

Theon and the History of the Progymnasmata

Malcolm Heath

THEON'S *PROGYMNASMATA* is one of four extant Greek texts on the preliminary exercises to rhetoric. Two are credibly ascribed to authors who can be dated securely (Aphthonius, Nicolaus); a third is ascribed to two authors (Hermogenes and Libanius) who, though securely dated, are unlikely to have written it. Theon has been variously dated, but the current consensus places him in the first century A.D.¹ In this paper I shall argue that the grounds for this early dating are weak, and that the author is more likely to have been an independently attested fifth-century rhetorician named Theon. I also make an unverifiable conjecture about the authorship of the text falsely attributed to Hermogenes.

1. Attested *Progymnasmata*

I begin with a catalogue of the evidence for progymnasmatic texts, reserving Theon and [Hermogenes] for separate treatment. The evidence has so far as possible been placed in chronological order. Brief comments on prosopographical issues provide an initial orientation, in some cases developed further in the later

¹W. Stegemann, "Theon (5)" *RE* 5A (1934) 2037–2054, at 2037–2039, gives a good overview of the discussion. I have used the following editions: H. Rabe, *Aphthonii Progymnasmata* (Leipzig 1926) [= *Aphth.*]; H. Rabe, *Hermogenes* (Leipzig 1913); J. Felten, *Nicolai Progymnasmata* (Leipzig 1913); M. Patillon and G. Bolognesi, *Aelius Théon* (Paris 1997) cited by page and line in Spengel. Also cited: H. Rabe, *Ioannis Sardiani Commentarium in Aphthonii Progymnasmata* (Leipzig 1928) [= *Sard.*] and *Prolegomenon Sylloge* (Leipzig 1931) [= *PS*]; C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* (Stuttgart 1832–1836) [= *RG*]. The research for this paper was completed with the support of a British Academy Research Readership.

sections. Where the evidence for a text is a title without a fragment, it may be uncertain whether the reference is to a technical treatise or a collection of model compositions. Conversely, where the evidence is a fragment without a title, it may be uncertain whether the fragment comes from a treatise specifically on the progymnasmata or reports an observation made in some other context.

HERMAGORAS at once plunges us into prosopographical difficulties, since there were three rhetoricians of this name: Hermagoras of Temnos, in the second century B.C.; a pupil of Theodorus of Gadara in the first century A.D.; and a third active early in the second century A.D.² There are two relevant testimonia:

(i) Theon (120.16–19) cites Hermagoras in connection with the exercise known as thesis. Theon explains that thesis differs from common topic in that the latter involves amplification of an acknowledged fact, while the subject of a thesis is disputed, and adds: “for this reason Hermagoras called it a topic subject to adjudication (κρινόμενον τόπον)³ and Theodorus of Gadara a head in a *hypothesis*.” *Hypothesis* is a technical term for the subject of a declamation or a speech; so Theodorus’ comment should not be referred to the progymnasma.⁴ But there is no reason to doubt that Hermagoras’ formula was meant to define the difference between thesis and common topic.

(ii) John Doxapatres (RG II 513.19–26) says that Hermagoras and Apsines denied the possibility of a description (*ekphrasis*) of manner, on the grounds that it has no substantive existence (ὑπόστασις) while “Theon the Platonist” asserted its necessity

²For a general discussion of the problem (which however fails to address the progymnasmatic fragments) see M. Heath, “Hermagoras: Transmission and Attribution,” *Philologus* 146 (2002) 287–298.

³τόπον is Patillon’s supplement, from the Armenian.

⁴For thesis as a head see M. Heath, *Hermogenes On Issues* (Oxford 1995) 121, on Hermogenes 67.13–18.

(in fact Theon affirms the possibility, not the necessity, of description of manner: 118.23–119.2).

Matthes perplexingly attributes (i) to Hermagoras of Temnos (fr.I.6d) and the verbatim quotation in John of Sardis (254.2–255.3) to the pupil of Theodorus (fr.II.3); and he ascribes (ii) to the third Hermagoras (fr.III.3).⁵ In the absence of contrary evidence, however, it would seem reasonable to take the two testimonia together. The content alone provides no guidance as to the identity of the Hermagoras(es) in question. The “point for adjudication” (κρινόμενον) was a key component in the version of issue-theory developed by Hermagoras of Temnos, but it was not distinctive to him; the schema of which it was part was still current in a variety of mutated forms in the second century A.D.⁶ A first-century date for Theon would rule the third Hermagoras out of consideration for (i); a later date would not rule out Hermagoras of Temnos for either testimonium (since some information about him was transmitted indirectly even when his writings had ceased to be current) but would favour the third Hermagoras (since more information about him was available to later Greek rhetoricians).

PAUL OF TYRE can be dated, since the *Suda* (Π 809) records his involvement in the embassy to Hadrian (A.D. 117–138) that led to Tyre’s recognition as a metropolis.⁷ The *Suda*’s bibliography attributes an *Art of Rhetoric*, progymnasmata, and declamations to him. It is not certain that the progymnasmata should be taken with the preceding *Art* (i.e. as a treatise) rather than with the following declamations (i.e. as models).

MINUCIANUS is best known as a contributor to issue-theory criticised by Hermogenes, who was probably his younger con-

⁵D. Matthes, *Hermagorae Temnitae testimonia et fragmenta* (Leipzig 1962).

⁶M. Heath, “The Substructure of *stasis*-theory from Hermagoras to Hermogenes,” *CQ* N.S. 44 (1994) 114–129.

⁷See A. Birley, *Hadrian: the Restless Emperor* (London 1995) 227–228; F. Millar, *The Roman Near East* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1999) 289.

temporary.⁸ In the *Suda* (M 1087) it is a later Minucianus, a sophist with a *floruit* under Gallienus (253–268) who is credited with an *Art of Rhetoric* and *Progymnasmata*, but that is likely to result from a conflation of two homonyms. The fact that Menander, in the latter part of the third century, wrote a commentary on Minucianus' *Progymnasmata* (*Suda* M 590) supports the attribution to the second-century Minucianus, and confirms that it was a technical treatise (Menander also wrote a commentary on Hermogenes *On Issues*).

HARPOCRATION owes his place in this catalogue to a notice in one manuscript of Doxapatres' lectures on Aphthonius (*PS* 171.10 app.) which states that Theon and Harpocration placed anecdote (*chreia*) before narrative because it is easier. This order is mentioned (but not attributed by name) in [Hermogenes] (4.7–8). Theon in fact places *chreia* first, before both fable and narrative. The prosopography of rhetoricians named Harpocration is exceptionally difficult. We know of:⁹

- (i) Valerius Harpocration (*Suda* A 4014) the Alexandrian rhetor who composed a *Lexicon of the Ten Orators*. *P.Oxy.* XVIII 2192 allows us to place him in the latter part of the second century.¹⁰
- (ii) Gaius Harpocration (*Suda* A 4012) who wrote *On Antiphon's Figures*, *On the Speeches of Hyperides and Lysias*, and other unspecified works.
- (iii) Aelius Harpocration (*Suda* A 4013) who wrote *On the Art of Rhetoric* and *On Types of Style*, and other works on classical orators and historians.
- (iv) a Harpocration whose *Art* is cited frequently by the Anonymus Seguerianus.
- (v) a Harpocration cited several times in the scholia to Hermogenes for technical points in issue-theory.

⁸M. Heath, "The Family of Minucianus?" *ZPE* 113 (1996) 66–70.

⁹Further references and discussion in M. Heath, "Porphyry's Rhetoric," *CQ* N.S. 53 (2003) 141–166, at 147.

¹⁰See J. J. Keaney, *Harpocration. Lexeis of the Ten Orators* (Amsterdam 1991) ix–x.

(vi) a philosopher and rhetor named Harpocraton attested in a third-century Athenian inscription (*IG* II² 10826).

Although it is likely that some of these testimonia relate to the same person there is no reliable way to determine the identifications. The identity of the Harpocraton who wrote on progymnasmata is even more uncertain. The most that we can say is that if he is (iii), (iv), or (v), he probably dates to the late second or early third century; only (ii) lacks any dating criterion.

APSINES is named in the second testimonium under Hermagoras. The easy assumption is that the reference is to Apsines of Gadara (born probably around 190);¹¹ but there does not seem to be any way to exclude Apsines the Spartan, who appears in Eunapius (*VS* 482) as a rival of Julian of Cappadocia and a distinguished theoretician, and who was probably the son of Onasimus, another author on progymnasmata.

