THE OPPOSITION ΠΙΝΕΥΜΑ AND ΣΑΡΞ AS PERSUASIVE SUMMONS (GALATIANS 5:13-6:10)

E A C PRETORIUS

Abstract
It is suggested that the conflicting forces of πνεῦμα and σάρξ are utilised in a deictic way in the paraenesis of Galatians, reaffirming values once held by Paul and his Galatian converts. The rhetoric occasion for a rerouting of the argument from the law - Spirit controversy to the flesh - Spirit opposition seems to be the perception that the demise of Jewish observances had left an unprotected flank on the side of the flesh. The apostle fills this mental gap with reference to the potent agency of the Spirit, subtly applying the workings of both the Spirit and the flesh to the theme of peace and unity, respectively strife and disunity in the community, possibly on a Jewish - Gentile axis. He thus reinforces his persuasion in favour of a choice (once again) for the Spirit.

1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: 5:13-6:10 IN THE GALATIAN DEBATE

In the research on Galatians the main emphasis has certainly not fallen, nor the bulk of literature been devoted to this part of the letter. However, proper attention to the rhetorical situation and the rhetorical thrust of this passage could shed light, not only on the nature and function of the paraenesis of the letter, but also on some of the troublesome aspects of the 'main argument' in the preceding chapters, since the integrity of the letter is not really contested.

In his contribution titled 'The call to responsible freedom in Paul's persuasive strategy: Galatians 5:13-6', G F Wessels (1992) deals with the rhetorical features ascribed to this passage and the way its function in the letter has been variously described in the recent debate. Some additional remarks are warranted, leading up to the specific theme addressed here.

Some interesting features emerge from views on the relation of chapters 5 & 6 to the preceding four chapters. H D Betz (1975 & 1979) lists chapters 5 and 6 (1-10) as the exhortatio of the letter, but seems at a loss to explain the obviously hortative nature of these chapters (1979:16-23), since he regards the letter as primarily an apologetic speech in the forensic mode (1979).
Robert Hall (1987) opposes the notion of Betz, concluding ‘that Galatians fits squarely in the deliberative species of classical rhetoric’ (1987:287). He however, admits that it can prove a difficult task to assign a speech or document to one of the three species of rhetoric (278). His generalising dictum: ‘Galatians as a whole is an exhortation, as every deliberative speech is’ (284), indicates that it is not very helpful to impose a classical rhetoric genre on the document as a whole! In this way, one might lose sight of both the letter form and the special paraenetic character of chapters 5 & 6.

The special rhetorical character of the Pauline paraenesis is pointed out by Wolfgang Harnisch (1987). The juxtaposition of positive and negative advice clearly indicates that Paul is using the opposing rhetorical categories of persuasion (Zuraten) and dissuasion (Abraten), which do not belong to the forensic speech but to the deliberative. This he takes as an undeniable indication that a transition to a different rhetorical mode is made between chapters 4 and 5: ‘Das Genus iudiciale wird durch das Genus deliberativum abgelöst’ (1987:286-7).

However, Paul deviates from the classical model in so far as he does not give advice of a comparative degree of desirability or undesirability. He does not operate with ethical, but with eschatological alternatives. What is at stake is not merely more or less of a gain or loss but the either-or of the new existence which has been opened up by the gospel (1987:287).

It has been pointed out by Lambrecht (1989) that the three classical genres of Aristotle, which were applicable to oratory in his times, are completely inadequate for the classification and exposition of literature in modern times. ‘Besides oratory Kennedy points to historiography and philosophical dialogue: according to Quintilian only these three prose genres are literary. Of course, there is also poetry. But what about epistolography?’ (1989:243).

Richard Longenecker (1990) explicitly proceeds from the basic (though variable) Hellenistic form of the Pauline letter to investigate the composition of Galatians. His use of attested letter formulae to identify the component parts and letter transitions is especially commendable. However, he then tends to find a substitute for the list he provides of the parts of a Pauline letter, adopting with Hansen (1989) the simple structure of a salutation (1:1-5), a rebuke section (1:6-4:11), a request section (4:12-6:10) and a subscription (6:11-18). Accordingly our passage is included in the request section as part of the paraenesis, which starts ‘somewhere between 4:28.. and 5:13.., with request blending into and becoming explicitly exhortation’ (1990:iv-ix).

The problem of finding a unitary line between Paul’s theology and his ethics in Galatians is addressed by Richard Hays (1987) in an attempt to overcome the necessity of holding that Paul ‘was either fighting enemies on two fronts at once (legalists and libertines) or fighting a single group of enemies with theologically schizophrenic tendencies’ (1987:268). He supports Betz’s effort (1979) to find a
situation to which both components of the letter might have been addressed, namely one in which the Galatians were experiencing a problem with the flesh and doubting the sufficiency of the Spirit to empower an obedient moral life. This was caused by Paul’s proclaiming of a gospel that replaces the law and a gospel of the freedom in the Spirit. The letter as a whole can thus be regarded as an apology in defense of the Spirit. Hays, however, opposes Betz’s view that the Spirit is only credited with providing the motivation and power for a moral life, whereas the norms and guidelines in 5:13-6:10 are not derived from Paul’s theological stance, but merely constitute a repetition of the conventional standards of cultured persons at the time (1987:270).

He argues that the phrase ‘the law of Christ’ in Galatians 6:2 does not refer to a new (Christian) code of laws, nor even to the moral teaching of Jesus. It should be seen as an ironic reaction by Paul to the emphasis on ‘law’ by the Judaisers—referring to ‘the pattern of action (or “structure of existence”) exemplified by the Christ who bore the burdens of others in becoming a curse “for us”. Therein’, according to Hays, ‘lies the fundamental paradigm for Christian ethics’ (1987:286-7).

