

University of Massachusetts Amherst

From the Selected Works of Keith L. Yoder

Spring March 11, 2016

Slides_Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Keith L. Yoder



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/klyoder/27/>

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

©Keith L. Yoder 2016
Warring States Project
UMass Amherst
EGLBS 2016 Annual Meeting

Handout: works.bepress.com/klyoder/26

PP Slides: works.bepress.com/klyoder/27

Draft Paper: works.bepress.com/klyoder/25

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Thesis: As literary composition, the Foot Washing of John 13:1-17 is a creative imitation of the Sinful Woman of Luke 7:36-50.

Creative Imitation:

A combination of *mimēsis* (inventive imitation) and *zēlosis* (rivalrous emulation) widely practiced by Greek and Roman authors in antiquity.

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

MacDonald's Tests of Intertextual Influence: Is Text B mimetic of Text A?

Accessibility	A written prior to and available to B
Analogy	A was imitated by other contemporary texts
Density	Significant bulk of non-trivial parallel features
Order	Parallel features frequently in the same order
Distinctive	Some features are unique or rare
Interpretability	Contributes to greater understanding of B
Dennis R MacDonald, <i>The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark</i> , pp.8–9	
Directionality	Features that attest whether flow of influence is from A to B or from B to A

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Adam Winn's Supplements to McDonald

- ~~1. Jewish Scripture/Texts~~ have primacy over Greco-Roman Literature as sources of intertextual reference
2. **Clear and Obvious Clues** should indicate another text is being used as a literary model, such as:
 - **quoting** the imitated text, and/or
 - referencing a **character** from the imitated text, and/or
 - **strongly parallel** shared events or details
3. **Distinctive and Significant** similarities must be found between imitated and imitating text – not **subtle** or **vague** parallels

Adam Winn, *Mark and the Elijah-Elisha Narrative*, p.50

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

1. Four-Part Story Line

1	Other men gather with Jesus for a meal	Luke 7:36–37	John 13:1–4
2	Mid-meal foot washing involving Jesus	Luke 7:37c–38	John 13:4–5
3	Dialog between Jesus and Simon	Luke 7:39–46	John 13:6–11
4	Jesus' “I say to you” pronouncement	Luke 7:47–48	John 13:12–17

- **Distinctiveness:** These are the only two foot washing narrations in the GNT

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

2. Timing of Foot Washing: Delayed to Mid-Meal

Luke: Delay is fully explained

7:44-46: Host has dishonored Jesus :
he gave Jesus no “**water for [his] feet**”, no “kiss” of greeting, and no
“oil” for his head

John: Delay is explicitly anomalous

13:4-5: Jesus “**rises from dinner**” (ἐκ τοῦ δείπνου);

- **towel, water, and basin** = ready at hand for Jesus to use
- pours water => basin not yet used?
- “except to wash the feet” (13:10)
 - not a second washing!

The otherwise Anomalous Delay in John 13 makes literary sense as an imitation of an Intelligible Delay in Luke 7

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

3. Protagonist's "Knowing" Leads Directly into Foot Washing

Luke 7:37

The woman, "knowing (ἐπιγνοῦσα, pres ptc) that he <Jesus> was reclining at table in the house of the Pharisee . . .,"



Next Action: she conveyed an alabaster of perfume (first Luke action in #4)

John 13:1, 3

Jesus "knowing (εἰδὼς, prf ptc) that his hour had come . . . knowing (εἰδὼς) that the Father had given everything into his hands . . .,"



Next Action: he rises from dinner (first John action in #4)

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

4. Foot Washing Scene: Sequence of 7 Action-Verb Phrases

	Luke 7:37c-38 (W=34/S=71)	John 13:4-5 (W=33/S=69)
1	she conveyed (κομίσασα) perfume	he ris es (ἐγείρεται) from the dinner
2	and stood (στᾶσα) behind <u>his feet</u>	and puts-off (τίθησιν) his garments,
3	crying (κλαίουσα)	and taking (λαβὼν) a towel
4	with her tears she began to-shower (ἤρξατο βρέχειν) <u>his feet</u>	he girded (διέζωσεν) himself
5	and was-wiping (ἐξέμασσεν) with the hair of her head	then he pours (βάλλει) water into basin
6	and was-kissing (κατεφίλει) <u>his feet</u>	and he began to-wash (ἤρξατο νίπτειν) <u>the disciples' feet</u>
7	and was-anointing (ἔλειφεν) with perfume	and to-wipe (ἐκμάσσειν) with the towel with which he was girded