ONASIMUS “of Cyprus or Sparta” is described by the *Suda* (O 327) as a historian and sophist, and given a *floruit* under Constantine (306–337). His bibliography is extensive: *Divisions of Issues*, *Art of Judicial Rhetoric to Apsines*, *On the Art of Controversy* (περὶ ἀντιρρητικῆς τέχνης), progymnasmata, declamations, encomia, “and much else.” This Onasimus must be the son of the sophist Apsines of Athens (A 4734) who on chronological grounds should be distinguished from Apsines of Gadara.¹² The dedicatee of the *Art of Judicial Rhetoric* (τέχνη δικανική) will have been Onasimus’ son, recorded in the *Suda* as “Apsines, son of the Athenian sophist Onasimus,” and himself a sophist (A 4736). The son is probably Eunapius’ Apsines the Spartan, mentioned above.

SIRICIUS (*Suda* Σ 475) was a pupil of Andromachus of Neapolis (A 2185) who taught in Nicomedia under Diocletian (284–305) and is probably identical with “Andromachus from

¹¹M. Heath, “Apsines and Pseudo-Apsines,” *AJP* 119 (1998) 89–111.

¹²Heath (*supra* n.11) 91.

Syria," one of the leading teachers of rhetoric in Athens in Porphyry's time (*i.e.* before 263) according to Eunapius (*VS* 457).¹³ Siricius was for a time a sophist in Athens. The bibliography in the *Suda* comprises only progymnasmata and declamations. In this case we can resolve the ambiguity in favour of a technical treatise, since Nicolaus (27.14–28.8) cites Siricius for a classification of different kinds of maxim (γνώμη). We also have fragments of other technical works.¹⁴

ULPIAN of Emesa appears in the *Suda* (O 911) as the author of works on local history (*FGrHist* 676) and of progymnasmata and an *Art of Rhetoric*. It is possible that he is identical with the Ulpian who taught in Antioch; according to the *Suda* (O 912, *cf.* E 3738) Ulpian of Antioch had previously taught in Emesa. This identification would add to the bibliography miscellaneous discourses, declamations, and informal discourses (διαλέξεις) of the kind often prefaced to declamation performances but sometimes also performed on their own (Menander 393.25–26), as well as unspecified other works. Three fragments relating to issue-theory are preserved under Ulpian's name,¹⁵ and one on the figure that he called ἐπιδρομή (*RG* 7.1030.9–17, 1052 n.). The appearance of Ulpian's name in connection with the scholia to Demosthenes poses a difficult problem that I shall discuss elsewhere.¹⁶

The Armenian historian Thomas Artruni (*ca* 900) attributes a fable to "the philosopher Ulpian."¹⁷ An Armenian fable collec-

¹³M. Heath, "Caecilius, Longinus, and Photius," *GRBS* 39 (1998) 271–292, at 280–281.

¹⁴S. Gloeckner, *Quaestiones rhetoricae* (*Bresl.Philolog.Abh.* 8.2 [1901]) 98–101; O. Schissel, "La définition de la στάσις par Σιρίκιος," *Byzantion* 3 (1927/8) 205–207.

¹⁵L. Schilling, *Quaestiones rhetoricae selectae* (= *Jahrbuch für classische Philologie* Suppl. 28 [1903] 663–778) 763, 766–767.

¹⁶M. Heath, *Menander: a Rhetor in Context* (in preparation) Chapter 5.

¹⁷M. F. Brosset, *Collections d'historiens arméniens* I (St Petersburg 1876) 107 ("le philosophe Vulpien"). R. W. Thomson, *History of the House of Artsrunik* (Detroit 1985) 190, offers "the philosopher Olympian," apparently an

tion attributes a group of fables to "Olympianus." "Ulpian" has been suggested as a correction in the fable collection, and "Olympianus" as a correction in Artruni.¹⁸ Either corruption is plausible; the confusion of the two names can be found in Greek sources.¹⁹ A sophist Olympianus is mentioned in a cryptic entry in the *Suda* (O 213), and Libanius also attests a sophist of that name (*Ep.* 1489) but we know nothing about him. If the attribution to Ulpian is correct, we may have evidence that a collection of models was transmitted under Ulpian's name. This would not exclude a theoretical treatise (fables are also attributed to Aphthonius) but would weaken the case for assuming one.

EPIPHANIUS, son of Ulpian (possibly, but not certainly, Ulpian of Emesa/Antioch) taught in Petra and in Athens (*Suda* E 2741). His bibliography is given as: *On the Similarity and Difference of the Issues*, progymnasmata, declamations, epideictic speeches, and miscellaneous theoretical works. We have some technical fragments concerned with issue-theory, and Epiphanius "the theorist" is cited in the scholia to Demosthenes.²⁰ From Eunapius (*VS* 493–495) and Libanius (*Or.* 1.16) we know of a Syrian Epiphanius, a pupil of Julianus. He was distinguished in Athens before the arrival of Libanius (A.D. 336) and died before the arrival of Eunapius (A.D. 362). The fact that he was mocked for the pedantic technical precision of his declamations (*VS* 491) would fit the theoretical writer well. The identification has been questioned, on the grounds that one would expect Eunapius to call a man from Petra Arabian rather

emendation. The fable is Aphthonius 16, Syntipas 13, Babrius 44, cf. Themistius *Or.* 22.278d.

¹⁸See C. Zuckerman, *A Repertory of Published Armenian Translations of Classical Texts* (Jerusalem 1995) s.v. "Ὑλιανός."

¹⁹Steph. Byz. s.v. Τηνοί (*FGrHist* 676 F 1: the manuscripts vary between Οὐλιανός (printed by Müller and Jacoby), Οὐπιανός, and Οὐλυμπιανός, whence Meineke's Ὀλυμπιανός. In Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 234 editors have preferred Ὀλυμπιανῶ over the variant Οὐλιανῶ.

²⁰*RG* IV 463.29–465.18, cf. Gloeckner (*supra* n.14) 93–94; schol. Dem. 18.8 (27c).

than Syrian;²¹ but Callinicus of Petra was also, according to the *Suda* (K 231) variously designated Syrian and Arabian.²²

APHTHONIUS brings us back to firmer ground. He was a pupil of Libanius, and so dates to the late fourth century. The bibliography in the *Suda* (A 4630) is ambiguous: ἔγραψεν εἰς τὴν Ἑρμογένους τέχνην προγυμνάσματα might mean “he wrote progymnasmata to Hermogenes’ *Art*” (a Byzantine perspective on the fact that Aphthonius’ *Progymnasmata* heads the standard collection of four rhetorical works attributed, in two cases mistakenly, to Hermogenes), but the expression is strange. A comma would separate the *Progymnasmata* from a commentary on Hermogenes *On Issues*. Such commentaries were proliferating in the fourth century, and although there is no independent evidence that Aphthonius wrote one, Menander’s commentary on Hermogenes too is explicitly attested only in the *Suda* and has left no certain fragments. As well as the extant theoretical text on progymnasmata, we have a collection of fables attributed to him;²³ Photius (cod. 132, p.97a) also refers to declamations (μελέται).²⁴

SOPATER appears in the commentary on Aphthonius by John of Sardis (ninth century). John attributes a number of fragments to Sopater by name, but probably preserves more of Sopater’s text than he explicitly attributes, since not all of his extensive extracts from Theon are explicitly attributed; Rabe has attempted

²¹R. J. Penella, *Greek Philosophers and Sophists in the Fourth Century A.D.* (Leeds 1990) 95–96; J. Geiger, “Notes on the Second Sophistic in Palestine,” *ICS* 19 (1994) 221–230, at 225–226.

²²D. S. Potter, *Prophecy and History in the Crisis of the Roman Empire* (Oxford (1990) 216–218, discusses incentives to avoid the designation “Arabian.” A sophist named Epiphanius taught Apollinarius in Laodicea while Theodotus was bishop (Soc. 2.46, Soz. 6.25.9) but there is no reason to assume the identification: see Penella (*supra* n.21) 95.

²³Rabe, *Apth.* xxv; A. Hausrath and H. Hunger, edd., *Corpus Fabularum Aesopicarum*² I.2 (Leipzig 1959) 133–151.

