

## THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS AND CLASSICAL RHETORIC:<sup>1</sup> PARTS 1 & 2

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### Summary

*Is it a useful or valid approach to St. Paul's Epistles to analyse them in terms derived from the classical Greek and Roman rhetorical theorists? In the following three-part exploration of this question, of which the first two parts appear here and the third is to be published in the next issue of Tyndale Bulletin, the main focus of attention is the Epistle to the Galatians. Part 1 presents a demonstration that rhetorical criticism of a quality which deserves the attention of modern readers is applied to Paul's writing in the Commentary on Galatians by St. John Chrysostom. Part 2 re-examines with necessary scepticism the general question of Paul's relation to pagan Hellenic culture as a whole and rhetoric in particular. Evidence is found for consciousness on Paul's part of sophisticated rhetorical concepts, but it remains debatable whether, in his youth, he had studied any non-Jewish Greek literature. Part 3 begins with a close reading of Galatians in relation to classical theory on proems, narratives, arguments and conclusions, and poses the question, 'What justification did Paul have for regarding his discourse as somehow distinct from the σοφία of this world?' It often proves possible to parallel Paul's rhetorical strategies in pagan theory and practice. However, it emerges that at the most fundamental level, notably in the bases of his argumentation, his approach was genuinely quite distinct from pagan sophistic.*

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## 1. Rhetorical Criticism of Galatians, Ancient and Modern

The contention of Hans-Dieter Betz that ‘Paul’s letter to the Galatians can be analyzed according to Greco-Roman rhetoric...’ is commonly regarded as something of revolutionary newness, though Betz himself notes that Luther, Melanchthon and Lightfoot had partially anticipated his critical position on this matter.<sup>2</sup> In fact, all post-Reformation application of classical rhetorical analysis to the Pauline epistles is a revival, conscious or unconscious, of a method already to be found fully developed in the expository works of the early Church Fathers.

There is no scarcity of ancient commentaries on the Epistle to the Galatians.<sup>3</sup> To concentrate on just one of them, the commentary of St. John Chrysostom,<sup>4</sup> though to a large extent homiletic, makes frequent use of rhetorical terminology and presents an approach to the text which is not only impressive for the high degree of spiritual sympathy evident between the commentator and the Apostle to the Gentiles, but also seems to me exceedingly sensible on a number of literary issues over which modern exponents of rhetorical criticism have found themselves at variance. Chrysostom (c. 350-407 A.D.), Archbishop of Constantinople, preacher and diplomat, was a native speaker of a version of Greek not too far removed from Paul’s own, despite his very different background, and he had a high reputation for eloquence. His opinions deserve our close attention.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>H.-D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) 14, with n. 97.

<sup>3</sup>For an extensive list see A. Vacant, E. Mangenot, *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique* (Paris: Letouzey & Ané, 1915) Vol. 6, col. 1051 s.v. ‘Galates, Épître aux’. In addition, note that there exist important attempts at ‘practical criticism’ of Galatians in Augustine’s *De Doctrina Christiana*.

<sup>4</sup>Text in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, 61 (Paris: Migne, 1862) cols. 610-682, with parallel (Renaissance) Latin translation; English translation by G. Alexander in *The Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers*, 1st series, Vol. 13 (ed. P. Schaff; reprinted Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1976).

<sup>5</sup>See Chrysostom, *De Sacerdotio* 4.6, for a general appraisal of Paul’s eloquence.

For instance: is the Epistle to the Galatians to be regarded, from a rhetorical point of view, as primarily apologetic<sup>6</sup> or deliberative?<sup>7</sup> To this vexed question Chrysostom would, it seems, have answered that it was both.<sup>8</sup> His note on the very last verse of the Epistle (6:18) uses terminology very familiar to our modern exponents of ‘rhetorical criticism’.

Thus, having clearly justified himself in every particular (ἀπολογησάμενος διὰ πάντων) and proved that he had spoken nothing from anger or malevolence, but had preserved his affection towards them unimpaired, he again establishes this same point by concluding his discourse with a prayer teeming with a thousand blessings...he concluded his exhortation (παραινέσιν) with a prayer reminding them of grace and the Spirit, and at the same time addressing them as brethren, and supplicating God that they might continue to enjoy these blessings, thus providing for them a twofold security.<sup>9</sup>

Chrysostom’s phrase ἀπολογησάμενος διὰ πάντων, placed as it is at the end of the commentary, seems to imply that the whole of the Epistle had the character of an ἀπολογία or at least had undertones of self-defence throughout, and this is certainly also the implication of some words in the introduction to the commentary where Chrysostom imaginatively reconstructs the charges against Paul to which the Epistle may be regarded as an answer:

But these deceivers, by withholding the causes both of Paul’s condescension and that of the brethren, misled the simpler ones, saying that he was not to be tolerated, for he appeared but yesterday, while Peter and his colleagues were from the first—that he was a

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<sup>6</sup>So Betz, ‘The literary composition and function of Paul’s letter to the Galatians’, *NTS* 21 (1975) 353-79.

<sup>7</sup>So G. Kennedy, *New Testament interpretation through rhetorical criticism* (University of N. Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1984), 145; J. Smit, ‘The letter of Paul to the Galatians: a deliberative speech’, *NTS* 35 (1989) 1-26.

<sup>8</sup>*Cf.* D. Aune, Review of Betz, *Galatians*, in *Religious Studies Review* 7 (1981) 322-7; G.W. Hansen, *Abraham in Galatians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989) 58.

<sup>9</sup>Migne 680, lines 41ff.; Alexander 47, col. 2 to 48, col. 1.

disciple of the Apostles, but they of Christ—that he was single, but they were many, and pillars of the Church. They accused him too of acting a part; saying, that this very man who forbids circumcision observes the rite elsewhere, and preaches one way to you and another way to others. Since Paul then saw the whole Galatian people in a state of excitement, a flame kindled against their Church, and the edifice shaken and tottering to its fall, filled with mixed feelings of just anger and despondency...he writes the Epistle as an answer to these charges (γράφει τὴν Ἐπιστολὴν, πρὸς ἅπαντα ταῦτα ἀπολογούμενος). This is his aim from the very commencement (καὶ ἐκ προοιμίων εὐθέως πρὸς ἐκεῖνο ἀποτείνεται), for the underminers of his reputation had said. The others were disciples of Christ, but this man of the ‘Apostles’. Wherefore he begins thus, ‘Paul, an Apostle not from men, neither through men...’<sup>10</sup>

This is not the only place in the commentary where Chrysostom alludes to the resemblance of Paul’s manner in Galatians to that of a man pleading in self-defence. He also has to come to grips with the fact that at Galatians 1:10 Paul appears to deny that he is engaging in the art of persuasion at all, so far as it concerns this world.

As for *παράνεσις*, it must not be assumed that when Chrysostom uses this term at the end of his commentary he is referring only to that part of Galatians (5:1-6:10) which Betz terms the ‘parenetical section’. Note, for instance, that Chrysostom refers to the argumentation about the sons of the slave-woman and free-woman in chapter 4 as a *παρακλήσις*, a term which Alexander translates as ‘consolation’,<sup>11</sup> but which might more appropriately be regarded in the context as synonymous with *παράνεσις*.<sup>12</sup> It seems, indeed, that he regarded the Epistle as not only parenetic throughout, but as almost a copy-book example of that simplest type of deliberative *ὑποθέσις* (*quaestio finita*) in which, although the debate concerns particular

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<sup>10</sup>Migne 613, lines 21ff.; Alexander 2, col. 1.

<sup>11</sup>*Cf.* LSJ *s.v.* *παρακλήσις* II and III.

<sup>12</sup>Migne 663, line 43 to 664, line 1; Alexander 35, col. 1.

persons in a particular place at a particular historical juncture, the basic question at issue may be formulated as a single abstract θέσις (*quaestio infinita*).<sup>13</sup>

It is in his remarks on Galatians 1:17 that Chrysostom formulates, first positively and then negatively, the crucial subject at issue both in the dispute at Antioch and in the Epistle to the Galatians:<sup>14</sup>

When a question<sup>15</sup> arose on our present subject (περὶ αὐτοῦ τούτου τοῦ νῦν προκειμένου) in the city of Antioch, in the Church which had from the beginning shown so much zeal, and it was discussed whether the Gentile believers ought to be circumcised, or were under no necessity to undergo the rite (ἐζήτουν πότερον χρὴ περιτέμνειν τοὺς ἐξ ἔθνῶν πιστεύοντας ἢ μηδὲν τοιοῦτον ἀναγκάζειν αὐτοὺς ὑπομένειν), this very Paul himself and Silas went up (*sc.* to Jerusalem).

It is indeed possible, at a pinch, to view the whole of Galatians as a discourse in the deliberative mode hinging on the issue of Gentile circumcision, even though the autobiographical narrative of the opening chapters may seem to us more obviously apologetic than exhortatory and there is a passage towards the end of the Epistle (5:13-6:10) where it may seem that the subject of circumcision is lost sight of as Paul free-associatively preaches about the new freedom in the Spirit which he is offering the Galatians in its place. The principal subject of the Epistle might be formulated, in terms suggestive of Roman *suasoria*-themes, as follows: ‘The Galatians deliberate whether Gentile believers in Christ should be circumcised’. As corroboration of the idea that Chrysostom viewed the epistle as primarily a treatment of a single, specific issue, we may note that he

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<sup>13</sup>See Quintilian 3.5.5-11, especially 3.5.8, where the example given of a θέσις is ‘Should one marry?’ and of a ὑπόθεσις: ‘Should Cato marry?’ Note that the term ‘thesis’ which frequently occurs (unitalicised) in Betz’ commentary is not always used there in exactly the ancient technical sense.

<sup>14</sup>Migne 630, lines 3ff.; Alexander 12, col. 1.