2 A SWITCH OF OBJECTIVES IN THE PARAENESIS?

It has been a feature of the ‘new rhetoric’ not to focus mainly on formal stylistic features but rather to determine the way in which an author attempts to exert influence on a particular rhetoric situation (vid Bitzer 1968). The scope of the enquiry has also been considerably widened in the light of a new understanding of the rhetorical process itself. This opens up a better possibility of taking into account both the primary letter character of Galatians and the pragmatic rhetorical strategies employed by the author.

2.1 The flesh — enemy number two after the law?
The present enquiry revolves around the observation that, whereas the main antithesis developed in the first part of Galatians (Chs 1-4) is that between law and Spirit, the other big antithesis, in the second part of Galatians (Chs 5-6) is that between flesh and Spirit. Though the flesh controversy is already heralded in the first part (3:3) and the law controversy still echoes in the second part (5:14,18,23), the relationship between the two issues needs clarification.

When the indicative argument reaches the point (in 4:31) where freedom from the way of obedience to the law has been ascertained, the stage seems set for paraenetic instruction regarding a return to, and remaining steadfast in the freedom of Christ through the Spirit. Exhortation on these lines actually follows, but only up to 5:12, where the risk of freedom from the law becomes an issue because of the flesh. This leads to our passage and the teaching regarding the Spirit as the (only) remedy, also for the evil inclination of the flesh. In 5:18 there is then a
flashback from the ethical situation to a confirmation that living by the Spirit is indeed freedom from the law.

2.2 The ‘exposed flank’ left by the redundant law
Perhaps a simple graphic representation of the Galatians’ dilemma as surmised from Paul’s view might serve as a point of reference in the approach to the interplay of rhetoric motifs in the letter and especially in the paraenetic section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE ADVENT OF CHRIST</th>
<th>THE LAW SITUATION</th>
<th>THE PNEUMA SITUATION</th>
<th>THE GALATIAN CRISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GOD’S PEOPLE</td>
<td>BEGINS WITH PNEUMA</td>
<td>PNEUMA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BELIEVERS</td>
<td>THE GALATIANS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>THE LAW</td>
<td>FREEDOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>THE LAW INCLINATION</td>
<td>THE GALATIANS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FREEDOM</td>
<td>ENDS WITH SARCX?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Christ event is thus seen by Paul as the pivot on which the ages turn. In 4:4 it is explicitly stated that ‘when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born...under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.’ This entailed receiving the Pneuma of his Son ‘in their hearts’, who uttered the ‘Abba’ call, implying that they were no longer slaves, but sons (4:6,7). When before their eyes ‘Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified’ in the preaching of the gospel, and they had received the Spirit by faith (3:1,2 RSV) the Galatians had, as it were, re-enacted this momentous religious event. The problem addressed in the paraenesis, can be crudely defined as the ‘vacuum’ left between them and the σαρξ when the law had been removed from its place as the traditional hedge or shield between God’s people and the sinful nature, the evil inclination, or in short, ‘the flesh’.

In one way or another, the solution suggested or urged by the Judaisers comprised a reversal to the law situation, where the law, complete with circumcision, would remain in place as a guarantee that pagan Christians would be able to live upright lives, worthy of the people of God. As (Jewish) Christians they them-
selves obviously did not reject the sacrificial merit of Jesus. Their concern must have been the moral character of the community of believers which, they were sure, could only be maintained if performance of the Old Testament law and liturgy remained an integral part of the requirement for full membership and a sine qua non for true piety.

Paul’s agony results from the fact that he regards this as a turning back of the clock of religious history and as entailing nothing less than a complete rejection, not only of Christ and his salvation, but also of the Spirit, whom the Galatian Christians have also received by faith as the sign of their adoption as full members (sons) into the new people of God from among all nations.

In the paraenetic section he finally has to confront the ethical consequences of this abrogation in principle of the salvific function of the law. Questions raised at this point might include: Was the danger of the flesh, in absence of the ‘shield’ of the law, perceived by Paul; was it actually experienced by the Galatians; or was it indicated as a threat by the Judaisers, should the law be abolished? The answers hinge to some extent on the kind of evil attributed to the flesh and the way in which the Spirit is regarded as counteracting these evils, no longer as an outward agency like the law, but by way of internal indwelling in God’s people. Finally, this gives rise to the question whether a relation is implied between law and flesh, both being regarded as foes of the Spirit (vid 10 infra)

3 THE PATTERN OF PERSUASION IN 5:13-6:10

3.1 Freedom: the transition to the paraenesis

The progression from the main argument to 5:13 and following, is clearly facilitated by the term ἐλευθερία (freedom). It first occurs in the letter in Paul’s remarks about those who spy on his Christian freedom (2:4) but it is especially interwoven in the allegory based on the children born of the free and unfree wives of Abraham, from which the slavery of those under the law, and the freedom of those who believe in the promise are deduced (4:22, 23, 26, 30, 31). Thus Paul arrives at the conclusion that the Galatians (4:28), and indeed all Christians (4:31), are children of the promise, because (by believing in the promise) they are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman.