²⁴But references to μελέται in a Byzantine source must be treated with caution: Libanius’ progymnasmata are designated προγυμνασμάτων μελέται in some manuscripts (see the introduction to volume VIII of Foerster’s edition).

to identify the full scope of Sopater's contribution.²⁵ Here, too, there are prosopographical complications.²⁶ Other rhetorical works attributed to Sopater are:

- (i) *Division of Questions*: the author taught or (according to an attractive emendation) studied in Athens (55.6–7) perhaps with Himerius (318.29–319.2). This would place his activity around the end of the fourth century, a date consistent with the citation of this work by Georgius in the fifth century.²⁷
- (ii) Commentary on Hermogenes: this is preserved in what is evidently an abbreviated form in RG V. A reference to Libanius *Decl.* 30 (RG V 46.10–11) gives a rough *terminus post quem*.
- (iii) *Prolegomena to Aristides*:²⁸ the author studied in Athens (151.1–3 Lenz).
- (iv) *Paraphrases*:²⁹ this text demonstrates techniques for the stylistic transformation of passages from Homer and Demosthenes.

Differences in doctrine incline many (myself included) to distinguish the commentator from the author of the *Division of Questions*.³⁰ There is some reason to believe that the commentator was the author of the Aristides prolegomena.³¹ But it has also been claimed that linguistic resemblances make it

²⁵Rabe, *Apth.* 57–70, *Sard.* xxiv–xxix. See also R. F. Hock and E. N. O'Neill, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* (Atlanta 2002) 98–112.

²⁶S. Gloeckner, "Sopatros (10)," *RE* 3A (1927) 1002–1006; cf. Gloeckner (*supra* n.14) 71–76, where the attempt at source-criticism assumes too sharp a polarity between pro-Minucianus and pro-Hermogenes commentators: see M. Heath, "Metalepsis, paragraphe and the Scholia to Hermogenes," *Leeds International Classical Studies* 2.2 (2003) 1–91, at 24–27, = <<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/classics/lics>>.

²⁷See D. Innes and M. Winterbottom, *Sopatros the Rhetor* (BICS Suppl. 48 [1998]) 1 and (for the text) *ad locc.* For the citation in Georgius (cf. n.56 *infra*) see Schilling (*supra* n.15) 759.

²⁸The text in F. W. Lenz, *The Aristides Prolegomena* (Mnemosyne Suppl. 5 [1959]) 157–172, supersedes Dindorf, but in other respects Lenz's analysis of the prolegomena and scholia is seriously defective: see n.61 and n.67 below.

²⁹S. Gloeckner, "Aus Sopatros Μεταποιήσεις," *RM* 65 (1910) 504–514.

³⁰E.g. Innes/Winterbottom (*supra* n.27) 1; Heath (*supra* n.4) 245 (but note the correction in Heath [*supra* n.9] 164 n.100); Heath (*supra* n.26) 11–12.

³¹Gloeckner (*supra* n.26) 1004 acutely noted that the commentator's preference for εἰ δεῖ δοθῆναι (instead of the more common δοῦναι) is shared by the Aristides prolegomena.

“certain” that the same author wrote *Division of Questions* and the prolegomena.³² A definitive solution to this problem is not necessary for present purposes, although the element of uncertainty which it creates should be kept in mind.

A more serious uncertainty arises when we consider the material preserved under Sopater’s name in the composite scholia to Hermogenes printed in *RG* IV. This is usually taken to derive from a redacted version of the commentary abbreviated in *RG* V, but the adaptation is sometimes radical, and there is evidence that material has been incorporated from other sources, including a commentary datable to the fifth century.³³ So it seems likely that the Sopater whose commentary was excerpted in the *RG* IV scholia was a later Sopater, who drew on the work of his earlier homonym among other sources. Since the name is a common one, there is no reason to assume that all the rhetorical works attributed to a Sopater are by one man. In fact, we know that a sophist named Sopater taught in Alexandria in the late fifth century: Severus (later bishop of Antioch) studied in Alexandria in the 480s with sophists named Sopater and John “the shorthand writer” (ὁ σημειογράφος = *notarius*).³⁴ It is possible that the Sopater who taught Severus is the sophist to whom Aeneas of Gaza *Ep.* 9 is addressed (*PLRE* II Sopater (3)–(4)).

If this identification of the Sopater of *RG* IV is correct, it becomes a matter of doubt whether the work on paraphrase and the work on progymnasmata should be attributed to a fourth-century Athenian Sopater or a late fifth-century Alexandrian

³²Innes/Winterbottom (*supra* n. 27) 13 n.3; but no specific examples are given.

³³The source-critical argument is presented in detail in Heath (*supra* n.26) 27–34.

³⁴Zacharias of Mytilene 12.1–3 Kugener (this work is extant only in a Syriac translation, and I depend on Kugener’s French version). For more on John ὁ σημειογράφος see Heath (*supra* n.26) 33.

one.³⁵ Further evidence that the fifth-century Sopater has left traces in the tradition will emerge in the next section, and I shall suggest that they support the attribution of the progymnasmata to the later homonym.

ATHANASIUS was an Alexandrian sophist, probably dating around the end of the fourth century. Fragments on issue-theory are mainly preserved by Georgius, the fifth-century commentator on Hermogenes who also cited Sopater's *Division of Questions*.³⁶ There is no evidence that he wrote a specialised work on progymnasmata, but a series of extracts from his writings (*PS* 171.1–183.9) begins with a discussion of the order of progymnasmata; *chreia* appears first (in an admittedly incomplete list).

SYRIANUS twice refers to his own progymnasmata (2.39.17–20, 171.3–11 Rabe). Self-citation gives no reason to believe that the text was widely circulated or preserved for long. By contrast, texts known from fragments and/or third-party citations are more likely to have enjoyed some measure of currency.

NICOLAUS has two *Suda* entries, one derived from Hesychius of Miletus (N 395), the other based on Proclus' *Life of Marinus* 10 (N 394).³⁷ The combined bibliographies yield an *Art of Rhetoric*,

³⁵Gloeckner (*supra* n.26) notes (1005) that the Aristides prolegomena refer to Homeric paraphrase (μεταφράζειν); but this is not sufficiently distinctive to carry any weight. The resemblance between John of Sardis 252.3–4 τοὺς ἐν ῥητορικῇ βαθείας ὑπήνας καθέλκοντας, in a passage which Rabe regards as an extract from Sopater, and prol. 141.5 τινες τῶν τὰς βαθείας ὑπήνας ἐλκόντων, is not evidence of common authorship, since it echoes Aristides *On the Four* 315, and was evidently a familiar phrase (*cf.* Greg. Naz. *Or.* 5.5).

³⁶Athanasius: H. Rabe, "Aus Rhetoren Handschriften: 4. Athanasios, ein Erklärer des Hermogenes," *RM* 62 (1907) 586–590 (*cf.* also 63 [1908] 519–520); Gloeckner (*supra* n.14) 90–92; Schilling (*supra* n.15) 738–742. Athanasius is cited in *RG* IV 359.8–13, from a section headed "Syrianus and Sopater" (not from Syrianus: his contribution begins at 359.13 = *Syr.* 2.76.27 Rabe) and 518.17–26, from a section headed "Sopater and Marcellinus" (contrary to Heath [*supra* n.9] 161 I now suspect a change of source at 520.6). Since neither passage has a parallel in *RG* V we cannot infer that the commentary by the fourth-century Sopater referred to Athanasius.

³⁷There is a good treatment of Nicolaus' life and writings in Felten xxi–xxvii.

progymasmata, declamations, “and certain other things.” As well as the extant treatise we have a collection of model exercises attributed to him (RG I 266–420). He was a pupil of the sophist Lachares, who was associated with the philosopher Syrianus.³⁸ As a student in Athens Nicolaus himself studied philosophy with Syrianus’ predecessor Plutarch,³⁹ and was a friend of Proclus. Felten infers that he was born around 410, and reached Athens before 430. He practised as a sophist in Constantinople; if the *Suda* is right to extend his career “until Zeno and Anastasius” he lived into the 490s.

