

The Use and Influence of Rhetoric in Galatians 2: 1-14

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The Use and Influence of Rhetoric in Galatians 2:1–14

1. Introduction

During the last two decades or so the study of Pauline literature has been enormously benefitted by a growing awareness of the importance of the form and function of the letter genre.¹ Significant studies have been done on the letter form itself and on elements of letter structure and style.² As a

¹ My first exposure to this area of study was as a member of the Paul Seminar of the Society of Biblical Literature in the early 1970's. That group produced a number of important, unpublished papers and drew attention to significant, on-going work. The Ancient Epistolography Group, which published some of its more important findings under the title: *Studies in Ancient Letter Writing*, Semeia 22 (J.L. White, ed.), 1982, was formed to examine the letter forms and settings of ancient cuneiform, aramaic and Greek letters. Other studies that have contributed much to the discussion include H. D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, Philadelphia 1979; W. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity*, Philadelphia 1973; *Id.* *The Classification of Epistolary Literature*, CBQ 31 (1969) 183–199; F. X. Exler, *The Form of the Ancient Greek Letter* (Diss. 1923); R. W. Funk, *Language, Hermeneutic and Word of God*, New York 1966; Ch. H. Kim, *The Familiar Letter of Recommendation*, SBLDS 4 (1972); H. Koskeniemi, *Studien zur Idee und Phraseologie des griechischen Briefes bis 400 n. Chr.* Helsinki 1956; B. Rigaux, *Paulus und seine Briefe*. Munich 1964; M. L. Stirewalt (Jr.) *The Form and Function of the Greek Letter Essay*, in: *The Romans Debate* (K. P. Donfried, ed., Minneapolis 1977) 175–206; K. Thraede, *Grundzüge griechisch-römischer Briefepik*, Munich 1970; J. L. White, *The Form and Function of the Body of the Greek Letter*, SBLDS 5 (1972); *id.*, *St. Paul and the Apostolic Letter Tradition*, CBQ 45 (1983) 433–444. This selection is of necessity brief and further bibliography can be found in the works cited.

² The bibliography here is large and growing. What follows is at best representative. G. J. Bahr, *The Subscriptions in the Pauline Letters*, JBL 87 (1968) 27–41; K. Berger, *Apostelbrief und apostolische Rede: Zum Formular frühchristlicher Briefe*, ZNW 65 (1974) 191–231; C. J. Bjerkelund, *Parakalo: Form, Funktion und Sinn der parakalo-Sätze in den paulinischen Briefen*, BTN 1 (1967); D. G. Bradley, *Topos as Form in the Pauline Paraenesis*, JBL 72 (1953) 238–246; R. Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe*, FRLANT 13 (1910); N. Dahl, *Adresse und Prooemium des Epheserbriefes*, ThZ 7 (1951) 241–264; J. Jeremias, *Chiasmus in den Paulusbriefen*, ZNW 49 (1958) 145–156; R. W. Funk, *The Apostolic Parousia: Form and Significance*, in: *Christian History and Interpretation* (ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule, and R. R. Niebuhr, Cambridge 1967, 249–268); T. Y. Mullins, *Disclosure: A Literary Form in the New Testament*, NT 7 (1964) 44–50; *Id.*, *Formulas in New Testament Epistles*, JBL 91 (1972) 380–390; *id.*, *Topos as a New Testament Form*, JBL 99 (1980) 541–547; P. O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings in the Letters of Paul*, NTS 49 (1977); J. T. Sanders, *The Transition from Opening Epistolary Thanksgiving to Body in the Letters of the Pauline Corpus*, JBL 81 (1962) 348–362; P. Schubert, *Form and Function of the Pauline*

result we are not only better able to appreciate the fact that Paul chose to write letters as opposed to some other form of literary expression but also better able to take into account what that means for interpreting his thought. R. Funk has laid out what I believe to be the best explanation of the relationship of letter structure to intentionality, insisting that, among other things, Paul's letters must be read with "attention to the movement of the whole" if we are to hear the proclamation of Paul.³ The letter structure is not incidental to the meaning of the letter.

It is widely recognized that Paul's letters are not like other letters in the common letter tradition, and conventional letter structure can't always account for Paul's structuring of a letter.⁴ As Funk points out, Paul's style is as much oral as it is written.⁵ It is as though Paul wrote speeches; not sermons, but speeches. This insight was brought to full expression by H. D. Betz in his commentary on Galatians. Even though Betz placed the letter in the "apologetic letter" genre, he saw the letter as having the form and function of a forensic speech and attempted to demonstrate how the letter structure fit into the traditional pattern of that kind of speech.⁶ His attempt

Thanksgiving, BZNW 20 (1933); St. K. Stowers, *The Diatribe and Paul's Letter to the Romans*, SBLDS 57 (1981); J. L. White, *Introductory Formulae in the Body of the Pauline Letter*, JBL 90 (1971) 91–97; W. Wuellner, *Toposforschung und Torahinterpretation bei Paulus und Jesus*, NTS 24 (1978) 463–483; J. Zmijewski, *Der Stil der paulinischen "Narrenrede": Analyse der Sprachgestaltung in 2 Kor 11, 1–12, 10 als Beitrag zur Methodik von Stiluntersuchungen neutestamentlicher Texte*, Köln/Bonn 1978.

³ Funk, *Language* (N. 1), 248.

⁴ B. H. Brinsmead (*Galatians – Dialogical Response to Opponents*, SBLDS 65 [1982] 37–55) discusses this issue critically and suggests that concern for epistolary forms and formulas in Paul may be inadequate to the task of understanding the structure of Paul's letters. However, he adopts Betz's view of the genre and forensic structure of Gal.

⁵ Funk, *Language*, 245.

⁶ Betz (*Galatians*, 143, ft. 97) remarks on the fact that commentators before him generally ignored or evidently were unaware of the possibility of analyzing Gal according to Greco-Roman rhetoric and epistolography. Despite the uniqueness of his approach, however, Betz cannot be accused of bringing a new method to the understanding of Paul's letters. The writing of letters was included in rhetorical training; see J. Schneider, *Brief*, RAC II, 564–585, and A. J. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists*, *Ohio Journal of Religious Studies* 5 (1977), 3–77. C. A. Patrides (*Epistolary Art of the Renaissance: The Biblical Premises*, PQ 60 [1981] 357–367) says that many writers of the Renaissance valued Paul as a rhetorician and recognized his self-deprecatory remarks in I Cor 1:17 and II Cor 11:16 as rhetorical strategies. H. F. Plett (*Einführung in die rhetorische Textanalyse*, Hamburg 1973, 17) identifies the latter as a written form of speech with five characteristic parts as follows: *Salutio*, *Captatio*, *Benevolentia*, *Narratio*, *Petitio*, *Peroratio*. F. Wigham (*The Rhetoric of Elizabethan Suitor's Letters*, *Publication of the MLA* 96 [1981] 864–884) says that 16th cent. English treatises on letter writing followed Erasmus, who had returned to the Ciceronian oratorical heritage, in using rhetorical

has been met with some reservations,⁷ but on the whole Betz has succeeded in drawing attention to the fact that Paul stood within a powerful tradition of rhetoric that must be taken into account whenever we analyze his letters.⁸ Since Betz, it is incumbent on those of us who struggle with Pauline literature to become rhetorical critics.⁹

In all of this, however, attention continues to be focused primarily on the letters as literature, or as products of the conscious act of writing by Paul who tries to understand and speak to specific historical situations using forms and formulae known to him by virtue of his involvement in both Jewish and Hellenistic cultures and his work in the church. That, in and of itself, is hardly startling, but such attention usually does not take into account two potentially important phenomena.

