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From Grammar to Rhetoric. First Exercises in Composition According to Quintilian, Inst. 1,9

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1. Introduction

In Book 1 of his *Institutio oratoria* Quintilian deals with the teaching of grammar and literature in the school of the grammaticus. The whole schooling of eloquence which is presented by Quintilian in books 1-2 of the *Institutio* in detail, is in theory, and often also in practice, divided into three stages: at the primary stage boys are taught the alphabet, to read, write and count either within the home or in the elementary school; at the second stage they are taught to use language correctly and to read and understand literature (the grammar school); thirdly, in the school of rhetoric they learn to speak well.

Quintilian divides the curriculum of the grammar school into two parts, *recte loquendi scientia* and *enarratio poetarum*, i.e. the rules of correct language and the reading and interpretation of literature (1, 4, 2; cf. 1, 9, 1). After discussing the second part, Quintilian goes on (ch. 9) to consider some additional tasks of the grammaticus, among other things, instruction in writing and speaking of elementary exercises, or progymnasmata (1, 9, 1 *adiciamus tamen eorum curae quaedam dicendi primordia, quibus aetates nondum rhetorem capientis instituant*; cf. also 1, 10, 1 *Haec de grammaticae quam brevissime potui, non ut omnia dicerem sectatus, quod infinitum erat, sed ut maxime necessaria*).

Quintilian divides Chapter 9 of Book 1 clearly in three distinct parts. The first exercise he mentions consists in the retelling of Aesop's fables and paraphrasing of poetic texts. From early childhood, boys were familiar with short stories or fables, not necessarily those of Aesop (cf. 5, 11, 19), and

they often appear as independent themes in poetry, particularly in the epic poets. Secondly, he draws attention to maxims, proverbs and moral anecdotes, which could be found especially in the dramatic poets and it was the treatment of these that was most clearly related to the work in the grammar school. In its simplest form this work consisted mainly in the declension of Greek or Latin, or in the instruction of moral wisdom that would be useful for life and in oratory. In the third section Quintilian briefly mentions short stories told by the poets, which in his opinion should be treated by boys only for them to become acquainted with the subject-matter of each story.

The general idea seems clear enough. In the grammar school only certain very elementary exercises in composition should be assigned by teachers to their pupils. The exercises should not be too exacting. Composition is to be related with reading and the themes for exercises should be taken from poetry.

The chapter is not, however, without its difficulties and some of the problems, which can clearly only be resolved within a wider perspective, have exercised students of Quintilian's text.

Firstly, there is a problem concerning the so-called Aesopic fables and the paraphrasing of poetry. Quintilian says (1, 9, 2): *Igitur Aesopi fabellas, ..., narrare sermone puro et nihil se supra modum extollente, deinde eandem gracilitatem stilo exigere condiscant: versus primo solvere, mox mutatis verbis interpretari, tum paraphrasi audacius vertere*. These words have been explained as meaning that the second exercise after the fable in Quintilian's list should be the paraphrase. S.F. Bonner¹ accepts this interpretation and says: "Immediately after his precepts on the Fable, Quintilian mentions an exercise, which was long practised in the grammar-schools, that of the Paraphrase of passages of verse". Paraphrase, however, is not an independent exercise in composition and it is not listed in Greek and Latin handbooks of progymnasmata.²

¹ S.F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome*, London 1977, 255-256; cf. F. Colson, *M. Fabii Quintiliani Institutionis oratoriae liber I*, Cambridge 1924, 117.

² Quintilian's list can be compared with the textbooks of progymnasmata by Theon, Hermogenes, Aphthonius and Priscian; *Rhetores Graeci*, vol. II Spengel and Prisc. II, 430ff. Keil.

A second problem concerns mythological or poetic narratives. At the beginning of the chapter, Quintilian mentions fables (*Aesopi fabellas*) and at the end short poetic narratives (*narratiunculae*). Later, in 2, 4, 2, he leads us to understand that the treatment of poetic narratives is part of the curriculum of grammar school. Colson (op. cit. in note 1, 121) interprets Quintilian as follows: "Narratio' is only to be employed in the grammatical schools as a test of knowledge and to familiarise them with the stories not as a regular progymnasma. Further when it reappears in 2, 4, 2 as a rhetorical exercise, it is used in connection with history in the stricter sense. Narrative composition based on mythology or literary fiction seems therefore to have been considered unsuitable to either school by Q. It is not likely that scholastic practice followed him in this." But is Colson correct in saying that mythological and fictitious narratives (in the terminology of rhetoric: *fabula* and *argumentum*) were considered by Quintilian unsuitable for exercises in the schools? Since Quintilian, however, in 2, 4, 2, says that *grammaticis autem poeticas* (i.e. compositions based on mythology or literary fiction) *dedimus: apud rhetorem initium sit historica*, there seems to be some inconsistency between Chapter 1, 9 and Chapter 2, 4.

There is a third problem related to the passage where Quintilian enumerates exercises on moral maxims, anecdotes and sayings, 1, 9, 3 *Sententiae quoque et chriae et ethologiae/aetiologiae subiectis dictorum rationibus apud grammaticos scribantur: quorum omnium similis est ratio, forma diversa, quia sententia universalis est vox, ethologia/aetiologia personis continetur. Chriarum plura genera traduntur:...* Should we read *aetiologia* (*aetiologiae*) or *ethologia* (*ethologiae*)?³ And what is the meaning of aetiology or ethology? Neither appear in the standard lists of progymnasmata.

³ Radermacher 1907 (BT) *ethologia*; Colson 1924, Winterbottom 1970 (OCT) and Cousin 1975 (Budé) *aetiologia*; cf. also J. Cousin, *Études sur Quintilien I*, Paris 1935, who, pp. 80-81, accepts the reading *ethologia*, but with reservations; he says in the footnote: "il y a toute évidence pour que ce soit *aetiologia*" referring to Colson and Robinson (R. Robinson, "Ethologia" or "Aetiologia" in Suetonius *De grammaticis* c. 4, and Quintilian i. 9, CPh 15 [1920] 370-379).

To these three problems I address myself in the present paper. I shall discuss them in the light of the general content of Quintilian's *Institutio* taking into consideration his intentions and his pedagogical principles as well as the plan and structure of his work.

2. Who was to teach the preliminary exercises?

Before considering the question at which stage Quintilian recommends that the exercises in composition should be started I shall first comment briefly on his teaching programme and how he presents that programme.