Based on this indicative, a twofold paraenetic goal is pursued by the apostle. Firstly, in 5:1 and following, the practical consequence is drawn of all that has been said about the bondage to the law in the previous chapters. Over against submitting to circumcision, which brings the obligation of obeying the whole law (5:3), the clarion call is sounded in 5:1: τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστός ἠλευθέρωσεν στίκτε ὑμᾶς καὶ μὴ πάλιν ζυγῷ δουλείας ἐνέχεσθε. In 6:12-16 attention is again called to the serious matter of being persuaded into submitting to circumcision.
The second prong of Paul's rhetoric thrust also hinges on the freedom indicative. But this time the danger perceived seems to lurk, not in a possible return to bondage, but in the proclaimed situation of freedom itself. Γινείς γάρ ἐπ’ ἐλευθερία ἐκλήθητε, ἀδελφοί· μόνον μὴ τὴν ἐλευθερίαν εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῇ σαρκί, ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις (5:13). If not understood and practised properly, that is under the regimen of the Spirit, freedom may indeed cause a slide into the realm of the flesh. Thus the flesh - Spirit controversy, which dominates the rest of the paraenetic section (5:13-6:10), is introduced.

### 3.2 The procedure

In a text like this, with its direct, exhortative nature, no great divergence is to be expected between the surface and the deep structure — the causa, or intention of the discourse. In identifying the different thought categories (isotopics) and linking up the trends and patterns in the terms and images used, one might arrive at a clearer perception of the persuasive goal and strategy of the apostle.

In order to get a picture of the rhetoric input and intent in this part of the letter we shall start by scanning the primary impulses which are revealed by the recurrence of motifs in the argument. Starting from the 'opposite' side of a lexicographical listing of terms, our quest will be to identify positive and negative lines of rhetoric thrust and the way in which they relate to one another, thus attempting to detect a persuasive pattern in the paraenesis. On this basis the various semantically related thought categories which are utilised in the argument are to be defined more accurately according to the in situ context of the individual loci. When this stage in the exercise has been reached, a comparison with views reached along more traditional ways of enquiry might be possible.

### 3.3 The main rhetoric threads of the argument

The following elements present themselves:

1. There is, of course, the explicit pair of opposites: πνεῦμα (Spirit) and σάρκις (flesh), which frequently appear in the passage and are also in evidence in the rest of the letter. The basic conflict between these two can indeed be regarded as the matrix for the structure of the paraenesis.

2. Secondly, there is a group of semantic units indicating a law, a being compelled or being constrained, including terms of submitting to a restraining force or principle.

3. The third class encompasses those terms indicating mutual attitudes and personal interaction.
Finally, there is a category in which completion, result or destination is envisaged.

In what follows, the hypothesis will be pursued that the rhetoric aim of the paraenesis can be identified by determining the relationship between these four semantic domains which arises from the way in which the author makes use of them.

ΠΝΕΥΜΑ AND ΣΑΡΚΩ AS DEICTIC MOTIFS

These two terms are already utilised as a contradictory pair in the initial framing of Paul’s view on the impending straying of the Galatian converts: In 3:3 he probes the situation with the searching question: ἐναρξάμενο πνεῦμα τυν σαρκι ἐπιτελεῖσθε; From the way in which they are introduced, it can be accepted that the Galatian believers were already acquainted with both terms. Apart from the distinction of beginning and ending, it is also clear that πνεῦμα is here regarded as the positive force, whereas σάρξ is representative of a negative disposition (in spite of the fact that in the two previous instances in the letter, that is 1:16 and 2:20, it is used in a ‘neutral’ sense, respectively indicating a human being and the present life). It can be tentatively surmised that πνεῦμα and σάρξ are indicative respectively of the ultimate religious good and bad in Paul’s remedial approach to the precarious situation of the Galatians as he perceives it.

Furthermore, in Paul’s perception of πνεῦμα and σάρξ, they are not viewed in a static way, but as locked in a deadly struggle. There is a mutual ἐπιθυμεῖν κατά (5:17) one another. The chiastic construct in 5:17 emphasises this existential opposition, in which the Galatian Christians are involuntarily involved. From these two compelling forces and their mutual struggle there is no escaping!

According to the views of Perelman, the elaboration on, and exposition of mutually known and accepted images or ideas constitute a typical strategy in the epideictic mode of argumentation. He says ‘...epidictic oratory has significance and importance for argumentation, because it strengthens the disposition towards action by increasing adherence to the values it lauds’ and ‘[b]eing in no fear of contradiction, the speaker readily converts into universal values, if not eternal truths, that which has acquired a certain standing through social unanimity.’ He proceeds ‘In epidictic oratory, the speaker turns educator’ and, quoting Simone Weil, draws attention to the fact that the expression of sentiments by a respected person may even bring about an inner transformation in those who respond favourably (1969:50-53). Surely this indicates a close parallel to Paul’s strategy in this paraenetic section and opens up the possibility of a more adequate evaluation of its rhetoric situation than is possible from a forensic or even a deliberative viewpoint, or a mixture of the two. In fact, Perelman claims that the common values required by the forensic and deliberative modes, can only be taught by way of epideictic instruction (1969:52).
The accepted symbols of good and evil, πνεῦμα and σάρξ, are thus brought to bear on the specific ills which the apostle envisages in the congregation. As will be clear from the following overview, it is not sufficient to index the terms according to their ‘meaning’ or ‘translation equivalent’ in the individual instances. The decisive slant and the real aim and objective of their implementation in each occurrence will only be revealed by the interplay with other rhetoric motifs. What may emerge from a scanning of these terms is the deictic use Paul makes of them in various instances.

