

## Chapter 4

### **A historical-critical classification of Jesus' parables and the metaphoric narration of the wedding feast in Matthew 22:1-14**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Texts cannot be interpreted if they are not subjected to inquiry. Questions can, however, seem irrelevant and even illegitimate. What determines the relevance of the questions that the interpreter of Jesus' parables in the New Testament may pose? In my opinion the pragmatic aim of interpretation (the teleological dimension) is the partial answer to this question. What this amounts to is that it is necessary not only to get clarity about the motives underlying the original use of the parables, but also the practical use of the results that give rise to specific questions. The validity of the questions is in turn particularly determined by the literary nature of the parable. This nature can relate to the evolutionary, historical origins as well as the synchronic, coherent poetics of the parable. What will come to the fore in the parable, the history of origin or the poetics of a parable, should be determined by the interpreter according to the pragmatic aim. Should it occur with a view to, for example, preaching, one should thoroughly consider the communication possibilities and the communicative conditions of the particular choice.

Communication is largely facilitated by communication strategies. The literary form is no doubt one of the most important strategies in communicating literature. This touches on the old problem of the relationship between *form* and *content*. As early as at the turn of the last century, Hermann Gunkel (Old Testament) and Johan G Herder (New Testament) demonstrated insight into the relationship between form and content in the interpretation of biblical texts. It has, however, only been in recent times that the hermeneutic implications of this relationship have been recognized and used in exegesis with a pragmatic aim. The reason for this is that identification of the 'generic' literary convention helps one to

understand the text's communicative focus (intention), and what the interpreter should both expect and ask of the text. Hirsch (1967:76) formulates this as follows: 'All understanding of verbal meaning is necessarily genre-bound'. Therefore, the realization that the determination of the intention of a text is more than the distinction between form and content is more and more noticeable among biblical scholars (see Van Aarde 1982a:7-9). 'That *genre* must stand at least partly to indicate something beyond form, I take to be self-evident. *Meaning*, a common way to designate this additional factor, is genre-bound...since generic expression must rank among the most important signal-systems used by the author' (Doty 1972:430).

New Testament scholars have distinguished, as far as the parables of Jesus are concerned, since the time of Adolf Jülicher (1910) in the footprints of Aristotle, between *comparison* and *metaphor* and consequently between, on the one hand, *comparison*, *parable*, and *example story*, and on the other, *metaphor* and *allegory*. This classical division has since been under fire. The new-hermeneutic scholars (e.g. Ernst Fuchs) question the distinction made between comparison and metaphor, particularly on the basis of the *Sprachkraft der Existenz* (Fuchs 1958:211-214, see also Kingsbury 1972:102), and even deny it (see later). In the circle of the *Formgeschichtler* (e.g. Bultmann 1970:188; Dibelius 1971:249) Jülicher's distinctions are however largely upheld. But the more the positivism of their literary and historical views is exposed to ridicule, the more traditional classification becomes regarded as irrelevant.

Since the *formgeschichtliche* period there has been less debate about Aristotelian terms in parable research with regard to classification; it is more a question of the relationship between the identification of its form and functional, communicative focus. For example, Bultmann's own contribution with regard to the interpretation of parables, besides his interest in the *traditionsgeschichte* of the parables, is the description of the technique of narrating the parables (*die Technik der Gleichniserzählung*; see Bultmann 1970:203). Although he does not mention it explicitly, the clear hypothesis is that the narrative technique involves communication strategies that can help explain the motive behind the use of Jesus' parables in the early church. Bultmann (1970:203-208) discusses the compactness of the parables as narratives with regard to characterization, economy of words, their single dominant perspective, the frequent occurrence of direct speech and monologues, repetition, the anticipation of the listener's/reader's decision with regard to the point that the parable wishes to make, and finally the law-of-end-stress (*Gesetz des Achtergewichts*). The latter stylistic characteristic amounts to the most important information being mentioned last. This is a common feature of trivial, folklorist literature.

The identification of the different forms into which parables divide themselves, and of their respective stylistic characteristics, should therefore no longer have classification and appellation as goals in themselves. The exegete should take the hermeneutic implications of the classification into account. And if the exegete is a homilete as well, he must ask himself what implications the classification has for the ministry. The purpose of the present study is to discuss the traditional classification of the parables in the New Testament and to test them against a pragmatic goal, such as the ministry. The conclusion is that an emphasis on *metaphoricity*, together with *narrativity* and *reference* would be more functional for preaching. The parable of the wedding feast (Mt 22:1-14) is used as an example.

## 2. JÜLICHER'S DISTINCTION BETWEEN COMPARISON AND METAPHOR

The distinction that Jülicher (1910:52) has made between a comparison and a metaphor is traditionally the basis of further distinctions and the eventual classification of parables in the New Testament. The essence of the distinction is that a comparison as a rule would depend on an *Ähnlichkeitsrelation* (relation of similarity), while a metaphor has to do with the literary phenomenon that two comparable objects (a 'subject' is like a 'predicate' - e.g. 'Achilles is like a lion') is articulated in an *uneigentliche* (indirect) discourse (see Kissinger 1979:72).