On the one hand, only occasional work has been done in trying to understand the production of the letter itself. Here I am not referring to the physical act of writing with its attendant problems of writing materials and the amount of time it must have taken to produce letters of the length of Paul's. I am thinking more of the use by Paul of secretaries.¹⁰ It has long

structure for the parts of a letter: *exordium*, *narratio*, *propositio*, *confirmatio*, *confutatio*, and *peroratio*. Finally, M. R. P. McGuire (Letters and Letter Carriers in Christian Antiquity, *The Classical World* (53 [1960] 148–153, 184–186, 199–200) reminds us that Greek rhetorical schools wrote letters and forged correspondence as rhetorical exercises. He refers to the so-called “Epistles of Phalaris.”

⁷ See the review of his commentary in *Religious Studies Review* 7 (1981) 310–328, by W. D. Davies, P. W. Meyer, and D. E. Aune. H. Hübner (*Der Galaterbrief und das Verhältnis von antiker Rhetorik und Epistolographie*, *ThLZ* 109 [1984], 214–250) building on Aune's suggestion that Betz fails to account for the apparent mixture of types of speeches in Gal, offers a different analysis of the *probatio* and its relation to the *exhortatio*, based on his understanding of the relationship of ancient rhetorical theory and the letter form. G. Kennedy (*New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, Uni of North Carolina, 1984, 144–152) says that Betz's misunderstanding of the function of the *narratio* has led him to identify Gal as a judicial letter when in fact it is probably deliberative. Betz continues to use rhetorical models to interpret Paul's letters; see, for example, *2 Corinthians 8 and 9: A Commentary on Two Administrative Letters of the Apostle Paul*, Philadelphia 1985.

⁸ D. L. Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education*, New York 1957, 142.

⁹ In my use of “rhetorical criticism,” I am not assuming the agenda proposed by J. Muilenberg in his seminal essay: *Form Criticism and Beyond*, *JBL* 88 (1969) 1–18. As far as I can tell, his suggestions have been picked up mainly by OT scholars, with some few NT scholars applying it. See, for example, J. Dewey, *Markan Public Debate: Literary Techniques, Concentric Structure, and Theology in Mark 2:1–3:6*, *SBLDS* 48 (1980). This method seems to focus almost exclusively on “figures of speech” or “figures of thought,” i.e. it is an analysis of aspects of style. My use of rhetorical criticism is meant to be more inclusive, as I hope will become clear as my discussion unfolds.

¹⁰ G. J. Bahr, (*Paul and Letter Writing in the First Century*, *CBQ* 28 [1966] 465–477) has made some interesting suggestions as to the influence of secretaries on letter writing. On the

been recognized that he used them, but have we fully appreciated their possible influence on things like choice of forms and conventions and vocabulary? We have tended to see the secretary as passive, dutifully transcribing what Paul was saying. Might it not be possible that in some situations Paul provided a general notion of what he wanted to say in a section of his letter and later endorsed what the secretary had written? We may never know for sure, but such a possibility should make us cautious when we make claims based too heavily on things like word studies. And, it is an issue that needs much more thorough study.

The issue of the influence of the writer of the letter on letter forms and vocabulary is not new, though widely neglected. The second phenomenon is yet, as far as I know, to be the subject of much, if any, study. If one accepts the notion that Paul's letters are rife with oral expression or style and that at least one of his letters has the form of a rhetorical address, then, it seems to me, one had better begin to take seriously the possibility that Paul saw his letters as speeches. They may be analogous to ancient official letters.¹¹ They were to be read, probably by the letter carrier in those situations where he faced real opposition in the congregation, perhaps by the leader of the congregation in less hostile setting.¹²

other hand, N. Turner, *Style* (J.H. Moulton, *Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Vol. 4 [Edinburgh 1976]) 82, 99–100, downplays the possible influence of secretaries on Paul's style.

¹¹ M. L. Stirewalt, *Official Letter-Writing and The Letter of Paul to the Churches of Galatia*, unpublished paper distributed to the Seminar on Paul of the Society of Biblical Literature, 1973. In another unpublished paper entitled: *The Letters of Paul: the Letter Setting*, Stirewalt describes the social setting of letter writing and says that the letter setting for Paul's letters argues for the inclusion of third parties in the "conversation" that is characteristic of letters. That is, Paul's letters are not, for the most part, simple private correspondence but more nearly like official letters which would have been read out loud, perhaps even displayed, for interested others to hear and see. Turner (*Style*, 83) says, "Indeed, Paul's letters seem to be intended to be read aloud, like formal letters and literary epistles."

¹² J.J. Murphy (*Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance* [Berkeley 1974] 194–195) says that for the ancient Greeks, the transmission of messages was carried out orally. In the time of Demosthenes letters sometimes supplemented these messages, but the letters were also read aloud to those to whom they were addressed. "Roman rhetoricians like Cicero and Quintilian follow the lead of Isocrates in declaring speech to be the basis for all social order . . . Eloquent letters, like eloquent speeches, were expected to be the product of broad rhetorical education. In fact, it was common to dictate (dictare) a letter for a scribe to copy out" (195). McGuire (*Letter Carriers*, 150) emphasizes the fact that, ". . . the ancients habitually read everything aloud. A man read even a private letter aloud in a low voice. This practice obviously had great influence on epistolary composition and style."

Paul could not help but have been influenced by the pervasiveness of training in rhetoric in Roman and Hellenistic education, although how deeply influenced is a matter for much further discussion.¹³ It seems reasonable to suppose that he knew some of the traditional *topoi*, tropes and figures and understood their value in the art of persuasion.¹⁴ He might even have appreciated the importance of word choice as a function of rhythm and meter in speaking, not thereby leaving such matters exclusively to a secretary's discretion. If these possibilities are granted, not as certainties but only as possibilities, then as rhetorical critics we must be aware not only of the structures of a speech but also its stylistic characteristics.¹⁵ To return to Funk's point and rephrase it, we must be aware not only of the movement along the vectors of the structure but also of the interplay of style

¹³ A recent issue of *Semeia* (29, 1983) was devoted to the topic Kingdom and Children: Aphorism, Chreia, Structure. Two articles in that issue (V. K. Robbins, Pronouncement Stories and Jesus' Blessing of the Children: a Rhetorical Approach, and J. D. Crossan, Kingdom and Children: A Study in Aphoristic Tradition) focus attention on the need to understand the role of rhetorical exercises (*progymnasmata*) in the shaping of the gospel traditions. The observations and methods highlighted in these studies are suggestive for Pauline study.

¹⁴ Quintilian (*Institutio Oratorica*, 4 vols, Cambridge 1920ff.) defines a trope as "... the transference of expressions from their natural and principle signification to another, with a view to embellishment of style ..." (9.1.4) He also speaks of it as an "... artistic elaboration of a word or phrase from its proper meaning to another." (8.6.1) Tropes include such things as metaphor, allegory, irony, simile, epithet, hyperbole, and metonymy. B. Vickers (*Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry*, [London 1970] 86) says that a trope "... involves a change or transference of meaning and works on a conceptual level ..." Figures have to do with the order and arrangement of words and tend to work more on a structural level, "... influencing the disposition, placing, or repetition of words." There are two classes of figures – of thought and of speech. Quintilian devotes a great deal of time in B. 9 to a discussion of figures, complaining at one point that some rhetoricians are so intent on the identification of new figures that they make figures out of other parts of speech (9.3.99). R. A. Lanham (*A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* [Berkeley 1968] 130–132) lists 34 figures of speech and 19 figures of thought. In one of the introductory chapters to his translation of: *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (Cambridge [1954] Ivi–Iviii) H. Caplan lists 45 figures of speech and 19 figures of thought discussed by the author.

¹⁵ Quintilian, 9.4.1 ff, discusses the importance of artistic structure and, while acknowledging the "looser structure" and "peculiar rhythms" of letters that make them difficult to analyze, nonetheless points out that they legitimately have "rhythms of a different kind" (9.4.20). Demetrius (*On Style* [Cambridge 1932] iv, 231–235) says that a letter ought to contain a mixture of plain and elegant styles and deals with a "simple subject in simple terms." Cicero (*Orator* [Cambridge 1939] 63.214) emphasizes the importance of word order in arousing emotion. E. A. Judge (*Paul's Boasting in Relation to Contemporary Professional Practice*. AusBR 16 [1968] 44) says that the Roman political orator Gaius Gracchus had a servant "... stand beside him with a pitch-pipe to control the modulation of his voice, so fastidious was the taste even of the riotous Roman mob."

and semantics that carry the goal of persuasion along those vectors. We must take more seriously the possibility that Paul understood the dynamic of his letters as speeches.