PSEUDO-MOSES is an Armenian text, falsely attributed to Movsēs Chorenac’i.⁴⁰ It is commonly known as the “book of chreiai,” but that is a misapplication of the title of the first section of the incomplete extant version; the preceding sections on fable and narrative have probably been lost accidentally. Like the Armenian translation of Theon, it is a product of the “Hellenising school,” active in the late sixth and early seventh centuries.⁴¹ The treatise is based on Aphthonius, but with significant omissions and additions. Adaptations of Aphthonius are also found in Greek manuscripts, such as *Parisinus* 3032 and *Marcianus* 444.⁴² In the Armenian example, Theon appears to

³⁸H. Graeven, “Ein Fragment des Lachares,” *Hermes* 30 (1895) 289–313; L. Radermacher, “Lachares (4),” *RE* 12 (1921) 332–334.

³⁹Felten xxiv–xxv provides evidence that Nicolaus was influenced by Syrianus’ work on rhetoric.

⁴⁰Rabe, *Aphth.* xv–xvii. A. Baumgartner, “Über das Buch ‘die Chrie,’” *ZDMG* 40 (1886) 457–515; M. Akinian, “Moses Chorenaci,” *RE Suppl.* 6 (1935) 534–541, at 540. G. S. Mouradyan has published a critical edition of the Armenian text (Erevan 1993), reviewed by S. P. Cowe, *Le Muséon* 108 (1995) 200–205, and a Russian translation (Erevan 2000); neither was (physically or linguistically) accessible to me.

⁴¹R. W. Thomson, “The Formation of the Armenian Literary Tradition,” in N. G. Garsoian, T. F. Mathews, R. W. Thomson, edd., *East of Byzantium: Syria and Armenia in the Formative Period* (Washington 1982) 135–150; A. Terian, “The Hellenizing School: Its Time, Place, and Scope of Activities Reconsidered,” *ibid.* 175–186; E. M. Shirinian, “Translations from Greek in Armenian Literature,” *Eikasmos* 12 (2001) 229–240.

⁴²See Rabe, *Aphth.* iii–iv, xii–xiii, and RG II 127–135 respectively. R. Sgarbi, “Contributo allo studio delle fonti dell’ opera *Yalags Pitoyic’* attribuita a

have been used, and perhaps Nicolaus; but a more detailed study would be welcome.

Three other pieces of evidence, to which no name can be attached, may be mentioned finally:

(i) The early-fourth-century Christian author Eustathius of Antioch (*De engastrimutho* 27.2) cites from unspecified works of rhetorical technography a definition of fable that is not identical with any other extant: πλάσμα συγκείμενον μετὰ ψυχαγωγίας πρὸς τι τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ χρήσει διαφέρον.

(ii) A third-century papyrus defines fable as follows: μῦ[θ]ός ἐστι [λόγο]ς ἐκ ψευδολογίας τὴν σ[ύνθε]σιν λαμβά[ν]ω[ν μετὰ] ψυχαγωγίας (αἰ)νετοῦ βίου τοῦ κατακλάστο[ν].⁴³ This papyrus reflects the practice of those who apply refutation to fable (*cf.* Nicolaus 21.19–20).

(iii) Another papyrus (*PSI* I 85), not later than the third century, is concerned with *chreia* (τί] ἐστὶν ἡ χρεία; ἀπομνημόνευμα σύντομον ἐπὶ προσώπου τινὸς ἐπαινετόν) and seems at the end to proceed to narrative (ἡ διήγη[σις]).⁴⁴ This is the order of exercises attributed to Harpocration and attested by [Hermogenes].

2. Theon

The basic evidence for the identification of the author of the *Progymnasmata* is provided by the *Suda* (Θ 206): Aelius Theon, of Alexandria, was a sophist who wrote an *Art*, and *On Progymnasmata* (or possibly an *Art on Progymnasmata*) as well as commentaries on Xenophon, Isocrates, and Demosthenes, and

Mosé Corense," *RendIstLomb* 103 (1969) 78–84, claims that the text in *Marc.* 444 is one of the sources of the Armenian text, but fails to identify any point at which the Armenian agrees with this adaptation against Aphthonius.

⁴³J. G. Winter, "Some Literary Papyri," *TAPA* 53 (1922) 128–141, at 136–141. I have supplied μετὰ (ἐπὶ? Winter) in the light of Eustathius; for μετὰ ψυχαγωγίας, *cf.* also Nicolaus 9.8.

⁴⁴See Rabe, *Aphth.* 52–53. For this papyrus see also Hock/O'Neill (*supra* n.25) 94–97.

other works on rhetoric.⁴⁵ There is nothing here that helps determine his date, unless we infer from the cognomen that Theon or an ancestor received Roman citizenship from Hadrian, perhaps when he visited Alexandria in A.D. 130;⁴⁶ but that is not certain. An external constraint is provided by a papyrus fragment, dated to the fourth or fifth century;⁴⁷ but since no date later than the fifth century is likely to be proposed, that too does not significantly limit our options.

If Theon dates to the first century, as the current consensus holds, his is the earliest of the extant progymnasmatic texts ([Hermogenes] cites Aelius Aristides). But Theon's work cannot be viewed as a straightforward reflection of any given stage in the development of the tradition, since he proposes innovations to the progymnasmatic syllabus (59.13–14). On the evidence of the other extant texts his innovations were not accepted into the tradition; nor was his order for the exercises (placing *chreia* first) generally accepted. The extant Greek version has been redacted accordingly: the exercises have been rearranged in the standard order, and the chapters dealing with the additional exercises were probably omitted deliberately (although the loss may have been accidental, since the last of the standard chapters has been truncated accidentally). The original form was, however, preserved long enough to be translated into Armenian. This

⁴⁵Including, according to Adler's edition, 'Ρητορικὰς ὑποθέσεις· καὶ Ζητήματα περὶ συντάξεως λόγου. Perhaps better 'Ρητορικὰς ὑποθέσεις καὶ ζητήματα· Περὶ συντάξεως λόγου: the former would be a collection of declamation themes, perhaps similar to Sopater's *Division of Questions* or Porphyry's συναγωγή τῶν ῥητορικῶν ζητημάτων; for the latter compare Pausanias of Caesarea's περὶ συντάξεως (*Suda* Π 819) and the five books περὶ συντάξεως by Apsines' pupil Gaianus (*Suda* Γ 9).

⁴⁶Compare Aelius Sarapion (*Suda* Σ 115), an Alexandrian rhetor who composed a panegyric on Hadrian: see M. Heath, "Pseudo-Dionysius *Art of Rhetoric* 8–11: Figured Speech, Declamation and Criticism," *AJP* 124 (2003) 81–105.

⁴⁷P.Cairo temp. inv. 26/6/27/1–41, ed. L. Koenen, *Studia Papyrologica* 15 (1976) 53–54, 67–69; identified by M. Gronewald, "Ein Fragment aus Theon, Progymnasmata," *ZPE* 24 (1977) 23–24.

yields a paradox. Technical writings on rhetoric were preserved for functional reasons, and hence were likely to be lost when they were superseded. That is why we have very little Greek technical writing on rhetoric from before the second century A.D. The loss of the works of Hermagoras of Temnos is a striking example (already posing difficulties to Quintilian); likewise Minucianus' *Art of Rhetoric* was driven out of circulation once Hermogenes' *On Issues* became established as a standard text. Since Theon's text sets out a course of exercises which the rhetorical tradition declined to adopt, its preservation in unadapted form from the first century to late antiquity would be surprising. Nor would an accidental historical survival have been translated; the making of the Armenian version implies functional currency.

How strong is the evidence for a first-century date? For Patillon, the decisive considerations arise from the structure of Theon's course in relation to other evidence for the historical development of the progymnasmata: Theon places *chreia* first, an order paralleled in Suetonius *On Grammarians and Rhetors* (25.4) but not accepted in any other extant text; Theon does not treat maxim (γνῶμη) as a separate exercise, and would not have omitted it had it already been in use; confirmation and refutation are placed late in the sequence, as in Suetonius.⁴⁸ This last point is weak: the role of confirmation and refutation in Theon's system (not as an exercise, but as a mode of treatment of other exercises) is so distinctive as to make the validity of the comparison questionable. Theon's references to the confirmation and refutation of maxims as well as *chreiai* (66.31–32, 105.23–25, 128.18–20) show that he was familiar with maxim as an exercise; so the omission was a deliberate choice. The place of *chreia* is the most interesting point. [Hermogenes] (4.7–8) attests to an ordering which places *chreia* before narrative (though not,

⁴⁸Patillon viii–xvi.

apparently, before fable); that is the order attributed to Harpocration, which probably takes us to the late second or early third century; and there is a third-century papyrus which follows that order. It is possible that Theon's order, placing *chreia* first, was accepted by Athanasius, around the end of the fourth century. Nicolaus discussed this order in the fifth century, and it is not self-evident that his discussion is purely antiquarian (I examine Nicolaus' evidence more closely below). In other words, we have to consider the possibility that divergent teaching practices persisted into the fifth century. This would, of course, weaken my argument against the preservation of a first-century Theon, since it would provide a context in which he was of continuing practical relevance. But it would also eliminate the main argument for a first-century date.

