent is an implicit constant, if not an explicit rationale for the text’s production. For instance, in Dionysius’ comparisons with Thucydides (*ad Pomp.* 3), Herodotus’ “attitude” (διάθεσις) toward both the Greeks and the “barbarians” is “fair” or “balanced” (ἐπιεικής); Thucydides, however, is “outspokenly harsh” (αὐθέκαστός τις καὶ πικρά) against his own people, revealing “a grudge against his native city” (τῇ πατρίδι τῆς φυγῆς μνησικακούσα), due in no small measure to their banishment of him to Thrace long before the war had concluded. Dionysius thus imputes a motive to Thucydides’ partial, indeed purportedly prejudiced presentation of the Athenians.

In *de Thucydides* Dionysius’ criticism of Thucydides’ ‘thought’ (διάνοια) crescendos as he now speaks of the Greek historian’s “perverse mind”: “I could produce many more examples of his thought (διάνοια) that are both clever and perverse (τὸ συνετὸν ἐχούσας πονηρόν, *de Thuc.* 41). Dionysius has just catalogued a series of grave “faults”/“mistakes” (ἁμαρτήματα) in Thucydides’ ‘methods of development/elaboration’ (ἐξεργασίαι) in chaps. 13-20. Chief among them is Thucydides’ ‘elaborating’ too much upon episodes of lesser importance while “skipping too nonchalantly over incidents that require more thorough development” (ῥαθυμότερον ἐπιτρέχων τὰ δεόμενα πλείονος ἐξεργασίας, *de Thuc.* 13). It becomes clear when Dionysius criticizes and re-arranges and re-writes Thucydides’ paragraphs that the Halicarnassian is unhappy with the Athenian’s underlying malevolence toward his own people. Proper ‘balance’ and ‘arrangement’ of episodes turn finally on the “intention” (διάνοια) of the composer in communicating to his audience(s). Similar, then, to Plutarch who, a century later, would ironically, now accuse *Herodotus* of “malice”



(κακοήθεια)<sup>31</sup> Dionysius imputes “ill feeling” to Thucydides’ whole enterprise.

—To sum up, in Dionysius, the trialectic or triadic synergy of authorially intended interpretations and emotions, realized for specific audiences, of events configured through a distinctive narrative emplotment is in full bloom. Or to approach the trialectic from the opposite direction: the persuasion of discrete audiences to specific understandings and emotive responses of *the composer* dictates from the text’s very inception the shape and the strategy which the telling of the narrative will take.

## II.

In one shorter period of chap. 9, Dionysius combines three technical terms of poetics that Luke will employ in his short prooemial period (Luke 1:1-4) approximately one century later (παρακολούθουμεν—παρηκολουθηκότι, Luke 1:3; πράγματα—πραγμάτων, 1:1; ἀκριβῶς—ἀκριβῶς, 1:3)—namely, the ability to “follow” the significance of “events”/“matters” as they are presented by the author. Four other terms or cognates that function as key components in Dionysius’ period or immediate context (ch. 9) are also found in the Lukan prologue (γράφειν—γράψαι; σαφήνεια—ἀσφάλεια; ἡ διήγησις—διήγησιν; ἐκπληρῶσαι—πεπληροφορημένων). At the base of these terms are the shared assumptions regarding a narrative plotting intended to effect the author’s desired interpretation among his or her audience.

We shall concentrate only on those poetics-rhetorical clues that Luke in his opening *prooimia* provides his listeners in matters of “division”/“partitioning” that we have discovered are so decisive for Dionysius’ narrative hermeneutics.