Quintilian's *Institutio* is a professional treatise on the training of an orator from childhood right up to adulthood. It is based on a full knowledge of earlier theories of education and rhetoric and on Quintilian's own experience as teacher and orator. Quintilian does not claim to be an original thinker when developing his theories, rather he invites his readers, who are thought to be teachers, to use common sense in applying theories in practice. As he says in the preface to Book 1, the purpose of his work is not so much to formulate new theories as to arbitrate between the conflicting and contradictory old ones. Quintilian's originality lies first and foremost in his condemnation of the excesses of contemporary oratory and in his criticism of the unrealistic conventions of some of the teachers of grammar and rhetoric.⁴

Quintilian is primarily concerned with teaching, which, he says, must be practical, sensible, positive, and moral. Thus the teacher has to create and foster mental activity in the student (cf. e.g. 1, pr. 27 and 1, 1, 3) and his teaching must be adapted to the ability of the student; therefore, for instance, one cannot exactly say at what age the student should move from the lower stage to the higher (2, 1, 7). Since knowledge can only be acquired step by step (1, 2, 28) Quintilian often stresses the principle that in education the initial steps are of vital importance and it is thus necessary to provide a good foundation for studies in the earliest stages (e.g. 1, pr. 4-5 and 1, 4, 5);

⁴ For Quintilian's teaching methods and for the plan and objectives of his work, see Colson, *op. cit.*, intr. 35-42, G. Kennedy, *Quintilian*, New York 1964, 31 ff.; the question of whether or not he succeeded in his teaching programme has no bearing on the present study; cf., however, G. Kennedy, *An estimate of Quintilian*, *AJPh* 83 (1962) 130-145.

on the other hand, since the capacity of the young for congenial work is very large, different subjects should be taught concurrently in the grammar school (e.g. 1, 12).⁵

It is important to remember that Quintilian's work has a practical purpose. Throughout the work he makes his own selection from the existing rules and theories in order to give them some sort of practical meaning in a coherent system for training a good man and a good orator. Thus in addition to the exposition of rules he has a persistent desire to give practical advice in composition and he repeatedly pleads for naturalness and simplicity, warning against pedantic acceptance of rules. As a result of this practical plan there are in the *Institutio* several terms which occur many times but in different parts of the work they have different meanings. On the other hand Quintilian, as is his habit, does not mention all the terms and rules which might apply to a particular case, since some of them can be more appropriately discussed in other connections. He gives the impression throughout that everything discussed must have its proper function in that particular part of the course. In the same way he has a clear concept of the difference between grammar and rhetoric; each has its own function and ought not to do the work of the other.

Let us return to Chapter 1, 9 of the *Institutio*, where Quintilian introduces elementary exercises in composition into the programme of the grammar school. The way in which he introduces the composition exercises makes it clear that he did not see them as belonging to grammar proper or indeed to the ordinary programme of the *grammaticus*. However, he wants them introduced for several reasons.

Firstly, as Quintilian often explains, Roman teachers of rhetoric, apparently under the pressure of the pupils' ambitious parents, had neglected the elementary exercises in composition, wishing to teach their pupils as soon as possible how to deliver well-formed speeches.⁶ The rhetoricians had passed quickly over the elementary exercises and concentrated their efforts on exercises they considered more important for argumentation and style in a

⁵ Cf. J. Cousin, *Quintilien Institution oratoire*. Tome I, Paris 1975, Notice p. 5: "Trois principes paraissent, dès l'abord, guider notre auteur: la foi dans la nature, la nécessité d'adapter l'enseignement aux aptitudes de l'enfant, l'orientation vers la pratique".

⁶ E.g. 2, 1, 2 *Illi (rhetores) declamare modo et scientiam declamandi ac facultatem tradere officii sui ducunt idque intra deliberativas iudicialisque materias*. Cf. Bonner, *op. cit.* 252 and Colson, *op. cit.*, xxxii.

speech. In this situation, the teachers of grammar had had to include some of the exercises in elementary composition in their teaching programme.

Secondly, the use of elementary exercises in the grammar school was only natural because the grammaticus, in connection with poetry-reading necessarily taught things touching style and expression; he taught prosody and taught the boys to read poetry correctly (cf. 1, 8, 1-12).⁷ On the other hand, many teachers of grammar were probably quite eager to take the teaching of composition into their programme, as the teaching of a subject traditionally belonging to the higher level would be felt to enhance their status.⁸ In fact the exercises in composition that in Greek composition practice were traditionally assigned to the rhetoricians presupposed not only the reading of poetry but also the reading of prose and it involved furthermore some knowledge of philosophical argumentation.

As the Latin rhetoricians were content to leave more and more of the preliminary work in composition to the grammatici, the course of the grammar school was prolonged so that in some cases it embraced all the progymnasmata, and the pupils, when entering the school of the rhetor, could at once embark on declamation on deliberative and legal themes (*suasoriae* and *controversiae*). Quintilian was not pleased with this development and considered it a dereliction of duty on the part of Latin teachers of rhetoric (Quint. 1, 9, 6 *cetera maioris operis ac spiritus Latini rhetores relinquendo necessaria grammaticis fecerunt: Graeci magis operum suorum et onera et modum norunt; 2, 1, 1 ...et rhetores utique nostri suas partis omiserunt et grammatici alienas occupaverunt*). He advances therefore his own views about the duties of the grammaticus and the rhetor. He argues that the grammaticus should retain only a few of the preliminary exercises, the most elementary ones, and leave the rest to the rhetor.

⁷ As Colson, op. cit., xxxii, rightly observes, some exercises in composition were naturally associated with the grammaticus when one part became the "ars recte loquendi".

⁸ For this change in the scope of the work of the grammaticus, see also Suet. gramm. 4.

3. Presenting of the progymnasmata

Quintilian discusses the progymnasmata in two places, at the end of the grammaticae (Book 1, ch. 9) and at the beginning of the rhetorice (Book 2, ch. 4), although the definitions given by him clearly indicate that they are properly speaking rhetorical (he uses the terms *dicendi primordia* and *primae in docendo partes rhetorum*). These chapters are important in ancient literature, being the earliest surviving descriptions of the whole scale of exercises in the art of speaking (the earliest textbook of the progymnasmata, that of the rhetorician Theon, probably dates from the second century A.D.).⁹

Quintilian's discussion of the topic makes it clear that there was in his time a recognized system, a graded series of exercises in writing and speaking, from the easy to the more difficult. Quintilian enumerates the following: *fabula*, *paraphrasis* (?), *chria*, *aetiologia* / *ethologia* (?), *narratiuncula* / *narratio*, *opus destruendi confirmandique* (*anasceue* and *catasceue*), *laudatio*, *vituperatio*, *comparatio*, *communis locus*, *thesis*, and *legum laus et vituperatio*.