<sup>15</sup>Here the Greek text is lacunose and regrettably lacks the word for ‘question’.

regarded the more generalised moral exhortation of Galatians 5:13-6:10 as an excursus.<sup>16</sup>

Chrysostom's view of Galatians 2:15-21, the passage beginning with the words, Ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι, καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί..., was that it constituted a report of a spoken exhortation couched, for the sake of the Jewish Christians present, in the form of a rebuke: καὶ τὰ μὲν λεγόμενα παραίνεσις ἦν, σχῆμα δε ἐπιπλήξεως αὐτῇ περικείται διὰ τοὺς ἐξ Ἰουδαίων.<sup>17</sup> It is clear from elsewhere in the commentary that Chrysostom took the whole of vv. 15-21 to have been a rebuke addressed to Cephas at Antioch, a rebuke, however, which could serve as an exhortation to other hearers also.<sup>18</sup> Viewed in relation to the overall structure of Galatians, this passage, according to Chrysostom's analysis, constituted a παραίνεσις within a παραίνεσις. The soundness of this analysis will be discussed in due course.

It may seem astonishing that so early a critic could have conceived of the remarkably subtle notion that Galatians is, rhetorically speaking, both apologetic and exhortatory. In fact, this is nothing to be unduly surprised about, in the light of literary theory available in Chrysostom's day. It is clear from the phrasing of many of his notes, including the one on Galatians 2:15 just cited, that Chrysostom was familiar with the theory of what was known as 'figured' rhetoric, in which a positive delight was taken in the notion that discourse could simultaneously fulfil several functions. This theory, expounded notably in the two treatises Περὶ ἐσχηματισμένων attributed (wrongly, it is thought) to Dionysius of Halicarnassus, may or may not have been current in its developed form as early as the time of Paul:<sup>19</sup> it was certainly enjoying a heyday in the time of

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<sup>16</sup>See his remarks on 5:13 (Migne 669, lines 32ff.; Alexander 39, col. 2) and on 6:11f. (Migne 677, last line - 678, line 4; Alexander 45, col. 2).

<sup>17</sup>Migne 642, lines 50ff.; Alexander 20, col. 2.

<sup>18</sup>See especially Migne 642, lines 52ff; Alexander 19, col. 2.

<sup>19</sup>The beginnings of this theory were certainly pre-Pauline. An elliptical sentence in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* 3.13.3 (1414b 3f.) has been interpreted to mean that 'both accusation and defence are often found in deliberative, but not *qua* deliberative, speech' (J.H. Freese, Loeb translation [London: Heinemann, 1926] *ad loc*). Quintilian (9.1.14) cites Zoilus, a critic of the 4th century B.C., for a definition of sch'ma as a device whereby something different is expressed than what is actually being said. It is clear that a multitude of critical approaches to the subject were current by Quintilian's day.

Chrysostom. Here is an illustration of the critical approach adopted in these treatises:

Since we are on the subject of deliberative and judicial speeches, you may also take from Plato examples of further complex disputes, and the combining, in some fashion, of all the species of rhetoric. The *Apology of Socrates* has as its primary subject (πρότασις) an apology, as its title makes clear, but it is also an accusation of the Athenians, seeing that they brought such a man to court. And the bitterness of the accusation is concealed in the mildness of the apology. The things which are spoken in self-defence are an accusation of the Athenians. These are two implications (συμπλοκαί) of the speech. A third is this: the speech is an encomium of Socrates, and the anger of the speech casts its shadow over the bare essentials of the apology. This is the third implication. Two of the implications are interconnected judicial ὑποθ/σεις and one is encomiastic: the praise of Socrates. The fourth implication, which was, as Plato saw it, the most important, having a deliberative and philosophico-theoretical force, is this: the book is an exhortatory proclamation (παράγγελμα) of what sort a man a philosopher ought to be.<sup>20</sup>

That thinking of this sort was already known in the Jewish world by the end of the Second Temple period<sup>21</sup> is suggested by the opening of 4 Maccabees, where the author announces that his treatise will be both of philosophical import and eulogistic. It is, in fact, a *thesis*, elaborated with extensive historical *exempla*, and it also has an exhortatory function. Thus it is an interesting work to compare and contrast with Galatians, with which it may have been nearly contemporary.

The background to Chrysostom's capacity to see Galatians as simultaneously judicial and deliberative surely lay in theory περὶ

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<sup>20</sup>Περὶ ἐσχηματισμένων A, 8 in *Dionysii Halicarnasei Opuscula*, vol 2 (ed. H. Usener, L. Rademacher; Leipzig: Teubner, 1929) 305, lines 5ff. The translation is my own.

<sup>21</sup>For the dating see M. Hadas, *The Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees* (Ktav: New York, 1953) 95-9.

ἐσχηματισμένων. As we shall see, he detected encomiastic elements in the Epistle too, and commented on counter-accusation as one tactic used by Paul in self-defence. Let us look now more closely at his rhetorical analysis of the Epistle, stage by stage.

Whereas Betz marks the beginning of the προοίμιον of Galatians at 1:6, Chrysostom was happy to attach this name to the whole of the Epistle's opening section, beginning at v. 1. What struck him as particularly noteworthy about this proem is Paul's vehemence and the unconciliatory tone adopted. He adduces precedent for the latter trait in the sayings of Jesus, and notes parallels for vehemence elsewhere in the Pauline Epistles:

The exordium (τὸ προοίμιον) is full of a vehement and lofty spirit (θυμοῦ καὶ μεγάλου φρονήματος), and not the exordium only, but also, so to speak, the whole Epistle. For always to address one's disciples with mildness, even when they need severity, is not the part of a teacher, but it would be the part of a corrupter and enemy. Wherefore our Lord too, though He generally spoke gently to His disciples, here and there uses sterner language, and at one time pronounces a blessing, at another a rebuke. (Examples from Matt. 16:17, 28; 15:16; John 4:27). Thus taught, and walking in the steps of his Master, Paul hath varied his discourse according to the need of his disciples, at one time using knife and cautery, at another, applying mild remedies. (Examples follow from 1 Cor. 6:21; Gal. 3:1; 6:17; 4:19.)

Chrysostom, as is evident from his remarks on Paul's opening affirmation of his apostolic status, considered the apologetic tendency of the Epistle to be evident from its very outset.<sup>22</sup> He draws attention also to the starkness of Paul's mode of greeting the Galatians, and detects implicit indignation in it:

Consider too the grave indignation contained in the phrase, 'unto the Churches of Galatia': he does not say 'to the beloved' or 'to the

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<sup>22</sup>See n. 9 above for reference.

sanctified', and this speaking of them as a society merely, without the addition 'Churches of God'.<sup>23</sup>

With regard to the doxology in verse 5, Chrysostom has this comment to offer:

'To whom be the glory for ever, Amen': this too is new and unusual, for we never find the word 'Amen' placed at the beginning (ἐν ἀρχῇ καὶ προοίμοις) of an Epistle, but a good way on; here, however, he has it in his beginning; to show that what he had already said contained a sufficient charge (κατηγορίαν) against the Galatians and that his argument (ὁ λόγος) was complete, for a manifest offence does not require an elaborate crimination (κατασκευῆς).<sup>24</sup>

Note here two things in particular: first, that Chrysostom was sensitive to a departure by Paul from the epistolographical norm, and secondly, that he evidently regarded the Epistle as containing an implicit accusation of the Galatians as well as a defence of Paul. His thinking here is reminiscent of the analysis of Plato's *Apology* in the first treatise Περὶ ἐσχηματισμένων. Later in his remarks on the doxology of verse 5 he uses the term εὐφημία in the sense 'panegyric': '...he breaks out into a doxology, sending up for the whole world a eulogium, not indeed worthy of the subject, but such as was possible to him.'<sup>25</sup>

Chrysostom nowhere makes the claim that the whole of Galatians is a panegyric, but it is worth noticing that he sees the goodness of God as a theme traceable not only in the proem but throughout the work: διὰ τοῦτο πανταχοῦ καὶ ἐν προοίμοις κατασπεύρει τὰ ἴχνη τῆς εὐεργεσίας τοῦ Θεοῦ.<sup>26</sup>

After the doxology, according to Chrysostom, Paul 'begins with a somewhat severe reproof' (ἀπὸ σφοδρότερας ἄρχεται ἐπιπλήξεως).<sup>27</sup> This rebuke comprises a twofold charge against the Galatians, first for their apostasy and secondly for its extreme rapidity. What the author of the first treatise Περὶ ἐσχηματισμένων might

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<sup>23</sup>Migne 616, lines 42ff.; Alexander 4, col. 1.

<sup>24</sup>Migne 619, lines 58ff.; Alexander 6, col. 1.

<sup>25</sup>Migne 620, lines 17ff.; Alexander 6, col. 1.

<sup>26</sup>Migne 617, lines 17ff.; Alexander 4, col. 2.

<sup>27</sup>Migne 620, line 23; Alexander 6, col. 2.

have called the Epistle's third συμπλοκή is uppermost here: Paul is counter-attacking. The words beginning θαυμάζω are seen as putting the Galatians to shame (ἐντρέπων) while reminding them of Paul's former good opinion of them.<sup>28</sup> On the anathematising of vv. 8-9, Chrysostom commends the Apostle's wisdom in including himself in his own anathema 'to obviate the objection that he was prompted by vainglory to applaud his own doctrine'.<sup>29</sup> The outburst in verse 10, Ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω, ἢ τὸν Θεόν... ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν... reminds Chrysostom of similar sentiments expressed in the Epistles to the Corinthians (he cites 2 Cor. 5:12 and 1 Cor. 4:3).<sup>30</sup> He sees it as combining self-defence with counter-attack (ὥστε ὁμοῦ μὲν ἀπολογούμενος, ὁμοῦ δε αὐτῶν κατεξανιστάμενος ταῦτα τέθεικε)<sup>31</sup> and reconstructs the reasoning behind it as follows:

He who wishes to persuade men, is led to act tortuously and insincerely, and to employ deceit and falsehood, in order to engage the assent of his hearers. But he who addresses himself to God, and desires to please Him, needs simplicity and purity of mind, for God cannot be deceived.<sup>32</sup>

With regard to the question whether self-vindication may not involve the insincerity of persuasion it must be admitted that Chrysostom displays a certain inconsistency. His comment, cited above, to the effect that Galatians 1:10 is in part a self-defence implies no condemnation of the apologetic mode, and yet later in his remarks on the same verse, we read:

This he says, being about to narrate his former life and sudden conversion, and to demonstrate clearly that it was sincere. And that they might not be elevated by a notion that he did this by way of

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<sup>28</sup>Migne 620, lines 51ff.; Alexander 6, col. 2.