In seeking support for a dating criterion one might also consider the range of authors cited. I have discussed the citation of Hermagoras and Theodorus above: since we do not know which Hermagoras is in question, this cannot be used to establish date without circularity. In any case, such citations only produce a *terminus post quem*; there is no reason to assume a date close to the cited author unless there are independent grounds for thinking the citation unlikely at a later date, which in this case we do not have. The same applies to Theon's references to the stylistic faults of Hegesias, Asian rhetors, and Epicurus (71.10–12). Hegesias is mentioned in *On Sublimity* (3.2) a text usually ascribed to the first century by modern scholars; but I do not believe there are good grounds for rejecting the traditional attribution to Longinus in the third century.⁴⁹ There is, at any rate, evidence that the third-century Longinus discussed Asian rhetoric: excerpt 12 (F50 Patillon-Brisson = 215.9–11 Spengel-Hammer) credits Aristides with setting right

⁴⁹M. Heath, "Longinus *On Sublimity*," *PCPS* 45 (1999) 43–74.

the faults of style associated with Asianism.⁵⁰ Longinus was still being read in the fifth century, as was Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who is critical of Hegesias, Asian rhetors, and Epicurus; Lachares cites both of them. Agatharchides' critique of Hegesias was still available to Photius (cod. 250, 446a–447b). Thus the authors cited by Theon present no obstacle to a later dating.

I turn now to positive arguments for a later date. The earliest of the extant texts apart from Theon is [Hermogenes]. One point to note is that [Hermogenes] consistently uses the term γύμνασμα, not προγύμνασμα; the plain form is also used by the authors of [Hermogenes] *On Invention* (113.13–14) and the pseudo-Dionysian chapters on epideictic (261.13–20), both probably dating to the third century. Theon uses both forms, as do Aphthonius and Nicolaus in the fourth and fifth centuries.⁵¹ Secondly, if we compare the classification of *chreiai* which [Hermogenes] attributes to “the ancients” (7.7–9), we find a scheme much less elaborate than that in Theon (97.11–99.10), which one might think more suggestive of the progressive elaboration of categories characteristic of late antique rhetoric.

Such observations are indecisive. Is there clearer evidence that either text depends on the other? The chapter on description (*ekphrasis*) provides a good test case, since it is here that the verbal parallels are most sustained and the inference of direct use of one text by the other is strongest. Comparison leads me to infer Theon's use of [Hermogenes].

(a) H. 22.7–8 ~ T. 118.7–8. (definition of description): there is a slight difference of wording. T.'s ἐναργῶς ὑπ' ὅψιν ἄγων (also in Aphthonius, 36.22–23) could be seen as a stylistic improvement on H.'s ἐναργῆς καὶ ὑπ' ὅψιν ἄγων.

(b) H. 22.9–10 ~ T. 118.9–10 (summary list of categories of subjects for description): H. includes occasions (καίροι) and times (χρόνοι); T. and

⁵⁰See Heath (*supra* n.13) 274–276.

⁵¹On the terminological shift see Hock/O'Neill (*supra* n.25) 12–15 (though they accept the conventional dating of Theon and Sopater).

A. (37.1–2) could be seen as adopting different ways to eliminate this apparent doublet, deleting occasions and times respectively.

(c) H. 22.11–12 ~ T. 118.10–17 (persons): T. has additional examples (one shared with A., 37.4).

(d) H. 22.12–13 ~ T. 118.17–18 (things): H. has land and sea battles (retained by A.); T. has a list beginning with war and peace. In H. war and peace illustrate occasions (e) and the difference could result from T.'s elimination of this category.

(e) H. 22.13–14 (occasions): this category is omitted by T. (see (b) above); H.'s examples are used by T. to illustrate things (d).

(f) H. 22.14 ~ T. 118.18–20 (places): T. gives more examples.

(g) H. 22.14–15 ~ T. 118.20–21 (times): T. adds an "etc."

(h) T. 118.23–119.2 (manner): T. has a category of subject not in H. (or A.); the fact that his initial list of subjects (b) has not been brought into line suggests that the addition is T.'s adaptation of an earlier scheme.

(i) H. 22.15–18 ~ T. 119.3–5 (mixed): T. has a reference to Philistus not present in H.

(j) T. 119.6–15 (relation of description to *topos*): not present in H.

(k) H. 22.19–23.6 ~ T. 119.16–24 (treatment of things): the variants in T. can be interpreted as stylistic improvements or elaborations:

H. ἀπὸ τῶν προγεγονότων καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς γινομένων καὶ ἐπισυμβαίνοντων ...

T. ἔκ τε τῶν προγεγονότων, καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς γινομένων, καὶ ἐκ τῶν συμβαινόντων τούτοις ...

H. εἰ πολέμου λέγοιμεν ἔκφρασιν, πρῶτον μὲν τὰ πρὸ τοῦ πολέμου ἐροῦμεν ...

T. ἐπὶ πολέμου διεξελευσόμεθα πρῶτον μὲν τὰ πρὸ τοῦ πολέμου ...

H. ... τὰς στρατολογίας, τὰ ἀναλώματα, τοὺς φόβους, εἴτα τὰς συμβολάς, τὰς σφαγὰς, τοὺς θανάτους, εἴτα τὸ τρόπαιον, εἴτα τοὺς παιάνας τῶν νενικηκότων, τῶν δὲ τὰ δάκρυα, τὴν δουλείαν.

T. ... τὰς στρατολογίας, τὰ ἀναλώματα, τοὺς φόβους, τὴν χώραν δηουμένην, τὰς πολιορκίας, ἔπειτα δὲ τὰ τραύματα καὶ τοὺς θανάτους καὶ τὰ πένθη, ἐφ' ἅπασι δὲ τῶν μὲν τὴν ἄλωσιν καὶ τὴν δουλείαν, τῶν δὲ τὴν νίκην καὶ τὰ τρόπαια.

(l) H. 23.6–8 ~ T. 119.24–30 (treatment of other subjects): T. adds manner (see (h) above). T. has an example, H. does not. The replacement of H.'s rather obscure παραδόξου with ἡδέος, and of H.'s vague ἔξομέν τινα ... λόγον with the clearer ἀφορμὰς ἔξομεν λόγων, may both be seen as deliberate improvements.

(m) H. 23.9–14 ~ T. 119.31–120.2 (style): T. supplements the requirement of clarity and vividness, also present in H., with a constraint on length; it is easier to understand T. adding than H. eliminating this. Rabe sees H.'s shorter version as a rhetorical reworking of T.,⁵² but T. replaces H.'s τὸ πρᾶγμα with the more general and accurate τὸ δηλούμενον, as in the definition (the advice applies to any description, not just description of things); this seems to be a deliberate improvement.

(n) H. 23.16–22 (should description be a separate exercise?): not present in T.

(o) T. 120.3–11 (should description be subject to refutation and confirmation?): not present in H.; T. rejects the view of “some” that it should.

Theon's addition of description of manner is worth considering further. When it is reported that Hermagoras and Apsines denied its possibility, this could be understood as their rejecting a position taken by a predecessor; that would fit a first-century Theon if the Hermagoras is the one who worked in the second century, although we would then have to split the two Hermagoras testimonia. But it is equally possible that it was Theon who was responding to predecessors. If description of manner was absent from the tradition it would surely occur to someone to try to explain why manner differed from the other standard circumstances. Once Hermagoras and Apsines had given such an explanation it was available for critical evaluation by subsequent rhetoricians. Anyone who concluded that the explanation was flawed could either look for a better explanation or abandon the consensus. Theon did the latter, but there is no evidence that anyone followed him (for reasons explained by John of Sardis, 218.2–21).