Two of the commonest progymnasmata are lacking in Quintilian's list: the description (*ecphrasis*) and the speech in character (*ethopoeia*) or impersonation (*prosopopoeia*). However, *ethopoeia* (*imitatio morum alienorum*; 9, 2, 58-60) and *prosopopoeia* (*fictio personarum*; 9, 2, 29-39) are included in the treatment of the figures of thought.¹⁰ In connection with narratives Quintilian also mentions the description (4, 3, 12-17) and he recognizes the merits of vivid portrayals which bring the events described before the eyes of the listeners (8, 3, 61-71 and 9, 2, 44). Descriptions as well as speeches in character and impersonations were in Quintilian's opinion the most exacting exercises, and that is why he postponed them to more

⁹ Cf. Bonner, *op. cit.* 250-251 and D.L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education*, New York 1957, 178; for an earlier dating of Theon, I. Lana, *Quintiliano, il «Sublime» e gli «Esercizi preparatori» di Elio Teone*, Torino 1951.

¹⁰ See also 6, 1, 25-26, where imaginary speeches (*prosopopoeiae*) are mentioned as possible elements in the peroration, and 6, 2, 17, where Quintilian actually mentions character-sketches as scholarly exercises.

advanced stages of the course, e.g. he treats *prosopopoeia* together with the declamation of deliberative themes (3, 8, 49-54).¹¹

Two exercises mentioned by Quintilian are not listed in the standard textbooks of progymnasmata. One is the paraphrase, the other is the enigmatic aetiology or ethology. I shall return to these later.

In Quintilian's discussion the progymnasmata are grouped in different ways. Firstly, there is the particular group under discussion, i.e. the most elementary exercises, fable, paraphrase, maxim, aetiology/ethology, saying or anecdote and simple narrative, all of which are associated with the grammar school and are primarily aimed at instilling correctness of language.

Secondly, we can distinguish the group of *fabula*, *narratiuncula* and *narratio*, with which the exercises of refutation and confirmation (*anasceue* and *catasceue*) are connected (2, 4, 18). These exercises are similar in content, involving reproductions and amplifications of narratives: fables, stories and episodes taken from the poets, but also extracts from the historians. They naturally differ from each other in the style and elaboration of the theme, but in particular there is a difference according to whether the subject matter is taken from poetry or from prose. Quintilian considers poetic narratives to be appropriate exercises for assignation by the teacher of grammar, whereas he would leave historical narratives to the teacher of rhetoric (2, 4, 2 *grammaticis autem poeticas dedimus; apud rhetorem initium sit historica*).

The third group consists of the exercises of praise, denunciation and comparison, all concerned with historical or mythical persons. Quintilian mentions them only briefly in his presentation of rhetorical exercises (2, 4, 20-21); because these themes may take up entire orations, he treats them more extensively in his discussion of the third branch of oratory, the epideictic speech (*genus laudativum* or *demonstrativum*; 3, 4, 12-16 and 3, 7).

Lastly, we have the exercises of commonplace and thesis as well as discussion of a law. These last exercises were most closely related to oratorical practice either in the law courts or in deliberative debates.

¹¹ Cf. 2, 1, 2 ... *ad prosopopoeias usque ac suasorias, in quibus onus dicendi vel maximum est, inrumpunt.*

4. Fable and paraphrase

As Quintilian (1, 9, 2) says, the first exercises in oral and written composition assigned to small boys in the grammar school were reproductions of Aesopic fables: the boys would retell or paraphrase fables (*narrare, paraphrasi vertere*). The problem connected with Quintilian's exposition is most clearly expressed by Colson (op. cit. 117): "The introduction of paraphrasing at this particular stage perhaps requires some explanation. I understand Q. to name these exercises in the order in which he wishes them to be taken up. The fable, based as it was on traditional knowledge, could be employed at the very earliest stage in the grammatical school, while paraphrasing in its simplest form followed as soon as Homer and Virgil were seriously begun".

But are fable and paraphrase meant by Quintilian to be two different progymnasmata?¹² And does Quintilian mean that the originals to be paraphrased should be Aesopic fables, or some other pieces of poetry? Colson's view that Quintilian here adverts to two separate exercises has been accepted by some scholars (cf. above Ch. 1). However, Quintilian's text hardly supports that view because the acts of retelling and paraphrasing are so closely connected in the text. Thus, for instance, Cousin (Quintilien I, 129) translates the relevant passage as follows: "Qu'on apprenne... aux élèves à conter les fables d'Ésope, ..., en un langage pur qui ne se guinde pas au-dessus de la mesure; qu'on leur apprenne ensuite à les mettre par écrit avec le même dépouillement; les élèves auront tout d'abord à rompre les vers, ensuite à replacer les mots par des équivalents, puis à procéder à une paraphrase plus libre ...".

Two things in Quintilian's exposition must be kept separate. First, there is the material from which appropriate stories are to be extracted for the exercises. This material has the common name of Aesopic fables.¹³ Quintilian appears to use the term in a very general sense. The attribute "Aesopic" merely distinguishes the fable from the other myths. As Theon (II, 72, 28 Spengel) defines it, the Aesopic fable is a "fictitious story

¹² Cf. Cousin, Quintilien I, 177, who notes that Quintilian seems to be first to adopt the Greek term paraphrase. The term appears also in Theon.

¹³ Quintilian also uses the terms *apologus* (6, 3, 44) and *apologatio* (5, 11, 20); cf. also Cic. de orat. 2, 264, and for the different terms particularly Theon II, 72, 28-73 Spengel.

metaphorically representing the truth”, the truth being a fact of human life or behaviour or a piece of moral wisdom. The characters appearing in the fables are usually, but not always, animals. Secondly, there is the way in which the exercise must be carried out: there are several stages or steps by which pupils must pass: first the boys are to relate fables orally in plain language, then express them with the same simplicity in writing (*Igitur Aesopi fabellas, ..., narrare sermone puro, ..., deinde eandem gracilitatem stilo exigere condiscant*). The written exercise was performed in the following way: the word order of the poetry was recast in prose, then the diction was altered and lastly the act of paraphrase was accomplished, i.e. there was shortening here, expanding there, but always the general sense of the poet was to be preserved (*versus primo solvere, mox mutatis verbis interpretari, tum paraphrasi audacius vertere, qua et breviare quaedam et exornare salvo modo poetae sensu permittitur*);¹⁴ there is an explicit order: *versus solvere, interpretari, paraphrasi vertere*.