Metaphoricity is hereafter seen as purely ornamental diction. This implies that the 'subject' does not furnish new information about the 'predicate' (Weder 1978:76-77). 'Ornamental diction' thus means that a metaphor is a *Mimesis des Seienden* (= a reflection of reality). Seen thus, the metaphor, according to the connotative language of Aristotelian logic, is reducible to the intended predicate in the real world (see Sellin 1982:381). The intention of the phrase 'the lion charged,' for example, can be deduced by replacing the 'subject' lion with Achilles. To summarize, the metaphor 'Achilles is (like) a lion' (1) refers indirectly (that is, in an *uneigentliche* way) to the intended reality and (2) therefore demands transformation (or interpretation), but (3) provides no new information with regard to the 'predicate' (= lion).

In contrast, *comparison* needs no interpretation. Its purpose is to teach; that is, it is didactic in nature. In terms of the example, the phrase 'Achilles charges like a lion' is a comparison. What comparison and metaphor have in common is that both are based on *analogy*. This means that both name a 'subject' in analogy to a 'predicate'. Jülicher explains the difference between a comparison and a metaphor by seeing the analogic principle in the first in terms of something *similar*

(*Anschaulichkeit*) and in the latter in terms of *substitution* (see Sellin 1982:368). The reference between the 'subject' and the 'predicate' thus occurs directly in a comparison (the so-called *Ähnlichkeitsrelation* principle). The listener/reader immediately knows how one thing is used to demonstrate another. From the *Ähnlichkeitsrelation* he can infer a general truth principle which is didactic in nature.

Jülicher considered that the parables of Jesus in the Synoptic gospels are comparisons and not metaphors. As a child of the *pre-formgeschichtliche* 'Leben Jesu Forschung' (see Wrege 1978:11) he saw the parables of Jesus as the expression of general (moral) truths (Pelser 1985:459). He thus did away with the allegorizing and de-historizing trend in exegesis and the preaching of the parables, but on the other hand it unfortunately paved the way to moralizing and even romanticized preaching. In this type of preaching Jesus is held out to be an example of moral rectitude in a romantically idealistic manner.

Later in the essay comes the question of the untenability of distinguishing between a 'comparison' and a 'metaphor' in the above terms. This criticism indeed has had a fundamental effect on exegesis and the preaching of Jesus' parables. It indeed has had a far-reaching effect on traditional classification in allegories (in the narrower sense), parables, example stories and allegories. (According to some parable scholars the latter occur only occasionally in the New Testament.)

As mentioned above, Jülicher drew these other distinctions on the very grounds of his basic distinction between comparison and metaphor. Where he perceived the distinguishing component of allegory to be the *metaphor*, for comparison (in its narrower sense = *similitude*), the *parable* and for the example story the *comparison* (in its broader sense). The characteristics of comparison (in the broader sense) and metaphor, as discussed above, are applicable to the different types of parables. Let us briefly discuss these types and their respective characteristics.

## 2.1 Comparison, parable, example story and allegory

A comparison in the broad sense of the word, as indicated above, can comprehensively form a narrative discourse (= *parable*). A 'parable' as an extended comparison is a narration in which an idea is told in the form of a story, with the aid of an image. As far as the parables in the New Testament are concerned, the idea is intrinsically religious and often deals with something relating to the kingdom of God. In a 'parable' there is therefore an *image* (= *Bild*) and a *topic* (= *Sache*), as well as a *point of comparison* (= *tertium comparationis*) between them. The literary categories *image*, *topic* and the *tertium comparationis* can thus be distinguished in a 'parable'. However, one should not take it for granted that the

structural synthesis of a 'parable' could be divided into these three parts, as though they were incomplete parts (see Linnemann 1977:24). The term *tertium comparationis* refers to that single idea common to the image and the (religious) topic, for example the idea of 'joy' in the 'parable' of the lost sheep in Luke 15:4-7. The other material and motives in the 'parable' function to illustrate the *tertium comparationis*.

As far as the classification of such narratives in the New Testament is concerned, a distinction is made between *parable* and *allegory*, on the grounds of the above basic distinction between comparison (in its broader sense) and metaphor. As we have pointed out, in this view the comparison is the distinguishing component of the 'parable'. Metaphor is the distinguishing component of allegory. Since the material of the 'parable' and the individual elements it contains are grouped around a single *tertium comparationis*, these elements refer, *loosely*, through the image, to realities in the real world. In an allegory more than one of the individual elements it contains refer in a *primary* way to the real world, without there being even one *tertium comparationis* in question. In the so-called allegory of the wedding feast that the king prepared for his son (Mt 22:1-14), for example, the individual element 'son' refers to Jesus Christ, the 'invited guests' refer to the Jewish leaders, their 'city' relates to Jerusalem, the 'servants' that are sent refer to the disciples' commission, and the 'uninvited outside the city' to the Gentiles and the other socially despised, et cetera. On the other hand individual elements such as 'field', 'friends and neighbors' in the 'parable' of the lost sheep (= image) refer in a loose way to the real world, with the single idea of 'joy' as the *tertium comparationis*. These individual elements can even be *unusual features* (see Linnemann 1977:18), since a parable's *tertium comparationis* in some circumstances (the so-called *parable-proper*) does not derive from an incident in the real world, but from a general, acknowledged, fact of life or experience (the so-called *comparison* in its narrower sense = *similitude*). In other cases the *tertium comparationis* does derive from a concrete incident in the real world, and it is focused on a character as the example (the so-called *example story*). Here we find the reason for, in the second place, making a distinction in 'parables' between comparison (in the narrower sense), *parable-proper* and *example story*.