<sup>29</sup>Migne 624, lines 9ff.; Alexander 8, col. 2. Chrysostom has more to say about Paul's avoidance of pride and arrogance in the eleventh of his *Homilies on 1 Corinthians*, with reference to 1 Cor. 3:4.

<sup>30</sup>Migne 625, lines 12ff.; Alexander 9, col. 1.

<sup>31</sup>Migne 625, lines 29f.; Alexander 9, col. 1.

<sup>32</sup>Migne 625, lines 36ff.; Alexander 9, cols. 1-2.

self-vindication (ἀπολογούμενος) to them, he premises, ‘For do I now persuade men?’<sup>33</sup>

The inconsistency is regrettable, but, to do Chrysostom justice, the basic trouble is that Greek had no way of distinguishing between the speaking of truth in self-defence, and dishonest chicanery with the same aim. The same terms, ἀπολογία and its cognates, had to cover both, and this poses problems for critics today who wish to analyse New Testament texts in terms of classical rhetoric. It is almost equally hard to draw the distinction in English, though we do have the useful military metaphor ‘self-defence’ and the neutral term ‘vindication’, neither of which has any implication of intellectual compromise.

The word which Chrysostom uses for ‘to narrate’ is διηγείσθαι, the standard term for any sort of narrating both in classical rhetorical treatises and in the New Testament. Διήγησις, ‘narrative’, the word used in Luke 1:1 to describe the ensuing Gospel, was also the standard Greek for the section of a speech known in Latin as the *narratio*.<sup>34</sup> Formal narration was a regular feature of law-court speeches. It was much less common, but, as Aristotle notes, not unheard of, in deliberative oratory too, where ‘if there is narrative, it will be of things past, in order that, being reminded of them, the hearers may take better counsel about the future’.<sup>35</sup>

Chrysostom’s analysis of Paul’s autobiographical narrative is sensitive, within the limits of the vocabulary available to him. He feels that Paul has adopted a quasi-forensic mode, noting, for instance, with reference to Galatians 1:11-12: ‘he is obliged to relate his life and to *call* the Galatians *as witnesses* of past events’;<sup>36</sup> and commenting on verse 20 (‘Now touching the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not’):

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<sup>33</sup>Migne 625, lines 52ff.; Alexander 9, col. 2.

<sup>34</sup>See *e.g.* Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.16.6 (1417a 8).

<sup>35</sup>*Op. cit.*, 3.16.11 (1417b 12ff.), a corrective to an earlier sweeping statement in 3.13.3 (1414a 37ff.) to the effect that ‘narrative only belongs...to forensic speech’.

<sup>36</sup>Migne 626, lines 41ff.; Alexander 10, col. 1.

Observe throughout the transparent humility of this holy soul; his earnestness in his own vindication is as great as if he had to render an account of his deeds, and was pleading for his life in a court of justice (καθάπερ γὰρ ἐν δικαστηρίῳ ἀγωνιζόμενος, καὶ μέλλων εὐθύνας ὑπέχειν, οὕτως ἐσπούδακεν ἀπολογήσασθαι).<sup>37</sup>

Here Chrysostom's trust in Paul's integrity is absolute, in spite of the use of ἀπολογήσασθαι. He has earlier drawn attention to the way in which Paul lays heavy emphasis on his past crimes as a persecutor of the Church, commenting on verse 13 ('For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God and made havoc of it'):

Observe how he shrinks not from aggravating each point, not saying simply that he 'persecuted' but 'beyond measure', and not only 'persecuted', but 'made havoc of it', which signifies and attempt to extinguish, to pull down to destroy, to annihilate, the Church.<sup>38</sup>

With reference to 1:17, 'Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me', Chrysostom is troubled that Paul might be criticised for a lack of proper apostolic humility, and is prompted to make some interesting generalisations about the need for the reader to look deeply into an author's intentions, beyond the 'naked' meaning of his words.<sup>39</sup> Elsewhere he is impressed by Paul's self-abasement—his refusal to take advantage in his narrative of a number of opportunities for self-glorification:

Having said, 'I went to Arabia', he adds 'and again I returned to Damascus'. Here observe his humility; he speaks not of his successes, nor of whom or of how many he instructed...But what great things did he not probably achieve in this city? For he tells us (2 Cor. 11:32) that the governor under Aretas the king set guards about the whole of it, hoping to entrap the blessed man. Which is a proof of the strongest kind that he was violently persecuted by the

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<sup>37</sup>Migne 632, lines 42ff.; Alexander 13, col. 2.

<sup>38</sup>Migne 626, lines 54ff.; Alexander 10, col. 1.

<sup>39</sup>Migne 628, lines 40ff.; Alexander 11, cols. 1/2.

Jews. Here, however, he says nothing of this, but mentioning his arrival and departure, is silent concerning the events which there occurred, nor would he have mentioned them in the place I have referred to, had not circumstances required their mention.<sup>40</sup>

In his discussion of Paul's confrontation with Cephas at Antioch, Chrysostom's experiences of Byzantine diplomacy colour his interpretations, as the notes to Alexander's translation make clear. With reference to Paul's tactics our commentator makes intriguing use both of the term *σχημα* (figure) and of the word *οικονομία*, the same term used in scholia on Greek dramatic texts to mean 'plot-construction'. It emerges that the practice of being 'economical with the truth' in a good cause was not frowned upon in Chrysostom's milieu. Chrysostom does not directly tackle the question of why Paul makes no mention in Galatians of the circumcision of Timothy—whether for reasons of rhetorical economy or because, despite evidence in Acts suggesting the contrary, our Epistle in fact predated this event<sup>41</sup>—but in his discussion of Galatians 2:5 we find him viewing Paul's decision to circumcise his half-Jewish mission-companion as a justifiable *οικονομία*:

The blessed Paul himself, who meant to abrogate circumcision, when he was about to send Timothy to teach the Jews, first circumcised him and so sent him. This he did, that his hearers might the more readily receive him; he began by circumcising, that in the end he might abolish it.<sup>42</sup>

With reference to Galatians 5:11 ('But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted?') he comments:

Observe how clearly he exonerates himself from the charge, that in every place he judaised and played the hypocrite in his preaching...observe his accuracy: he says not, 'I do not perform

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<sup>40</sup>Migne 628, lines 43ff.; Alexander 12, cols. 1/2.

<sup>41</sup>For divergent modern opinions on this vexed question see e.g. Betz *ad loc.* and F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1982) 108f.; also M. Hengel, *Acts and the History of Earliest Christianity* (SCM: London, 1979) 111ff.

<sup>42</sup>Migne 636, lines 26ff.; Alexander 16.

circumcision', but 'I preach it not', that is, 'I do not bid men so to believe.'<sup>43</sup>

Chrysostom takes Galatians 2:15 and what follows, right to the end of the chapter,—παράνεσις couched in the form of a rebuke—as all belonging to the report of the address to Cephas which opens in verse 14 with the words: Εἰ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἔθνικῶς καὶ οὐκ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαίσειν... In this I am quite sure he is right, and that it is mistaken of Betz to see verse 14 as marking the end of the *narratio* and verses 15-21 as a *propositio* introductory to the main argumentation of Galatians.

A *propositio* was typically a plain and simple preliminary setting-out of the main topics which the orator proposed to treat in his subsequent argumentation. It was a standard feature of a classical judicial speech, but by no means obligatory. As Quintilian says: *ea non semper uti necesse est. aliquando enim sine propositione quoque satis manifestum est quid in quaestione versetur* (4.4.2). It was perfectly acceptable to move straight from narrative to argument, as subtly or unsubtly as one liked. That the passage Galatians 2:15-21 does not constitute the opening of a *propositio* seems to me demonstrable from two facts. First, the phrase, Ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔθνῶν ἀμαρτωλοί makes good sense as a continuation of Paul's address to Cephas, a fellow Jew: it makes no sense at all as a way of addressing Galatian congregations which certainly included Gentiles; indeed it is a remarkable sign of the degree of reverence in which Paul expected to be held by the Galatians that he ventures to report his past use of such language. Secondly, if we had the opening of a *propositio* in Galatians 2:15, one would expect the beginning of this major new rhetorical paragraph to be signalled in some way: by a particle at least, or alternatively by some form of address to the recipients of his letter, or an indication in the preceding sentence that a paragraph has just been concluded. There are no such markers in Galatians 2:14-15, and what follows does not have the bare-bones articulation of a typical *propositio*. Certainly the passage serves as an effective transition from narrative

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<sup>43</sup>Migne 667, lines 43ff.; Alexander 38, col. 1.

to argumentation: it adumbrates arguments to come and has relevance not just to the past controversy at Antioch but to Paul's present dealings with the Galatians. But it seems very unnatural to interpret verses 15-21 as detached from what precedes them and constituting a *propositio*.

Betz takes Galatians 3:1 as marking the opening of the *probatio* of Galatians, and Chrysostom too views the opening of Chapter 3 as a most important juncture in the Epistle:

Here he passes on to another κεφάλαιον;<sup>44</sup> in the former chapters he had shown himself not to be an Apostle of men, nor by men, nor in want of Apostolic instruction. Now, having established his authority as a teacher (ἀξιόπιστον καταστήσας ἑαυτὸν διδάσκαλον) he proceeds to discourse more confidently, and draws a comparison (σύγκρισιν) between faith and the Law.<sup>45</sup>

Σύγκρισις (comparison) was a rhetorical term. In the Greek world the art of comparison had long been popular in various types of literature and by Paul's time formed part of the progymnastic curriculum.<sup>46</sup> Paul may be clearly seen to set up a comparison in Galatians 3:2: 'This only would I learn from you: Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of Faith?' It is possible to regard the entire section Galatians 3:2-4:11 as a working out of this σύγκρισις, not that his manner of developing it is particularly suggestive of influence from the rhetorical schools.

On the relation between the argumentation in Galatians 2:14-21 and that in Chapter 3, Chrysostom comments as follows:

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<sup>44</sup>Alexander's translation has 'subject': 'section' would be more accurate.