These exercises gave the boys practice in putting words together correctly and aided them in understanding literature. Colson (op. cit. 117) is probably right in saying that the models used for the exercise were not from Phaedrus' fables or from any other collection of poetic fables. It is interesting to notice that the example of fable given by Aphthonius (II, 21, 15-21) is approximately the same as that which occurs in Horace's first satire. When Quintilian repeatedly states that teaching in the grammar school ought to be restricted to poetry, this must be taken seriously.¹⁵ Evidently poetry (in Latin particularly Ennius, Lucilius and Horace) provided enough material for exercises with fables.

It is important to note that Theon puts forward a similar view of the exercises (II, 61, 28ff. and 65, 22-25 Spengel). He says that it is not enough to read or to hear another reading and lecturing, but the student when he has learnt enough language must also write, i.e. paraphrase; after paraphrasing, which is very common also in literature, more exacting exercises will follow, that is the elaborate treatment of stories and their confirmation or refutation. Colson's (op. cit. 117) example from Augustine (conf. 1, 17) is not appropriate in this connection, because Augustine clearly speaks about the exercise of writing in character (*ethopoeia*), which of course is also a kind of

¹⁴ Cf. Suet. rhet. 1 *et apologos aliter atque aliter exponere*.

¹⁵ Cf. Colson, op. cit., xxx.

paraphrase; also Theon (II, 75, 17ff.) says that at a later stage of rhetorical schooling fables can be elaborated into descriptions or character-speeches, but according to Quintilian's system this kind of exercising should not be used in the school of the grammaticus. It is evident that Quintilian wanted to keep his grammar school at the level of interpreting and paraphrasing stories. Theon, too, considered these to be the first steps in practising composition.

Because of his excessive emphasis on paraphrase Quintilian's exposition is somewhat uneven, but as usual, he is taking a stand between conflicting assumptions. In general the first imitative exercises were paraphrase, translation and learning by heart. Quintilian's experience was that some people were inclined to underestimate the value of imitation.¹⁶ In exactly the same way, Theon extols the value of paraphrasing in opposition to those who claim that it is valueless because the imitator can never equal the model.

5. Narratives

From the fable it is natural to proceed to narratives. Firstly we should note that Quintilian uses different phrases when defining the *lectio* of the grammar school: in 1, 4, 2 *enarratio poetarum*, in 1, 8, 18 *enarratio historiarum* and in 1, 9, 1 *enarratio auctorum*.. Have these definitions the same meaning? And is the meaning the same as for instance in Cic. de orat. 1, 187 *omnia fere quae sunt conclusa nunc artibus, dispersa et dissipata quondam fuerunt: ...; in grammaticis poetarum pertractatio, historiarum cognitio?* History was also considered to be a part of grammar by Marius Victorinus (GL VI 4, 7-9 Keil): *ut Aristoni placet, grammaticae est scientia poetas et historicos intellegendi* (cf. Quint. 2, 15, 19, where Ariston, the pupil of Critolaus, is mentioned).

In 2, 5, 1, however, Quintilian reminds us that the *poetarum enarratio* belongs particularly to the tasks of the grammaticus whereas *historiae atque etiam magis orationum lectio* belong to the rhetor. In the light of the instances mentioned above Cousin (op. cit. 33-34) infers that the

¹⁶ Cf. 10, 5, 5 *Neque ego paraphrasin esse interpretationem tantum volo*. Quintilian has no doubt at all that paraphrase is a beneficial exercise (cf. 10, 5, 4-8), but recognizes that the imitation can never equal the model; cf. the doubts raised by Cicero, de orat. 1, 154.

pupils advanced from the study of poets and historians in the grammar schools to the study of orators in the schools of rhetoric. Cousin also points out that because the word *historia* has so many meanings it is easy to draw erroneous conclusions. Thus the complex¹⁷ *enarratio poetarum* and *historiarum* consists of myths, legends, and fictions, which are typically the subjects of dramatic poets. Because in Quintilian's system the grammaticus concentrates on poetic material it is natural that myths, legends and fictions are within his sphere; after dealing with these the pupil may progress to historical material and the orators.

Quintilian always tends to give practical advice and is satisfied with the minimum of theorizing. It is not part of his intention to give a full account of the doctrine of narratives. There was no general agreement about how narratives ought to be classified, and some theorists proposed hair-splitting distinctions (cf. 4, 2, 2). As usual in treatises on progymnasmata (cf. e.g. Priscian. II, 431, 6-10), Quintilian, for practical reasons, distinguishes four types of narrative. First, there is the narrative that forms part of the judicial speech and this Quintilian naturally postponed to the relevant place in his discussion of different sections of the speech. Other types which may be used in school exercises, or appear in different parts of the speech, are classified according to the reality and truth of the stories, or on the basis of the kind of literature from which they are taken, as mythical, fictitious, and historical (2, 4, 2 *fabula, argumentum, historia*). Secondly, Quintilian holds it to be important that the main difference between the teaching of the grammaticus and the rhetor is always observed: the former uses poetic material, the latter starts with prose (2, 4, 2 *grammaticis autem poeticas dedimus: apud rhetorem initium sit historica*). In fact, mythological stories and fictitious themes are partly discussed in connection with the treatment of the fable and the moral anecdote in Ch. 1, 9.¹⁸ Thirdly, the narratives practised in the grammar school must be simple reproductions of stories made famous by the poets, without amplification and without refutation or confirmation (1, 9, 6 *narratiunculas a poetis celebratas notitiae causa, non eloquentiae tractandas puto*). A more elaborate treatment of stories,

¹⁷ Cf. Colson, op. cit., 114: "The word as used in the schools covers any information ... in the poems..."