There is, in fact, one other important phenomenon we must understand. It is what has been called by W. Wuellner, borrowing from Ch. Perelman and the proponents of the “new rhetoric,” the “argumentative situation.”¹⁶ Loosely understood, the argumentative situation is “... the influence of the earlier stages of the discussion on the argumentative possibilities open to the speaker.”¹⁷ In other words, in order properly to analyze an argument, whether in a speech or one of Paul’s letters, one has to be aware not only of the historical relationship between the speaker/author and audience but also how that relationship influences the purpose or goal of the speech/writing and the arguments it may encounter. It is the argumentative situation which influences the selection of the *topoi*, figures, conventions and vocabulary to be used in formulating the argument.

The author’s understanding of the argumentative situation also suggests the order of the speech/writing. “... (T)he order to be followed in a speech is dictated by adaptation to the audience and the argumentative situation, and any rules that may be formulated in this matter are functional.”¹⁸ Based on a knowledge of the argumentative situation, the speaker/writer will try to anticipate the impact his arguments will have on the audience and the arguments that will be generated by his choosing the argumentative techniques that will best address them. Arguments will then be “... advanced in the order which gives them the greatest strength.”¹⁹

There is a dynamic here that must be recognized. Although one can

¹⁶ Wuellner, *Toposforschung*, 469 ff. S. also his essay: *Paul’s Rhetoric of Argumentation in Romans: An Alternative to the Donfried-Karris Debate*, *The Romans Debate*, 152–174. Wuellner’s work has been influenced by Ch. Perelman & L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, Notre Dame 1969, (Hereinafter cited as Perelman.) See also L. F. Bitzer, *The Rhetorical Situation*, *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1 (1968) 1–14. Bitzer’s identification of the rhetorical situation as a combination of context, exigence, and utterance in which meaning is found and discourse invited, illicit a series of responses in subsequent issues of *Philosophy and Rhetoric*: R. L. Larson, *Lloyd Bitzer’s “Rhetorical Situation” and the Classification of Discourse: Problems and Implications*, 1970); R. E. Vatz, *The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation*, 6 (1973) 154–161; S. Consigny, *Rhetoric and its Situations*, 7 (1974) 175–186; A. Brinton, *Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric*, 14 (1981) 234–248. S. also, D. M. Hunsaker and C. R. Smith, *The Nature of Issues: A Constructive Approach to Situational Rhetoric*, *Western Speech Communications* XL/3 (1976) 144–155.

¹⁷ Perelman, 491.

¹⁸ Perelman, 501. See also Wuellner, *Toposforschung*, 472.

¹⁹ Perelman, 500. The point made throughout the discussion in: *The New Rhetoric* is that the speaker has great discretion in choosing the order of topics or sections in a speech, dictated

identify an argumentative situation for the speech/writing as a whole, one must also be aware of argumentative situations that are created by the speech/writing while it unfolds its arguments. In trying to anticipate the impact of argumentation and identifying what arguments might be formulated against his, the author/speaker moves with his argumentative techniques along the vector of the argument, with each stage of his argumentation becoming an “earlier stage” of the discussion, thus presenting him with new argumentative possibilities and allowing him flexibility in the use of figures, etc. In this way, the structure and content of the speech/writing, while conforming to convention, will be functional and not just formal. And, the argumentative situation is both given and changing during the course of the speech/writing. Therefore, in analyzing a speech/writing after the fact, when the original authors and audience are not at hand, one must develop an overview of the argumentative situation that deals not just with historical questions but also tries to identify and understand the argumentative techniques, figures, and conventions used to try to influence his audience at each stage in the development of the argumentative situation. This understanding of the dynamic of the argumentative situation gives us a partial explanation for the flexibility of Paul’s use of the letter form.

II. *The Argumentative Situation for Galatians*

The cause for the writing of Gal has been pretty well established²⁰ even though the identity of Paul’s opponents has not.²¹ Someone had followed

by the need to adapt to the successive “states of the audience” (502). Cp. Hunsaker and Smith (Issues, 150–152) who argue that the speaker’s perception of the rhetorical issues and the way he or she structures the rhetorical discourse is dependent on the speaker’s perceptions of the potential audience, which they distinguish from the actual audience and the situational audience. Brinsmead (Dialogical Response, 42–439) discussed aspects of the flexibility of structure and form in rhetoric. Quintilian (7.1.12) indicates that Cicero changed the order of the presentation in *pro Vareno* because of special circumstances.

²⁰ See Betz (Galatians, 44–50) for an interpretation of the cause. Almost any discussion of the identity of the opponents will also review the proposals for the cause.

²¹ Brinsmead (Dialogical Response, 9–33) provides a survey of the history of interpretation of this problem, reviewing the major solutions proposed. For further literature, s. his bibliography and cp. Betz, Galatians, 5–9, *et passim*. Recently W. Schmithals (Judaisten in Galatien, ZNW 74 [1983] 27–58) re-argued his contention that Judaism was not the problem in Galatia, and that if one persists in arguing that such is the case, one would also have to argue that Paul misunderstood the situation in Galatia. D. J. Lull (The Spirit in Galatia, SBLDS 49 [1980] 3–6) disagrees with Schmithals’ earlier statement of his position, seeing the opponents as Jewish-Christian nomists.

Paul into the Galatian churches, attacking him and advocating a different version of the gospel.²²

One way to understand the charges made by his opponents, as reflected in 1:11, 12, is as follows: Paul's apostolic commission was as derived as his understanding of the gospel. Both were dependent on Jerusalem for authenticity and content. Because of that, Paul preached a "second-hand gospel"²³ that he subsequently watered down so that the gospel the Galatians heard did not contain some important concepts.²⁴ It was, therefore, inadequate to the task of salvation. The gospel they (the opponents) offered was authentic, also having come directly from Jerusalem but preached in unexpurgated form.

Paul saw the attack upon him as an attack upon the gospel.²⁵ Therefore, he turned the issue around. His understanding of the gospel was derived alright, but derived from a direct and unmediated revelation that revealed not only the Son of God (thus establishing him as an apostle) but also the

²² For the issues involved in understanding Paul's use of this term, s. Betz, *Galatians*, 48 and the literature in the footnotes. For a fuller description, s. also F.F. Bruce, *Galatian Problems: 3. The "Other" Gospel*, *BJRL* 53 (1970/71) 253–271; E. Graesser, *Das eine Evangelium; Hermeneutische Erwägungen zu Gal 1, 6–10*, *ZThK* 66 [1969] 311–320; J.H. Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority*, *SNTSMS* 26 (1975) 116–120. It seems to me that Paul's reference to another gospel has to be seen in the context of the ironic rebuke that opens the letter (s.n. 30) and is used by him as an ironic reference to the preaching of the opponents.

²³ J.P. Sampley, *Before God I Do Not Lie (Gal 1:20): Paul's Self-Defense in Light in Roman Legal Praxis*, *NTS* 23 (1977) 479. Sampley lists four charges made against Paul. It must be emphasized that our reconstruction of the charges is inevitably based on Paul's, which may well mean that we can never know them in their entirety. It is clear that Paul is dependent on some sort of report of the opponent's behavior and their teaching about him and equally clear that in formulating his defense he must characterize those charges to his best advantage. The argumentative situation as Paul saw it forecloses anything other than generalizations of what they might have been.

²⁴ In 5:11, Paul implies that one of the charges leveled against him was that he in fact preached circumcision in places other than Galatia. P. Richardson (*Pauline Inconsistency*, *NTS* 26 [1980] 347–362) argues that such was the case.