<sup>45</sup>Alexander 23, cols. 1,2; Migne 647, lines 29ff.

<sup>46</sup>For example, Theon, *Progymnasmata* in L. Spengel *Rhetores Graeci* (Leipzig, 1854; reprinted Frankfurt: Minerva, 1966) II, 112-5 gives instruction in the art of comparison and cites as a classic exemplar the comparison in Xenophon's *Symposium* (8.9ff.) between the ἔρως of the body and the ἔρως of the soul. For discussion of the evidence for the *progymnasmata* prior to Roman Imperial times see my *Seneca the Elder* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981) 104ff.

Before he had convinced (ἔπεισεν) them by what he said to Peter; now he encounters<sup>47</sup> them entirely by arguments, drawn not from what had occurred elsewhere, but from what had happened among themselves. And his persuasives and proofs are adduced, not merely from what was given them in common with others, but from what was especially conferred on themselves (οὐκ ἐκ τῶν ἀλλαχοῦ συμβάντων, ἀλλ' ἐκ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς γινομένων κατασκευάζων ἅπαντα, καὶ οὐκέτι μόνον ἀπὸ τῶν κοινῇ δεδομένων, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐκ τῶν αὐτοῖς ἰδίᾳ δεδορημένων πείθων καὶ ποιούμενος τὴν ἀπόδειξιν.)<sup>48</sup>

Thus, according to Chrysostom's analysis, Paul moves at 3:1 from an indirect mode of persuasion to argument specifically addressed to the Galatians in their particular present circumstances. Note that Chrysostom here has recourse to using the term πείθειν, despite his own, and Paul's, reservations about 'persuasion'. Ἀπόδειξις ('demonstration') is his preferred term for proof (*argumentum, probatio*), the alternative term, πίστις, being unavailable for use as a rhetorical term in discussions of Christian writings.

Chrysostom is struck by the new level of vehemence which Paul reaches in Galatians 3:1:

At the outset he said, 'I marvel that ye are so quickly removing', but here, 'O foolish Galatians'; then his indignation was in its birth, but now, after his refutation of the charges against himself, and his proofs, it bursts forth.<sup>49</sup>

Our commentator feels it necessary to defend Paul's giving way to anger,<sup>50</sup> and makes subtle speculations as to the reasons why he delayed until this point in the Epistle before administering his rebuke.<sup>51</sup>

Chrysostom escorts us through his close reading of the argument of Galatians without setting out diagrammatically, as his modern counterparts might feel obliged to do, an analytical *divisio* of

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<sup>47</sup>Literally: 'strips himself towards them' (πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἀποδύεται) *i.e.*, 'strips off for an encounter with them, as for a wrestling match'.

<sup>48</sup>Migne 649, lines 27ff.; Alexander 24.

<sup>49</sup>Alexander 23, Migne 647, lines 36ff.

<sup>50</sup>Alexander 24; Migne 647, lines 39ff.

<sup>51</sup>Alexander 24; Migne 647, lines 50ff.

its main subsections. This much one may deduce about his view of how the argument was divided. He views 3:1 as opening a new section of the epistle, characterised by greater authoritativeness and directness. His note summarising the contents of 3:1-6 points to a shift in his mode of argumentation: ‘The miracles wrought by you, he says, also demonstrate the power of faith, but, if you wish, I shall venture to persuade you on the basis of ancient narratives.’<sup>52</sup>

He describes the passage about Abraham’s faith as a τόπον ἀγωνιστικώτατον.<sup>53</sup> Galatians 3:15 prompts a discussion of ‘human’ παραδείγματα, for which he notes parallels elsewhere in Paul’s letters and in the utterances of God in the Old Testament.<sup>54</sup> With reference to the imaginary objection mooted in 3:21: ‘Is the law, then, against the promises of God?’, Chrysostom comments on the way that Paul rejects (ἀπαγορεύει) this counter-proposition (ἀντίθεσιν) and then constructs a positive argument against it (κατασκευάζει). Chrysostom marks no rhetorical division at 4:1, presumably regarding the παράδειγμα with which chapter 4 begins as an illustration of what has preceded it, and the reflections of 4:8-11 as the conclusion of the long section (starting at 3:6) concerned with Abraham and the Jewish Law. At 4:12, however, he sees the beginning of a new stage in the argument, marked first of all by the use of the honorific form of address, ἀδελφοί. There is a move here from chastisement to tender reconciliation.<sup>55</sup> With reference to 4:21-31, Chrysostom attempts to explain why Paul uses the term ἀλληγορούμενα with reference to a passage which in normal parlance he reckoned would have been called a τύπος. He sees 5:1 as initiating another stage in the argument, ‘another inducement to them to abide in his doctrine’.<sup>56</sup> At 5:13 he remarks that Paul enters here upon an ἠθικὸν...λόγον, and he draws an interesting general comparison with Paul’s practice in other epistles:

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<sup>52</sup>Migne 650, lines 44ff. (my own translation).

<sup>53</sup>‘A special point of controversy’ (Alexander); ‘a powerful debating point’ (D.A. Russell *per litt.* 17.2.’94).

<sup>54</sup>Migne 653, lines 37ff.; Alexander 27f.

<sup>55</sup>Migne, 658, lines 47ff.; Alexander 31, col. 2.

<sup>56</sup>Migne 664, lines 40f.; Alexander 35, col. 2 *fin.*

Henceforward he appears to digress into a moral discourse (εἰς τὸν ἠθικὸν ἐμβαίνειν λόγον) but in a new manner, which does not occur in any other of his Epistles. For all of them are divided into two parts, and in the first he discusses doctrine, in the last the rule of life, but here, after having entered upon the moral discourse, he again unites with it the doctrinal part.<sup>57</sup>

In his note on Galatians 6:11, Chrysostom marks Paul's return to his original subject matter after the end of the 'ethical discourse': οὕτω καὶ ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος εἰπὼν ὀλιγά περὶ τῶν ἠθῶν, πάλιν ἐπὶ τὰ πρότερα ἐπανέρχεται, ἃ μάλιστα αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν διετάραττε.<sup>58</sup>

Schematically, then, Chrysostom analyses Galatians as follows:

**Basic question at issue in the Epistle:**

Should Gentile believers in Christ be circumcised, or not?

**Establishment of Paul's authority**

1:1-5 **Proem** with apologetic overtones;

1: 6-10 counter-accusation of the Galatians;

1:11-2:21 **Narration** culminating in address to Cephas: **indirect persuasion** of the Galatians.

**Direct persuasion and demonstration**

**Doctrine**

(3:1-5:12): Comparison between faith and the Law:

(3: 1-5: arguments based on Galatians' own experiences;

3:6-4:11 persuasion based on ancient narratives.

4:12-4:31: Tender reconciliation after chastisement.

5:1-5:12 Another inducement to abide by Paul's doctrine)

**Rule of Life** (5:13-6:10):

Moral discourse, encouraging adherence to Paul's doctrine.

**Restatement of doctrine:** (6:11-18).

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<sup>57</sup>Migne 669, lines 36ff.; Alexander 39 col. 2.

<sup>58</sup>Migne 677, line 63 - 678, line 1f.; Alexander 45, col. 2.

Chrysostom's analysis of Paul's argumentation reveals him as sensitive to its every gradation of tone and twist of logic. Although he does not totally abjure use of the word *πείθειν*,<sup>59</sup> he normally analyses the arguments in more specific terms, drawn from a rich critical vocabulary: for example *ὑβρις* in the sense 'violent anger' (Migne 648, line 23); *ἀγανάκτησις*, 'indignant outburst' (647 line 37); *ἐλέγχος*, 'refutation' (647 line 52); *ἐπιτίμησις*, 'castigation' (647 line 54); *ἐπίπληξις*, 'rebuke' (648 line 28); *παράκλησις*, 'exhortation' (664 line 1); *ἀπειλή*, 'threat' (664 line 53). Chrysostom notes where Paul mobilises a major new topic of argument—*τόπον ἐκίνει* (650 line 40), where he turns an argument against his opponents—*εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον περιτρέπει* (651 line 2f.), where he dispels the fear which he has aroused by his anger (651 line 3), where, by use of a very human *παράδειγμα*, he sweetens his discourse and makes it accessible to the less intelligent (653 lines 43f.), where he is simultaneously reproving and encouraging—*ἐπιτύγων τε ὁμοῦ καὶ παραμυθούμενος* (654 line 3), where he constructs a positive argument—*κατασκευάζει* (655 line 16), where he uses an honorific form of address (658 lines 48f.), where he gives release and healing—*ἀνήσει καὶ θεραπεύει* (658 lines 52f.), where he puts the Galatians to shame in the course of his own self-defence—*ἐν τάχει ἀπολογίας... αὐτοὺς ἐντρέπει* (659 line 36—with reference to Gal. 4:14) where he is at a loss and astonished—*διαπορεῖ καὶ ἐκπλήττεται* (659 line 46), where he chastises the Galatians and puts them to shame, but then restores them to health again and finally laments—*ἐπέπληξε καὶ ἐνέτρεψε, καὶ ἐθεράπευσε πάλιν, εἶτα ὠλοφύρατο* (661 lines 17ff.), where he instructs the Galatians and sets them right—*ἐπαίδευσε καὶ διώρθωσε* (668 line 20); where he advises and gives wisdom to those capable of receiving his correction—*δυναμένους λαβεῖν διόθωσιν νουθεταῖ καὶ σωφρονίζει* (668 lines 23ff.).