13:6 he **comes** then (οὖν) to Simon Peter

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Reference	Selection	First–Last Verbs	Verbs	Words	Density
Lk 10:33–35	Good Samaritan B	ὁδεύων–εἶπεν	12	42	0.29
Lk 8:47	Woman with Blood	ἰδοῦσα–ιάθη	8	25	0.32
Lk 7:37–38	Sinful Woman	κομίσασα–ἤλειφεν	7	32	0.22
Lk 15:22–23	Prodigal Son C	ἐξενέγκατε–εὐφρανθῶμεν	7	29	0.24
Lk 16:22–23	Rich Man and Lazarus	ἀπέθανεν–εἶπεν	7	32	0.22
Lk 24:12	Peter at Empty Tomb	ἀναστὰς–θαυμάζων	6	16	0.38
Lk 2:44–45	Searching for Jesus	ἦλθον–ἀναζητοῦντες	5	19	0.26
Lk 9:16	Feeding 5000	λαβὼν–ἐδίδου	5	19	0.26
Lk 15:13–14	Prodigal Son A	συναγαγὼν–δαπανήσαντος	5	18	0.28
Lk 15:20	Prodigal Son B	εἶδεν–κατεφίλησεν	5	16	0.31
Lk 22:19	Last Supper	λαβὼν–λέγων	5	8	0.63
Lk 23:52–53	Burying Jesus	προσελθὼν–ἔθηκεν	5	15	0.33
Lk 24:30	Disciples at Emmaus	κατακλιθῆναι–ἐπεδίδου	5	11	0.45
Lk 5:25	Healing lame man	ἀναστὰς–δοξάζων	4	13	0.31
Lk 10:30	Good Samaritan A	ἐκδύσαντες–ἀφέντες	4	7	0.57
Jn 13:4–5	Foot Washing A	ἐγείρεται–ἐκμάσσειν	7	28	0.25
Jn 19:2–3	Soldiers mock Jesus	πλέξαντες–ἐδίδοσαν	6	26	0.23
Jn 2:15–16	Cleansing Temple	ποιήσας–εἶπεν	5	31	0.16
Jn 4:3–5	Leaving Judea	ἀφῆκεν–ἔρχεται	4	23	0.17
Jn 9:6–7	Healing blind man	ἔπτυσεν–εἶπεν	4	18	0.22
Jn 13:12	Foot Washing B	ἔνιψεν–ἔλαβεν–ἀνέπεσεν–εἶπεν	4	13	0.31

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Observations: Chart of Action Verb Sequences in Luke and John

- John uses this narrative device only one-third as often as Luke, 6 times in this chart for John to 15 for Luke.
- John's Foot Washing A has his highest action verb count, Luke's is equaled or exceeded by four other texts.
- John's next two texts, the Mocking and Temple Cleansing, were likely influenced by Mark (Mocking in Mk 15:16-20 has 14v, Cleansing in Mk 11:15b-17 has 5 vb)
- John's remaining three sequences are all 50% shorter than Foot Washing A, four verbs to seven.

These data indicate that an uninterrupted sequence of seven action verb phrases is much more likely to have originated with Luke rather than John.

➤ **Implication: John emulated Luke**

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

5. Washing and Wiping: Three Step Action

Verbs / Physical Implements / *Objects*

	Luke 7:38	John 13:5
1 Get Water	κλαίουσα <u>τοῖς δάκρυσιν</u> crying, <u>with her tears</u>	βάλλει <u>ὔδωρ</u> εἰς τὸν νιπτῆρα he puts <u>water</u> into the basin
2 Wash Feet	ἤρξατο βρέχειν τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ she began to shower <i>his feet</i>	ἤρξατο νίπτειν τοὺς πόδας τῶν μαθητῶν he began to wash <i>the disciples' feet</i>
3 Wipe (feet)	καὶ <u>ταῖς θριξίν τῆς κεφαλῆς αὐτῆς</u> <u>ἐξέμασεν</u> and <u>with the hair of her head</u> she wiped	καὶ ἐκμάσσειν <u>τῷ λεντίῳ ᾧ ἦν διεζωσμένος</u> and he wiped <u>with the towel with which he was girded</u>