5 REVIEW OF THE ΠΝΕΥΜΑ AND ΣΑΡΞ LOCI IN GALATIANS

5.1 Gl 1:1-5:12.

1:16 (c18f) οὐ προσανέθεμνυ σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι, [neutral: human being]
2:20 (c59a) δὲ νῦν ζὼ ἐν σαρκὶ, ἐν πίστει ζῷ [neutral: present life]
3:2 (c63b) τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε (the way in which the Spirit was received)
3:3 (c65a&b) ἐναρξάμενοι πνεῦματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε; (N B! Spiritual start & fleshly ending?)
3:5 (c68a) ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα (provision of the Spirit by law or through faith?)
3:14 (c80d) τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν (nations receive blessing, promise of Spirit)
4:6 (c114b) ἐξαπέστειλεν θεός τὸ πνεῦμα (Spirit sent to hearts of God’s children)
4:13 (c125b) δὲ ἀποθείειν τὴς σαρκὸς [neutral: bodily illness]
4:23 (c138) κατὰ σάρκα γεγένηται (born according to the flesh)
4:29 (c149a) ὁ κατὰ σάρκα γεννηθεὶς ἐδίωκεν τῷ κατὰ πνεῦμα (enmity between those born of different principles)
5:5 (c159) ἤμεις γὰρ πνεῦματι...δικαίωσιν ἀπεκδεχόμεθα (through Spirit, hope of righteousness)

5.2 Gl 5:13-26 (P17 & 18)

5:13 (c171) τὴν ἐλευθερίαν εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῇ σαρκὶ (sinful destiny of a mistaken sense of freedom)
16 (c175.1.1) πνεῦματι περιπατεῖτε (imperative: walk by God’s Spirit)
(c175.1.2) ἐπιθυμήσαι σαρκὸς
(conquerable design of sinful human nature)

17 (c176) σάρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ 
κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος,
(c177) πνεύμα 
κατὰ τῆς σαρκὸς

(deliberate chiasm: emphasis on mutual enmity, causing an 
ongoing battle which demands a repeti tive choice from the Galatians)

18 (c179a) πνεύματι ἀγεσθε 
control by the Spirit [liberates from the law])

19 (c180) ἐργα τῆς σαρκὸς 
(evidence of sinful nature [listed in c181])

22 (c183) καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος 
(produce of Spirit [listed in c183])

[compatible with the law!]

24 (c185b) τὴν σάρκα ἑσταύρωσαν 
(origin of sinful desires eliminated)

25 (c186a) ζωμεῖν πνεύματι 
(the Spirit has brought about the new existence)

(c186b) πνεύματι καὶ στοιχώμειν 
(the Spirit should inspire the way of life)

5.3 GL 6:1-10 (P19 & 20)

1 (c188b) οἱ πνευματικοὶ 
(You, people of the Spirit, should correct one another’s faults)

[ἐν πνεύματι πραγματος] [in a modest way]

8 (c198a) σπείρων εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ 
(acting on sinful human impulses)

(c199b) ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς θερίσει φθορὰν.
(acting on the impulses inherent in a choice for the ‘flesh’)

(c200a) ὀ δὲ σπείρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα 
(acting on the impulses of the indwelling Spirit)

(c200b) ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος θερίσει ζωῆν αἰώνιον.
(‘life’ as a result inherent in a choice for the Spirit).

5.4 GL 6:11-18 (P21 & 22)

6:12 (c205a) ἐν προσωπήσαται ἐν σαρκὶ 
(the prestige of conforming to circumcision)

13 (c207b) ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχήσωμαι 
(the desire to boast about swaying the Galatians to submit 
to circumcision)

18 (c216) μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ὑμῶν.
450 THE OPPOSITION ΠΕΥΜΑ AND ΣΑΡΞ

(neutral: 'with you', 'in your innermost' possibly a word play on their being πνευματικός)

6 RHETORIC AIMS REVEALED BY INTRODUCING ADDITIONAL SEMANTIC CATEGORIES

Whatever cumulative definitions, lexical indices or translation equivalents may be offered for the terms σάρξ and πνεῦμα, what really matters in determining their rhetorical impact is rather the direction in which these terms, of which the field of reference was presumably well-known to the addressees, were 'pointed' in their paraenetic application.

This becomes evident when the links between these terms and the other semantic classes are disclosed, for example right at the start of our passage, in 5:13:

The alternative (ἀλλα) to a gratifying of the σάρξ in the freedom situation is initially defined as 'becoming slaves to one another' (δουλεύετε ἀλλιώτας) 'in love' (5:13). This is already an indication that there are several other motifs involved in Paul's flesh-Spirit opposition. Whereas the bondage to the law, which was advocated by the false teachers, was vehemently opposed in the first four chapters, now the legitimate restraint (sic) of the Spirit is advocated as energetically by Paul. A serving 'like slaves' of one another (5:13), fulfilment of the 'law of Christ' (6:2) and of the essence of the law (5:14) are now advanced (albeit perhaps in an ironic way) as quite compatible with a life under the Spirit of freedom!

Again, the exact rhetoric aim with which the apostle introduces the powerful directing influence of the Spirit in various ways, as well as the devastating effect of the flesh will only emerge clearly when, in 8 below, it is brought to bear on another semantic sub-category which we have isolated, namely that of personal relationships.

However, dwelling on the known power of the Spirit is in itself a strategy of persuasion, aimed, in the words of Perelman, at the strengthening of adherence to mutual convictions (5:10!) — in this case to a real experience of the benevolent nature and uplifting influence of the Spirit, leading to action which is in accordance with this renewed awareness. Having been forcefully reminded that they once started off with the Spirit (in 3:3), that they once 'were running well' (5:7) and that God provided the Spirit to even work miracles among them (3:5), the imperatives are now given with images of a being enlivened, inspired and controlled by the Spirit. They must now 'walk by the Spirit' in the face of such distracting and opposing forces as the flesh (5:16); they must be 'led by the Spirit' in freedom from the oppression of the law (5:18); they must 'walk by the Spirit', overcoming sour personal relations, because they have indeed been made alive by this indwelling Spirit (5:25,26).
7  ΠΝΕΥΜΑ AND ΣΑΡΧ IN TERMS OF THE CATEGORY OF
LAW, CONTROL, RESTRAINT, OF BEING COMPELLED

7.1 Terms in this sub-category
This second group of related semantic elements includes the following instances
in 5:13 — 6:10:
δοιλεύειν (5:13), νόμος (5:14,18,23; 6:2), περιπατεῖτε, ἐπιθυμία (5:16), μὴ ἢ ἐὰν θέλετε ταῦτα ποιήτε (5:17), ἀγομαι (5:18), ἐγκράτεια (5:23), παθήματα, ἐπιθυμία (5:24) and στοιχεῖαι (5:25). (In the same vein we find the κατων and the στοιχήσουν of 6:16.)