²⁵ Schütz, in ch. 5 of *Apostolic Authority; Tradition, Gospel and the Apostolic Ego: Gal 1 and 2*, describes Paul's argument in Gal 1 and 2 as Paul's "... attempt to provide a rationale for apostolic authority in the absence of a concept of apostolic legitimacy which is sufficiently well developed to include within itself an implicit appeal to authority. This argument is not Paul's attempt to defend his apostolic legitimacy, but his attempt to elaborate the idea of apostolic authority" (156–157). I disagree. The rhetoric and vocabulary of authority are absent from the *narratio*. Rather it is the legitimacy of Paul's gospel that is being defended as 1:6–9, 2:1–3, and 2:14 show. Even Schütz argues that authority is always derived from the truth of the gospel (142–144).

content of gospel (thus leaving no question as to its authenticity).²⁶ There can be no question that his gospel was adequate to the task of salvation, as the Galatians themselves very well knew (Gal 3:1 ff). Furthermore, because his gospel and commission came in unmediated fashion, there was no need for him to go to Jerusalem immediately after his conversion and when he did go, what he heard there, from a very few of the leaders, did not add anything of substance to his gospel.²⁷ In fact, when it became necessary for him to go to Jerusalem to assert, in the face of questions and opposition, the truth of his gospel, the “pillars” agreed with him and accepted the legitimacy of his mission, giving him the right hand of fellowship.

Even if we could identify with certainty the charges leveled against Paul (that is made difficult by the fact Paul seems to deal with them throughout the letter rather than list them in one place) and the features of the deviant version of the gospel by extrapolating them from Paul’s response, it would be impossible to argue that we could know the full extent of the problem in Galatia. There is at least a probability that the charges of the opponents were tailored to the situation of the individual churches in which they were made. There is no reason to suppose that they made their full argument in each place, and in fact their understanding of the argumentative situation in each church may very well have precluded that. Paul’s problem may have been compounded by having to address one circular letter to churches (1:2 ἐκκλησία), each of which had heard a slightly different version of the opponent’s arguments.²⁸ Paul was dependent on second-hand reports. It is

²⁶ D. Lührmann (Das Offenbarungsverständnis bei Paulus und in paulinischen Gemeinden, WMANT 16 [1965] 76–78) says that the “revelation” Paul describes in 1:12 and 16 is the revelation of Jesus Christ in his significance as the eschatological bearer of salvation. O. Haas (Berufung und Sendung Pauli nach Gal I, ZM 46 [1962] 81–92) agrees with Lührmann that “revelation” in these chapters should not be equated with visions or “... einem abstrakten Einblick in das Geheimnis Christi ...” (83)

²⁷ Schütz, *Apostolic Authority*, 142. J.D.G. Dunn, *The Relationship between Paul and Jerusalem according to Galatians 1 and 2*, NTS 28 (1982) 468–469.

²⁸ The general assumption that lies behind most attempts to reconstruct the identity and theology of the opponents is that they were one group preaching the same thing to all the Galatians. Usually there is little or no interest in the fact that Paul addresses the letter to the “churches” of Galatia. Could it be that the reason the opponents seem so syncretistic is that they emphasized slightly different things in different churches or that different churches responded differently to different features of this other gospel? In other words, could it be that the opponents’ understanding of the argumentative situation in each church caused them to vary the presentation of their message? If this be so, in his response Paul would have had to deal with a variety of features of their teaching as they were manifest in several churches. Furthermore, is it possible that there may have been more than one group, different parties loosely related in their opposition to Paul? Finally, it must be recognized and taken with full

also quite likely that he chose to respond only to those charges he considered to be most dangerous. His selection of charges determined his choice of *topoi* and other argumentative figures.²⁹

III. *Topoi and Figures in the Narratio (1:15–2:10)*

Keeping in mind that the argumentative situation is dynamic, evolving as the argument is being made, we turn to the *narratio* portion of the letter. We must assume that the θαυμάζω ironic rebuke and the threat of the ἀνάθεμα provided Paul with argumentative possibilities not available to him had he used the ordinary thanksgiving period. In other words, he did what he did for its argumentative function.³⁰ Furthermore, the declaration of the singularity of the gospel (1:8–9) and the statement of his thesis in 1:11–12, established the direction he planned to take the argument until the argumentative situation evolved to the point that he needed to make his next move. That move appears to take place in 2:10, and again at 3:1, as we

seriousness that the opponents and the charges they make are never fully recoverable because they are, in the last instance, creations of Paul's argumentative situation.

²⁹ *Topoi* (Greek) or *loci* (Latin) are general arguments or, perhaps more accurately, common sources for arguments. They were categories under which relevant material could be grouped for use by a speaker when the need arose for some general observation to enhance the argument. K. Burke (*A Rhetoric of Motives*, Berkeley 1969, 56) says that commonplaces " . . . are derived from the principle of persuasion, in that they are but a survey of things that people generally consider persuasive, and of methods that have persuasive effects." The subject of commonplaces received much attention from Aristotle, Cicero and Quintilian, with the concept evolving so that the category of "commonplace" becomes a part of the rhetorical exercises studied by schoolboys. Besides the rhetorical handbooks, one can benefit from discussions in Perelman, 83–99; Lanham, *Handlist*, 110–111; C.S. Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic*, New York 1928) 28–30; R. Nadeau, *The Progymnasmata of Aphthonius in translation*, *Speech Monographs* 19 (1952) 271–272. There has been a tendency recently to use "*topos*" to refer to a literary form; see for example Mullins, *Topos*, and Bradley, *Topos as Form*, cited in n. 2. Mullins faults Bradley for not giving a good analysis of the form of the *topos* he identified. It is important to keep in mind that all *topoi* – special and common – were rhetorical devices for use in argumentation and that their form was determined by context and content. They were not in the first instance "literary." See Wuellner, *Toposforschung*, for a fuller discussion of this point.

³⁰ Betz (*Galatians*, 47–54) has an excellent discussion of argumentative function of the vocabulary in 1:6 ff. In n. 39 he refers to an unpublished paper by N. Dahl, *Paul's Letter to the Galatians: Epistolary Genre, Content and Structure*. In the paper Dahl discusses the use of θαυμάζω in 1:6 and identifies the genre of Gal as an ironic rebuke letter. He does not agree with Betz's identification of Gal as an apologetic letter modeled on a forensic speech.

will see below. Forensic convention demanded, however, that Paul first lay out the facts of the case.

It appears that in formulating his statement of facts, Paul decided to use a mixture of two *topoi* in 1:15–2:10.³¹ In referring to his revelation (1:16 and 2:2) Paul used a *topos* of quality. In describing the central characteristic of this *topos* (or “*loci*”) Perelman says, “It is the struggle of one in possession of the truth, guaranteed by God, against the multitude which is in error . . . we are dealing with a value of higher order, beyond compare.”³² This characteristic is clear in 1:15.

On the other hand, Paul had to face the implied charge that he came late (and thus occupied an inferior position in the church) to the apostolic ministry – he acknowledges that implicitly when he speaks of his activities as persecutor of the church in 1:13–14 – and so he had to add to the *topos* of quality a *topos* of order. Normally a *topos* of order is used when a speaker wants to appeal to the superiority of that which has come earlier to that which comes later. (This was probably the argument of the opponents.) However, when combined with a *topos* of quality, the argument implies that that which has come later is better – think, for example, of the statements of John the Baptist in John 1:24–34.³³ Paul unfolds the *topos* of order throughout the narrative of his contacts with Jerusalem, crowning it with statements in 2:6 (“those who were of repute added nothing to me”) and 2:9 (“ . . . James, Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and to Barnabas the right hand of fellowship . . .”). Therefore, not only does Paul develop his statement of facts to refute the most dangerous charges made against him, but he has also designed into the statement *topoi* that add to its persuasive impact.

With that background we turn to an examination of some of the features of Paul’s report of his second trip to Jerusalem (2:1–10).