Where the *similitude* envisages a type of situation in the real world, the *parable-proper* refers to an interesting, specific case in the real world. The *similitude* is thus often introduced with the question τίς ὅμων. *Examples of comparisons are: the yeast worked into flour (Mt 13:33), the sowing of a mustard seed (Mt 13:31), the scattering of seed on the ground (Mk 4:26-29) and the actions of a master towards his servant (Lk 17:7-10).*



A *parable-proper*, as a freely composed story (see Linnemann 1977:4), relates to what anyone could do, and what has already been done by someone. It does not matter whether someone else will do it in the same way or not. *Examples of parables-proper are: the dishonest manager (Lk 16:1-13), the man with two sons (Mt 21:28-32), the man who gave the great banquet (Lk 14:16-24) and the judge in a certain city (Lk 18:2-8).*

As far as reference is concerned, the *similitude* is thus universally valid, whilst the *parable-proper* refers to what has happened only once. Communicatively, both the comparison and the *parable-proper* furnish new information about a topic by giving the listener/reader an image. The former wants to avoid opposition from the listener/reader with regard to the narrated topic by basing the image on universal validity. The latter hopes to avoid opposition by specifically not building the image on universal validity, but by presenting it as attractively as possible in literature. As a result the *parable-proper* is more subtle and thus less trivial, but more aesthetic than the *similitude*. The *parable-proper* is often introduced by the particles *ὥς* and *ὥστερ* or the expressions *ὁμοίως ἔστιν*, *ὅμοια ἔστιν*, *ὁμοιωθήσεται*, *ὁμοιωθήτε*.

The example story (*Beispielerszählung* or *Illustration*) is, like the parable, a *freely invented story* and subject to the same rules of story-telling. The communication strategy is however different: where the *parable-proper* creates an *analogy* between the image and the topic by means of a *tertium comparationis*, the example story creates an *exemplum*. Where the *parable-proper* builds the strength of its conviction on the hypothetical fact that what happens in the real world in the specific case cannot be argued by a correlating case, in the example story the 'ideological' point of view of the narrator, on the basis of the evidence regarding the specific *exemplum* in the hypothetical reality, is presented as being authoritative. *Examples of example stories are: the rich fool (Lk 12:16-21), the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31) and the Pharisee and the tax collector (Lk 18:9-14).* With regard to the narrative about the good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-37), it has not been established whether it should be interpreted as an example story (Linnemann 1977:4) or as a *parable-proper* (Crossan 1973:65). According to Pelser (1985:471), it is possible to consider that it forms a meaningful unit in isolation, and that it should therefore no longer be considered an example story, but rather as a *parable-proper*.

With regard to allegory, like the *parable-proper*, it is a coherent, freely composed narrative intended to persuade. The function of allegory is that it offers an evaluation of the real world without supplying new information about it, so that this evaluation can be shared by the listeners/readers. Allegory is therefore modelled on the real world. What allegory is about is given in terms of a series of images (= items of reference) which relate to the real world. Reality, however,

remains veiled, so that only the initiated can interpret the allegory. In other words it means something other than what it says. Whilst the parable-proper tends to be addressed to opponents, allegory addresses itself to the initiated. In the view of Eta Linneman (1977:8), the narrative about the wedding feast in Matthew 22:1-14 is the only incontestable allegory that Jesus used. She considers that the narratives about the ten maidens (Mt 25:1-13) and the farmers and the vineyard (Mk 12:1-2) are not allegories. The application, in Jesus' own words, of the parable about the sower (Mk 4:3-9; Mt 13:1-9; Lk 8:4-8), given in Mark 4:13-20, Matthew 13:10-23 and Luke 8:11-15, is certainly allegorical in nature, but the narration itself is not an allegory. This also applies to the application of the parable about the net (Mt 13:47-48), given in Matthew 13:49-50.

### 3. CRITICISM OF THE TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATION

From the discussion thus far, two aspects of parable research in particular seem to be the basis of traditional classification. These are *reference* and *metaphoricity*. One thing is certain, and this is that Jesus' parables are narrative texts. When *narrativity*, however, is taken seriously in parable interpretation, the above-mentioned base begins to show cracks. The reason for this is that, in narratology, one looks at the *reference* of narrative texts with new insights. These new insights, as well as a changed view on metaphoricity which is apparent in new-hermeneutic circles in particular, causes the *formgeschichtliche* categories to lose their pragmatism with, for example, preaching in view.