¹⁸ Comedy, which is the source of fictitious narratives, is also useful on account of the abundance of moral examples it contains; cf. Bonner, op. cit. 260.

including of the poetical ones, must be left to a later stage of education. When mentioning the rhetorical exercises of refutation and confirmation Quintilian explicitly says that these exercises concern both historical themes and poetical stories (2, 4, 18 *Narrationibus non inutiliter subiungitur opus destruendi confirmandique eas, quod ἀνοασκευή et κατασκευή vocatur. id porro non tantum in fabulosis et carmine traditis fieri solet, verum etiam in ipsis annalium monumentis*). Similarly, the progymnast Theon, who naturally presents a more detailed analysis, divides the exercises based on narratives as well as on fables and moral sayings into two parts (II, 64, 30 - 65, 22 Spengel). To recapitulate: Quintilian wants to be as practical as possible, to keep separate the tasks of the grammaticus and the rhetor in such a way that the grammaticus should only deal with poetical material, and only allow the most elementary exercises to be practised in the grammar school. These principles result in a certain inconsistency in his exposition concerning narrative exercises, but he by no means considered mythological and fictitious narratives unsuitable for practice in the schools.

6. Chreia, Maxim, and Ethology (or Aetiology)

Quintilian mentioned Aesopic fables in first place because the boys had been familiar with them from early childhood. Also in the textbooks of progymnasmata the fable is usually listed first. However, as we have seen, it could be associated with the exercise of narratives, and there is also another exercise in composition which could lay claim to being the most elementary and most typical. This is the chreia (*usus*), the instructive saying or anecdote.¹⁹ Usually it is a saying (*dictum*) or action (*factum*) with some kind of moral application, but it can also be a clever saying or action apposite to a particular occasion. Evidently it was named the chreia by reason of its suitability for apposite descriptions as well as because of its usefulness for moral and rhetorical teaching. Chreiae were mainly used by moral philosophers (cf. Sen. epist. 33, 7 *ideo pueris etiam sententias ediscendas*

¹⁹ In Theon's textbook the fable is also listed first; Theon, however, explicitly says that he would like to take the chreia first (II, 64, 30; 66, 2) and in general he thinks that exercise to be most important. Also Quintilian seems to suggest that the chreia has a certain priority and antiquity (2, 4, 26); cf. also Suet. rhet. 1, 8.

damus et has quas Graeci chrias vocant, quia complecti illas puerilis animus potest, qui plus adhuc non capit),²⁰ whereas grammarians and rhetoricians tended to emphasize their practical use. That Quintilian conceives of the chreia primarily as a certain exercise-type, and not as a moral example, is supported by the fact that he mentions also a third variation of it when, in connection with his treatment of the thesis-exercise, he refers to the ancient practice of giving pupils problems taken from mythology (2, 4, 26 *Solebant praeceptores mei neque inutili et nobis etiam iucundo genere exercitationis praeparare nos coniecturalibus causis, cum quaerere atque exsequi iuberent "cur armata apud Lacedaemonios Venus?" ... et similia ...; quod genus chriae videri potest*).²¹

In its simplest form the chreia exercise consisted merely in declension (1, 9, 5 *in his omnibus et declinatio per eosdem ducitur casus, et tam factorum quam dictorum ratio est*),²² and it is therefore natural that Quintilian devotes most attention to that exercise in his presentation of exercises suitable for the grammar school. The chreia is closely associated with the maxim (*sententia*), since a maxim is changed into a chreia if it is introduced by its author's name. For this reason, they are often considered together in treatises on progymnasmata, and even those theorists who list them separately remark upon their obvious similarity. Theon, however, like Quintilian, does not make the maxim a separate exercise and only mentions it in connection with the chreia. Usually, and Theon also follows this practice, three types are mentioned together: χρεία, γνώμη and ἀπομνημόνευμα (*chria, sententia, commemoratio*). Quintilian's way of presenting these is in principle similar, except that the third member in his list is not a memorandum (a kind of longer anecdote, as defined by the progymnastiasts) but an ethology or aetiology (1, 9, 3 *Sententiae quoque et chriae et ethologiae/aetiologiae subiectis dictorum rationibus apud grammaticos scribantur: quorum omnium similis est ratio, forma diversa*). In fact he does not explain how a maxim or an ethology is to be practised. Probably it consisted merely in writing out the maxim and explaining its meaning

²⁰ Seneca was apparently to be the first to use the term in Latin. For the use of the chreia by the philosophers and in moralising poetry, P. Lejay, *Oeuvres d'Horace. Satires*, Paris 1911, xvii-xxiii.

²¹ These exercises are evidently the same as the *problemata* in Suet. gramm. 4.

²² Cf. Theon II, 101, 3-23 and Suet. rhet. 1, 8 *nam et dicta praeclare per omnes figuras per casus ... exponere ... consuerant*.

(*subiectis dictorum rationibus*).²³ Also in this connection we must remember that Quintilian is always preoccupied with practicalities. Here his main concern is to give advice about how the pupils can practise the declension and inflection of words. Thus it is most likely that he thought a maxim should be a chreia if it was used as a kind of morphological and syntactic exercise.²⁴

The problem in Quintilian's text is that he mentions the *ethologia* (or *aetiologia*) instead of the *commemoratio* as the third type in this group. Bonner (op. cit. 258), who follows Colson and Robinson²⁵, is certain that Quintilian's term is *aetiologia* and he explains it as "a paradoxical or controversial saying or quotation, i.e. it probably was an easy saying-exercise, which the pupil was merely required to paraphrase and 'decline'; for here the author supplied the 'explanation'".

If we accept the text as it stands (with the exception of the problematic *ethologia* or *aetiologia*) and most editors do that, although some have reservations, then this exercise is in Quintilian's exposition connected with *sententia*, not with *chria*: *sententia universalis est vox, ethologia (aetiologia) personis continetur, chriarum plura genera traduntur*.²⁶ It is thus a sort of *sententia*, not however a general expression but limited by a reference to some individual. Robinson (op.cit. 374) explains (though apparently he does not believe his own explanation) that "this might be interpreted to mean that a *sententia* is a maxim of universal application, while an *ethologia* is a maxim as applied to an individual case". The explanation is similar to that between *thesis* and *hypothesis* (3, 5, 5-11 *quaestio infinita* or *generalis* and *finita* or *specialis*), and it closely resembles the definition of the *gnome* by Aristotle, rhet. 1394 a 21-22 "A maxim (*gnome*) is a statement of general application, not applied to an individual to

²³ Robinson, op. cit. 378, seems to be alone in thinking that the phrase *subiectis dictorum rationibus* refers only to the word *aetiologiae*.