These is clearly a continuation of the series of similar terms in 5:1-12, e.g.: 
ζυγὸς δοιλείας ὑπέχεσθε (5:1), ὀφειλήσεις ἐστίν (5:3), νόμον ποιήσας (5:3), ἐν νόμῳ (5:4), ἐνεργοῦμεν ἐν (5:6), ἐνέκοψεν (5:7), παράσοου (5:10) κρίμα (5:10) οἱ ἀναστάτωτες ὑμᾶς (5:12). Closely connected to these are the ἀναγκάζειν in 6:12 and the νόμος of 6:13.

7.2 Ἐλευθερία curbed in two different ways
Collectively, these terms clearly form an isotopic which is formally set against Ἐλευθερία. However, there is a distinction. When these words are used in connection with the dualism between law and Spirit as is mostly the case in the ‘direct paraenesis’ in 5:1-12, and in 6:12-13, they carry a negative connotation — as has already been argued in the main part of the letter. In connection with the opposition of flesh and Spirit, though, (mainly in the ‘indirect paraenesis’ of 5:13-6:10, and in 6:14-16), they are evaluated positively — even where formally they have likewise been portrayed as in opposition to the concept of freedom. This provides an indication that Paul places some special constraints on the freedom in the pneuma-situation, in view of the danger inherent in the ever-present flesh. Ἐλευθερία may take a mistaken and disastrous off-road if it is decisively influenced by the σάρξ. The πνεῦμα, however, provides all the necessary ‘checks and balances’ in the freedom situation, ensuring that freedom is not abused, but used to the benefit of everybody concerned. In this way any opposition perceived between Ἐλευθερία and the restraining forces of the πνεῦμα is shown to be artificial.

7.3 The real bondage
Negatively, an unwarranted subservience is pointed out by the use of the following terms in the category of ‘constraint’, ‘coercion’, ‘compelling’ etc:
In 5:18 ὑπὸ νόμου (ἐλαῖναι) is an indication of the obligation that people enter into if they would find refuge in the law against the σάρξ and its real and inescapable power of destruction. However, the personal guidance of the πνεῦμα eliminates the need for such an external system of bondage.
The ἐπιθυμία σαρκὸς of 5:16 is regarded as such a compelling force in the human situation that it would naturally follow its course to the 'bitter end' (τελέσθη) if not held in check by the πνεῦμα. Again in 5:24 the Galatians are urged to get rid of the παθήματα and the ἐπιθυμίαι of the σάρξ. Indeed, the coercive power of these is of such a nature that a radical elimination ('crucifixion') of the σάρξ is called for in order to attain to the status of a Christian. Paul's persuasive (deictic) strategy should not be overlooked, even though it is stated in the indicative that οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ have indeed already done just that!

In 6:12 the Judaisers are themselves portrayed as agents of a negative coercion (ἀναγκασθείσῃ). Paul relates their motives, as they try to force the Galatians into circumcision, to the base ambition of religious boasting — at that being on behalf of what should in any case have been an act of obedience of the Galatians to the law! That, he argues, proves that the Judaisers themselves are not really intent on guarding the law (νόμον φυλάσσοντι, 6:13), but rather have personal ambitions!

7.4 Being subdued by persuasion
Over against the loci in 7.3, the persuasive force of the πνεῦμα is set as the positive counterpart in the instances mentioned below. Paul clearly intends to convince the Galatians that the inner discipline which originates from the Spirit is synonymous with the freedom to which the Galatian Christians have been called (5:13). He obviously mocks what he regards as the slavery of the outward rules and precepts propagated by the Judaisers — by using similar terms for the inner rule of the Spirit. Flagrant examples are to be found in the following loci:

The διὰ τῆς ἁγάπης δουλεύετε of 5:13 (already referred to in 6 supra) concludes a number of references to 'slavery' (e.g. 2:4, 4:3, 8, 9, 24, 25 & 5:1) and is the only occasion where it is used in a positive way, indeed directly commanded as the proper action! The other instances all refer to the enslavement (ἐγγὺς δουλείας as it is called in 5:1) from which Christ sets one free. The apostle has referred to the unsuccessful attempt of the Judaisers to 're-enslave' him (2:4). He has identified the traits of slavery which the stage of being like children implied to both the Jews and the Gentiles (ch 4). And he has illuminated the status of the free sons and heirs of God, the fact that righteousness is expected 'through the πνεῦμα by faith' 5:5, as well as the conviction that outward signs such as circumcision no longer have any meaning if a person is thus 'in Christ' (5:6). Exactly at this point, his argument turns to the real-life situation of the Galatians, impressing on them that what really matters is 'faith working through love' (πίστει δι' ἁγάπης ἐνεργουμένην, idem). These constraints — faith and love in the service of one's fellow human beings — are then designated as the only acceptable form of 'slavery' in 5:13!