Quintilian (9.1.23) refers to theorists who maintained that there were as many rhetorical figures as there were human emotions:

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<sup>59</sup>See again Migne 664, lines 41f.; Alexander 35, col. 2: 'Next he states another inducement to them (ἄλλην αἰτίαν τὴν πείθουσιν αὐτοὺς) to abide by his doctrine.'

no doubt it would be possible to find nearly all the emotional and logical ploys detected by Chrysostom in Galatians also pinpointed by one ancient theorist or another as part of the stock-in-trade of the good orator. The passage from Cicero's *De Oratore* which Quintilian quotes at the beginning of his discussion of figures lists a great many of them: *iracundia, obiurgatio, promissio, deprecatio, obsecratio, declinatio brevis a proposito...purgatio, conciliatio, laesio, optatio atque execratio*, to name but a few.<sup>60</sup> There exists, furthermore, a treatise on epistolography, preserved amongst the works of Libanius, and perhaps dateable to Chrysostom's time, which presents the following classification of types of epistolary discourse:<sup>61</sup>

- 1) paraenetic, 2) blaming, 3) requesting, 4) commending, 5) ironic, 6) thankful, 7) friendly, 8) praying, 9) threatening, 10) denying, 11) commanding, 12) repenting, 13) reproaching, 14) sympathetic, 15) conciliatory, 16) congratulatory, 17) contemptuous, 18) counter-accusing, 19) replying, 20) provoking, 21) consoling, 22) insulting, 23) reporting, 24) angry, 25) diplomatic, 26) praising, 27) didactic, 28) reproving, 29) maligning, 30) censorious, 31) inquiring, 32) encouraging, 33) consulting, 34) declaratory, 35) mocking, 36) submissive, 37) enigmatic, 38) suggestive, 39) grieving, 40) erotic, 41) mixed.

Galatians, one might say, is definitely 'mixed'.<sup>62</sup> Such theory was part of the background to Chrysostom's manner of commentating. Yet somehow one never gets the impression that he regarded the Epistle as a box of rhetorical tricks: his prevalent approach is that of a contemplative mulling over the spiritual riches to be derived from a holy text.

How does Chrysostom regard the concluding sentences of the Epistle? We have seen that he regarded them as bringing to a close both the apologetic and the parenetic aspects of the Epistles. He also

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<sup>60</sup>Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.201-8 = Quintilian 9.1.26-36.

<sup>61</sup>Text in *Libanii Opera* (ed. R. Foerster; Leipzig: Teubner, 1927), Vol. 9; text and translation in A.J. Malherbe, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 66-81.

<sup>62</sup>Compare also the only slightly less elaborate classification in Ps.-Demetrius *Tuvpoi jEpistolikoiv*, which may be pre-Pauline. The text of this work may be found in: *Demetrii et Libanii qui feruntur TYΠΟΙ ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΙΑΙΚΟΙ et ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΙΜΑΙΟΙ ΧΑΡΑΚΤΗΡΕΣ* (ed. V. Weichert; Leipzig: Teubner, 1910); text and translation in Malherbe, *op. cit.*, 30-41.

took the line that the words ἴδετε πηλίκοις ὑμῖν γράμμασιν ἔγραψα τῇ ἑμῇ χειρὶ, implied that the whole Epistle was written in Paul's own hand,<sup>63</sup> and that πηλίκοις was suggestive of misshapen, as well as large, lettering.<sup>64</sup> We need not attach undue authority to his pronouncements on either of these matters: ἔγραψα, an epistolary aorist, may or may not have referred solely to the writing of the epistolary postscript. But one phrase he uses to sum up the character of the whole Epistle, μαρτυρίαν ἔγγραφον, 'a testimony in writing' is certainly apt and thought-provoking, for indeed 'bearing witness' is a key concept in Galatians. Also interesting is his likening of the very last verse of the Epistle to a seal set by Paul upon all that preceded it: τῷ ἐσχάτῳ ῥήματι τούτῳ πάντα τὰ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεσφράγισεν. The metaphor of 'affixing a seal', which strikes one as particularly apt for describing the conclusion of an epistle, was one that had enjoyed very long currency as a Greek literary metaphor, its earliest known occurrence being in a poetry book by Theognis (6th century B.C.),<sup>65</sup> where it signals authorial self-announcement.<sup>66</sup> Hence modern classical scholars have adopted the term *sfravgi*" to denote any such self-announcement in the Graeco-Roman poetic tradition: in a σφράγισ, typically, mention of the author's name serves to authenticate the work which follows or precedes it. Paul's autograph greeting at the end of 1 Corinthians: ὁ ἀσπασμός τῇ ἑμῇ χειρὶ Παύλου and what follows, may aptly enough be termed a σφράγισ. Galatians 6:11-18, despite the omission of Paul's name, even more obviously has the purpose of authenticating the preceding letter, and the metaphor used by Chrysostom with reference to the last verse alone could appropriately be applied to the whole postscript.

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<sup>63</sup>Migne 678, lines 5ff.; Alexander 45, col. 2 to 46, col. 1. The alternative is to regard ε[γρα]ψα as an 'epistolary' aorist referring to Paul's present action in writing his postscript.

<sup>64</sup>Migne 678, lines 19ff.; Alexander 46, col. 1.

<sup>65</sup>Theognis (ed. D. Young; Leipzig: Teubner, 1971) *Elegy* 1, lines 19ff.; translated by J.M. Edmonds in *Elegy and Iambus*, Vol. 1 (Loeb edition; London: Heinemann, 1931).

<sup>66</sup>See W. Kranz, 'Sphragis', *Rheinisches Museum* 104 (1961) 3-46, 97-124.

Chrysostom's commentary on Galatians presents a rhetorical analysis of the Epistle which deserves to be regarded as a valuable alternative to that of Betz. It provides, in particular, a very necessary corrective to Betz's view of the place of Galatians 2:15-21 in the structure of the Epistle, and it ought to allay the anxieties of those scholars who have been troubled by the fact that the epistle seems to be neither simply apologetic nor simply parenetic, but both at the same time. The way in which Chrysostom sees Paul's argument as divided up also deserves the modern reader's attention: it is an interesting exercise to compare it with the paragraphing adopted in the *New English Bible*, which in some respects, though not all, it resembles.

There remains a wider question to consider, namely whether or not the discovery of detailed rhetorical analysis in a fourth century commentary on Galatians constitutes absolute vindication of the modern fashion for 'rhetorical criticism' of New Testament texts, at least where Paul's Epistles are concerned. (The applicability of classical rhetorical analysis<sup>67</sup> to speeches reported in the Gospels and to the Gospel narratives themselves should be regarded as quite separate questions.) Even where Paul is concerned a measure of scepticism is appropriate, given his strict Jewish upbringing and his strongly worded repudiation, in 1 Corinthians and elsewhere, of the 'wisdom of this world' in general and persuasive discourse in particular. But we ought not to let any over-simplifying presuppositions about Jewishness or a disinclination to accuse Paul of hypocrisy stand in the way of an objective assessment of his relation to pagan Greek literary culture.

## 2. Paul and Hellenism: a Reconsideration

Chrysostom, so it emerges from his commentary on Galatians, was familiar with the theory of 'figured rhetoric': was Paul likewise

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<sup>67</sup>By this I mean the adoption of analytical terms and methods used in the Greek and Roman handbooks, as distinct from modes of literary criticism developed in our own century, however closely related to ancient theory.

learned in, and a conscious exponent of, that highly sophisticated art? This is not a necessary inference from the fact that terminology associated with it is used in a late antique commentary. In rhetoric, as in other disciplines, theory arises out of practice and not, normally, *vice versa*. With regard to the combining, in Galatians, of implications suggestive of more than one rhetorical genre, it should be borne in mind that the type of theory set out in the Pseudo-Dionysian treatises *Περὶ ἑσχηματισμένων*, with precedent traceable as far back as the time of Aristotle, was essentially a response to the fact that Greek rhetorical practice was, and always had been, more flexible than is suggested by the rigid divisions drawn by most ancient theorists, for the sake of pedagogic clarity, between the principal types of oration. That Galatians is, rhetorically speaking, mixed in genre does not necessarily mean that its author is to be regarded as hyper-sophisticated.

Does Paul's adoption of the 'proem - narrative - argument - epilogue' pattern in his Epistle represent clear proof of the influence on him of the theory and practice of Greek pagan rhetoric? One is not obliged to believe even this. We learn from Acts that Paul was bilingual, in Greek, the language of his letters, and 'in the Hebrew tongue' (Ἑβραϊδί διαλέκτῳ), the latter being the language in which, so we are told, he received his vocation on the way to Damascus (Acts 26:14) and in which he once proved capable of delivering a fluent self-defence in Jerusalem (Acts 21:40ff.). Presumably this was Aramaic, though one would expect a pupil of Gamaliel also to know classical Hebrew. Now, the student of anthropology soon learns that devices which we categorise as 'rhetorical' may find favour in more than one society, even, sometimes, where there are no possible cultural connections between the societies in question, apart from a common share in human nature. A great linguistic divide, such as that between the Indo-European and the Semitic languages need not prove a barrier to the wide diffusion of even quite sophisticated literary motifs and procedures—as is illustrated, for instance, by the distribution of the formal μακαρισμός ('beatitude'), a feature of both pagan Greek religious language and of the Psalms. Literary influences between the Greek and Hebrew-Aramaic world did not all flow in the

same direction.<sup>68</sup> Homeric poetry, the *fons et origo* of most Greek rhetorical forms, including the deliberative speech, appears to have come from Asia Minor, not mainland Greece, and it is therefore nothing to be surprised at, and not necessarily to be explained as the result of Greek influence, if parallels to these forms are found to occur in other Near Eastern literatures. For whatever reason, the sequence, proem - narrative - argument, is already clearly discernible in an Aramaic petition from the Jews of Elephantine in Upper Egypt dating back to the fifth century B.C.,<sup>69</sup> a period when the occasional mercenary or intrepid explorer from the Greek world might travel that far up the Nile, but hardly, one would think, the direct influence of Gorgias of Leontini. Arguably, then, the *dispositio* of Galatians could be considered part of Paul's Semitic inheritance rather than a sign of Greek influence. Paul's expertise in the deployment of rhetorical figures, likewise, does not have to be explained exclusively in Hellenic terms. The compendious work of E.W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech used in the Bible* (London and New York, 1898), shows that even some of the most elaborate *schemata* discussed in classical theory were exemplified in the Old Testament, and that Paul was by no means the only New Testament author to demonstrate mastery of them. For the figure κλίμαξ/*gradatio* (step-construction) Bullinger<sup>70</sup> finds illustrations in Hosea (2:21f.) and Joel (1:3-4), in the famous opening verses of John's Gospel (1:1-2, 4-5),<sup>71</sup> also in the Epistles of James (1:3-4, 14-15) and Peter (2:1, 5-7), as well as in Paul (Rom. 5:3-5; 8:29-30; 10:14-18). Thus, use of even the most contrived-seeming figuration does not prove conclusively indebtedness to Greek pagan rhetorical schools. That said, one need look no further than the Old Testament Apocrypha, the books of Maccabees in particular, to see how widely pervasive the Hellenising of Judaea and the Jewish

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<sup>68</sup>See esp. A.D. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) 74-96, on 'The Hellenistic discovery of Judaism'.