The traditional classification of Jesus' parables can certainly obtain when they are isolated from their respective holistic macrottexts. But the historic, literary and theological implications of such isolation should then be thoroughly taken into account. Willem Vorster (1985a:157) refers to this as follows:

[I]t [is] clear that the study of the parables of Jesus in isolation has certain consequences. If they are regarded as aesthetic objects, meanings are attached to them, which are different from the situation where the parables are analyzed in the context of their transmission, or in pursuance of the reason for their narration. Narratives out of context also have functions which differ from those of narratives related for a reason determined by the unnatural context. One can do various things with parables, just as with other forms of language. For this reason it is important for these matters to receive attention when the parables of Jesus are studied.

(Vorster 1985a:157; translation from the Afrikaans)

Isolation of Jesus' parables hinders the full implementation of narrativity in their interpretation. Moreover, a functional application of the traditional classification must sustain the old metaphor concept. Some New Testament scholars, like Snodgrass (1983:24), think that a compromise may be possible.

Whether one defines allegory as extended metaphor or a series of metaphors, the question 'Can a parable be an allegory?' must be answered effectively....This is not a licence for fanciful exegesis since such significance must be rooted in the historical and literary context.

(Snodgrass 1983:24)

On the other hand he says: 'Whether one chooses to call this story [that concerning the farmer and the vineyard - AG v A] a 'parable', an 'allegory', or both is not really important' (Snodgrass 1983:25). Why, then the genre-jargon? Why not simply refer to a *metaphorical narrative*?

### 3.1 Metaphoricity, narrativity and reference

Jülicher's distinction between comparison (in the broad sense) and metaphor have long been neither partially (see Via 1967; Crossan 1976) nor wholly (see Klauck 1978; Weder 1978; Sellin 1982) accepted by prominent parable scholars. Today *metaphoricity* is not taken to be mere ornamental diction. On the contrary, a narrator uses a metaphor to create a new reality which, from the viewpoint of affective reading involvement, can be experienced and shared (see Weder 1978:75).

The classic distinction, according to Klauck (1978), has its origin in Jülicher's shift from allegorization. This in itself was a far-reaching contribution. He, however, confused allegorization (as exegetical technique) and allegory (as a literary form). The characteristics of allegorization are (cf Klauck 1978:354-361): (1) a lack of interest in the literary-aesthetic and historical aspects of a text; (2) anachronistic 'eisegesis' from an assumed viewpoint; (3) a presupposition that a text contains an esoteric communication code that conceals its intention and is thus only directed at the informed; and (4) an interpretation process in which texts and individual elements are isolated and drawn into a new context.

Dan Via (1967:24-25), on the other hand, does uphold the distinction between a parable and an allegory, but he rejects Jülicher's view that the former has only one direct point of comparison (*tertium comparationis*) with regard to the real world and the latter more (discussed later). This view is built partly on Ernst Fuchs's new hermeneutics. Although Fuchs (1958:213-214, 217-219) upholds the



distinction between a comparison and a metaphor, he considers that the principle of 'analogy' is the most important characteristic of a metaphor. Eta Linneman follows Fuchs's example in this.

Linneman points out that the narrator wishes to communicate to the listener/reader his evaluation of reality by means of the principle of 'analogy'. The possibility of a *new* understanding of reality is thus created for the listener/reader. The fact that the narrator wishes to convince the listener/reader (*Einverständnis*) implies that he must concede something to the listener/reader. The *concession* is the principle of 'analogy'. What is unknown to the listener/reader, namely the narrator's evaluation of reality, is stated by metaphorical narration in terms of what is known. The more unusual the narrator's evaluation, the more careful and subtle the concession must be. The power of conviction is thus dependent on the narrator's success in a literary integration of the 'world' of the listener/reader with the 'world' of the narrative, such that the 'analogy' created between the narrator and the listener/reader draws the latter into the narrative without the former making his manipulative position as narrator too obvious, thus losing this position (Linnemann 1977:28).

Robert Funk (1966) took the new-hermeneutic scholars' emphasis of *Sprachkraft der Existenz*, expressed in metaphorical language, even further. He therefore preferred to speak of 'a parable as metaphor' rather than 'a parable as analogy'. Nevertheless, in the period before 1985, *narrativity* as such has not been exploited in parable interpretation. G V Jones (1964) initiated it, but it was in fact Dan Via who began to interpret the parables of Jesus in an existential way as 'genuine works of art'. According to Via (1967:178-179), the parables were however resistant to being interpreted as microtexts in the light of the holistic macrotext of a gospel as narrative (see Pelser 1985:464). A standpoint such as this implies that Jesus' parables feature as mere 'free-floating' microtexts (see Kingsbury 1972:107). It therefore inhibits the narrativity of a parable from reaching the full potential of its interpretation.

In the introduction to this essay it was stated that the genre of a text, in particular, determines its pragmatism. The literary genre is the 'holistic macrotext' of the written language and it serves as the key to understanding its parts (see Talbert 1977:11). This applies to words in a sentence and sentences in a pericope and pericopes in the text as a whole (Güttgemanns 1971:290). The 'text as a whole' is what Talbert calls the 'holistic macrotext', and what is meant by 'literary genre'. Petersen and Hirsch, respectively, formulate the hermeneutic relevance of genre-investigation as follows:

In all cases genre has to do with the intended *meaning* of a total text as composed, and therefore with the traits by which this meaning is to be recognized.