The report is introduced by the temporal adverb *ἔπειτα*. He had already used this term in 1:18 and 1:21 and it seems clear that he means to denote by its use temporal succession.³⁴ A. Hultgren says that *ἔπειτα* is used as the

³¹ In the discussion that follows I am using the concept of *topoi* more in the manner of the new rhetoric than strictly in the manner of the ancient rhetorical handbooks.

³² Perelman, 89.

³³ Perelman, 97. “If value is placed on the old as having had a longer existence and embodying a tradition, the new will be valued as being original and rare.”

³⁴ An insightful discussion of this point can be found in G. Lüdemann, *Paulus, der Heidenapostel: Band I: Studien zur Chronologie FRLANT 125* (1980) 85–86. S. also J. A. T. Robinson, *Redating the New Testament*, Philadelphia 1976, 37, and J. D. Hester, *The Rhetorical Structure of Galatians 1:11–2:14*, *JBL* 103 (1984) 229–230.

figure of thought “asyndeton,”³⁵ “... denoting a succession of times in each case ...”³⁶ Although I am not fully comfortable with his identification of the figure,³⁷ the point is that each use of the word signals a distinct period of time, to be understood as separate and subsequent to the earlier ones.

This trip was prompted by the need to sort some things out with the leaders of the Jerusalem church. It is not accurate to argue that the trip was precipitated by an ecstatic vision or a divine command.³⁸ The reference to such a revelation makes no sense in the context of the argument nor would it to the Galatians. What possible difference would reference to that kind of revelation make to the Galatians? An ecstatic vision would not necessarily correlate with going to Jerusalem, and although a divine command could be understood as implying that Paul was not summoned to Jerusalem, it could also have been interpreted as indicative of Paul’s inferior status, i.e. Paul could not act on his own in dealing with Jerusalem but only at God’s command. It makes more sense in light of the argumentative situation to say that ἀποκάλυψιν in 2:2, has to be seen as related to the ἀποκαλύψεως of 1:12.³⁹ The preposition κατά can be translated “in behalf of”⁴⁰ and perhaps in context should be translated “in defense of.” The time had come when opposition to Paul’s gospel and questions about the authenticity of his apostolic office necessitated a trip to Jerusalem in defense of his revelation, which he had received some 16 to 17 years earlier and had preached with no substantive change since.

³⁵ *Asyndeton* is a figure of speech, a device of omission rather than a trope. It can be defined as, “omission of conjunctions between words, phrases, or clauses ...” Lanham, *Handlist*, 18. S. also E. P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, New York 1965, 433. For a fuller discussion s. W. J. Brandt, *The Rhetoric of Argumentation*, New York 1970, 162, who cites *ad Herennium*, 4.30.41.

³⁶ A. Hultgren, *Paul’s Pre-Christian Persecutions of the Church: Their Purpose, Locale, and Nature*, *JBL* 95 (1976) 106.

³⁷ Strictly speaking, *asyndeton* is a figure of speech that usually occurs in a single sentence or clause.

³⁸ s.n. 26 and 39.

³⁹ Lührmann, *Offenbarungsverständnis*, 41 and 80, argues that while revelation in 2:2 is related to 1:12 and 16, “... in gemeinsamem Sprachgebrauch ...” there is no Christological reference in 2:2. Although that would appear to be the case explicitly, the development of the argument from 1:12ff. carries that reference with it. W. Baird (*Visions, Revelation, and Ministry: Reflections on 2 Cor 12:1–5 and Gal 1:11–17*, *JBL* 104 [1985] 651–662) argues that there is no explicit exegetical basis for assuming Paul’s reference to a revelation in 1:12 and 1:16, includes an ecstatic experience (656). Gal 1:11–17 exhibits the features of a prophetic call narrative.

⁴⁰ Compare George Howard, *Paul: Crises in Galatia* (SNTSMS 35; Cambridge, 1979) 37–38.

That this is how ἀποκάλυψιν should be understood is made clear by the reference to “running in vain.” There can be no doubt that Paul does not mean to say by this metaphor that he was struggling with questions of whether or not he had properly understood the gospel. It is unlikely that he expected to learn something new after all the years that he had been working in the church. Surely, although Paul may not have been to Jerusalem to tell them, the Jerusalem leadership knew in general what was going on in his mission churches and had ample opportunity to protest grotesque or even unfortunate misrepresentations of the gospel. No, this athletic metaphor almost certainly refers to Paul’s frustration that his work was being dogged by opponents who constantly threatened to undermine it;⁴¹ compare the reference to the Galatians being prevented from running well (5:7) for an illustrative parallel. He saw these opponents as using Jerusalem, if not being countenanced by them, and he needed an overt expression of support from the leaders of the Jerusalem church, not as a device to legitimate his gospel, his revelation, but as a tool to be used against those disrupting his work.

The introduction of the controversy over the circumcision of Titus produces a jarring note; nothing prepares the reader for it. In fact, if you were to pass over vv. 3–5, the narrative moves quite smoothly, “... lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain ... And from those who were reputed to be something ...” It may well be that Paul is using a kind of *paralipsis* here. *Paralipsis* was used in speeches to introduce a matter that one proposed to pass over but managed to slip in anyway. The author of *ad Herennium* says, “Paralipsis occurs when we say what we are passing by, or do not know, or refuse to say that which precisely now we are saying ...”⁴² One might see examples of *paralipsis* in I Cor 3 and almost all of II Cor 11.⁴³

If some form of *paralipsis* is present in 2:3–5, then it allows Paul to deal with several issues that were not directly related to the purpose of his visit. He was careful to note that his meetings in Jerusalem had been not only of limited duration but with very few of the leaders. His statement in 2:2 implies that he expected his meeting with those in repute to be limited to

⁴¹ J. P. Sampley, *Pauline Partnership in Christ*, Philadelphia 1980, 36–37.

⁴² *ad Herennium*, 4.27.37

⁴³ I admit that none of these examples fits exactly the form of a regular *paralipsis*, but each hints at the introduction of something that Paul wants to get at even though it lies outside the main line of things with which his reader/hearer might expect him to deal. Turner (Style, 83) gives Phm 19 as an example.

that group. However, evidently the protocol was broken and representatives of his opponents were there. Using *paralipsis* he can raise that issue and brand the intruders “false brothers.” It also gives him the opportunity to introduce the theme of “our freedom which we have in Christ” (2:4), something he will return to later (cf. 5:11 ff.). Finally, he can re-inforce the nature of the issue of the demand that Titus be circumcized, i.e. bondage to the Law vs. truth of the gospel.⁴⁴

It seems likely that the disconnectedness of 2:3 to 2:4 and 5 is due to the use of *aposiopesis*. “*Aposiopesis* occurs when something is said and then the rest of what the speaker had begun to say is left unfinished.”⁴⁵ More simply put, it is a sudden halt in mid-discourse.⁴⁶ It is different from *ellipsis* in that in *ellipsis*, the word or words left out should be readily implied by the context.⁴⁷ Between 2:3 and 2:4, there is a more sudden break, with the expectation that Paul would finish his statement about Titus left unfulfilled.⁴⁸ The use of *aposiopesis* here⁴⁹ focuses the reader’s attention both on the truncated statement and on what follows, heightening the persuasive effect. Combined with another use of *aposiopesis* at the end of 2:4 – here too Paul does not explain just exactly what he means by the opponent’s effort to bring them into bondage – he cuts off both discussions to move to the central point of his section; he did not yield to pressure to circumsize Titus and successfully defended his gospel even though the meeting potentially had been stacked against him.

⁴⁴ There are places in Gal where it is clear that Paul set out contrasting models of behavior. The clearest example is in 2:11–14. Also, referring to the fact that he did not submit to bondage (2:4), he sets himself as an example to the Galatians who were close to falling back into bondage (4:8–11). The “false brothers” in 2:4, bring to mind “all the brethren who are with me” in 1:2, and the reader/hearer is reminded of the ἀνάθεμα in 1:8, 9, with the implied question, “are you with me or not?”

⁴⁵ *ad Herennium* 4.30.41.

⁴⁶ Lanham, *Handlist*, 40.