- **Physicality:** Woman: Body(-to-Body) Parts // Jesus: Towel, Water, Basin
- **Explicit Description**

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

6. “Began to wash the feet”

	Luke 7:38	John 13:5
2 Wash Feet	<p>ἤρξατο / βρέχειν / τοὺς πόδας / αὐτοῦ</p> <p>she began / to shower / the feet / of him</p>	<p>ἤρξατο / νίπτειν / τοὺς πόδας / τῶν μαθητῶν</p> <p>he began / to wash / the feet / of the disciples</p>
	<p>ἤρξατο (< ἄρχω) plus infinitive verb : 28 times in gLuke</p>	<p>ἤρξατο (< ἄρχω) plus infinitive verb: once in gJohn</p>

- Distinctive verbal parallel indicates a mimetic connection
- Singular Johannine appearance of ἄρχω + infinitive verb (28 times in Luke) indicates that John is mimetic of Luke

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

7. “and wiped”

“wiped”

- “wiping feet” is **unique** to Luke 7:38,44 and John 11:2, 12:3, 13:5 out of all 50+ extant foot-washing sources (J.C. Thomas, Destro & Pesce)
- “wipe” (ἐκμάσσω) used only in Luke 7 and John 11-12-13 in GNT (5)

➤ Explicit “wiping” of feet = highly distinctive to Luke 7 and John 11-12-13

“feet”

Luke text in #4: “feet” at end of alternating lines 2, 4, and 6

- triadic : **shower/feet/wipe** (lines 4-5), **kiss/feet/anoint** (lines 6-7)
 - single “feet” = object of both verbs

John text in #4: “feet” once at end of line 6

- John preserves **wash/feet/wipe** triadic structure in lines 6-7 which he changes to becomes **anoint/“feet”/wipe/feet** in John 12:3, 11:2

➤ **Verb/“feet”/Verb:** pattern integral to Luke but atypical of John

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

8. Seven Segment Dialog with Simon (Structure)

	Luke text	Ref	Speaker	John text	Ref
1	If he were a prophet	7:39	Simon	Are you washing my feet	13:6
2	I have something to say	7:40	Jesus	You don't know what I am doing	13:7
3	Say it, Teacher	7:40	Simon	You will never wash my feet	13:8
4	Two debtors	7:41-42	Jesus	If I don't wash you	13:8
5	I suppose	7:43	Simon	Not just my feet	13:9
6	You judge rightly	7:43	Jesus	One cleansed does not need to wash . . . but not all	13:10
7	See this woman	7:44-46	Jesus	Not all of you are clean	13:11

“Simon”: Homeric emulators used shared name as flag (MacDonald)

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

9. Simon Resists – Jesus Prevails

- Dialog Line #1: Both Simons resist the foot washing
- Focus of Resistance = identity of Foot Washer
 - Luke: what sort of woman was touching Jesus
 - John: Lord, are “you” washing “my” feet
- Resistance shares same narrative function:
 - provokes the dialog with Jesus

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

10. One Odd Dialog Segment: Jesus “Knows”

1 - **Simon**: If he were a prophet
(Luke 7:39)

7- **Jesus**: Not all of you are clean
(John 13:11)

- **Oddity**: Luke 7:39 = **soliloquy** of Simon spoken “to himself”
John 13:11 = **narrative repeat** from prior line “you are clean but not all”
- **Jesus “knows”** about another person in the act of foot washing:
 - Lk 7:39 “. . . he would have **known** (ἐγίνωσκειν) the sort of woman . . .”
 - Jn 13:11 “for he **knew** (ᾔδει) the one betraying him, therefore he said . . .”
- **In the foot washing, Jesus recognized woman=lover // Judas=betrayer**
Luke || Homer // John || Synoptics

Possible Homeric influence in Luke 7:36-50?