²⁴ Cf. the figure of *expolitio* in Rhet.Her. 4, 54-58: *per eam exercemur ad elocutionis facultatem* (58). The example of *expolitio* in Rhet.Her. is in fact a maxim, but because the same maxim is repeated in different forms in the figure it is often seen as corresponding to the chreia; see G. Calboli, *Rhetorica ad C. Herennium*, Bologna 1969, 406-408.

²⁵ Cf. note 3 above.

²⁶ For the meaning of *contineri*, see 3, 5, 11 *quae personis causisque contineantur* "which are limited by consideration of persons or special cases".

describe, for instance, what some Iphicrates is like".²⁷ This, in turn, reminds us about Quintilian's definition of the *sententia* in 8, 5, 3 *Antiquissimae sunt, quae proprie, ..., sententiae vocantur... Est autem haec vox universalis, ..., interim ad rem tantum relata, ut 'nihil est tam populare quam bonitas'; iterim ad personam, quale est Afri Domiti: 'princeps, qui vult omnia scire, necesse habet multa ignoscere'*. It is evident that the maxim referring to an individual quoted by Quintilian from Domitius Afer is a kind of gnomic characterization of the ruler and accordingly could be interpreted as an ethology.

In support of the readings *ethologiae* and *ethologia* in Quintilian two passages from contemporary Latin literature are usually quoted. They are Suet. gramm. 4 *Veteres grammatici et rhetoricam docebant, ac multorum de utraque arte commentarii feruntur. secundum quam consuetudinem posteriores quoque existimo quamquam iam discretis professionibus nihilo minus vel retinuisse vel instituisse et ipsos quaedam genera meditationum ad eloquentiam praeparandam, ut problemata paraphrasis allocutiones ethologias atque alia hoc genus*, and Sen. epist. 95, 65 *Posidonius non tantum praeceptionem, ..., sed etiam suasionem et consolationem et exhortationem necessariam iudicat. his adicit causarum inquisitionem, aetiologian quam quare nos dicere non audeamus, cum grammatici, custodes Latini sermonis, suo iure ita appellant, non video. ait utilem futuram et descriptionem cuiusque virtutis: hanc Posidonius ethologian vocat, quidam characterismon appellant, signa cuiusque virtutis ac vitii et notas reddentem, quibus inter se dissimilia discriminantur. Haec res eandem vim habet quam praecipere. nam qui praecipit, dicit: "illa facies, si voles temperans esse," qui describit, ait: "temperans est, qui illa facit, qui illis abstinet." quaeris, quid intersit? alter praecepta virtutis dat, alter exemplar.*

Unfortunately the manuscripts of both Quintilian and Suetonius have similar errors (and the same holds good of the word *aetiologian* in Seneca): *aethio-*, *ethio-*, *aethimo-*, *ethimo-*, etc. These errors have led

²⁷ Cf. also Isidorus 2, 11, 1 *sententia est dictum impersonale ut "obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit"*. - Note that M. Winterbottom, *Problems in Quintilian*, BICS 25 (1970) 67, comes close to my solution: "Quintilian may, however, be saying that all three are different. A *sententia* is universal, *aetiologia* particular, and *chriae* something rather more complex."

to three different readings: *aetiologia*, *ethologia*, *etymologia*.²⁸ The reading *ethologian* in Seneca is, however, proved by the definition and examples given by Seneca. The text of Quintilian and Suetonius must be restored in the light of the probable meaning of the term. This is also the view of Robinson (op.cit. 374), although he later says that “a fairly good case might be made for *ethologia* if it had any manuscript authority” (378) and finally adopts the reading *aetiologia* for both Quintilian and Suetonius, largely on account of the authority of the manuscripts.

There is considerable evidence concerning *aetiologia*. Usually the term refers to a figure, *ad propositum subiecta ratio* (e.g. Cic. de orat. 3, 207, Quint. 9, 3, 93, Rut. Lup. 2, 19).²⁹ Seneca in the letter quoted above defines it as a teaching method employed by the philosophers. He also refers to the use of the term by grammarians. If the reading *aetiologian* is correct (we can perhaps also read *etymologian*), the reference is certainly to the doctrine of figures since it was precisely the task of the grammarians to explain and define the figures and tropes of poetical texts (cf. Quint. 1, 8, 16-17). An exercise similar to the figure of *aetiologia* hardly fits the context in Quintilian. As interpreted above, it must be some kind of moral maxim limited by reference to an individual (*personis continetur*).³⁰ According to Robinson (378-379) and Bonner (258) Quintilian's *aetiologia* is a kind of *chreia*, i.e. it is introduced by the name of the person who explains the meaning of the reported act or saying. We must, however, take note of the fact that the αἰτία, or reason, in Quintilian's text is clearly meant to be the essence of all the exercises listed in the passage. We cannot therefore agree with Colson (op. cit. 118) that aetiology is the name of one only.

Suetonius cannot really be quoted in support of the text in Quintilian since he is referring to the habit of the grammarians of including rhetorical exercises in their programme, against which Quintilian is actually

²⁸ The confusion is easy to comprehend, because the three terms have conceptual similarities; for instance Seneca's definition *causarum inquisitio* is compatible with both aetiology and etymology, and since the *ethologia* or *characterismos* is a kind of a *notatio*, also this term can be confused with *etymologia* (cf. Quint. 1, 6, 28 and Cic. top. 35).

²⁹ The testimony of *aetiologia* is collected by Robinson, op. cit. 372-373.

³⁰ Quintilian distinguishes between universal and particular, not between attribution and non-attribution to a speaker, as suggested by Colson and Bonner. Cf. also Winterbottom, op. cit. 68.

arguing in Ch. 1, 9. However, also in Suetonius I would prefer the reading *problemata paraphrasis allocutiones ethologias atque alia hoc genus* on the reason that in treatises on figures of thought the figures corresponding to *allocutio* and *ethologia* are normally presented together. See, for example, Charisius (372, 25 - 373, 7 Barwick) *ethologia, prosopopoeia*; Rutilius Lupus 2, 6-7 *prosopopoeia, caracterismos*; Cic. orat. 138 (= Quint. 9, 1, 44) *ut hominum mores sermonesque describat, ut muta quaedam loquentia inducat*; Cic. de orat. 3, 204-205 (= Quint. 9, 1, 30) *morum ac vitae imitatio vel in personis vel sine illis, ...; personarum ficta inductio*; Rhet. Her. 4, 63 *notatio, sermonicatio, conformatio*; Quint. 9, 2, 29-37; 9, 2, 58-63 *fictiones personarum, imitatio morum*. It is worth noticing that all mention figures that are very similar in content and form and that there was evidently much confusion in naming these figures.³¹ The confusion was caused by the fact that it is very difficult to differentiate between an imitative figure (usually *ethopoeia*) and an imaginative figure (i.e. the speech of an imaginary person, usually *prosopopoeia*); there are moreover many variations possible when someone else's words are imitated or imagined. In any case, the figures often have the same names as the corresponding exercises in composition. This suggests that in Suetonius' list, the exercise mentioned together with *allocutio* must rather be an exercise resembling the figure of *ethopoeia* than for instance, an exercise similar to the figure of *aetiologia*.