(Petersen 1970:82, note 7)

All understanding of verbal meaning is necessarily genre-bound. This description of the genre-bound character of understanding is, of course, a version of the hermeneutic circle, which in its classical formulation has been described as the interdependence of part and whole: the whole can be understood only through its parts, but the parts can be understood only through the whole.

(Hirsch 1967:76)

What is the implication of taking into account the holistic macrotext of a gospel as narrative for the traditional classification of Jesus' parables? On the one hand the so-called allegorizing applications for certain 'parables' to which we referred earlier, should be regarded as narrator's commentary. On the other, the so-called 'parables' should be interpreted as direct speech (*besprochene Welt*) interrupting the *erzählte Welt* (narrated world; see Vorster 1985b:27-66). Direct speech (*besprochene Welt*) has more of an evaluative than an informative function. Vorster applies this narratological insight to both the Gospel of Mark as a whole and the parable discourse in Mark 4:1-34, respectively, as follows:

In terms of the structure of Mark's narrative in which narrative discourse and direct discourse are continually alternated and where the sayings of Jesus, as we have seen often serve the function of presenting norms for the reader, this is not without significance. It gives an indication of how the author wished his readers/hearers to interpret the...story....In Mark 4:1-34, the focus is like elsewhere in the gospel when Jesus speaks...on...what he says and why he says it. The function of the speech is first of all, as with all the other sayings of Jesus in Mark, to create a context of evaluation for the reader. Besides the information it offers..., it also provides the reader with norms to evaluate the actions of other characters in the story.

(Vorster 1985b:33-34)

Perhaps the most important characteristic of a metaphorical narrative is that it is *polyvalent in scope*. What this amounts to is that a narrative such as this can be interpreted on at least two levels of meaning, namely the literal and the figurative. The communicative focus of a metaphorical narrative derives its perspective from the *association of meaning* between the 'literal' and the 'figurative'. This characteristic applies to all (types of) parables in the gospels. The condition is that they must be interpreted as microtexts within their respective holistic macrotexts. From a pragmatic point of view, such as for preaching, the traditional classification of Jesus' parables has therefore lost its function. If the metaphorical narratives in the gospels must be typified, they can be termed *riddles* (Rhoads & Michie 1982:55-58). As 'riddles' they must be unraveled according to the guidelines that the narrator offers, as far as possible.

By taking narrativity seriously in the interpretation of parables, two further problems related to traditional classification can be resolved. One is that in a comparison (in the broader sense), and in the looser, related type of parable, there can be only one *tertium comparationis* and no more (e.g. Linnemann). The other is that a comparison (and related types) must be explained in the light of the *tertium comparationis* (e.g. Via).

As far as the first question is concerned, one must acknowledge Linnemann's view that there can be more than one *Beziehungspunkt* (= point of relation) (Linnemann 1977:24-25). The more complex a metaphorical narrative, the more the levels on which the 'ideological' point of view of the narrator is manifested, and the less there is an unambiguous 'association of meaning' between the literal and the figurative. This sort of complexity is, however, limited in trivial folklore, such as Jesus' parables. Aesthetic literariness is the exception rather than the rule.

With regard to the second question, Via's problem consists therein that the *tertium comparationis* is a referential point relating to something *outside* the parable itself (Via 1967:70-72). He cannot accept it from a structural-exegetic approach. Since the structure of a parable has a centripetal, *inward* organization, he considers that it is allegorizing exegesis to explain a parable according to the extratextual reference of its *tertium comparationis*. This is the apparent reason for his upholding, on the one hand, the distinction between 'parable' and 'allegory', and on the other, the parables of Jesus as isolated aesthetic objects. Via's problem, on close inspection, is the manner in which narrative texts have an internal and an external reference.

I consider Vorster's contribution in this regard, relating to *reference*, of importance (see Vorster 1985b:58). He points out that the reference items in a narrative refer in two ways, namely 'exophorically' and 'endophorically'. The former

concerns the reference to the world outside the microtext as well as that outside the macrotext. This world is the *situational context*. The latter type of reference concerns the reference to the so-called *co-text*, the macrotext. This 'world' is the holistic macrotext in which the microtext is present.

Both types of reference are, as far as the parables in the gospels are concerned, of an external nature. One is 'historical' and the other literary. The concepts of *Anschaulichkeit* and *Substitution* do not figure in either. And this is where the bottom of the traditional classification of Jesus' parables drops out. There is no essential difference in any of the metaphorical narratives in the gospels as far as either the analogy principle or the manner of reference is concerned.

#### 4. THE METAPHORICAL NARRATIVE REGARDING THE WEDDING FEAST IN MATTHEW 22:1-14

It thus seems unnecessary, with a narrative model in view, to distinguish between an allegory and a parable or example story in the *formgeschichtliche* categories of Jülicher. In the discussion of the story of the wedding feast which will shortly take place, the irrelevance of this distinction will be shown. Here the purpose is to indicate that Matthew's 'riddle' regarding the wedding feast resolves itself within text-immanent boundaries if one recognizes the *Verknüpfungsprinzip* (= principle of association) among the (four) narrative-lines in the plot of the story.