<sup>69</sup>See Pritchard, *ANET* 491f, 'Petition for authorisation to rebuild the temple of Yaho'.

<sup>70</sup>*Op. cit.*, 256-9.

<sup>71</sup>Not altogether clear-cut instances of the figure, though sharing some of its characteristics.

Diaspora had been for three centuries before Paul's time.<sup>72</sup> And it was part and parcel of Hellenism to give rhetoric a prominent place in the educational system.

To judge from the evidence available to us, Paul reckoned his upbringing to have been thoroughly Jewish, despite his birth in Tarsus, a centre of Hellenic philosophical and rhetorical culture.<sup>73</sup> 'Circumcised in my eighth day, a member of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrew parentage, with regard to the Law a Pharisee...'; 'a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city (*i.e.* Jerusalem), educated at the feet of Gamaliel in strict observance of the Law of my fathers...':<sup>74</sup> these accounts pay no attention at all to the Greek strand in his upbringing, to which, however, the language used in his Epistles stands as a clear testimony. Equally, they ignore the young Saul's training as a tentmaker, which may well have taken him back to Tarsus for extended periods.<sup>75</sup> That does not mean that they need be gross distortions of the truth. In his recent book, *The Pre-Christian Paul*, Martin Hengel presents a believable account of how the Apostle might have reached the level of Greek literary culture displayed in his letters without recourse to pagan schools. Hengel argues that it is improbable that the young Saul of Tarsus attended a non-Jewish elementary school 'because the literature from Homer to Euripides used in regular teaching was quite alien to him';<sup>76</sup> and he hypothesises that Saul's Pharisaic study of the Law would have been the most likely context in which he gained 'a certain basic training in rhetoric', which, however, 'did not correspond to the Attic-style school rhetoric of the time, the ideals of which can be studied a generation before Paul in Dionysius of Halicarnassus'. Even if one concludes that Paul's rhetorical training must have been

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<sup>72</sup>See M. Hengel, *The Hellenisation of Judaea in the 1st century after Christ* (London: SCM, 1989) 20.

<sup>73</sup>Strabo 14.5.13.

<sup>74</sup>Phil. 3:5; Acts 22:3.

<sup>75</sup>See M. Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul* (London: SCM, 1991) 17, on the Cilician origin of one of the likely raw-materials of the ancient near-eastern tent-maker.

<sup>76</sup>Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul*, 38.

more than basic, there is no need to assume that he would have needed to go far beyond Jewish schools and textbooks to obtain it. There is good reason to suppose, for example, that Caecilius of Calacte, one of the most distinguished rhetorical theorists of the first century B.C., was an adherent of Judaism.<sup>77</sup> Another very notable rhetorician of that time was Theodorus from Gadara in the Decapolis, near Galilee—not that it is particularly likely that he was Jewish, any more than the Epicurean writer on rhetoric, Philodemus of Gadara; the name Theodorus does not necessarily imply that his family adhered to a monotheistic faith.<sup>78</sup> One certainly would not have needed, in Paul's time, actually to read pagan texts in order to encounter sophistic modes of thought and procedures. Jewish historiography and philosophical writing had long been under Greek rhetorical influence; the declamatory and melodramatic tone of 4 Maccabees has aptly been compared by Moses Hadas with that of Senecan tragedy and the historical epic of Lucan.<sup>79</sup>

But we need to be very open-minded over the possible extent of Saul's early direct contacts with pagan culture. For one thing, we do not have to assume that his education in Jerusalem meant the breaking of all ties with homeland. School vacations were not unknown in antiquity<sup>80</sup> and one certain fact about Paul in later life is that he was no slouch with regard to travelling. The evidence for rhetorical schools at Jerusalem in Paul's day lacks solidity,<sup>81</sup> but it does not follow that no such schools in fact existed. Nor should we imagine that ancient schools operated behind closed doors. It appears

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<sup>77</sup>*Fragments* (ed. Ofenloch 1907; reprinted Stuttgart: Teubner, 1967); see also Pauly-Wissowa, *RE* 3 (1899) s.v. Caecilius 2.

<sup>78</sup>One even finds *te-o-do-ra* in a Linear B text, see L.R. Palmer, *The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963) 457.

<sup>79</sup>See M. Hadas (ed.), *The Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees*, 102-3.

<sup>80</sup>According to Seneca the Elder (*Controversiae* 1, *praefatio* 14), M. Porcius Latro, who had his school of rhetoric in Rome, spent regular holidays in Spain, where he so enjoyed country pursuits that he could scarcely be dragged back to work.

<sup>81</sup>See Hengel, *The Pre-Christian Paul*, 59. The assumption that Paul's prosecutor Festus would have needed to teach in order to support himself is not to be relied on.

from Roman evidence that one did not necessarily have to be enrolled at a school of rhetoric in order to make casual visits to it from time to time; nor did one necessarily have to approve of all its activities in order to do so.<sup>82</sup> The report in Luke's gospel (2:46ff.) of the intrusion by the boy Jesus into the midst of teachers at the temple suggests that schools in Jerusalem were similarly informal in organisation.

One could also learn a good deal about the practice of oratory from frequenting law courts and other public gatherings. We need to consider the possibility that, in his unregenerate youth, Saul had been a prosecutor, as well as persecutor, of the Christians. Greek draws no distinction between the two activities: the verb *διώκειν* covers both. At all events, his involvement in the persecutions is likely to have brought him into some degree of contact with Roman provincial administrators and their procedures, rhetorical as well as judicial. The fact that his style is non-Attic does not make extensive contact inconceivable. Style is a matter of personal taste, and one should be wary of assuming that the Atticising Greek advocated by Dionysius of Halicarnassus would have been the norm, in Paul's time, throughout the Greek-speaking Roman Empire. Neo-classical movements always originate from the enthusiasm of small élites and Graeco-Roman Atticism, aimed at the purging of types of stylistic 'corruption' perceived as being of Asiatic origin, was no exception.<sup>83</sup> How widespread the impact of the Atticist movement would have been in Paul's youth I am not sure, but even in Rome, it appears from the elder Seneca's evidence that not everyone favoured it in the time of Augustus and Tiberius, and a number of rhetoricians teaching there were regarded as *Asiani*; one of them openly professed himself an *Asianus* and waged open warfare *cum omnibus Atticis*.<sup>84</sup> It should occasion no surprise, then, given where Paul was brought up, if it turns out that his style owes more to Asianism than Atticism. As for his *koine* Greek diction: caution, and more expertise than most of us possess, are both required for a proper assessment of it. Barbaric

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<sup>82</sup>See Seneca, *Controversiae* 3, *praefatio*; 9, *praefatio*; 10, *praefatio*.

<sup>83</sup>See Cicero, *Brutus* 13.51; Petronius, *Sat.* 1.2.

<sup>84</sup>*Controversiae* 10.5.21. See Fairweather, *Seneca the Elder*, 245.

though Paul's vocabulary and syntax must seem to anyone approaching his writing for the first time with preconceptions about Greek prose derived chiefly from Athenian classics of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., it turns out, time and time again, that his unclassical expressions had in fact been in currency for two or three centuries previously. On the other hand, we have to cope somehow with the fact that there was no 'typical' Jewish, or Asiatic, idiom in Paul's period: the language of 4 Maccabees, though labelled as Asianist by Norden on account of its inclusion of neologisms and generally bombastic tone,<sup>85</sup> is nothing like Pauline Greek, and seems to me a great deal nearer to the classical Attic orators than anything in the New Testament. Why Paul might perhaps have deliberately opted for the *koine* in full consciousness of more elevated alternatives to it will be considered in more detail in Part 3 of this paper.

As to the curriculum at Gamaliel's school we can only speculate, but it may be doubted that a totally rigorist line was imposed there with regard to Greek learning. Gamaliel appears from the mention of him in Acts 5:34ff. to have been a broad-minded man. The earlier Pharisaic leader Hillel, according to later tradition at least,<sup>86</sup> Gamaliel's grandfather, was said to have been responsible for introducing an important set of seven modes of interpreting the Torah which in all probability had its origins in Greek dialectical theory.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>See Norden, *Die Antike Kunstprosa* Vol. 1, 416-8, discussed by Hadas, *op. cit.*, 98f.

<sup>86</sup>For doubts cast on this tradition, see J. Neusner, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70* (Leiden: Brill, 1971) Vol. 1, 14ff.; Hengel, *Pre-Christian Paul*, 27ff. But even supposing there was no blood-relationship, it is unlikely that a tradition of kinship would have arisen between two men who did not have at least some degree of intellectual affinity, *cf.* my article, 'Fiction in the biographies of ancient writers', *Ancient Society* 5 (1974) 231-275, esp. 256-9.

<sup>87</sup>See D. Daube, 'Rabbinic methods of interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric', *HUCA* 22 (1949) 239-264. Important and surprising parallels are adduced in this article between Jewish and Roman jurisprudence. See also S. Lieberman, 'Rabbinic Interpretation of Scripture' (1962) in H. A. Fischel (ed.), *Essays in Greco-Roman and related Talmudic Literature* (New York: Ktav, 1977) 289-324. Modern differences of opinion as to whether the systematic listing of the seven interpretative modes in fact went back to Hillel are summarised by G.L. Brooke in *Exegesis at Qumran* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985) 8-17.