Eurycleia “knew” (ἔγνων) Odysseus in touching him, as she “washed” (νίψεν) his feet and “anointed” them (ἔλειψεν) richly with oil (OD.19.475,505)

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

11. Simon does “Not Know”

- **Appearance:** Both Simon’s resist foot washing because they think Jesus does not “know” the truth about the foot washerer
- **Reality:** Both Simon’s do “not know” the inner significance of the foot washinging or of the foot washerer
- Luke’s dialog = **subtle/ironic**: Jesus is the gentle aggressor who masterfully teaches Simon the true significance of the Woman, the Foot Washing, and of himself
- John’s dialog = **explicit/exaggerated**: Simon Peter is the insolent aggressor as he ignorantly berates Jesus, who meanwhile patiently teaches Peter the true meaning of the Foot Washing cleansing

Luke’s Woman and John’s Jesus both play the role of “slave” in the foot washing and in the dialog!

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

12. “Feet” (Minor Agreement a)

“Feet” Count:

- Luke has seven / John has eight or seven (vl in 13:10, “except for the feet”)

“My Feet” Uninterrupted triadic sequence within the Dialog:

Luke – Spoken by Jesus to Simon	John – Spoken by Simon to Jesus
7:44 with her tears she showered <u>my feet</u> (μου τοὺς πόδας)	13:6 Lord, are you washing <u>my feet</u> (μου νίπτεις τοὺς πόδας)?
7:45 she has not ceased kissing <u>my feet</u> (μου τοὺς πόδας)	13:8 you will not ever wash <u>my feet</u> (μου τοὺς πόδας)
7:46 with perfume she has anointed <u>my feet</u> (τοὺς πόδας μου)	13:9 Lord, not only <u>my feet</u> (τοὺς πόδας μου).

- John avoids “your feet” in 13:8b “... if I do not wash you ...” (ἐὰν μὴ νίψω σε) and so preserves “my feet” triad!

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

13. “Love” (Minor Agreement b)

ἀγαπάω

- Luke: three times, 7:42 “loved more”, 7:47 “loved much” and “loves little”
- John: two times, 13:1 “loved his own” and “loved to the fullest”
 - **This is the only parallel feature out of order: Luke–End // John–Beginning**
 - Unless we consider the Luke parallels in **John 21**

(κατα-)φιλέω, φίλημα (the other “love”)

- Luke: three times, 7:38 “was-kissing”, 7:44 “kiss” and “kissing”
- John: none in ch.13, but both ἀγαπάω and φιλέω repeatedly and interchangeably in Jesus’ dialog with Simon Peter in **John 21**

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

14-15. Lukan “Love” Parallels with John 21:15-20

Final two parallels with **Luke 7:36-50**, both involving “love”, are found in the last Jesus-Simon dialog in **John 21:15-20**, which we may treat as a Continuation of **John 13:6-11**

Chart of Links: Dialog of Jn 21:15-20 = **reprise of/ final answer to** Dialog of Jn 13:6-11

1* Dialog between Jesus and Simon Peter	13:6-11	21:15-19
2 Dialog constructed around three objections or 3 (numbered) questions	13:6, 8, 9	21:15, 16, 17
3* Setting is during private meal of Jesus with his disciples	13:1-17	21:5, 9-13
4* Use of “to gird” (δια-ζώννυμι), twice in ch.13, and three times in ch.21 is unique to John	13:4, 5	21:7, 18, 18
5* Virtual verbatim quote: “ <u>disciple</u> / <u>whom Jesus loved</u> / in the supper / <u>leaned back</u> / <u>on Jesus’ chest</u> / <u>said ‘Lord who is it?’</u> ”	13:25	21:20

* Items are from Herold Weiss article

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

14. Which Person “Loves More?”

Jesus questions Simon using **closely parallel** and **highly distinctive** language:

- GNT: attribute **πολύς** is attached to verb **ἀγαπάω** only in Lk 7:42,47 and Jn 21:15

Luke 7:42

“which . . . of them loved him more?”
(τίς ... αὐτῶν πλεῖον ἀγαπήσει αὐτόν)

