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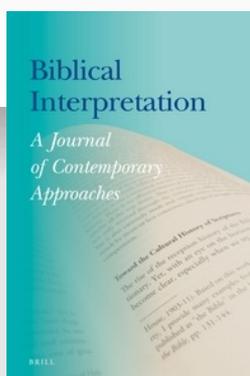
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A Theory of Character in the Fourth Gospel with Reference to Ancient and Modern



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Both literary theory and biblical narrative criticism lack an articulate, comprehensive theory of character. Many Gospel characters in the Hebrew Bible (where characters can develop) to be radically different from that in ancient Greek literature (with consistent ethical types). Most people also sharply distinguish between modern fiction and its psychological, individualized characters and ancient characterization where character lacks personality or individuality. In Part I, we examine concepts of character in ancient Greek literature as well as modern fiction, arguing that although there are differences in characterization, these are

than kind. It is better to speak of degrees of characterization along a continuum. In Part II, we develop a comprehensive Fourth Gospel, consisting of three aspects. First, we study character in text and context, using information in the text to analyze and classify the Johannine characters along three dimensions (complexity, development, inner life), and place them on a continuum of degree of characterization (from agent to type to personality to individuality). We observe that many characters are more complex and round than has been believed so far. Third, we analyze and evaluate the characters' responses to Jesus from the Evangelist's evaluative point of view, purpose and dualistic worldview.

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