Felten provides compelling evidence that Nicolaus responds

⁵²H. Rabe, review of M. Provot, *De Hermogenis Tarsensis dicendi genere* (Leipzig 1910), in *BPW* 31 (1911) 97–108, at 100.

to several positions held by Theon.⁵³ It is likely, then, that Nicolaus knew Theon's work (although, in the light of the close parallels to Hermogenes in Theon's chapter on description, we cannot exclude the possibility that Nicolaus knew another text on which Theon is, in parts, dependent). One of the points on which Nicolaus takes a position opposed to that of Theon is the place of *chreia* in the course. Nicolaus reports that "some" put it first because of the educational advantage of giving beginning students morally improving material (17.16–20) and replies that the exercise is technically more demanding than fable or narrative, because it involves division into heads, and therefore should come after them (17.21–18.1). "Others" put it first because they do not use division into heads in their treatment of the exercise, but only manipulation according to case and number (18.1–19.1). Nicolaus accepts that this made sense before the exercise had been divided into heads, but argues that division now makes this inappropriate (19.1–6).

One thing is immediately apparent: Nicolaus knows of at least one rhetorician who put *chreia* first other than Theon. The reason attributed to "some" is not the one that Theon gives, and Nicolaus' reply assumes that the "some" accept the division into heads. It is when he discusses the "others," who do not have the division into heads, that Nicolaus makes closer contact with Theon.⁵⁴ How, then, are we to read the critique of these "others"? It is possible that it comments on a practice that had been dead for three centuries or more. But the whole argument is more pointed if Nicolaus is saying that the practice *should* have

⁵³Felten xxviii–xxix. The disagreements cover the position of *chreia* in the course of progymnasmata; the application of refutation and confirmation to *chreia* and fable; the existence of *chreiai* that are only for charm; and the category of double *topoi*.

⁵⁴Strictly speaking, although Theon does not divide *chreia* into heads, he does not limit the exercise to grammatical manipulation (see 101.3–6). Nicolaus is even closer to having Theon as target when he criticises those who apply confirmation and refutation to *chreia* (21.18–22.9).

died out: that is, if he is commenting on contemporaries whose failure to recognise the superiority of the treatment according to heads makes their teaching practice an anachronism.

The fact that Nicolaus engages with Theon, or with someone whose views are close to Theon's, points the way to a possible identification. In the early 480s Damascius studied rhetoric in Alexandria with a Theon. We do not know how old Theon was at the time, but if Nicolaus lived into the 490s there is clearly no obstacle to his knowing and reacting to this Theon's work. The fragment of Damascius that mentions Theon (fr.49 Athanassiadi) is preserved by the *Suda* (Θ 209). If this Theon is identical with the Alexandrian sophist Aelius Theon, the author of the *Progymnasmata* (Θ 206), then we have two entries for the same person derived from different sources, just as in the case of Nicolaus. Identification with a sophist in Damascius' Platonist milieu would explain why the author of the *Progymnasmata* is sometimes referred to as "Theon the Platonist" (Doxapatres RG II 513.25–26, John of Sardis 218.3), a title which also appears in the superscription to the Armenian translation (see Patillon's apparatus). One might think, as Athanassiadi does, that Damascius' not entirely flattering description of Theon fits the author of the *Progymnasmata*;⁵⁵ but this is too subjective an impression to bear much weight.

The identification of Aelius Theon with Damascius' teacher places him in a rhetorical context for which we have a good deal of evidence. We saw above that Athanasius may have placed *chreia* at the head of the course of *progymnasmata*. The

⁵⁵ "He was not very sharp or bright, but was exceptional in his love of learning and hard work. In this way he acquired an excellent knowledge and a sure memory of the poets, reaching in both these areas the highest degree in technical expertise ... But, much as he would have liked to, he was incapable of writing poetry or prose": P. Athanassiadi, *Damascius. The Philosophical History* (Athens 1999) 143 (n.116 takes the identification for granted). The title "Platonist" makes it unreasonable to identify the author of the *Progymnasmata* with the Stoic Theon (plausibly conjectured in Quint. 9.3.76, cf. *Suda* Θ 203), as some have suggested.

superscription to the extracts from his writings indicates that he was a sophist of Alexandria; he is usually dated around the end of the fourth century. Georgius, the fifth-century commentator on Hermogenes who preserves most of the other fragments of Athanasius, was also Alexandrian.⁵⁶ The extracts from Athanasius were made by a Zosimus, who describes himself as a pupil of Theon. We know from the *Suda* (Z 169) of a sophist named Zosimus “of Gaza or Ascalon,” with a *floruit* under Anastasius (491–518), who wrote commentaries on Demosthenes and Lysias and a rhetorical lexicon.⁵⁷ Athanasius appears once in the A-scholia to Demosthenes (schol. Dem. 24.104 [207a]), and I shall argue elsewhere on independent grounds that Zosimus’ commentary was one of the sources for this class of scholia.⁵⁸

We therefore have some interesting clusterings: there are connections between rhetors who placed *chreia* first, or at least early, in the course (Harpocration, Athanasius, Theon) and Alexandrian sophists (Athanasius, Georgius, Theon). If we now return to the earlier suggestion of a continuing tradition in which *chreia* was placed first, it seems possible that the difference between Theon and the other extant texts regarding the order of the progymnasmata is not to be explained chronologically, but geographically: that is, that the persistence of the early position of *chreia* was a distinctive feature of the Alexandrian tradition as against the Athenian. If so, Nicolaus’ discussion of the

⁵⁶Georgius: Schilling (*supra* n.15); J. Duffy, “Philologica Byzantina,” *GRBS* 21 (1980) 261–268.

⁵⁷There is one point of uncertainty. George Cedrenus (I 622.2 Bekker) records the execution of a rhetor named Zosimus of Gaza under Zeno, in 477. The *Suda*’s chronology might be wrong, or this entry may conflate the Zosimus of Gaza executed under Zeno with a Zosimus of Ascalon active under Anastasius; or two sophists named Zosimus may have taught at Gaza (it was a major school, and the name was not rare). As Rabe points out (*PS* lviii n.1), it is not uncommon for one man to have two ethnics; so the *Suda*’s Zosimus might (for example) have been born in Ascalon, studied in Alexandria, and taught in Gaza.

⁵⁸Heath (*supra* n. 16) Chapter 5.

“others” would be an Athenian critique of an Alexandrian practice.⁵⁹

Athanasius and Zosimus both appear in the scholia to Aelius Aristides. One of Athanasius’ four appearances is particularly relevant to our current enquiry. A scholion to Aristides *On the Four* 25 (456.23–6 Dindorf) tells us that Athanasius identified the class of the speech as *antirrhesis* (that is, a controversial “counter-speech”).⁶⁰ We know from the hypothesis to the speech that its classification was a much debated problem.⁶¹ It is taken as self-evident in the hypothesis that the speech is not deliberative. The theory of some that it is panegyric (or encomiastic: the two recensions use different terminology) is rejected: containing encomia is not a sufficient criterion for a speech to be classed as an encomium, and this speech is not an amplification of acknowledged goods (the whole point, after all, is that the value of rhetoric is in dispute); rather, the encomia are introduced as a solution (λύσις) to Plato’s attack. But this does not make the speech judicial, either: Plato’s attack does not relate to charges carrying a legal penalty, and the speech is not addressed to a judge. Perhaps, then, it does not belong to any class: “one of the clever people in Athens, having got into an impasse by proving that the speech cannot belong to either

⁵⁹If the impression that Alexandria became relatively more important as a centre of rhetorical study in this period is not just an illusion produced by the patchy preservation of evidence, it may be that the rise of Alexandrian rhetoric provoked rivalry. On the history of rhetoric in Alexandria under the earlier Empire see P. Schubert, “Philostrate et les sophistes d’Alexandrie,” *Mnemosyne* 48 (1995) 178–188; Heath (*supra* n.46); B. Puech, *Orateurs et sophistes grecs dans les inscriptions d’époque impériale* (Paris 2002) 17–21. R. W. Smith, *The Art of Rhetoric in Alexandria* (The Hague 1974), is unreliable.

⁶⁰Text: F. W. Lenz, *Untersuchungen zu der Aristeidesscholien* (*Problemata* 8 [Berlin 1934]) = *Aristeidesstudien* (Berlin 1964) 1–99, at 18; also in Lenz (*supra* n.28) 12.