⁴⁷ B. Orchard, (The Ellipsis between Galatians 2,3 and 2,4, *Bib.* 54 [1973] 469–481) in addition to arguing for an *ellipsis*, says that it consists of the absence of the subject and main verb in vv. 4 and 5. He tries to reconstruct the missing words which, “... were entirely obvious to his Galatian readers” (469). He pushes the figure too far!

⁴⁸ The syntax of the sentence here has led some interpreters to believe that Titus was indeed circumcized by Paul, not through coercion but voluntarily. Betz (*Galatians*, 89, ft. 298) cites F. C. Burkitt, *Christian Beginnings*, (London 1924) 118. J. R. Porter (The “Apostolic Decree” and Paul’s Second Visit to Jerusalem, *JThS* 47 (1946) 173) agrees with Burkitt’s position as does D. W. B. Robinson (The Circumcision of Titus and Paul’s “Liberty”, *AusBR* 12 [1964] 36–37).

⁴⁹ Betz (*Galatians*, 89) says that these verses are grammatically an *anacoluthon* and rhetorically a digression. Turner (*Style*, 83) regards Rom 7:24, Phil 1:22, II Thess 2:3, as examples of *aposiopesis*.

Having dealt with issues that were not directly related to the question of his contact with the Jerusalem apostles and what, if anything, he learned from them, Paul can return to the main line of his argument in 2:6. Betz argues that this marvelously convoluted section is in fact one complex sentence.⁵⁰ I would only add to that observation that once again it would appear that Paul uses *aposiopesis*, and a parenthetical statement, in v. 6 to capture the readers' attention, to bring them back to the main point: in this second meeting the Jerusalem apostles acknowledged the legitimacy of his mission with no modifications.⁵¹

Much has been made of Paul's repeated use of the term "reputed" to modify his references to the Jerusalem leaders.⁵² It does appear that some sarcasm has crept in. That would be a legitimate use of a form of irony in reference to one's enemies.⁵³ However, the Jerusalem leaders are not the enemy, at least not directly. Paul would undercut his argument if he were to ridicule them and then point out that they gave him the right hand of fellowship, thus associating his gospel with those he judged to be ridiculous! It is more likely that he is arguing in verse 6 that the reputation of these men was of less importance than the truth of the revelation that in effect put Paul on a par with them, and in verse 9 that their designation by the Jerusalem church as "pillars" was, for the purposes of the meeting, irrelevant.⁵⁴ Their reputation didn't play a role in Paul's mind. On the other hand, if his opponents in Galatia wanted to make a point of who these men were, then they would also have to acknowledge the "pillars" acceptance of Paul on Paul's terms and in doing so undercut the argument that he received his gospel from them.

⁵⁰ To quote Betz, (Galatians, 92) "Paul's narrative account of the conference with the authorities of the church in Jerusalem (2:6–10) is one of the most intriguing, historically fascinating, and textually complicated sections of New Testament literature. The entire section v 6–10 appears to be one convoluted sentence, a strange phenomenon in the otherwise so well-composed letter."

⁵¹ D. M. Hay, Paul's Indifference to Authority, JBL 88 (1969) 43. Cp. Dunn, Relationship between Paul and Jerusalem, 467–469; Sampley, Pauline Partnership, 26–36; and Schütz, Apostolic Authority, 136–150.

⁵² See Betz (Galatians, 92–95) for discussion and citations of relevant literature. Also Schütz, Apostolic authority, 142–146.

⁵³ C. K. Barrett (Paul and the "Pillar" Apostles, in *Studia Paulina* [Haarlem, 1953] 3) says that Paul habitually uses *δοκεῖν* to "... imply doubt about the supposition or reputation in question ... Reputations may be false; what matters is not what a man appears to be, or is reputed to be (*δοκεῖ εἶναι*), but what he really is."

⁵⁴ Hays, Paul's Indifference, 41–43. S. also R. D. Aus, Three Pillars and Three Patriarchs: A Proposal Concerning Gal 2:9, ZNW 70 (1979) 252–261. Aus says that the Jerusalem church had identified Cephas, James and John with the three pillar patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and

In 2:7–9, Paul uses the figure of “*antithesis*” to set out the accommodation reached between him and Jerusalem.⁵⁵ It is important to understand that while *antithesis* uses contrast to achieve its effect, it should not necessarily be interpreted as setting things resolutely apart. As Brandt says, “... an antithesis does not require that the elements opposed to each other be literally antithetical in meaning; they need merely constitute some sort of opposition in the particular context.”⁵⁶ The purpose of an *antithesis* is to emphasize a point by setting up a contrast. Clearly that is what Paul is doing in this section. He emphasized the nature of his ministry in contrast with that of Peter’s. He was not arguing that somehow the gospel they proclaimed was different (he couldn’t do that and preserve the singularity of the gospel), only the audience. Furthermore, in context with the giving of the right hand of fellowship, the *antithesis* serves to demonstrate the equality of the “opposing” pairs. The legitimate mission of the church has two equally important foci for Paul, to the circumcized and to the uncircumcized. This rhetorical figure helps him make that point.⁵⁷

Throughout the narrative Paul makes distinctive use of metonymy and *periphrasis*. Metonymy is a trope which is defined as the, “... substitution of some attributive or suggestive word for what is actually meant.”⁵⁸ “False brothers,” “pillars,” “uncircumcized,” “circumcized,” “the poor” all qualify as metonymic words. *Periphrasis* is the “substitution of a descriptive word or phrase for a proper name or of a proper name for a quality associated with that name,”⁵⁹ “He who set me apart before I was born,” “flesh and blood,” “those who were apostles before me,” “he who once persecuted us,” “those who were of repute,” all would appear to be periphrastic. As with all the other figures we have discussed, these are used to enhance the style of the argument and thereby contribute to its persuasive effect. They also serve to strengthen the *topos* of quality of order.

Jacob and the effectiveness of their merit. Paul rejected notions of merit in Rom and I Cor, and believed the idea of “pillars” inappropriate.

⁵⁵ For a description of *antithesis*, s. Quintilian, 9.3.81–92, and *ad Herennium*, 4.15.21 and 4.45.58. Also Brandt, *Rhetoric of Argumentation*, 160–162.

⁵⁶ Brandt, *Rhetoric of Argumentation*, 161.

⁵⁷ N. Schneider (*Die rhetorische Eigenart der paulinischen Antithese* [Tübingen 1970] 16–16.19–30) lists places in the undisputed Pauline corpus where contrasts occur and words which make up those contrasts. After careful analysis of the structure of *antitheses*, he identifies two places in our section where *antitheses* occur, 1:12 and 2:9.

⁵⁸ Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric*, 440; Brandt, *Rhetoric of Argumentation*, 143.

⁵⁹ Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric*, 449.

That topos might lay behind Paul's use of κηφᾶς in the place of πέτρος in 1:18, 2:9, 2:11, and 2:14. In each case two other references are part of the immediate context of that use, Jerusalem and James. Taken together, these three serve as a kind of metaphor for the "old" understanding of the gospel. When Peter shares the context with James, he is κηφᾶς. Only in 2:7, when the two-fold nature of the mission is recognized and affirmed as God's gracious plan, does Paul refer to Peter as πέτρος, thus suggesting that he stands with Paul in the proper understanding of the gospel.⁶⁰

It is well known that Gal 1 and 2 contain a seemingly disproportionate numbers of *hapax legomena* or words otherwise rarely used by Paul.⁶¹ In addition to crediting this vocabulary to a secretary, some interesting explanations for this phenomenon have been offered.⁶² It seems to me that one must also reckon with the special nature of the narrative and the letter as a whole. The argumentative situation controls not only the selection of rhetorical conventions but also the vocabulary and style used to carry the argument. Furthermore it might be possible that certain words were chosen for their contribution to the rhythm and tone of the sentence.⁶³ In any case, the demands of style and the need for striking, rhythmic vocabulary to serve the argumentative function in elocution might be responsible for the choice of certain words.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ F. F. Bruce (Galatian Problems: 5. Christian Origins, BJRL 55 [1972] 279) citing O. Cullmann (Peter: Disciple-Apostle-Martyr [London 1953] 18) and E. Dinkler (Der Brief an die Galater. Verkündigung und Forschung [1953–5] 182f.) explains the interchange of "Peter" with "Cephas" as due to Paul's use of "... an extract from a more or less official record of the conference." That explanation presupposes a level of organization and importance for the meeting described in Gal 2:1–10 beyond that implied by the text. It hints at equating Acts 15 with Gal 2. See also Betz, Galatians, 96–97, and the relevant footnotes.

