

De Temmerman, K. 2006. *Personages op papyrus. Een narratologische analyse van de retorische karakteriseringstechnieken in de Oudgriekse roman* [English title: *Characters on Papyrus. A Narratological Analysis of the Rhetorical Techniques of Characterization in the Ancient Greek Novel*]. PhD Dissertation, Ghent University (Belgium).

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Scholarship on the ancient Greek novel (narrative prose fiction of love and adventure whose heyday dates from the first centuries AD) is characterized by a puzzling paradox. On the one hand, the central importance of characters in any narrative text ensures that there is hardly any contribution in the towering bibliography on the novels that does *not* occasionally touch upon characteristics, behaviour or self-performance of one or more characters. On the other hand, however, contributions offering systematic research into character construction are extremely rare. It is commonly accepted that the novel protagonists are characterized in a stereotyped, static and idealized way. This dissertation offers a detailed account of the protagonists' character construction in four of the five extant novels (Chariton's *Callirhoe*, Xenophon of Ephesus' *Ephesian Story*, Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, and Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*) and challenges this widely-held view. Methodologically, this analysis draws upon ancient rhetorical theory on *êthos* and *êthos* construction. As is well known, the novels are permeated by techniques and models originating from ancient rhetoric. Whereas scholarly attention has primarily been drawn towards distinct rhetorical set pieces in the novels, this study points out that rhetoric is more pervasively and intrinsically interwoven with the novels' literary texture than scholars have been willing to admit.

The first part of the dissertation goes beyond the study of the corpus texts and develops a model for the analysis of character construction in (ancient) narrative in general. It surveys the various (direct, metaphorical and metonymical) techniques of character construction provided by ancient rhetorical theory (*kharaktêrismos*, *êthopoeiia*, *paradeigma*, etc.). It is pointed out that almost all techniques listed by modern (structuralist) narratology are anticipated by techniques dealt with in ancient rhetoric. It is plausible, therefore, to assume that ancient and modern readers and writers draw upon conceptual frameworks that are at least partially similar.

The second part of the dissertation investigates the way in which the Greek novelists apply their rhetorical toolkits to their protagonists' character construction. It is demonstrated that rhetorical display in the novels does not exclude character construction (as common opinion would have it). On the contrary, rhetoric and character construction go hand in hand. The novelists construct characters in a much subtler way and with a larger toolkit of techniques than has been acknowledged up to now. Moreover, the formal variety and complexity reflect the

novelists' concern with the thematic aspects of character construction. Rather than straightforwardly offering idealized and stereotyped portraits of their protagonists, they construct characters that are more individualized than is commonly accepted and that thematize, each in their own way, the question of what it actually means to be a novel hero(ine).

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