Luke discloses the larger rationale for his writing yet another narrative when apparently “many” have already undertaken the task of compiling such an account (πολλοὶ ἐπεχείρησαν ἀνατάξασθαι, Luke 1:1). His διήγησις will produce a “clearer certainty” (ἡ ἀσφάλεια, 1:4) for his audience (σοὶ γράψαι κράτιστε θεόφιλε, 1:3) concerning the events he contends have now “in our midst come to fruition” (περὶ τῶν πεπληροφορημένων ἐν ἡμῖν πραγμάτων, 1:1). The only reasonable conclusion to draw for such an effort by one neither “eyewitness” nor “attendant”/“assistant” to the events from “the beginning” (οἱ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρεταὶ γενόμενοι τοῦ λόγου .

<sup>31</sup> Plutarch, *On the Malice of Herodotus*, *Moralia* 854-874; LCL XI, 8-129.

. . . παρέδωσαν ἡμῖν, 1:2) is that our author is not satisfied with the benefits that these other narrative accounts produce for their audiences. Especially since he aligns himself with these “many” others who themselves are dependent upon eyewitnesses and assistants for their material, Luke is quite deliberately placing himself on the side of *receiver* rather than formulator of the traditions that seem to motivate these many attempts. To be sure, the third evangelist does not lodge any formal complaints about these ‘others,’ and in this he departs from the conventional Hellenistic rhetoric of bettering one’s competitors;<sup>32</sup> on the other hand, it is striking from the ‘opening bell’ of his communication how Luke promotes his enterprise as meeting the Hellenistic standard of narrative performance that delivers the clarity of comprehension that, theoretically, in some circles at least, not even a Thucydides could adequately accomplish. Our scope permits only three specifics:

1. In both his opening *prooimion* to his two-volume work (Luke 1:1-4) and in his secondary *prooimion* of Acts 1:1-8 our inscribed author vouchsafes the reliability of his credentials (παρηκολουθηκότι, Luke 1:3) to order yet another narrative account that will be fully reliable (ἀκριβῶς, 1:3) for his auditors. Unlike Dionysius’ critique of Thucydides’ *War*, Luke bridges the reliability of the audience’s reception to his own dependability as a configurer of the traditions by claiming an authority of one who himself has “followed” “all” the traditions he recounts. By παρακολουθέω Luke contends that he, over a period of time, had become thoroughly familiar with all the traditions (λόγοι) that go back to a set beginning and have come to their “full flowering” in his own time (πεπληροφορημένων). And by using another perfect participle, παρηκολουθηκότι, Luke, like a Polybius two centuries before him (Moessner 1999, 88-90), or like his contemporary Josephus (Moessner 1996), forges the ‘schooling’ that he has already received to the guaranteed benefit his readers will derive from following his own two-volume account. Though he cannot claim status as eyewitness or even attendant to the eyewitness accounts of Jesus of Nazareth, Luke can and does claim full authority to draw up a new and distinctive comprehension of all that he presents.

Similar to Dionysius’ twofold insistence that an author’s “take” on recounted events be as free from personal bias as possible, on the one hand, and that the ‘management’ of the audience through the ‘arrangement’ (οἰκονομία) of the narrative deliver the maximum benefit according to the author’s intended understanding, on the other, Luke grounds his own ability

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<sup>32</sup> E.g., see Rajak (1987, esp. 82).

to deliver the desired interpretation upon his own saturation in these multiple traditions. Implicit, of course, in this claim is that his schooling is beyond reproach; explicit, however, is Luke's assertion that an auditor like "his Excellency Theophilus" will indeed gain a firm(er) grasp (ἡ ἀσφάλεια, 1:4) of the true significance of all these matters (περὶ λόγων, 1:4).

Contrary to the 'received tradition' of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, παρακολουθέω does not mean "to investigate", "conduct research", or "to go back over something to figure something out". Rather, as Cadbury argued (now many years ago: 1922a; 1922b; 1922-1923, 489-510; 1956-1957), as I have written in several articles (e.g., Moessner, 1996; 1999), and now as the latest edition of Bauer (2000: *ad loc.*) correctly reflects, none of the alleged uses of παρακολουθέω in the sense of "to investigate", cited in earlier editions of Bauer and esteemed commentaries, evinces that meaning (cf. correctly, L & S). Rather, in the perfect tense, παρηκολουθηκότες connotes in Luke's context a "following with the mind" which has produced a fundamental comprehension and/or adherence to learned traditions (cf. 1 Tim 4:6—[perf. ptc. sg.]—teaching adhered to/followed; 2 Tim 3:10—[perf. 2<sup>nd</sup> pers. sg.] "stayed abreast of Paul's teachings and persecutions" so that one is "thoroughly familiar" with all that Paul stands for).