Tradition declared that Hillel had learnt his modes of interpretation from Alexandrian proselytes,<sup>88</sup> and another anecdote presupposes knowledge on Hillel's part of the laws of Alexandria.<sup>89</sup> We may not wish, in view of what Paul is reported to have said about his master's strictness,<sup>90</sup> to assume that Gamaliel I went as far in accommodating himself to Graeco-Roman culture as his grandson and namesake, Gamaliel II, of whom it was said by his son Simeon that: 'There were a thousand young men in my father's house, five hundred of whom studied the Law, while the other five hundred studied Greek wisdom.'<sup>91</sup> But, supposing Gamaliel I shared in the slightest Hillel's reported openness towards Alexandrian culture, we may conjecture that the thought of Philo, for example, would have been known to the young Saul and his fellow-pupils. The Epistle to the Galatians (4:22ff.) includes what looks suspiciously like a reminiscence of the view taken by Philo of Greek rhetoric, dialectic and the whole range of what were later classed as the 'Seven Liberal Arts'. This had been set out in a remarkable treatise, *Περὶ τῆς πρὸς τὰ προπαιδεύματα συνόδου*, an allegorical exposition of Genesis 16:1-6, whose title might be translated roughly as *On getting into bed with Greek preliminary education*. The nub of Philo's allegory was this: Abram in Genesis 16 *init.* stands for the human mind; Sarai for wisdom/virtue, and Hagar, the Egyptian concubine, for the Greek ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία; it is to be understood that union of the mind (Abram, later Abraham) with Greek education (Hagar) is a necessary preliminary to the mind's begetting of offspring by its true spouse, wisdom/virtue (Sarai, later Sarah). According to this view of things, rhetoric and dialectic formed part of the mind's liaison with Hagar:

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<sup>88</sup>See Daube, *op. cit.*, 241.

<sup>89</sup>See. A. Kaminka, 'Hillel's Life and Work', *JQR* n.s. 30 (1939) 107-122 = Fischel (ed.), *Essays*, 78-93.

<sup>90</sup>Acts 22:3.

<sup>91</sup>See. S. Liebermann, *Greek in Jewish Palestine: studies in the life and manners of Jewish Palestine in the II-IV C.E.* (New York: Feldheim, 1965) 1, 20.

Rhetoric, sharpening the mind to the observation of facts (Θεωρίαν), and training and welding thought to expression, will make the man a true master of words and thoughts, thus taking into its charge the peculiar and special gift which nature has not bestowed on any other living creature. Dialectic, the sister and twin, as some have said, of Rhetoric, distinguishes true argument from false, and convicts the plausibilities of sophistry, and thus will heal that great plague of the soul, deceit. It is profitable, then, to take these and the like for our associates and for the field of our preliminary studies. For perhaps indeed it may be with us, as it has been with many, that through the vassals we shall come to the knowledge of the royal virtues. Observe too that our body is not nourished in the earlier stages with solid and costly foods. The simple and milky foods of infancy come first.<sup>92</sup> Just so you may consider that the school subjects and the lore which belongs to each of them stand ready to nourish the childhood of the soul, while the virtues are grown-up food, suited for those who are really men.<sup>93</sup>

Could we have here an indication of the way in which Saul of Tarsus had been encouraged to regard Greek culture in the days before the revolution in his life which prompted him to view the Torah itself as a mere παιδαγωγός, and to demote it, in his own allegorising, to the role of Hagar? We are certainly not barred from investigating the possibility that the pupil of Gamaliel had a grounding in τὰ προπαιδεύματα.

‘The extent of Paul’s knowledge of Greek literature has often been discussed, some asserting that his quotations from the Greek poets are no proofs of a Grecian education and others maintaining the opposite view’: thus P.G. Gloag in 1870.<sup>94</sup> The debate continues, complicated by aspersions cast on the historicity of Acts and the authenticity of the Epistle to Titus, issues on which I feel it justifiable to suspend judgement here in the interests of comprehensiveness,

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<sup>92</sup>Cf. 1 Cor. 3:2.

<sup>93</sup>Philo, *de Congressu*, 17-19, translated F.H. Colson and G.H. Whittaker (Loeb edition; London: Heinemann, 1932).

<sup>94</sup>P.G. Gloag, *A critical and exegetical commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (1870; reprinted Minneapolis: Klock and Klock, 1979).

given the considerable reaction in Pauline studies in recent years against the hypercriticism of the past.<sup>95</sup> The fact that Paul's Epistles do not contain an ostentatious parade of pagan learning does not necessarily mean that he had none at his disposal: there is a comparable scarcity of quotation from other Greek authors in, for example, the letters of Plato and Epicurus. The vast wealth of classical parallels assembled by Betz in his commentary on Galatians needs to be approached with critical caution, but it would not be wise to disregard the reminder it provides that the air which Paul and his converts breathed was permeated by Greek philosophical commonplaces.<sup>96</sup> Hengel is inclined to minimise Paul's indebtedness to Greek pagan literature, arguing that his 'few maxims and commonplaces from the popular philosophers' would have been in line 'with the style of missionary and apologetic preaching in the synagogues'.<sup>97</sup> However, the evidence permits us at least to toy with the hypothesis that Paul at some stage had undertaken a serious study of what the literature of the pagan world had to offer comparable with the wisdom literature and prophecy of the Jews.

'Evil communications corrupt good morals' (1 Cor. 15:33) is indeed a 'detached saying', now believed to have occurred in a tragic context (most likely Euripidean)<sup>98</sup> as well as in Menander,<sup>99</sup> and probably it would have been well-known even to completely unlettered Greek-speakers in the first century A.D. But Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12 seem suggestive of more abstruse learning on Paul's part. In the Acts passage he is reported to have cited pagan poetry in support of his contention that 'we live and move and have our being'

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<sup>95</sup>I am disinclined to dismiss Titus as inauthentic on the basis of the stylometric analysis of A. Kenny, *A Stylometric Study of the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986) 98, which finds 1 Corinthians the epistle that fits the second least 'snugly' in the Pauline corpus. Further historical study of problems of authenticity would be outside the scope of this paper.

<sup>96</sup>For classical parallels see also J.J. Wettstein (Wetstenius), *Novum Testamentum Graecum* (Amsterdam, 1752).

<sup>97</sup>*Pre-Christian Paul*, 2.

<sup>98</sup>P. Hibeh 17 = fr. 1024 in B. Snell (ed.), *Supplementum ad 'A. Nauck, Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta'* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1964). The restoration of the latter part of the proverb is conjectural here.

<sup>99</sup>Menander, *Reliquiae*, (ed. A. Koerte; Leipzig: Teubner, 1953), fr. 187.

in the God ‘unknown’ to the Athenians: ὥς καὶ τινες τῶν καθ’ ὑμᾶς ποιητῶν εἰρήκασιν: τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν.’ Observe that Paul is credited here with professing to a knowledge of Greek poets in the plural. The exact quotation given from the proem to Aratus’ *Phaenomena*<sup>100</sup> has indeed been found to have a close analogue elsewhere in Greek poetry, namely in a *Hymn to Zeus* by Aratus’ contemporary, Cleanthes.<sup>101</sup> Again, in the Epistle to Titus we find a whole line of hexameter verse cited, a disparagement of Cretans ascribed to one of their own prophets: εἶπέν τις ἐξ αὐτῶν ἴδιος αὐτῶν προφήτης, Ἰκρήτες αἰὲ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί’. The Cretan ‘prophet’ to whom these words were ascribed was Epimenides, who, incidentally, according to the biographical tradition,<sup>102</sup> was credited with having averted a plague at Athens by a system of sacrifices τῷ προσήκοντι θεῷ, which led to the setting up there of ‘anonymous altars’. It is an exciting thought that Paul may have known this.

But we do not have to assume that Paul’s reading had included a wealth of pagan poetry. It is quite conceivable that he had gleaned his knowledge of the Greek poets entirely from within the realm of Jewish-Greek literature. Interest in parallels for Jewish thinking in the Greek poets is attested far earlier than Paul. According to Eusebius and Clement of Alexandria, one Aristobulus, a Jew mentioned in 2 Maccabees, quoted Aratus in an exposition of Judaism addressed to King Ptolemy.<sup>103</sup> Both Euripides and Menander are cited in certain early Christian treatises where the superiority of Christianity over paganism is vaunted and it is argued that all the true wisdom of the Greeks came from the Bible.<sup>104</sup> It is very possible that Jewish works taking a similar line were available to Paul and could have

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<sup>100</sup>Aratus, *Phaenomena*, line 5 in *Callimachus, Hymns, Aratus, Lycophron* (ed. G.R. Mair; London: Heinemann, 1921).

<sup>101</sup>Cleanthes fr. 1, line 4 in *Collectanea Alexandrina* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925) 227.

<sup>102</sup>See Diogenes Laertius 1.110.

<sup>103</sup>*Pseudepigrapha Veteris Testamenti Graece*, (ed. A.-M. Denis, M. De Jonge; Leiden: Brill, 1970), Vol. 3, pp. 217ff.

<sup>104</sup>See A.-M. Denis, *Introduction aux pseudépigraphes grecs d’ancien testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1970) 221ff.

included discussion of the ‘prophet’ Epimenides and enumeration of the Greek poets (plural) who attested to the notion that we are all the children of the one God.<sup>105</sup> Discussion of Epimenides in Jewish sources might, alternatively, have been prompted by consideration of a fanciful theory, reported by Tacitus,<sup>106</sup> that the Jews (*Iudaei*/Ἰουδαῖοι) had originally been *Idaei* (Ἰδαῖοι) from Mount Ida, and were therefore kin of the Cretans. But certainty about the extent of Paul’s acquaintance with pagan literature is, of course, unobtainable, and the minimalist hypothesis is not necessarily the right one. Paul was at least sufficiently in touch with pagan culture to know his rights in law as a Roman citizen. He at least knew that the Greek philosophical quest was of a different intellectual character from the hankering after signs which he found characteristic of the Jews (1 Cor. 1:22). He is reported in Acts 17:19 to have encountered Stoic and Epicurean philosophers in person. And it is worth noting that to one of his hostile contemporary critics it seemed that the Apostle had been driven mad by τὰ πολλά ...γράμματα.<sup>107</sup>

Is there any reason to suppose that these γράμματα might have included works of literary theory? This is a question that the student of Galatians needs to ask, given that the Epistle includes two uncommon words from the technical vocabulary of literary criticism, namely μακαρισμός (Gal. 4:15) and ἀλληγορούμενα (Gal. 4:24). The term μακαρισμός, though perhaps meaning nothing more precise than ‘praise’ in Galatians 4:15, is used in Romans 4:6, 9 with reference to the opening of Psalm 32, in exactly the technical sense, ‘a pronouncing blessed’ which it is given in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* 1.9.34 (1367b 33). With regard to these terms, computerised word-searching yields interesting results. Of the Greek authors currently included in the *TLG* data-bank, the only one earlier than Paul recorded as having

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<sup>105</sup>M.J. Edwards, ‘Quoting Aratus: Acts 17:28’, *ZNW* 83 (1992) 266-9, argues for direct reminiscence by ‘Luke’ of Aristobulus.