In 5:18 the guidance of the Spirit (πνευματί ἁγεσθε) is radically and categor-
ically set in opposition to the state of being 'under the law' (ὑπὸ νόμου). However, formally the two are at least comparable, even though the mode of constraint by the Spirit is presumably a personal 'leading the way', over against the compelling impersonal force of the law.

Although the idea inherent in ἐγκράτεια (5:23) involves a pulling together or control of oneself as a fruit of the Spirit, it no doubt presupposes a divine enabling and guidance in order to be able to do what is regarded as the correct thing from a Christian perspective.

Στοιχεῖα in 5:25 (vid also 6:16), whatever vivid image it may have conveyed to the original readers, always has the element of orientation to, or taking into account of some pattern or person responsible for the formation and conduct of a body of people (Louw & Nida 1988, 41.12). The idea of constraint, of 'falling into the ranks' or of 'taking your marching orders' is ever present. In 6:16 there is even mention of a κατάων which in future will be the touchstone for the life conduct or 'walking' of the faithful. In this case, the measure is either being dead (crucified) to the world (6:14) or accepting that there is (through Christ) a new creation, in the light of which circumcision is of no avail (6:15).

It can therefore safely be assumed that the νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ in 5:2 is also used in a 'sparring', tongue-in-the-cheek manner, by way of a pun on the heavy focus on the law by the opposition. It has proved just too great a temptation, speaking of bearing one another's burden, not to describe it as the fulfilment of a law! Already a serving of one another (5:13c), like slaves according to the general dictum of the love commandment, is being equalised to a complete fulfilment of the law in 5:14. But speaking specifically to Christians on a Christian obligation, a more specific indication of the New Reality seems asked for. Thus the innovation: the law of Christ, to underline the new reality!

Paul thus intimates that in the Christian post-law situation there are indeed still restraining forces under which a person involuntarily finds him or herself. The freedom to do exactly what one intends, is a myth (5:17)! Strangely, being led by the Spirit guarantees freedom from being 'under the law' (5:18) whilst at the same time resistance to the flesh and a love of one's fellow humans are tantamount to a complete fulfilling of the law (5:14)! This can only mean that the moral objectives envisaged by the law are not discarded. Only they are attained — not by the external compelling force of the law's indicative and sanctions, nor by the ceremonial 'hedge' of the law around the people of God — but by subjecting oneself to the impulses of the indwelling Spirit of God. By returning to the start and the beginning with the Spirit, the Galatians will be free from the need for the outward regimen of the stipulations of the law, but also from any possible incursions of evil from the side of the flesh.
8 THE INTERPLAY WITH THE MOTIF OF INTER-PERSONAL RELATIONS

8.1 Terms within this category

The sheer frequency of terms in this category is impressive. The dictum of W.C van Unnik in his lectures on διαθήκη may be kept in mind, namely that words should be weighed and not counted. Nevertheless, the numerous ways in which the apostle’s thought returns to this notion in the paraenesis, leads to the valid conclusion that it comprises a main rhetoric vein in this part of his letter.

Right at the outset, in 5:13, the essential alternative to the undesirable σάρξ option is formulated as: ‘serve one another in love’! A positive attitude and benevolent action by the members of the community towards one another thus rank as top priority desiderata amongst the apostle’s rhetorical aims. Freedom may be wrongly acted out as an occasion for harmful egocentricity. This actually becomes a situation which the σάρξ utilises for its own mean purposes. Although σάρξ here undoubtedly carries all the negative connotations, up to sexual licentiousness, in the deictic use that Paul makes of it, the rhetorical scope is clearly focused on putting an end to the situation of a loveless free-for-all in Galatia. This could easily have arisen in the heated dispute regarding the relevance of the Jewish law and the resultant differentiation between groups (e.g. Jewish and gentile).

8.2 The respective ‘works’ and ‘fruit(s)’ of the two agencies
The parallel listing of the ‘works’ of the σάρξ and the ‘fruits’ of the πνεῦμα (5:19-21) bears out our finding concerning the scope of Paul’s persuasive intention. It has been pointed out that the vice catalogue ascribed to the σάρξ as well as the virtue catalogue attributed to the πνεῦμα contains mostly commonplace terms, used extensively by the Greek-Roman moralists as an indication of either undesirable, or desirable conduct. This would be compatible with the notion that a deictic use is made of the main opposing terms πνεῦμα and σάρξ, whilst the
deictic scope is even extended to what was commonly acceptable, even in non-Christian circles. It should nevertheless be kept in mind that, within the context of a Pauline letter, all common terms are utilised in a specific way. In Paul’s Christian universe the interrelation of concepts brings with it a new constellation of meanings attached even to stereotyped expressions.

What is especially relevant to our present enquiry, is the fact that a large contingent of both virtues and vices in this instance deals with interpersonal relations. In fact, these attitudes and actions can all in some way be perceived to have social consequences. In including in his lists such vices as enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit and envy, and such virtues as love, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and gentleness (RSV), Paul is clearly highlighting the target area according to his perception of the real-life situation in Galatia, and applies to it the consequences of the σάρξ - πνεῦμα conflict. In canalising these catalogues, it is of the utmost importance to keep in mind Paul’s exact rhetoric aim.

Σάρξ is not vilified without reason by attaching to it all these attributes. Whilst concurring with the assumed concern of the Judaizers about the grave consequences of a rampant ‘evil inclination’, he is at the same time localising the works of the flesh in concrete actions and attitudes among real-life people in Galatia! These anti-communal vices of the σάρξ are what they really should be alarmed at — and it is exactly against such outrages that the πνεῦμα, as the great adversary of the flesh, is the complete and effective answer.