Thus when our inscribed author contends that he has become "intimately familiar" with "all" (πάντα) the traditions that stem "from way back"/"from the top" (ἄνωθεν) which he will order in his account, and then echoes this comprehensive compass in Acts 1:1 by narrowing the "all" to "all" (πάντα) the traditions "that Jesus began to do and to teach" as recounted in his volume one, Luke asserts his own authorial intention to impress this design upon his auditors. In essence, Luke is saying: 'If you want to gain a clearer understanding of the true significance of all of these events, then you must "follow" the carefully arranged divisions and sequences of my two-volume work.' παρακολουθέω thus ties Luke's credentials to re-figure the traditions of Jesus of Nazareth "*with understanding*" to the ability delivered to the audience to follow this newly configured significance "*with understanding*" (παρηκολουθηκότες ἄνωθεν πᾶσιν ἀκριβῶς καθεξῆς σοι γράψαι . . . ἵνα ἐπιγνῶς . . . τὴν ἀσφάλειαν).<sup>33</sup>

2. That Luke's intent focuses upon an *epistemic* impact upon his audience rather than primarily empathic approbation or rejection becomes clear from his use of the ἀσφαλ- word group in his second book. At the end

<sup>33</sup> Note how ἀκριβῶς can be construed with both παρηκολουθηκότες and γράψαι.

of the first major speech (λόγος, cf. Acts 2:41) and second longest of volume two, Luke has Peter conclude his address, “Let the whole house of Israel know therefore with *clear certainty* (ἀσφαλῶς) that God had established him as both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified” (Acts 2:36). Not only does this summary climax the entire import of the speech (cf. 2:37—“What shall we do?”), but the use of both “Lord” and “Christ” also suggests that the heart of the argument is being summarized as well, since extensive scripture has been cited and all three quotations include a “Lord” figure,<sup>34</sup> while the last two refer David’s words (Psalms) to “Jesus of Nazareth” or “this Jesus” whom David himself had “foreseen” and “spoken about” as “the Christ”.<sup>35</sup> Are we to surmise that the “clear certainty” on the part of Peter’s (Luke’s) audience is integrally connected to the comprehending of this scriptural argument? Moreover, the three occurrences of the adjective/substantive, ἀσφαλής (Acts 21:34; 22:30; 25:26), are linked with verbs of “understanding”<sup>36</sup> and/or “writing”. Acts 25:26 curiously combines the need for a “firmer grasp” of the events around Paul in order that his “most excellent” Festus,<sup>37</sup> after a more thorough examination of Paul, might write his superior with specific content (περὶ οὗ ἀσφαλές τι γράψαι τῷ κυρίῳ οὐκ ἔχω . . . ὅπως . . . σχῶ τί γράψω)! Therefore ἀσφάλεια combines both the *senses* of “clarity” (σαφήνεια/σαφή) and “security” (ἀσφαλής) and has as its referent “certain knowledge”.<sup>38</sup> In contrast, then, to Dionysius’ complaint that Thucydides’ audiences could not follow his ‘arrangement’ with sufficient “clarity of understanding”, Luke maintains that ‘clear certainty’ is precisely what his audience will attain.

3. Not only do the two prologues claim an authority for Luke in relation both to the “eyewitnesses and attendants” of the gospel message as well as

<sup>34</sup> I am, of course, not suggesting that every use of “Lord” in the citations *must* refer to Jesus (Acts 2:20, 21—Joel 2:31, 32; Acts 2:25—[LXX] Ps 15:8; Acts 2:34b—[LXX] Ps 109:1; rather the texts which speak of “Lord” beg for explanation in light of the affirmation in Acts 2:36 that Jesus is “Lord”).