John 21:15

“Simon . . . do you love me more
than these?” (ἀγαπᾷς με πλέον
τούτων)

Related shared feature: Luke 7 and John 21 exhibit usage of both **ἀγαπάω** and **(κατα-)φιλέω** as interchangeable synonyms

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

15. “Turn-See-This-Lover/Beloved” Sequence

Parallel sequence of physical movement and a question asked that features four lexical matches: ἐπι-στρέφω, βλέπω, ἀγαπάω, οὗτος in nearly identical order:

Luke 7:44,47

Jesus turned and rebuked Simon: “See this woman”, who loved Jesus

John 21:20-21

Simon Peter turned and saw the disciple Jesus loved, and questioned Jesus: “What of this-man?”

The parallel of John 21:20-21 features a **triple** reversal of Luke 7:44-47:

- Actor-speaker, Jesus or Peter
- gender of the Lover
- Jesus as the Beloved or as the Lover

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Conclusion A

MacDonald's tests of **Density, Order, and Distinctiveness** have all been met, as well as Winn's criterion of **Clear and Obvious Clues of imitation** >> **Mimesis is present!**

What about the **Directionality** of the Mimesis?

- **Exhibit 2:** Delay of foot washing to mid-meal, anomalous in John, intelligible in Luke
- **Exhibit 4:** Packaging of foot washing in a 7-segment action verb sequence statistically more likely to have originated in Luke than in John
- **Exhibit 6:** Singular Johannine appearance of ἄρχω plus infinitive verb is a clear remnant of Lukan narrative DNA!
- **Exhibit 7:** John's "and wiped" (ἐκμάσσω) without an the explicit "feet" object is not natural to John but intelligible in Luke (verb1/feet/verb2)

All indicators point to Luke as original and John as the creative imitation!

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Conclusion B

Interpretability: How does this contribute to better understanding of John?

Four **Key Differences** between Luke 7 and John 13

- Reversed roles of Jesus, genders, and wiping implements, and absence of anointing
- **All these** present in Mary's Anointing in John 12:1-8 (Winn's mimetic "diffusion")
- Strong confirmation of Luke 7 influence in the Anointing of John 12

Shared Influence of Luke 7:36-50 in John 13:1-17 / John 21:15-20 / John 12:1-8:

- This intimate association with Foot Washing must be considered by 4G interpreters

Love and Forgiveness of Sins

- Lukan tie with foot washing bulks up its Johannine association with "cleansing"
- Link with John's final word on "sins" in 20:21 – Jesus authorizes his Disciples to forgive the sins of others: is "**cleansing**" of sins dispensed/realized in the **washing of feet**?
- Jesus' foot washing in John 13 = more than a one-time symbolic parable-in-action
- Key to: Why Foot Washing instead of Eucharist in John's Last Supper?

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Selected References

- **Adriana Destro and Mauro Pesce**, “The Colour of the Words”, in Arzt-Grabner and Kreinecker (eds), *Light from the East*, Harrasowitz, 2010, 27–46
- **Ingrid Rosa Kitzberger**, “Love and Footwashing: John 13:1–20 and Luke 7:36–50 Read Intertextually”, *Biblical Interpretation* 2:2 (July 1994) 190–206
- **Dennis R MacDonald**, *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark*, Yale, New Haven, 2000
- **Maurits Sabbe**, “The Footwashing of John 13 and its Relation to the Synoptic Gospels”, *ETL* 53:4 (Dec 1992) 279–308
- **John Christopher Thomas**, *Footwashing in John 13 and the Johannine Community*, Sheffield, 1991
- **Herold Weiss**, “Foot Washing in the Johannine Community”, *Novum Testamentum* 21:4 (Oct 1979) 298–325
- **Adam Winn**, *Mark and the Elijah–Elisha Narrative*, Pickwick, 2010

Mimesis: Foot Washing from Luke to John

Keith L. Yoder
Warring States Project
UMass Amherst
EGLBS 2016 Annual Meeting

Handout: works.bepress.com/klyoder/26

PP Slides: works.bepress.com/klyoder/27

Draft Paper: works.bepress.com/klyoder/25