⁶¹The hypothesis is preserved in two recensions. Lenz, who edited it along with the prolegomena argues (*supra* n.28: 7–11) that H₂ (the version which Dindorf prints first) is an epitome of H₁; in fact each has a fuller text at places, and it would be better to regard them as deriving independently from a common original.

class, declared that it is a refutation (ἀνασκευή)" (161.3–5 Lenz). That means that he treated it as one of the progymnasmata, which the hypothesis rejects as absurd: it is clearly a complete *hypothesis*.⁶² The clue to the solution is revealed "for those capable of understanding it" by "Theon the technical writer," who says at the end of his *Progymnasmata*: "There is also another class, *antirrhexis*, which is not a progymnasma but a partial class (μερικὸν εἶδος) of rhetoric. It is not one of the most general classes (γενικώτατα εἶδη) but nevertheless constitutes a complete class and a part. This can be understood from many other partial classes, whether one speaks of the imperial or the epithalamial or the funeral speech, and many others, each of which belongs to the encomiastic type" (162.1–6). It should be noted that in this, the fuller of the two recensions, it is not claimed that Theon himself classed the speech as *antirrhexis*, but that he defined *antirrhexis* as a distinct class, and that this provides a key to the solution of the problem.

Theon did discuss *antirrhexis* in his *Progymnasmata* (70.7–23). The chapter in which he did so is lost in the direct Greek tradition, but preserved in the Armenian translation and indirectly in Gregory of Corinth's commentary on [Hermogenes] *On Method* (RG VII 1206.11–28). At the end of the extract in Gregory we find that the aim of the exercise is to create the capacity to write a reply to a whole speech (ὅλω λόγῳ ἀντιγράψαι, 1206.27–28). This suggests that the progymnasmatic exercise leads towards a corresponding form of *antirrhexis* as a complete *hypothesis*, although the statement falls well short of what is attributed to Theon in the hypothesis. It is possible that the preserved text of Theon is truncated, or that the hypothesis mistakenly conflated the end of the *Progymnasmata* with a more

⁶²For *hypothesis* see *supra* 130. This debate has been recapitulated in modern discussion of Dio Chr. *Or.* 11: see J. F. Kindstrand, *Homer in der zweiten Sophistik* (Uppsala 1973) 154–155.

elaborate discussion by Theon elsewhere.⁶³ But it may also be that the hypothesis has extrapolated from a brief remark by Theon (the Greek gives no unequivocal indication of whether Theon is being quoted or paraphrased, or of where his contribution ends).

The sharply ironical reference in the hypothesis to the clever Athenian and his perplexity perhaps adds colour to the conjecture of polemical rivalry between Athens and Alexandria in Nicolaus. But when Nicolaus engaged with this debate, he likewise rejected the idea that *On the Four* could be classed as a refutation (34.4–21), claiming that those who think that the *progymnasmata* refutation and confirmation can supply a complete *hypothesis* on their own, as in *On the Four*, are ignorantly confusing refutation and *antirrhesis*. *Antirrhesis* and *On the Four* reappear (56.5–10, 57.3–8) in a lengthy discussion of the classes of oratory (54.22–57.8) which declines to follow theorists who add to the standard three.⁶⁴ Despite its agonistic character, *antirrhesis* is not judicial but panegyric (since the audience is not making a judgement about the imposition of a penalty). Nicolaus has already explained that Isocrates' deliberative *Panegyric* and Demosthenes' judicial *On the Crown* make use of encomiastic material (ὑλη) to support their argument (48.4–18).⁶⁵ Here the point is repeated, and its application extended: there is no reason why a speech in the panegyric class should not make use of material from another class; *On the Four* is a case in point.

In his *Prolegomena* (141.5–150.15 Lenz) Sopater takes it as obvious from the start that *On the Four* is an encomium, but he

⁶³The *Suda* attributes an *Art* to him, which may be distinct from the *Progymnasmata*. But "at the end of his *Art*" in the hypothesis must refer to the last chapter of the *Progymnasmata*.

⁶⁴The debate concerning the adequacy of the standard scheme of three classes was not a new one: see Quintilian 3.4.

⁶⁵For a related idea (a speech in one class needing a different character, style, or manner of treatment) see e.g. Sopater RG IV 187.30–188.2: "in *On the Crown* the εἶδος is judicial, but the ἰδέα is panegyric."

nevertheless undertakes a critical review of alternative theories. It is not judicial: agonistic character does not make a speech judicial, and it is legitimate to respond to counterpositions (ἀντιθέσεις) in encomia, as Isocrates does in *Busiris* and Aristides himself in the *Panegyric*.⁶⁶ If the speech is not judicial, the question of its issue does not arise, but the issues proposed by the supporters of the judicial interpretation are examined and rejected: it is not transference (μετάστασις), practical (πραγματική), or definition. Others have said that it is a refutation, but that is insane. So the only possibility left is panegyric.

There is therefore a sharp contrast between Sopater, for whom the speech is obviously panegyric and who makes no mention of *antirrhesis*, and the author of the hypothesis, who argues that the speech is not panegyric and is *antirrhesis*.⁶⁷ It is at first sight puzzling, therefore, to find Theon and Sopater paired in John of Sicily's commentary on Hermogenes *On Types of Style* (RG VI 455.29–456.4). Commenting on Basil of Caesarea's apologetic works John says that those known as *antirrheses* concerning the son (*i.e.* *Against Eunomius*) are progymnasmata rather than *hypotheses*, since they contain refutations and confirmations: "one must not pay attention to Theon and Sopater, who in the face of the view shared by both Plato and Aristotle

⁶⁶ At 142.9–11 Sopater cross-refers to his exposition of the *Panegyric* for this point: see 120.18–124.9. The doctrine is accepted by Nicolaus 53.6–19, with the same examples. See also schol. Ael. Arist. *Pan.* 302 (286.9–287.3 Dindorf), though the argument is different. On the admissibility of argument in epideictic see L. Pernot, *La rhétorique de l'éloge dans le monde gréco-romain* (Paris 1993) 682–689.

⁶⁷ In a confused discussion Lenz (*supra* n.28: 11–19) argues that the hypothesis and the prolegomena are both by the same person, despite their contradictory stances; and he identifies the Athenian who classified *On the Four* as a refutation as Athanasius—an Alexandrian who thought it was *antirrhesis*. Here, and in his study of the scholia (*supra* n.60), Lenz regards Sopater as the source of the main body of the Aristides scholia, and consequently sees those scholia which refer to Athanasius as Sopater's polemic; this view is not supported by any satisfactory analysis.

posit a fourth class of rhetoric.”⁶⁸ In the prolegomena Sopater explicitly assumes that there are three classes of oratory, and makes no reference to *antirrhesis*. Nicolaus (later than Sopater) introduces *antirrhesis* into the discussion, but like Sopater he regards the speech as panegyric and rejects any addition to the three classes of oratory. This is again a different view from the author of the hypothesis, who rejects the panegyric theory, and uses Theon’s concept of *antirrhesis* as a way out of the resulting impasse.

A solution to the puzzle posed by John of Sicily is suggested by the earlier prosopographical discussion of rhetoricians named Sopater. John’s testimonium makes complete sense if he was citing the hypothesis, which in turn cites Theon, and if the author of the hypothesis (or, more precisely, of the text from which its two extant recensions descend) was the fifth-century Alexandrian Sopater. It is not entirely clear that John has interpreted the theory proposed in the hypothesis correctly: if *antirrhesis* is not a “most general class,” it is not on a level with the standard three. But the fault lies with the evasiveness of the hypothesis on this point: since the imperial, wedding, and funeral speeches are sub-categories of epideictic (all are discussed in Menander’s treatise on epideictic), the attempted elucidation of the *antirrhesis* theory fails to remove the need *either* to recognise a fourth class *or* to revoke the objection to the panegyric interpretation.⁶⁹

If the hypothesis does derive from this later Sopater, we might suspect that a commentary by him was a major source for the scholia. That would be consistent with the named citations of

⁶⁸ John seems to accept the refutation theory: should we infer a source which defended this interpretation against its critics?