By the same token, the ‘fruit of the πνεῦμα’ is not described in a mere listing of pious attitudes and acts of interpersonal goodwill — it is identified as inherently belonging to the working of the Spirit and as positive proof of the irrepressible way in which the Spirit delivers ‘good’ relations, in complete contrast to the obviously ‘bad’ relations engendered by the flesh. Of such divinely inspired, elevated personal relations the Galatian Christians had no doubt already had a concrete experience and a vivid memory, judging by the apostle’s testimony in 4:12-18 regarding the reverence and the charitable way in which he and his message of the new life in Christ had earlier been accepted by them. The deictic reference to the Spirit with whom they started off as Christians, is thus expanded to the common experience of the excellent fruits of human rapport which the Spirit had actually brought about in the Galatian community.

8.3 Σάρξ as the anti-community agency
The reciprocal actions ascribed to the flesh are all harmful to and destructive of community life, e.g.: ἄλληλοις δικεῖν καὶ κατεσθέλειν (5:15), ἐπ' ἄλληλων ἀναλωθῆτε (5:15), ἄλληλοις προκαλοῦμενοι, ἄλληλοις φθονοῦτες (5:26).

Σάρξ thus comes to symbolise the forces working against cohesion in the community of believers — breaking down communication, charity and unity. It is
the agent of egocentricity, of keeping an aloof distance, of cutting off ties with one another, of forcing your opinion upon somebody else in the unrelenting bid to prevail in the argument. The reciprocal terms all denote harmful action towards others, even towards co-believers on the other side of the law controversy. It is conceivable that group distinctions, such as being Jewish or Gentile played a role in this regard.

8.4 Πνεῦμα: the source of community life

Πνεῦμα, on the contrary, signifies the force of cohesion, of community, of mutual benevolence, bearing one another’s burdens, even slaving on behalf of one another, practicing true Christian love!

Here the reciprocals have the good of the other in mind: ἀλλήλων δουλεύειν (5:13), ἀλλήλων τῷ βαρῷ βαστάζειν (6:2). There is love for the neighbour (5:14); the trespasser is restored to the community (6:1); nobody makes a nuisance of himself — he rather shoulders his own responsibilities (6:5); nobody boasts about his superiority — he rather competes against himself to achieve excellence (6:3,4). And — in the good tradition of the rabbinical practice — a teacher in the faith should be duly rewarded by his catecumen (6:6)! The kindness prevalent within the community should indeed be extended to include all humanity (6:10).

9 THE USE OF THE ‘ESCHATOLOGICAL’ MOTIF OF COMPLETION, RESULT, HARVEST OR DESTINATION

9.1 Terms indicating the ultimate results of present options

This fourth category of terms used in the paraenesis is also used in relation to Πνεῦμα and σάρξ in Paul’s rhetoric strategy. It is inter alia represented by the following terms: [ὡφελεῖσθαι (5:2), τῆς χάριτος ἐξεπέσατε (5:4), τῷ ἴσχυει (5:6)] πεπληρωματι (5:14), τελεσθε (5:16), κληρονομεῖ (5:21), καρπός (5:22), ἀναπληρώσετε (6:2) and θερίσει (6:7,8).

Whereas, in the previous two groups (7 & 8 supra), the present workings of the Πνεῦμα and the σάρξ were portrayed, they are now used in direct connection with expressions which indicate, in the manner of the Wisdom literature, the results and the respective destinations to which yielding to either the Πνεῦμα or the σάρξ ultimately leads in human life.

The citations in square brackets (because strictly still preceding our passage) are already indicative of Paul’s tendency to dissuade the Galatians from yielding to Judaistic demands by pointing out the dire consequences of such a surrender. Admittedly, the opposition in 5:1-12 is still that between the law (circumcision!) and the Spirit (5:5), or Christ (5:2,4,6) and faith (5:5,6) respectively. This is in accordance with our observation above that this passage can be regarded as the ‘direct’ paraenesis, following straight from the main argument against the reintroduction of Judaic observances. The result of not standing fast in the ἔλευθερα
that Christ provided, is to be bound to a yoke of slavery (5:1). The choice for circumcision has as its corollary that Christ will mean nothing for those who decide in favour of it (5:2). The consequence of a quest for righteousness through the law is a 'falling out of grace' (5:4). True righteousness, such as the 'in group' has in view, is received 'by the Spirit, through faith' (5:5). Therefore, 'in Christ' neither circumcision nor the lack of it amounts to anything. What is relevant is 'faith that works through love' (5:6).

In the 'indirect' paraenesis (5:13-6:10) the persuasive tactics remain the same in this regard, although the consequences of the choice between Spirit and the flesh as leading principles of conduct are now pointed out.

9.2 The ultimate destiny of the σάρξ-option

9.2.1 A course of destruction
Paul warns that the result of a freedom, corrupted by the σάρξ, disregarding the love command and engaged in an 'eating' of one another might end in mutual destruction (ὑπ’ ἀλλήλας ἀλλὰ ἄναλλον ὁ ἕνεκεν 5:13-15). The flesh is no less than the catalyst of mutual destruction. Paul likens the flesh-inspired action of the hostile parties to that of carnivorous animals, ripping the flesh from one another and ending up devouring one another. Indeed a meaty scene to illustrate a fleshly attitude! It does not of necessity mean violent altercations. What is in danger of mutual destruction is the specific Christian existence, identity and behavior. Ending with the σάρξ (3:3) would mean the return to a pre-Christian level of existence and a bidding farewell to the true gospel of salvation, which involves a new beginning with the πνεῦμα and a lifestyle of amicable mutual acceptance of one another and benevolence to people in general.