<sup>106</sup>*Historiae* 5.2; see M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1980), Vol. II, 17ff.

<sup>107</sup>Festus in Acts 26:24.

used ἀλληγορούμενος -η -ον is Philo.<sup>108</sup> The substantival use of the neuter plural form ἀλληγορούμενα seems, on the evidence available to me, unprecedented; it is reminiscent of the use by Cicero of τὰ φιλοσοφούμενα to mean ‘philosophical treatises’.<sup>109</sup> As for μακαρισμός, this term is of older vintage, occurring in Plato (*Rep.* 591a) where its meaning is much the same as in Galatians, and also in Aristotle. But, interestingly enough, it occurs in Philo too. Thus we are once more probably not obliged to look outside Jewish-Greek literature to account for Paul’s learning.

The fact remains that Paul’s use of technical nomenclature in Romans 4:6, 9. and Galatians 4:21 reveals him as not entirely unacquainted with the thought-world of the Greek rhetorical theorists. What is more: Paul’s use of the verb μετασχηματίζειν in 1 Corinthians 4:6 suggests that his theoretical grasp of the techniques of classical rhetoric was extensive and advanced. There is no parallel in Philo for the usage here, and whatever the precise implications of μετεσχημάτισα, the word is undoubtedly being used of Paul’s processes of literary composition. It seems to me inescapable that Paul here reveals considerable knowledge of the rhetorical theory of ‘figured’ discourse; also that he expected his Corinthian addressees to be to some degree familiar with this theory.

To understand what μετασχηματίζειν means we first have to shed modern preconceptions about what the term ‘figure of speech’ implies: for instance, in antiquity a metaphor was not regarded normally as a ‘figure of speech’ but as a ‘trope’. ‘Figures of speech’ were abnormal configurations of sentence-structure; ‘figures of thought’, as we have already noted with reference to Chrysostom, comprised many and various ploys for swaying the thoughts and emotions of one’s hearers. The article on 1 Corinthians 4:6, by F.H. Colson, a classical scholar who worked on Cicero and Quintilian as

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<sup>108</sup>*De Vita Contemplativa* (29.1). The possibility that Paul had read this text deserves the attention of historians of liturgy.

<sup>109</sup>*Ad Familiares* 11.27.5.

well as on Philo, includes a good introduction to the ancient theory.<sup>110</sup> A more recent discussion by Benjamin Fiore S.J. adds much useful documentation.<sup>111</sup>

As I see it, the figures which Paul was chiefly deploying in the opening chapters of 1 Corinthians are those listed in the course of Cicero's classic survey of figures (*De Or.* 3.53.204) namely: *praemunitio* (fore-arming of oneself): *traiectio in alium* (transference to a different person) and *communicatio* (taking the audience into consultation). His exact thought-processes are hard to follow, but perhaps what he meant the Corinthians to understand was that everything he had just been writing about in relation to himself, Paul, and Apollos—their subordinate position in a working partnership with God (1 Cor. 3:5ff.); the need to build on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ (3:10ff.); the need for trustworthiness on the part of servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of Christ (4:1f.); the need to be aware that only God's judgement is of importance (4:3ff.)—also applied to the whole Corinthian congregation. At any rate, some kind of 'transference of something to different persons' seems to be what is primarily in Paul's mind at 1 Corinthians 4:6, given that μετασχηματίζειν, which normally means 'to transform', has a neuter plural object and the construction εἰς + accusative referring to persons. What is normally transferred in the rhetorical figure known variously as *traiectio*, *remotio*, *transmotio*, and in Greek as μετάστασις, is blame: this, typically, is transferred from oneself or one's client on to another person. Paul may be regarded as unorthodox, rhetorically speaking, in shifting the focus of scrutiny away from the Corinthian faction-mongers and onto himself and Apollos for paradigmatic purposes, but undoubtedly some sort of 'transference to others' is going on.<sup>112</sup> That he specifically unveils the fact that he has been deploying figures—like a flower-arranger exposing the wire-netting—is in flagrant breach of normal rhetorical practice. It is as if his conscience is suddenly smitten by 'the Lord...who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts' (1 Cor. 4:5), and before whose

<sup>110</sup>F.H. Colson, 'μετεσχημάτισα: 1 Cor. 4:16', *JTS* 16 (1916) 379-384.

<sup>111</sup>B. Fiore, "'Covert Allusion" in 1 Corinthians 1-4', *CBQ* 47 (1985) 85-102.

<sup>112</sup>*Cf.* the beginning of Chrysostom's twelfth *Homily on 1 Corinthians*.

judgement-seat the covert allusiveness of classical figured rhetoric will be to no avail.

The use of μετασχηματίζειν in 1 Corinthians 4:6 seems to me to be inescapable evidence that Paul was a conscious exponent of the techniques of classical oratory, even if an unorthodox one. Perhaps he learnt about 'figured' techniques of persuasion somewhere other than in a school of rhetoric, say, in connection with a training for synagogue preaching. It is even possible to envisage contexts where the term μετασχηματίζειν might have cropped up in hellenised commentating on the Psalms, the Song of Solomon or the Prophets. Note that Paul's technical use of μακαρισμός (Rom. 4:6, 9) has reference to one of the Psalms. But wherever it was that he learnt what he knew about the theory of figures, we certainly cannot claim that he was totally ignorant of, or uninvolved in, the classical art of rhetoric. Yet elsewhere in 1 Corinthians he expresses in a forthright manner rejection of the 'wisdom of this world' in general and of verbal cleverness in particular, in favour of the language of the cross (ὁ λόγος...ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ).<sup>113</sup> In his tirades addressed to the Corinthians one detects apparent rejection of all that the classical 'art of persuasion' stood for. This also seems the implication of Galatians 1:10: ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἢ τὸν Θεόν· ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρεσκείν· εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἤρεσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἦμεν.

The expression of the initial question here is extremely stark, and assuming the text is correctly transmitted, strange.<sup>114</sup> The best commentary on it is 2 Corinthians 5:11: εἶδοτες οὖν τὸν θόβον τοῦ Κυρίου ἀνθρώπους πείθομεν, Θεῷ δὲ περᾶνερῶμεθα: ἐλπίζω δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν πεφᾶνερῶσθαι. Paul's intense consciousness that his utterances were under God's scrutiny seems to have been one thing which he saw as setting his writing apart from the man-pleasing of worldly persuaders. As a Jew, he would have been brought up on the commandment against bearing false witness in Exodus 20:16; hence 1 Corinthians 15:15. This fact too would have distanced him from the customary standards of pagan orators.

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<sup>113</sup>Especially 1 Cor. 1:17ff.; 2:4-5.

<sup>114</sup>As an alternative, it is conceivable that a verb expressing reverence, e.g. δοξάζω, has dropped out after θεόν.

Not that the Greek world was without a tradition of distrust for persuasion unfounded on in absolute truth: Plato in the *Gorgias* had represented Socrates as having demolished the pretensions of contemporary teachers of the so-called art of persuasion, by showing that they were not interested in questions of absolute right and wrong, merely with matters of opinion.<sup>115</sup> Such thinking may be suspected to lie behind the accusation which Paul is answering in Galatians 1:10 for, although ‘persuasion’ is not a concept entirely unknown in the Old Testament,<sup>116</sup> it is not widespread or well-developed there. Some awareness of the Greek anti-rhetorical tradition seems implicit in his own strictures against the persuasive words of σοφία in 1 Corinthians 2:4; also in the disparagement in Colossians 2:4 of πιθανολογία, this being a Platonic term found in the *Theaetetus* (162e). In the same dialogue we also find reference to Socrates’ famous claim to ‘know nothing’ (161b), a position with which that adopted by Paul during his Corinthian mission (1 Cor. 2:2) is in part comparable.

It remains to be considered whether or not we can isolate any particular features of Paul’s epistolary preaching-mode which are foreign to the classical art of persuasion, and may be claimed to constitute persuasion ‘in the knowledge of the fear of the Lord’ as proclaimed in 2 Corinthians 5:11. For the intention to persuade, even though disavowed in Galatians 1:10 (with particular reference to the severe rebuke of vv. 6-9), and again the object of scathing attack in 1 Corinthians 1:4 (with reference to the ‘wisdom of this world’), was not something that Paul could entirely disclaim, and 2 Corinthians 5:11 shows that he recognised this. That persuasion was regarded in Jewish thought as not always a bad thing is illustrated by Proverbs 25:15. A missionary preacher must inevitably employ the suasory mode; πέπεισμοι was a normal Greek way of expressing ‘I believe’, and πίστις, too, is etymologically connected with πείθειν.<sup>117</sup> No wonder, then, that Paul is several times described in the Acts of the

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<sup>115</sup>Plato, *Gorgias*, esp. 452d-455a.

<sup>116</sup>E.g. 1 Ki. 22:20-22; 2 Chron. 18:19; 32:11; Is, 36:18; Prov. 25:15.

<sup>117</sup>See P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Kleinsieck: Paris, 1968) s.v. peivqomai.

Apostles as ‘persuading’ his hearers.<sup>118</sup> In the concluding part of this study I will return to detailed examination of the Epistle to the Galatians, asking in particular whether it contains signs either of ‘anti-rhetoric’, or of unquestionable indebtedness to Greek classical modes of rhetorical composition. I will then make further attempts to isolate what in fact differentiated Paul’s mode of discourse from the sophistic art of persuasion.

Part 3 of this study will appear in the next issue of *Tyndale Bulletin*. (November 1994).

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<sup>118</sup>See Acts 14:19; 18:19; 19:8, 26 (words of Demetrius); 26:28 (words of Agrippa).