⁶¹ My survey of R. Morgenthaler (Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes, Zürich 1958) yielded a count of 28 words in Gal not found elsewhere in the NT. Including these, there are 73 words used by Paul only in Gal. According to A. Q. Morton (Paul: The Man and the Myth [London 1966] 61 and T. 51) there are 181 sentences in Gal and 2233 total words in the text. Betz (Galatians, 106, 108 *et passim*) remarks that certain words come from military and political life.

⁶² G. D. Kilpatrick (Peter, Jerusalem and Galatians 1:13–2:14, NTS 25 [1983] 324–325) says that Paul incorporated a "memo" for the church at Antioch into this letter. That seems to be a bit far-fetched.

⁶³ S. n. 15. Quintilian (1.5.1–33 *et passim*) speaks of the importance of words and their correct pronunciation.

⁶⁴ J. de Romilly (Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece [Cambridge 1975] 9. 74–78) lists three characteristics of literary prose: rhythm, *antithesis*, and use of rare and political words. Her point is that in rhetoric, particularly by the first century, style was seen as an important element in persuasion. E. A. Judge (Paul's Boasting, 44) says that classical rhetoric was concerned with three major things: selecting the appropriate speech for the occasion, the

IV. The episode at Antioch (2:11–14)

When Paul shifts his focus from his visits to Jerusalem to his encounter with Peter at Antioch, he does not use the sequential temporal adverb *ἔπειτα* but returns to the convention of 1:15 and uses *ὅτε δέ*. These words signal a change in direction along the vector of the argument.⁶⁵ We are no longer dealing with contacts with Jerusalem but Jerusalem's contact with Paul. We are now in a new stage in the argumentative situation, the *narratio* having raised the possibility of arguments come in from the audience. Here, using a different rhetorical device, Paul is able to illustrate his independence from Jerusalem and not only address the charge that his gospel was dependent on Jerusalem but also imply that his understanding of the gospel was superior.

Peter had come to Antioch whereupon he was almost immediately confronted by Paul, "... because he stood condemned." The presence of representatives of James had caused Peter to alter his practice and refuse to have table fellowship with gentile Christians. The controversy is reported in brief, economic fashion. With the repeat of *ὅτε δέ* in 12b, one has the impression that Paul may be coming back to his opening statement in 11. If you accept the excellent manuscript support for *ἦλθεν* in 12b over *ἦλθον*, that could indeed be the case.⁶⁶ The text would then read: "But when he came [to Antioch], he drew back ..." That translation fits the picture painted by Paul in 2:11. It would appear that the messengers from James⁶⁷ preceded Peter, causing the change in his behavior upon his arrival in Antioch. It makes little sense for Paul to say in 2:11 that he opposed Peter

application of figures, and the rhythm of words. One has to reckon with the fact that Gal was not written in passionate haste, in the heat of the moment, but with an eye to style and its place in persuasion.

⁶⁵ Cf J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, London 1959, 10.1. Lüdemann, *Heidenapostel*, 78–79.101–105.

⁶⁶ J. C. O'Neill, *The Recovery of Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, London 1972, 37–38. T. W. Manson, *St. Paul in Ephesus: (2) The Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians*, BJRL 24 (1950) 69. Manuscript support for the singular *ἦλθεν* includes p 46, Al. B, D* and some old Latin manuscripts.

⁶⁷ There is weaker manuscript support for the singular *τινα* here and, despite Manson, (*Paul in Ephesus*, 40) there is no necessary "presupposition" in favor of it. My somewhat "poetic" translation of 2:11–12, is this: "but when Cephas came to Antioch, I confronted him because he was guilty. For before certain men came from James, Peter shared in table fellowship. But when he [Peter] came [to Antioch], he withdrew, separating himself from table fellowship, fearing those of the circumcision party."

when he came to Antioch if in fact the confrontation occurred after he had been there for awhile. Furthermore, it would have strengthened Paul's argument had he been able to say that Peter changed his behavior in mid-visit. However, that is not what vv. 11 and 12 taken at face value say. All they indicate is a change in Peter's practice in eating with the Gentiles after James' messengers had come to Antioch. The messengers may have been there when he arrived, causing him immediately to withdraw from table fellowship.⁶⁸ This new behavior on Peter's part was so radically different from times past that he caused immediate disruption of the fellowship of the whole Antiochean church, influencing even Barnabas' behavior. One can speculate that the messengers had refused to eat with the Gentiles, and Peter's arrival was seen as an opportunity to settle the matter in favor of restoring fellowship. Instead, he sided with them causing Paul to say, "... when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel ..." having now to include Peter with the messengers.

The point of the report of the controversy is made in 2:14. I have argued elsewhere that 2:11–14 must be seen as a digression, a regular section of a speech used to introduce material that does not fit into the sequence of the narrative.⁶⁹ I want to add to that argument that the digression takes the form of, or is modeled after, a *chria* (Latin) or *χρηία*. That "*chria*" appears in 2:11–14. Putting it in its simplest form, it is this: "Confronting Peter because he stood condemned, I asked him, 'If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?'"

D. Clark says that, "A chreia is a brief exposition of what a person said or did, for the purpose of edification ..." ⁷⁰ R. Lanham defines "*chria*" as (1) "A short exposition of a deed or saying of a person whose name is mentioned ..." and (2) "A short rhetorical exercise in which a maxim or

⁶⁸ B. Reicke (Der Geschichtliche Hintergrund des Apostelkonzils und der Antiochen-Episode, Gal 2, 1–14, in *Studia Paulina* [Haarlem 1953] 172–187) says that the periphrastic phrase, "those of the circumcision," refers to Jews not Jewish Christians. Peter's fear was of Zealots who were persecuting Jerusalem Jewish Christians because of the behavior of those Jewish Christians who were in fellowship with Gentiles. R. Jewett (The Agitators and the Galatian congregations, *NTS* 17 [1971] 196–218) adopts this suggestion and elaborates on it. Cf. Betz (Galatians, 108–109) who suggests that "... Cephas 'feared' the 'political' consequences of losing his position of power."

⁶⁹ *Rhetorical Structure*, 223–233.

⁷⁰ Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education*, 186. See also St. F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome*, Berkeley 1977), 256–257. One of the weaknesses of my suggestion that this section is modeled after a *chria* is that the typical examples of *chrii* in the handbooks use "famous" people as their subject. Here the *chria* would be self-referant. However, within the

moral observation is developed and varied often through the traditional seven parts of an oration.”⁷¹ A *chria* is related to a maxim (or gnomic saying). The essential difference between them is that while a *chria* is a report of a saying or deed of an historical personality, a maxim or aphorism is more universal, with no specific attribution. In a very real sense, a *chria* is a subset of a maxim.⁷²

There were three general categories of *chria* – saying, action, and mixed.⁷³ Some of the *chria* often used as examples in the rhetorical handbooks include, “Isocrates said that the root of education is bitter, but its fruit sweet”; “Plato said that the Muses dwell in the souls of the fit”; “Crates, having met an ignorant boy, beat his tutor”; “Diogenes, seeing an illbred boy, struck his tutor, saying ‘Why did you teach him thus?’”⁷⁴

Chrii were used in rhetorical education. “The theme or *chreia* proper was the moral essay the boys would write, memorize and speak on . . .,”⁷⁵ It was part of the series of elementary exercises (*progymnasmata*) of rhetorical education. The exercises focused on the development of fables, narration, *chria*, aphorisms or maxims, refutation, commonplaces, *encomium*, comparison, vituperation, characterization, decription, thesis, and proposal of law.⁷⁶ Each was supposed to be more demanding than the next, so the development of a *chria* was among the earlier things a schoolboy had to do.

development of the argumentative situation and in the trajectory of the argument that is elaborating on the function of Paul’s revelation, that reference is necessary. Furthermore, the “maxim” in 2:14, is grounded not in the authority of Paul but in the legitimacy of his revelation.