⁶⁹ Nicolaus explains (47.12–48.18) the dual nature of encomium, which can be a progymnasma or a complete panegyric *hypothesis*, of which there are various sub-categories (47.5–11). But if we say that *antirrhesis* has a similar dual nature, we must either recognise a fourth class of complete *hypothesis*, or bring *antirrhesis* under one of the standard three.

Menander, Athanasius, and Zosimus in the scholia, and also with any citations of Sopater that refer to the fourth-century homonym. But if the proposed dating of Theon is correct at least one of the named citations of Sopater in the Aristides scholia must refer to the fifth-century homonym. A scholion to *On the Four* 367 (674.3–16 Dindorf) reports different views on the categorisation of the address of the four to Plato.⁷⁰ Aphthonius calls it an *eidolopoiia*, because the speaker is dead; but in *eidolopoiia* the speaker is a ghost, as in *Odyssey* 11. Theon calls it *prosopopoiia*, because *prosopopoiia* gives a voice to inanimate objects (ἄψυχα) and the dead are inanimate. Sopater says it is *ethopoiia*, because he represents them speaking as if they had come back to life; a *prosopopoiia* of living people would force us to call every *ethopoiia* a *prosopopoiia*. Aphthonius is correctly reported (cf. 34.10–13) but Theon is not: the definition of *prosopopoiia* that associates it especially with inanimate objects is found elsewhere,⁷¹ but not in Theon. It is, nevertheless, true that Theon would classify *On the Four* as *prosopopoiia*, which he uses as the general term where other progymnasmatic texts use *ethopoiia*; on this point, at any rate, Sopater's comment is accurate. Since Sopater would not have cited himself by name, it follows that the Aristides scholia draw on at least one source other than Sopater's commentary. It is possible that the comment on *ethopoiia* comes from the work on progymnasmata. The conclusion that Sopater's *Progymnasmata* commented critically on Theon is supported by John of Sardis 138.24–139.4, where Sopater (138.17) is reported as rejecting as absurd a view held

⁷⁰On the text, Lenz (*supra* n.60) 16.

⁷¹For this formulation see anon. *De tropis* III 212.12–17 Spengel; that it was current in the fourth century is clear from Greg. Naz. *Or.* 30.2 (πολλὰ γὰρ ἡ γραφή προσωποποιεῖν οἶδε καὶ τῶν ἀψύχων). The idea, if not the phrasing, is older: [Hermogenes] 20.9–10 (ὅταν πράγματι περιτιθῶμεν πρόσωπον), though here *On the Four* is classed as *eidolopoiia*, on the same grounds as in Aphthonius.

by Theon (138.10–17 = Theon 111.3–11).⁷² If that is right, then we must (again, assuming the dating of Theon proposed here) resolve the doubt about the attribution of Sopater's *Progymnasmata* in favour of the fifth-century homonym.

To return to the classification of *On the Four*, it is worth asking, finally, whether we can reconstruct the progress of what was evidently a prolonged debate. Here is one, admittedly speculative, account. In Athens in the late fourth century Sopater classified the speech as panegyric; for him this classification was unproblematic, since he did not accept that encomium excluded argument. He rejects the refutation theory out of hand;⁷³ there is no evidence that he was aware of the *antirrhesis* theory. Athanasius, an approximate contemporary working in Alexandria, classified the speech as *antirrhesis*; this may have been his way of adapting the refutation theory so as to avoid its salient weakness. Athanasius did not conjure the concept of *antirrhesis* out of thin air: Onasimus, one of our progymnasmatic writers, had written on the art of *antirrhesis* a century earlier. It is not clear from the brief mention in the scholion what view Athanasius took of the relationship of *antirrhesis* to the standard classes of rhetoric, or indeed whether he discussed this problem (he accepts the standard three classes in the excerpts: *PS* 178.12–179.2, 179.9–17, 181.18–21). But the fact that Nicolaus conducted an extended defence of the standard three against those who wished to go beyond them is evidence that someone, Athanasius or a follower, had proposed such an explicit extension. Nicolaus himself (trained in

⁷²One might then wonder whether the criticism of Theon with regard to description of manner in John of Sardis (218.2–21), though not attributed by name, also derives from Sopater.

⁷³Who was the clever Athenian who came up with this idea? One earlier commentator on Aristides whose work was influential enough to leave traces identifiable by name is Menander, who did work in Athens. But a commentary by Metrophanes is also attested (*Suda* M 1009) and speculation must have a limit.

Athens, though he spent at least part of his teaching career in Constantinople) was able to absorb the *antirrhesis* theory into the panegyric interpretation inherited from Sopater. Meanwhile, in Alexandria, Theon's innovation in treating *antirrhesis* as a progymnasma threatened to collapse the Athanasian theory into the same absurdity as the refutation theory, so some explicit recognition of the twin nature of *antirrhesis* was needed. Sopater, an Alexandrian contemporary of Theon who was sometimes critical of him, in this instance drew on his work in an attempt to give Athanasius' interpretation theoretical coherence; but he was not able to achieve a stable solution.⁷⁴

The details of this account are, obviously, not to be pressed. I offer it only as an illustration of how comfortably one of the innovations in Theon's *Progymnasmata* fits into a discussion that we know was in progress in the fourth and fifth centuries.

3. The identity of pseudo-Hermogenes?

Rabe has shown that the style and manner of the pseudo-Hermogenean *Progymnasmata* are unlike that of the authentic Hermogenean texts; more recent attempts to associate them succeed (in my view) in establishing no more than that they were both the work of rhetoricians in a common tradition, which has never been in doubt.⁷⁵ In reaching a conclusion it is important to take account of the pattern of external attestation. The attribution to Hermogenes is not an old one: it was not known to Syrianus, and the absence of this text from the five-part rhetorical corpus suggests that it was not widely accepted when the corpus was formed.⁷⁶ As well as the attribution to

⁷⁴It may be worth noting that the Sopater of *RG* IV often fails to produce a consistent integration of the material he conflates and adapts from different sources.

⁷⁵Rabe, *Herm.* iv–vi. E. Ruiz Yamuza, "Hermogenes y los Progymnasmata: problema de autoría," *Habis* 25 (1994) 285–295; "Mas sobre los Progymnasmata atribuidos a Hermogenes," *Habis* 31 (2000) 293–309.

⁷⁶On the formation of the corpus see Rabe, *PS* xix–xxiii.

Hermogenes we find an attribution to Libanius (RG VII 511.1–5); both alternatives are given in the superscription to Priscian's translation in some manuscripts. Clearly an anonymous text has attracted two conjectural assignments, to the recognised authority on rhetorical theory and to the author of an important collection of model progymnasmata respectively.

With the precedent of two failed conjectures before us, attempting to guess the authorship may seem foolhardy, especially since we cannot assume that the full field of candidates is known to us—there may have been many unattested texts. On the other hand, the more widely a text was circulated in space and/or time, the more likely it is to have left attestation, and the more likely it is to have survived. So the working hypothesis that [Hermogenes] is one of the attested texts, though not certain, is not wild. The fact that it was used by Aphthonius and (I have argued) by Theon strongly confirms its currency and influence. The question to ask, then, is which of the attested texts is most likely to have had such currency?

Some of the candidates can be eliminated. Aphthonius, Nicolaus, and Theon are obviously out of the question. Paul of Tyre can be ruled out on chronological grounds, in view of the citations of Aelius Aristides (20.11, 16). Siricius and Sopater can be excluded because their fragments do not match the text. Nor does the text match the testimonia for Hermagoras, Aspines, Harpocraton, Athanasius, and Syrianus.

That leaves Minucianus, Onasimus, Ulpian (if his work was theoretical), and Epiphanius (though the relative simplicity does not suggest the pedantic precision implied by Eunapius). Of these, Minucianus is surely the best candidate. The fact that Menander wrote a commentary on Minucianus' *Progymnasmata* suggests that it had currency as a teaching-text in the late third century. A text which had achieved that status would have a much increased chance of survival. Unfortunately, the fragments

of Minucianus (few of which are verbatim quotations) deal with another, and very technical, aspect of rhetorical theory, and it would be unrealistic to expect to find distinctive agreements in style or content with a text on the progymnasmata. So, while the thought that a text by Hermogenes' famous rival may have survived under Hermogenes' name is an attractive one, there is no way to verify it.

March, 2003

The School of Classics
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT U.K.
m.f.heath@leeds.ac.uk