Although Dan Via (1967:128-132) treated the story of the wedding feast and Matthew 22:1-14 as a 'narrative parable', he did not regard the narrativity of the story very highly. Both his approach and his results are, however, unconvincing. The reason for this is his inability to determine the narrator's point of view as to what he is discussing. He has not reckoned with the combined pattern of the various narrative-lines in the plot of the story. According to Via there is less cohesion in the *parts* of the story. He has the following comment:

The Wedding Feast is a parable, and the story element - the narration of events in time - is there. There is some movement and there is structure, but it is content or theme which generates the structure. Theme and plot are two sides of the same formal principle with plot being theme in movement and theme being plot in stasis. Of theme we ask, 'What is the point?' and of plot we ask, 'How will it turn out?' Usually one or the other is dominant in any given story, and in the Wedding Feast it is theme.

(Via 1967:189)

This approach by Via should be seen against the background of one of his earlier remarks. 'The parable does not present the organic inclusion of one of the motifs within the other, but rather the narrative structure is a juxtaposition of two fragmented forms with the continuity being provided by theme' (Via 1967:12). On the contrary, it must be pointed out that there is a coherence in the narrative structure of the story. The evangelist's redactional activity did not cause accidental linear juxtaposition of the two alleged fragmented sequences of events, but the one is correlatively modelled on the previous one.

Two of the above four narrative-lines in the story of the wedding feast are consummated *Handlungsstränge* (narrative-lines). Each of the two sequences consists of either a successful or unsuccessful mission of protagonists, sent by a king to, respectively, an 'object of aversion' (the 'city people') and an 'object of desire' (the 'street people'). The first complete narrative-line comprises a group of slaves (the protagonists) being sent to the invited guests in the city (the object). These people declined the invitation to take part in the wedding feast for the king's son and they were punished (Mt 22:4-7). The second narrative-line consists of another group of slaves being sent to the (uninvited) people outside the city - both good and bad people from the streets. These accept the call, but one of them is punished and excluded from the wedding hall (Mt 22:8-14).

From a linear, chronological perspective according to the Aristotelian paradigm, the sequence of episodes in the two narrative-lines is respectively as follows:

1. A king sends his slaves to request the invited persons in the city (a particular mission) to be present at his son's wedding feast, because it is ready (the *beginning*); they turn down the invitation and some grab the slaves, mistreat them and kill them (the *middle*); the commission ends fruitlessly, but the king punishes the murderers by ordering his soldiers to kill them and burn down their city, for they do not deserve to take part in the wedding feast (the *end*).
2. The king sends his slaves with the wedding feast invitation to the 'street people' outside the city (a universal mission), because it is ready (the *beginning*); they accept the invitation and the wedding feast is realized (the *middle*); the king inspects the guests, finds one among the 'street people' who does not really belong at the wedding feast (he does not wear a wedding garment) and he commands his servants to shut him out irrevocably from the banquet (the *end*).



It is clear that there is a remarkable similarity between these two narrative-lines. The narrator's ideological/theological point of view can be recognized when the principle underlying the union of the two lines (*Verknüpfungsprinzip*) is pinpointed.

In view of the law-of-end-stress in folk literature, to which Via has in fact paid attention in the above-mentioned article, it seems that the story's main interest is not in the invited guests in the city, but in the uninvited people from the street outside the city. They are dealt with in the climax at the end. However, the end-stress is laid upon the 'street person' whose hands and feet were tied up and who was thrown out into the darkness, because he was not dressed in wedding clothes. The Jesus-logion at the end of the story, 'Many are invited, but few are chosen' indicates that the point about which the narrator is speaking is not his interest as such in the person without the wedding garment (Via 1967:129), but in the nature of the correlative analogy which is created between the reason for the burning down of the city in the first narrative-line and the brutal exclusion from the wedding feast in the second. It is also clear that these two narrative lines should not be treated merely as juxtaposed fragments taken from the tradition.

From the perspective of 'plotted time' it is striking that one of the 'street people', despite his acceptance of the invitation along with the others in contrast with the 'city people', is punished in the same fashion as the 'city people' in a sort of correlative action. One conclusion from this equivalence of events is that the absence of wedding clothes which made the unlucky person unacceptable at the banquet (Mt 22:11) does have a text-immanent reference: his ideological point of view, despite his acceptance of the invitation, conforms with that of the antagonists in the first narrative-line. Therefore, one may say that the events in the first narrative-line are presented by the narrator as a 'transparency' of the second narrative-line. In other words, the *Verknüpfungsprinzip* between the two sequences does not exist in terms of theme/ideology alone, as Via would have it, but also in terms of plot; in short, in terms of plot as mediated through point of view.

How does this conclusion fit in with the equivalent analogical pre-paschal Jesus commission and the post-paschal disciples' commission in Matthew's story as a whole? Particularization of this question leads us to the following two issues: firstly, the problem regarding the extrinsic reference of narrative texts, and secondly, the *formgeschichtliche* distinction between an 'allegory' on the one hand and a 'parable' on the other. I have already mentioned that this distinction does not hold good in narrative criticism. In the story of the wedding feast, the question of the differentiation between allegory and parable intrudes on the exegesis of the story. The reason is that the pericope in Matthew 22:1-14 is the one passage in the New Testament which has been reckoned in the past to be the only indisputable 'allegory'

among Jesus' parables. Contrary to the Matthean presentation, the wedding feast parallels in the Gospels of Luke and Thomas are cast in the form of the so-called 'parable-proper'.