9.2.2 In the final analysis, the law is not fulfilled in the Galatian dispute
Paul is in fact performing no mean rhetoric feat, by changing the whole basis of the Galatian dispute! Whereas the Galatian Christians are being harassed and recruited by the Judaizers to fulfil the law by the way of circumcision, he contends that the central and abiding aspect of the law manifests itself in another direction. In loving your neighbour as you love yourself, the law in its totality is brought to its ultimate fulfilment, according to its original design and intention (5:14). The apostle thus combats the negative influence of the σάρξ by pointing out ultimate goals which supersede the strife and enmity between groups with different alliances and viewpoints in Galatia.

9.2.3 The Kingdom lost through works of the flesh
Perhaps the strongest case of dissuasion in the paraenesis is linked to the list of examples of σάρξ-infused actions. People practicing the catalogue (τὰ τοιαῦτα
of vices inspired by the σάρξ are warned that they stand to lose the Kingdom, that is the inheritance destined for God’s true children (5:21, c182.1a.1b). The lovelessness revealed in the war of words corresponds with and is implicated by the majority of terms listing τὰ ἕργα τῆς σαρκός (5:19). The conflict in the Galatian community is thus declared symptomatic of a life under domination of the σάρξ, and subjected to the strongest possible veto by the apostle: exclusion from the coming Kingdom!

9.2.4 Of sowing and reaping

Another powerful metaphor utilised in the action-result scheme is that of the inevitable harvest. Conniving with the σάρξ is tantamount to reserving for oneself the only ‘harvest’ that the σάρξ provides — that of final destruction: ἐκ τῆς σαρκός θερίσει φθοράν (6:8).

9.3 The destiny of the πνεῦμα-option

9.3.1 ‘Harvesting’ eternal life

Stating the positive side, inevitably in connection with the πνεῦμα, Paul also uses the ultimate destiny of persons as a persuasive summons. In this respect he does not speak about entrance into the Kingdom, which is uncommon for him, but of eternal life, for example in 6:8: Sowing with the Spirit eventually brings with it ἐκ τοῦ πνεῦματος θερίσει ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

9.3.2 Fulfilling the will of God

There is no law ‘against’ the fruits of the Spirit (5:23). In fact, the requirements of the law in its totality are properly and utterly met in the love command (5:14) — which, in turn, is precisely in accordance with the ‘fruits of the Spirit’.

9.3.3 Thwarting the ultimate aims of the σάρξ

In the first three verses (5:16-18) of the pericope (P18) the πνεῦμα is advocated as the redemptive force which opposes the σάρξ, preventing the latter from attaining its ultimate goal. Because of the great conflict of purpose between the πνεῦμα and the σάρξ, emphasised in the chiastic structure of 5:17, man is unable even to do what he regards as right. His sole escape from completely fulfilling the desires of the σάρξ is to take his ‘marching orders’ from the πνεῦμα alone (5:16).

10 ΠΝΕΥΜΑ OVER AGAINST AN EVIL ΝΟΜΟΣ·ΣΑΡΧΞ ALLIANCE?

If the general outline of Paul’s rhetoric strategy in the paraenesis is interpreted correctly in the above review, then it may also be possible to suggest a ‘hidden’ connection between the role he assigns to each of these opponents of the πνεῦμα. He implicates the σάρξ as the moving force behind the inclination to return to
the bondage of the \( \nu o m o s \): circumcision and such outward observances of the law. Having started with the \( \pi v e d i a \), they are now inclined to ‘end with the \( \sigma a r e \)’ according to his assessment in 3:3, if they should bow to the demand of law observances. After the advent of Christ, in the \( \pi v e d i a \)-era, insistence on \( \nu o m o s \)-salvation in Paul’s view undoubtedly acquires a sinful character, comparable, and indeed linked to the vices inspired by the \( \sigma a r e \)!

Viewing it the other way round, the \( \nu o m o s \) had already played the role of a divisive agency. It has created the deep and unremitting barrier between those who ‘have the law’ and those who have not. And it is going to keep on playing that role, even in the Christian community, if it is to be maintained in one form or another, as a prerequisite for admission to the people of God. In this sense it is seen as the great antagonist of the \( \epsilon l e v o e r i a \) by means of which Christ has set his people free.

In advocating a return to the law, and especially to circumcision, as a hallmark of the true people of God, the Judaisers are in fact serving the powers of division and enmity — an action which corresponds to what has been identified as the workings of the \( \sigma a r e \) (vid 8.3 supra).

However, even if the Galatians should opt for the freedom alternative, \( \sigma a r e \) still has the potential to play the role of instigator to lawlessness, in so far as it is implicated in the strife and lovelessness within the community.

It would thus seem that the problematic relationship between Jewish and Gentile believers and the theological debate on Israel and the nations are as much a concern of the apostle in Galatians as in Romans. This impression is enhanced by the fact that the \( A b b a \) motif (4:6,7) surfaces here, just as it does in Romans. The \( \pi v e d i a \) is the One who makes people true children of God, who can freely call on his name as Father. Therefore there can be no more talk of ‘second class’ children in the house of God. The \( \pi v e d i a \) is par excellence the breaker down of barriers between God’s people, whatever their origin or descent. Neither the law nor the flesh can stand in his way when He is creating and calling God’s new people from among all nations.

This may have been the motivation for this agitated letter to the \( \alpha i o n t o i \ \Gamma a l a t a i \), who, according to Paul’s perception, were having trouble resisting both the claims of the \( \nu o m o s \) and the snares of the evil human \( \sigma a r e \), against which, according to the apostle, only a wholehearted return to the \( \pi v e d i a \) could prevail!

**WORKS CONSULTED**


Lategan, B C 1992 The argumentative situation of Galatians. Neotestamentica 26(2).