According to Robinson (373) the passage in Seneca is the only indisputable instance of the word *ethologia* in any Greek or Latin text. Robinson fails to notice that the word appears in Charisius as the name of a figure (p. 372, 25-28 Barwick): *Per ethologiam, ut 'siquis me videat, dicat nimirum vir hic est ille talis, tantis opibus praepotens? Ubi nunc secundis rebus adiutrix potens?'*. The *ethologia* in Charisius is evidently synonymous with the *ethopoeia* and in Quintilian it corresponds to an art of *prosopopoeia: incertae personae ficta oratio* (9, 2, 36). Quintilian mentions among the figures of thought 9, 2, 29ff. *fictiones personarum* (= *prosopopoeia*) and 9, 2, 58 *imitatio morum alienorum* (= *ethopoeia* or *mimesis*), which appears both *in factis* and *in dictis*; as an example of the latter he gives Ter. Eun. 155-157 *at ego nesciebam, quorsum tu ires: "parvola hinc est abrepta, eduxit mater pro sua, soror dicta est: cupio abducere, ut reddam suis"*. The example resembles Charisius' *ethologia*, differing however that it is not an imitative speech of

³¹ Cf. Calboli, op. cit. 418-429.

an undefined person but an imitation of what a person has said before.³² Figures like these were of course practised in the schools. One of the rhetoricians' and also Quintilian's main doctrines was that the style must be appropriate to the character imitated and to the circumstances described by the speaker. As Bonner (op. cit. 268-269) says, "the teaching and the practice at this point also linked up very effectively with the grammar-school teaching, in which, ..., the virtue of propriety in style was often praised in the exposition of the poets". The grammarians, too, prepared their pupils for the kind of compositions mentioned. Quintilian in fact refers to this practice in 6, 2, 17 *non parum significanter etiam illa in scholis ἠθῆν dixerimus, quibus plerumque rusticos, superstitiosos, avaros, timidos secundum condicionem propositionum effingimus: nam si ἠθῆν mores sunt, cum hos imitamur, ex his ducimus orationem*. Slightly different in form, but similar in function, were exercises generally termed *allocutiones*, for which the teachers made their pupils imitate speeches from the poets.³³

The above examples can be used in support of Suetonius' text in gramm. 4, but as the preparatory exercises intended by Quintilian in 1, 9 they are far too advanced. According to my interpretation of the *ethologia*, Quintilian is thinking rather about moral examples which the boys were to write down and the wisdom of which they were to explain.³⁴ Here we can return to the passage quoted earlier from Seneca's letter, because it seems that Seneca's *ethologia* is exactly the same as Quintilian's. It is also possible that Quintilian either borrowed the term from Seneca or from Seneca's source, Posidonius.³⁵ Certainly Quintilian's view of education, and particularly his view of the meaning of philosophy in education, was different from Seneca's, but this did not prevent him from using the same terminology any more than

³² A similar passage is Ter. Adelp. 407ff., on which Donatus has the comment: ἠθικῶς *totum et 'coepit clamare' et quod sequitur*.

³³ Suet. gramm. 4; Priscian. II, 437, 20ff. Keil. Cf. also Quintilian's definition of *ethopoeia* or *mimesis* in 9, 2, 58 which is very similar to that of *allocutio*. These definitions, in turn, come close to the definition of *effictio* and *notatio* in Rhet. Her. 4, 63. Augustine, conf. 1, 17, refers to this practice of the grammarians.

³⁴ Cf. also 1, 1, 35-36 and 10, 1, 52.

³⁵ For Quintilian's Stoicism and his possible use of Posidonius, see, for example, Kennedy, Quintilian, 34. On Quintilian and Seneca, see Cousin, Quintilien I, Notice 37-43.

it prevented Seneca from adopting terms currently used by the grammarians.³⁶

Seneca defines ethology as follows (in the letter quoted above): *ait utilem futuram et descriptionem cuiusque virtutis: hanc Posidonius ethologian vocat, quidam characterismon appellant, signa cuiusque virtutis ac vitii et notas reddentem, quibus inter se dissimilia discriminentur. Haec res eandem vim habet quam praecipere. nam qui praecipit, dicit: "illa facies, si voles temperans esse," qui describit, ait: "temperans est, qui illa facit, qui illis abstinet." quaeris, quid intersit? alter praecepta virtutis dat, alter exemplar.* And he continues: *Descriptiones has ... ex usu esse confiteor.* This last sentence corresponds to the usual definition of the *chreia*. In Seneca, because philosophical teaching is in question, the use (*usus*) obviously refers to the moral application of ethologies, because Seneca continues *proponamus laudanda, inveniatur imitator.*³⁷ The example of ethology given by Seneca is from Virgil (Georg. 3, 75ff.), and it is actually a portrayal of a thoroughbred horse, but Seneca applies it metaphorically to the virtuous man. It is important to note the terms used by Seneca when he defines an ethology. First it may be called a *characterismon*. Rutilius Lupus, 2, 7, in his definition of the figure of *characterismon* employs phrases that resemble those in Seneca's letter: *Characterismon. Quemadmodum pictor coloribus figuras describit, sic orator hoc schemate aut vitia aut virtutes eorum, de quibus loquitur, deformat.* The example given by Rutilius Lupus is, however, far too elaborate for Quintilian's purposes, but naturally also shorter characterizations could be used; one instance of a succinct characterization is Ter. Hec. 352 *quam tristis est!* on which Donatus has the comment: *χαρακτηρισμός locuturi Pamphili.* Secondly, Seneca's ethology is an *exemplar virtutis*, a definition that is obviously in accord with Quintilian's intentions (cf. e.g. 1, 1, 35-36 and 10, 1, 52). Thirdly, the ethology is a *descriptio* or *notatio* (*signa cuiusque virtutis et vitii et notas reddentem*). These definitions are not unlike those of the figure of *notatio* in Rhet. Her. 4, 63: *Notatio est, cum alicuius natura certis describitur signis, quae, sicuti notae quae naturae sunt adtributa; ut si velis non divitem, sed ostentatorem pecuniosi describere* and *descriptio* in Cic. part. 65 *descriptio generis alicuius et quasi imago est exprimenda, ut*

³⁶ It was especially on account of its educational function that Seneca rated poetry highly; see for instance epist. 33, 2-7. Cf. Lejay, op. cit. xx.