<sup>35</sup> Acts 2:25a—“For David speaks concerning him” [i.e., “Jesus of Nazareth”, 2:22]; 2:34a—“For David did not ascend, but he himself says”; (in the following citation of Ps 110:1, David can therefore not be speaking about himself but about another, viz., “this Jesus”, Acts 2:32a, whom he speaks about in advance as “the Christ”, Acts 2:31).

<sup>36</sup> Both Acts 21:34 and 22:30—γινῶναι τό ἀσφαλές—involves the Roman tribune who wants to know more of the “certain facts” surrounding such opposition to Paul.

<sup>37</sup> Acts 26:25—κράτιστε Φῆστε; cf. Luke 1:3—κράτιστε θεόφιλε.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. the only other instance of ἀσφάλεια in Luke-Acts in Acts 5:23 with its literal sense and referent, “the securely locked” prison gates! but cf. Acts 16:23 for the adverb: Paul and Silas are guarded by the jailer ἀσφαλῶς. Cf. Bauer (2000) on Acts 2:36: “know beyond a doubt”; RSV—“know assuredly”.

to the “many” (λόγος, Luke 1:1-2), his secondary *prooimion* also establishes a credibility for the third evangelist that would ward off any criticism that Luke’s own mindset or orientation toward “all” these traditions is seriously flawed or morally skewed. We have already seen that Luke claims the same body of traditions at his disposal as those utilized by the “many” in their attempts at a “narrative account” (διήγησις, Luke 1:1). But more than that, Luke distinguishes his authorial voice from the narratorial voice of the sequel volume in a way that highlights the special authority of his telling in both of his volumes.

Through a *metaleptic* replay of Luke’s first volume in Acts 1:2—“all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up”—our inscribed author, “I”, who once again has emerged only to quickly disappear behind his familiar third person (‘omniscient’) narrator in 1:3, directs his audience back to the end of volume one. There on the day of his resurrection, while speaking directly to his apostles at table, Jesus charges the eleven to “stay in this city [Jerusalem] until you are clothed with *power* from on high”, before Jesus is then “taken up into heaven” (Luke 24:49b, 51b). Now, however, the linking preface of Acts re-configures this final one-day event of the first volume in a most unconventional way. By a striking rhetorical ploy, Luke augments this command into the climax of a forty-day period of resurrection appearances in which Jesus’ instruction to the apostles concerning the Kingdom of God re-characterizes the charge “to await the Spirit”. Jesus in fact “interrupts” and overrides the voice of the narrator to break into the scene directly: “And while eating with them he commanded them (narrator speaking) not to depart from Jerusalem but to await the promise of the Father which (narrator still speaking) you heard from *me!*” (Jesus speaking). The *prooemial* voice of the narrator is overtaken by the voice of the leading character of volume one. All that “Jesus began to do and to teach” thus continues on now, already, in the linking preface. Through this remarkable ‘voice-over,’ Jesus’ own direct speech binds the two volumes and addresses the audience directly as he continues “to do and to teach”. The ‘end’ of the Gospel volume must now be viewed as a telescoped preview of the beginning of the sequel volume with the authority of both books now vouchsafed by the risen-crucified One himself. But that means that Luke’s ‘school’ pedigree blends its voice with nothing less than the living voice of Jesus himself.

We can now summarize our main conclusion: It is good prose arrangement that unleashes the persuasive power of ‘clear certainty.’ In the

ways in which he ‘divides’ his narrative through his interlocking *prooimia* and the ‘convention and convergence of terms’ he selects in introducing his volumes, Luke signals loudly and clearly that a “firmer grasp” of all these traditions that seem to matter is precisely what he can deliver his audience—‘*Who is to be master?! That’s all!*’

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