The reason it is unnecessary to draw a distinction between an 'allegory' and a 'parable' in narrative criticism is rooted in the currently debated question regarding the way a narration reflects the real world. On quite different grounds Dan Via (1967) and H-J Klauck (1978) dispute Jülicher's traditional distinction. Klauck furthermore rejects Jülicher's differentiation between a similitude/parable and a metaphor. Traditionally, a similitude and a parable arise from an *Ähnlichkeitsrelation* while a metaphor alludes to the literary phenomenon that two comparable objects are articulated in an *uneigentliche* discourse.

Today, metaphoricality is not viewed as mere 'ornamental diction' in the sense of a *Mimesis des Seidenden* where the 'subject' does not create new information about the 'predicate'. Like language in general, a metaphor is creatively able to establish a new view of reality. The principle of *Substitution* is therefore no longer valid.

The two aspects, *Ähnlichkeitsrelation* and *uneigentliche Rede* should therefore not be seen as the two distinguishing features of a *similitude*/parable and a metaphor. This distinction originated in Jülicher's campaign against first-century allegorical exegesis. Jülicher mistakenly confused the so-called literary form, 'allegory', with the fundamental features of allegorical exegesis, the latter of which was not merely a Hellenistic theoretical phenomenon, as Jülicher would have it, but was also known in the Old Testament, early Judaism and Qumran.

With regard to the so-called literary form 'allegory', Klauck opposed the idea of an allegory not being a realistic sketch as a 'metaphor' which symbolizes reality. Klauck (1978) indicated that a metaphor, which belongs to a clearly structured pictorial field, is surrounded by a network or bundle of possible associations. Unfortunately, he did not elaborate on this important insight. It seems that he particularly wanted to emphasize that the so-called literary form 'allegory' should not be confused with allegorizing exegesis. He defined the latter as an allegorical commentary which disregards the intentional texture of a text and confirms its own insights and convictions in the text. Klauck however neglected to carry principles over into practice.

Via's approach, on the other hand, is partially rooted in Ernst Fuchs's 'new hermeneutics'. Still distinguishing between a 'parable' and a 'metaphor', Fuchs holds that analogy is most readily apparent in metaphor which is a type of parabolic speech. 'Analogy' in the case of 'ornamental diction' refers to the phenomenon that there is talk about one thing even though something else is intended. 'Analogy' is

not intended to increase the hearer's knowledge concerning the subject matter which the words bring to expression. Instead, 'analogy' functions, according to Fuchs, to shape the point of view of the hearer and to change it. The upshot, then, is that through 'analogy' the narrator aims at achieving a changed point of view on the part of the hearer, thus bringing him into agreement (*Einverständnis*) with the narrator concerning the reality the figurative language is expressing.

In spite of the valuable contribution of 'new hermeneutics' regarding the meaning attached to the linguistic power of existence, expressed by metaphoricity, the parables of Jesus were not studied as forms of narrative art. Via drew attention to the need to interpret the synoptic parables existentially as 'genuine works of art', or in other words, as 'real aesthetic objects', unyoked from their historical links to the life of Jesus. Unfortunately, this view makes of Jesus' parables mere 'drifting' objects.

The consequence is that the parable, because it is viewed as an aesthetic object, is not interpreted as a part of the holistic context of a gospel as a narrative. On the other hand, the evangelist, in the selection, description, and placement of his material, would be guided by his view of the whole (*Gestalt*), that is, in shaping the material during the production of the gospels so that it accords with the intended *Gestalt*. According to Erhardt Güttgemanns (1971), the gospel form should, in *gestaltist* terms, be seen as an intentional, individual creative act, which absorbs the collective tradition of the 'material'. It is a creation, a new form in which the evangelist freely and at the same time dialectically takes up the 'material' into the 'framework'. By means of the intentional miswriting of the 'material', the 'material' is raised onto another linguistic level. Güttgemanns (1971:33) describes it as follows: 'it now serves a linguistic effect which is not produced solely by means of its sum, but also, by means of the intentional composition of the form of the gospels, bestows the contextual sense-horizon upon the material'.

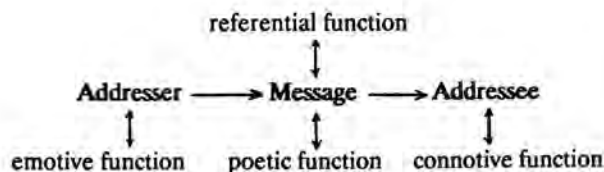
The grounds on which we reject Jülicher's distinction between an 'allegory' and a 'parable' do not accord with those of Via. Via builds his arguments specifically on his objection to the unconvincing theory that a parable has only one point of reference with the reality outside the text, and an 'allegory' more than one. He argues that if that were correct, it would have the effect of a parable being read from the perspective of one subjectively delineated point of view, looking out on the real world outside. And that is exactly the same as falsely allegorizing the parables of Jesus.