⁷¹ Lanham, Handlist, 23. He adds that it is a maxim that is often illustrated by an anecdote.

⁷² H. Lausberg (Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik [Munich 1960]) classifies *chria* as a “finite” or individually focused maxim or *sententia* (536). The *sententia* or maxim is an “infinite”, i.e. not limited to an individual case, thought formulated in a sentence that can be used as proof (431). The *chria* is an instructive anecdote that offers a maxim or aphorism as a reality of practical life. The historical person serves as an authority for the practical effectiveness of the maxim (536). *Chria* are longer than *sententia* because, although it contains the kernel form of *sententia*, it builds on a historical anecdote. Crossan, (Kingdom and Children, Semeia 29 [1983] 77–80) has an excellent discussion of this.

⁷³ Lausberg, Handbuch, 537–539 for illustrations and discussion. Also Bonner, Education, 256–257.

⁷⁴ These are taken from Nadeau, *Progymnasmata*, 266; Clark, Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education, 186–187; Bonner, Education, 258–259; Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric, 26.

⁷⁵ Clark, Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education, 186.

⁷⁶ Lausberg, Handbuch, 532–546; Nadeau, *Progymnasmata*, 264–285; Baldwin, Medieval Rhetoric, 23–38, who translates the elementary exercises of Hermogenes.

The author of *ad Herennium* (4.43.56–4.44.57) and Quintilian (2.4.26) advocate this exercise as preparation for or for use in argumentative situations.

The anecdote in 2:11–14 fits the general description of a mixed *chria*.⁷⁷ It is brief; it tells what Paul did and said; and it ends in a maxim couched as a rhetorical question, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?” That is the point Paul has been pressing towards since 1:7; this is the perversion of the gospel. This is the question that the Galatians should have been asking Paul’s opponents. In light of the gospel, how can they compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?

In terms of style, the question must be raised, why a digression here in the form of a *chria*? The answer lies partly in the development of the argumentative situation which demanded that Paul deal first in the *narratio* with his contact with Jerusalem and then use the episode at Antioch to summarize and illustrate the point of his thesis. It lies also in what Quintilian (8.5.11) called the “*epiphonema*,” “. . . an exclamation attached to the close of a statement of proof by way of climax.” According to Lausberg, maxims were often used this way.⁷⁸ Admittedly we do not find in 2:11–14 a pure maxim but a *chria*, and 2:14 is a rhetorical question and not an exclamation, but the principle is there. The *epiphonema* was a kind of reflexion of the previous arguments, not as a kind of proof but as a saying which focuses and crowns the argument. The episode at Antioch, in the form of a mixed *chria*, crowns the narration. The maxim not only reminds the readers/hearers of a value they shared in Christ, i.e. freedom and life in Christ, but also reminded them of the paradox of life under the other gospel. Moreover, the reader/hearer is brought back to the ἀνάθεμα of 1:8,9, and the questions Paul asked about himself in 1:10 are by implication asked of Peter in 2:14.

It is likely that 2:15–21 contains the “moral essay” or the elaboration or, as the author of *ad Herennium* puts it, the “refining” (4.41.54) of the maxim. This section would correspond to the “exercise” that the schoolboy would be expected to produce using a more-or-less standard pattern.⁷⁹ A

⁷⁷ R.F.Hock and E.N.O’Neil, *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric*, Atlanta 1986, 27–35, describe sub-classifications of *chreia*. It might be possible to classify Gal 2:11–14, as a response *chreia*, a sub-class of the sayings *chreia*.

⁷⁸ Lausberg, *Handbuch*, 434.

⁷⁹ According to Bonner (*Education*, 257–260), the earliest and simplest elaborations were declensions in which the maxim was written out in different cases of the noun and then tenses and voices of the verb. This level of work was the proper domain of the grammarian. The

more detailed study of this suggestion will have to be undertaken elsewhere, but a preliminary outline might look like this:

Maxim	2:14
Paraphrase	2:15–16 a
Explanation	2:16 b, c
Argument from contrary	2:17
Argument from comparison	2:18
Argument from example	2:19–20
Epilog	2:21

The elaboration of the *chria* may function as the *propositio*⁸⁰ and lays out the issues that Paul will address in chapters three and four.

If this is indeed a *chria* then the question of whether or not Paul “won” his argument with Peter is moot.⁸¹ As a rhetorical figure and exercise it is not designed to address that issue but rather to serve the argumentative situation posed by the digression. Furthermore, from Paul’s point of view he had already dealt with the outcome of the confrontation in 2:1–10. He had “won” the debate in the place where it counted, Jerusalem, and most likely at a time when it counted, after it had been raised at Antioch. In other words, if one accepts the argument that 2:11–14 constitutes a digression at the end of the narrative, the substance of which is a *chria*, then it raises the possibility that 2:11–14 also reports the event which led to the conference reported in 2:1–10. Antioch was the catalyst for Paul’s trip to Jerusalem on behalf of his revelation of the gospel.⁸²

V. Conclusion

Identification of the *topoi* and figures in the *narratio* (1:15–2:10) and *digressio* (2:11–14) and the recognition of an evolution in the argumenta-

rhetorician took over when elaboration became commentary on the maxim under certain headings or topics. Details of the names of the headings change but the ideas are the same.

⁸⁰ Betz (Galatians, 113–114) discusses the problem of identifying the function of 2:15–21 and then argues that this section “... conforms to the form, function, and requirements of the *propositio*.” I want to suggest that vv. 15–21 may have the form and function of a *chria* elaboration which Paul causes to act as the *propositio*.

⁸¹ G. Bornkamm (Paul [New York 1971] 47) says that Paul’s silence on a change of opinion on Peter’s part means that Paul lost that round of the debate. S. also P. Richardson, *Pauline Inconsistency*, 353, and D.R. Catchpole, *Paul, James, and the Apostolic Decree*, NTS 23 (1977) 440–441.

⁸² Lüdemann, *Heidenapostel*, 78–79. He says that Antioch is the rhetorical cause for Jerusalem but doesn’t elaborate in detail on that observation.

tive situation suggest a somewhat different understanding of some of the details of those sections than is usually encountered. That is not to say that our understanding of the whole has been changed significantly, only that a picture emerges of a rather carefully constructed argument that makes use of the tools of rhetoric to change the minds of the audience. My analysis of this portion of the letter has not been as closely tied to questions of grammar, syntax and vocabulary as it has to levels of language which shape grammar, syntax and vocabulary to their own ends, i.e. figures of thought and speech and tropes. More than that, however, my analysis suggests that we must take into account the interplay of situation, *topoi*, figures, tropes, semantics, syntax, grammar and vocabulary and try to understand how that dynamic functions to persuade the audience hearing/reading this letter. However, what has been done here is at best only suggestive of a much larger and more detailed project.

It is not within the scope of this paper to work out the details of how the argumentative situation functions throughout the whole letter. I have accepted Betz's finding that the forensic speech model is present, at least through 2:21, with the additional suggestion that a *chria* elaboration functions as the *propositio*. The main point I am trying to make is that we must be alert to the presence of rhetorical elements and try to understand how they contribute to the "art of persuasion."

I close with one final suggestion. Given the unique features of this letter – from ironic rebuke used in the place of thanksgiving, to the presence of a carefully conceived argumentative outline, to a special vocabulary – ought we not consider the idea that Paul did not write this letter? That is not to say that Paul was not its author, only that he left its composition to one carefully versed in rhetoric.

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