³⁷ Cf. also Cic. de orat. 2, 242 *mimorum est enim et ethologorum, si nimia est imitatio, sicut obscaenitas.*

qualis sit avarus aut qui superbus. In particular they are reminiscent of Horace's sat. 1,4 where he talks about his father's teaching methods (105-111): *insuevit pater optimus hoc me, ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quaeque notando. cum me hortaretur, parce frugaliter atque viverem uti contentus eo quod mi ipse parasset, "nonne vides, Albi ut male vivat filius, utque Baius inops, magnum documentum, ne patriam rem perdere quis velit"*.³⁸ The terms used by Horace are similar to those used by Seneca. It is clear, therefore, that many of the phrases used in the poems of Horace, where they provide a succinct description of the conduct and morals of some actual person or character-type, can be called ethologies in Seneca's sense. An example would be Hor. epist. 1, 18, 6-7 *asperitas agrestis et inconcinna gravisque, quae res commendat tonsa cute, dentibus atris*, on which Porphyrio comments: *characterismos hominis tristis et amari*, or Hor. epist. 1, 18, 10-11 *alter in obsequium plus aequo pronus et imi derisor lecti sic nutum divitis horret*, on which Porphyrio comments: *hic characterismos adulatorum est*.³⁹ From the numerous trenchant characterizations with a proper name in Horace's satires I select the following from sat. 1,4: *beatus Fannius ultro delatis capsis et imagine* (21-22); *stupet Albius aere* (28); *pastillos Rufillus olet, Gargonius hircum* (92); *Sulcius acer ambulat et Caprius, rauci male cumque libellis, magnus uterque timor latronibus* (65-67). In the Roman satire, which has a certain philosophical background, realistic character sketches are often based on Peripatetic or Cynic philosophy (cf. Arist. rhet. 1389-1390 and Theophrastus' Characters; for Cynics, e.g. Diog. Laert. 6, 46-54); the New Comedy, on the other hand, with its careful delineation of types, provided rich material for the poets and teachers.⁴⁰

³⁸ A similar teaching method is mentioned by Horace also in sat. 2, 3, 168-175. See also Hor. ars 156 *aetatis cuiusque notandi sunt tibi mores*. Cf. Ter. Adolph. 415-419.

³⁹ Cf. also Porphyrio's notes on Hor. epist. 1, 20, 24 and 2, 1, 184. C.O. Brink, *Horace on Poetry. Epistles Book II*, Cambridge 1982, 385 and 588, actually uses the term ethology in his explication of Horace's realistic character sketches. - Also C. Gill, *The Ethos/Pathos Distinction in Rhetorical and Literary Criticism*, CQ 34 (1984) 159 n. 49, seems to suggest that Quintilian used the term ethology: "under *ethos* we can find the long-standing association with good character and ethics ...; with depiction of types, such as *rusticos*, 6. 2. 17, cf. 1. 9. 3".

⁴⁰ Cf. G. Fiske, *Lucilius and Horace*, Madison 1920, 298-99.

I believe that the evidence adduced in the foregoing discussion demonstrates conclusively that the term used by Quintilian was not *aetiologia* but *ethologia*, an *ethologia* being a moral exemplar, a succinct description of a virtuous man, to be followed, or of a vicious man, to be eschewed. There were two types of *ethologia*, either those with a proper name – as often in Horace – or those in which a general character-type is described. It is therefore possible, as suggested at the beginning of this chapter, that the term could also mean a maxim with personal or individual reference.⁴¹

7. Conclusion

Long before Quintilian's time the theory of rhetoric had become a highly sophisticated system with its detailed precepts and elaborate classifications and sub-classifications. The teachers of rhetoric had also developed a scheme for training their pupils in the writing and speaking of prose, a graded series of exercises. In Rome, however, the system of education was not yet fully established. Certain difficulties were caused when the old Roman system of education was modelled on the teaching methods of the Greeks. But above all there were two languages and two literatures to be taught. Although both were taught to the same pupils, a division arose, and the Greek teachers of grammar and rhetoric were separated from the Latin ones. In the Greek system, the progymnasmata, preliminary exercises in composition, were assigned to the teacher of rhetoric, whereas Latin teachers of rhetoric were willing to leave this part of the instruction to the teachers of grammar. Since there was a danger that an important sector of education would be neglected, Quintilian proposed that the teachers of grammar should take charge of some of the most elementary exercises in composition. Because training in the art of writing and speaking was thus divided into two stages, there came to be certain terminological confusion; since the same themes could appear later in more exacting exercises, those exercises that were practised in the grammar school were not quite the same as those listed

⁴¹ Cf. for example Sen. epist. 1, 2, 6 *non qui parum habet, sed qui plus cupit, pauper est*; epist. 33, 4 *pauperis est numerare pecus* (= Ov. met. 13, 824) and Hor. sat. 1, 64-67 and 95-100.

and analysed in treatises on rhetorical progymnasmata. Quintilian's exposition can be compared to the respective passages in Theon's handbook and to the remarks of Seneca the Younger and Suetonius on the same topic and one can observe in them similar problems concerning the definition and naming of those exercises.

It is Quintilian's contention that the themes practised at the grammar school always have a moral application. Fables, maxims, and ethologies are suitable for observing this educational principle. Secondly, he asserts that the practice of composition must be closely related to the reading of poetry. There was an abundance of poetic fables to be found in Greek and Latin poetry. Quintilian says, furthermore, that the methods used should be harmonized with the other teaching at the grammar school. This principle makes the chreia the most typical primary exercise. Finally, Quintilian always stresses the importance of imitation. In the grammar school, imitation must combine writing practice and moral training. The mode of expression of good writers serves as a model in forming the pupils' style, and paraphrase is therefore the most essential element in all literary training. Moral maxims, sayings and anecdotes, as well as characterizations (ethologies), all provide the pupils with models of good conduct to be imitated and of bad conduct to be eschewed.