If one considers Klauck's distinction on this point between allegorizing exegesis and the theoretical form, 'allegory', as well as Weder's thesis that *metaphoricity* is an element in the theoretical forms of both 'parable' and 'allegory',

Via's objection to traditional classification can be amended. An important condition is that the *narrativity* of Jesus' parables, irrespective of whether it is an 'allegory' or a 'parable', has to be taken seriously. This would have the effect of metaphoricity becoming an element of the poetics of a parable, as a narrative. On the other hand, it allows us to assume that Jesus' parables are fully part of the selected, arranged and integrated story of a gospel as a whole. A metaphorical story in a gospel as a narrative can therefore be understood as a 'riddle' with a solution to be found in the holistic context. In this light, one can no longer deny that a 'parable-proper' contains allegorical traits.

The traditional distinction between a 'parable' and an 'allegory', on the grounds that the two text types have different ways of relating to reality or outside the text itself must therefore be rejected.

If the narrativity of a metaphorical narrative is taken seriously, there is no need in principle for such inconsistency between the two types of text. The argument can be elucidated by Roman Jakobson's communication model, simply illustrated as follows:



In narration, from the viewpoint of Jakobson's model, the 'poetic function' corresponds to the notion of plot, but the notion of plot also interacts with the 'emotive function' which includes the 'connotive function'. Although the 'poetic function' draws attention to the message of the narrative, it does not directly indicate the realities that are selected, rearranged and interpreted in the message. The message, as it were, provides 'windows' looking out on extrinsic horizons.

Applied to the Matthean story of the wedding feast (the so-called 'allegory') in comparison with its Lukan parallel (the so-called 'parable-proper'), one cannot differentiate in principle between the means of reference (extrinsic or intrinsic) of these two stories, simply because they are not different text types, although the interpretation of their parallel references would not be the same.

From the internal references to the holistic framework of the Gospel of Luke, it appears that it is a story of Jesus' mission to Israel. It is a story of Jesus' *journey* to Jerusalem. Since the work of Hans Conzelmann on the Gospel of Luke, it has been widely assumed that the reason for presenting the Gospel of Luke as a story of a journey has to do with the evangelist's particular understanding of the 'history of salvation'. However, this understanding is not primarily 'historical', but a feature in which the 'endophoric' (intrinsic/internal) contrasts with the 'exophoric' (extrinsic/external) use of reference in language. The latter has to do with the reference to the world and its realities outside the text. The 'endophoric' use concerns the references within the macrotext itself - that is, the information in the holistic context, which represents a particular presentation of the realities outside the text. Part of this information, according to Luke's gospel, is his portrayal of the disciples, which is totally different from that of Mark or Matthew. Luke regularly refers to Jesus' followers as his 'disciples', but they do not stand apart from Israel. From this perspective, Luke, by casting the story of Jesus in the form of a journey through Galilee towards Jerusalem, with its temple at the center of Israel, directs attention to the theme of Jesus' proclaiming salvation to Israel. The disciples of Jesus, that is the crowd of followers beyond the circle of the Twelve, are those from the midst of Israel who hear his authoritative summons and follow him.

In terms of the Lukan macrotext the metaphorical story of the 'great banquet' (Lk 14:15-24) is part of a scenario in the episode of the journey itself which commences in Luke 9:51 and ends in Luke 19:44. According to Matthew, Jesus told the story after his arrival in Jerusalem. This positional change in the terms of the macrotext alters the 'endophoric' use of reference within the metaphorical stories, but it does not make them two different text types. It is not necessary to state in terms of *narrativity* or *metaphoricity* that the Matthean version is an 'allegory' and the Lukan version a 'parable'. *Reference* does not essentially have a different function in the two versions.

An important consequence of the particular position of the story of the 'great banquet' in the Lukan macrotext is, inter alia, that the declination of the invitation by the invited guests should not be understood as refusals, but as excuses for coming late. Against the inference that, in and through Jesus, God offers messianic salvation to Israel, these excuses serve to stress the point that any one who does not immediately and unreservedly accept the invitation is actually asking for a respite before joining Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. Such a person thereby excludes himself/herself from the community of true Israel (cf Lk 22:30) and is indeed not ready (cf Lk 9:60, 61 in retrospect) to continue the journey from Jerusalem onwards (cf Lk 24:52-53, from a prior perspective) - in fact, according to Acts, towards Rome.



Thus it is clear that there is more than one point of reference in Luke's version of the 'great banquet' which refers to aspects outside microtext. Just as in the case of the Matthean parallel, both the 'street-people' and the invited are such references.

As far as the Matthean macrotext is concerned, one can assume that the characters and the events in the story of the wedding feast refer 'endophorically' in a symbolic manner to the attitude of the Jewish leaders to Jesus (the first narrative-line) and on the other hand 'exophorically' to the members of the Matthean community who are actually the implied readers of the gospel. The narrator lures the addressee into the narrated world, allows him to associate with the 'street-people', and tries to change his point of view existentially so that it does not conform to the Jewish leaders' (as antagonists) point of view, just as the person in the story without the wedding garment, rather conforms to the 'ideological' point of view of the narrator who makes Jesus the vehicle of his ideas.